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RESISTERS, DIVERSITY IN PHILOSOPHY,
AND THE DEMOGRAPHIC PROBLEM

Abstract

The discipline of academic philosophy suffers from serious problems of diversity and inclusion whose acknowledgement and amelioration are often resisted by members of our profession. In this paper, I distinguish four main modes of resistance – *naïveté*, *conservatism*, *pride*, and *hostility* – and describe how and why they manifest by using them as the basis for a typology of types of “resister”. This typology can hopefully be useful to those of us trying to counteract such resistance in ways sensitive to the different motives and strategies that these resisters tend to employ.

1. Introduction

The discipline of academic philosophy has two closely related problems that relate to the complex set of issues gatherable under the label “diversity and inclusion”. The first is that academic philosophy has so far largely failed to respond significantly to the fact that it is ‘demographically challenged’, in the diplomatic phrase offered by Linda Martín Alcoff. Much of the concern concerns the underrepresentation of various groups, most obviously women, but also others, too. In the US, for instance, there are depressingly few African American, Asian American, Native American, and Latino philosophers. In the UK there are very few black philosophers, certainly when compared against the national demographic. Similar situations recur in other countries, reflecting the entrenched historical inequalities of the history of philosophy.

The second problem, my concern in this paper, is the depressing fact of the considerable resistance to efforts to positively and concretely respond to this “demographic problem”. Though many philosophers are actively engaged in such ameliorative work, far too many still resist claims about the existence, extent,

causes, and urgency of the demographic problem. Such resistance is obvious to anyone with practical experience of trying to report and respond to the situations of marginalised and underrepresented groups and traditions in philosophy. Indeed, a main reason why philosophy has stubbornly remained in its demographically challenged state is surely because of the fact of effective resistance to that fact, and to the efforts of those trying to introduce ameliorative measures.

My aim in this paper is to survey some of the main reasons for resistance to efforts to respond positively to the demographic problem. I do this by offering a typology of *resisters*, of generalised types of person who resists and their reasons for doing so. Although typologies have their limits and should not distract from structural factors, they also have their uses, not least as heuristics. I do not claim that this typology is definitive or exhaustive, nor that any given person can only occupy one “type” – indeed, resisters often shift type, adopting new modes of resistance if and when they are put under critical pressure. My hope is that thinking in terms of resisters *qua* agents is just as important as attending to the structural factors that motivate and enable resistance.

2. *The demographic problem*

What Alcoff calls the demographic problem is indeed a genuine and urgent problem. Its reality and extent is increasingly recognised within the philosophical community and in recent years there have been encouraging signs of progress. Such signs include important reports by major subject associations, increasing awareness of implicit bias and stereotype threat, dedicated events on sexism and racism in the academy, empirical studies of the “leaky pipeline” for women, the Gendered Conference Campaign, the Minorities in Philosophy movement, and debates on blogs, around watercoolers, and over coffee at conferences¹. Many of the developments build on a longer tradition of feminist philosophy and activism that only recently became mainstream. In her 2012 presidential address to the Eastern APA, provocatively entitled “Philosophy’s Civil Wars”, Alcoff was quick to remind us how slowly things change. It is a good thing if departments form Equality and Inclusion Committees and if undergraduate courses include more women in their reading lists and if conferences commit to securing more female keynotes. But progress is slow and not always steady.

There are many reasons for such slow progress, not least the wider problems faced by academic philosophy, including financial, political, and practical pressures. But a primary reason is the presence, within the discipline, of those whom we might call *resisters*: a person whose attitudes, assumptions and actions tend to prevent, delay, dilute, or otherwise undermine efforts to positively respond to

¹ Some very useful empirical studies include Botts *et al* 2014 and Dodds and Goddard 2013.

the demographic problem, for suspect reasons, of a sort outlined below. Clearly there are many types of resister, including some who occupy ‘grey areas’, such as those who are generally inefficient at getting *anything* done, or those who try to resist but are ineffective in doing so. My focus, however, are on those who are successful, at least to some degree, in effecting their resistance. That focus is justified on pragmatic reasons: since they are succeeding in blocking efforts to grasp and act on the demographic problem (and related problems), then we ought to start with them.

The general category of “resister” needs three general comments. The first is that resisters can act individually or collectively, although most of my discussion is of individual resisters, even though there are certainly groups of resisters. Second, “positively responding” to the demographic problem can involve many things, including *acknowledging* it, trying to *understand* it, or *implementing* measures to do something concrete about it, and resisters might fail to do one or more of these. The third point, perhaps the most important, is that a person can obviously *question* or *challenge* or *criticise* certain claims about the demographic problem and its solution in “good faith”. A colleague might raise worries about gender quotas, say, due to some genuine concern or principle. Perhaps they are performing the vital discursive role of Devil’s Advocate or are a Principled Critic acting on the basis of sincere moral objections to the sorts of solutions being proposed.

Such cases of putatively principled resistance are important and might be responded to one of two ways. In one set of cases, such as that of colleagues, one might know enough about the character and values of the putatively principled resister to determine whether their motivations are genuine. It may be clear, to their colleagues, that the self-described Devil’s Advocate is implacably hostile to the “diversity and inclusion agenda”, but disguises this under a veil of critical procedure. But not every case is so easy, if, for instance, the Principled Critic is a stranger or a new colleague. So, in another set of cases, one will have to invite the resister to *justify* their resistance and make good on their worries.

Suppose a Principled Critic insists that their course on early modern philosophy should be exempted from even minimal criteria for gender inclusion, given the lack of women in the period. A reasonable, respectful response to this Critic is to appraise them of the scholarship on women in the early modern period, maybe including examples of figures and texts to include. If so, the “lack of women” objection is weakened if not rebutted, such that further resistance along that line becomes more difficult. Ideally the Critic yields, but they might not. Instead, they might change tack, appealing instead to the integrity of the “canon”, at which point the process starts again. Perhaps they ought to be encouraged to engage with general studies in feminist history of philosophy – Genevieve Lloyd’s 1984 classic *The Man of Reason* is an obvious choice – or the now-extensive literature

on women in early modern philosophy (see Atherton 1994 and O'Neill 2005). If resistance cannot be justified, then surely it cannot be principled².

Such experiences will be familiar to those who try to respond to the demographic problem in their capacities as course convenors, department chairs, journal editors, and so on. I give that case partly to show the dynamics of resistance, but also to make a point to justify my strategy of offering a typology: when you have a resister in mind, you are likely thinking of someone who was, is, or might be a colleague. The resister might be a mentor, supervisor, director of research, or head of department, or even a personal friend. To talk about and engage with resisters can therefore be difficult for a variety of interpersonal reasons – guilt, fear, bullying, unequal power relations, painful memories, fear of retaliation, or the pressures of hierarchy. The abuse of such negative feelings and experiences by those who marginalise and oppress the members of certain groups is well-known from other areas of progressive activism. Many resisters naturally exploit these facts of our intersubjective and professional lives to their advantage. Indeed, that is one reason why the demographic problem has persisted. So resistance must be taken to have both agential and structural features, even if my focus in this paper is on agential resistance³.

3. Resisters

The typology sketched below is neither exhaustive nor definitive. It is a work-in-progress and wholly open to expansion, modification, and revision. There are at least three reasons why a typology of resisters can be useful: *pragmatic*, *evaluative*, and *epistemic*. To start with, typologies can have pragmatic value: efforts to counteract resistance are more likely to be effective if they are adapted to the specific reasons the resister will *give* to explain and defend their actions. Next, certain types of resistance, and therefore of resister, are more morally objectionable than others in a way that we ought to attend to – misogyny is surely worse than *naïveté*, even if both can and do lead to resistance. And finally, thinking about typologies of agential resisters can be a source of knowledge and understanding. We can learn a lot about social psychology and the organisation of our institutional environments by studying the activities of resisters – as agents embedded in social and material structures. It is for these three reasons that a typology can have value.

²The example of gender quotas in the early modern canon should not be generalized. I do not rule out the possibility of there being genuinely good reasons for exempting *certain* modules from gender quotas, but with two provisos. First, one can often do better, in terms of gender balance, than one supposes – not least given the abundance of online resources for those who wish to diversify their courses. Second, one could at the least acknowledge that certain courses are “boy’s clubs” to students – a small gesture, but better than nothing.

³I thank Shannon Dea for emphasising the structural aspects of resistance.

There are five specific points to make about resisters qua agents, before I go on to the typology. First, a resister need not be motivated by any specific hostility to women, blacks, or members of other marginalised social groups: many resisters are sexist and racist, but not all. In some cases, resistance is rooted in laziness, obstinacy, or contrariness in isolation from any sexist, racist, or otherwise prejudiced hostility. Indeed, it is important to emphasise that many resisters are genuinely motivated by a desire to do what they feel is best for philosophy – to “invite the best speakers”, say, or “teach the best philosophy” – and think their current efforts accomplish this, at least to a better degree than alternatives. Other resisters might be concerned to protect their academic freedom against what they see as the pernicious intrusion of quotas, ideological diktats, and the like. Many of these resisters are likely guilty of *naïveté* – of a sort described below – but the outcome is still to prevent, delay, or dilute positive responses to the demographic problem, in a way that is consequentially indistinguishable from misogyny and other more nefarious motivations.

Second, a resister is more problematic if they occupy a position of power within their department, community, or the discipline at a large. A resister might now, or in the future, be a director of graduate studies, department chair, journal editor, president of a learned society, or a “big name” with a “voice”. Such powerful resisters have a power to enact their resistance at both the personal and the social levels – for instance, by extending their refusal to ensure gender balance in their course reading list onto the influential journal that they edit. If so, practical efforts should focus on them rather than on less influential, “junior” resisters.

Third, it is likely that many resisters developed their attitudes and values due to the nefarious effects of bad role models. Perhaps their doctoral supervisor openly sneered at “feminist grumbling”. Perhaps the “world leader” in their department dismisses talk of diversity and inclusion as “junk”. Perhaps the “big names” in one’s discipline are contemptuous of what they see as politically correct efforts to insidiously “socially engineer” philosophy. The fact of poor role models does not excuse resistance, but it should inform how we engage with resisters. It should also play a greater role in our reflections as a community on our practices and criteria for the training and professionalisation of junior philosophers.

Fourth, resisters can be, and often are, members of those various social groups that are marginalised within philosophy. Many women philosophers are critical of and resistant to efforts to improve the situation for women in philosophy. Some might think it bad to “single out” women for perceived special treatment, while others might think that certain proposals are objectionable. If the resistance of women to such efforts sounds strange, it shouldn’t. Some women think that it is character-building to have to fight one’s way to the top, such that a fairer playing field is, in fact, to the disadvantage of junior women philosophers. Some may think it unfair that junior women are afforded advantages denied to them.

Some are opposed on principle to what they see as discriminative “affirmative action” that select for gender or race rather than proven philosophical ability. And so on.

Fifth, even small acts by resisters can have large effects. Some perverse law of social mechanics dictates that it often takes a lot of energy to implement measures to respond to the demographic problem, but only a little effort to block or undo them. Such disproportional investments of energy are often exploited by resisters, who know that creating a tense climate in a department meeting through a few charged outbursts will upset discussion. But of course this is why we must think about resistance at both its agential and structural levels. It also points to the need for careful studies of the sorts of social structures that might amplify the effects of those ameliorative measures – a topic for another paper.

4. *A typology of resisters*

I will describe four main types of resister, each to be taken as generalised *types of person* who resists efforts to positively respond to the demographic problem. The typology is empirically based insofar as it is informed by the experiences of those engaged in efforts to respond to the demographic problem. It is also worth noting two features of the typology. One is that an individual agent need not fall into one type to the exclusion of others. Indeed, modes of resistance can and do shade into one another, merging and interacting. The other is that resisters can and do change type, especially if put under critical pressure: a resister may begin with *naïveté*, but, if educated, switch to conservatism. I hope that part of the value of the typology is that it enables us to identify and track a resister’s shifting reasons and select and adapt corrective strategies in response.

(i) The naïf

The first type of resister is the naïf, a person who resists due to empirical, psychological, or conceptual *naïveté* – a term more conciliatory than the obvious alternative, “ignorance”. Some philosophers are unaware of the fact, extent, or severity of the demographic problem, of a sort that could be corrected by education or training. But, until that point, the naïf might genuinely believe there is no demographic problem, or that, even if there is, that it is not as severe as “They” say, or that, even if there *are* problems, there are no problems *here* – and so on: indeed, such resistance loops can be prolonged for a very long time. A naïf might start by denying the existence of the demographic problem, then shift to doubting its severity or its extent, or its application to their home department – and so on. But the resistance is sustained by ignorance or *naïveté* and so is, in principle, correctible through informing, education, and training.

Naïveté can be understood as having three roughly separable aspects. The first is *empirical naïveté*, an ignorance of the relevant statistical, empirical, and

anecdotal data concerning the demographic problem. Maybe the naïf has not read the major reports on the situation for women in philosophy, such as *Women in Philosophy in the UK*, a joint report by the British Philosophical Association and Society for Women in Philosophy-UK published in 2007. Maybe the naïf has not read, and may be unaware of, the blog *What Is It like to Be a Woman in Philosophy* and other relevant online fora. Maybe their bookshelves are not graced by collections like *Singing in the Fire* (Alcoff 2003) or the recent edited collection *Women in Philosophy: What Needs to Change?* (Hutchinson and Jenkins 2013). Maybe the naïf has not trawled through the statistics gathered by higher education authorities and publicised in the philosophy blogosphere that document the demographic problem (see <http://www.apaonlinecsw.org/>). Taken together, the naïf is likely to be empirically naïve insofar as their positive perceptions of their discipline are due to a lack of information about the actual realities (Paxton *et al* 2012 and Thompson *et al* 2016).

The second is *psychological naïveté*, a lack of knowledge and understanding of the biases and other suboptimal features of human psychology that are relevant to the demographic problem. Central among these is implicit bias, which the naïf may be unaware of or might have passed off as a trendy “hot topic”, alongside stereotype threat and other phenomena (see Saul 2013). Maybe the naïf does not grasp the distinction between *implicit* and *explicit* biases and so naively supposes that their lack of explicit sexist and racist bias thereby entails that they do not discriminate against women and blacks. Maybe the naïf is unaware that the majority of human beings tested – 98 percent, apparently – have a variety of implicit biases, and also unaware that thinking of oneself as “objective” actually amplifies the power of those biases. And so on. Such *naïveté* is widespread and has real effects in stifling efforts to respond to the demographic problem. I once attended a meeting where a colleague rejected a call for modest gender quotas on the grounds that philosophers ought to aspire to an “ideal of intellectual purity” – to be unbiased, impartial, and assess philosophers only on their merits. A noble ideal, for sure, but also hopelessly psychologically naïve.

The third is *conceptual naïveté*, a lack of the concepts required to properly understand the statistical, psychological, and other aspects of the demographic problem. It is easy to keep a positive view of the situation within philosophy for various social groups if one is *naïve*: if one lacks concepts like *chilly climate* or a *microaggression* or a *leaky pipeline*, without which one will struggle to make sense of the data that flash by on a PowerPoint slide (see The Chilly Collective 1995). The naïf may suppose that women choose to leave philosophy simply because they decide that it is not for them – or that the paucity of reports of sexual assault must mean that one’s department is safe for women – or that certain students may not be speaking in class simply because they ‘learn by listening’ rather than because their confidence has been systematically eroded by a lifetime of gendered and racialized microaggression. Such judgements reflect conceptual *naïveté* – not to mention a lack of engagement with the rich testi-

monies offered by women and others who feel alienated by and in philosophy. As feminist philosophers showed long ago, if we lack certain concepts, then we will tend to fail to identify and understand certain types of social experiences. Philosophers who lack the concept of a microaggression or a chilly climate will find it very difficult to grasp certain facts about their classrooms and staffrooms. Instead they will tend to be ignorant about the very existence of the complex and cumulative behaviours that can ‘chill’ those environments. The effect is a naively optimistic evaluation of how inclusive and welcoming those classrooms and staffrooms are of a sort that will stifle proposals for robust investigation and amelioration.

Taken together, the naïf lacks the empirical, psychological, and conceptual resources needed in order to properly understand the demographic problem. Because of this, they fail to grasp its significance and so are led to resist it – why make such extensive changes to how we organise our communities if things aren’t, as far as one can see, as bad as “They” say? In a worst-case scenario, a naïf will lack the relevant data and the concepts and knowledge needed to make sense of them. Part of the objection to the naïf is, of course, that it is not always hard to make good on that lack – to read the reports, attend implicit bias training, and so on. This is obviously easier if departments make such resources available, either formally as part of a staff training day or through a Diversity and Inclusion Committee or by a visiting speaker. But providing training is one another; making people attend is another. People are busy, for sure, and training sessions can be tedious. But those are poor reasons to persist in naïveté when its consequences are the persistence of the demographic problem (see Puddifoot 2015). It is better to admit to naïveté and attend a training session, then acquiesce in ignorance, especially when the ignorance pertains to such fundamental moral and intellectual issues.

(ii) The conservative

The second type of resister is the *conservative*, one who resists efforts to respond to the demographic problem due to a desire to preserve established norms, practices, and cultures (see Haslanger 2008). Conservatism is not in itself automatically a bad thing, of course, since many of the things that we do – and the ways that we do them – are genuinely good and admirable. But worries ought to arise when we have good reasons to be rethink our confidence that our ways are good ones, whether those reasons flow from our own reflections or the testimonies and criticisms of others. The “bad” conservative will be prone not only to want to preserve some or all of the *status quo*, but also to resist or silence or exclude those potential critics.

The conservative resister of the bad sort is one who resists changes that ought to be made for moral, epistemic, or other reasons – most obviously, the sorts of changes that addressing the demographic problem will require. A conservative

resister likes things the way they are and wants to carry on doing things the way they have always been done, even if that means allowing the structures and values that generate and sustain the demographic problem to persist. Perhaps the conservative wants to stick to “the way things have always been done”, or has their course “just the way they like it”, or has a fixed sense of how a department ought to be run. Perhaps they prefer ways of doing that are tried or tested or enjoy continuity with the past – a desire often reinforced by the cultures of proudly traditional institutions with a strong sense of the past. If a person uses these sorts of desires and preferences to justify a failure to respond constructively to the demographic problem, then that person is a conservative resister.

Such conservatism can flow from different sources. Some might be lazy or otherwise disinclined to put in the work needed to modify reading lists, write new lectures, redesign courses, enact new policies, commit to new rules for selecting seminar speakers – and so on. Others might have deeper sources of resistance than indolence. Certain conservative resisters perceive in current efforts to improve the diversity and inclusiveness of philosophy the thin edge of the wedge. A fear arises that once departments, societies, and journals start to go down the path of “inclusion and diversity”, things will be set in motion that will drastically change the identity and direction of academic philosophy, for the worse. A conservative is prone to worry that once they “submit” to the greater inclusion of women in their course, they will be met with more demands – for the inclusion of black philosophers, gay philosophers, trans philosophers, and so on. A call to include Confucius into a course on ethics will soon be followed by another for an Indian philosopher, too – and so on.

The mention of Confucius points to a very rich contemporary example of the conservative mode of resistance, described recently by Amy Olberding, a scholar of Chinese philosophy and advocate of the study of that tradition by philosophers working mainly in the Western tradition – not least by engaging in metaphilosophical reflection (see Olberding 2015). Commenting on a *Daily Nous* article about a proposed expansion of the philosophical canon to include “non-Western” traditions, Olberding described a variety of typical forms of conservative resistance that such proposals elicit:

- Someone will simultaneously profess not to know non-western sources and express skepticism that the sources are philosophical;
- Someone will offer argument that – hey! – there are some good things out there and here’s a list of some (which, if ensuing future iterations of nearly identical blog conversations are indication, most everyone will ignore);
- Someone will make claims along the lines of “I once read something in that area and it wasn’t very good” and thereby ostensibly settle the matter for us all;
- Someone will offer incredibly condescending remarks purporting to explain what philosophy is (once and for all! in a blog comment!) and, well, there

it is, non-western stuff just, alas, doesn't fit (not that there's anything wrong with that!);

- Someone will play precision-monger and take issue with some minutiae in any proposed expansion and insist that change ought stop dead in its tracks till we sort out this tiny detail;
- Someone will point out that as mere mortals with limited budgets, we can't be expected to do everything (or presumably even anything where non-western traditions are concerned)⁴.

Each of these forms of conservative resistance are, of course, argumentatively impoverished or otherwise intellectually unimpressive. The best way to assess the merits of Chinese and other “non-Western” traditions is to study the primary texts in conjunction with the scholarly literature in an intellectually humble and reasoned manner. It is the failure of conservative resisters to conform to these utterly basic epistemic norms that is so objectionable.

The selective observance of such basic norms by the conservative is obviously explicable by reference to the strongly affective nature of their resistance. Underlying their resistance will often be alarm and anxiety, as they perceive a long-term shift in the trajectory of their discipline, a fear that can be well or badly motivated. It is good to have historiographical concerns about the philosophical canon and quite proper to pay heed to the classic texts of the tradition. But what critics typically call for is a rethinking of the content of the canon and sensitivity to the contingent prejudices that affect the sorts of people who, historically, got to “do” philosophy. I teach a course on the history of Western philosophy, covering fifteen figures, ancient to modern. It includes familiar figures, like Plato and Kant, but also others who ensure that the line-up is fairly gender balanced and inclusive of various “unusual suspects”, including Islamic and “Continental” philosophers. The course is also explicit about the gendered and racial biases evident in the views of certain figures – in Aristotle and Kant, for instance – and that helped to shape the Western tradition at large. But such inclusion and reflexivity, if carefully done, need not entail an abuse of the tradition or its “big names”. If done well, it can enable students to be critically respectful of the familiar and also appreciative of the unfamiliar, such that a conservative resister cannot reasonably complain about abandonment of the classics and the canon. At the least, that would be a worry to be expressed and appraised, not just assumed and asserted.

An especially objectionable type of conservative resister is the one motivated by self-interest. It is obvious, even to a naïf, that successfully responding to the demographic problem would have significant implications for the discipline's

⁴The article is *Philosophical diversity in U.S. philosophy departments* (updated), “Daily Nous”, 11th May 2016 and Olberding's comment is dated 12th May 2016.

composition and *status quo*. The reading lists and course curricula and job market are already overcrowded and the sundry epistemic and professional goods of philosophy are finite. Unless our resources suddenly expand, there are only so many jobs, so many slots in a seminar series, and so on – and this can prompt a conservative to want to keep things the way they are, since that is their best strategy for maximising their own prospects for success. A conservative once opined to me that “it’s grand to be a man in a man’s world”, and he spoke a truth, one rooted in the long history of Western philosophy as a culturally privileged intellectual and professional domain of “the man of reason”. There is often understandable reluctance to transform the discipline in ways that constitute a surrendering of those inherited privileges. Such an attitude is understandable, but still unacceptable given that it results in the perpetuation of a culture that structurally disadvantages philosophers from a variety of social groups – not to mention those many philosophical disciplines and traditions that are also marginalised.

(iii) The proud

The third type of resister is the *proud*, who resists proposed efforts to improve the diversity and inclusiveness of philosophy because they perceive in them criticisms of their personal character, intellectual integrity, or professional pride. Since for a philosopher, those aspects often roll together – and not always in healthy ways – a challenge to one will likely resonate with the others.

A proud resister might, for instance, interpret the suggestion that they improve the gender or racial balance of their reading lists as a charge of sexism or racism. If so, they are likely to be stung by the perceived accusation of bigoted prejudice and take it as an insulting and offensive affront to their *personal character*. Such charges can, after all, cut deep, perhaps especially for senior philosophers nearing the end of their careers for whom charges of implicit bias can resonate across an entire career. Proud resistance can also arise from perceived attacks on one’s *intellectual integrity*. Many of the calls to act on the demographic problem unavoidably impute to philosophers a degree of intellectual error, if of a culpable sort. This could be thought about at two levels.

At the “global” level, the proud might worry that talk of the demographic problem, especially if construed as an historical as well as contemporary phenomenon, will undermine the integrity of philosophy. Since a philosopher’s self-image is rooted partly in their status as participants in that tradition, any perceived attack on the tradition can rebound on them. The inherited self-image of philosophy as the rational enterprise *par excellence* conducted under strict disciplined conditions of objectivity is both entrenched and powerful. Because that self-image is a deep source of confidence, self-identity and pride for many philosophers, it is quite natural for them to want to protect and defend it. But the self-image that guides our conduct and life should also be true and accurate

one rather than distorted or self-serving. It's crucial therefore to critically reflect upon the inherited self-images that circulate within our communities rather than uncritically adopt them.

At the "personal" level, it is easy to hear a call to undertake a gender balance survey for one's course as a charge that one lacks the requisite competence or skills – for monitoring and intervention is surely only required where one has reasons to think one is going badly. In such cases, naïveté and pride can be mutually reinforcing: the resister wants to stick with their course in its current form because they are unaware of the psychological and other factors that might have distorted its design. Pride in the course one has carefully developed is liable to be punctured by a realisation that its design reflects implicit biases and other phenomena. It is easy to see why a call to include figure x , or tradition y , or approach z can be easily taken as accusations – one is ignorant of x and is overlooking y and is inexplicably leaving out z . Such calls need not be taken that way, but of course often are.

I suspect that a main reason why the proud resister reacts as they do is that the calls that provoke them come from those who are (or are perceived as) junior or subordinate to them. In my experience in the UK and Ireland, the various phenomena gathered into the demographic problem are the concern of a diversity and inclusion committee (or something similar). These groups usually share a common social profile: their members mainly tend to be women staff members, early career philosophers, postgraduates – many on fixed-term or part-time contracts – and also sometimes undergraduates. Not all groups share this profile, but most do, and these social profiles have two unfortunate consequences. One is that those members are often professionally vulnerable, in ways that affect their confidence and capacities to act – an early career philosopher, anxious about the job market, will quite naturally want to avoid controversy and jeopardise the prospects of a good reference and other means of support. Another is that activists for diversity often lack the sorts of social and professional power one really needs to get things done, especially if the resisters they face are senior, tenured, or otherwise powerful.

Such asymmetries of power and status are often exploited by resisters, especially if their pride is stung by (what they see as) the presumption of inexperienced, self-appointed, junior staff who are, as they see it, "dictating" how they ought to conduct their professional affairs: call this the "whippersnapper reaction". But proud resistance is neither exclusive nor peculiar to senior philosophers, since junior philosophers can exhibit it too, even if only in latent forms. A junior philosopher may have taken a certain senior colleague as an exemplar to emulate, such that criticisms of them are transitively felt to rebound back upon them. If one's personal and professional pride is partly invested in one's successful emulation of a senior exemplar, then any criticism of the exemplar will be felt by the junior. Moreover, a junior philosopher's pride will be invested in their sense of their place within and success and prospects relative to the

philosophical landscape. If so, a challenge to the landscape on the grounds, for instance, of its gender imbalance or racial exclusions, can be experienced as an assault upon the grounds upon which one is building one's career and identity. Proud resistance is therefore a risk for philosophers both junior and senior⁵.

The relationship of pride, power relations, and social realities should be taken seriously by anyone engaged in efforts to respond positively to the demographic problem.

(iv) The hostile

The final type of resister I want to describe is the *hostile*, a person who resists due to hostility to the interests and situation of one or more of the underrepresented groups in philosophy. Hostiles can include racists, sexists, homophobes, transphobes, chauvinists and Eurocentrists, and others inveterately hostile to 'Other' persons, groups, and traditions.

A hostile resister may take pleasure from acting injuriously towards individuals who are or are perceived to belong to those groups. Such resisters are therefore motivated to strive to protect the departmental and disciplinary norms and cultures that enable their deleterious behaviour. Perhaps they try to maintain institutional cultures that fail to take seriously reports of sexual assault or racial abuse. Perhaps they want to keep gay, queer, and trans philosophers out of the discipline. Perhaps they are "good old-fashioned sexists" and run-of-the-mill racists. I do not have rich data on the incidence of such hostile resisters, but the reports reported on blogs and other sources indicate that they do exist – in philosophy and in wider society.

The hostility in question can be directed at two different things. The first are *people*, both individuals and groups: a hostile resister could be sexist, racist, ableist, homophobic, transphobic or otherwise negatively prejudiced against some group of people. Perhaps they believe that members of those groups are incapable of effective philosophising, or that the discipline suffers little for their absence, or is better off without them. If so, that resister aims to resist measures that would include and represent those people within the discipline's ranks, history, and self-image. Some of these hostile resisters will fall into the worst sub-type: the sexual predators who abuse their power and status to sexually aggress women – a fact documented with tremendous courage in several posts on the *What is it like to be a woman in philosophy* blog.

Although hostility to persons is the worst sort, some other resisters are motivated by hostility to *intellectual* targets, such as traditions, methodologies, and disciplines. It is crucial that this sort of resistance does not indicate informed acquaintance or reasoned objection. I have heard philosophers dismiss the topic of epistemic injustice ("that Fricker stuff") and decolonial epistemology

⁵I am grateful to an anonymous referee for raising the prospect of "proud juniors".

(“deological pseudo-epistemology”) and Daoism (“Asian mystical crap”). Sometimes resistance to ideas or traditions could result from *naïveté*, conservative, or pride, but sometimes – if only in rare cases – the reason really does seem to be a xenophobic aversion to culturally Other people and traditions or a chauvinist privileging of one’s own tradition, or both. The claim here is not that these Other topics and traditions should be given *carte blanche* and included without question into our research and teaching – tokenistically included to satisfy the demands of “political correctness” or whatever. It is instead the position that there are excellent philosophical and scholarly reasons to suppose that these Other intellectual disciplines and traditions merit critical investigation and fair evaluation rather than the usual dismissive responses that they too often meet.

Interestingly, teaching is a case where hostility can be effectively challenged. I hope that exposure to a range of culturally and intellectually diverse philosophical traditions, methods, and ideas can prevent students from an all-too-easy drift into the hostility of ignorance. An average undergraduate philosophy course in the UK will feature little if any of the philosophical figures, texts, or traditions of India and China, let alone of Africa or Latin America. There may be a little Buddhism tucked into the philosophy of religion course, but even that will tend to frame that tradition in narrow ways. Many History of Philosophy courses are actually confined to the history of Western tradition and will still tend to neglect Islamic philosophy. And so on.

Happily this is slowly starting to change, at least in certain departments, but there is still huge scope for teachers of philosophy to intellectually and demographically diversify their syllabi. We could expand the scope of our teaching to *philosophy*, rather than to certain of the forms it has taken in certain times and climes (see Cooper 2003 and Garfield and van Norden 2016). Student initiatives like the Diversity Reading List in Philosophy and the UP Directory are welcome steps in that direction⁶. The limits of our philosophy courses are not due solely or primarily to hostility, of course, since they reflect the messy contingencies of history and of culture and the limits on our resources. But such contingencies are apt to be encouraged and exploited by resisters.

5. Conclusions

My aim was to contribute to practical efforts to respond positively to the demographic problem in philosophy by sketching a typology of “resisters”. It is neither definitive nor exhaustive, but ought to be judged on its practical contributions to projects for the reform of philosophy. I hope it might help those

⁶ See <http://www.diversityreadinglist.org/> and <http://www.theupdirectory.com/>.

working for diversity and inclusion in philosophy, whether at the local level of a department or community or at large within the wider profession.

Certainly there is more work to do in identifying and mapping the reasons for, and modes of, resistance to that work. If the typology holds true for your own experiences, that's well and good, but if not, it might still be of use as a heuristic tool. If a colleague twists and turns under critical pressure, then one can see then shifting awkwardly between different types – an initially naïve resister is dragged or badgered into attending a Diversity in Philosophy workshop and so can no longer seriously deny the demographic problem. So, they switch gears, now starting to give conservative reasons – maybe conceding the problem but warning against precipitate action. How a resister will behave in such situations cannot always be predicted. People can and do surprise as well as disappoint and as the disciplinary climate changes, things will hopefully improve – but only if that climate incorporates understanding of the forms of resistance and the forms of counter-resistance that are effective against them.

Happily, some resisters respond very positively and quickly exchange their *naïveté* for clear understanding of the problem and real commitment to addressing it – a commendable, admirable choice. But others – call them *recalcitrant resisters* – will refuse to yield, due to personal psychology, corrupting formative experiences, or other factors. If so, at least we have a polite term for them.

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