# Feminism and Philosophy

## FROM THE EDITOR

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In May 2013, the first "Diversity in Philosophy Conference" was held at the University of Dayton. The theme of that conference provides the theme for this issue of the newsletter. Some of the essays in this issue were developed from conference presentations, while others address the themes of the conference, though they were not presented at the conference. The essays discuss a wide range of responses to the issue of diversity—rather, its lack—in philosophy. They range from the practical to the theoretical, and integrate the two, showing how philosophical commitments have implications for professional practice. All of the articles are thoughtful and passionate.

Lauren Freeman's "Creating Safe Spaces" targets the stage of philosophical education where we lose perhaps the greatest numbers of underrepresented students: between the introductory course and the major. Freeman argues that implicit bias and stereotype threat, among other things, prevent many students from flourishing in our philosophy courses and classrooms, and suggests practical ways of removing such obstacles. This is one of several articles in this issue that I intend to distribute to my own philosophy colleagues for discussion about how to retain more of our women, racial and ethnic minority, and disabled students, in the major and beyond.

In "Limits to the Pursuit of Philosophy for Post-Traditional Female and Minority Students in On-Ground and Online Educational Modalities," Justin Harrison similarly addresses the barriers to participation in philosophical education faced by underrepresented groups of students, but focuses particularly on students who are the first in their families to attend college, or "first-generation." He points out how the traditional structure of higher education presents barriers of time and space, and suggests that online courses can help to breach these barriers. However, even online courses present obstacles to the participation of students in philosophy. For first-generation students, philosophy is a luxury. Harrison suggests some ways in which philosophy can be worked into the curriculum to benefit students that may not recognize what philosophical education can do for them. Again, this is an article I will share with my colleagues, since we have a large number of first-generation students, and other non-traditional students, enrolled in our university.

Nancy J. Holland's "Humility and Feminist Philosophy" is focused on the "masculinity" of philosophy. She argues that since the 1600s, it is possible to divide philosophies into those that are and those that are not characterized by what she calls "ontological humility." Ontological humility is opposed to Marilyn Frye's "arrogant eye," which Holland claims provides the west's basic assumptions about the world itself, including the status of women and other oppressed groups. While not all feminist philosophy exhibits ontological humility, much does, and Holland provides two contemporary examples: Patricia Hill Collins's Black Feminist Thought and Ladelle McWhorter's Racism and Sexual Oppression. Holland asks why, if ontological humility has characterized at least some philosophy for four hundred years, it was not thematized by these philosophers, to show its political implications. She suggests that the answer may lie in the meaning of the word "humility," which was and still is considered a "feminine" trait. Holland's article provides a thought-provoking perspective on types of philosophy that are attractive to members of groups committed to ending oppression, and their continued overshadowing by more arrogant and less humble philosophical perspectives.

In "How to Solve the Diversity Problem," Carmen Maria Marcous considers three possible attitudes that members of philosophy departments might take to the underrepresentation in philosophy of women and minority ethnic and racial groups: skepticism, acceptance, and affirmation. In this context, skepticism denies that this underrepresentation has any adverse impact on a department, the field of philosophy, or on the body of knowledge constituted by philosophy. An attitude of acceptance recognizes that underrepresentation of nontraditional groups is problematic, but characterizes the problem as one of social justice. Affirmation acknowledges that underrepresentation constitutes a problem for a department, the field of philosophy, and the knowledge of which it is comprised. Marcous then argues, with reference to Charles Mills, that due to the fact that members of social groups are likely to have different experiences depending on their group membership, and so develop different knowledge and different approaches to knowledge, the correct attitude for philosophers to adopt is affirmation. It is only when the field of philosophy is inclusive of nontraditional perspectives that it can aspire to theoretical and methodological adequacy. This theoretical argument has practical consequences, for the inclusion of nontraditional people in philosophy requires that departments intentionally seek to diversify their philosophy students and faculty, and that the perspectives members of nontraditional philosophers bring be fully integrated into the teaching and scholarship

of the department. Equally important is the shift in power that such a perspective enacts. Rather than a student or job candidate being regarded as the beneficiary of the institution's largesse, as is the case in other justifications for affirmative action, the empowerment-based approach endorsed by Marcous puts the student or candidate in the position of benefitting the department or discipline by providing their much needed epistemological perspective. This empowers the nontraditional philosopher to critically engage dominant philosophical methodologies and theories with the knowledge that he or she has philosophical reasons for finding such methodologies or theories unconvincing or incomplete. Marcous's argument elegantly combines theoretical work on epistemology and arguments for diversity, and applies them to the discipline of philosophy.

"Best Practices for Fostering Diversity in Tenure-Track Searches," by three colleagues at the University of Oklahoma—Amy Olberding, Sherri Irvin, and Stephen Ellis—provides concrete steps for fostering diversity in hiring. Basing their recommendations on the latest relevant social scientific research, Olberding, Irvin, and Ellis have done all of us a great service by developing and sharing what they have learned about what enables and what prevents diversity in hiring. They assume a range of implicit biases—about race and disability, for example, but also about what counts as philosophy—from the start. They also recognize the effect of stereotype threat on the interviewing process. Awareness of these obstacles to diversity shapes the entire hiring process. There is much to be learned from this thoughtful, self-conscious consideration of hiring in philosophy, and, as they say, it is their hope that their thoughts about hiring will prompt more conversation among professional philosophers about the process.

Phyllis Rooney's "An Ambivalent Ally: On Philosophical Argumentation and Diversity" takes on the debate about whether "combative argumentation," typical in much philosophy, is uncomfortable for women, thereby contributing to their low numbers in the field. As Rooney points out, many men and women do not accept that there is a relationship between combative argumentation and low numbers of women in philosophy, because it seems to suggest that women are not "tough enough" for philosophy, when, clearly, they are. However, Rooney reframes this objection and shows that it rests on certain problematic assumptions, perhaps the most important of which is the understanding of gender traits as inherent rather than situational. If we shift to a situational account of gender characteristics, we must consider the situations in which philosophical argumentation takes place, especially its gendered history and the social spaces in which philosophy is practiced. We should also ask, as Rooney does, "Is it clear that argumentative practices bound up with culturally specific masculine norms and behaviors are better—as measured, for instance, by their tendency to support the epistemic goals of philosophical argumentation?" Rooney's article makes a significant contribution to the ongoing discussions about the relationship between gender and the practices of philosophy as a discipline.

Daniel Susser's "Climate Change Guide" is an extremely useful primer for distribution to one's entire department. It explains the issue of departmental climate and provides suggestions for positive change that can be understood and at least entertained, even by those who have not reached "Affirmation" (Marcous, this issue).

The articles in this issue help all of us to think about, and act toward, making our profession and discipline more diverse. As one can see from these essays and their references, there is a growing literature on diversity in philosophy, something that could not be said not so very long ago. We have come quite a way, but there is still a long way to go. These articles help us on our way.

## ABOUT THE *NEWSLETTER ON FEMINISM AND PHILOSOPHY*

The *Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy* is sponsored by the APA committee on the status of women (CSW). The newsletter is designed to provide an introduction to recent philosophical work that addresses issues of gender. None of the varied philosophical views presented by authors of newsletter articles necessarily reflect the views of any or all of the members of the committee on the status of women, including the editor(s) of the newsletter, nor does the committee advocate any particular type of feminist philosophy. We advocate only that serious philosophical attention be given to issues of gender and that claims of gender bias in philosophy receive full and fair consideration.

## SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION

**1. Purpose:** The purpose of the newsletter is to publish information about the status of women in philosophy and to make the resources of feminist philosophy more widely available. The newsletter contains discussions of recent developments in feminist philosophy and related work in other disciplines, literature overviews and book reviews, suggestions for eliminating gender bias in the traditional philosophy curriculum, and reflections on feminist pedagogy. It also informs the profession about the work of the APA committee on the status of women. Articles submitted to the newsletter should be limited to ten double-spaced pages and must follow the APA guidelines for gender-neutral language. Please submit essays electronically to the editor or send four copies of essays via regular mail. All manuscripts should be prepared for anonymous review. References should follow *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

**2. Book reviews and reviewers:** If you have published a book that is appropriate for review in the newsletter, please have your publisher send us a copy of your book. We are always seeking new book reviewers. To volunteer to review

books (or some particular book), please send the editor a CV and letter of interest, including mention of your areas of research and teaching.

**3. Where to send things:** Please send all articles, comments, suggestions, books, and other communications to the editor: Dr. Margaret A. Crouch, at mcrouch@emich.edu.

**4. Submission deadlines:** Submissions for spring issues are due by the preceding September 1; submissions for fall issues are due by the preceding February 1.

# NEWS FROM THE COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

## DIVERSITY CONFERENCE
The Diversity Conference, held May 29 to May 31, 2013, in Dayton, Ohio, was very well attended and offered many important strategies for bringing about greater diversity in philosophy and improving the climate for underrepresented groups. Participants pressed for a second such conference, so plans for that are underway. It is to be held May 28–30, 2015, in Philadelphia, in conjunction with the Hypatia conference. The conference organizers are Sally Scholz and Anne Jacobson.

## SITE VISIT PROGRAM
The CSW's site visit program is up and running. A training session for twenty participants was held the day after the first Diversity Conference, and the site visit team immediately began receiving requests for visits. These must come from department chairs, deans, or higher administration, as the team goes only where it is invited to go. Site visitors' expenses are paid and they receive honoraria for what is typically a three-day visit. The first visit was conducted in September, with four more visits scheduled to date for 2014.

## CSW WEBSITE
The CSW website continues to feature bimonthly profiles of women philosophers. New links to excellent resources include one to a database on teaching with articles and readings, and another to the new directory of women philosophers, described in more detail below.

## TASK FORCE ON INCLUSIVENESS
The APA executive committee has formed a new task force on inclusiveness to provide top-down help for diversity initiatives. Chaired by Elizabeth Anderson, its members are Lawrence Blum, Susanna Nuccitelli, Ronald Sundstrom, Kenneth Taylor, Robin Zhang, and Peggy DesAutels. Anyone who has recommendations concerning the status of women should give them to Peggy DesAutels, who will pass them on. The task force is expected to issue a report by November 2014.

## WOMEN OF PHILOSOPHY
CSW is delighted to announce the publication of a new directory of women philosophers, which can be found at http://www.womenofphilosophy.com. This crowd-sourced database is searchable by name, school, faculty position, areas of specialization, primary research interests, and geographical location. Women philosophers are searchable by specific research interests so that anthology editors, journal editors, and conference organizers can have access to a list of women who work in those specific areas, and hiring committees can ensure that they have not overlooked any worthy women candidates in their deliberations. Women philosophers are also searchable by location so that conference organizers with limited travel funds will be able to locate women speakers who work on the conference topic and work nearby.

# ARTICLES

## *Creating Safe Spaces: Strategies for Confronting Implicit and Explicit Bias and Stereotype Threat in the Classroom*

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### INTRODUCTION
One of the central points in Sally Haslanger's influential article "Changing the Ideology and Culture of Philosophy: Not By Reason (Alone)" (2008) is that we must root out biases that work against women and minorities at every stage of the profession. Yet, with some notable exceptions (Norlock 2012; Saul 2013; Calhoun 2009; Paxton, Figdor, and Tiberius 2012; Buckwalter and Stitch 2010),[1] most of the work on implicit bias in this area (both in philosophy and in psychology) concentrates on issues that plague women and minorities at later stages in their education and/or career, or in the profession more generally. Here I have in mind important articles that consider how implicit bias works against women publishing in top journals (Haslanger 2008; Lee and Schunn 2010), negatively affects the evaluation of CVs of women and minorities (Steinpreis et al. 1999; Bertrand and Mullainathan 2004), results in weaker letters of reference for women than for men (Valian 2005; Madera et al. 2009), and might be eliminated in the ranking of philosophy departments (Saul 2012).

In this paper, I take up Haslanger's imperative to consider how we can root out biases at an earlier stage, namely, in the classroom. Specifically, I'm concerned with creating learning environments that are safe for traditionally underrepresented minority groups. The guiding idea is that if we can create safe spaces early in the philosophical educations of these students, then not only will more women and minorities enter into philosophy, but they will also continue on in the field, thereby diversifying it. It is crucially important to focus on the undergraduate level, and specifically on introductory-level courses, since it has been shown that the biggest drop in the proportion of women in philosophy occurs between the introductory level and declaring a major (I know of no published work that has systematically traced the drop-off rates of other minorities).[2] Creating classrooms as safe spaces is not only an intrinsic good that should be a goal for all educators; it will also help traditionally underrepresented minority

groups advance and succeed in the profession. Moreover, the creation of such safe spaces will also improve the content of philosophy by fostering a more diverse body of philosophers, which will bring about a greater understanding of the range and diversity of human lives (Friedman 2012). My aim in this paper is to delineate strategies for creating safe learning spaces in philosophy classrooms in which underrepresented groups can feel sufficiently comfortable and confident to be active participants, to remain in the field, and, hopefully, to flourish in it as well.

The paper has four sections. First, I discuss what a safe classroom space is. Second, I review some key insights from the literature on implicit bias and stereotype threat that preclude safe spaces from existing. Third, acknowledging that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to the problem, and that there might be different challenges for creating safe spaces for women than there are for other minorities, I delineate five strategies that can help create safe spaces in philosophy classrooms and that can diminish the kinds of psychological oppression that women and minorities suffer as a result of the current climate in such classrooms. Finally, I raise and respond to an objection to the project of creating safe spaces in philosophy classrooms.

## UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS AND SAFE SPACES

Philosophy departments in general and classrooms in particular tend to be "hyper-masculine," white spaces that are "competitive, combative (non-nurturing), highly judgmental, oriented towards individual accomplishment, individual intelligence, agency, [and] hostile to femininity" (Haslanger 2008, 217). This is reflected in the fact that the underrepresentation of women in philosophy surpasses all other disciplines in the humanities (Healy 2009). Both implicitly (in terms of attitudes) and explicitly (in terms of curriculum), philosophy classrooms also tend to be hostile to difference, specifically, to underrepresented minority groups. By underrepresented minority groups, I have in mind women in a discipline normatively dominated by men; religious, ethnic, racial, and sexual minorities;[3] students from low socio-economic backgrounds; and students with disabilities. In sum, groups who tend not to be reflected in the notion of "subject" operative in traditional philosophical texts.[4]

In my account, I will use the following working definition of safe space:

> A place where anyone can relax and be fully self-expressed, without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable, unwelcome, or unsafe on account of biological sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, cultural background, age, or physical or mental ability; a place where the rules guard each person's self-respect and dignity and strongly encourage everyone to respect others." (Kenney 2001, 24)

A safe space is more than simply a physical space. It is also a *psychological* space in the minds of those who occupy the physical space, a *lived* space (in that it is not static and changes depending on who occupies it), and a *conceptual* (philosophical) space of thought (Al-Saji 2012).

It is inclusive and discrimination-free (to the best of our ability), and threat-removing, rather than threat-provoking. Given this definition, one might ask whether such a space can ever exist. This is a legitimate question, a satisfying answer to which exceeds the scope of this paper. For now, we might say that even if such a space can never exist, it can still be a normative goal towards which we should strive and which we should aim to achieve to the best of our abilities, acknowledging that a fully safe space might never be possible.

## IMPLICIT BIAS AND STEREOTYPE THREAT

Implicit bias (IB) occurs when someone consciously rejects stereotypes and even supports anti-discrimination efforts, but, at the same, unconsciously holds negative associations in his or her mind. It affects how members of a stigmatized group are perceived, judged, or evaluated. Recent psychological research shows that most people—even those who explicitly hold anti-racist and feminist views—implicitly hold biases against groups such as women, blacks, and gays, based on unconscious stereotypes of these groups. In fact, although more than 85 percent of Americans consider themselves to be unprejudiced, researchers have concluded that the majority of people in the United States hold some degree of implicit racial bias (Greenwald and Banaji 1995). Moreover, even members of targeted groups are susceptible to IB (Steinpreis et al. 1999; Vedanham 2005). With respect to the dangers of IBs in classrooms, the worry is that we as educators are implicitly biased against underrepresented students. Such biases influence our behavior and actions (e.g., the way we lecture, call on students, respond to questions, evaluate arguments), our body language, the readings we choose to include in the course, the objections we raise, and our grading practices.[5] In sum, they disadvantage certain groups of students.

Stereotype threat (ST) refers to the way that a person's awareness of his or her *own* group membership can negatively affect his or her performance on a given task (Steele and Aronson 1995). Whereas IB affects the ways that members of a stigmatized group are perceived or evaluated *by others*, ST affects how members of stigmatized groups think of *themselves*. Stereotype threat involves fear of being judged or treated stereotypically, anxiety that a negative stereotype might be true of oneself, or that others might think that it's true. It is provoked when one belongs to a group that is negatively stigmatized in a certain context (e.g., girls in math classes, women in philosophy classes), when one is in that context, and when one's group membership is made salient.

Studies have shown that victims of ST consistently underperform on relevant tasks because they are unconsciously preoccupied by fears of, and are anxious about, confirming stereotypes about their group (Steele 2010; Steele, Spencer, and Aronson 2002). For example, one of the first studies done in this area found that black college freshmen and sophomores performed worse than white students on standardized tests when their race was emphasized; when race was not emphasized, however, they performed equivalently to white students (Steele and Arsonson 1995). Studies have shown that ST affects

women taking math tests, Latinos taking verbal tests, elderly people taking short-term memory tests, low SES groups taking verbal tests, blacks on a golf task assessing "sport intelligence," and whites on a golf task assessing "natural athletic ability."[6] Although no extensive studies have been done for women or minorities in philosophy classes, given that their situations resemble those of the minority groups just mentioned in that they tend to be grossly underrepresented and, insofar as this is the case, their group identity tends to be made salient, one can surmise that they most likely suffer the same kinds of ST as members of these other groups.[7]

The consequences of ST are serious, pervasive, and enduring. ST mitigates learning, memory, and academic performance in general (Taylor and Walton 2011; Rydell et al. 2010; Yeager and Walton 2011). It also diminishes motivation (Davies et al. 2000). Moreover, on account of ST, members of stigmatized groups not only underperform on major tasks (e.g., exams),[8] but they also underperform on more minor tasks (e.g., group discussions, debates) since they become distracted (Schmader, Johns, and Forbes 2008), often cautious, and their cognitive energies are directed away from the task at hand and toward worrying about confirming stereotypes, the consequences of doing so, and about how to beat stereotypes. The stress they experience with respect to fears of confirming stereotypes can manifest both consciously (e.g., anxiety) and unconsciously (e.g., elevated heart rate, increased blood pressure), which can have lasting psychological and physiological harm (Steele 2010, 119ff). Moreover, ST occurs when the material under consideration is especially challenging (like in philosophy classes), and its effects tend to be strongest in those most committed to doing well in the area in question.[9] We should therefore care especially because ST is affecting and disadvantaging students who, under different circumstances, would excel in the field. Finally, with regards to the long-term effects of ST, Claude Steele writes that

> if people are under threats from stereotypes . . . for long periods, they may pay a tax. The persistent extra pressure may undermine their sense of well-being and happiness, as well as contribute to health problems caused by prolonged exposure to the physiological effects of the threat. And all the while . . . they may have little awareness that they are paying this tax. (Steele 2010, 127)

For traditionally underrepresented philosophy students, being in a classroom primarily filled with white, able-bodied, heterosexual, cis-gendered male students (and most often professors) is enough to make one's group membership salient and therefore is enough to cause ST. Stereotype threat leads not only to the underperformance of women and minority students, it also leads to these students feeling as though they are not as smart, and that they do not have the ability to succeed in the given field. Moreover, it leads to their feeling uncomfortable and unable to participate in class and to approach professors in class or during their office hours (Adelson et al. 2013). Underperformance and feeling unsafe in the classroom is enough to prevent them from continuing in the field, and

this is a problem. It is a problem *both* for the field (in the sense that it is and will continue to be less diverse than it could be) and also for the individual students (who suffer psychologically and physiologically as a result of ST). The good news is that when ST is removed, performance from stigmatized group improves dramatically, often to the point of equality (Steele 2010; Steele and Aronson 1995; Good, Aronson, and Inzlicht 2003). Even better news is that there are a number of strategies that we can implement to alleviate ST.

## STRATEGIES FOR CREATING SAFE SPACES

As a part of a comprehensive report written by the UK branch of the Society for Women in Philosophy (UK SWIP) on the climate of philosophy for women, Helen Beebee and Jennifer Saul write: "To get the best possible philosophy being done, we need the best philosophers to receive proper encouragement and good jobs, and to be working in environments where they can produce their best work. Until we successfully do something about implicit bias and stereotype threat, this will not happen" (2011). This statement is true not only for women but for all underrepresented groups. Based on the literature and on the experiences of underrepresented students in philosophy, our immediate goal must be to create a climate in classrooms and departments that encourages the full participation of underrepresented students by changing the subtle (and not so subtle) patterns of bias and stereotypes. Our long-term goal should be for more underrepresented groups to continue in the profession of philosophy. There are a number of relatively easy strategies that we can implement in our departments, classrooms, and offices to help achieve these goals. In what follows, I delineate and discuss five of these strategies.[10]

## 1. VISIBILITY OF UNDERREPRESENTED PHILOSOPHERS

Studies have shown that making counter-stereotypical exemplars visible in academic settings can strongly alleviate ST and increase the level of comfort and the performance of underrepresented students.[11] We can increase the visibility of underrepresented philosophers in a several ways.

(i) We can increase the visibility of counter-stereotypical exemplars *in the faculty body* by hiring more professors from underrepresented groups. The visibility and presence of underrepresented faculty reduces ST (Steele 2010, 145; 215) and offsets implicit (Steele 2010) and explicit (Yeager and Walton 2011, 286) biases. Moreover, underrepresented faculty help make classroom climates less "chilly,"[12] more welcoming, and their presence demonstrates to underrepresented minority students that they can have a future in academic professions (Valian 2005, 258). For example, it has been shown that having female teachers in math classes (where implicit and explicit biases deem women to be less proficient) reminds women who are already extremely motivated in math, but who are not performing at the same level as their male classmates, of their own abilities in that domain. They also make female students less disturbed by gender stereotypes, thereby enhancing their performance (Marx and Roman 2002, 1189). Furthermore, based on their surveys of philosophy

departments across the United States, Paxton, Figdor, and Tiberius write, "Our data are consistent with this hypothesis about how more women professors might lead to more women majors. However, they are also consistent with a much simpler hypothesis: that the mere presence of women faculty in philosophy classrooms yields a quantifiable result in the percentage of women entering philosophy at the undergraduate level, independent of course content."[13] It is very plausible that this will be the case for other minority groups as well; however, we do not yet have the data to back this up.

In addition to diminishing ST in students, increasing the visibility of underrepresented faculty can also help to change students' preconceived beliefs (and implicit and explicit biases) about *who* does philosophy (and relatedly, about what philosophy is or can be). Specifically, increasing the visibility of underrepresented faculty can help to offset gender schema in all students where the schema for "philosopher" is "white" and "male."[14] Changing these preconceived beliefs, biases, and schemas by hiring faculty who counter the schema for "philosopher" can attract and retain more underrepresented students to the field by making classroom climates more welcoming to these students. One way in which classrooms become more welcoming is that underrepresented students will see an affinity between themselves (members of underrepresented groups) and counter-stereotypical philosophers who have succeeded in the field. Over time, this can affect the achievement of underrepresented students since by having counter-stereotypical exemplars as their professors, underrepresented students can not only imagine themselves in this field, but can imagine themselves *succeeding* in it.[15] As Kathryn Gines, founder of the *Collegium of Black Women Philosophers*, writes, "when Black Women see and/or read the scholarship of other Black women in philosophy, it allows the option of becoming a philosopher to enter into their realm of possibilities in very concrete ways" (Gines 2011, 435).

(ii) We can increase the visibility of underrepresented philosophers *in our physical and virtual spaces* by putting images of them on department websites, course websites, walls of department, office doors, and lounges.[16] This reduces our tendencies to be implicitly biased about who is a philosopher; also, seeing and being surrounded by more underrepresented philosophers reduces ST for underrepresented students. Moreover, we can invite speakers from underrepresented groups and also invite speakers to present their work on topics that are not securely within the canon, thereby disrupting the schema for "philosopher" and "philosophy" in other ways. These tactics show students from underrepresented groups that philosophy can be and is more than the traditional questions that continue to be alienating for those who are not represented, for example, in the traditional notion of "subject" operative in most texts.[17]

(iii) Greater visibility of underrepresented groups can also occur in the content of courses as required readings, in class discussions, and as examples. As Kathryn Norlock writes, "required readings from de-centred or marginalized positions tend to enhance students' critical consciousness of and critical appraisal of the dominant perspective across the board" (Norlock 2012, 355). It helps when such inclusions are *not* simply tokenized or tacked on at the end of the semester, but rather are important and integrated parts of the curriculum throughout the course. Alternately (or better, in addition), recommendations for "further" or "recommended" readings can be made on syllabi and course websites that emphasize topics that have been less traditional for the subject matter (e.g., feminist epistemology and feminist metaphysics in standard epistemology and metaphysics classes). At the very least, articles by women and minority authors can be included on syllabi on more standard topics (again, offsetting schema of "philosopher" as "white" and "male").

On syllabi, there can also be a requirement and discussion of gender-neutral pronouns to be used in both written and oral components of the class, which brings this issue to the fore *as* an issue.[18] Furthermore, we can highlight on our syllabi links to websites such as "Feminist Philosophers," "Women Philosophers," "What Is It Like to Be a Woman in Philosophy," "What We're Doing About What It's Like," "Disabled Philosophers," and "Society for Young Black Philosophers."[19] Such inclusions can make underrepresented groups feel more included by showing them that the profession is confronting its own problems (or at least beginning to). One study found that by including material by women in areas where such material traditionally is not included, female students not only "learned new facts, theories, and approaches, but also gained new perspectives on themselves as women and as scholars and were much more ready to assume responsibility for their educations" (Hall et al. 1982, 13).

## 2. DISCUSSION OF CLASSROOM CLIMATE

During the first week of the semester, we can have students write down, share, and as a class, discuss answers to the following questions:

(i) What was a classroom situation in which you felt unsafe?

(ii) How could this situation have been avoided?

(iii) What was a classroom situation in which you felt safe?

(iv) How did the professor facilitate this situation?

(v) What have teachers/professors done to create safe classroom environments?

(vi) What are your goals for this class?

(vii) How can we as a class help you to achieve them?

(viii) How can we make this classroom a safe environment?

Such an exercise and discussion can work well for at least four reasons. (1) They give *all* students a kind of ownership over the class by shifting some of the fulcrum of power to them. (2) They empower all students to redefine parameters and dynamics of the classroom according

to their standards. (3) They get students comfortable speaking in a context in which they aren't being judged about how "smart" they are, a problem that is known to hinder students, especially women, from speaking in philosophy classes (Rooney 2012). (4) They *demonstrate* to students that you are committed to making their experience in class one in which they feel as though they belong and aren't alienated, unwelcome, or out of place (as opposed to simply *telling* them that you are).

This exercise works even better if, midway through the semester, we do a follow-up exercise by conducting an informal, anonymous survey which asks students to evaluate to what extent the class is being experienced as a safe space and how we are faring as professors who are committed to this goal. In case the classroom is not being experienced as a safe space, we can solicit suggestions as to how we might change our practices to make it safer. This mid-semester review might look something like this:

Please complete the following three sentences.

(i)   Please stop . . .

(ii)  Please start . . .

(iii) Please continue . . .

Please answer the following two questions.

(iv)  Do you feel comfortable speaking in class? If not, why not?

(v)   Do you find the climate in the classroom to be safe? If not, why not?

This follow-up exercise not only demonstrates to students that you continue to be committed to making their experience in class a safe one, it also serves as a check that you are willing to tweak your practices to the specifics of *this* classroom.

### 3. DISCUSSION OF ST
It has been shown that making the phenomenon of ST explicit to students and educating them about it reduces ST (Steele 2010). Specifically, it improves the performance of students prone to ST in threat-provoking situations (e.g., women on math exams; blacks on tests of "intelligence") (Johns, Schmader, and Martens 2005; Aronson and Williams 2004). At the beginning of each semester, we can explain to students the phenomenon of ST and that it may cause anxiety to underrepresented students. During the semester, before assignments, exams, or class discussions, we can then remind and reinforce to students that if they are feeling anxious, this could very well be the result of negative stereotypes that are widely known in society and that it has nothing to do with their actual ability to do well on the assignment, exam, class discussion. It has been shown that this tactic improves the performance of minority students (Johns, Schmader, and Martens 2005; Aronson and Williams 2004).

### 4. DISCUSSION OF DEPARTMENT/CLASSROOM CLIMATE IN INFORMAL MEETINGS

In my former department, I started a task force on the status of underrepresented groups in philosophy, which had a number of benefits. First, it stimulated *awareness* that this is an issue about which (some) faculty care. Second, it enabled underrepresented students to feel solidarity with one another and *created a safe space* within the department where they could share their experiences with other students who were in the same boat. Third, it raised the issue of safe spaces as a practical one, allowing us to organize together to come up with strategies for how to change the department from within.

Specifically, we identified problems (both individual and structural) at various levels (e.g., university, department, classroom, courses, syllabi), attempted to better understand discriminating factors that made students feel unsafe, and set out strategies for improving the climate in the department and in classrooms. Some of the issues and items we considered were faculty breakdown (number of women and other minorities), class syllabi (number of underrepresented authors, non-traditional content), and gender breakdown of first-year students, majors, graduate students, TA/fellowship breakdowns (number awarded to women, men, underrepresented students). We then invited the chair of the department to one of our meetings, presented our findings to him, and invited him to relay our findings and the concerns of students to the faculty at the next department meeting. We initiated a letter writing initiative to professors in the department who did not include any minority, women, feminist topics/authors in their courses. This initiative was inspired by and mirrored the Gendered Conference Campaign started by Feminist Philosophers.[20] Finally, we compiled a resource binder for the undergraduate lounge that had lists of feminist, women, and minority authors and articles on a variety of topics (epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, political philosophy) to encourage students to supplement their courses with these more diverse insights.

Simply creating this venue was an important preliminary step to give underrepresented students a place where they could feel safe. Not unsurprisingly, many students who were a part of this group—who rarely, if ever, participated in their philosophy classes—were outspoken participants and organizers. It has been shown that simply giving students the opportunity to voice concerns on matters of discrimination and feeling uncomfortable helps to alleviate ST (Steele 2010, ch. 3).

### 5. ENCOURAGE AND MENTOR UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

In order to make underrepresented students feel safe in the classroom, we can invite them to our offices with the aim of discussing both their performance in class and their academic or career goals. With regards to the former, we can remind them that ST is likely one root of their anxiety, discuss other factors that might contribute to their reluctance to participate in class, and encourage them to participate by setting out certain strategies for alleviating

their anxiety and fear.[21] We can also provide further informal as well as formal feedback on their work and offer them a safe space in which they can discuss their concerns in the class/field.

Research has shown that mentoring underrepresented students increases both their levels of confidence and their achievement (Marx and Rowman 2002; McIntyre, Paulson and Lord 2003). Specifically, having role models enhances the way that they see their academic abilities; moreover, students benefit in terms of their self-appraisals when they believe their role model is similar to them.[22] On the basis of their research on creating healthy classroom environments, Yeager and Walton write:

> As students study and learn and build academic skills and knowledge, they are better prepared to learn and perform well in the future. As students feel more secure in their belonging in school and form better relationships with peers and teachers, these become sources of support that promote feelings of belonging and academic success later. When students achieve success beyond what they thought possible, their beliefs about their potential may change, leading them to invest themselves more in school, further improving performance and reinforcing their belief in their potential for growth." (Yeager and Walton 2011, 286)

I hope that the strategies I have presented are a step in the direction of creating classrooms as safe spaces where underrepresented philosophy students can become comfortable with themselves, with their classmates, and with their professors, and are inspired to remain in the field. Before concluding, I would like to summarize and respond to an objection to the project of creating classrooms as safe spaces that has been raised by George Yancy (Yancy 2011).

## IV. OBJECTION AND RESPONSE
Yancy's position is that teaching philosophy ought to challenge students to question their general assumptions about their experiences, their beliefs, and about how the world is. He claims that the best way to do this is by making students "feel strange to themselves" (Yancy 2011, 2), specifically by making classrooms *unsafe*. In answering the question as to why anyone would want to create *unsafe spaces* within academia, Yancy responds:

> Safety can signify a lack of courage on the part of teachers and students to question the presuppositions of their area of inquiry, to challenge the maleness, or whiteness, or western-centric dimensions of such areas. The creation and maintenance of safe spaces within such contexts results in a form of intellectual disservice. Such spaces perpetuate chains of power and control that truncate the potential for developing radical imaginations within students. Such spaces also mitigate against the possibility of creating radically subversive democratic spaces of critical dialogue.[23]

Let me now respond to Yancy's objection to the value of making philosophy classrooms safe spaces. First, in his objection he seems to be taking for granted the fact that all students *are* comfortable and safe in philosophy classrooms, whereas what data we have (as well as a large amount of anecdotal evidence) shows that many students, specifically underrepresented students, do not feel safe. Thus, the students Yancy seems to have in mind here are only those who already hold positions of power in the classroom; he seems to be excluding underrepresented students in his critique of making philosophy classrooms safe spaces.

Another related problem with Yancy's account of philosophy classrooms more generally is that he fails to engage an intersectional analysis of the problem. He breaks down divisions of philosophy students along racial lines alone to advocate for an unsafe classroom environment for all students, but in particular for those students who are already in dominant positions of power. However, in breaking down classrooms only along racial lines, he fails to consider other minority and underrepresented students who might feel unsafe in philosophy classrooms as they are. He wants to intentionally make philosophy classrooms unsafe for all students, but he fails to acknowledge that for many students, classrooms are *already* unsafe environments and that these students already feel "strange to themselves" by virtue of being minorities in a white, male-dominated, heteronormative field. Thus, by urging professors to make classrooms even more unsafe, Yancy precludes the achievement of the very goals he sets out, in particular, fruitful pedagogical engagements of all sorts *for all students*. Even if his idea of creating unsafe spaces works for students who already hold the dominant positions of power in the classrooms (i.e., white male students), then his pedagogical ideals and practices still exclude an entire proportion of the classroom who are already at a disadvantage. Moreover, and of greater concern is that according to his proposed idea, underrepresented and minority students are made *doubly* unsafe: they feel unsafe in the classroom to begin with when the explicit goal is not to make students feel unsafe, and then they are made to feel even more unsafe when the explicit goal *is* to make students feel unsafe (in order, as Yancy believes, to challenge their assumptions, etc.).

Let me emphasize that I agree with Yancy's not uncommon position that one of the goals of a philosophy course ought to be for students to "question the presuppositions of their area of inquiry, to challenge the maleness, or whiteness, or western-centric dimensions of such areas." However, in his discussion of how we should get students to do this, Yancy conflates two different senses of "safety." On the one hand, he seems to have in mind the *safety of the classroom environment*: for example, the day-to-day experiences of students; their feelings of adequacy and ability in the subject area; their comfort with themselves as philosophical interlocutors, with their classmates, and with the professor. On the other hand, he seems to have in mind the *safety of the material*: for example, to what extent the material or content of the course pushes the boundaries and margins of philosophy, challenges the tradition, questions the canon, and, in so doing, challenges

the students to broaden their own philosophical horizons. We must separate these two senses of "safety" in order to properly respond to his objection.

In order to be able to do good philosophy with our students, we must first create *safe classroom environments* in which we can ensure that *all* students feel comfortable with themselves, with each other, and with their professors (to the best of our abilities), so that they can voice their positions, challenge themselves, and engage with others: in sum, so that they can be active members of the class. Only once we have built a safe classroom environment can we then disrupt the *safety of the material* or the content of the course, which enables students to engage with potentially radical, transformative ideas and, in so doing, question the assumptions, intuitions, and presuppositions that they have brought to the table. Without a baseline level of safety in the classroom environment for all students, but in particular for underrepresented minority students, the latter is not possible, at least not possible for all students. Thus, I disagree with Yancy's claim that "the creation and maintenance of safe spaces within such contexts results in a form of intellectual disservice." I agree that it is pedagogically lazy, perhaps even irresponsible, not to challenge students to question their assumptions and also the canon of philosophy, among other things; however, I do not think that this has to do with offsetting the basic feeling of the safety of the classroom, which, as I have shown, can have detrimental effects on underrepresented minority students. With regards to Yancy's claim that safe spaces "perpetuate chains of power and control that truncate the potential for developing radical imaginations within students . . . [and] mitigate against the possibility of creating radically subversive democratic spaces of critical dialogue," I think that here he has in mind the second sense of safety, namely, the safety of the material. If he does, then I agree with his claim, but again, only if we still have a baseline level of safety in the classroom environment.[24] In sum, in order to do good philosophy with our students, we must create a safe classroom environment wherein all students feel as though they can be active members. This involves using strategies that help offset implicit and explicit biases and that fight against ST.

## CONCLUSION

In this paper I have provided several tactics to begin to confront IB and ST in the classroom, and I have responded to an objection against the goal of creating philosophy classrooms as safe spaces. My aim has been two-fold: (i) to help to create safe spaces where underrepresented students in philosophy can flourish, and (ii) to initiate further discussion on this topic. With both of these aims, my hope is that we can better the profession, both inside the classroom and beyond.

### NOTES

1. For a paper that is highly critical of Buckwalter and Stich, see Louise Antony, "Different Voices or Perfect Storm: Why Are There So Few Women in Philosophy?" *Journal of Social Philosophy* 43, no. 3 (2012): 227–55. More recently, an excellent paper by Toni Adleberg, Morgan Thompson, and Eddy Nahmias, "Women and Philosophy: Why Is It 'Goodbye' at 'Hello'?" (Diversity in Philosophy Conference, University of Dayton, May 30, 2013), has not only called into question the methods and results of Buckwalter and Stich but has done further, extensive, empirical work that considers what issues cause women and minorities to leave philosophy after introductory classes and also what can be done to fix this problem. This issue has even made national news in a story on NPR by Tania Lombrozo, "Name Five Women in Philosophy. Bet You Can't," NPR, June 17, 2013, http://www.npr.org/blogs/13.7/2013/06/17/192523112/name-ten-women-in-philosophy-bet-you-can-t.

2. Cf. Paxton et al., especially pp. 953ff. This high rate is significantly higher than the drop off rate from female philosophy major to female graduate student and from female graduate student to female faculty member. As Adelberg et al., have found in their research at Georgia State University (GSU), where they surveyed over seven hundred students in Introduction to Philosophy courses, whereas introductory classes are usually comprised of about 50 percent women, philosophy majors are less than one-third women. At GSU, 55 percent of students in introductory philosophy courses are women, yet only 33 percent of the philosophy majors are women. Consistent with the findings of Paxton et al., Adelberg et al. also found that the drop offs from undergraduate to graduate and from graduate to professor are not nearly as significant as the first drop off after introductory courses. With regard to race, at GSU, black students comprise 35 percent of Introduction to Philosophy students (a number roughly proportional to the number of black undergraduate students (38 percent)). However, black students, like female students, are significantly less likely than white students to major in philosophy; only 20 percent of philosophy majors are black.

3. By *sexual minority* I mean anyone who does not identify as heterosexual or cis-gendered.

4. Although in what follows I will be speaking about underrepresented groups along the lines just mentioned, most of the empirical work that has been done in this area looks at women in philosophy. Some numbers are beginning to be collected on blacks (in particular, by the Society for Young Black Philosophers), but to my knowledge, no empirical data exists for other underrepresented groups in philosophy (perhaps because the numbers of these groups are so low). This dearth of information calls for more empirical work to be done. I realize that different issues affect different minority groups; however, due to the limited empirical data for other minority groups, in what follows I will be generalizing based on the data for women and the scarce data we have for blacks. My justification for this methodological step is that especially in light of the literature in implicit bias and stereotype threat, some of the same techniques can be used to improve the situation of different minorities in potentially oppressive situations. That is not to say, however, that different methods might not also be important and helpful for different minority groups.

5. See Saul, *Implicit Bias, Stereotype Threat, and Women in Philosophy*, 52–53, for an account of how stereotypes are harming women—in an number of ways, but specifically in grading practices—by denying them fairness and equality of opportunity in philosophy.

6. For a summary of all studies and all sources, see Greg Walton, "Stereotype Threat: What It Is, How It Affects Students' Achievement over Time, and How to Fix It," presentation at Stereotype Threat Conference, Boston University, April 29, 2013.

7. As I have already mentioned, one study has been done that considers the climate for women and blacks in introductory philosophy classes (Adleberg et al. 2013). Among the issues considered in their study were the following: perceived ability

in philosophy (speaking in class, arguing, writing papers, taking exams); perceived ability vis-à-vis other students in the class; perceived fit as a philosophy student/major; level of comfort participating in the class and approaching professor in class and during office hours; fairness in treatment of all students by professor; fairness in treatment of all students by other classmates; proportion of women authors studied; and proportion of non-white authors studied. One problem with the way that the study was set up, however, is that it does not use an intersectional approach—it accounts for male/female and black/white, but it does not specify how many of the black and white students were male or female; thus, for example, we do not know how the black female students are faring.

8. For example, empirical research suggests that stereotype-related psychological threats explain more than half of the gender gap on the SAT math test and 20–40 percent of race differences on the SAT as a whole (Walton et al., "Stereotype Threat").

9. Jennifer Saul assesses the problem (of women in philosophy, but I think it could be broadened to include all underrepresented groups) in terms of a *feedback loop*. She writes: "Women have trouble performing well and being fairly assessed when they are so under-represented. But it is very hard to fight the under-representation when women are being unfairly assessed and impeded in their performance. In short, the under-representation that underlies implicit bias and stereotype threat is *reinforced* by the implicit bias and stereotype threat that it helps to produce" (*Implicit Bias, Stereotype Threat, and Women in Philosophy*, 13).

10. I do not claim that my list is by any means exhaustive, nor do I claim that all of these points are original. In fact, especially points 1 and 5 are well known and are currently being implemented in many (although not enough) departments. There are a number of other empirically tested strategies that are also known to help reduce the fallout from IB and (especially) ST. For example, it helps to emphasize on assignments that you have high expectations of *all* students and that you are confident that they will be capable of meeting them (Steele, *Whistling Vivaldi*, 159–64). This strategy has helped to show black students that you are not holding them to different (lower) standards and also serves as an impetus for them to work hard (as opposed to dissuading them, implicitly or explicitly, that they are not able to meet the standards of white students). Relatedly, we can teach students to view critical feedback as reflective of the professor's high standards and confidence in their ability to meet the standards (Yeager et al., "Social-Psychological Interventions in Education"; Cohen and Steele, "A Barrier of Mistrust"; Cohen et al., "The Mentor's Dilemma"). Another strategy, called an incremental theory of intelligence, is to present intelligence as malleable (like a muscle) as opposed to static. If we can promote *this* conception of intelligence or ability as a norm, then students tend to do better since it instills in them a confidence that with hard work and effort, they are able to improve (Aronson et al., "Reducing the Effects of Stereotype Threat"; Blackwell et al., "Implicit Theories of Intelligence"; Dweck, *Mindset*). Such attributions also help to determine whether students respond well to setbacks (e.g., instead of quitting or losing interest, trying harder, using better work/study strategies, seeking help). Two other strategies for reducing ST are having students write down their most cherished values and having them make a list of their friends in the class. The first exercise gives students the opportunity to make salient to themselves the most valued aspects of themselves, which distances them from negative stereotypes that apply to the group to which they belong. The second exercise makes salient to students that they have allies in their class, thereby diminishing their susceptibility to ST (see Gresky et al., "Effects of Salient Multiple Identities on Women's Performance under Mathematics Stereotype Threat"; Stinson et al., "Rewriting the Self-fulfilling Prophecy of Social Rejection").

11. This observation is not new. For example, see Blair, "The Malleability of Automatic Stereotypes and Prejudice"; and Walton, "Stereotype Threat." With respect to this issue in philosophy in particular, see Margaret Walker, "Diotima's Ghost," 156. Also, Paxton et al. ("Quantifying the Gender Gap") have shown a significant positive correlation between the proportion of philosophy majors who are female and the proportion of philosophy faculty who are female. I do not know of any similar studies that have been done for other underrepresented groups in philosophy.

12. Hall et al., "The Classroom: A Chilly Climate for Women." With regards to this issue in philosophy in particular, see Cheshire Calhoun, "The Undergraduate Pipeline Problem."

13. Paxton et al., "Quantifying the Gender Gap," 955. It is also the case that the number of female majors at a given institution seems to correlate with its number of female professors. I do not have data for blacks in philosophy. The Society for Young Black Philosophers is in the process of collecting such data for black philosophers. It is known that in educational settings more generally, black and Latino students in schools that had teachers (and a majority of students) who were black and Latino experienced virtually no ST in classrooms (Steele, *Whistling Vivaldi*, 159).

14. Schemas provide a useful model for understanding unconscious bias. As Virginia Valian writes, a schema is "a mental construct that . . . contains in a schematic or abbreviated form someone's concept about an individual or event, or a group of people or events. It includes the person's or group's main characteristics, from the perceiver's point of view, and the relationship among those features. . . . [Schemas] give rise to expectations. They interpret behavior in ways that are consistent with the schema rather than inconsistent with it. They supply explanations where data are missing or ambiguous" (Valian, *Why So Slow? The Advancement of Women*, 104–06). On this issue, also see Calhoun, "The Undergraduate Pipeline Problem"; and Haslanger, "Changing the Ideology and Culture of Philosophy."

15. See, for example, Carrell et al., "Sex and Science." With regards to philosophy, the data of Adleberg et al., "Women and Philosophy," suggest that female and black students may feel out of place in philosophy classrooms. Not only were both groups less likely than white and male students to agree that they have a lot in common with typical philosophy majors (where, presumably, the schema for "philosophy major" is also "white" and "male"), but they also answered that they felt less comfortable both expressing their opinions and answering questions. Black students also report being less comfortable approaching instructors to ask questions in class or during office hours.

16. For example, the APA committee on the status of women has printed a posters, mugs, and buttons that celebrate women in philosophy. See http://www.apaonlinecsw.org/posters.

17. For an excellent article that outlines some reasons as to why philosophy can be alienating for women, see Regan Penaluna, "Wanted: Female Philosophers, In the Classroom and In the Canon."

18. For example, on all of my syllabi I include the following blurb: "In philosophy, gender-neutral writing is the accepted practice recommended by the American Philosophical Association. The words 'man' and 'mankind' do not refer to humanity; phrases such as 'everyone has a right to his own property' contain a faulty pronoun reference (substitute 'abortion' for 'property' to see why). Appropriate language use includes, for example: 'humanity,' 'humankind,' 'her/his,' 'his or her,' etc. When quoting writers who use non-inclusive language, leave their words in the original. Gender-specific language is, of course, appropriate when referring to a gender class such as 'men' or 'women.' Students are strongly encouraged to read 'Guidelines for Non-Sexist Use of Language' by Virginia L. Warren, originally published in the *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* in February 1986 (Vol. 59, no. 3, pp. 471–82), which can be found at the APA website: http://www.apaonline.org/?page=nonsexist." I would like to thank Brady Heiner for sharing a version of this blurb with me and for permitting me to use it.

19. Cf. respectively: http://feministphilosophers.wordpress.com/, http://www.women-philosophers.com/Women-Philosophers-blog.html, http://beingawomaninphilosophy.wordpress.com/, http://whatweredoingaboutwhatitslike.wordpress.com/, http://disabledphilosophers.wordpress.com/, https://www.facebook.com/home.php?sk=group_313902619150.

20. See http://feministphilosophers.wordpress.com/gendered-conference-campaign/.

21. On all of my syllabi, I include the following statement, which (I hope) makes students feel more comfortable coming to my office: "Participation should allow you to demonstrate acquaintance with the assigned reading and will make up a significant part of the course. If you do not feel comfortable speaking in a classroom setting, willingness to come to office hours and pertinent email inquiries will also count toward your participation grade. If you have particular circumstances you feel may prevent you from participating fully in the class, please

come see me as soon as possible so that we can make necessary arrangements."

22. The Collegium of Black Women Philosophers (CBWP), a philosophical organization launched in 2007, is currently doing this at the graduate and professorship level. The specific goals of CBWP, as articulated by its founder, Kathryn Gines, are "to increase the representation of Black women in philosophy in the academy; to provide a network for participants to share their experience and expertise; to help participants in graduate programs in philosophy successfully complete the Ph.D. and transition well into the job market and the academy; to help participants get into tenure-track positions; to help participants successfully navigate the track to tenure; to help participants develop research projects into publications; and to offer mentoring and professional development" (Gines, "Being a Black Woman Philosopher," 432). To say that this is an excellent, much-needed organization is an understatement. Its target members and mentees, however, are all graduate students or women early on in their careers. It does not directly target students at the undergraduate level and therefore does not deal with the pipeline problem of losing these students.

23. Yancy, "Loving Wisdom and the Effort to Make Philosophy 'Unsafe,'" 3. In his article, Yancy oscillates back and forth between talking specifically about discussions of race in philosophy classrooms and discussing philosophy classrooms more generally. I take his claim to refer to both contexts, but here I will be concerned with philosophy classrooms in general and not just in contexts where race is being discussed.

24. I would like to thank Guy Dove and David Owen for their helpful conversation on this point.

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## Limits to the Pursuit of Philosophy for Post-Traditional Female and Minority Students in On-Ground and Online Educational Modalities

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The goal of creating equality in higher education must begin with an analysis of the factors that have led to and that currently maintain inequality. I will be writing from the perspective of a professor working with an online student body and utilizing what I have learned about students working within this modality to attempt to cast light on barriers that prevent minorities, first-generation students, and women from participating in the study of philosophy.[1] My hope is that those who read this article will be able to translate these ideas into an on-ground modality and will be able to connect ideas as their campuses provide more blended and online learning opportunities for students. I will attempt to analyze conditions that prevent "post-traditional" students at my institution from participating in philosophy programs as such programs currently exist in most universities. I will ultimately argue that overcoming these limitations and being patient with future learners through the harmonization of on-ground and online modalities will contribute to the development of more equality in philosophy. I end the paper with a cursory proposal for an open form of education that would enhance equality in education and would contribute to more just distribution of philosophical content across the population and perhaps across other countries as well.

It is first important to point out the most evident social force that has led to the current disparity in higher education, as well as other areas. There are inherent structures in the system of education that have led to educational inequality in this country. This might seem like a benign platitude, but the lack of cultural memory in relation to important historical events indicates that it might be in order to point out a few cases that represent the gross injustice that has existed in education in our society. Our society is built on the exclusion of women and minorities from higher education. In 1962, James Meredith became the first African-American student to successfully enroll at the University of Mississippi. Upon his enrollment, there was such vitriolic anger and violent rioting that President Kennedy sent 5,000 troops to maintain order in Oxford, Mississippi. At the time, Oxford had between 15,000 and 20,000 residents.

In 1920 only 7 percent of U.S. women were enrolled in colleges. The medical community at the time cautioned parents against allowing their daughters to think too much. It was considered a sound medical theory that women who engaged in higher-order thinking at young ages would probably develop problems with their reproductive systems. Of course at this time, a healthy brain in a woman was not as prized as a healthy uterus. It is imperative that we remember the past in this country in order to understand current disparities between sexes, races, and ethnicities and do not work with the illusion that everyone has the same opportunities for education, and that the past can be extracted from our current conditions and quarantined in distant history.

This leads me to an analysis of the structure of higher education itself, especially how, when, and where courses are usually taught. College courses are usually taught in buildings on campuses during mornings and early afternoons. Non-traditional students often work long hours to make ends meet. Work usually takes place during waking hours—the same time that most courses are offered. If a student cannot take a class due to time constraints, or they fail a class that is only offered during a specific time period, they might have to wait 3–12 months to attempt the course again. Forcing students to wait in this way leads to lack of retention and lack of successful completion of their degree programs. Thus, the way that courses have typically been scheduled leads to unequal access to education for those who must work during the times that the courses are offered. In a recent WASC survey of Ashford students, about 60 percent claimed that they worked more than thirty hours per week. In many engagements in the classroom and when students run into issues at home, they often speak of the stress of work and the demands of work that prevent them from successful completion of assignments.[2]

In addition to the structure of the courses, the physical structure of campuses also contributes to unequal distribution of education to students. Not all students can

go to classes on campus. Physically traveling to campus causes problems for students who do not have access to dependable transportation. Taking public transportation is not always a viable option (especially for rural students), and even in those cities in which it is an option, taking multiple buses and/or trains drains precious time from these already time-poor students. A fifteen-minute drive for students with their own cars might take 1–2 hours for someone dependent on public transport. If one cannot get to campus, one cannot participate in education on that campus.

There is also the problem of the structure of the classroom itself. Imagine being an adult walking into a building and being surrounded by 18–22-year-olds who, on average, reflect much different ethnic and social classes than your own. It takes a significant amount of courage for many adults to participate in such an environment.[3] For some it is frustrating and frightening. For others it is impossible. It appears, then, that the actual physical structure of the classroom excludes a large population of people who could potentially complete a college degree. Much of that excluded population includes women, minority students, and rural students from lower socioeconomic classes.

Having listed some roadblocks to general participation in brick and mortar courses for post-traditional students, I now turn my attention specifically to online students and their lack of participation in philosophy, in particular. Now that students find themselves taking online courses, why do they participate less in philosophy and the humanities than in other majors within education, business, and the health sciences?

One major factor that contributes to this lack of participation lies in the perspectives and social constraints on first-generation college students. In our society, the expenditure of monetary and temporal resources in going to college is often justified by its leading to gainful employment for college graduates. Many first-generation college students do not have the benefit that others have of growing up being surrounded by people who understand what college is and how one can successfully complete a college degree.[4] Their family members often support first-generation college students, but family members and friends also have certain expectations that they place on these students. I am working from the assumption that participation in the humanities is significantly dependent upon exposure to and acceptance of the humanities in one's life. Usually this comes from a generational perspective of appreciation for all forms of learning.

There is a development that families go through as they participate more in higher education. The first stage is that people do not participate in higher education. Higher education appears to be a goal or prize that might be obtainable by someone in the future, if the current uneducated generations dedicate themselves to providing for this goal. The first-generation college student feels the weight of all previous generations on her shoulders. Many hopes and dreams of previous generations can be met if the student completes her degree. However, this locks the student into specific options. A primary reason

why first-generation students go to college is to provide better job opportunities for themselves and the possibility of better lives for their loved ones. College is often viewed as the golden ticket to a better life. It is assumed that one will automatically have better job prospects in the future if one completes a college degree. This mentality leads first-generation college students to align their studies with majors that are believed to lead to gainful employment (nursing, business, K-12 education, technology).

The choice of degree program of already employed adults who are first-generation college students almost always aligns with their current career.[5] The opportunity to pursue any degree program a student desires primarily occurs in families that have a generational experience of higher education. What I mean by this is that once a family begins to have multiple generations that successfully complete college, there are more opportunities to pursue what are considered "less applicable" career fields, philosophy of course being generally construed by the population at large as the ultimate form of this type of pursuit. It takes a generational mentality to allow for the pursuit of degrees that fall outside professional degrees. Of course there are outliers who study humanities, theater, and the arts, but a majority of first-generation college students are constrained by economic conditions as well as familial beliefs about what they should be pursuing. They do not have the luxury of pursuing something like philosophy because their college education is expected to result in a career that will allow them to break free from their current conditions of existence. Usually when higher education becomes a regular generational experience, one's socioeconomic conditions improve.[6] This leads to less pressure on future generations and more freedom in what they choose to study. If mom and dad have money and one studies philosophy, then "he has his head in the clouds." If one's family does not have access to resources, and she studies philosophy, she becomes a "selfish squanderer."

The reason why philosophy students in this situation are considered in a negative light is that philosophers have continually failed to make their degree field applicable to gainful employment, or to even consider this as an option. Philosophy is sometimes celebrated by its practitioners in that it pursues ideas outside of the "constraints" of economic thinking. Many philosophers belittle the pursuit of a degree as the means to the end of a job or career. However, this view actually contributes to further educational limitations on post-traditional female and minority students. Many female students have social and family pressures that traditional students do not have and that their male post-traditional counterparts do not have: children.[7] One can imagine what it is like for a single woman with 1–3 children, who works more than thirty-two hours a week, as she thinks about going back to school. Philosophy probably won't be high on her list of degree programs, and rightfully so. She is practicing excellent critical thinking for herself and her children as she marks philosophy off the list of her potential degree programs.

What does this indicate to us about our field itself? It appears that philosophy is a field that is best undertaken when one is young. It does not seem to align with the goals

and aspirations of those who have limitations due to their family and work schedules. It is not considered to be a field that will lead to gainful employment. If one wants to teach it full time, it is highly likely that the person will need to achieve a Ph.D. We have certainly failed to accommodate post-traditional students. In this sense, philosophy is a field of study that is privileged. Philosophers often bemoan the fact that people do not think deeply or pursue the life of the mind. However, the field itself is impenetrable both literally and intellectually for many students. Those in the field tend to dedicate themselves to esoteric minutiae rather than to focusing on ways that philosophy might make itself applicable or integral to what it means to be a flourishing citizen. The highest levels of the academy provide the greatest academic rewards to those who pursue questions that are interesting and intelligible to a minute subset of humans.

This raises the issue of the ethicality of encouraging post-traditional students to choose philosophy as their primary degree program. Previously, I claimed that students who marked philosophy off their lists of majors were practicing excellent critical thinking. This is merely from the dominant perspective of those who are outside of philosophy. A middle-aged female student with kids should only mark philosophy off her list because of how her employers will view the degree. However, philosophy in itself, as philosophers understand, leads to intellectual benefits that are priceless. Thus, promoting philosophical study alongside a more recognized topical degree is an excellent way to help these students set themselves apart from those who merely have a degree in a specific business or educational field. Philosophy majors regularly have the average highest scores in GRE placement exams. They also do extremely well on the LSAT. While standardized tests have their limitations, this seems to indicate that philosophy majors learn thinking patterns or skills that other college students do not. Getting post-traditional students to supplement their majors with as much philosophy as possible can enhance the skills that they will need in their careers. Although first-generation students tend to take fewer courses in the humanities and arts than their peers, the benefits of these courses on writing skills and the rest of their educations are larger for first-generation college students.[8]

If we think of philosophy as competency-based or outcome-based learning, some of the competencies that arise from the study of philosophy include a solid grasp of critical thinking, the ability to analyze complex information, the ability to identify arguments and their components, the ability to identify informal and formal logical fallacies in reasoning, the ability to take on multiple perspectives, fairly present other positions on issues, the ability to communicate through speech and writing in an insightful and clear manner, and a sense of wonder at the human capacity to think about deep human problems. Certain polls indicate that some employers actually prefer to hire graduates with backgrounds in the humanities and liberal arts for these reasons.[9] However, other companies are not so insightful. This is why I claim that, for the students with whom I work, it is imperative that our philosophy curriculum attempts to come alongside and weave itself into a degree

that is considered by society at large as more "employable." This is certainly not a limitation for other types of students who have more economic and social freedom. However, for post-traditional students, it is imperative that they create a degree that will not only serve them in terms of the skills they need to succeed in a career, but will also appear to align with commonly accepted norms about degrees that apply to their fields of interest.[10] The analysis here is pragmatic, and perhaps not subtle, but if one cares about students' lives becoming better through the study of philosophy, then one must help them learn how to work within the system, even when that system is biased and unfair.[11]

Helping post-traditional students utilize their philosophy degrees (or course of study) with a view towards gainful employment requires intentional curriculum design. It is imperative philosophy courses align the competencies mentioned above with a view towards how students can utilize those capacities in their careers. At the same time, one must present the curriculum in such a manner that it connects with students. This leads to an inevitable conundrum, one that our department takes very seriously. How does a department create a curriculum that aligns with the post-traditional student while also avoiding a certain reverse prejudice in the curriculum?[12] A vibrant philosophy curriculum is one that enhances the knowledge and intellectual skills of the students while also connecting with what they find to be important and interesting.

In our own courses, we attempt to align learning outcomes with the competencies listed above. At the same time, we attempt to include various voices in the curriculum that can speak to our students and resonate with them. This means that we include female and minority authors in our curriculum and we focus on issues that are relevant to our student body: women's rights, gender and ethnic disparity, business ethics, military ethics,[13] and environmental issues.[14] At the same time, we do not assume that our post-traditional students will only be interested in contemporary issues or authors that reflect their own backgrounds, and we develop courses that include primary readings from classical thinkers in the history of applied and theoretical philosophy.

It is also important that people working with post-traditional students provide information about the paths that students should take to get their degrees if they want to pursue philosophy and successfully complete the degree.[15] Student advising can take place in the classroom, perhaps with even entire class periods being dedicated to helping students outline their paths through college. The curriculum needs to be explained to students to enhance engagement. It might be that students are less engaged because they do not recognize the importance of being engaged.[16] Educating students about the benefits of philosophy and then backing up these claims with dynamic courses that empower students through the acquisition of intellectual skills they previously did not have can help generate energy and internal motivations in students that will help carry them through the initial period when they are more likely to fail or drop out.

Another key element to dynamic philosophy curricula for post-traditional students is the use of philosophical thought to break through gender stereotypes. Our students often have specific beliefs about the roles of men and women, and many female students psychologically submit to those roles. However, exposure to multiple perspectives enhances the ability of first-generation female students to successfully complete college and gain cultural capital. It also works to empower these women. Male students who engage this curriculum have the opportunity to analyze their own gender assumptions, and in college courses with high percentages of women, this effect is intensified and can lead to changing certain unfounded preconceptions.[17]

Gilardi and Guglielmetti found that post-traditional students in Italy who met regularly in after-class support groups had a greater chance of first-year success as well as a better opportunity to discover their personal student identities.[18] The future of education with such students might include intentional support groups where adult students and first-generation students can meet with people like them and discuss their fears, frustrations, victories, and motivations. Faculty leaders of these groups could weave philosophical content into the discussions while also guiding these students on their educational paths, informing them of volunteer opportunities and extracurricular activities that could enhance their experiences. Philosophy courses could be a space in which previous graduates who reflect the diversity and age differences among the student body came back and explained the methods they used to successfully navigate and engage in higher education. Perhaps these graduates could take on a more pronounced role as a resource for students who wanted to ask questions that arise in their own educational journeys.[19] Gilaradi and Guglielmetti found that non-traditional students who took advantage of the resources of the university and developed relationships outside of class were more successful than those who merely attended lectures. In addition, they warn against the danger of a student psychology according to which education is a "journey one must take alone." This perspective tends to lead to failure for employed students. In contrast, building relationships with students and faculty enhances student satisfaction with learning as well as their overall success.[20] For many adult students, the professor might be much more approachable and familiar in terms of age and experience than their peers.

A major roadblock to successful participation in online learning in general is the fact that there is not a physical campus where students can engage in discourse and extra-curricular activities. First-generation college students who participate in extracurricular activities and regular peer interactions show greater abilities in critical thinking, degree plan, sense of control of academic success, and a preference for higher-order cognitive activities than other students.[21] Living on campus contributes significantly to learning and intellectual development.[22] Pike and Kuh relate intellectual development to the regular interactions that students have with people who have diverse views, opinions, and lifestyles. They claim that the more diverse the interactions, the more students (especially first-generation) develop intellectually.[23] Recreating the typical college experience is extremely difficult in the online modality. However, the research indicates that creating more opportunities for extra-curricular activities and student interactions would enhance intellectual development and diversity.[24] In relation to philosophy, creating philosophy clubs or forums for discussion and debate are ways in which an online department can enhance student participation in philosophy.

Having outlined some ways to enhance and increase student participation in education in general, as well as in philosophy, I now turn to the question of how to make philosophy accessible beyond the university classroom. Unlike fields such as medicine, physics, chemistry, and computer technology, the content of the field of philosophy is all out there in printed pages. No lab required. No tools required. Web-based resources such as Project Gutenburg and ClassicalLibrary.org are opening up the classics to the world. With resources for free, money is no longer required, and this is an exciting possibility for future generations of students all around the world.

The goal of my paper is not merely to explain the limitations to the undergraduate pursuit of philosophy for post-traditional women and minority students. I want to outline how we might change the system such that more people who do not have the traditional opportunity or resources to be students have more access to philosophy. My thesis is that, in order to create more equality in higher education in the humanities in general, we need to create a generational higher education experience for these students. Rather than continually waiting for the next generation to come along, we now have methods for providing the higher education experience to parents and grandparents. That is the role of institutions such as my own. As I mentioned at the beginning of the paper, there needs to be a two-pronged attack. Those working with new generations will take care of the future. Those of us working with adults will take care of the past. Through combined efforts we will open up philosophy to those who have been traditionally excluded from it for hundreds of years. For the above mentioned reasons, philosophy will not be as significantly pursued by older generations. However, including philosophy in the general education sequence and perhaps including some elective possibilities in philosophy will provide experiences of philosophy for these adults. Exposure to philosophy is key for this group. In my own experience, adult students relish the opportunity to think creatively about the big questions that philosophy confronts. They also regularly communicate that they are thinking differently and engaging in thinking that has wriggled free from black and white distinctions. Students tell us that they are engaging their children with the content they study. Engaging children can help to build the cultural capital that many of these students did not have in their own childhood experiences.[25]

In analyzing the growing disparity between degrees awarded to females versus male students, Buchmann and DiPrete present two influential sociological theories that attempt to explain why more women receive degrees than men do.[26] According to the gender-egalitarian theory, parents who have college degrees tend to have more egalitarian views and strive to ensure that their sons and daughters have equal educational experiences. The

gender-role socialization perspective claims that young boys model their behavior and beliefs around the father figure and that young girls model theirs around the mother figure. Because women have been receiving college degrees at a higher rate, more single mothers are likely to have degrees and the young girls then model their lives around their mothers. According to this theory, the lack of a father disadvantages sons in these cases and leads to less motivation to pursue college, leading to declining male enrollments.

If we transpose these ideas to the realm of philosophy in particular, we have a great way to think about what happens when adult students participate in philosophy. Of all fields, philosophy is on the cutting edge of diversity awareness and the questioning of commonly held gender roles. Quality philosophy curricula not only create more egalitarian values in many male students, they also have the added effect of empowering adult females. Many of our online students hold conservative political and gender identity beliefs. Teaching all students to question societal beliefs and to try to find reasons based on evidence to support their beliefs empowers women by providing a space in which they have freedom to question religious traditions and social beliefs that have told them that they should submit to men or are only suited for certain activities.

If we move to the gender-role socialization perspective, we can say that students who participate in philosophy will engage in those forms of thinking in the home. As was mentioned above, students regularly tell us that they are talking to their children about philosophy while they take their courses. When parents engage in philosophical reasoning with their children, the children will be introduced to thinking that does not often take place in most typical grade schools and high schools. Not only does practicing philosophical thinking with family and friends enhance student understanding, this practice could also influence the ways that these children think and reason. Because elementary and high schools do an abysmal job of engaging most public school students in philosophical content, this might be another inroad into philosophical education for children. This could also contribute to the generational learning that I am examining in this paper. When parents have gone through a life with less education and then experienced one with more, they are more likely to push their children into higher education. Education contributes dramatically to economic and intellectual liberation.[27] Generational educational success leads to more options for future generations. However, if this is the case, then what does this say about how philosophers have structured philosophy? It seems that we need a revaluation of philosophy itself if we are to allow for more equality.

Why are we not creating free philosophy for the world? Why doesn't a group of philosophers blow up the system itself? If I really care about equality, diversity, and education for all, then why don't I work toward the instantiation of that possibility in my field? All it takes is a group of philosophers committed to providing these opportunities to students for free. Why couldn't a group of philosophers donate some of their time to creating a free philosophy degree for anyone who wants to take it? They could create classes that had every component of an on-ground course (lecture, group work, close analytical reading, media, film, analysis of arguments, etc.). They could then disseminate this information through the Internet. Some might be thinking, "Well that's what MOOCs are doing." Yes and no. The problem with MOOCs is that they don't function very well in terms of course completion and retention. In addition, they have serious limitations in fields that require qualitative research and human feedback in relation to student assessment activities. I think most of us would shrink in horror thinking about teaching a philosophy course using scantrons, and this is precisely the problem with MOOCs; that and they have between a 2–10 percent completion rate.[28]

What I am talking about here is not a MOOC. It is a free program (a FOOC—Free Open Online Curriculum). In a FOOC, students would have access to all the materials that they need and this would be provided through some sort of learning platform that could be accessed from anywhere in the world at any time of day. At the same time, there would be real professors teaching the students and providing feedback on the skills necessary to do philosophy as well as the learning assessments that students complete in the course. Faculty and students would meet in the evenings or on weekends or through synchronous chats and videos such as Google Hangouts, Skype, or Adobe Connect. Anyone could participate and the curriculum would be developed in such a way that students who successfully complete one course could move on to the next (this would allow students to take breaks as needed in response to life circumstances and know exactly where they stand in relation to program completion). The curriculum would be scaffolded in a fashion that promotes development of lower-level skills in intro courses and then intermediate and higher-level skills as one moves through the program. By the end of their academic career, students will have studied all the important thinkers and philosophical themes necessary for their "degree." "Departments" could provide different tracks for students depending on their interests or the typical demarcations that already exist in philosophy. So why doesn't this exist?

In order for there to be academic job opportunities for philosophers, philosophy must remain exclusive. It has to hole up behind literal walls so that all people cannot engage it. It must shroud itself in dense and pedantic language to prevent most of those who engage it from understanding it. It creates the conditions for its own existence. Only a few people have the opportunity to study it, and of those few, fewer still have the patience and capacity to understand it. Therefore, it exists for only the select few, and then these few wonder why more people do not participate or show interest in it and why it is hard to establish equality in the field itself.

What happens when we create free philosophy programs for students?[29] Well, the simple answer is that we provide opportunities for those who have been excluded to participate. In its current form, higher education is beginning to provide access to education to students who have traditionally been excluded. The blending of on-ground and online modalities and the liberation of

the classroom from the physical structures on a campus have radically altered the educational landscape. However, traditional higher education (whether it is on-ground or online) will always have a limiting factor: money. Eliminate the need for money for students, and one now has created a more just form of education. At the same time, we need to redefine what it means to be a successful philosopher. Equality in departments in higher education can only occur if there is equality in the percentages of women and minorities who are participating in the education at the lower levels. Philosophers need to redefine philosophy to make it more pertinent. They need to focus on developing dynamic curricula, pedagogy, and andragogy. They need to consider that being a high quality philosopher means being a high quality educator. They need to advocate for philosophy in high schools, philosophy in grade schools, philosophy in culture and society.[30]

This would be the ultimate purification of philosophy. Of course it is an idealistic vision and critiques of its idealistic nature naturally follow. However, these critiques fail to note that the whole point of envisioning Elysium is not to make it a reality, but to *attempt* to make it a reality. If we can envision an ideal form of just education, then we can continue the journey towards that ideal form. Of course we will not achieve our goals, but the process of moving towards the goal, the process of even refining our vision of that goal, is what is meaningful and what could contribute to a more just and fair society.

**NOTES**

1. In a 2013 survey of Ashford students, 64 percent of all students who responded identified themselves as female and 72 percent identified themselves as non-European American, with 36.9 percent identifying as African-American and 9.2 percent identifying as Hispanic-American. While we do not maintain demographic data on the percentage of first-generation college students, 66.6 percent of students claimed that their fathers had a high school diploma or less education, and 59.1 percent claimed that their mothers had a high school diploma or less education.

2. Silvia Gilardi and Chiara Guglielmetti, "University Life of Non-Traditional Students: Engagement and Styles and Impact on Retention," *The Journal of Higher Education* 82 (2011): 45. The authors found in a study of non-traditional Italian students in a non-residential context that 35.3 percent of students with permanent jobs dropped out in their first year of college, while 49 percent of employed students with part-time jobs dropped out. This compared to a dropout rate of 15.7 percent for traditional students.

3. Carol Kasworm, "Adult Student Identity in an Intergenerational Community College Classroom," *Adult Education Quarterly* 56 (2005): 9. Kasworm suggests that personal anxiety about older age can be detrimental to successful engagement and retention.

4. Ernest T Pascarella et al., "First-Generation College Students: Additional Evidence on College Experiences and Outcomes," *The Journal of Higher Education* 75 (2004): 252. The authors claim here that first-generation college students often lack cultural and social capital that their peers of college-educated parents have. This leads to lack of understanding in relation to the importance of completing a degree, which colleges to attend, and which types of activities will contribute to their successful completion of college.

5. Ibid., 279. Employment seems to have more of a negative effect in the sense of retention and intellectual development on first-generation students as they pursue higher education than on their peers who come from families in which parents have college-level education.

6. Terry T. Ishitani, "Studying Attrition and Degree Completion Behavior among First-Generation College Students in the United States," *The Journal of Higher Education* 77 (2006): 879. The researchers found that students with family incomes of less than $19,999 were 41 percent and 69 percent (in relation to four- and six-year graduation rates) less likely to complete their degree programs than students who came from families with incomes of $50,000 or higher. Students from families with incomes between $20,000 and $34,999 were 41 percent and 43 percent less likely to graduate in the fourth and fifth years than the reference group.

7. Jerry A. Jacobs and Rosalind Berkowitz King, "Age and College Completion: A Life-History Analysis of Women Aged 15–44," *American Sociological Association* 75 (2002): 225. In an analysis of students who are mothers of young children, Jacobs and Berkowitz King found that, while motherhood negatively impacts student of all ages, it has a much more detrimental impact on mothers twenty-five years or younger compared to those who are older than twenty-five.

8. Pascarella et al., "First-Generation College Students," 274.

9. "Employers Target Liberal Arts Majors and College Grads Who Had Internships: Survey." Last modified May 17, 2012. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/05/16/employers-liberal-arts-interns-college-grads-survey_n_1522144.html. "Employers Want Broadly Educated New Hires, Survey Finds." Last modified April 10, 2013, http://chronicle.com/article/Employers-Want-Broadly/138453/.

10. Josipa Roksa and Tania Levey, "What Can You Do with That Degree? College Major and Occupational Status of College Graduates over Time," *Social Forces* 89 (2010): 408. Roksa and Levey examined degrees based on what they referred to as "occupational specificity." Vocational fields as well as those in education and medicine have a high level of occupational specificity, while fields like math and humanities have low levels. They found that students who studied in majors with low occupational specificity tended to lead to greater levels of occupational mobility. While students of majors with high specificity started out at higher pay, those with low specificity had a greater chance of moving up in pay as well while those with high specificity leveled off. They indicated that the skills that students learn in fields with low specificity provide more opportunities to contribute in various fields in an effective manner.

11. I am working from the assumption that students who learn to navigate disparities and actually reach higher levels of employment and intellectual understanding in spite of the prejudices that exist inherently in the systems in which they work will be able to attack the roots of those disparities from inside and move toward a more just system in itself. For example, a minority female who becomes manager at the grocery store where she works due to her enhanced education will be able to change the ethos of the store by combating the unjust hiring practices she has seen take place over her tenure working as a stocking clerk. The key to sabotaging an unjust system is to get the rebels past the gates.

12. Joanna Goode, "Mind the Gap: The Digital Dimension of College Access," *The Journal of Higher Education* 81 (2010): 591. It is important to give all students the ability to pursue a broad, variegated, and holistic educational experience that provides multiple perspectives. Assuming too much about what will interest students of specific backgrounds can be dangerous as one limits student possibilities for intellectual development.

13. In a 2013 survey, 21.3 percent of Ashford students identified as having some form of previous or current military service.

14. For an interesting discussion of the implications of race and gender in online communications and learning, see C. Hanson, S. Flansberg, and M. S. Castano, "Genderspace: Learning Online and the Implications of Gender," in *Politics of Gender and Education*, ed. Suki Ali, Shereen Benjamin, and Melanie L. Mauthner (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003). Hanson, Flansburg, and Castano examine gender expressions in "anonymous" online interactions and the propensity of students and participants to construct gender and ethnic identities in these forums, thereby eliminating anonymity.

15. Lisa Tsui, "Reproducing Social Inequalities through Higher Education: Critical Thinking as Valued Capital," *Journal of Negro Education* 72 (2003): 328–29.

16. Gary R. Pike and George D. Kuh, "First- and Second-Generation College Students: A Comparison on Their Engagement and Intellectual Development," *Journal of Higher Education* (2005): 290–91.

17. At the same time, some male students become even further entrenched into their original belief systems.

18. Gilardi and Guglielmetti, "Impact on Retention," 46.

19. Michael Herndon and Joan Hirt, "Black Students and Their Families: What Leads to Success in College," *The Journal of Black Studies* 34 (2004): 506. The authors found that current Black students and alumni who acted as educational mentors to children greatly impacted the likelihood that children would attend college. Similar activities that extended beyond ethnicity into gender and age categories could be incorporated into both on-campus and online courses for entry-level students.

20. Gilardi and Guglielmetti, "Impact on Retention," 48.

21. Pascarella et al., "First-Generation College Students," 278.

22. Pike and Kuh, "First- and Second-Generation College Students," 289.

23. Pike and Kuh leave out the fact that students get to engage with professors who demonstrate high levels of cognitive function and inspire their students to think more critically and holistically than they had been required to think in K–12 education.

24. Due to space limitations, I am not able to broach difficulties in concrete participation in online classrooms. An excellent article on campus participation by Weaver and Qi on both traditional and non-traditional students indicates that the three most significant contributors to in-class participation are student-faculty interactions outside of the classroom context, deconstructing the view of the professor as the authority of knowledge, and overcoming fears of peer disapproval (591). This holds important implications for online teaching because it is more difficult to have everyday interactions that break through the student-teacher dynamic. It is also more difficult to create assignments in which students can work together outside of class in a manner that deconstructs fear of peer disapproval.

25. Herndon and Hirt, "Black Students," 505. Herndon and Hirt's research indicates that families lay the groundwork for success long before Black students go to college. Blood relatives as well as "fictive kin" (neighbors, church members, friends) who stress the importance of college and also guide young children about the difficulties of navigating a majority culture as a minority member greatly enhance the likelihood of college matriculation and success. It is my opinion that these findings apply not only to Black children, even though that was the sample group of this study.

26. Claudia Buchmann and Thomas A DiPrete, "The Growing Female Advantage in College Completion: The Role of Family Background and Academic Achievement," *American Sociological Review* 71 (2006): 519–20.

27. Min Zhan and Shanta Pandey, "Postsecondary Education and Economic Well-Being of Single Mothers and Single Fathers," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 66 (2004): 671. Zhan and Pandey found that single parents with some college education were four times more likely to live above the poverty line than those with high school degrees, while single parents with four-year college degrees were twelve times more likely to live above the poverty line. That being said, only 17 percent of single fathers and 8 percent of single mothers in the study had college degrees. In addition, education had more of an impact on single fathers than single mothers, and African American single parents (both men and women) had lower labor income than their white counterparts. Zhan and Pandey conclude that these discrepancies are caused by racial and gender discrimination in the American labor market.

28. Steve Kolowich, "Academics to Udacity Founder: Told Ya So, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, November 29, 2013, http://chronicle.com/blogs/wiredcampus/academics-to-udacity-founder-told-ya/48667.

29. These "programs" would be set up to allow all people around the world to participate and gain skills that could enhance their thinking and skills that they would find relevant in their occupations. They would be self-paced and would exist for anyone who did not have the opportunity to go to college to engage in these subjects or was in college but did not have the resources to pay for extra philosophy courses.

30. The FOOC concept does not have to limit itself to post-secondary education. One can envision a series of courses that relate to philosophy for children and philosophy for teenagers. Exposing young children to philosophical literature and thinking can awaken this field for many of them and pique their interest early on. Many kids, the author included, never realize that philosophy exists until they go to college, and by then many of their interests have already been solidified.

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## *Humility and Feminist Philosophy*

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Roughly twenty-five years ago, I published a book titled *Is Women's Philosophy Possible?*[1] Its main argument, something along the line of Genevieve Lloyd's *The Man of Reason*[2] (which appeared a few years earlier), was that philosophy in the west has defined itself at least since Plato in terms identified with masculinity, thus making

women's philosophy (as opposed to feminist philosophy as a critique of traditional philosophy) a problematic undertaking. To this I added a sub-argument that so-called "continental" philosophy, specifically phenomenology and deconstruction, provided a richer ground for women's philosophy than analytic philosophy or Anglo-American philosophy more broadly construed.

Later, that thesis was, if not vindicated, at least supported in the United States by the perception among many women analytic philosophers that "continental" philosophers dominated feminist philosophy, to the point that analytic feminists formed their own professional society. This debate, like the others reflected in that first book, has, of course, long since fallen out of fashion. Yet, if you look at the literature in feminist philosophy since that time, you will find a continuing suspicion that philosophy in the west is so tied to our definitions of masculinity that a genuinely woman-centered philosophy might be an oxymoron.

Last year, my most recent book was released by SUNY Press. In *Ontological Humility*,[3] I argue that a second divide in western philosophy, at least since 1600, is more directly tied to the possibility of woman-centered philosophy than what we used to call the "continental/analytic" divide. This second divide is between philosophers whose work exhibits what I call "ontological humility" (to be defined shortly) and those whose work does not.

This approach judges philosophers not on the basis of their gender or what they explicitly say about women—which often merely echoes the dominant view of their time, place, religion, and social class—but judges them by the extent to which their work embodies the stereotypically masculinist thinking of what Marilyn Frye quite accurately described as "the arrogant eye." Understanding this divide might help us further understand both the effect feminist philosophy has had on philosophy in the last three decades (or the lack thereof) and why philosophy as a profession continues to have so little appeal for many of even our most talented women students.

In this paper I will briefly define ontological humility and place it in the context of Frye's pioneering work, and then provide two examples of how it figures into contemporary feminist thought. After that I will briefly return to the broader concerns, sociological and historical as well as philosophical, evoked by "ontological humility."

## I: ONTOLOGICAL HUMILITY AND THE ARROGANT EYE

The difference between ontological humility and humility as an individual character trait should be immediately apparent when I explain that the basic insight for my thinking in this area came from Martin Heidegger. Although some of the thinkers whose philosophies show great ontological humility were also known for their humility as persons (one thinks of David Hume here), many others were not. Paradoxically and perhaps regrettably, a philosophical stance that acknowledges the limitations of human intellect and will, and the randomness of both our blessings and our burdens, can be the product of the most

arrogant of philosophical minds. (And vice versa, I might add—I argue in the book that Baruch Spinoza, one of the most humble of philosophers as a person, ultimately falls victim to the arrogance of believing in a knowledge that cannot be doubted. He, and arguably Descartes, evidence what might be called "theological humility"—i.e., humility in the face of God—but lack epistemological humility).

This is how SUNY Press defines ontological humility (I wish I'd written this, but at least I wrote the book): "Neither self-effacing modesty nor religious meekness, ontological humility is a moral and philosophical attitude toward transcendence—the unknown and unknowable background of existence—and a recognition and awareness of the contingency and chance that influence the course of our lives." Note that it is an "attitude" toward what transcends us (a psychological state, as it were), but one based on the recognition that this transcendence is not necessarily (in fact, most likely is not at all) comprehensible by human reason (epistemological humility), *and* that our existence, both the bare fact that we exist and that we existence in one way (time, place, etc.) rather than another, is completely dependent on it (hence "ontological").

This concept has its roots in Heidegger's claim in "Letter on Humanism" that "What throws in projection is not man but Being itself, which sends man into the eksistence of Da-sein that is his essence."[4] Heidegger insists on the linguistic connection between the German words *schicken*, to send, *Geschichte*, history, and *Geschick*, destiny or fate, and links both history and destiny to the expression "*es gibt*." He believes that this "it gives" names Being's "giving" of existence to historic *Dasein*. For Heidegger, we are given or sent a history that is also a fate, at both the individual and social levels (although after *Being and Time* he focuses primarily on the latter). The attitude he seems to recommend toward this giving or this gift is something very much like humility in the face of the Being that gives it. (Note that this is not a religious reading of Heidegger—based on his own attacks on what he calls "onto-theology," I am convinced the only thing we know or can know about Being in this sense is that it is transcendent to human experience.) Ontological humility, then, would be humility in the face of the unknowable Whatever is responsible for the fact that we exist, and explains how we exist.

Once I began to look for ontological humility in philosophers other than Heidegger, I found signs of it across a wide spectrum of philosophy and feminist theory, from Aristotle and Hume to Jacques Derrida and recent work in the epistemology of ignorance.[5] Moreover, I began to suspect that some of these philosophers were aware of their ontological humility (i.e., they understood that their philosophical views implied both epistemological humility and what might broadly be called an "existentialist" understanding of the human situation) and recognized it in others. This is what, I would argue, drew Immanuel Kant to Hume, Heidegger to Søren Kierkegaard, Derrida to J. L. Austin. But if some of these philosophers were aware of their own ontological humility, if not under that name, why does it remain unthematized in their work? Why does ontological humility reappear over and over again in the

last four centuries of philosophy, only to vanish and need to be recreated in each new generation?

Frye offers an important clue to this in her classic paper "In and Out of Harm's Way: Arrogance and Love."[6] Her claim is that the ideology underlying contemporary western culture structures and facilitates the exploitation of women (and other oppressed groups), whether that is intentional on the individual level or not. She labels this ideology "the arrogant eye" and identifies the core of this arrogance as the belief that the world, and everything in it, exists to meet the needs of "Man" (in the non-inclusive sense). This "arrogant eye" is diametrically opposed to ontological humility, but it constitutes "normal perceiving among those who control the material media of culture and most other economic resources."[7] Frye further suggests that western philosophy in the modern period lies at the base of this specifically masculinist form of ontological arrogance, so that refuting and restructuring the one demands the refutation and restructuring of the other. (Frye herself does not limit the discussion to the modern period, but in another classic of early feminist philosophy Susan Bordo makes a strong argument that earlier formulations of the relationship between men, on the one hand, and women and nature, on the other, worked in significantly different ways. Bordo's discussion is relevant here because it has important links to Heidegger's account of the uniqueness of the modern age.[8])

What Frye's work adds to Heidegger's can be seen when, in "The Question Concerning Technology," he situates the "danger" of a "precipitous fall" in which humanity itself would be "taken as standing-reserve" (that is, be seen as nothing more than a source of labor/energy) in a possible, but avoidable future.[9] Frye makes it clear that too many people already exist as a "standing reserve" today because, as she explains, the world they live in is structured so that their "pursuit of [their] own survival or health and [their] attempt to be good always require, as a matter of practical fact in the situation, actions that serve [the powerful]."[10]

Both Heidegger and Frye argue that the problem is not just a relatively benign matter of how "man" looks at "his" world and those who share it, something that might be resolved by correcting a minor philosophical error. As Frye says, "The arrogant perceiver falsifies . . . but he also coerces the objects of his perception into satisfying the conditions his perception imposes."[11] Oppressed groups become part of the standing reserve because that is the only role the arrogant eye gives them in the world that it creates. She goes on to say that

If someone believes that the world is made for him to have dominion over and he is made to exploit it, he must believe that he and the world are so made that he *can*, at least in principle, achieve and maintain dominion over everything. But you can't put things to use if you don't know how they work. So he must believe that he can, at least in principle, understand everything.[12]

For Descartes, to take the prime example, a tree cannot usefully be understood as an Aristotelian unfolding of some innate essence because only God can know how that essence will unfold.[13] Humans can gain the knowledge needed to make use of the tree, however, by reducing it to nothing more than what we *can* know about it (i.e., its existence as a resource for providing us with wood, shade, etc.). And, in the subsequent history of European science, not to say western thought as a whole, that is what trees become.

This is why to question the status of women (or other oppressed groups) as understood by "the arrogant eye" in the modern world is to question the underlying assumptions of that world itself. The reverse also holds: to question, as Heidegger does, the underlying arrogance of modernity is, on some level, to question the status of women in the modern world, regardless of whether a particular thinker recognizes that arrogance as specifically gendered in the way Frye describes or not. Even the most sexist of thinkers (a category Heidegger might arguably fall into) cannot evade this implication of his work if he undertakes a thorough-going philosophical critique of the western tradition from a position of ontological humility.

## II: ONTOLOGICAL HUMILITY AND FEMINIST PHILOSOPHY

If the above account is true, it means that, while there might be some feminist philosophy that doesn't exhibit ontological humility, there will also be much that does. Here I'll briefly discuss two examples of recent feminist thought where ontological humility plays a significant, if tacit, role in moving toward constructive solutions to the problems of sexism, racism, and homophobia. These thinkers achieve this by addressing the deep links between these contemporary evils and the "arrogant eye" of philosophers, scientists, and others certain of the Truth of what they know and of their right to act against others based on that Truth.

One of the primary examples of ontological humility in contemporary feminist thought is Patricia Hill Collins's ground-breaking *Black Feminist Thought*. She argues that gender and race oppression must be seen as intersecting dimensions in the lives of Black women, creating a uniquely Black feminist standpoint that cannot be placed in any hierarchical relationship with the knowledge claims of other groups.

For Hill Collins, the key features of Black feminist thought include a clear distinction between knowledge and wisdom and "the use of experience as the cutting edge dividing them," because "knowledge is adequate for the powerful, but wisdom is essential to the survival of the subordinate."[14] Another trait she identifies in Black feminist epistemology is the use of dialogue to validate knowledge claims (an emphasis shared with Socrates and Plato): "For Black women new knowledge claims are . . . usually developed through dialogues with other members of a community." She traces this practice to Afrocentric roots, and distinguishes it from the adversarial debate that is the paradigm in most contemporary philosophical discourse, but she also links the practice to feminist epistemology.[15] At the same time, Hill Collins makes it clear that the connections Black feminist thought maintains with both feminism and an Afrocentric standpoint can be sources

of tension and conflict. This creates a Black feminist standpoint that is particularly well situated to generate ontological humility: "No one group has a clear angle of vision. No one group possesses the theory or methodology that allows it to discover the absolute 'truth' or, worse yet, proclaim its theories and methodologies as the universal norm evaluating other groups' [lived] experiences."[16]

Hill Collins explores wider issues of Black thought and identity in her more recent book, *Black Sexual Politics*, where she tackles, among other topics, the binary thinking that "divides concepts into two oppositional categories, for example, Black/white, man/woman, heterosexual/ homosexual, saint/sinner, reason/emotion, and normal/ deviant."[17] Heidegger also expresses extreme skepticism about these hierarchical dualisms, which he describes in "The Origin of the Work of Art" as "a conceptual machine that nothing is capable of withstanding."[18] Hill Collins's intersectional understanding of oppression can be seen as a direct attack on these opposition that undermines, cuts across, and exposes the falseness of these bifurcated categories of human existence that the "arrogant eye" creates and organizes others into in order to better know/ control them. She refers to this later book as "a volume of critical social theory," but it might also be seen as a focused, highly effective act of ontological humility.[19]

In *Racism and Sexual Oppression in Anglo-America*, Ladelle McWhorter takes a position not unlike Hill Collins's as she investigates how racism and homophobia developed in tandem as new and powerful tools of domination in the earliest days of the history of the United States.[20] In the narrative she traces, we learn that slavery in the North American colonies was not initially based on race, since English indentured servants worked side by side with slaves imported from Africa. Nor was slavery motivated by "racism"—the main motive was profit.[21] By the nineteenth century, however, the ideology of evolution and race took a unique form in the United States, not only because of slavery, but also because the nation could not be identified with any "living race" on a par with the Briton or the Scandinavian race. In response to this lack of a "racial" basis for nationhood, political and scientific discourse about race in the United States tended to see Anglo-Americans as "the white race."[22] Any deviation from this ideal type, any "abnormality," became a threat not only to "the Race" but to the nation itself.

This led to massive regulation of American life to protect "the Race" through limitations on immigration and marriage, lifelong commitment of the insane, sterilization of poor and nonwhite women, the death penalty, and an extensive reliance on intelligence and psychological testing. These normalizing discourses, McWhorter explains, both created and relied on a governing image of the "normal" American family as under attack by the "deviant" families created in nonwhite communities and by "deviant" sexualities. She joins Michel Foucault (and Hill Collins) in asserting the importance of the "subjugated knowledge" that has been buried and disqualified as knowledge by the dominant discourse, because it generates a genealogy of struggle. She also emphasizes the ontological humility of her own position: "I have not presented a story of the development

of modern racism in these pages that claims to be *the* definitive, final account as over against false accounts already circulating." She claims merely to have made "the question of what racism is, where it comes from, and what it allies itself with too complex and too persistent and too frightening to put down," calling her work, therefore, "an act of philosophy."[23]

## III: ONTOLOGICAL HUMILITY AND THE FUTURE OF PHILOSOPHY

These are only two examples of ontological humility in current feminist thought. As Hill Collins and McWhorter suggest, the standpoint of oppressed groups illuminates the arrogance of the last four hundred years of philosophy in the west because this arrogance underlies and licenses forms of oppression based sexism, racism, homophobia, etc., whether overt or tacit. At the same time, a large part of the argument in my book is that throughout those four hundred years, some philosophers did see the importance of ontological humility in our search for truth and a way to live in peace with each other. Why then, as I asked at the beginning, does it remain unthematized in their work?

One answer to this question may lie in the word "humility." Aristotle considered "undue humility" a vice. We inherit from two millennia of Christianity a concept of humility that is nearer to this servility than to Kantian wonder. Given that, and our culture's long obsession with a model of masculinity rooted in the ancient Greek virtues of honor, pride, and courage, why would any man, outside of the confines of certain forms of religious life, want to flaunt his humility, much less recommend it to others as a virtue? What kind of scorn would a philosopher who preached or promoted humility have been subject to? (One thinks of Kierkegaard here.) A profound link between ontological humility and feminism is that in our culture humility remains powerfully coded as a feminine trait, so to articulate it as a philosophical view is to become in some sense, as Annette Baier said of Hume, "a virtual woman."[24]

At the same time, just as the masculinist arrogance of philosophy as generally understood and taught in the western tradition presents us with one clear reason the proportion of women in the field in the United States remains 25 percent at all levels, from undergraduates to full professors, the fact that ontological humility provides a continuous critical counterpoint to the dominant discourses, not only of philosophy but of the culture at large over the last four hundred years, suggests a way to transform philosophy into an enterprise that would be more open to and accepting of everyone. Ontological humility allows us to see beyond claims of certain knowledge, whether based on religious belief, pure reason, or science; provides a basis for challenging the environmental degradation and other excesses of the technological age; and illuminates structures of domination. More importantly, it suggests how we might reach across boundaries of gender, race, sexuality, ethnicity, social class, age, nationality, and religion to better share our world.

NOTES

1. Nancy J. Holland, *Is Women's Philosophy Possible?* (Savage, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1990).

2. Genevieve Lloyd, *The Man of Reason: "Male" and "Female" in Western Philosophy* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

3. Nancy J. Holland, *Ontological Humility: Lord Voldemort and the Philosophers* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2013).

4. Martin Heidegger, *Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper, 1991), 241.

5. On epistemologies of ignorance, see Nancy J. Holland, "If I Know I Can Be Wrong: The Hidden History of Epistemologies of Ignorance," *Philosophy Today* 54 (2010): 122–27.

6. Marilyn Frye, *The Politics of Reality: Essays in Feminist Theory* (Trumansburg, NY: Crossroads Press, 1983), 52–83.

7. Ibid., 72.

8. Susan Bordo, *The Flight to Objectivity: Essays on Cartesianism and Culture* (Albany, NY: State Univeristy of New York Press, 1987).

9. Heidegger, *Basic Writings*, 332.

10. Frye, *The Politics of Reality*, 70–72.

11. Ibid., 67.

12. Ibid., 71. Emphasis in original.

13. See Meditation Four, "this reason suffices to convince me that the species of cause termed final, finds no useful employment in physical [or natural] things; for it does not appear to me that I can without temerity seek to investigate the [inscrutable] ends of God." (*The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, trans. Elizabeth S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911], I-173). Cf. above comment about theological humility and epistemological "arrogance" in Spinoza and Descartes.

14. Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (New York: Harper, 1990), 207–10.

15. Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, 212.

16. Ibid., 235.

17. Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 349.

18. Heidegger, *Basic Writings*, 153.

19. Hill Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 8.

20. Ladelle McWhorter, *Racism and Sexual Oppression in Anglo-America: A Genealogy* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009).

21. Ibid., 70.

22. Ibid., 202.

23. Ibid., 295–96.

24. Annette Baier, "Hume: The Reflective Women's Epistemologist," *Feminist Interpretations of David Hume*, ed. Anne Jaap Jacobson (University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 2000), 28.

## How to Solve the Diversity Problem

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### I. OVERVIEW

In order to identify approaches philosophy departments can take to address the problem of the underrepresentation of nontraditional social groups in the field, effective measures to assess departmental climate issues need to be developed and implemented; it is reasonable to suspect that a department's success in the recruitment and retention of a diverse student (and faculty) composition would partly constitute such a measure.[1] To this end, it is instructive to get clear on what sorts of philosophical attitudes currently underscore diversity recruitment and retention practices at our home departments. Below are three attitude-types to guide this consideration:

**Skepticism**—This attitude is characterized by a general unwillingness to acknowledge that underrepresentation presents a problem for the integrity of the department, the field, or its body of knowledge. Skepticism can range from a passive to an active denial that the issue constitutes a problem (e.g., the view that the state of philosophy is not compromised by the lack of diversity in its constituency).

**Acceptance**—This attitude is characterized by a general willingness to acknowledge that underrepresentation presents a problem for the integrity of the department, the field, or its body of knowledge, but inadequate or no effort to address the problem. Acceptance can range from a passive to an active acknowledgment that the issue constitutes a problem, though the problem is recognized exclusively from the standpoint of social justice (e.g., the view that it is, politically speaking, *unfair* that women and minorities don't have their interests, concerns, and values adequately represented in the field).

**Affirmation**—This attitude is characterized by a willingness to identify underrepresentation as *prima facie* problem for the integrity of the department, the field, and its body of knowledge, and is accompanied by prioritized effort(s) to address the problem. Affirmation is an active attitude that identifies the issue as problematic, not merely from a social justice standpoint but, significantly, out of concern for the methodological and epistemological integrity of the discipline (e.g., the view that such underrepresentation negatively impacts the quality and content of knowledge produced by the field).

With these attitudes serving as parameters for discussion, I submit that an effective approach to diversifying philosophy could be grounded in a robust account of alternative epistemologies (as the concept has been extensively developed by feminist standpoint theorists) as the material consequence of nontrivial differences in the real world experiences of different social groups (or what Charles Mills terms "differential group experience").[2] In the next section, I present an argument to motivate the practical

import of such a grounding principle in support of the view that the historically longstanding underrepresentation of women and minorities in philosophy is problematic for the field in a manner that justifies the attitude of affirmation as the most appropriate position for philosophers (and philosophy departments) to endorse in response to the diversity problem. If compelling, this argument should lend support to a particular approach to diversifying the field of philosophy, one that empowers women and minority philosophers at the individual level in important ways that current affirmative action efforts—limited as they are—have failed to do, namely, by making explicit the superordination of traditionally undervalued factors of their individual merit in departments' selection and retention efforts. Throughout the discussion, I refer to this recruitment approach interchangeably as the empowerment-based rationale, or the empowerment-based approach, for diversifying philosophy.

## II. GROUNDING PRINCIPLE: ALTERNATIVE EPISTEMOLOGIES

In his book *Blackness Visible: Essays on Philosophy and Race*, Charles Mills argues that differences between the shared experiences of certain social groups best explains asymmetries in the cognitive capabilities characteristic of their members' standpoints relative to particular social-historical systems and conceptual-epistemic schemes. Mills borrows the metaphor of an "experiential space" to help illustrate his point:

> A society is not a collection of individuals, but a system of positions. . . . To be a member of a society is to occupy a prestructured social space and to find oneself already related to others in a certain manner. . . . Since (one's) relations with other positions are objectively structured in a determinate manner, so are (one's) social experiences. . . . Since (one's) social experiences are structured, (one's) forms of thought, the categories in terms of which (one) perceives and interprets the social world, are also structured.[3]

Thus, contra Descartes's intuitions about the epistemic capabilities of an asocial knower—that is, an individual presumed capable of moving freely along all axes of this "experiential space" as he makes determinations as to what constitutes his *a priori* knowledge (i.e., knowledge presumably acquired independent of his experience, that he assumes he may uncontroversially universalize as characteristic of all human experience)—Mills explains that certain resistances linked to one's social characteristics and group memberships epistemologically ground (and empirically constrain) the sorts of experiences one is likely to have, and the organizing concepts one is correspondingly likely to develop.[4] While Mills does grant obvious and nontrivial overlap between the shared experiences of different social groups, he instructively directs readers' attention to the significant domains of experience that lie at the periphery, or "outside" the normal trajectory of hegemonic groups.[5]

So, Mills argues, a robust account of alternative epistemologies helps to explain how subordinate or minority groups' first-person access to certain areas of experience (that exist outside—or at the periphery—of theories and systems mediated by unequal power relations) can facilitate their development of a more cognitively robust picture of the dynamics of these theories and systems. This is due in part to the fact that subordinate groups are more likely to have had the experience of being educated in hegemonic terms about the functional, highly visible aspects of systems and theories, while simultaneously experiencing the dysfunctional, less visible (or invisible) aspects of their operation. Relevantly, Mills develops the metaphor of "experiential space" in a manner that renders visible historical barriers to the effective dissemination of knowledge from subordinate groups' marginalized standpoints throughout the rest of the social system:

> If it doesn't strain the metaphor too much, a rough distinction could probably be made between experiences that are outside the hegemonic framework in the sense of involving an external geography (a muck racking Frederick Engels brings details of British slum conditions to the shocked attention of a middle-class audience) and experiences that are outside because they redraw the map of what was thought to be already explored territory (feminists put forward the claim that most "seductions" have a coercive element that makes them more like rapes). Thus in the latter situation the shock arises not merely from the simply alien but from the alienated familiar, the presentation of the old from a new angle. It is this kind of inversion of perspective that is most characteristic of alternative epistemologies. Given the initial scientific realist assumptions, the contention must be that these alternative sets of experiences are not epistemically indifferent vis-à-vis one another but that hegemonic groups characteristically have experiences that foster illusory perceptions about society's functioning, whereas subordinate groups characteristically have experiences that (at least potentially) give rise to more adequate conceptualizations. It is a question not so much of simple oppression, then, but rather of an oppression so structured that epistemically enlightening experiences result from it.[6]

So, partly inspired by the metaphor of an "experiential space" (as well as the philosophical contributions of feminist standpoint theorists on the ontology of alternative epistemologies in which the preceding argument is rooted), the line of reasoning proposed for orienting colleagues to the diversity problem in philosophy takes the following form:

1. Bodies of knowledge that are disproportionately determined by a social-historically privileged, hegemonic, and homogenous subset of standpoints within an experiential space are predictably more likely to result in biased, incomplete, or inaccurate epistemological claims.

2. Such bodies of knowledge reflect methodologically inadequate practices due to a systematic omission or neglect of nontrivial experiential data sets (i.e., they fail to integrate the marginalized experiences of nontraditional social groups).

3. Philosophy's body of knowledge is of this sort.

4. The remedy to the material consequences (biased, incomplete, or inaccurate epistemological claims) of such systematic methodological inadequacy in philosophy's production of knowledge is recruitment and retention of nontraditional practitioners, and the integration of their experiential insights and expertise into the knowledge produced by philosophy.

5. Therefore, the appropriate attitude for philosophers to adopt toward the diversity problem is that of affirmation.

## III. THE EMPOWERMENT-BASED APPROACH

An empowerment-based approach to recruitment and retention of diverse practitioners of philosophy is one that informs prospective philosophers about social and historical factors that are relevant to their current position of power (in terms of their social characteristics and group memberships) *in relation to* relevant social systems, institutions, or conceptual-epistemic schemes (e.g., a body of knowledge like philosophy)—in a way that helps render visible their unique value and status in that relationship. As an example, if a prospective graduate student applicant is asked to consider the argument in section II above as a reason to give special consideration to joining a university's philosophy department, then that effort should count as the use of an empowerment-based rationale in a diversity recruitment initiative on behalf of the department.[7] To help highlight the unique benefits of an empowerment-based rationale in diversifying the field of philosophy, it is instructive to consider the shortcomings of two more mainstream arguments used in affirmative action advocacy: the integration rationale and the diversity rationale.

The "integration rationale" runs as follows: nontraditional and minority perspectives have (historically) been unjustly and systematically excluded from higher education and scholarship due to past discriminatory social norms, laws, and practices. Therefore, university admissions staff are justified in giving special consideration to such minority and nontraditional applicants in the admissions process. This is viewed as a necessary step in order to address the material consequences of longstanding, social-historical inequality in treatment. In other words, the integration rationale represents the problem as a matter of fairness and social justice, thereby (at best) merely legitimating the attitude of acceptance. The integration rationale can be seen at work in the University of Michigan's mission statement, wherein the university prioritizes the selection of a racially and ethnically representative class of incoming students in order to achieve their goal of graduating future leaders from their university who are appropriately representative of the state's population demographics.[8]

One shortcoming of the integration rationale is its uncritical orientation to the power-standing of the educational institution in its relation to the individual applicant (e.g., the university presumes the status of privileged delegator of special consideration to the minority applicants at its own discretion). Thus, the integration rationale remains complicit in the problematic assumption that past candidates have historically been (largely or solely) selected by *prima facie* unproblematic selection criteria, and, more to the point, the additional criteria are largely presumed not indicative of individual academic merit (e.g., applicant's race or gender). Thus, these students are negatively structurally positioned to internalize a view of themselves as the "lucky" or "underqualified" benefactors of some socially mandated reparations initiative. As many of us are aware, opponents of affirmative action often argue against the integration rationale by explicit appeal to this sort of supremacist logic. Unfortunately, the integration rationale fails to provide an explicit buttress against hegemonic endorsement of such negative speculation and biased attitudes towards underrepresented students' individual merit. And in particular, it fails to prescribe a critical attitude towards the merit schemes characteristic of (potentially problematic) historically sanctioned ("objective") selection criteria (e.g., standardized exams like the GRE, undergraduate GPA, and prestige of undergraduate institution).

Consider next the similarly popular "diversity rationale." It runs as follows: nontraditional and minority students have (historically) been unjustly and systematically excluded from higher education opportunities and scholarship due to past discriminatory social norms, laws, and practices. As a result, university learning environments have missed out on the benefits of dynamic classroom discussion that are only possible when a genuinely diverse set of perspectives are brought together to learn from (and share access to) a wide variety of individually lived experiences. This line of reasoning can be seen at work in the 1970s Supreme Court ruling on the legality of the University of California at Davis Medical School admissions' program, when Justice Powell endorsed the argument that student body diversity is a compelling state interest that can be used to justify the consideration of a minority status, such as race, in university admissions decisions.[9]

Admittedly, the diversity rationale does a better job than the integration rationale at appropriately locating the value and merit in individual applicants' uniquely socially situated experiential insights and expertise. However, it still fails to identify as *prima facie* problematic the theories of knowledge and selection criteria that have resulted from such longstanding, systematic exclusion of nontrivial experiential data sets (i.e., nontraditional epistemological standpoints). In this respect, it, too, may be regarded as inadvertently complicit in perpetuating the problematic assumption that disciplines like philosophy are constituted by adequate admissions criteria, ideological climates, methodologies, and bodies of knowledge. This, in turn, undermines efforts to holistically determine and adequately calculate the value of such underrepresented factors of individual student merit in the case of these disciplines.

Bearing this last point in mind, consider finally the unique philosophical line of reasoning characteristic of an empowerment-based rationale. It runs as follows: nontraditional and minority perspectives have (historically) been unjustly and systematically excluded from higher education and scholarship due to past discriminatory social norms, laws, and practices. To the extent that such longstanding social and historical inequality in academic participation has persisted within a field, it is reasonable to suspect the field's body of knowledge and systems of knowledge acquisition—as well as the quality of the experiential education practitioners in the field have been exposed to in the classroom—has been proportionately compromised. This is due to the fact that the knowledge produced in these fields has been disproportionately informed by an arbitrarily homogenized, hegemonic subset of experiential data points (i.e., epistemological standpoints). Therefore, academic fields that boast the most longstanding homogeneity in hegemonic member participation would need to address the epistemological and methodological inadequacy of their field via proactive recruitment and retention of traditionally underrepresented social groups. Using this approach, university admissions staff may judge that, for example, a comparably younger academic field like computer science can assign a slightly lesser value to recruitment of nontraditional standpoints than a field as old as philosophy can afford to assign (especially given the fact that it continues—even at present—to operate with one of the least diverse set of professional practitioners in the humanities). An empowerment-based rationale requires explicit notification to women, minority, and other nontraditional applicants that it is *they* that are being asked to give special consideration to a methodologically problematic field such as philosophy. Empowerment-based recruitment and retention policies affirm the value of these individuals' experiential insights and expertise as a means to address philosophy's epistemological shortcomings. To extend Mills's metaphor, increasing the proportion of practitioners that operate from nontraditional standpoints equips the philosophical community with the ability to identify (and begin to rectify) historically longstanding experiential "blind spots" that have invariably undermined the structural integrity of its epistemological claims.

The empowerment-based rationale makes appropriately explicit *who* is giving special consideration to *whom* in the selection process. When a nontraditional or minority applicant gives special consideration to the diversity problem in philosophy, that individual does so with an informed appreciation for the sort of experiential background from which the field's body of knowledge, methodological tools, and epistemological claims have drawn their legitimacy. So, as an example, when the issues or why-questions that have long driven a subfield within philosophy are stressed to have an importance above and beyond their historical role—say, for example, the viability of the distinction between *a priori /a posteriori* epistemic claims, or the viability of standard uses of the analytic/ synthetic distinction—yet strikes these students as less fruitful, uninteresting, misguided, or methodologically problematic, they have *philosophically motivated reasons* to make explicit their cognitive dissonance—and to be

critically engaged with their position (as opposed to questioning themselves, or being questioned by others, as to why or how it is they don't share the "correct" sorts of "intuitions" about an idea's relevance).

And, more crucially to my mind, if or when we, as members of these underrepresented social groups, experience the field of philosophy as alien or unwelcoming, we are empowered by this feminist and critical-race theorists' inspired recruitment approach to consider additional explanations for the social and historical events that may be contributing to our cognitive dissonance. When an idea of ours—or an idea from some literary source that has inspired us—gets labeled as "philosophically uninteresting," "unphilosophical," "obscure," "radical," "counterintuitive," "implausible," "misguided," "trivial," "irrelevant," or "irrational," we may choose to treat these buzz words problematically, as signals to engage in a thoughtful, critical meditation on possible causal roots grounding these dismissals (e.g., as potentially having stemmed from experiential blind spots predictably endemic of a field with such a skewed demographic constituency). Finally, if or when nontraditional students perceive signals that we "just don't get" philosophy, we may—instead of exclusively attending to internal doubt about whether or not something is wrong with us—decide instead to investigate the legitimate possibility that there is something wrong with the discourse we are engaged in.

## IV. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Below are three reasons I submit in support of the view that this empowerment-based approach would be uniquely well suited to the tasks of tackling the diversity problem and improving the cultural climate for philosophers from underrepresented social groups working in this profession:

1. The empowerment-based approach explicitly affirms the value of knowledge production originating from marginalized subfields in contemporary philosophy (e.g., critical race theory and feminist philosophy). Thus, the use of this distinctive recruitment approach affirms the philosophical contributions of professionals working in these often marginalized subfields.

2. The empowerment-based approach explicitly prioritizes the affirmation of traditionally undervalued factors of individual student merit out of mezzo and macro level epistemological and methodological concern for the field itself (versus mere appeal to social justice concerns on behalf of the individual applicant). This may provide a critical psychological buttress for individuals from underrepresented social groups who choose to voice and develop nontraditional philosophical views in less hospitable professional climates.

The empowerment-based approach represents a philosophically significant public education contribution on the part of philosophers towards the mainstream understanding of affirmative action advocacy, as well as potentially setting a precedent for the establishment of criteria by which to more critically assess the legitimacy of traditionally sanctioned power bases (e.g., bodies of knowledge, systems of

knowledge production, and educational/professional selection/hiring practices) at various political levels of society at large.

Additionally, here are my initial responses to three specific concerns raised in response to the empowerment-based approach as it has been elaborated thus far:[10]

1. What if a member of an underrepresented social group disagrees with some aspect of the approach (e.g., standpoint epistemology), or feels alienated by (or fundamentally disagrees with) *any* affirmative-action like recruitment initiative?

One can readily imagine better and worse ways to attempt to recruit prospective philosophers with reference to the empowerment-based rationale. And this is an important point to stress, especially early on. These discussions should be had—with empowerment-based strategies carefully worked out and reflected upon—prior to their implementation. Here I can only speak anecdotally (as a recruitment representative for my home department) and say that I believe our department has experienced success with this approach. Moreover, I see it as a virtue of this approach that it can be pitched as a particular *philosophical* view. Just as members of the dominant group can choose to agree or disagree with any of the three attitude-types, members of subordinate groups should be equally entitled to the same range of philosophical views on the matter. Regardless, the empowerment-based approach encourages philosophers of all stripes to explicitly discuss (and defend) what have long been taken for granted (i.e., implicit and undefended), problematic, methodological assumptions of the field.

2. Recent studies suggest that a significant drop off in women and minority participation in philosophy happens at the undergraduate level, but it is not clear that this proposal adequately attends to that data.

First, there is no reason to restrict employment of the empowerment-based rationale *exclusively* to graduate student recruitment or faculty hiring. I have had several minority and female undergraduate students come to my office to discuss majoring or minoring in philosophy, and who have been greeted by my warm enthusiasm over the dual facts that (1) our department would be lucky to have such intelligent and gifted young people engaging us in philosophical discourse, and (2) that we would especially benefit from the likelihood that many of their ideas may be sufficiently novel, and their thinking sufficiently creative, to help us better understand our own positions and the debate (especially given the currently skewed demographic composition of the field). Moreover, I do not need to wait on data to tell me what seems to me the very obvious fact that young people are much more likely to imagine themselves successfully engaged in whatever professional capacity when they see others who look and sound and think like them already successfully doing so. So, if the empowerment-based approach helps a department become more successful in recruiting and retaining female and minority faculty in tenure posts (as well as retaining a more diverse constituency of graduate teaching assistants),

then we are creating a more representative range of professional models that undergraduates may identify with and feel inspired by.

3. If a department already has a reputation of providing a less than hospitable climate towards issues such as the diversity problem (a department of skeptics!), who or what army is going to make them feel any pressure to prioritize diversity recruitment and retention?

Here, again, it's too soon for me to speak any way other than anecdotally. From experience, I can say this: it feels shitty to lose the only female counterpart in your cohort your first year into graduate school, to be informed of the joke (cracked by a senior faculty member, no less) that the acronym for the philosophy organization you preside over really stands for the Society for Women *Against* Philosophy (I'm current president of the Society for Women's Advancement in Philosophy), to have a fellow graduate student joke that everyone knows feminist philosophy isn't "real philosophy" and that everyone knows *you* don't like "real" or "hard" philosophy (and to be reminded that it's *a joke* when your face relays the frustration, insecurity, and embarrassment you are trying so hard to hide), to look out at the front rows of your department's colloquium events and witness the male porcelain people-scape that currently dominates your department's faculty composition, to be reassured by more than one of your colleagues that you do have a good shot of getting into your dream school (only to be informed of the depressing source of their intuitive revelation: "Mary, you're a female *and* a minority").

Despite the dozen (often unintended) daily cuts, I have managed to make a happy, professional home for myself, and have worked closely to build power bases with those faculty and peers that I know support me and my concern over diversity and department climate issues, to become a chief recruitment representative for the department, to found its first Minorities and Philosophy Chapter, and to work relentlessly to promote a more genuine culture of inclusiveness for future recruits. My point? Whether you are one measly graduate student (or the chair of your department, or a divisional president of the APA, or the first philosopher to learn how to blog well enough to start ranking departments), you don't need to enlist an army to significantly impact the direction of the field. You can effectively begin to employ the empowerment-based rationale in your own daily effort to address the diversity problem in the field, in the thoughtful and intentional one-on-one discussions you *choose* to engage in with your students and colleagues.

To conclude, I submit this empowerment-based approach to allies in the philosophy community as a potentially promising strategy to employ (in conjunction with other, similarly motivated efforts) in order to solve the diversity problem. For it, unlike the integration rationale or the diversity rationale, explicitly prioritizes the effort to improve philosophy's methodological and epistemological standing via the affirmation of the value of the experiential insights and expertise of philosophy's women, minority, and nontraditional practitioners, while simultaneously working to undermine the taken for granted legitimacy of

traditional, *prima facie* problematic, power bases in the profession.

**NOTES**

1. Treating the establishment of such a measure as a priority is consistent with Sally Haslanger's recommendations for data collection in order to hold institutions accountable for efforts taken to integrate underrepresented social groups into the profession. See Sally Haslanger, "Changing the Ideology and Culture of Philosophy: Not By Reason (Alone)," *Hypatia* 23, no. 2 (2008): 210–23.

2. Charles W. Mills, *Blackness Visible: Essays on Philosophy and Race* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1998).

3. Ibid., 27.

4. Ibid., 28.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Again, I regard this sort of effort as consistent with a number of Haslanger's recommendations concerning the disruption of traditional power bases and the forging of new ones (e.g., do not ignore or re-describe women and minorities in philosophy, but make them visible, make the schemas for gender, race, class, and philosophy explicit and defuse them, establish contexts where women philosophers and philosophers of race are valued, and establish contexts where feminist philosophy and philosophy of race are valued).

8. Robert Fullinwider, "Affirmative Action," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2013 Edition). http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/affirmative-action/.

9. Ibid.

10. I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for drawing my attention to these concerns with the empowerment-based approach as it stands in its current form.

# Best Practices for Fostering Diversity in Tenure-Track Searches

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Our department at the University of Oklahoma has, like many others, become increasingly aware of philosophy's need to recruit and retain members from presently underrepresented demographic groups.[1] We recognize that the discipline lags behind many, even in the STEM disciplines, in the diversity of its demographic profile.[2] Moreover, we share the worry of many that the discipline's lack of diversity may be due in part to factors such as implicit bias and stereotype threat operating at multiple stages in students' and job candidates' trajectory toward professional academic employment. In an effort to render our hiring processes as fair as possible, we recently revised our procedures to address these issues. The basic outline of our process remains the same: A search committee reviews dossiers in order to narrow the search to 10–15 particularly promising candidates for closer scrutiny; this

closer look allows us to select 3–5 top candidates for final consideration.[3] Our new procedures were developed to make this winnowing process both more fair and more effective. In what follows, we outline our amended process in the hope that it may be of use to other departments and, more importantly, may stimulate additional conversation about how to improve the profession.

**CONTEXT AND RATIONALE**

The revision of our search processes is framed by two important principles. First, we take as a given that we all are prey to implicit biases.[4] Our faculty recognize that even where we are well-meaning and committed to egalitarian principles and to fair evaluation of candidates, we nonetheless operate under the influence of biasing schemas that may influence our estimations of a candidate's skills, fitness, or philosophical acumen.[5] In addition to operating with biases common to the population at large—biases that will conform to general schemas regarding, for example, race or disability status—we likely operate under more profession-particular biases. As Sally Haslanger has argued, perceptions about who will be readily recognized as a *philosopher* are prey to a host of historically and culturally embedded schematic associations linking philosophy with the white and male.[6] Perhaps most basically, we are likely to implicitly associate "what a philosopher looks like" with what philosophers in fact currently and overwhelmingly *do* look like—that is, white, heterosexual, non-disabled, and male.

Second, we recognize that the performance of a job candidate within a search is malleable. What we as a hiring department do and the conditions for candidate performance we establish can influence how well a candidate will perform. Implicit bias is relevant here as well: such biases can, for example, inform whether questions directed at a candidate are, either in tone or content, generously charitable or unsympathetically skeptical, and thus consequently steer whether a candidate appears at ease and comfortable or guarded and defensive. More globally, we recognize that stereotype threat is an abiding risk for candidates from underrepresented groups. Stereotype threat, in brief, is a phenomenon in which a person underperforms relative to his or her abilities owing to his or her membership in a group stereotyped as being less agile or able at the task at hand.[7] Insofar as philosophers are schematized as white, heterosexual, non-disabled, and male, those with elements of social identity outside this schema may be subject to stereotype threat that leads to underperformance. This risk will, moreover, be aggravated where stereotypes are rendered especially salient by group demographics. A candidate in "solo status," one who has a social identity distinct from that of her interlocutors, will be more prey to stereotype threat, to performance inhibiting psychological responses induced by her outsider status relative to the group.[8]

In accord with these assumptions regarding implicit bias and stereotype threat, in revising our hiring procedures we aimed to minimize the operation of implicit bias in our evaluation of candidates and to engineer conditions favorable to strong performance for all of our candidates. While we seek, in what follows, to articulate in brief how

the desiderata we adopted feature in the logic of particular procedures and practices, it bears emphasizing that the utility of these procedures and practices considerably depends on a department's enjoying a collective sense of resolve and attention. Faculty need not agree over myriad issues that may bear on a search, but accord regarding general principles and shared adherence to the practices that seek to enact these principles within the search is crucial.

## I. COMPOSING THE JOB ADVERTISEMENT

While most of our recommendations attach to the process of evaluating candidates, the job advertisement itself can be useful in encouraging a diverse pool of applicants. One strategy for this is simply to include in the advertisement a statement that reflects a department's welcoming orientation toward a variety of approaches to philosophy. This may be particularly important for departments in which the current faculty research areas are more homogenous, for such a statement can signal candidates whose work resides outside the prevailing approaches within the department that their applications are nonetheless welcomed. Likewise, where a department may have interests in underrepresented areas of philosophy that are not a formal part of the advertised AOS, signaling these interests in the advertisement can be helpful. One of our worries is that there may be areas of philosophy that are so underrepresented or marginalized within the discipline that candidates with interests in these areas may feel it prudent to conceal or minimize their interests. Consequently, alerting candidates that in addition to the advertised AOS, the department would additionally welcome an AOC or teaching interest in, for example, philosophy of race, feminist philosophy, or Asian philosophies is a way to promote the job and department to candidates who otherwise may not apply or might minimize their presentation of interests in underrepresented areas.

Structuring the job advertisement to send signals to diverse candidates can also importantly send signals to the department itself. In devising the advertisement, the department will necessarily engage in reflection about its desires for the hiring search. Collective affirmation that the department does encourage diverse approaches to, or areas of, philosophy can set the stage for the search, helping to orient faculty toward goals that include diversity. Likewise, once the advertisement is drafted and published, it operates as a formal commitment that can serve to remind faculty of their own collective aims and guide their subsequent reflections on candidates' dossiers. Just as an advertised AOS functions in part to constrain a search by articulating in advance what the department's interest is and should be, so too signals toward diversity interests can open a search by articulating imperatives that favor keeping diversity in view throughout the search.

As a final note, the department may wish to request within the advertisement that candidates submit anonymized versions of their writing samples, with an explanation that the department uses bias-reducing procedures as it conducts its searches. (See section II.F below for further discussion.) This will signal a commitment to fairness, make it possible for committee members to access anonymized samples from the beginning of the evaluation process, and eliminate the work of anonymizing the writing samples of finalists.

## II. REVIEWING CANDIDATES' DOSSIERS

Our department judges the vetting of dossiers to be the principal activity of our searches. The reasons for this include the fact that the dossier contains the most complete body of data about the candidate, reflects the candidate's own judgment about how to present herself, and, compared to other elements in a search at least, is less likely to stimulate evaluations influenced by nebulous social factors that may arise when meeting candidates in person. Consequently, many of our hiring procedures focus on just this element of the search, seeking to reduce the potential for implicit bias to feature in our evaluation of dossiers.

### A. Pacing

Some of our procedures regarding the vetting of dossiers are quite straightforward and simple. Because haste in reading can increase the likelihood of implicit bias (Valian 1998, ch. 14), we take steps to maximize the time available for review of dossiers. In our job posting, we set a sufficiently early deadline for receipt of application materials that the department can reasonably pace its work. Likewise, since our search committee members are responsible for the initial screening of candidates, we adopt an informal policy of protection from other service for search committee members in order to maximize the time they have available for careful review of application documents. Finally, our department has a standing Recruiting and Diversity Committee whose members are available to the search committee throughout the search to assist and advise as needed. The committee assists by performing specific tasks, discussed below, best handled by faculty not directly involved in the search. By handling a number of process questions related to the search, the Recruiting and Diversity Committee guards the time of the search committee. More generally, the Recruiting and Diversity Committee serves as a resource should questions within its ken arise.

### B. Establishing Criteria

A key desideratum in efforts to address implicit bias is developing clear job criteria and applying these to all candidates as uniformly as possible. Where criteria for a job are nebulous, informal, or unclearly weighted, they are more likely to shift as a reader proceeds from application to application.[9] For example, the dossier of a candidate whose social identity intersects positively with a reader's implicit biases may incline the reader to weight the areas of the candidate's strengths more heavily; where negative implicit bias toward a candidate is activated, a reader may unconsciously discount those areas in which the candidate exhibits particular strengths.[10] Having explicit, clearly articulated criteria more effectively prevents irregularity in how candidates' qualifications are evaluated and weighted. Consequently, we develop hiring criteria *before* ever reading candidates' materials and have these criteria on hand as reading of the materials proceeds, using them as a continuous check and reminder to encourage uniform review.

Criteria should, of course, be tailored to individual departmental needs. There are, however, some general criteria that we find useful in most searches. Some are quite basic—for example, evidence that the Ph.D. is completed or near completion, the candidate's expertise satisfies the AOS specified in the job advertisement, and the candidate's AOC areas are relevant or important to the department—but are nonetheless quite important to include, for they guard against steering a search away from what the department, prior to its consideration of individual candidates, established as its goals in hiring. In addition to these, other criteria may include quality of the writing sample, evidence of research strength (e.g., publications, presentations, awards, or testimony in recommendation letters), evidence of teaching experience and competence (e.g., teaching evaluations, sample syllabi, testimony in recommendation letters), and evidence of collegiality (e.g., participation in or organization of reading groups, special events, or projects). Likewise, candidates may be considered in terms of their capacity to contribute to diversity within a department (e.g., through teaching underrepresented subjects or experience in teaching inclusively). While these are samples of the sorts of criteria we have found effective, what is most important is to reflect upon and formalize criteria prior to engaging with candidates' dossiers in order to establish as much uniformity as possible.

There can, it should be noted, be complicating factors in developing and employing criteria in the evaluation of candidates. Most basically, there are many legitimate ways in which individual faculty members may disagree about relevant job criteria or how they ought be weighted in evaluating candidates. Such disagreement need not, however, be a barrier to employing this strategy for minimizing bias. Where no consensus regarding the relevant criteria or their weight exists, each individual reviewing dossiers ought have her own list of criteria and thereby guard the uniformity of her individual evaluations. That is, whether criteria are collectively shared or individual, what matters is that they be a governing constant in engaging with candidates' dossiers.

It is also important to note that it can be useful to retain a critical consciousness regarding the weighting of criteria used for evaluating dossiers. While criteria ought be uniformly applied to candidates, the effect of this should likewise be monitored. Thus, for example, if the application of a pre-established set of criteria has the consequence that the resulting pool of top candidates is utterly lacking in diversity, a re-evaluation of the criteria or the weight assigned to various elements may be in order. Shifting criteria are a worry, but this ought not supplant awareness of the complexities of implicit bias. As discussed below, for example, letters of recommendation can exhibit the implicit bias of their writers, so a set of criteria that heavily privileges letters may incline the search toward replicating such biases. Consequently, a careful eye on the results yielded by employing any particular arrangement of criteria and their relative importance is necessary.

## C. Screening for Potential Bias Triggers
Even with reasonable pacing and clear criteria, we think it important to enact particular methods of engaging with candidates' dossiers. As noted above, dossiers contain elements that can operate as triggers to implicit bias. Even where we do not consciously register that a candidate belongs (or *appears* to belong) to a social group, we may unconsciously register it, and associations we implicitly make between the schemas for the group and qualifications for the job can influence evaluation, both positively and negatively. Self-consciously attending to potential bias triggers within the dossiers—those subtle and unsubtle apparent tells that may indicate information about a candidate's identity—can be a strategy for minimizing the influence of implicit bias. Because maintaining awareness of this is inevitably quite difficult where a reader is simultaneously engaging with a complex body of data about a candidate, we devised a mechanism for alerting readers to just those dossiers that contain potential triggers of bias that might disadvantage the candidate.

Before dossiers were vetted by our search committee, members of our Recruiting and Diversity Committee not on the search committee reviewed each dossier with the specific charge of identifying and flagging any dossier that contained potential negative implicit bias triggers.[11] A list of these dossiers was then made available to the search committee and whole faculty, with the list being used as a mechanism to guard against implicit bias. Faculty reviewing dossiers were encouraged to be especially mindful to guard against haste in reading flagged dossiers and to give them a second reading, both strategies for minimizing implicit bias in evaluation. Because reading dossiers with the aim of identifying potential bias triggers is a complicated business, let us outline how we proceeded in doing so.

In identifying potential negative bias triggers within dossiers, we eschewed drawing any conclusions regarding the social identity of candidates. That is, we recognize that there is a substantial difference between drawing conclusions about candidates' *actual* identity features and registering what may be *perceived as tells* to identity or may *unconsciously be taken* as indicating identity features. Thus, for example, while membership in LGBT organizations cannot and should not ground any conclusions regarding someone's sexual orientation, such membership could plausibly trigger implicit biases regarding sexual orientation in a reader. Since our aim was only to identify dossier elements that might trigger bias, our listing of potential negative bias triggers included any and all triggers we could identify.

In devising a list of potential negative implicit bias triggers, we thought carefully about what metrics to employ and how to construct the list itself. We judged it important not simply to note *that* a dossier contained potential negative bias triggers, but to identify something of the *nature* of these triggers, specifying whether a dossier contained, for example, triggers tracking gender or triggers tracking race. We simply do not know enough about how implicit bias operates to be confident that triggers for one species of bias will operate as triggers for another do, and thus whether guarding against one species of bias will be effective in guarding against any. We thus wished, insofar as possible, to avoid flagging potential bias triggers by appeal to a generic list. Likewise, we realize that some

potential triggers to bias are far more obvious than others. For example, names that appear to betray gender are far easier to spot than a brief line in a cover letter that may appear to indicate disability status. However, a candidate's dossier can, of course, contain both, and we thus worried that simply flagging such a dossier as containing "potential bias triggers" might obscure the latter, with readers readily alerted to avoid bias tracking gender while still unwary about bias tracking disability status. Again, to emphasize, we do not know whether such biases operate similarly, and whether guarding against one would effectively guard against another. In consequence, we devised our list to include some specificity.

Our first and most basic focus was to create a category that would apply for any dossiers containing indications that a candidate may belong to a demographic group underrepresented in philosophy. For this, we used the following metrics:

1. Gender: used for dossiers for candidates with apparently female names and/or for whom recommendation letter writers used the pronoun "she."

2. Racial/Ethnic Identification: used for dossiers containing triggers that may be taken to indicate a candidate belongs to any racial or ethnic group other than non-Hispanic white.

3. LGBT: used for dossiers containing triggers that may be taken to indicate a candidate who is not heterosexual or is transgender.

4. Disability: used for dossiers that contain triggers that may be taken to indicate a candidate who has a disability.

In using all of the above categories, it should be reiterated, we did *not* seek to draw any conclusions about the candidates' identities, recognizing that what may operate as an *apparent* tell, such as a name that appears to indicate race, is an epistemically unreliable basis for any such conclusions. Our sole aim was to identify what plausibly might trigger bias in readers.

In addition to creating categories to capture potential negative bias triggers linked to demographic features, we also judged it important to create a second list that would capture potential negative bias triggers linked to sub-fields within the discipline, sub-fields that might appear in applicants' research areas or in their conference presentation or publication lists. This list was in some measure a concession to regrettable realities in the profession, an acknowledgement that some sub-fields may stimulate implicit bias relating to the sub-field itself or to implicit associations made between sub-fields and the identities of those working within them.[12] For example, low publication rates for articles addressing feminist philosophy or philosophy of race in several top-ranked journals suggest that there may be bias at work in perceptions of these sub-fields, biases that could perniciously attach to any candidate who claims them.[13] Likewise, we were concerned that information about

some sub-fields may be unconsciously taken as a tell about a candidate's identity, the scholar who publishes on disability, for example, implicitly assumed by readers to *be* disabled and thus vulnerable to biases cued to disability status. We thus constructed a second category of potential bias triggers linked to disciplinary areas and flagged any dossier indicating work or research interest in the following areas: philosophy of race, feminist philosophy, queer philosophy, disability theory, Africana philosophies, Latin American philosophies, Native American philosophies, and Asian philosophies.

While our principal purpose in flagging dossiers for potential bias triggers is to try to shield these dossiers from implicit bias, having our faculty attend to them with additional time and care, it bears noting that the process itself is valuable. Considering the myriad issues attached to this effort and engaging in shared discussion about our aims brought to the fore of our hiring efforts a greatly enhanced consciousness about the risks and complexities of bias.

**D. Reading Dossier Elements**
A second way in which we sought to manage our engagement with candidates' dossiers was far less formal but nonetheless important to note. We discussed as a faculty and incorporated into descriptions of our hiring procedures the ways in which implicit bias may influence the *contents* of candidates' dossiers. That is, apart from guarding against our own implicit biases, we recognized the need to be aware of how implicit biases could influence what we would see in the dossiers themselves. For example, empirical studies have shown that letters of recommendation can exhibit significant differences that break down along gender lines, with letters for women applicants tending to be weaker.[14] Where letters for men tend to emphasize more directly job related skills and intellectual acumen, letters for women tend to emphasize more nebulous social and personal characteristics and speak less often or less emphatically to job-related skills. We consequently judged it important that review of letters of recommendation proceed sensitive to this difference.

We also considered risks attached to the "Matthew Effect."[15] In brief, the Matthew Effect—so named for the biblical passage Matthew 13:12, "For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away"—describes the way in which inequities can accumulate over time as differential expectations inform evaluation and outcomes. Our field tends to favor "hotshots" and prestige departments, but research on the Matthew Effect suggests that differential expectations play a role in different outcomes, in high prestige "hotshots" being more easily able to maintain that status and in others finding cracking into "hotshot" status more difficult even when the quality of their work is equivalent to that of the "hotshots." The phenomenon can also of course be informed by implicit biases tracking gender, race, and the whole range of biases rooted in elements of social identity.[16]

The relevance of the Matthew Effect for job searches is in the need to maintain awareness that candidates' past success may have Matthew Effect elements, with early privilege and high expectations setting the stage for continued privilege and elevated evaluative perceptions. Concomitantly, early disprivilege can set the stage for continued disprivilege. We find it important not to bluntly equate the rather nebulous quality of "promise" in early-career philosophers with halo effects of prior privilege and prestige or with accumulations of assets (e.g., prestigious postdoctoral positions or publications co-authored with well-known advisers) that may track with prior privilege and prestige. Candidates who have not yet accumulated such assets, but who are producing excellent work identified through reading of their anonymized writing samples, may have very successful careers if they are afforded appropriate resources and support in their first tenure-track positions.

### E. Forgoing Eastern APA Interviews
Our traditional department practice would have been to interview our top ten or fifteen candidates at the Eastern APA meeting. However, as we revised our search procedures, we decided to include neither in-person nor Skype interviews at this stage. There are notorious difficulties with the quality of information one receives from an interview.[17] APA and Skype interviews are highly artificial and stressful situations in which the pressure is on the candidate to offer snap responses. The ability to perform well in such situations may give little indication of how well the candidate would perform in more job-relevant tasks. In addition, interviewer behavior may create unfair dynamics: Dougherty et al. ("Confirming First Impressions in the Employment Interview: A Field Study of Interviewer Behavior," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 79, no. 5 [1994]: 659–65) found that interviewers tend to behave in ways that confirm their first impressions of a candidate, for instance, by showing more positive regard to candidates whom they favored prior to the interview. It is not difficult to see how this might enhance performance for some while depressing performance for others.

The data most relevant to future job performance are contained in the dossier submitted by the candidate, but impressions left by an interview, in part because they are so vivid, can end up overriding the more reliable information in the decision-making process. We judged that the time and effort we had previously devoted to sending several search committee members to the Eastern APA meeting would be better spent reviewing our longlisted candidates' dossiers and reading additional writing samples we solicited from them, in order to base our decisions on highly job-relevant information.

### F. Anonymizing Writing Samples
Although we recognize that many risks of implicit bias might be reduced by completely anonymizing dossiers, the logistical and time constraints of a search bar readily doing this. However, we do make an effort in this direction, focusing on what we judge an especially important element of the dossier: the writing samples. Once our search committee has resolved upon a list of 10–15 preferred candidates, we anonymize the writing samples

provided by these candidates and make the anonymized samples available to our entire faculty, encouraging faculty to engage with these versions of the work as preparation for reducing this initial list of candidates to a shorter list. Reviewing anonymized work is a well-established practice in the profession, enhancing the reader's ability to engage material more directly on its merits. We thus simply adapted this practice to secure its benefits for our job candidates. As mentioned above, a department may wish to request anonymized writing samples in the job advertisement: this will enable the search committee to assess anonymized work from the start, and may be especially effective for a small department that cannot delegate the work of selecting finalists to a search committee that is much smaller than its full faculty cohort.

Obviously, anonymizing writing samples is far from a perfect solution to problems of bias in assessment. Authors may disclose elements of their social identity within their texts, readers may make assumptions about the author's social identity based on the topic of the text, and a text addressing an underrepresented area of philosophy may trigger biases about that area or about the people who tend to work in it. For these procedures to work effectively in reducing bias, it is important for the search to proceed in the context of recognition—and reminders as needed—that biases related to social identity and academic sub-discipline are pervasive in philosophy, and tend to serve as profound barriers to entry for members of underrepresented groups. Evaluators must be vigilant in questioning negative or lukewarm reactions they have to writing samples that may be triggering unconscious bias, and in reminding themselves of the value of the cognitive diversity that comes from the inclusion of scholars with diverse interests, knowledge bases, philosophical methods, and social identities. It might be beneficial, before assessment of dossiers begins, for the department as a whole to prime awareness of these issues by reading and discussing Sally Haslanger's "Changing the Ideology and Culture of Philosophy: Not By Reason (Alone)" (*Hypatia* 23, no. 2 [2008]: 210–23).

### G. Ranking the Campus Visit List
As a search proceeds to the stage of the campus visits, we consider it important to anticipate the ways in which direct personal contact with candidates can alter much about the process and subsequent deliberations. Campus visits afford opportunities to interact with candidates in ways that unavoidably blend the social and the professional, so implicit biases may naturally come into play as the data available about the candidates radically expands and includes much more than what strictly bears on their capacities for the job. Because quite nebulous social factors can at this stage easily exert an undue influence on evaluation, we seek to establish our own self-imposed obstacles to such influences. We thus request that when our search committee delivers its list of candidates for campus visits, it present this as a ranked list. Where the search committee cannot agree on a ranking, we ask that each individual member of the committee have his or her own ranked list and indeed encourage all faculty involved in the search to do this. The purpose of ranking candidates prior to their arrival on campus is simply so that we, as

a department, will be aware if the campus visits effect a change in our ranking. There may, of course, be good reasons for re-ordering the candidate rankings after the visits, but the initial ranking, based solely on the dossiers, provides an important stimulus for the department to query just what in the visits has prompted any revised evaluation of the candidates and thus better guard against inadvertently giving way to any biasing elements produced by the visits. Put simply, where minds are changed by the campus visits, we want to both recognize *that* they have changed and stimulate ourselves to query carefully *why*.

## III. CAMPUS VISITS

As a search moves into the campus visit stage, our aims and concerns necessarily expand. Where implicit bias is the risk we seek to avoid in our handling of candidate materials, the visits entail the need for continued attention to this coupled with close attention to the performance conditions we establish for our candidates. With respect to the former, striving to achieve uniformity across multiple candidate visits is our principal strategy. Making each candidate's experience as like another's as possible can, like the application of uniform criteria, better guard against implicit bias featuring in the necessarily comparative judgments and evaluations we must make. With respect to the latter, our goal is most basically to provide an environment that does not disadvantage any candidate. While uniformity in the visit arrangements can go some distance toward this goal, we also must proceed sensitive to differences in situation, the ways in which, for example, the demographics of our majority male and white department will refract differently through the experience of different candidates depending upon their own identity features. The procedures outlined in this section are efforts to regulate for both of these elements, guarding our evaluations of candidates and engineering the best performance conditions for them we can.

### A. Inviting Candidates for Campus Visits

We recognize that candidates may have needs that can affect the success, or even viability, of elements of the campus visit. For example, a candidate with mobility issues may wish an alternative to a walking tour of campus or a pregnant candidate may need additional and more frequent breaks than we typically provide. Consequently, we follow our invitations for the visits with an inquiry regarding any such needs. This inquiry, it should be noted, is made by faculty on our Recruiting and Diversity Committee who identify themselves as such and who are not on the search committee. Our reasoning is that candidates will feel more at ease about announcing their needs, and less concerned about detrimental effects on the assessment of their performance, if given the signal that the department is committed to diversity and invited to communicate with faculty less solely focused on the vetting process.

### B. Giving Candidates Information

A standard element of the campus visit is a meeting with our departmental governance committee that serves, in part, to inform the candidate about relevant departmental policies, such as tenure expectations. We recognize that there may be policies of interest to our candidates that they may nonetheless be wary of raising. In particular,

inquiring about policies regarding family leave and related tenure clock adjustment possibilities may elicit concern in a candidate about betraying personal information or a life plan he or she would prefer to remain private for fear of its exercising a negative influence on our evaluation. We wish to avoid placing candidates in such a position and consequently ensure that such information is conveyed as part of a regular checklist of items to address. Moreover, we convey that this information is routinely supplied to all candidates, to guard against, for example, women candidates receiving the impression that we are notifying them *in particular* about parental leave and thus placing them at greater risk of experiencing stereotype threat.

### C. On-Campus Interviews

One element of our campus visit is an interview session with the candidate that traverses issues regarding research, teaching and pedagogy, and general features of our department. We consider having a standard format for these interviews important for maintaining uniform evaluation of candidates.[18] Consequently, our interviews follow a scripted list of questions devised in advance to capture what we judge to be the most important and relevant issues to address. Because each candidate within the search is responding to the same set of questions, we avoid the peril of some candidates receiving more "favorable" or "unfavorable" queries and have a more reliable way to compare candidate answers. The search committee conducting the interview is likewise responsible to maintain a uniform format for all interview sessions— for example, settling in advance upon whether follow-up queries will be allowed,[19] who among the faculty present will ask questions, and in what order discussion will proceed.

In addition to ensuring uniformity in this fashion, we also undertake steps to provide the best environment possible for candidate performance. First, because quick facility in answering questions can be unreliable as a criterion in evaluating candidates and, at any rate, the campus visit provides no shortage of opportunities for the candidate to demonstrate "thinking on one's feet," our interviews do not operate on this model. Instead, all candidates are provided with the list of the questions in advance of their visit, with each candidate given the questions on a schedule ensuring that all have an identical lead time to consider them. Second, we try to ensure that the audience for the interview reflects the diversity of the department, because this is valuable in its own right, because it helps make our department more attractive to candidates who value diversity, and because it can aid in containing the risks of stereotype threat for some candidates. To the extent that the demographic composition of our department allows, we strive to ensure that no candidate is interviewing under "solo status." Thus, for example, if a search committee has no women faculty as members, women faculty attend the interviews and participate by asking some of the questions. Finally, we include in all interviews at least one query regarding the candidate's approach to diverse classroom populations, as well as recruiting and retaining students from underrepresented demographic groups. This, we hope, signals to all our candidates the priority with which we treat diversity issues. It also provides us with

valuable information about the candidate's perspective on an important professional issue that may not be addressed in the dossier.

### D. Job Talk

Our job talk arrangements largely mimic those we make for colloquia. In our department the job talk is the most high stakes element of the campus visit, however, so we manage it more closely. We assign a member of the search committee to chair the session and moderate the question and answer period. The chair is charged with ensuring that discussion maintains a constructive tone and moves at a reasonable pace, and that questions are asked by a diverse array of people, women as well as men and graduate students as well as faculty. In this, we seek to avoid rather obvious risks, such as prolonged follow-up queries that risk bogging down discussion.

### E. Meals

Much of the campus visit unavoidably blends professional and social aspects. Hosting candidates for meals requires special care precisely because the informality of meals can reduce vigilance in attention to important professional constraints in hiring processes. For members of the department, such events are a regular, enjoyable social feature of our hosting various guests, but for candidates, meals will almost inevitably be far more stressful, as they are, in an important sense, performing as candidates and potential colleagues. For our meals with candidates, we limit the number of people attending to six. Our reasons for this are multiple. Given our present department demographics, larger parties will almost inevitably overwhelmingly tilt towards a heavily male population. So, too, we recognize that the potential to overwhelm a tired candidate is great, and where the numbers are large the candidate will have difficulty even in remembering the names and status of all present. Implicit bias can be cued by elements as subtle as voice timbre, and in large gatherings a more commanding voice may be necessary to be heard while a softer voice operates as a deficit. We also restrict attendance at these events to those formally affiliated with the department to avoid generating any confusion in candidates about just who is evaluating them. Most importantly, when we solicit participants for these meals, we rehearse the norms governing interaction at such events, reminding participants that questions about the personal relationships and family lives of our candidates are strictly *verboten*. While our faculty are well aware of these constraints, students may not be and so this helps to avoid any inadvertently inappropriate queries.

### IV. FINAL VETTING

Once a search moves past the campus visits and we enter into final deliberations, we seek to minimize implicit bias and, in particular, to control any "noise" produced by the in-person contact of the campus visits. Most basically, we seek to frame the campus visits as data in supplement to the more fundamental presentation of the candidate in his or her dossier. Consequently, we encourage search committee members and all faculty to revisit and review the candidates' dossiers and the criteria adopted for evaluating them. We likewise recall our initial ranking of the candidates, devised prior to the visits, and query carefully any reasons offered for re-ordering this ranking. Two additional features of our final vetting of candidates are worth particular mention.

### A. Soliciting Additional Information

Our graduate students and, to a lesser extent, undergraduates are often involved in various aspects of our searches, attending open events such as the job talk, hosting meals (including a meal during which the candidate meets only with graduate students), and escorting candidates. We believe that feedback from students following a campus visit should be actively sought with the understanding that their interactions with a candidate can sometimes have a very different flavor than the candidate's interactions with faculty. One of our goals in hiring is to recruit faculty who not only will work well with our students but will actively contribute to maintaining a healthy departmental climate for students. Consequently, any apparent red flags signaled in student feedback about candidates should be closely considered, though here, too, effort must be made to separate the social from the more substantive, especially since students reporting on their experience may lack the professional background to readily identify what is most salient and within their ken for comment. In soliciting such feedback, our goal is simply to assess the likely effectiveness of a candidate in working with our students and assisting in department efforts to recruit and retain a diverse student population.

### B. Structuring Deliberations

Discussion of candidates following the prolonged process of a search may be prey to a number of hazards, not least of which is faculty exhaustion with the process, a reality that can readily slacken attention to guarding deliberations from bias. We thus include in our hiring procedures basic reminders regarding what we ought count most salient and what we ought omit in our discussions of the candidates. Thus, for example, we have concluded that the more social and informal aspects of the campus visits, such as conversations conducted over meals, ought not exercise any substantial influence in our deliberations. So many variables are in play in these parts of the visit that care should be taken to avoid comparatively evaluating candidates based on them. For example, who attended a meal with a candidate can greatly influence whether the dinner conversation was philosophically lively or not, so we strive to police our discussions in order not to allow such elements to weigh in evaluations. More pointedly, we recognize that the candidate who seems to "fit in" best may do so simply because he or she fits the dominant demographic profile of the existing faculty, and so we eschew any discussions that would frame candidates in this fashion or register faculty's subjective comfort with or enjoyment of a candidate. In short, we seek in our deliberations about the candidates to hew as closely and self-consciously as possible to discussions of the candidates' work, as represented in the dossier and, to a lesser extent, the formal, professional elements of campus visits. Moreover, we seek at this late stage of the process simply to revive our own awareness that this should be our focus.

## V. CONCLUSION

Many of the processes we have adopted in our hiring searches are, we think, plain good sense, but rehearsing "plain good sense" explicitly among a faculty has its own value. However organized, searches can nonetheless quite easily become a mix and muddle as faculty juggle their teaching, research, and service obligations while also conducting this important work. Losing sight of our plain good sense is always a risk, and the concerted, collective effort to maintain it can help avoid slips that will corrupt the integrity and fairness of a search. Likewise, many of our processes delve into minutiae of interactions with candidates. This, too, has value, for where avoiding implicit bias and engineering equitable conditions for candidates are concerned, we are convinced that minutiae matter. Small inequities in how candidates are evaluated and received can have significant consequences in the trajectory of a search. Attending carefully to the smaller things can aid in combating this.

Our department has now employed these processes in two hiring searches and used an earlier prototype of them in a third. From these experiences, we can attest to matters that may be of interest to departments interested in adapting them. First, to the extent that faculty may be concerned that such elaborate and explicit procedures introduce an odiously additional time- and energy-consuming element to a process that already drains faculty time and energy, this has not been our experience. Developing these processes was time-intensive, but with that work complete, in using these procedures, our searches have achieved a useful efficiency. Many questions that might arise about how to arrange various elements of a search are formally settled for us and so there is an economical automaticity in how we proceed. Where our processes do commit more faculty time to our searches than was heretofore the case—e.g., in constructing a list of dossiers containing potential bias triggers—the investment of additional time has been, in our judgment, worth it.

Second, we realize that having rather strictly formalized hiring procedures may be out of step with the informality that prevails in many philosophy departments. Such formality was, at least in our department, a departure from our past practices. However, we came to the conclusion that formality can often be the friend of fairness. Because implicit bias operates below conscious awareness, and because the sometimes casual atmosphere of the profession can casually exclude some, combating these perils is not best served by stubborn insistence on what we find most familiar, natural, or comfortable. Uniformity is crucially important to equitable evaluation of candidates, and uniformity requires formality, an explicit commitment to doing things a particular way so that potentially biased deviations are avoided. Whatever sacrifice of comforts derived from more relaxed processes we have made, we judge them trumped by the enhancements in fairness achieved in our searches.

Finally, while we have not formally sought feedback from our candidates about the processes employed in our searches, what feedback we have received has been overwhelmingly positive. Candidates have attested to

finding reassurance in the care with which we manage our interactions with them. Our processes, we think, have served to make the often inhumane experience of job-seeking a bit less so. While we do not address this aspect here, we consider our hiring procedures to be an important recruiting strategy, for they serve to notify candidates that we take their interests and concerns seriously, that we want to optimize their chances to perform well, that our evaluation of them is undertaken conscientiously and carefully, and that we are committed to addressing diversity problems in the larger profession.

### NOTES

1. E.g., women represent 20.7 percent of faculty in philosophy in the United States and only 16.6 percent of full-time faculty (Norlock, "Women in the Profession," 2011 update). Even worse, as of 2011 there were fewer than thirty black women employed full-time in philosophy departments (Gines, "Being a Black Woman Philosopher").

2. See, e.g., the comparative chart developed by Kieran Healy that shows the percentage of Ph.D.s awarded to women in a variety of academic disciplines: http://www.kieranhealy.org/blog/archives/2011/02/04/gender-divides-in-philosophy-and-other-disciplines/.

3. In the past, the search committee has selected 10–15 job candidates for personal interviews at the Eastern APA meeting and the department has selected 3–5 for on-campus interviews. As we note below, revising our processes has entailed a change in these practices.

4. This is part of the emerging picture of human cognition being advanced by the behavioral sciences. On the old picture, people act to advance all of their values given their whole view of their situations. While the newer account allows that people can sometimes act in this cognitively inclusive way (especially when they are proceeding slowly and deliberately), most of the time they act quickly, automatically, and myopically (see, e.g., Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*). Implicit bias results from this latter sort of thinking. Part of the story about how fast, unconscious processing works is that people act on proper subsets of their mental states—they "see" particular situations in terms of some of their interests, doxastic states, etc. (see, e.g., Schick, *Understanding Action*; Bazerman and Tenbrunsel, *Blind Spots*). Commonly activated value-belief-etc. "packages" serve as schemas that frame and guide interpretation and behavior. Shared schemas, in turn, give rise to social norms (see, e.g., Bicchieri, *The Grammar of Society*). The existence of social norms based on problematic schemas can have a deleterious effect on everyone so long as enough people conform to them (see, e.g., Cudd, *Analyzing Oppression*).

5. Moss-Racusin et al. ("Science Faculty's Subtle Gender Biases Favor Male Students") found that faculty members were biased against female students who applied for a laboratory manager position. Strikingly, female faculty members exhibited this bias just as strongly as did male faculty members. For a useful summary of various studies regarding how implicit bias may specifically influence hiring, see Women in Science and Engineering Leadership Institute, University of Wisconsin–Madison, "Reviewing Applicants: Research on Bias and Assumptions," http://wiseli.engr.wisc.edu/docs/BiasBrochure_2ndEd.pdf. This small brochure is also an immensely useful, quick tool for orienting faculty and administrators to both the myriad issues at play in hiring and basic recommendations for avoiding bias in hiring.

6. Haslanger, "Changing the Ideology and Culture of Philosophy," 3–4.

7. One standard example of this observes the way in which the cultural stereotyping of girls as less able at mathematics can operate to depress their performance: Girls, when merely reminded that they are girls, will underperform on math exercises (Ambady et al., "Stereotype Susceptibility in Children"; see Shih et al., "Stereotype Susceptibility," for a similar effect in women). For more on how stereotype threat operates and the ways in which it may compromise performance, see Steele, *Whistling Vivaldi*. In addition to Steele's research, the web-based

tutorial "Reducing Stereotype Threat" is a very useful resource. See http://www.reducingstereotypethreat.org/.

8. Sekaquaptewa and Thompson, "Solo Status, Stereotype Threat, and Performance Expectancies."

9. Uhlmann and Cohen, "Constructed Criteria Redefining Merit to Justify Discrimination."

10. For example, one study indicated that job applicants with African American-sounding names had to send one and a half times as many resumes to achieve the callback rate enjoyed by applicants with white-sounding names (Bertrand and Mullainathan, *Are Emily and Greg More Employable Than Lakisha and Jamal?*); another found that female applicants for postdoctoral fellowships needed 2.5 as many publications to receive the same productivity score as male applicants (Wold and Wennerås, "Nepotism and Sexism in Peer Review").

11. We flag only *negative* bias triggers. As a practical matter, that is all we can do; if we tried to flag all of the *positive* bias triggers as well, we would, in effect, just be re-listing all of the dossiers. There is a risk of the flags being treated as, in effect, warning signs: unflagged dossiers being read as *normal*; flagged dossiers being read as *deviant* or *problematic*. (Thanks to Jennifer Saul for pointing this out during the Diversity in Philosophy Conference in Dayton, OH, May 29–31, 2013.) Taking that worry seriously, we still think that flagging negative bias triggers is necessary. Triggers will cue negative implicit bias whether we flag them or not; making the triggers explicit allows for amelioration. The effect of counteracting negative schemas on the influence of positive schemas, however, is unclear. Hopefully, the general attention to eliminating bias in decision-making will undermine the usual *this-is-what-a-philosopher-looks-like* associations.

12. In addition to including particular sub-fields on our list of potential bias triggers, our department finds it useful to signal in our job advertisements the department's commitment to inclusivity. This is accomplished by simply adding a line in our ads noting that we are open to diverse approaches to philosophy. Insofar as the discipline may incline toward biases against some sub-fields, we judge it valuable to signal that work or interest in such sub-fields is welcome in our department.

13. Sally Haslanger's review of seven top-tier journals in analytic philosophy found very few publications in feminist philosophy or philosophy of race ("Changing the Ideology and Culture of Philosophy"). Kristie Dotson's (2012) essay "How Is This Paper Philosophy?" is an eloquent treatment of these issues and worries.

14. E.g., Madera et al., "Gender and Letters of Recommendation for Academia"; Schmader et al., "A Linguistic Comparison of Letters of Recommendation for Male and Female Chemistry and Biochemistry Job Applicants"; Trix and Psenka, "Exploring the Color of Glass."

15. Brennan, "Rethinking the Moral Significance of Micro-Inequities," contains a helpful discussion of how Matthew Effect elements may feature in reduced rates of awards and honors accorded women in academia in particular.

16. Both Jennifer Saul and Eric Schwitzgebel note the gendered elements of "seeming smart" in philosophy. See Saul, "Women in Philosophy"; and Schwitzgebel, "On Being Good at Seeming Smart," *The Splintered Mind*, March 25, 2010, http://schwitzsplinters.blogspot.com/2010/03/on-being-good-at-seeming-smart.html.

17. Campion et al., "Structured Interviewing."

18. Many studies have found that highly structured interviews produce information with much greater predictive validity. For discussion, see ibid.; Wiesner and Cronshaw, "A Meta-Analytic Investigation of the Impact of Interview Format and Degree of Structure on the Validity of the Employment Interview."

19. It may be advisable to limit follow-up questions, or even to eliminate them entirely. Follow-up queries are one way in which interviewers may show more positive regard for candidates they antecedently favor. Dougherty et al., "Confirming First Impressions in the Employment Interview." Improvised elements like follow-up questions may undercut the greater predictive validity produced by structured interviewing. See Campion et al., "Structured Interviewing"; Wiesner and Cronshaw, "A Meta-Analytic Investigation of the Impact of Interview Format and Degree of Structure on the Validity of the Employment Interview."

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## An Ambivalent Ally: On Philosophical Argumentation and Diversity

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### 1. A VALID ARGUMENT

A recent article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, "Women Challenge Male Philosophers to Make Room in Unfriendly Field" (January 2013), brings attention (again) to questions about whether and why philosophy is an unfriendly discipline for women. Robin Wilson, the article's author, reports, "part of the problem, women say, is that philosophy is a verbally aggressive field, and some women may be more uncomfortable than men are with the kind of sparring and jousting typical of philosophical debates." Wilson mentions conversations she had with various philosophers, including one with Brian Leiter, whose popular philosophy blog has contributed to discussions about gender equity.[1] Leiter, Wilson reports, "isn't sympathetic to arguments that the content of philosophy courses, and the style in which the discipline is taught, should be changed to make it more attractive to women." Leiter says that he "dislike[s] the suggestion that the field's too combative for delicate women," noting that some women in the discipline have also voiced their concern about this suggestion.

The combative argumentation (hereafter, CA) concern is one that regularly surfaces in discussions about gender disparity in philosophy. However, as Wilson correctly adumbrates, there is something of a tension about whether and how the concern might be articulated and addressed. On the one hand, it is an issue that needs to be carefully examined, since many philosophers continue to give voice to it in discussions about diversity. On the other hand, as Leiter points out, it is an issue about which some women have reservations, especially if it suggests that women may not be tough enough for philosophical argumentation—a suggestion that carries an uncomfortable reminder of philosophy's long, sexist history of devaluing women's capacities in reasoning and philosophical debate.

In this article I propose a resolution of the tension. I will direct attention especially to the way in which the CA concern is framed and articulated, particularly as it relates to gender. To focus discussion, I examine a valid (deductive) argument that, to my mind, motivates some reservations about advancing CA as a gender equity concern:

$P_1$: If CA (in philosophy) is a gender equity concern, then women are not tough enough for philosophical argumentation.

$P_2$: It is not the case that women are not tough enough for philosophical argumentation.

C: It is not the case that CA (in philosophy) is a gender equity concern.

The conclusion of this valid (*modus tollens*) argument does not seem to bode well for efforts to advance critical reassessments of CA as a diversity issue, particularly in relation to gender. Yet the conclusion is compelling only if we do not have serious doubts about the premises. Such doubts are in order, I maintain, particularly in relation to $P_1$. My primary goal in this paper is to uncover some implicit—yet questionable—understandings and assumptions about gender, about gender difference, and about connections between combativeness or toughness and (good) philosophizing that seem to make the conditional statement in $P_1$ (or variants thereof—women are "too delicate," for instance) a reasonable one for many philosophers to accept.

Let us first be clear about some central terms and claims in this discussion. I take the term "argumentation" in this context to refer to common practices of interaction among philosophers. These practices include presenting arguments to others (verbally or in written form), responding to the arguments of others, modifying arguments in light of others' responses, presenting modified arguments, and so on. The terms "combative" or "adversarial" as applied to argumentation can mean various things. There are levels of adversariality, Trudy Govier argues, and there are many reasons to impugn what she calls "ancillary adversariality" ("lack of respect, rudeness, . . . animosity, hostility, failure to listen and attend carefully . . . quarrelsomeness, and so forth") that is sometimes evident in philosophical debates.[2] Such displays of combative argumentation may well turn away those who are put off by them, and that is a genuine concern if we wish to promote philosophical debate as a model of open, inclusive discussion. But in any case, Govier argues, such displays are also not in accord with the *epistemic* norms of respectful exchange of ideas and evidence that good argumentation aims to promote. Concerns about CA and diversity extend beyond the ancillary adversarial *tone* of philosophical argumentation, however. Some also pertain to the form or content of philosophical exchanges, particularly those that convey the idea that agonistic browbeating disagreement is the only or best form of response to others' arguments. As I argue in more detail elsewhere (Rooney 2012), the "default skeptical stance" that many philosophers regularly adopt can (among other things) be epistemically problematic, particularly when it is likely to discourage or misrepresent

the views of those who belong to minority subgroups within the discipline—not least when they seek to examine "new" topics of particular significance for their subgroup (topics in philosophy of race or feminist philosophy, for example). My intent there clearly is to examine CA as an diversity issue that is not limited to gender disparity.

As I suggest with the valid argument above and elucidate further below, the gender concern with CA has its own particular delineations. This, in no small part, is because discussions about the concern often involve terms (combativeness, toughness, delicacy) that are somewhat unclear but, more to the point, they are terms that are already problematically entangled with gender associations and stereotypes. We need to be especially mindful of this as we sort out which types of combativeness (gender-inflected or not) are more or less likely to contribute to the epistemic goals of constructive philosophical engagement. I want to stress at the outset that I do not question the generally accepted view that a certain level of "combativeness" (as spirited disagreement, for instance) contributes to good philosophical debate. However, I do think that we need to be especially mindful about the links or associations we draw between combativeness and (good) philosophical debate, since these associations may implicitly endorse norms of masculinity that have their roots in particular historical and cultural understandings and constructions of "masculinity." Such attentiveness is surely called for when we realize that those associations were probably informed by the long-held assumption that only men can do philosophy.

Finally, we need to be clear about what the "gender concern" is. It typically involves the claim that women (on average) are likely to be less comfortable, less willing to engage, or less effective with the combative forms of argumentation regularly on display in philosophy discussions than men (on average) are. The statistical generalization here does *not* entail the assertion that all women are uncomfortable with CA or that no men are—contra some comments on blog discussions that regularly misrepresent the issue. Nor is the concern, as so articulated, inconsistent with the (likely) truth that women and men from particular cultural or geographical backgrounds (U.S. Midwesterners, for instance) may be (on average) less comfortable with particular forms of "sparring and jousting" than women and men from other backgrounds are—New Yorkers, for instance.[3] The *gender concern* is the concern that this discrepancy in engagement with combative argumentation is likely to be *a* factor—among others—in discouraging more women than men from philosophy.[4]

My primary interest here is in examining how the statistical generalization about women being less comfortable or engaged with CA is regularly interpreted and understood. In particular, I want to unpack three steps or moves that are involved in arriving at the consequent in $P_1$ (or variants thereof), that is, from the suggestion (in the antecedent) that CA in philosophy is a gender equity concern to the suggestion that women are less able (not tough enough, too delicate) for philosophical debate. First, the "gender concern" is usually parsed as a claim about "gender difference." Such an assertion of difference in not

unreasonable, if it means that women's experiences of CA in philosophy are likely to be somewhat different from men's experiences—keeping in mind the qualifications noted in the previous paragraph. It is the second and third steps that I consider more problematic. Insofar as a difference is admitted, it is assumed that women are the disadvantaged ones (when it comes to philosophy at least), not men. (In some feminist theoretical contexts, this assumption is articulated as the assumption that the "male is norm.") That cannot be assumed in advance of a full examination of the epistemic benefits and liabilities of various forms of CA in philosophy—and that examination has not yet taken place. A third step involves the implicit understanding that "gender difference" is about (average) differences in relatively stable "inner" capacities, traits, or dispositions that individual women and men might exhibit—this understanding is needed in order to be able to make claims about women's natural or inherent deficiencies. Drawing on important feminist work on the concept of *gender*, I will propose a shift away from the understanding of gender implicated in these last two steps and toward a view of *gender as situational*. We can then articulate the "gender concern" somewhat differently. We are encouraged to consider the extent to which gender differences (in experiences in philosophy) may be the result of ongoing gender-inflected practices, situations, and institutional norms—including standard practices and norms of argumentation—that the discipline continues to, at least implicitly, endorse. In effect, we are encouraged to reflect on the ways in which the many "situations" of philosophy may continue to reinforce gender expectations and norms, despite our explicit intent.

## 2. PHILOSOPHY'S CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER

The problematic assumptions noted in steps two and three above have deep roots in the history of Western philosophy. That is, "gender difference" (as differentiated from biological difference) was generally understood to refer to notable differences in traits, abilities, and behaviors attributable to individual women and men. In addition, as any student of our tradition can readily ascertain, gender differences typically played out as *deficiencies* for women, particularly when it came to traits and abilities that were thought suitable for public realms of influence, status, and power—including in philosophy itself. I will briefly address this history, which has already been well documented and examined in important feminist work on the history of philosophy.[5]

Aristotle's understanding of women as (biologically and otherwise) deformed men exerted considerable foundational influence, including well after philosophers of the early modern era held up many of his other ideas to critical scrutiny. Philosophical accounts of gender differences in terms of complementarity, the view that both genders have valuable and complementary traits (with Kant and Rousseau, for example), certainly went some distance toward challenging the "women as different *and deficient*" view. Though initially such a view presents a "different but equal" account of gender, further textual analyses of canonical texts often reveals that the "male difference" is more closely aligned with philosophical ideals of morality, civic engagement, reason, and knowledge—

ideals thought to characterize humans at their best. Many of the accounts of gender difference were grounded in assumptions about women's and men's different "natures," and these natures acquired a kind of metaphysical status way beyond, and sometimes unconnected to, anything having to do with differences in reproductive capacities. Gender difference assumptions were not confined to assertions about (actual) women's inherent differences and deficiencies. They also informed the deployment of gender metaphors in philosophical texts: these tropes regularly presented "woman" or "the feminine" as "the Other," as that which is excluded from or contrasted with the proper realms of reason and order which were thereby metaphorically constructed as "masculine."[6] There were some philosophers—Wollstonecraft and Mill, for instance—who sought to challenge the dominant philosophical construction of gender as difference (in inherent natures and natural capacities) and as deficiency for women. Such philosophers are noteworthy not just because there were so few of them but because their work on gender was largely neglected, that is, until quite recently when women in philosophy recovered these works as important texts in social and political philosophy.

The assessment of gender as gender difference in relatively stable capacities and traits of intellect and behavior did not originate with Western philosophy. Nor was that tradition the only one to circumscribe gender in this way. Religious institutions (sometimes aligned with philosophy) described women's and men's natures and "proper" roles along similar lines—though typically with the added emphasis that "Providence" determined it to be so. Yet Western philosophy has exerted considerable influence in maintaining this understanding of gender. Traditionally at least, philosophy was granted a place of cultural and institutional authority. Philosophers were considered to have (and they considered themselves to have) access to knowledge and wisdom about many things, including knowledge about women's and men's natures, natural capacities, and "proper" roles. When, for instance, Kant asserted that a woman (Marquise Du Châtelet, in particular) who had aspirations to partake in debates about recent developments in mechanics "might as well even have a beard," he was, in part, determining what a "proper" or "normal" woman is and does.

How does all of this relate to the gender concern with CA, in particular, the valid argument above which we philosophers (that is, "we" female or male students, readers, teachers, and writers of philosophy) might be inclined to accept? Most of us (alas, by some reports, not all of us yet) now distance ourselves from a sexist and misogynistic history of philosophical theorizing that is replete with claims about women's inferiority in reasoning and other intellectual pursuits. That is why we are inclined to assent to $P_2$, that is, we resist the suggestion that women may not be tough enough for philosophy, or any other suggestion that women may not be "X enough for philosophy." However, that same history has bequeathed to us a construction of gender that is likely to make us also want to assent to $P_1$, or at least not notice the "automatic" moves that, as noted above, are incorporated into that premise. That is, insofar as gender is assessed as gender difference(s), the "gender concern" with CA is interpreted as being about a gender difference (and deficiency for women) with respect to the traits and capacities that individuals exhibit in engaging in philosophical argumentation.

It may be that at this point in time these moves or steps (in $P_1$) are inevitable. In other words, we may not yet be distanced enough from our authoritative philosophical history to be able to meaningfully discuss gender issues or concerns without at some level invoking philosophical understandings of women as different and deficient. Our assent to $P_2$, however, indicates we have come some distance from that history, in that we challenge claims about women's philosophical deficiencies that were automatically and unquestioningly assumed in that history. But perhaps women's entry into philosophy in greater numbers is still too recent and still too tenuous for us to be able to discuss gender in a way that challenges at a deeper level philosophy's specific construction of gender as difference. This is why the tradition and discipline of philosophy has been and, despite recent advances, continues to be something of an ambivalent ally in the fight for gender justice.

I do think we can move forward, however. We need to reframe our understanding of gender. Important work in feminist theorizing that is informed by empirical research helps us to shift our focus "outward" to the practices, situations, and institutions that can evoke or reinforce gender norms, expectations, and stereotypes. As we will see, attending to these "outside" factors enables us to provide an alternative assessment of the "gender concern," and it also refocuses our attention on the important epistemic goals that philosophical argumentation is intended to serve.

## 3. TOWARD A VIEW OF GENDER AS *SITUATIONAL*
The conception of gender that I have outlined in the previous section is now considered somewhat limited, particularly in light of recent feminist work that helps to shed light on the many and subtle ways in which women's subordinate social, economic, and political status persists, despite well-meaning attempts (in the political and legal arenas, for instance) to counter some of the more apparent manifestations of sexism (political exclusions and unequal pay, for example). Among important shifts in understandings and analyses of gender, we can include those foregrounded by feminist research in psychology and social psychology over the past four decades. Quite representative of this research is Kay Deaux's paper "From Individual Differences to Social Categories," in which she analyses a decade of psychological research on gender. Deaux documents psychologists' growing skepticism about considering sex/gender "as a subject variable," especially given the discovery that "observed sex differences are not durable main effects."[7] She continues, "Main effects of sex are frequently qualified by situational interactions, and the selection of tasks [used to measure sex/gender differences] plays a critical role in eliciting or suppressing differences."[8] She also notes studies that show that when there is a "fit" between gender expectations and performance observers tend to attribute differences to "stable and internal causes," and when there is a discrepancy they tend to attribute those differences to "unstable causes."[9] Deaux concludes her analysis with the caution, "Views of gender as a static

category must give way, or at least be accompanied by, theories that treat sex-related phenomena as a process—a process that is influenced by individual choices, molded by situational pressures, and ultimately understandable only in the context of social interaction."[10] Work by Deaux and others thus promotes an understanding of gender *as situational*. That is, this work shows that progress on gender justice requires an examination of the subtle or not-so-subtle ways in which the ongoing practices and norms—including linguistic norms—of "situations" (understood more broadly or more narrowly) can lessen or exacerbate problematic gender effects including, for example, gender discrepancies in who feels included and who feels excluded.

Empirical studies documenting the workings of *implicit bias* and *stereotype threat* (increasingly familiar terms in discussions about philosophy and gender) fit within this (broadly defined) research framework examining gender as situational. In particular, as is now well documented, "situations" structured by interpersonal interactions (that is, most situations) regularly exhibit the operation of *gender schemas*, that is, unconscious "implicit" beliefs and expectations (held by both women and men) that contribute to different evaluations of women's and men's contributions. Women are regularly disadvantaged by these evaluations, and especially in areas and disciplines that have been considered stereotypically masculine. In addition, women's performance can be negatively impacted by stereotype threat in contexts or disciplines in which women have long been considered to be less competent. Though much of the research documenting these effects in academia has focused on the sciences, there is every reason to think, as Jennifer Saul (2013) argues, that they are operating in philosophy, a discipline that has also had a significant male history.

Competence in philosophical argumentation is considered an important requirement for advancement in the field, and combative forms of it (especially in verbal interactions) are evident in many "situations" in philosophy. Let us examine some of these situations and their likely gender effects, especially in connection with argumentation. I have noted one such situation in section 1 above. This is a situation in which people who belong to a visible minority group in the discipline (a group that is not favored in traditional texts) are attempting to address philosophical topics (about justice and truth, for example) that are of particular significance for their subgroup. A hearing space that is dominated by the default skeptical stance that is evident in many philosophical interactions is likely to be especially discouraging, if not silencing for members of that group.[11] In the next section, I direct attention to four additional situations that I maintain lend themselves to further examination in terms of likely gender effects. They range from a "situation" broadly defined—the historical situation of philosophy—to one quite narrowly circumscribed—a classroom discussion. They do not exhaust the possible situations of philosophy that we might examine, and they also merit further exploration—to uncover connections among them, for instance. I present them as examples that, I hope, give some indication of what is involved in moving forward in discussions about gender and CA in philosophy.

## 4. GENDER, ARGUMENTATION, AND THE MANY "SITUATIONS" OF PHILOSOPHY

Some time ago I was talking with a colleague in linguistics about the relatively high numbers of women in his discipline (certainly compared with philosophy), even though the topics and methods of analysis in his discipline are not unlike those in areas of philosophy (logic and philosophy of language, for instance) that have notably few women. He thought one explanation of the discrepancy was fairly evident. He noted that linguistics is a relatively "new" discipline, and so it does not carry the "historical baggage" that philosophy does in relation to gender. The history of philosophy is certainly a broadly construed "situation" that presents differently for women and men, which is not to say that male philosophers cannot seek to better understand how it might be experienced by women. My first two situations relate to aspects of that history: the first directs attention to philosophy as a theoretical construct with a substantial historical component, and the second focuses attention on some specific historical material practices of academic interaction that are still quite evident in philosophy.

The historical situation of philosophy is certainly problematically gendered in some obvious ways: until relatively recently it was significantly male dominated, and philosophers' views about women were not just sexist but often misogynistic. However, my (albeit short) examination of that history in section 2 above is intended to direct attention to an additional problem. Western philosophy significantly contributed to a way of theorizing gender that still presents difficulties—not least when we seek to clarify concerns about gender equity in the discipline. That history and tradition might even be considered an "institution of gendering," in that it theoretically and discursively reinforced understandings of "gender" in terms of "natural" differences in inherent qualities or traits attributable to individual women and men (something that then facilitated assertions about women's deficiencies), and those understandings exerted influence well beyond philosophy institutes and departments.

We might be inclined to think that this historical situation is a given that we cannot now change. Actually, in a way we can. We can mitigate its lingering gender effects by drawing attention to the problem, by noting that canonical male figures considered "great" had great ideas and insights about many things, but not about women—perhaps they could not given their limited historical horizons. We can also be more proactive about mainstreaming feminist philosophical work that addresses the problem, and not just feminist work on the history of philosophy, which includes the recovery of important contributions by women philosophers. In short, the limitations that our tradition has imposed on our thinking about gender will continue only if many of us (in the discipline) continue to resist making a substantial effort to incorporate feminist philosophical work that helps to uncover and address those limitations. (When blog discussions about increasing the number of writings by women in our class syllabi elicit concerns about limitations on academic freedom I worry about lingering complicity with a problematic history. And *whose* academic freedom

and flourishing are we really concerned with anyway?) With the mainstreaming of feminist work we can expect to develop not just new understandings about gender and gendering but also about reason and argumentation and many other concepts that, as historically theorized, incorporated limiting assumptions linked to implicit, if not explicit, suppositions about which gender best exemplified the concepts in question.

A second situational focus directs our attention to the specific institutions and practices that provided what we might think of as the historical material conditions and situations for philosophy and philosophizing. In particular, we might note that practices of academic argumentation were, at times, refined in institutions that had a particular role in contemporary understandings of and training into practices of "masculinity." In her paper "Agonism in Academic Discourse," Deborah Tannen examines the pervasiveness of agonism (or "ritualized adversativeness") in Western academic settings. She questions the "widespread assumption that critical dialogue is synonymous with negative critique, at the expense of other types of 'critical thinking'…[resulting from] an underlying ideology by which intellectual interchange is conceptualized as a metaphorical battle."[12] Drawing on historical work by Walter Ong, Tannen maintains that agonism has roots in medieval church discourse and practice. Young men were subjected to something akin to a "male puberty rite" in the all-male medieval university where "knowledge was recycled through public oral disputation and evaluated through combative oral testing."[13] Tannen's remarks certainly bear further investigation, but they do provide some insights into the way in which CA (in philosophy and elsewhere) may still endorse practices that have a particular (perhaps even peculiar) gendered cultural history.

A third, standard type of situation in academic contexts involves the presentation and discussion of papers—in seminars, conference sessions, and colloquia. Linguists and other researchers of "discourse analysis" ask, among other things, what these discourse situations involve besides a "disinterested" exchange of ideas and arguments. Tannen makes reference to a specific study of weekly department colloquia that faculty and graduate students were expected to attend. Interviews with the faculty and students initially yielded descriptions of the colloquia as providing a forum for "trading ideas" and "learning things." But the interviews also revealed that the colloquia also had many "unofficial purposes." Tannen continues, "As a faculty member put it, 'One of the purposes it serves is to give different people, ah I think more faculty than graduate students, a chance to kind of show *they're* smart, sometimes by showing that someone else isn't as smart as *they* are.'"[14] Interviews with students revealed their concerns about being judged on their competence based on their participation: as one student commented, "it emerged that to be seen as competent, one had to ask 'tough and challenging questions.'" Tannen does not specify that these colloquia were in a philosophy department, but they might well have been. Discussions after philosophy talks can involve many things, including negotiations of competence and status as indicated by people's abilities with respect to finding the "incisive" critique of the speaker's argument (the

"*fatal* flaw," so to speak). As studies of discourse analysis also reveal, these combative displays are associated with particular requirements of normative masculinity, as exhibited, especially, in male-male interactions where one-upmanship plays a significant role.[15]

If models of philosophical argumentation are implicitly linked to specific historical and contemporary practices of masculinity, then they are surely limited on that account. If women are discouraged in these contexts, it may simply be due to the fact that they have not been trained into the specific practices—or not as much as men have been. But should they be? Is it clear that argumentative practices bound up with culturally specific masculine norms and behaviors are better—as measured, for instance, by their tendency to support the epistemic goals of philosophical argumentation?

To clarify, let us suppose that in debate situations both women and men disagree with their discussants, but women tend to be less aggressive and confrontational than their male colleagues whose behavior tends to conform more to *argument-is-war* or *argument-is-a-sport* metaphors. Such situations are likely to present epistemic liabilities for both genders. If gender norms and expectations discourage women from taking positions and elaborating on them, or confidently voicing their disagreements with the positions of others, then those norms are limiting for women seeking to develop epistemic capacities of reasoning with others. Yet, by the same token, if gender norms and expectations are discouraging men from expressing agreement with others, or are encouraging them to keep fighting to "win" the argument (however trivial the point of disagreement), then those norms also carry specific epistemic liabilities. Listening to attack often displaces listening to understand, and agreement *or* disagreement are more effective, epistemically at least, when based on clear understandings of people's positions. In philosophy colloquia, a comment that begins, "let me see if I understand your main claim properly" does not always signal a move toward greater understanding. It may well be a set up for ambush! Debate situations that elicit particular forms of male-inflected combative argumentation (perhaps because men are in the majority in the situation) may not advance men's reasoning capacities, just as women's gender-specific behavior may not serve the best development of their reasoning abilities. In addition, no one is served when combative or adversarial argumentative environments are likely to exacerbate stereotype threat among those not favored by traditional assumptions about who is best qualified to be a philosopher.[16]

As a fourth "situation" we might direct attention to undergraduate and graduate classrooms and seminar discussions. These situations may well reflect the gender dynamics of debates in the larger culture, making it likely that male students are (on the whole) more comfortable with the combative interjections that philosophy discussions often encourage. We may feel that we do not have much control over who comes to our classes or which gender-inflected norms or practices our students are more or less comfortable with. However, as Harry Brighouse has recently pointed out in a blog discussion about this issue, we can go

along with these dynamics, or we can take positive steps to counter them. He notes,

> We can conduct our classes to reward the loudest voices and the most confident students, who can crowd out others in discussion. We can use all, or mainly, male authors on our syllabuses. We can use sporting metaphors. . . . We can call on men disproportionately to the number of hands that are raised. We can ignore sexist dynamics that arise in the classroom. These are all excellent ways of reducing the numbers of women in our classes, in our majors, and who apply to graduate school![17]

Or, he continues, we can be mindful of these dynamics and seek out specific ways to encourage the quieter students. I know that many philosophers are now attentive to these issues: they try out new discussion formats and they solicit suggestions from colleagues about which strategies *they* have found helpful in generating more inclusive discussions. These are, of course, quite practical steps we can take tomorrow or next week.

## 5. IN CONCLUSION

I have not claimed that CA is the only factor, or even the main factor, that is likely to contribute to making a classroom, a discussion, or any other philosophical situation less friendly for women. I have argued that it is a factor that bears examination in its links with other factors. It needs to be considered in the context of a historical "tradition" that too comfortably embraced sexism in, among other things, assumptions about who is most likely to exhibit the forms of reasoning and argumentation that are suitable for philosophical engagement. But we also have a continuing "tradition" that still resists incorporating important insights from feminist philosophical work that seeks to uncover the limiting effects of that historical tradition.[18] By pressing new feminist understandings of *gender* as significantly determined and reinforced by "outside" factors (cultural stereotypes, institutional norms, situational requirements, implicit gender schemas operating in interpersonal interactions among philosophers) we can hope to continue to advance our understanding of the gender concern with CA. As I hope I have shown, the issue is not simply about diversity and about the continued relevance of our discipline in a world of diversity; it is an issue also about our core commitment to good philosophical discussion and argumentation.

### NOTES

1. *Leiter Reports: A Philosophy Blog*, http://leiterreports.typepad.com/.

2. Govier, *The Philosophy of Argument*, 245.

3. I recall a conversation with a philosopher who thought that this may be the reason why there are proportionally more New Yorkers in philosophy—though I don't know if he had collected data on that.

4. I have rarely seen this presented as the only factor or even the most important factor in explanations of women's underrepresentation in philosophy—though it is sometimes assumed to be so when people express doubt about CA being a diversity concern. I agree with Louise Antony's approach to considering the many factors that may be operating in philosophy. She posits a "perfect storm" model that suggests that "familiar kinds of sex discrimination that are operative throughout society . . . take on particular forms and force as they converge within the academic institution of philosophy" (Antony, "Different Voices or Perfect Storm: Why Are There So Few Women in Philosophy?," 231).

5. The many articles on feminist philosophy in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* provide excellent starting places for study of this work. See, for example, Charlotte Witt's article on "Feminist History of Philosophy," http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-femhist/.

6. I provide references to this important work on the metaphorical role of gender in philosophy texts in Rooney 2010. In that paper I also examine the way in which the metaphorical construction of "masculinity" as "other-than-femininity" influenced philosophical understandings of argumentation—in particular, I examine connections between metaphors of *embattled reason* and *argument-as-war*. The latter metaphor has clear limitations when it comes to understanding and promoting the epistemic benefits of good argumentation.

7. Deaux, "From Individual Differences to Social Categories," 107.

8. Ibid., 108.

9. Ibid., 111.

10. Ibid., 115. I have examined the philosophical significance of work by Deaux and other psychologists in Rooney, "Methodological Issues in the Construction of Gender as a Meaningful Variable in Scientific Studies of Cognition."

11. Rooney, "When Philosophical Argumentation Impedes Social and Political Progress."

12. Tannen, "Agonism in Academic Discourse," 1651–52.

13. Ibid., 1654.

14. Ibid., 1662.

15. Tannen discusses this research more directly in chapter six of her book, *The Argument Culture*.

16. A significant part of Janice Moulton's now classic 1983 paper on the "adversary paradigm" in philosophy was devoted to articulating the epistemic limitations encouraged by the paradigm—irrespective of which gender tends to exhibit it. She also argued that, despite obvious problems with it, the paradigm has persisted because of dubious cultural associations linking aggressiveness with masculinity, and equally dubious associations linking male aggressiveness with competence and success.

17. Harry Brighouse, September 24, 2013 (1:59 p.m.), comment on Brian Leiter, "Gender (or Other) Quotas for Entering Ph.D. Classes: What Do We Really Know about Their Effects?," *Leiter Reports: A Philosophy Blog*, September 23, 2013, http://leiterreports.typepad.com/blog/2013/09/gender-or-other-quotas-for-entering-phd-classes-what-do-we-really-know-about-their-effects.html.

18. Many factors contributing to a "chilly climate" for women are now well documented in the blog, *What Is It Like to Be a Woman in Philosophy*: http://beingawomaninphilosophy.wordpress.com/. Again, it is important to consider these many factors as impacting each other—along the lines of Antony's "perfect storm" model (2012).

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## *Philosophy's Climate Problem: A Primer*

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Women and minority philosophers are all too often expected to do the work of explaining the climate problem in philosophy to their colleagues and their students, to host workshops and training sessions, write materials for teaching practicums, and so on. That this labor is rarely recognized as labor is, of course, part of the problem. What follows is meant to ease some of that burden. It is a pedagogical tool—a short, readymade primer. It aims to explain to allies and potential allies of women and minority philosophers what the climate problem in philosophy is, why it matters, and what, in very broad but concrete terms, one can do about it. In the final section, I address a common response to discussions about the climate problem in philosophy offered by those who believe that no such problem exists.

### ON THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM
What is the "climate" in which we do philosophy, and why does it matter? The climate in which we do philosophy comprises the entire set of situations, interactions, institutional structures, social circumstances, attitudes, evaluations, expressions of belief, expressions of judgment, stereotypes, social and professional hierarchies, privileges and deficits of privilege which shape the way individuals understand themselves *as philosophers* and their standing with respect to others in the discipline. Obviously, such enormous structural problems as the ratio of men to women faculty members in philosophy departments, as well as such gross misconduct as sexual harassment, professors sleeping with students, overt favoritism, and so on, all fall squarely within what I've just described and negatively affect the climate in which we do philosophy. Indeed, such factors are likely the most significant contributors to

philosophy's climate problem. In what follows I will assume that those reading this guide are aware of those issues and aren't engaging in any patent abuse, but are concerned, rather, with how to improve our climate's more subtle features.

To make things more concrete, the following are examples of things which contribute to and shape the climate in which we do philosophy:

- calling on male students more often than female or non-cisgendered students in a graduate or undergraduate seminar

- listening to, thinking about, and responding to one student's "abstract and objective" comments, while brushing off or dismissing as "unphilosophical" another student's comments about his or her experience

- joking in the hallway about how people working on [insert marginalized philosophical question, figure, or sub-discipline here] aren't "really doing philosophy"

- denying that there is a climate problem for women and minority philosophers on account of the fact that you "know women and minority philosophers who don't believe such a problem exists"

- perceiving a man who argues vehemently as smart and philosophically capable, while perceiving a woman who argues vehemently as aggressive and unlikeable

- telling a woman that you "admire her passion, but disagree with her claim," instead of just offering a counterargument

- assuming that just because a philosopher is a woman she ought to specialize in feminist philosophy or work on a purportedly "feminine" issue, such as the philosophy of emotion

- a department with few or no women or minority faculty members

- a conference program with few or no women or minority presenters

- a course syllabus with few or no texts by women or minority philosophers

- the fact that few philosophy departments require that their majors take a course in feminist philosophy

The way all of these things shape how individuals understand themselves as philosophers and their standing with respect to others in the discipline should be fairly obvious, once you think about them. Never being called on in class or being told that your comments are "unphilosophical" tells you that you're in the wrong place, that your thoughts and your voice are less important than those of your colleagues, that you aren't *really* a philosopher.[1] Hearing people cliquishly joke about the problems or figures you work on tells you that your work is *by definition* second-rate, that no matter

how clever or rigorous or deep is your analysis, no matter how clear or edifying is your writing, your work is *worse* than others' work simply on account of its subject matter. Not seeing anyone like you on a conference program or course syllabus tells you, rather straightforwardly, that you don't belong here.

The effects of these sorts of behaviors and practices on individuals in philosophy are well documented. Studies of implicit bias have shown that identical CVs are judged less impressive if headed under a woman's name than a man's (likewise with applications, articles, etc.). Stereotype threat has been demonstrated to cause women and members of minority groups to perform suboptimally in situations where they are underrepresented. If you are interested in concrete and specific stories about how the climate in philosophy impacts women, you can read hundreds on the blog, *What Is It Like to Be a Woman in Philosophy?*

### HOW TO FIX IT
Many will respond to the above by rolling their eyes and throwing their hands in the air. "It would seem that *everything I do* contributes to the climate in philosophy! Should I rigidly police myself then? Count the number of times I call on each student? Never make a joke to a friend, on account that it might negatively affect someone else's philosophical self-conception?" The short answer is "yes." Most of what we do with, to, or around others in the department and the discipline more broadly (including conferences, conversations on Facebook and philosophy blogs, etc.) shapes their experience of philosophy. And while we needn't rigidly police ourselves as a result, there are several things we can do.

First, and most importantly, *pay attention* to how your comments and behaviors affect your students and colleagues. The simple act of attending to how we affect those around us can be a powerful corrective. Look around and see if anyone seems put down by your jokes. Think about why your women students rarely speak up in class, and if it might have anything to do with the way you frame philosophical problems or the way you respond to their comments when they do. Ask yourself if you've ever read a book by a female philosopher (that isn't about a male philosopher). If you haven't, ask yourself whether that might be in part because none was ever assigned to you in a course. Try and remember the last comment made or question raised by a woman or person of color in a graduate seminar. If you draw a blank, consider whether or not you were really listening when they spoke.

Second, work to correct negative habits and behaviors as best you can, without obsessing over everything you say or do. You don't have to count the number of times you call on each student in class (though that too can be a useful strategy)—just *assume* that you aren't calling on women and people of color often enough and strive to call on them more. Try to be less discouraging of others, in general. Your joke about how *ridiculous* it is to take [insert marginalized topic] as an object of philosophical analysis probably isn't very funny. Your friends laugh because they want to look like they get it, but the person in the next room in the middle of a brilliant dissertation on that subject is already

pretty demoralized (because: middle of dissertation) and doesn't need to be kicked while she's already down.

Third, call others out when they behave badly. This doesn't have to mean public admonitions. But when you see your friend or close colleague behaving in some of the ways mentioned above, pull them aside or send them an email and point out what they're doing and some of the harms it can cause.

### ADDENDUM: WHY CLIMATE MATTERS FOR ADVERSARIAL PHILOSOPHY

One of the most common responses to criticisms of the climate in philosophy is that the critics are just trying to obscure the fact that they can't hack it in a discipline which has been adversarial since its inception. Putting aside the fact that in most cases that obviously isn't true, that it's often just coded language meant to signify that the people challenging the status quo are somehow less rational or less capable of rational argumentation than those being challenged, etc., I want to briefly draw attention to the ways in which the climate in philosophy is relevant and important even if we believe that philosophy is by nature an adversarial activity. Or, to put this another way, many philosophers assume that in spite of the climate problems which may exist in the places where we do philosophy, *philosophical activity itself* is immune from them. I want to show why that assumption is mistaken.

When people say that philosophy is by nature adversarial, I think they mean something like this: philosophy is a rational pursuit, which is to say, one aimed at revealing the truth, and the most reliable method for doing so is to produce an argument and then to try as best we can to expose that argument's flaws. By going through this process repeatedly, ad infinitum, our arguments have progressively fewer flaws, and thus they bring us ever closer to the truth. In practice, what all of this looks like is people making arguments and their adversaries making counter-arguments. Socrates and his interlocutors, and so on.

Again, I'm not disputing any of this. Although I think there are other, non-adversarial ways of doing philosophy that are just as truth-yielding, I recognize the value of taking an adversarial approach. What I want to point out is that *the success or failure of doing philosophy in this way—of adversarial philosophy—rests, in part, on it being done in the right climate.*

That is because the success of adversarial philosophy rests not only upon our capacity to make good arguments but equally upon our capacity to *judge* them. Consider the following: Who gets to decide which is the better of two arguments? In some cases, of course, the winner is self-evident. But in many cases it isn't. Absent a reductio, the difference between the forces of two arguments comes down to which is more persuasive to those present. Note: I'm describing an epistemological, not an ontological, phenomenon. I'm not claiming that the truth is whatever the majority agrees to. Rather, I'm claiming that what we believe to be the best argument is what we believe to be the best argument. Yet such beliefs are important. What

we judge to be good and bad arguments, meaningful and meaningless counterarguments, and so on, determines the course of the adversarial process.

This is where the climate in philosophy enters the picture, in two ways. First, in a climate where certain kinds of people aren't taken as seriously as others, where they are listened to and responded to less carefully, it simply isn't possible to decide impartially whether or not their arguments should be persuasive. If a student of color isn't heard, his or her argument won't be persuasive. If a woman is valued first and foremost for her appearance, then it is her appearance rather than her argument which will determine whether or not she is persuasive. If a subject matter, say feminist philosophy or queer theory, is considered "unphilosophical," then arguments presented under its auspices will be deemed unpersuasive from the start.

Second, when the judgments of women and minority philosophers about the arguments made by others aren't taken as seriously as everyone else's, then the arguments under consideration aren't given a fair trial. If a woman challenges an argument and is told that she simply "doesn't get it" or "isn't objective enough," then the mechanism by which the adversarial process is meant to do its work has broken down. When an African American or LGBT philosopher claims that a philosophical position ignores or does violence to his or her experience of the world, and is told in response that such experience is irrelevant, then the truth that position is meant to articulate is not everyone's truth (and thus is no truth at all). In other words, if only half the crowd (or less) gets to point out an argument's flaws, then many flaws are likely to be left uncorrected.

Thus, for adversarial philosophy to work, everyone must be considered *and treated as* an equal participant in the pursuit of truth. It must take place within a climate that grants each person the same standing—both for making arguments and for judging them. Otherwise philosophy is conducted in a white, male echo chamber, and we should have little reason to believe that its products are anything but a white, male image of the truth. Non-marginalized philosophers have only been able to operate under the assumption that climate is irrelevant to adversarial philosophy because our arguments and our counter-arguments have always been fully heard.

### NOTES

1. It's not that there isn't such a thing as an unphilosophical claim. But disciplinary boundary policing is more often than not used to silence people, rather than for the legitimate tidying of academic discourse.

# BOOK REVIEWS

## *Re-visioning Gender in Philosophy of Religion: Reason, Love, and Epistemic Locatedness*

Pamela Sue Anderson (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012). 264 pages. $39.95. ISBN 978-0-7546-0785-4.

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In 1998, Pamela Sue Anderson published the first book-length treatment of feminist philosophy of religion, *A Feminist Philosophy of Religion: The Rationality and Myths of Religious Belief*. In it, Anderson advanced a critical, feminist account of reason and rationality appropriate for the study of religion. Her guiding question—whether it is reasonable to hold a religious belief—was answered not through philosophical proofs or theological apologetics but through a reconfiguration of the concepts of reason, rationality, and objectivity that attended to the embodiment of subjects and the role of power relations in the construction of knowers and of knowledge.

In her latest book, *Re-visioning Gender in Philosophy of Religion: Reason, Love, and Epistemic Locatedness*, Anderson returns to these matters, surveying and assessing the vibrant conversation that she helped to launch fifteen years ago. Anderson marshals the resources of feminist and non-feminist analytic and continental philosophy of religion to craft an argument about the ways that gender operates in the field in the early decades of the twenty-first century. Her central claim is "that the field of philosophy of religion continues to be implicitly and explicitly gendering the moral and religious dimensions of human identities; this includes shaping human emotion, reason, and cognition" (1). Her constructive project advances conceptions of the divine, love, and reason that are better suited to the struggle for justice than the prevailing conceptions are.

As she did in *A Feminist Philosophy of Religion*, Anderson identifies sites where philosophy of religion remains "male-neutral," places where it presumes sex/gender impartiality while nevertheless deploying masculinist assumptions. She looks, for example, at the 1999 exchange between analytic philosopher A. W. Moore and continental philosopher Jacques Derrida on the infinite and the ineffable. Anderson applauds the bridge that Moore and Derrida build between analytic and continental philosophy of religion, and she finds Moore's attempt to specify the role of the ineffable in an epistemology that affirms truth and rationality especially promising. Anderson argues, however, that the Moore-Derrida exchange suffers from its lack of attention to how the infinite and the ineffable function as gendered categories. Opening the conversation to include feminist voices, Anderson shows how the infinite and the ineffable—and human beings' ways of knowing and relating to them—have been imagined and constructed as male or female. Feminist scholarship on mysticism, for example, shows how the specific bodily practices of female mystics in

medieval Europe inculcated particular forms of knowledge and experience of the ineffable. The exclusion of these voices from the Moore-Derrida exchange reinforces the male-neutrality of the field. "No critical reflection on language, understanding, and truth can remain content with traditional answers to the philosophical question of ineffable knowledge. These answers are inadequate insofar as they have failed to acknowledge a necessary tension in our gendered relations to the finite and the infinite, as both corrupting and enabling" (87).

As Anderson exposes (non-feminist) philosophy of religion to feminist voices and critiques, she also remains an engaged participant in the debates within feminist philosophy of religion, particularly over the conceptions of the divine, love, and reason. Anderson commends Sarah Coakley, for example, for her focus on the sexually specific ways that men and women relate to the divine, while arguing that Coakley's insistence that women can be empowered through their submission to the Christian God "leaves the much deeper dangers of theism and its masculinist injustices untouched" (57). Meanwhile, Anderson's sharpest disagreements may be with Luce Irigaray and Grace Jantzen, both of whom highlight the male symbolic power of the Christian God and the ways that men's and women's desires, virtues, and knowledge have been shaped in relation to that God. Both call for a new symbolic order that recognizes male and female difference and conceives the divine in women's image. In their view, women must "become divine." While this approach exposes the role of gender in Christian conceptions of the divine, Anderson argues that it reifies sex and gender difference. More profoundly, it fails to ask whether the desire to "become divine" is "an unequivocally positive goal for either feminist or masculinist theism" (63). Anderson's own answer is that it is not.

Whereas Irigaray and Jantzen find the potential for justice in the desire to become (the feminine) divine, Anderson finds it in the struggle for mutual recognition between embodied subjects. Her emphasis on recognition, moreover, bears on her views of reason and rationality. Anderson turns repeatedly to bell hooks as an exemplar of a woman whose call for recognition is embedded in site-specific practices of truth-telling. Whereas male writers and philosophers are often presumed to be rational, authoritative, and trustworthy, female writers and philosophers struggle to be recognized as such. hooks, for instance, has had to "write to tell the truth, to be heard and to be trusted. For this, she needs to be recognized as a knower who is credible and also trustworthy for those at the centre of epistemic practices and for those at the margins of an epistemic community" (127). hooks is socially and materially marked as a black woman writer. She embraces this locatedness, telling her particular truths in ways that attend to history and power relations. This is a model, Anderson suggests, of how truth-tellers and knowers can be epistemically located, as well as credible and trustworthy.

This model is an alternative to male-neutral conceptions of reason and rationality, particularly those that aspire to attain a "view from nowhere." In her earlier book, Anderson drew extensively on feminist standpoint epistemology,

particularly the work of Sandra Harding, to reconfigure these conceptions. *Re-visioning Gender in Philosophy of Religion*, however, includes no mention of Harding and little explicit discussion of the field of standpoint epistemology. Given the importance of reason and rationality in the new book, one wonders whether Anderson is assuming this background or whether she is trying to avoid some feminist epistemologists' skepticism about the authority of reason. Anderson worries that to reject the authority of reason is to lose one's ability to evaluate beliefs and practices. "The postmodern celebration of plurality implies the loss of any rational authority. This means the loss of any rational authority—or credibility—for judging good or bad beliefs, or inclusive, exclusive, and hurtful practices" (43-44).

On this point, Anderson's sympathy for a (implicitly Hegelian) recognitive model remains in tension with her (explicitly Kantian) notion of the free-standing authority of reason.[1] The Hegelian model, like the feminist epistemologies that draw from it, focuses its attention not on *reason*, understood as a mental faculty governed by universal principles, but on *reasoning*, a variety of socially and historically specific practices. These practices can include judging claims, granting epistemic authority, and holding oneself and others responsible for beliefs and actions—the very sorts of practices that Anderson notes as central to mutual recognition. For Anderson, however, the authority of these practices depends on something independent of them, namely, reason itself. Only reason, Anderson suggests, can give us the critical leverage that we need to evaluate and criticize exclusionary and unjust social structures and power relations.

Anderson rightly notes that practices of reasoning can themselves be the source of domination and injustice (128). But it remains unclear—particularly given her emphasis on epistemic locatedness and the struggle for mutual recognition—what "reason" is on her account, how it transcends this locatedness, and how its authority amounts to something greater than the social authority that is claimed, called for, and recognized in social practices of reasoning. The Hegelian recognitive model would suggest that there are no universal principles to which we all have access; there are only socially and historically situated reasons and practices of reasoning. This model need not lead to skepticism or relativism, as Anderson fears it does. It is not that the truth is relative, but, rather, that the tools available to us as we go about making, evaluating, and challenging truth-claims are, to use Anderson's own word, *located*.

In the final chapter, Anderson turns to debates about religious diversity in philosophy of religion. The philosophical question, Anderson thinks, is how to make sense of religions' competing truth-claims. Answers to this question, she argues, must attend to the epistemic locatedness of those making and evaluating such truth-claims as well as the intersectionality of gender with religion, race, ethnicity, nationality, class, and sexual orientation. She rejects religious universalism for its failure to recognize this locatedness, and she rejects religious exclusivism for its hubristic claim to be in sole possession of the truth. Anderson urges philosophers of religion

to assess religions' truth-claims with a critical eye, with attention to their beliefs and practices, to the ways these are gendered, and to the forms of violence and injustice that they perpetuate. A feminist standpoint must be both critical and constructive: "the struggle both *against* reductively sexist accounts of women's religious practices and *for* inclusive personal-social transformation of reality and its depiction insofar as false beliefs have obscured the truth about our lives as women and men" (222). One may be left wondering, however, how Anderson's account of reason escapes the charges that she levels against exclusivism, save that she prefers its politics.

Analytic and continental, feminist and non-feminist philosophers of religion should all find much to engage with here, in part because Anderson has created a conversation across borders that are not often traversed. Anderson moves among so many sources—commending and criticizing in turn—that it can be challenging to follow the thread of her own constructive proposals. As she does so, moreover, she risks oversimplifying the contributions and challenges of her interlocutors. For example, Anderson applauds recent work by theorists like Saba Mahmood and Amy Hollywood that emphasizes the role of bodily practices in inculcating particular forms of practical reasoning. These theorists bring to light—through analyses of the religious practices of women in the Egyptian piety movement and of medieval mystics, respectively—the ways that virtues, dispositions, even rationality itself are shaped by the socially and historically specific practices in which they are engaged. But Hollywood has argued that her view of bodily practices and practical reason challenges Anderson's conception of reason and rationality, writing that "without attention to bodily, mental, and spiritual practices and rituals, and their powerful shaping of the *habitus*, the transformation of practical reason and of religiosity demanded by feminist philosophers like Anderson and Jantzen will necessarily fall short."[2] Anderson's very brief discussion of Hollywood praises her "courageous and well-informed" work (183), while noting "misunderstanding in a passage in Hollywood" in a footnote (200n74), but it sidesteps the challenge that Hollywood poses to her account of reason. A full response to Hollywood's challenge would go far in clarifying how the pieces of Anderson's project—recognition, the divine, love, truth-telling, and reason—all hang together.

**NOTES**

1. See Pamela Sue Anderson, "Life, Death, and (Inter)subjectivity: Realism and Recognition in Continental Feminism," *International Journal of Philosophy of Religion* 60, nos. 1/3 (2006): 41–59.
2. Amy Hollywood, "Practice, Belief, and Feminist Philosophy of Religion," in *Feminist Philosophy of Religion: Critical Readings*, eds. Pamela Sue Anderson and Beverly Clack (London: Routledge, 2004), 237.

## *Lying, Misleading, and What Is Said: An Exploration in Philosophy of Language and Ethics*

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President Bill Clinton gave a deposition to a U.S. federal grand jury in Paula Jones's 1998 sexual harassment suit against him, *Clinton v. Jones*. When asked during his deposition about his alleged affair with White House intern Monica Lewinsky, President Clinton famously said, "There is no improper relationship" (2). On a common-sense reading of President Clinton's utterance, he did not lie to the grand jury, because his statement was not false. Yet he did mislead the grand jury, because many jurors interpreted his statement to mean, "There is (and has never been) an improper relationship (between Monica Lewinsky and me)." Jennifer Saul argues in *Lying*, *Misleading*, *and What Is Said* that whether this common-sense reading is correct depends upon (a) what lying amounts to, (b) how, if at all, lying is to be distinguished from misleading, and (c) what exactly President Clinton said when he made the aforementioned utterance before the grand jury.

In asking these questions, Saul enters the fray of the existing debate within the philosophy of language about the nature of propositional content through an unusual path, namely, the distinction that many people make in ordinary speech between lying and misleading. Saul breaks new ground, however, by connecting her exploration of this debate in the philosophy of language directly to the debate in moral philosophy about whether lying is worse than misleading from a moral point of view. In bringing the philosophy of language and moral philosophy to bear upon one another, Saul sets her inquiry apart from the large majority of work in each of these subfields of philosophy.

Saul begins her inquiry by developing a definition of lying in chapter one that fits her intuitive judgments about whether a variety of hypothetical examples of speech acts count as lying or something else: "If the speaker is not the victim of linguistic error/malapropism or using metaphor, hyperbole, or irony, then they lie iff (1) they say that P; (2) they believe P to be false; (3) they take themselves to be in a warranting context" (18). By a "warranting context," a notion borrowed from Thomas Carson, Saul means a speech context in which uttering a certain statement will involve promising or guaranteeing that the uttered statement is true (10).[1] Saul excludes expressions of linguistic error, malapropism, metaphor, hyperbole, and irony from her definition of lying because in all such cases, one may say something that one believes to be literally false without lying.

On Saul's account, when a person lies, the content of the proposition P that the person utters plays a crucial role in making the utterance a lie: the liar must say that P and must believe that P is false. For this reason, developing

an account of propositional content, that is, what is said, is crucial to making Saul's definition of lying precise. Saul locates herself squarely within the tradition of philosophy of language initiated by H. P. Grice by insisting that conversational implicature plays a significant role in determining what a speaker says by uttering a certain statement in a certain context (21–23). In chapter two, Saul explores existing accounts of what is said to determine which of them, if any, can be used to distinguish acts of lying from acts of misleading, as we distinguish them in ordinary speech.

The distinction between lying and misleading depends crucially on the ability of a speaker to create some distance between what the speaker literally says and what the speaker effectively communicates to the audience. For this reason, what is said cannot simply be what is communicated to the audience, since the distinction between lying and misleading would vanish in this case. Nor can what is said be completely detached from the context of communication, since it is this context that the speaker uses to suggest that the audience should make unjustified inferences that take the understanding of the audience some distance from what the speaker literally says. Saul maintains that an account of what is said that can help us make sense of the distinction between lying and misleading must navigate between these twin perils and handle correctly especially skillful acts of misleading that nonetheless do not amount to lies (51–54).

Saul spends chapter three developing an account of what is said that is intended to provide an adequate basis for distinguishing between lying and misleading. As with any account of what is said, the question is just which features of the conversational context, if any, play a role in determining the propositional content of the statement that is uttered in the context in question. Saul's account of what is said involves contextual contributions exactly to the extent that such contributions are necessary to make the utterance susceptible to truth-evaluation, and no further (66). This account ensures that what is said can be assigned a definite truth-value, so that the utterance expresses a definite propositional content. Nonetheless, it permits some distance to emerge between the true content of a proposition uttered and the false content of a proposition that an audience may take to be true on the basis of the utterance. It is this distance that the act of misleading, as distinct from lying, requires. Saul argues not that her conception of what is said is universally correct, but that it is the account we need in order to distinguish between lying and misleading (xi).

Saul shifts from the exploration of the nature of the distinction between lying and misleading in the philosophy of language to the exploration of the ethical importance of the distinction in chapter four. She argues that acts of misleading are not always morally better than acts of lying, since lying and misleading can be equally wrong in some cases, if they cause equally serious harms, and equally good in others, if they achieve equally valuable goods or avoid equally serious harms (72–73). Nonetheless, Saul maintains that a person's choice of misleading an audience over lying to an audience, or vice versa, can reveal morally

significant facts about the speaker (86). In some cases, for instance, the choice to mislead rather than to lie can display an admirable respect for the truth. In others, a similar choice can display a disreputable desire to avoid the likely consequences of being caught in a lie while reaping the benefits of causing an audience to believe a falsehood (86–90).

Saul concludes the book by examining the implications of her definition of lying for a variety of examples where the distinction between lying and misleading is morally relevant, including misleading responses to attorneys' questions in courtroom contexts (118–26), misleading statements made out of tact or politeness (127–30), and misleading uses of quotations out of context (131–32). In examining these examples she is concerned to show both that her definition of lying and its accompanying account of what is said can shed light on the examples and that people's choices about whether to lie or mislead their audience can reveal morally significant facts about them.

Some key parts of Saul's arguments are likely to leave skeptical readers unconvinced. For instance, Saul's definition of lying, on which the entire argument of the book depends, lists a number of linguistic errors and figures of speech that count as exceptions to the generalization that a speaker lies whenever the speaker utters a statement that the speaker believes is false in a context where uttering the statement involves promising or guaranteeing the audience that the statement is true (18). Saul offers no argument, however, to show that this list of exceptions to the generalization is complete. Saul concedes as much at the end of chapter one, saying, "I do not take myself to have shown that [this definition] is the only possible definition of 'lying' as contrasted with misleading, but rather to have shown its plausibility and given some reasons for adopting it" (19). Given the wide variety of ways to use words otherwise than to affirm literal truths, however, the reader is left wanting some more general account of the kinds of speech acts that cannot count as lies. If there is a general way to capture the kinds of figures of speech that are exceptions to Saul's definition of lying, it would be helpful to know what that is.

Again, Saul argues in chapter four that we should distinguish morally not between acts of lying and acts of misleading but, rather, between agents who lie and agents who mislead (86). This argument seems to presume a consequentialist moral framework, since Saul's conclusion that misleading is not generally better than lying from a moral viewpoint depends heavily on the claim that, in some cases, misleading an audience can have equally positive or equally negative consequences (72–73). The argument will likely be persuasive only to readers who are also persuaded by John Stuart Mill's argument for the conclusion that motives for action have no bearing whatsoever on the moral evaluation of the action but great bearing on the moral evaluation of the agent who performs the action.[2] Such a radical separation between the moral evaluation of agents and of the agents' actions is likely to persuade only committed consequentialists, especially in the absence of any additional supporting argument for the separation on Saul's part.

These concerns about the details of her argument aside, however, Saul has done philosophy a great service by bringing into conversation two subfields that have long remained isolated from one another, namely, philosophy of language and moral philosophy. Saul rightly acknowledges the work of some feminist philosophers, such as Jennifer Hornsby and Rae Langton, who have shown how the philosophy of language can shed light on debates in moral philosophy concerning, for instance, free speech and pornography (xi). Saul goes a step beyond this, however. She does not argue only that considerations in the philosophy of language, such as a theory of propositional content, can shape practical judgments in ethics, such as the distinction between lying and misleading. Saul also argues that considerations in ethics, such as a view about whether or not misleading is generally morally preferable to lying, can reciprocally shape our theoretical views in the philosophy of language, for instance, by convincing us that an acceptable account of what is said must be able to distinguish lying from misleading. In this way, Saul makes a valuable contribution to moral philosophy and the philosophy of language alike. Feminist philosophers who seek to explore connections between moral philosophy and other subfields of philosophy will find Saul's book interesting for this reason.

**NOTES**

1. Thomas Carson, "The Definition of Lying," *Noûs* 40, no. 2 (2006): 284–306.

2. John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, 2nd ed., ed. G. Sher (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2001), 18.

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## Suspect Citizens: Women, Virtue, and Vice in Backlash Politics

Jocelyn Boryczka (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012). 216 pages. $26.95. ISBN 978-1439908945.

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Jocelyn Boryczka's *Suspect Citizens: Women, Virtue, and Vice in Backlash Politics* is innovative and thought-provoking. In her well-crafted book, Boryczka argues that contemporary concepts of virtue and vice in the United States have been framed in ways that are detrimental to American women's political position. The overall claim of the book is that gendered notions of virtue and vice have been used to construct American women's identities as moral guardians, but at the same time, as "suspect citizens." Boryczka asserts that American women's tenuous membership in the political community "derives from the paradox of their moral responsibility for either democracy's success or its failure despite the lack of formal political power relative to male citizens" (5). Women, who do most of the child rearing, have been long regarded as the moral guardians of the family. The family acts as a "seedbed of virtue from which grows flourishing citizens who acquire a solid moral education and the strong familial roots that allow democracy to thrive"(4). As moral guardians, women are assigned a critical role in shaping democracy in America and, conversely, they are also held to be responsible for

democracy's failure. Yet, they are not granted the same power to actively partake in politics that male citizens enjoy. Moreover, male citizens do not carry the burden of responsibility for the success of democracy, and any failure of democracy is to be bestowed only upon the moral guardians of the nation, who are, ironically, deprived of full political power.

Boryczka claims that gendered notions of virtue and vice play a crucial role in shaping women's identities as moral guardians and suspect citizens. She cautions that the reinforcement of virtues has gained momentum in the United States, especially during the Bush administration, and a "back to virtue" movement is expanding. The "back to virtue" movement not only emphasizes the importance of family values for the nation's future in general, but it also promotes traditional female virtues such as chastity and modesty. The expansion of "abstinence only" programs in public schools is an example of how "back to virtue" politics functions. Moreover, Boryzcka does not think that the more comprehensive sex education supported by the Obama administration is much better, because she believes that this shift "still anchors sex education policy in abstinence" (5). She asserts that comprehensive sex education curricula fail to challenge stereotypical female virtues and vices. Moreover, male sexual vices are not condemned as much as female sexual vices are, and men keep enjoying a privilege of irresponsibility as citizens, whereas women are, once again, trapped in a double bind of moral guardianship, and an "incapacity" to make their own decisions regarding their bodies and relationships. In other words, contemporary debates over sex education do not show much progress from the ideals of "purity and chastity for women and a 'boys will be boys' attitude toward men" (85).

Boryzcka also addresses many contemporary thinkers, from conservatives to communitarians and liberals, who, she contends, have contributed to the reinitiation of a virtue/vice framework since the 1960s. She believes that recent trends in contemporary political theory especially points in the direction of cultivating certain virtues and constructing a democratic ethos. Although they focus on particular democratic virtues such as civility, she is worried that any attempt to construct moral character reinforces a "back to virtue" approach that jeopardizes women's progress in politics and thereby confers on them a suspect status.

Ultimately, however, Boryczka is not able to provide a convincing argument for jettisoning the virtue and vice framework altogether. Each chapter of the book is part of an eye-opening journey through feminist conceptual history, showing how American women have been denied full citizenship, yet, I believe, the wide-range of examples she uses in the book—ranging from Puritan women, to the "Ozzie and Harriet" television show, to contemporary sex education debates, to lesbian feminist sadomasochism—only show that the *traditional female virtues* such as chastity and self-sacrifice are detrimental to American women's position in politics. Moreover, some of Boryzcka's examples could be actually used to show the liberatory power of virtues, as I will argue below.

Boryzcka refers to Tocqueville and Mary Wollstonecraft several times. Both thinkers defended the cultivation of women's reason through education and religion. Although this approach could have rescued women from their status as "sentimental wives," this is not what happened, according to Boryzcka. Instead, it led women only to become better wives and mothers and, at the same time, burdened them with the possibility of failure as "moral guardians of the family." As she points out, Tocqueville admired American women because he believed that the foundation of American democracy is based on their Puritan morality. The ideals of the Puritan society in sixteenth and seventeenth-century England poignantly defined female virtues and vices—virtues including purity, modesty, chastity, humility, piety, female courage, and sacrifice, and vices including independence, sexuality, and disobedience. Tocqueville especially emphasized American female courage in his writings (not to be confused with male courage), which he believes "secretly" provides political stability, as courageous women supported their husbands during difficult times such as war and financial crises. It is clear that he is defending women's cultivation only in order to create more beneficial members of "society" in the private sphere.

In another chapter, Boryzcka refers to the same problem as "Ozzie and Harriet" morality. *Ozzie and Harriet* was a 1950s television show illustrating the life of a traditional, heterosexual, white middle-class family. The separation of the public and private spheres, as well as the roles of men and women, is sharply outlined in the series. Boryzcka revisits Tocqueville to lay out the double burden of moral responsibility for female private and male public life; not able to enjoy many aspects of public life, American women such as Harriet, at the same time, have the responsibility always to support their husbands and even prevent them from engaging in any vice-ridden actions in public. She asserts that contemporary thinkers Alasdair MacIntyre, Amitai Etzioni, and William Galston support the "Ozzie and Harriet" morality and they "share Tocqueville's concern that decaying morality leads to disorder and decline in democracy" (127). As a result, once again, women as the moral guardians of the nation are to be blamed for the failure of democracy.

One could, however, defend the "back to virtue" position and argue for gender neutrality, but Boryzcka argues that this overlooks "how virtue justifies dividing people into dominant and subordinate categories" (130). I suspect that some readers might question this position; a similar dualist logic that Boryzcka refers to is inevitably present in every moral theory when normative categorizations such as good and bad, right and wrong, normal and deviant are used. In other words, the problem is not peculiar to a virtue and vice binary but is present where any moral binary opposites are adopted. It is true that gender neutrality might not be the best approach, given the fact that gendered traits are already present in the world. Yet, Boryzcka needs to develop her argument further to justify her contention that the concepts of virtue and vice are *inherently* problematic. She successfully shows that (female) virtue and vice derived from certain moral traditions, cultural beliefs, and practices in the United States have been used as a tool in dominating

and oppressing women. It does not follow from this that virtue and vice frameworks inevitably lead to oppression of women.

Surprisingly, Boryczka is also critical of Mary Daly's ethical project aimed at liberating virtue and vice from their patriarchal associations and re-evaluating them. According to her, attempts such as Daly's are not successful because "the logic of dualism dictated by oppositional, either/or categories remains in place in the reversal process, which maintains its structural hierarchy and inequality" (61). The core of female and male virtues is not challenged; instead, women simply adopt male virtues or female vices and, as such, resist a "feminine" identity. For example, for Daly, lust, one of the seven deadly sins, is a virtue when she classifies it as "pure." However, Boryzcka thinks that in order to enact this redefinition, Daly disassociates lust from sexual desire, which "pushes women back into a moral universe where sexual purity, chastity, and modesty prevail" (62). In fact, Boryzcka also criticizes contemporary feminist care ethics for the same reason. Although she does not think of care as a virtue, she asserts that a focus on care has the risk of maintaining separate spheres, as well as overly emphasizing mothering, and hence other related traits such as purity and modesty. She points out that many care ethicists, such as Nel Noddings, Sara Ruddick, and Dan Engster, avoid sex and sexuality in their works (157).

Yet, neither her criticism of Daly's work nor feminist care ethics shows that a virtue and vice framework inevitably leads to the oppression of women. Two of the examples she uses in the book, Lowell Mill girls and S&M lesbian feminists, challenge dominant standards of female virtue; yet, this did not result in oppressing women further. The Lowell Mill girls, by working in a textile factory in Lowell, Massachusetts, during the Industrial Revolution in the United States, challenged "True Womanhood" and traditional female virtues. Similarly, S&M lesbian feminists challenge dominant standards of female virtue. Both the Lowell Mill girls and S&M lesbian feminists have been marginalized and widely regarded as vice-ridden by the mainstream society. One could argue that these women display virtues such as fortitude, self-confidence, integrity, self-respect, friendship, and justice as they resist the female virtues imposed on them. In other words, they are able to create a liberatory space by adopting a new set of virtues that are useful in resisting traditional female virtues.

I believe that these examples alone show the possibilities for creating a "liberatory space" to combat the dominant moral paradigm. Boryzcka thinks that in order to resist traditional feminine virtues and vices, these women are aligning with the traditional female vices such as rebellion, greed and selfishness, sexuality, impurity, despotism, and violence, which still traps them in a dualistic logic of female virtue and vice. I find her perspective limited, because she herself tries to understand marginalized women's morality in terms of the traditional female vices and male virtues and as such misses the point that virtues such as self-respect or friendship can be useful in resisting oppression. In other words, it is Boryzcka's interpretation that, for example, the Lowell Mill girls had to be either "masculine" or "vicious" women, and they adopted traits

such as rebellion and selfishness to start working outside of the house, while they could have simply tried to be self-confident and courageous, thereby challenging the female virtues assigned to them without being caught in the virtue/vice dualism (that is, without choosing to become masculine or "vicious" women). However, acknowledging the liberatory power of certain virtues would create a problem for Boryzcka's claim that any virtue and vice framework is inherently oppressive.

Boryzcka not only denies the liberatory power of virtues, she also offers a weak solution to the dominant paradigm of women as moral guardians, but suspect citizens. Drawing on Hannah Arendt's work, she suggests that we should promote "collective responsibility," where responsibility for politics belongs to all people, including male citizens. She hopes that collective responsibility will open the way for a concept of "belonging" as an alternative to citizenship. Her attempt to offer an alternative to virtue and vice in the last three pages of the book is very limited. For example, one may wonder if Boryzcka is too optimistic. With the concept of "belonging" also comes "not belonging."

Overall, Boryzcka's book is a valuable contribution both to feminist political theory and feminist ethics as it is empirically and historically very compelling. Yet, I suspect that readers might find that some of the central philosophical claims of the book require more explanation and support.

## The Imperative of Integration

Elizabeth Anderson (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010). 246 pages. $18.00. ISBN 978-0-691-15811-2.

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In this dense, sweeping, well-argued, and admirably accessible book, Anderson draws on a formidable array of sociological and psychological research to flesh out a "nonideal," "relational" account of unjust group inequality in order to argue that the elimination of segregation of blacks and whites in the United States today is an imperative of justice.

Chapter one, the most abstract of the book's chapters, provides Anderson's explanation of nonideal theory, her reasons for employing it, and a statement of her relational account of unjust group inequality. "In nonideal theory, normative inquiry begins with the identification of a problem [in our actual world]. We then seek a causal explanation of the problem to determine what can and ought to be done about it" (22). This is in contrast to ideal theory, which begins with "principles and ideals for a perfectly just society" (3). Anderson opts for nonideal over ideal theory because she believes that focus on the ideal effaces important realities of our actual world (3–7).

Having briefly described her nonideal approach, Anderson argues for a relational rather than a distributive account of unjust group inequality. On her account, the "primary object of normative assessment" is social relations rather than the distribution of goods per se (21).

Modifying and extending work by Weber, Tilly, and Young, Anderson identifies the root of unjust inequality as a group's control of a valued good and the group's practice of segregation "to prevent other groups from getting access to [that good], except on subordinating terms. [. . .] A group's dominance over one good then extends to others by emulation, adaptation, leverage, violence, and political control" (21). She concludes:

> Group inequality thus arises from the relations or systematic interactions between social groups. The advantaged group may oppress outside groups by reducing them to a marginalized, exploited, powerless, or stigmatized class, vulnerable to group-based violence or denied cultural freedoms. Or it may impose less extreme disadvantages on them: subjecting them to systematic discrimination, denying them equal political influence, and depriving them of resources they need to stand as equals with others and of opportunities to develop their talents to qualify for positions of authority. Oppressive social relations are unjust because they deprive members of the disadvantaged group of their basic human rights. Less extreme forms of group inequality are unjust because they violate a fundamental norm of democracy, which is social equality. (21)

What Anderson provides is "an explanatory scheme" (21). It is a description of one (albeit complex) cause of group inequality. But it is a plausible causal explanation of any particular group inequality only if it can be filled in "with a specification of the multiple mechanisms by which group closure [i.e., segregation] generates and reproduces inequality" (21). If that "filling in" is persuasive, one legitimately can claim not only to have identified a cause of the inequality, but to have established that the inequality is unjust.

Chapters two and three are Anderson's deep dive into the empirical data to make the case that the inequality between blacks and whites in the United States today does indeed fit the explanatory scheme sketched above and is therefore unjust. Chapter two spells out the connections between segregation of blacks and whites in the United States and the well-documented material inequalities between those groups.[1] Citing numerous empirical studies, the chapter demonstrates that "segregation isolates blacks from access to job opportunities, retail and commercial services, and public health goods. It impedes their ability to accumulate financial, human, social, and cultural capital. It deprives them of access to state-provided goods, including decent public schools and adequate law enforcement, while subjecting them to higher tax burdens and discriminatory police practices" (43).

Chapter three is a fascinating exploration of "the psychological mechanisms underwriting" group inequality. Again drawing on a wealth of empirical studies, Anderson argues that

segregation is a fundamental cause of stigmatization. It causes the inequalities that form the basis of racial stereotypes and triggers numerous biases that induce people to explain black disadvantage in stigmatizing terms. [. . . ] Racially stigmatizing representations do not merely inhabit people's private thoughts; they have public standing as commonly known, publicly noticeable default presumptions for interracial interactions. (65)

Anderson performs an invaluable service simply by gathering together the abundance of empirical research on which she draws in chapters two and three. One might worry, however, that she uses the data to argue that black-white segregation in the United States today is unjust because it results in unequal distribution of (material and symbolic) goods. Such an argument would be of the distributive variety, a form of argument she explicitly eschews. Anderson is careful to point out, therefore, that her claim is that black-white segregation in the United States today is unjust not because it distributes goods unevenly but because it is caused by, embodies, and causes unjust group relations (67). Chapter four rebuts various arguments against the claim that segregation is caused by unjust group relations and then argues for the claim that it embodies and causes such relations. Anderson first notes that

current patterns of black-white racial segregation, causing the systematic race-based disadvantages documented in chapters 2 and 3, are the legacy of state-sponsored anti-black racial discrimination. These patterns are perpetuated today by massive illegal housing discrimination while the state looks the other way. The causes of segregation and resulting inequality can thus be traced to unjust intergroup processes. (69)

She then cites empirical data to refute the claim that black-white segregation today is primarily the result of black ethnocentrism (70), argues against the notion that group relations cannot be unjust if motivated by unconscious biases (73), and critiques the claim that the bulk of contemporary black disadvantage is the result of "dysfunctional norms present in black underclass neighborhoods" (75–84). (I will return below to Anderson's discussion of "dysfunctional norms.") Finally, Anderson argues that, even if black-white segregation in the United States did not result from unjust group relations, it still would be unjust because it embodies and causes unjust group relations in a myriad of ways, including by causing four of the kinds of oppressive intergroup relations highlighted in the explanatory scheme above—i.e., marginalization, exploitation, powerlessness, and stigmatization (85). It is unclear why Anderson does not argue that segregation also renders blacks vulnerable to group-based violence and denies blacks cultural freedoms, the remaining two kinds of oppression enumerated in her explanatory scheme, since chapters two and three supply ample empirical evidence to do so.

Chapter five can be read as completing the process of matching black-white segregation in the United States today to the explanatory scheme Anderson provides by arguing that segregation embodies and causes unjust group relations by violating "a fundamental norm of democracy, which is social equality" (21). She first sketches and defends her "ideal of democracy" (89) and then explains how "segregation impedes the intergroup communication needed for democratic institutions to gather and use widely dispersed information about problems and policies of public interest [;] blocks the mechanisms needed to hold officeholders democratically accountable to all people [;] embodies demeaning group relations incompatible with equal citizenship [; and] makes elites insular, clubby, ignorant, unaccountable and irresponsible" (111).

Having clarified the complex ways in which segregation is caused by, embodies, and causes unjust social relations, in chapter six Anderson surveys how integration—understood as the "participation as equals of all groups in all social domains" (134)—works to undermine those relations. Again drawing heavily on empirical evidence, she describes four stages of integration, viz., formal desegregation, spatial integration, formal social integration, and informal social integration, and how each "helps to dismantle different injustices" (134).

Anderson regards affirmative action policies as essential tools in the process of integration; thus, chapter seven supplies deft defenses of such policies against common objections. Chapter eight provides withering critiques of arguments for color-blind remedies to the kinds of injustice documented in the book. And the concluding chapter, chapter nine, acknowledges that integration comes at a cost to blacks, but argues that the cost is sometimes misidentified and heavily outweighed by its benefits.

As I hope is apparent from what I have written, my overarching evaluation of this book is extremely positive. In my estimation, the book skillfully presents and defends a compelling and original argument for the injustice of black-white segregation in the United States today, effectively utilizes both sophisticated philosophical theory and rigorous social science research, covers an enormous amount of ground in relatively few pages, and is written in an unusually accessible style for an academic text. Accordingly, the following critique speaks more to framing or structure than to substance.

I mentioned above that I would return to Anderson's discussion of "dysfunctional norms present in black underclass neighborhoods" (75–84). Note that this discussion occurs *before* Anderson argues for the claim that segregation embodies and causes unjust group relations by violating a fundamental norm of democracy. That is, the discussion of blacks' (purportedly) dysfunctional behavior occurs before she has completed presenting her argument for the injustice of segregation. This placement seems inappropriate. "Dysfunctional norms present in black underclass neighborhoods" are pointed to not only as explanations for the pervasive material and symbolic inequality between blacks and white in the United States today, but also to explain blacks' lesser political influence.

So shouldn't the rebuttal of "dysfunctional norms" accounts occur either before or after Anderson's alternative account is fully presented, rather than in the middle of it?

This confusing arrangement is symptomatic of a larger discontent I have with the book. Anderson notes in the introductory/framing chapter one that "the relational theory of inequality locates the causes of economic, political, and symbolic inequalities in relations (processes of interactions) between the groups, rather than in the internal characteristics of their members or in cultural differences that exist independently of group interaction" (16). But this contrast is given short shrift compared to her explanation of the distinctions between nonideal and ideal theory and relational versus distributional accounts of justice. Yet, on my view, *the signature accomplishment of this book is that it provides the conceptual and empirical tools to undermine, and presents a compelling alternative to, accounts of black-white inequality in the United States today that principally attribute that inequality to blacks themselves.* Arguably, both Anderson and those who defend a "dysfunctional norms" account of black-white inequality are positing nonideal theories and relational accounts of justice; both acknowledge that black-white inequality is pervasive and provide causal explanations for the inequality, but, because of their differing causal explanations, disagree about whether the inequality involves unjust relations. So emphasizing the distinctions between ideal and nonideal theory and distributive versus relational accounts of justice distracts from what I take to be the book's signal contribution. I wish Anderson had framed her discussion as, first and foremost, a refutation of insidiously victim-blaming "dysfunctional norms" accounts of black-white inequality, instead of suggesting this purpose almost in passing. In such a framing, a fuller description of accounts that attribute black disadvantage to dysfunctional black behaviors would be supplied and, instead of nine pages of criticism rather illogically tacked onto chapter four, systematic criticism of them would comprise a central chapter of the book.

A final point about Anderson's discussion of "dysfunctional norms" accounts: in my opinion, Anderson concedes too much in chapter four by accepting characterizations of such behavior as early single-motherhood, disengagement from school, and gang membership as "dysfunctional cultural norms" (79). She suggests a more nuanced understanding of such behaviors in chapter six when she writes: "Such adaptations, while they may enhance individual well-being within disadvantaged communities, are collectively destructive and undermine the individual's chances to succeed in a more advantaged setting" (115). A full chapter dedicated to criticism of "dysfunctional norms" accounts would provide Anderson the opportunity to elucidate this more nuanced account.

**NOTES**

1. As Anderson notes, "Blacks are worse off than whites [. . .] on virtually every objective measure of well-being, including health, wealth, education, employment, criminal victimization and involvement, and political participation" (43).

## The Epistemology of Resistance: Gender and Racial Oppression, Epistemic Injustice, and Resistant Imaginations

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José Medina situates his recent book as an exercise in non-ideal theory (13) that furthers the project of articulating an account of the integral role that epistemology plays in relation to political theory and praxis. In other words, following in the footsteps of Lorraine Code, Miranda Fricker, Linda Alcoff, and so many other laborers in the vineyard of what might be thought of as liberatory epistemology, Medina's text undertakes the twofold project of articulating the particularly (though not *purely*) epistemic manifestations of oppression (especially in terms of gender, race, and sexuality) on the one hand, and the epistemic practices and conditions necessary for liberation from oppression on the other. Medina offers a diagnosis and a prescription in relation to the ways and means whereby oppression harms us in our particular capacities as *knowers*, and the ways and means whereby our knowledge practices and standards reinforce, legitimate, or mitigate oppression. The task he thus sets for himself is indubitably ambitious, and he draws upon a diverse array thinkers, traditions, and examples to achieve his aims. The end result is an impressive example of the integral link between intellectual work and activism, pairing rigorous scholarship and theoretical acumen with a clear sensitivity to the ways in which those intellectual virtues will or will not "pay off" in terms of concrete action. The range and depth of *The Epistemology of Resistance* is such that I cannot hope to offer a chapter-by-chapter summary in the scope of this review, so I will proceed by offering a very brief sketch of the overall argument before offering a more in-depth account of what I take to be one crucial aspect of the text.

Medina makes clear from the outset that his focus is upon the "epistemic aspects of our social interactions" that "take place in complex and diverse communities under conditions of oppression" (3). As he argues in the course of the text, oppression functions in part by fostering in the oppressors a kind of ignorance, insensitivity, and indifference to the suffering of others that he calls *epistemic arrogance* (31), while among the oppressed it fosters *ego skepticism*, which is "a skepticism about the self, about its capacities and even about its very existence" (42). Oppression thus fosters both a first-order ignorance about the workings of the social world and one's role within that world, and a *meta-ignorance* that obscures one's sense of one's own epistemic failings (149). In other words, under just epistemic conditions, one will typically acknowledge one's own epistemic lacunae—one will have some knowledge of one's ignorance, but oppression facilitates an ignorance of one's own ignorance through a variety of mechanisms Medina describes in compelling detail. Significantly, this ignorance must be understood as an *active ignorance* (56) for which

we bear responsibility as individuals and as members of communities (226). This active ignorance, functioning on both the first-order and the meta-level, aims at establishing a dominant mode of understanding the world that drowns out, disavows, or ignores alternative understandings. Part of the epistemic harm is thus that the false universal of (for example) the masculine or white perspective, in establishing itself as the *normative* hegemonic view, creates epistemic conditions in which it is very difficult for alternative, *resistant* perspectives to assert themselves. At the heart of Medina's critical endeavor is thus a critique of any epistemological theory that makes the arrival at some stable endpoint, or even a fixed and settled consensus, its *telos*. Rather, what should motivate our epistemic endeavors is the fostering of what he refers to as a "kaleidoscopic consciousness" (200) in which knowledge is always in *friction* with *resistant* perspectives between communities, between individuals within a community, and *internally* to a given agent. Only through this ongoing process of friction are we able to approach "meta-lucidity" (192).

The "resistance" of the book's title, therefore, refers both to the praxis of resisting oppression, and to the positive kinds of *epistemic resistance* that Medina argues are necessary components of that praxis. Adequately resisting oppression, in other words, requires that we take responsibility for our epistemic shortcomings. Through particularly compelling use of examples, Medina lays out his account of the responsibility we bear as epistemic agents on a variety of levels and vectors. As individuals, we bear responsibility both for our first-order ignorance of the different situations and perspectives of relevant others and their histories (and very often in the case of the privileged, of one's *own* particular difference, perspective, and history), as well as for the meta-ignorance we bear in relation to that first-order ignorance (the ways in which we ignore or disavow our own ignorance). Both of these manifestations of ignorance, however, are fostered and supported within and through communities, and thus there must always be a *social* aspect to that responsibility (158). To advance his articulation of this social aspect, Medina's text offers a thorough and sophisticated account of what he refers to as "the insufficiencies of purely individualistic and purely collectivist views of responsibility with respect to justice" (313). While he does not deny that individuals can and do act as individuals, and collectivities act collectively, he argues that the most efficacious political resistance will require "chained action," where actions are repeated by others, and "coalesce in such a way that they become a *traceable performative chain*, with each action in the chain having traceable effects in the subsequent actions of others" (225). This makes it possible, he argues, for us to conceive of our responsibilities as *chained* to that of diverse others (individual and collective). Ultimately, an epistemology of resistance aims not at the assimilation or even *integration* of all difference, but rather seeks a "network solidarity" (308) that acknowledges difference, and fosters a pluralism that can generate and sustain the beneficial epistemic friction that Medina holds to be a necessary condition both for effective resistance of oppression and for the cultivation of the epistemic virtues conducive to *meta-lucidity* under conditions of what he refers to as "polyphonic contextualism" (206).

Having offered this very brief sketch of the overall argument of Medina's text, I will now turn to a more focused engagement with a specific theme, namely, the theme of metaphor in relation to our accounts of epistemic justice. While Medina employs such metaphors throughout the text, he only addresses the topic explicitly, and briefly, in the forward. In the remainder of this review, I will argue that Medina's actual use of metaphor offers advantages that remain only implicit in the text, and that rendering them explicit can, in fact, strengthen his overall argument.

It is difficult to take on issues of epistemology and oppression without drawing upon a long and well-established line of metaphors for knowledge that appeal to *vision*. The hegemony of this metaphor, as well as the more common and compelling critiques of it, are doubtless well known to anyone who has worked on these issues.[1] Aside from the inherent privileging of perceptual *ability* to be found in contrasting with *disability*, the visual paradigm has been critiqued for entailing a rigid subject/object distinction, and generating an understanding of perception as a passive phenomenon. In the forward to *The Epistemology of Resistance*, Medina states that he hopes "to have contributed a bit to such overcoming [of the visual paradigm] by avoiding the visual language at least in some of my discussions when it was possible and appropriate," turning instead to more neutral terms like *insensitivity* and *numbness* (xii). In describing this decision, he appeals to the "problems associated with equating epistemic deficiencies with perception disabilities," but makes little reference to the more theoretical critiques of the visual metaphor (ibid.).

This is a weakness, I submit, insofar as the metaphors that Medina actually uses in the course of his text manifest advantages over the visual paradigm in terms of theory that both illustrate his larger understanding and demonstrate the weaknesses of the visual paradigm. For example, his use of the *friction* metaphor appeals to touch. *Polyphonic contextualism* and the need for our actions to "echo" within a context of chained action appeal to sound (244). These appeals to touch and sound avoid the theoretical limitations of the visual paradigm in ways that Medina himself does not make explicit. To touch is at the same time to be touched, thus avoiding the radical subject/object distinction common to the visual paradigm, and placing the touching/touched in both a passive and active role in relation to one another. Likewise, sound is a matter of the *interaction* of components through a medium that connects the listener with the source of the sound. Indeed, sound is in fact generated by a kind of resistance between objects, either when one object strikes another, as with a drum, or when two objects are brought together in a way that generates friction, as with a bow and violin string. This means that friction/touch always generates sound (even if it is not always audible by humans), which in turn is always *felt* as much as heard, demonstrating the interconnectivity of these two modes of sensation.

Medina's use of these metaphors of touch and sound thus help, because of the ways in which they function *as sensations*, to illuminate his emphasis on interconnectivity, and the role of resistance in epistemic life. For there would

be no touch, and no sound, without resistance (friction) and movement. We see in these metaphors, therefore, an illustration not only of the centrality of resistance but of the need for constant and dynamic development and change in our epistemic life—that is, as Medina asserts in relation to knowledge, we are not aiming toward the arrival at some fixed and static conclusion but, rather, at the ongoing generation of friction. Thus, while the standard paradigm of vision (which is in actuality a very deep misunderstanding of how vision works) invites us to think of objects as discrete individuals, where one actively sees and the other is passively seen and it is common for images to be understood as static, the metaphors Medina employs avoid this misapprehension of the social world and its role in our capacity as knowers.

This being said, Medina is quite rightly concerned with the impact the use of such metaphors may have on those who lack access to one or more avenues of sense perception, and though his use of aural and tactile metaphors may not escape this concern either, he makes clear what he sees as the advantages of his preferred terminology. "Insensitivity and numbness are more appropriate than blindness because," he tells us, "they can be easily extended to the non-perceptual, and indeed the epistemic deficiencies in question go beyond our perceptual organs" (xii). Thus, in addition to the disrespect the visual metaphor shows for blind people, Medina's concern is that perception in general does not capture the full scope of the epistemic deficiencies that are the focus of the text, and so he proposes the terms "insensitivity" and "numbness." Nevertheless, I find it difficult to understand how to conceive of insensitivity or numbness apart from some appeal to sensory (and thus perceptual) organs. On the one hand, to be insensitive, or numb, literally just means to lack *sensation*. We may use such terms to describe emotional distance or lack of tact, but when we apply them in this way to "non-perceptual" deficiencies, they are still metaphors that appeal to the appropriate use of functioning sensory organs, and so do not avoid the disrespecting of those who lack the use of those organs. On the other hand, given Medina's own commitments to the *affective* dimension of epistemic interactions (81), and the foregrounding of embodiment (268), it seems strange for him to draw a clear boundary between the perceptual and the non-perceptual in the first place. Insensitivity and numbness are thus, like metaphors of vision, metaphoric appeals to sensory organs (in general), yet they are more than *mere* metaphors, insofar as a polyphonic contextualism aiming at the generation of epistemic *friction* between inescapably socially embodied agents seems on every level to be concerned with *literal*, and not just metaphorical, sensitivity to oneself and others. This move does not, in other words, escape his concern about disrespect, and given the role that perception plays in his account of epistemology, it may not be possible to completely avoid the problem. How to address it in the long term is an important question beyond the scope of this review.

In conclusion, Medina's outstanding book makes a crucial and timely contribution to a cluster of philosophical problems spanning several sub-fields and disciplines that contribute to our understanding of the relationship between epistemology and oppression. It most assuredly deserves to be read by those theorists and activists working in and around these issues.

**NOTES**

1. See Kelly Oliver, *Witnessing: Beyond Recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 12.

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## *Worldly Ethics: Democratic Politics and Care for the World*

Ella Myers (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013). 212 pages. $23.95. ISBN 978-0-8223-5399-7.

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As Ella Myers makes clear in the opening pages of her book, *Worldly Ethics* "provides a sympathetic critique of the quest for a democratic ethos, cautioning against the directions this search often takes, while seeking to forge a different path" (2). The directions against which Myers will caution are, broadly, Foucauldian and Levinasian; her different path or "alternative ethos" will take its bearings from Arendt (though here, too, she will argue against particular aspects of Arendt's approach). Myers wants to use associational democratic action as her criterion for what kind of care can best contribute to a democratic ethos. Thus, her project aims to construct a democratic ethics that embraces and expands multiplicity and pluralism and broadens the scope of what is encompassed by care. But, she argues, a genuine attempt to grapple with and embrace the diversity of cultures and perspectives in the world, shows the inadequacy of approaches centered on care of the self or care of the "Other"—both of which, she argues, "are ill-equipped to nourish associative democratic politics" and "obscure the worldly contexts that are the actual sites and objects of democratic action" (2). Instead, she articulates and argues for what she characterizes as a "contentious and collaborative care for the world" (2), because "[c]are for the world, distinct from concern for oneself or for an Other, is an ethos uniquely fit for democratic life" (86).

This "care of the world" is constructed not as a dyadic relationship—with oneself or with a particular other— but rather as an orientation of concern for a third term, the world. She understands "world" in a broadly (but not uncritically) Arendtian frame, as the commonality that brings humans together (as pairs and as groups) and provides humans (and other creatures) with what they need for survival and flourishing. "Care for the world"—the core tenet of her "worldly ethics"—thus consists of two central normative commitments: first is care of the world as humans' home—that is, a world that "ought to provide hospitable conditions for all, not just some, human beings" (113). Specifically, this means that "for humans to be at home in the world, certain of their basic needs must be met" (113). Myers discusses the multiple ways that poverty and hunger make the world inhospitable—and the kinds of care that can motivate efforts to overcome global poverty, in contrast to "merely" charitable local efforts—to illustrate

this first aspect of "care for the world," for "the alleviation of poverty, through the collective transformation of existential conditions, is essential if the world is to be a home for all human beings" (115).

The second essential normative aspect of this "care of the world" is an orientation towards the world as a mediator "in-between" individuals and groups: "Caring for the world as a potential intermediary means fostering practices and building institutions that provide as many citizens as possible with meaningful opportunities to articulate their innumerable perspectives in the presence of one another and to influence the conditions under which they live" (125). This entails, as she notes, "broad efforts of democratization: the expansion of the power of ordinary citizens to participate in their own government through multiple and accessible sites for the exchange of opinions and decision making" (125). This caring engagement with the world will develop through, and in turn shape, both collaborative and contentious engagements with others.

Myers acknowledges that there are potential tensions between these two normative aims. "Neither end entails the other, nor is there any guarantee that they will support one another" (130). Martha Nussbaum's determination of what counts as basic capabilities that ought to be guaranteed, for example, privileges the first at the sacrifice of the second. But Myers argues that both of these normative aims can and should be (and sometimes, indeed, as her discussion of a number of examples illustrates, are) pursued together: "My argument identifies the pursuit both of substantive ends and of democratic processes as integral to a specifically democratic ethos. . . . [These two aims] together define what it means to actively and democratically care for the world" (133).

The book is organized in four chapters framed by an introduction and epilogue. The first two chapters constitute Myer's negative or critical project, critiquing two dominant but contrasting versions of an ethics of care as inadequate for a democratic politics: "the orientations encouraged by Foucauldian and Levinasian ethics, the most prominent in the turn to ethics, may need to be resisted, even overcome, if democratic care is to be enacted" (139). With respect to both Foucault and Levinas, Myers's exegeses are cogent, clear, and generally fair, though I do have some reservations about her conclusions. Early in the introduction she notes in passing that Foucault, Levinas, and Arendt are all "heirs to a specific, shared intellectual heritage" (14), Martin Heidegger's existential phenomenology. I would have very much liked to see an extended discussion of the implications of this shared lineage. Her positive project, the seeds of which begin to emerge through her negative critiques (and the core of which I've already described above), is articulated in the third and fourth chapters: chapter three's task is to develop Arendt's notion of *amor mundi* in order to elaborate an understanding of "the world" and of its care that connect with a democratic ethos; chapter four's task is to articulate the normative implications of these concepts (which I've highlighted above). Let me present her negative project in a bit more detail, in order to introduce my reservations about her overall argument.

The first chapter argues that "care for the self is a flawed basis for elaborating a democratic ethics," because "an ethics capable of animating associative democratic activity . . . cannot take the self's relationship to itself as its starting point" (24). Myers concludes that "Foucault never provides his own argument for how an ethics of self-care might bear on interpersonal, social, or political relations" (39) and, further, that the care of the self that Foucault draws from ancient Greek and Roman practices "is at odds with[ ]the claim that care of the self can help render power relations more open and symmetrical" (37). She goes on to consider William Connolly's recent development of this Foucauldian approach, since "Connolly endows Foucauldian aesthetics of existence with a strong, explicitly political aim: developing the sensibilities suitable to pluralist democratic politics" (42). But this, too, fall short, she argues, because "for reflexive self-care to be democratically significant, it must be inspired by and continually connected to larger political mobilizations" (45), which she maintains neither Foucault's nor Connolly's accounts can assure. Moreover, "conceptualizing ethics primarily in terms of self-intervention is dangerous in the context of an American cultural environment that can fairly be described as narcissistic" (47). (As I'll discuss below, I am not persuaded by this critique.)

If an ethics of care centered on "therapeutic" self-transformation is inadequate for the collective action that Myers hopes to support, she asks, would a "charitable" ethics of care of others (or "the Other") be a better approach? Chapter two thus takes up the Levinasian tradition of ethical care for an Other. Here, too, Myers takes up both Levinas's own presentation and two more contemporary variants—Simon Critchley's and Judith Butler's. Her ultimate conclusion (as we should expect) is that this approach "is poorly suited to democratic politics because it revolves around a hierarchical, charitable relation that is focused on addressing immediate needs" (54). Even Levinas's gesture toward embracing a non-dyadic relationship, with what he calls "the third," is unable to adequately encompass the collective and collaborative perspectives that she argues a "care for the world" can foster: "a real gap separates charitable ethics from associative democratic practice, in which citizens act publicly and collaboratively in order to shape the world in which they live" (83). Critchley's and Butler's respective developments of this Levinasian approach also fall short, with each approach illustrating one of the two weaknesses she has identified. Critchley's approach, Myers argues, remains fundamentally undemocratic insofar as his "ethical subject" is conceived as acting charitably—and this charity presupposes hierarchies and inequality, is focused too narrowly on particular individuals' needs, and can be strictly private, not public or collaborative. She supports this critique with a fascinating discussion (principally in the endnotes) of empirical studies of volunteerism and how volunteers can foster anti-political, uncritical attitudes and practices. While Butler's development of "precariousness as an ethically significant fact" (76) creates the possibility of a more democratic determination of what needs must be met, Myers continues, this approach too still "depends upon the unjustified assertion that a specific truth about the world compels the pursuit of a particular normative end" (79).

*Worldy Ethics*'s project is valuable—Myers's insistence that an ethics of care must be linked to politics, and her sharp critique of strictly-dyadic conceptions of care are particularly important contributions to the contemporary development of an ethics of care. But I worry that her opposition of an Arendtian world-oriented to Foucauldian self-oriented and Levinasian Other-oriented approaches to conceptualizing care is too starkly drawn. More precisely, there may be more room for overlap between these three orientations than her argument is willing to acknowledge—though, to be sure, she does move a bit in this direction in the epilogue. In the end, she maintains that "care of the world" is sufficient to motivate both collaborative and contentious collective action at the core of a democratic ethos, whereas Foucauldian (therapeutic) and Levinasian (charitable) conceptions of care *could*—but also could *not*—contribute to the kind of democratic ethos that she seeks to foster.

I have two principal concerns about Myers's argument in *Worldly Ethics*. The first, as I've noted, concerns her criticism of the Foucauldian approach. What she fails fully to appreciate is that the Foucauldian care of the self is inescapably situated within power-laden political practices and is constituted in important part through the collaboration and contestation that defines the political constitution of the world in her view. And Connolly's specific version is not the only way that Foucault's framework can be developed in explicitly contemporary and democratic directions. There are more resources for a political and democratic development of the Foucauldian ethics than Myers acknowledges. This is not the appropriate space to develop an answer to Myers at length; let me note simply that, while she raises an important challenge worthy of explicit attention, she has not demonstrated that this approach "is not an ethics fit for democracy" (45).

My second worry concerns a lacuna in the argument. The American feminist tradition of care ethics (with a more than thirty-year history, as long as that of Foucauldian ethics) is virtually undiscussed in this volume. Nel Noddings's, Virginia Held's, and Joan Tronto's early work is mentioned in passing (in a mere handful of notes at the very beginning of chapter three), but the complex development of the political resources and implications of care ethics in this tradition is otherwise ignored. Myers's critique of the Levinasian approach is that it fails to bridge "the gap separating charitable care for another's basic needs from collaborative care for shared conditions" (55), but this very issue has been a central focus of debate and development in the feminist care ethics tradition. Thus, her dismissal of this approach, like her rejection of Foucauldian care of the self, seems premature. Caring for others, too, may have more resources than she acknowledges.

Is this book a work of "feminist ethics"? Not exactly—it is profoundly sympathetic with feminist aims and methods (hence her elision of the feminist care ethics tradition is particularly striking), but this book would be better situated as an engagement within continental ethics and political theory. It is, nonetheless, a work that should be seriously engaged by feminist ethicists interested in developing a politically rich and subtle ethics of care. Ella

Myers frames an important and undertheorized aspect of caring—caring *for* the world—that a robust argument for the place of care in politics ought to address. "Caring for the world, which is to say, tending to a specific worldly thing together with others, requires a shift in perspective, one which involves decentering both oneself and suffering Other(s)" (109). This task—the book's central project—is an important contribution, both sympathetic and critical, to the articulation of care ethics. Though I am not yet persuaded that we need to adopt the care of *the world*—i.e., *of things*—as the *grounding* and *framing* standpoint for a political ethics of care (there are more resources, as I have suggested, for effecting such a shift in perspective in care for oneself and others), Myers makes a strong case that "care of the world" is an integral component of a well-developed ethics and democratic ethos of care.

## Simone de Beauvoir and the Politics of Ambiguity

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Sonia Kruks's marvelous new book, *Simone de Beauvoir and the Politics of Ambiguity*, demonstrates Beauvoir's enduring importance to political philosophy. Beauvoir's politics of ambiguity, as presented by Kruks, develops out of the political milieu of the twentieth century but contributes to contemporary debates in political theory. This book is a wonderful addition to Beauvoir scholarship and a fitting follow-up to Kruks's two earlier books, *Retrieving Experience: Subjectivity and Recognition in Feminist Politics* (2001) and *Situation and Human Existence: Freedom, Subjectivity, and Society* (1990).

The book opens with a discussion of Beauvoir's contribution to a reconstructed humanism. Mindful of the critiques—including Beauvoir's own—and attentive to the "particularities of a multiplicity of differently embodied lives" (32), Kruks argues that Beauvoir offers a creative middle ground between humanism and posthumanism. By eschewing the individualism of liberalism and developing a complex conception of situated freedom, Beauvoir's politics of ambiguity, as Kruks argues, rejects both abstract humanism and the posthumanist radical dismissal of any sort of universal claims—ethical, ontological, epistemological—regarding humans. Beauvoir "calls for a politics that focuses on resistance to oppressions and oppressors, a politics that acts against those who designate members of other groups as the 'inessential,' as the 'absolute Other,' or as mere 'things'" (54).

The politics of ambiguity may be understood not only as this middle ground between humanism and posthumanism but also as the lived body's way of being in the world. Beauvoir's conception of freedom entails subjective embodiment as well as situation. Race, class, gender, sexuality, and social context are some of the facticities that affect the ability to

act as a freedom. "Here, in the complexities of the lived body and its always already-situated, always material, always social, existence lie perhaps the most fundamental ambiguities of human life" (35). The tendency to abstract away from complex ambiguities misleads political action as well as theory; for Beauvoir, politics must address the messy elements of the lived body and can never be certain about what is central or valuable about existence beyond freedom itself. Kruks thus skillfully puts Beauvoir into dialogue with critical race, gender, and sexuality theorists.

According to Kruks, Beauvoir's famous novel *Les Mandarins* exemplifies another element of the politics of ambiguity relevant to complex engagement in the world: the ambiguity of political judgment. The novel illustrates how judgments are never really the product of a deliberative decision considering possible alternatives. Read as a phenomenology of political judgment as Kruks does, *Les Mandarins* reveals the array of factors that shape not only the alternatives but the person(s) and the point of decision itself. Further, "geopolitics changes the meaning of our actions" (139). Of course, the consequences of political action also reveal the ambiguity of political judgment: "In politics we can never know enough to be sure that our decisions will have the desired outcome" (137). In this sense, as with her discussion of oppression and privilege discussed below, Kruks shows how Beauvoir anticipates and fits into the debate between ideal theory and nonideal theory.

Beauvoir scholars and others who study oppression will find Kruks's account particularly useful. She argues that Beauvoir's theory of oppression is much richer than merely mapping the master-slave dialectic onto the situation of women. Asymmetrical recognition, which appears in its most extreme form in sadism as Beauvoir describes in "Faut-il brûler Sade?" does utilize Hegel, but a much richer and varied theory of oppression emerges from looking at some of Beauvoir's less studied texts alongside her famous ones.

The two volumes of *The Second Sex*, according to Kruks, ought to be read dialectically (65) and illustrate asymmetrical recognition that has become systemic oppression. The social structure limits women's possibilities. Kruks discusses the creation of women's inferiority as well as possibilities of resistance (71–73). She recognizes the criticisms of Beauvoir's political thought and action—her "alleged failures"—and uses these to "highlight ongoing and perhaps irresolvable methodological dilemmas still faced by critical social and political theory, feminist and otherwise" (46). Defending Beauvoir's existential feminist phenomenology against some oft-cited criticisms, Kruks shows us a subtler reading of Beauvoir that is also more coherent with Beauvoir's overall project. One criticism of Beauvoir, for instance, focuses on her masculine linguistic choice, but Kruks demonstrates that Beauvoir herself criticizes masculine language even while she employs it. This ambiguous relation to language, Kruks explains, "raises enduring questions about to whom and how oppressed groups need to speak. It also complicates, without at all denying, the epistemological claims of much feminist and critical race theory that knowledge is strongly situated" (48). Indeed, throughout the text, Kruks connects Beauvoir to the feminist movement and ongoing feminist

philosophical scholarship. *The Second Sex* inspired and continues to inspire feminists around the world. These moments of connection to contemporary political action and theory indicate Beauvoir's continuing relevance as well as Kruks's skill as a theorist, recognizing the salience of certain criticisms of Beauvoir's thought while also providing an avenue for understanding the political importance of the dissonance or ambiguities within Beauvoir's life and thought.

Two other forms of oppression are also evident in Beauvoir's works, according to Kruks: indifference and aversion. *America Day by Day* demonstrates indifference wherein "individuals may be treated as no more than anonymous members of a social category, as interchangeable units in a 'series'" (73). Beauvoir's descriptions of race relations in the mid-twentieth-century United States reveal the social systems reliant on the appropriation and exploitation of certain cultures. Astutely aware of the limitations and failings of Beauvoir's analysis, Kruks offers a compelling critique of Beauvoir's lack of recognition of her own white privilege in one context (a pueblo in New Mexico) even while she appears to acknowledge it in another (the Deep South). The final form of oppression, aversion, is evident in Beauvoir's *The Coming of Age*. Perhaps out of fear of what is to come, or perhaps out of disgust of "bodily decrepitude," the aged are objectified and rendered superfluous (87). As Kruks explains, Beauvoir complicates her theory of oppression by acknowledging that series or groups are not only affected in various, often interwoven, ways by these modes of oppression, but that some might be simultaneously oppressed and privileged. "Irrespective of which particular modes and dynamics are at play, what always makes a situation one of oppression is that it curtails the ambiguities of an embodied subject and forecloses freedom" (91).

Even the privileged "are not free to refuse the social rewards conferred on them" by unjust social structures (92). Beauvoir, according to Kruks, offers a nuanced and important critique of privilege insofar as it is confined to informing a politics based on self-transformation. The politics of privilege is abundantly evident in feminist politics. Kruks contends that too often feminist accounts of privilege focused on self-transformation that may issue from a recognition of how privilege works in one's life. Such an individualist account of privilege presupposes an autonomous self, ignoring the effects of situation and "too easily collaps[ing] into a rather self-referential, even self-indulgent, concern with one's own feelings, attitudes, and actions, a kind of 'care of the self' or a personal therapeutic" (101). In contrast, Kruks argues that Beauvoir offers a "politics of deployment" in which the privileged use their privilege individually or collectively to bring about social change. The politics of deployment is "where one contests privilege not by 'working on oneself' but by consciously using the advantages that stem from one's privileges in order to combat structures of privilege" (96).

Beauvoir's nuanced account of bad faith further enhances her discussion of privilege. As Kruks explains, bad faith allows for degrees. Beauvoir's own experience of coming to grips with her existence as a French citizen reveals the variable tension of owning responsibility for one's

existence. First under Nazi occupation and then later—with the recognition that France was the oppressor—during the Algerian crisis, Beauvoir's lived experience points to the fact that bad faith seeps in or rushes out not in a single moment but lingers more or less powerfully (109). Beauvoir might be faulted for not renouncing her privileged status to stand with Algerian victims of French violence, but Kruks argues that Beauvoir's significant status as a French intellectual actually allowed her to deploy her influence "as a basis for effective, public, political intervention" (111). The politics of deployment, in other words, finds politically powerful ways to recognize and utilize privilege rather than merely renouncing it; solidarity forms as the privileged and oppressed mobilize in order to transform the social structures that support oppression utilizing the powers and knowledge that each brings to the effort (104).

Such concerted and collective political action continues to be needed in the wake of outrageous acts of violence and entrenched oppressive systems. The book ends with a discussion of atrocity. Kruks argues that "it is as embodied and situated subjectivities that we experience such events. The bottom 'falls out of your world' when your tacit, taken-for-granted, habitual ways of 'being-in-the-world' are suddenly and violently shattered by the overwhelming disruptive force of an atrocity. For in normal daily life we do not put into question the integrity of our own and others' bodies, the constancies of space and place through which we orient ourselves, or the routine flow of time in our lives" (153). It would be interesting to explore the politicized collective experience of atrocity and how it disrupts history from a Beauvoirian lens. How, for instance, does that disruption in normal daily lives that calls into question bodily integrity affect the choice to engage in a politics of deployment or solidarity? The book ends by trying to bring Beauvoirian ideas to bear on the truth and reconciliation commissions and restorative justice more generally. Although merely suggestive, this application of Beauvoir's politics to post-conflict reconciliation processes invites further examination of her richly diverse works.

Kruks's book places Beauvoir squarely in a number of conversations in political theory and expands the focus of politics simultaneously. There are extensive notes throughout connecting Beauvoir's ideas to those of Jean-Paul Sartre, Gunnar Myrdal, Michel Foucault, Hannah Arendt, and countless others. Feminist scholars will also find a trove of useful discussions of Beauvoir's relevance for and place within contemporary feminist issues and debates. Kruks's book offers thorough analyses of works that tend not to be discussed in the philosophical literature on Beauvoir such as "An Eye for an Eye," *Djamila Boupacha*, and, of course, *Les Mandarins*. *Simone de Beauvoir and the Politics of Ambiguity* is a "must read" for Beauvoir scholars but it also should not be overlooked by political theorists and feminist philosophers more generally.

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