Epistemic Peerhood and Standpoint Theory: What Knowledge from the Margins tells us about Epistemic Peerhood

Abstract. This paper uses standpoint theory to explore whether all there is to establish epistemic peerhood between subjects is that they be (i) equally exposed to or familiar with the evidence pertaining to the disagreed claim, and be (ii) equals with regards to intelligence, freedom from bias and similar epistemic virtues within the domain of the claim in question. I argue that there is at least one general circumstance in which conditions (i) and (ii) are met, but nevertheless the subjects deviate in their likelihood to be mistaken about the claim in question, thus preventing them from being epistemic peers. Such a circumstance presents itself as a case in which the claim in question is part of those aspects of social relations and experiences of the marginalized. That is, a circumstance in which special knowledge (i.e., knowledge from the margins) is needed to property evaluate the evidence for the claim in question. Finally, I discuss some of the epistemic consequences that may follow from the insights of the previous observation.