

## **Regaining Control: On Revenge Feelings and Self-Trust**

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This contribution examines the psychological function of revenge feelings—the desire or inclination to seek revenge through specific actions— in cases where self-trust is challenged by harm inflicted by others. It seeks to determine in which ways revenge feelings can be interpreted in terms of an attempt to compensate for or repair self-trust by recalibrating a person’s sense of control. The underlying idea is that self-trust refers to the ability to psychologically process a disappointment of trust and to retain a sense of control even when exposed to damaging actions by others. The thesis to be developed in the article is that revenge feelings can increase a person’s sense of control by opening up new scopes of action that were previously not considered and foregrounding new possibilities. By changing the perceived space of possibilities, it will be argued, revenge feelings alter a person’s experience of the world, herself, and others in such a way that gives rise to a temporarily restored sense of freedom for someone who has been wronged.

## **Mauvaise foi and fiducial belief – Sartre’s contribution to questions of trust (and uncriticalness)**

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According to Sartre, *phenomena* discussed as self-deception are as revealing as our *notion* of self-deception is misleading. The relevant phenomena are revealing as indicators of the impact that fiducial belief has in our life. The *notion* is misleading in turning our attention away from this impact and towards the assumed possibility of some self-directed lying or deceit. To open the eyes of the theoretician, Sartre introduces the technical notion: *mauvaise foi*. It is a reminder that we can only understand the phenomenon when focusing on the nature of fiducial belief and trust.

As Sartre outlines: Fiducial belief occupies the realm in which uncertainty prevails, but in which a corresponding hesitant or doubting attitude has always already been left behind. The “always already” points at how we are socialized and how we learn to approach ourselves and the world in a way that blanks out indeterminacy. A controversial Sartrean issue here is, of course, learning to see ourselves as *knowable objects* which conflicts with our existing

as *néant*. But even if we do not follow Sartre here, we may appreciate his claim that we grow into fiducial beliefs when growing into a social practice whose norms shape *what we accept* and *on which grounds we accept it* before we can critically relate to all this. According to Sartre, one of these problematic norms is: *learning to be epistemically modest* and *to believe-(by-trusting)* where evidence is missing.

As the fiducial nature is not clearly marked – we say “I believe that p” whether we have a fiducial belief or enjoy epistemic certainty – we do not only become sloppy acceptors. We also *learn to trust in a way that does not reveal itself as trust*. Hence, the fundamental role that trust plays in our *being-towards* is always already concealed – and so is our downgrading of norms. From here, it is but a small step to push trusting a bit further. This is what happens in cases of apparent “self-deception”.

From a historical perspective, Sartre’s reflections step in where a.o. Kant takes us with his notion of the “inner lie” – as the ground of a disturbing uncriticalness (and, according to Kant, of evil). However, as much as Sartre deserves attention due to framing this problem as one of trust, he misses to raise the question what kind of trust in one’s critical capacities is required for living an authentic (or examined) life – and whether this kind of trust can remain unscratched when becoming aware of the socialization that Sartre assumes.

### **Trusting well in transformative experiences – the role of guided (self-)inquiry and patterns of attention**

Daniel Vespermann (University of Heidelberg)

Most, if not all, people have transformative experiences in the course of their lives: experiences that provide them with new knowledge (epistemically transformative) or change their values, concerns, or commitments (personally transformative). Examples abound: from settling into a new country, changing one’s profession, drastic changes of political landscapes, facing serious illness, or loss of a significant other. In such high-stakes situations, trusting others or institutions is a highly valuable resource for coping with uncertainty. Notably, the vulnerability implied in these situations requires trusting well. Considering that transformative experiences precisely challenge the available evidence for trusting well, and, more importantly, guidance by practical norms and motivations, transformative experiences pose a

challenge to accounts of trusting well that presuppose either evidence or sufficiently stable practical norms or personal value systems. In particular, transformative experiences pose a challenge to accounts of trust that take confirmed or betrayed expectations as a benchmark for assessing the quality of trust.

For trusting well in transformative experiences, I suggest looking at how inquiry can be guided. Although inquiry and trust seem at first glance to be mutually exclusive, this only applies to cases in which we inquire someone's trustworthiness (and even then not necessarily). On the contrary, there are plenty of affinities that warrant reflecting on norms for trusting well under high uncertainty in the sense of (liberal accounts of) guided inquiry. Not the least, what seems to happen when undergoing transformative experiences is a type of self-inquiry and, by stipulation, trust plays a crucial role for this. For buttressing the applicability of guided inquiry to trusting well, I will start from proposals that see trust as an affective attitude that involves a specific pattern of salience. Existing accounts of trust as or involving patterns of salience, however, cannot be readily reconciled with more recent proposals on how affective states come with distinct attentional profiles. Even more so, trust and salience appear to be antithetical, barring further qualifications, and those proposals that qualify trust in terms of patterns of salience are phenomenologically hard to grasp. I will suggest that one way to solve the apparent problem is to understand the attentional profile of trusting well in transformative experiences in virtue of guided self-exploration.

### **Trust and reliance in cryptocurrency cognitive institutions**

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The core business of cryptocurrencies can be described in terms of transitioning the monetary system from a basis of interpersonal (or institutional) trust to one of mechanistic reliance. Trust appears as the main, even the only, target of criticism in cryptocurrencies' foundational documents. While Bitcoin's white paper points to "the inherent weaknesses of the trust based model" of monetary transactions (Nakamoto, 2008, p. 1), Vitalik Buterin's (2022) writings about Ethereum constantly refer to the goal of "trustlessness" achieved through a reliable mechanism, the market mechanism.

Many have maintained that trustlessness represents a mere ideal in cryptocurrency ecosystems (e.g. Bratspies, 2018), showing that cryptocurrency adoption, which represents a crucial condition for the emergence of network effects, spreads through interpersonal trust (Jalan et al., 2023). In this paper, we go a step further and criticize in principle the idea that trustlessness, if attainable, would represent a desirable ideal. To do so, we first characterize cryptocurrencies as “cognitive” institutions (Gallagher & Crisafi, 2009), a concept which builds on the philosophical idea of the “socially extended mind” (Gallagher, 2013). Cognitive institutions are those that “not just allow agents to perform certain cognitive processes in the social domain but, more importantly, without which some of the agents' cognitive processes would not exist or even be possible” (Petracca & Gallagher, 2020, p. 747). The cognitive processes externalized onto the cryptocurrency ecosystem concern everything related to the monitoring and verification of counterparts’ behaviors (to avoid the double-spending problem).

Some versions of the extended mind actively encourage the trading of trust for reliance. Clark’s concept of a “scaffolding institution” sees the constancy (i.e. reliability) of an institutional infrastructure as the source of its mind-extending potential (Clark, 1998). We question Clark’s functional idealization of trustlessness, showing that cryptocurrency ecosystems would produce undesirable outcomes if complete trustlessness were achieved (Gallagher & Petracca, 2022). We insist in particular on the contradiction inherent to framing the cryptocurrency ecosystem as a “community” (see Jackson, 2023) when in fact a reliance-based system crowds out what holds a community together.

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### **Trust in Hartmut Rosa's Resonance Theory: Some Responsive Questions and Suggestions**

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As a major contribution to current Critical Theory, Hartmut Rosa employs the notion of 'resonant' subject-world-relationships. The specific critical potential of the resonance concept, as a positive counter-concept to alienation, is based on an alternative account of the good life. Crucial in this regard is the ability of subjects to sustain a basic 'resonance trust' ('Resonanzvertrauen'). In our contribution, we propose clarifications concerning some ambiguities with respect to resonance trust and related concepts in Rosa's writings. First, while Rosa discusses two basic non-resonant modes of subject-world-relationships, indifference and repulsion, he also came to acknowledge a 'mere echo' relationship (or 'resonance simulation') as a third, separate mode. What unites these three 'others' of resonance is subject and object interacting not in a responsive, but in an ignorant or even hostile way. Rosa stresses that the world has to be experienced as alien (repulsive/indifferent) to a certain degree, (acknowledging the other as other), but also as possibly open, to enable resonance to occur. Rosa understands this as a 'dialectic between resonance and alienation', but, as we point out, this seems to conflate 'the alien' with 'alienation'.

Second, the 'three others' of resonance may be distinguished from ambivalent cases of resonance. With 'resonance ambivalence', we want to denote situations of co-dependent experiences of resonance and non-resonance. An example are resonance experiences with regard to a specific part of the world which are grounded on alienation experiences with regard to another part of the world; for instance the urge to leave 'home' behind, but still (later) recognizing it (although maybe only partly) as 'home'.

Third, Rosa speaks of differing degrees of profundity of resonance, and he distinguishes exceptionally deep states as 'deep resonance' ('Tiefenresonanz'). However, this seems to be conflated with resonance trust frequently. Although resonance trust itself constitutes a 'deep' resonance with the world, not every form of deep resonance is also resonance trust. Deep resonance can also be constituted by experiencing a profound but limited relationship with a specific part of the world, without implications for a broader attitude of trustingly expecting experiences of resonance beyond that. Nonetheless, there cannot be resonance, especially no deep resonance, without a general underlying resonance trust. Resonance trust and deep resonance are therefore not the same, but they are mutually dependent.

Fourth, Rosa characterizes resonance trust also as a basic existential 'Getragenheit', which he opposes to 'Geworfenheit'. This is, considering the phenomenological heritage on which Rosa heavily leans, a confusing opposition, since the philosopher who coined the term 'Geworfenheit', Martin Heidegger, meant something very different by it. How exactly does Rosa conceive of 'Getragenheit'? As a dialectical process? As an elementary rhythmic process? And how does this relate to psychopathological theories like those of psychiatrists Jacques Schotte and Hubertus Tellenbach, who understood (melancholic) depression as a disturbance of an elementary rhythmic attunement process or event? Because of this basic disturbance of elementary connection, depression is closely linked to anxiety and lack of confidence. Does Rosa's theory help to clarify this basic existential (dis)connection?

### **The impact of individuals' uncritical trust on the formation of epistemic bubbles and group polarization**

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The increased ideologization and polarization of societal issues brought about a gamut of different types of false information, e.g., misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation.

The epistemic bubbles and the ever-stronger biases show that there is a high level of trust in the sources of information supported within one's bubble and a high level of distrust in the content of beliefs residing outside of it. In both types of cases, trust is given uncritically and irrationally. The goal of this paper is to try to explain why this phenomenon occurs and to propose some solutions for rectifying it.

First, we will provide a comprehensive definition of trust that categorizes trust as an attitude and involves cognitive, affective, evaluative, and motivational components. We will also briefly contrast it to some of the other prominent attempts to define the concept of trust.

Second, we will engage in a discussion on two key topics relevant for understanding this phenomenon. As we will try to show, one of the main culprits for the need to trust in the sources of information within our bubble is maladaptive in the sense in which Hepp et al. (2022) try to examine. Choosing maladaptive sources of trust tends to correlate to maladaptive traits within the individual. Since trust is crucial for forming healthy relationships (Simpson 2007), it is important to note that the trust based on irrational individual beliefs may lead to the formation of dysfunctional relationships between members of a group. When a number of individuals with similar maladaptive tendencies clusters around a set of disinformation, a bubble forms. This, in turn, leads to higher and higher levels of distrust in any source of information beyond the bubble. Fundamentally, this is the main source of polarization. Studied at the collective and global level, polarization seems like an intractable problem. Thus, we will argue that one needs to first study individual cases of maladaptation and misplaced trust, uncritical thinking and resistance to question the bubble.

Third, we will explain how it is possible, through psychotherapeutic work, to bring about changes in individual thinking within an epistemic bubble. Namely, we will elaborate on how challenging one's irrational beliefs and employing other cognitive and behavioral techniques may lead to a more flexible mode of thinking. This, in turn, results in a more functional emotional and behavioral response. We will also explore whether there is a common characteristic among individuals who struggle to let go of their irrational beliefs and who cannot or do not want to abandon a rigid way of thinking, always aligning with one side around which they cluster within their bubble. We will also consider how we predict individuals might behave after adopting a rational way of thinking and whether their cognitive change can lead to a shift in trust within the bubble, whether they can remain part of the bubble, and how other members, who have not undergone cognitive changes, react to them.

**Distrust, Power, and the Pursuit of Invulnerability**  
Hale Demir-Doğuoğlu (University of Western Ontario)

Annette Baier framed trust as both a response to and a generator of vulnerability: we trust because we are inherently dependent on (and thus vulnerable to) others; in trusting, we render ourselves even more vulnerable to those on whom we depend. While Baier’s “good-will” account of trust has since received its share of criticism, there remains general agreement among philosophers in the field that vulnerability, risk, and trust go hand in hand. Curiously, however, the implied—or, at the very least, intuitively viable—connection between *distrust* and *invulnerability* remains largely unexplored. Bringing distrust to the fore of philosophical attention is worthwhile in part so that we might grapple with the role that the attitude plays in the perpetuation of social injustice. It is also valuable amid growing concerns about a so-called “trust crisis” across North America and Western Europe.

Accordingly, this paper aims to establish theoretical connections between distrust, power, and (in)vulnerability. Following Baier, I take distrust as a response to various forms of vulnerability which surface as a result of our interdependence. I demonstrate the advantages of conceptualizing distrust in this way by rendering explicit the myriad connections between Baier’s work on trust and feminist theories of the self as necessarily interdependent and relational. I appeal to these feminist accounts, as well as relevant literature on the phenomenology of race and gender, to identify a specific kind of vulnerability – what I call “constitutive vulnerability” – as a particularly potent (and potentially destructive) type of vulnerability that our relational selfhood engenders. After a preliminary sketch of this concept, I argue that a pursuit of constitutive *invulnerability* characterizes some instances of what I call “top-down” distrust. Some distrust is “top-down” insofar as the attitude springs forth from relatively advantaged social locations (e.g., along lines of race, class, and gender), and flows “downward” to collectively target those who are comparatively oppressed. I go on to engage with three contemporary examples which have featured widespread “top-down” distrust: the #MeToo movement, anti-trans legislative efforts in the U.S., and pro-police narratives that have circulated in popular discourse across North America and Europe following the Black Lives Matter movement.

The pursuit of constitutive invulnerability on part of dominantly situated classes manifests in an overlapping series of practical and epistemic gestures of distrust. I argue that these gestures seek to foreclose the collective “exposure” of dominant groups to the identities, testimonies, and realities of oppressed people. I conclude that social patterns of “top-down” distrust are often profoundly pernicious (even maladaptive), as they help to reinscribe, maintain, and perpetuate oppressive status quos in Western societies. I close by suggesting that theorizing about distrust in a way that is actively and explicitly attentive to the directions and/or flows of various forms of social and political power ought to be a priority for philosophers. Not only does such an approach encourage us to move beyond the basic claim that our otherwise “pure” or “accurate” attitudes of (dis)trust are “corrupted” by prejudice, but it also serves to support the far more radical idea that trust and distrust are themselves fundamentally contextual attitudes, tangled up in our proximities and/or investments in structures of power, and shaped, at least in part, by collective and competing class interests.

### **When the Body shakes and shivers.**

#### **Trust in Oneself in Parkinson’s Disease**

Miriam Feix (University of Heidelberg)

In general, the way we find ourselves in the world is shaped by our embodied habits that constitute our everyday life as habits manifest themselves in the flow of the movement of our lived body. There is an implicit self-evidence (implizite Selbstverständlichkeit) in the way we live our everyday lives: When we make ourselves a coffee for breakfast without thinking about it, pick up the cup and drink from it, this action implies a certain form of self-trust, trust in our own body. This trust in our own body consists of the fact that habits are incorporated into our lived body and we can perform them automatically.

The body is not only mediating between the world and the self, but is also constitutive for self-trust. The main thesis for this presentation is that trust as self-trust is rooted in the body. How the self-trust is lost in Parkinson’s Disease through the lack of control over the body, and how self-trust can be restored through movement therapy (e. g. dancing therapy) will also be addressed.

Parkinson’s Disease is characterized by a loss of agency over one’s own body. The main symptoms of the progressive disease are uncontrollable trembling (tremor) or a stiffness and

immobility (rigor). In both cases, the patient is no longer able to move their own body voluntarily. Many patients also develop anxiety of falling, and loose trust in their body. This inability to move also results in a loss of trust in themselves.

Restoring control over the body with the help of medication is necessary and enables the patient to move again in a more natural way, but on its own it does not help the patient to regain their self-trust. Therefore, additional therapies, such as movement therapy, are needed. There are different kinds of movement therapy, but I would like to focus on couple dance therapy as it also involves an interpersonal aspect.

The aim of dance is to relearn the ability to move ones own body, which not only lowers the fear of falling but also the actual falling. Besides, moving together with a partner provides additional stability and security.<sup>1</sup> The music that guides the movements also helps to return to a natural way of moving. In dance, the body becomes a lived body again, in which trust in oneself can be rooted.

### **Exploring losses of trust in people with dementia**

Sarah Wood (University of York)

The goal of this talk will be to clarify the ways in which cognitive impairment associated with dementia affects trust in oneself and in others. Due to their symptoms, many with dementia express that they often feel the need to retreat from certain activities they previously would have had no qualms about engaging in (e.g., Bryden, 2012, Snyder, 1999, Davis, 1989). I argue that this is because these activities are now perceived as ‘risky’ in a way that they were not previously. These perceived risks can be characterised in terms of a disturbance to the habitual confidence that typically underscores our orientation in the world. I attribute this habitual confidence to what Ratcliffe, Ruddell and Smith (2014) call ‘one-place trust’, which I argue is an essential foundation for other kinds of trust. In examining the causes of losses of trust in dementia, a variety of themes can be uncovered. Losses of trust in oneself are often based upon a fear of becoming disoriented, and withdrawal is therefore often an indication of rational forward-thinking rather than an unreasonable desire to isolate oneself, as it might

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<sup>1</sup> In addition, dancing in couples sometimes leads to switching roles. When Parkinson’s patients dance with their partner, on whom they are normally completely dependent, moving together to music creates a situation in which the partners can once again meet at eye level. The intersubjective experience also helps to strengthen self-trust

appear to others who are not ill (Byrne, 2022). However, more interpersonal losses of trust are also apparent in first-person testimonies, with many expressing a fear of being shamed by others, “positioned” (Sabat, 2003) as “crackers” (Langdon et al, 2007) and, as a result, having freedoms removed (Davis, 1989). In avoidance of this, I argue that people with dementia enact ‘safety behaviour’, typically discussed only in the context of Social Anxiety Disorder (e.g., James and Sabin, 2002). Safety behaviour in dementia, I argue, incorporates various modes of ‘cover-up strategies’ including physical avoidance, and compensatory acts to mask cognitive decline (e.g., working longer hours to cover up mistakes (Lee, 2003)). Successful enactment of safety behaviour therefore results in the avoidance of the potential negative consequences of taking a particular risk. I draw the talk to a close by suggesting that ‘positive risk-taking’ (an idea broached by Morgan and Williamson (2014)) could help to restore trust, limit uncertainty, and allow people with dementia to hold on to freedoms and retain an identity for longer. This involves weighing up the risks of allowing a person with dementia to continue to partake in a desired activity and creating a safe environment for them to do so. Dementia villages, I suggest, are one of the best examples of how positive risk-taking might be implemented.