10

A Tale of Two Injustices

Epistemic Injustice in Philosophy

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1. Introduction

This chapter has two aims. I articulate and defend a conceptual tool for thinking about epistemic injustice. I utilize this tool to develop a partial explanation for the persistent lack of diverse practitioners in academic philosophy. Academic philosophy has been amply observed to lack diversity in (at least) two ways:

- (i) Academic philosophy lacks diversity with respect to the social identities of its practitioners. Women, gender minorities, and people of color are among those notably underrepresented and marginalized within the field.²
- (ii) Academic philosophy lacks diversity with respect to the kinds of discourses in which its practitioners are engaged. Contributors engaged in race and gender discourses—including, for example, philosophy of race and feminist philosophy—are among those notably underrepresented and marginalized in the field.³

¹ This chapter concerns academic philosophy as it is practiced in the United States and the socalled English-speaking world. While I focus especially on race and gender disparities in philosophy, I intend for my analysis to extend more broadly, where applicable, to other underrepresented groups (e.g. ability, class, sexual orientation, etc.).

² Concerning women in philosophy, see Alcoff (2003); Haslanger (2008); Calhoun (2009); Antony (2012); Hutchison and Jenkins (2013); and Paxton et al. (2012). Concerning black women and women of color, see Yancy (2008); Belle [Gines] (2011); Russell (2019); Narayan (2003); Wilson (2017); and Lee (2017). Concerning trans and non-binary persons, see Bettcher (2018) and Dembroff (forthcoming). Concerning blacks, see Yancy (1998) and Botts et al. (2014). Concerning indigenous persons, see Waters (2003) and Whyte (2017). Concerning Asian and Asian Americans, see Lee (2014) and Kim (2002). Concerning Latinx persons, see Gracia (2008); Yancy (2012); and Madva (2016). While this chapter aims to articulate commonalities that bear explanatory relevance for the underrepresentation and marginalization of the groups outlined above, my analysis may not resonate uniformly with every member within and across these groups.

³ Concerning feminist philosophy, see Walker (2005); Haslanger (2008); Rooney (2011); and Superson (2011). Concerning philosophy of race, see Outlaw (1996); Mills (1997); Haslanger (2008); and Yancy (2012). I also intend for my analysis to encompass a wider range of discourses, some of which are and some of which are not situated under the more general categories of race, feminist, or gender philosophy: e.g. philosophy of disability (Tremain 2018); trans philosophy (Bettcher 2018), black feminist philosophy (James 2014); queer theory (Salamon 2009); Africana philosophy (Outlaw 1996), indigenous philosophy (Whyte 2017), Indian political philosophy (Krishnamurthy 2016),

As I show, these disparities are epistemically connected. Practitioners outlined in (i) and (ii) are both targets of epistemic injustice in academic philosophy; while the former are targeted in virtue of their social identities, the latter are targeted in virtue of the content of their contributions. To illuminate this connection, I distinguish between two varieties of testimonial injustice: identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice. Utilizing these twin concepts, I offer an epistemic explanation that plausibly contributes to our understanding of the demographic disparities observed.⁴

Specifically, I argue that identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice are both prevalent in academic philosophy and that this prevalence introduces substantial barriers to participation for those targeted. Both identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice give rise to similarly injurious effects. For example, targets of either form of testimonial injustice may find it more difficult to shape the direction of inquiry, to secure credit for their contributions, and to find platforms through which to disseminate their ideas. They may be flatly ignored, dismissed, or interrupted. Their credibility may be openly questioned, and they may be pre-emptively denied opportunities to participate in an exchange. In a discipline like philosophy, the practice of which predominately transpires through written and spoken discourse, such epistemic and communicative hurdles are prohibitive. Thus, the dual and compounding effects of identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice in academic philosophy plausibly contribute to the lack of diversity concerning both the social identities of practitioners and the discourses in which practitioners are engaged.

Diverse practitioners are disproportionately represented at every level of academic philosophy—from student majors to doctoral students to faculty. Empirical research has suggested that the most significant decline in representation occurs prior to the Ph.D. stage (Paxton et al. 2012; Beebee and Saul 2011; Botts et al. 2014). As this chapter demonstrates, epistemic injustice is harmful at all ranks of the discipline, but I argue that there is good reason to think its effects are particularly pernicious at the earliest stages of philosophical exposure. On the account I am developing, students who experience, or anticipate experiencing, testimonial injustice in the formal and informal spaces in which they are exposed to academic philosophy—for example, lecture halls, seminar rooms, departmental talks, hallways and common spaces, reading rooms, student clubs, etc.—are

decolonial philosophy (Maldonado-Torres 2011), among others. While this chapter explores unifying factors contributing to a shared displacement within the field, a more comprehensive analysis would also examine commitments of individual discourses and unique forms of exclusion attendant to each.

⁴ See Thompson (2017) for a survey of proposed hypotheses and existing empirical research. As Thompson notes, the empirical literature has focused almost exclusively on philosophy's gender gap, without sufficient attention to the underrepresentation of other identities or their intersections. Consequently, the range of hypotheses offered do not generally acknowledge the differential barriers experienced by non-white (especially black and indigenous), first-generation, disabled, trans, non-binary, etc. persons in pursuing higher education or academic careers in philosophy.

uniquely disincentivized from pursuing philosophy further. An unequal epistemic playing field provides ample reason for even the most promising practitioners to seek alternative educational and employment opportunities.

The chapter proceeds as follows. In section 2, I distinguish between identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice and consider cases in which these injustices discourage participation in philosophy. In section 3, I articulate three ways in which a philosophical discourse may become social identity-coded, such that identity prejudice (or other unwarranted assessments) influence epistemic appraisals of the discourse and its contributors. In section 4, I distinguish my proposal from three extant accounts: the "different voices," "schema clash," and "culture of justification" accounts. In the remaining sections, I address potential objections to my analysis. In section 5, I respond to the objection that my analysis is unable to account for the "uniqueness" (at least amongst the humanities) of philosophy's diversity problem. In section 6, I address the concern that my analysis employs a distinction without a difference; I argue that although identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice are inextricably linked, the phenomena should not be collapsed. In section 7, I respond to the challenge that content-based testimonial injustice is inappropriately characterized as an epistemic injustice, in that it lacks the central epistemic harm associated with traditional (e.g. identity-based) forms. I argue that the distinction between identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice illuminates two modes of epistemic subjectivity, both of which can be harmfully thwarted by epistemic injustice.

2. Identity-Based and Content-Based Testimonial Injustice

As it has been conventionally—but not uncontestably⁵—defined, testimonial injustice picks out "the injustice that a speaker suffers in receiving deflated credibility from the hearer owing to identity prejudice on the hearer's part" (Fricker 2007, 4). Identity prejudice, on this view, is prejudice that targets persons in virtue of their social group identities (e.g. their gender, race, ability, etc.). Testimonial injustice can lead to the dismissal or rejection of the target's contribution, or, operating pre-emptively, it can prevent the target from being appropriately consulted or otherwise epistemically acknowledged. To illustrate, consider a doctor, Paul, who refuses to accept the testimony of a patient, Sammi, concerning her chronic pain, where this refusal is at least partially attributable to ableist and sexist stereotypes about the physical manifestations of chronic illness and women's credibility concerning their own bodies. "You look fine to me," Paul tells her, adding that most of his patients "are in wheelchairs." Insofar as Sammi's

⁵ See Medina (2011); Dotson (2012a); Anderson (2012); Pohlhaus Jr (2014).

doctor assigns her an identity prejudicial credibility deficit, she experiences a familiar form of testimonial injustice. Let us call this *identity-based testimonial injustice*.

Identity-based testimonial injustice can be contrasted with another form of testimonial injustice. A contributor may be prejudicially (or otherwise unjustly) assessed not only owing to social identity, but also owing to the kind of information one attempts to convey. Indeed, the content of a contributor's contribution can itself become social identity-coded in ways that provoke unwarranted epistemic assessments of the contributor and contribution. To illustrate, consider several doctors at a medical conference who have gathered for drinks to discuss their favorite sessions. One doctor, Preston, begins to report to the group what he has learned during a session on fibromyalgia (a condition of recent interest to him, since several of his patients may be affected). Just as Preston begins to share, a fellow doctor, James, chimes in: "Preston, I'm gonna have to stop you right there. Everyone knows those patients are just looking for attention. There's a reason it only affects women!" Preston tries to respond, but James sharply interrupts Preston to tell the group about what he has learned in a session on new developments in robot-assisted joint replacement. As James's commentary makes quite clear, his dismissal of Preston's testimony owes itself to a gender association between fibromyalgia and women coupled with a prejudicial assessment of women (with chronic pain) as "attention-seekers." James pre-emptively dismisses Preston's contribution—essentially preventing Preston from sharing with the group what he has learned about fibromyalgia—in virtue of prejudice occasioned by identity-coded content in Preston's contribution. Moreover, James calls into question Preston's own credibility by suggesting that his contribution has no merit. Let us call this content-based testimonial injustice.⁶ Like its counterpart, content-based testimonial injustice can lead to the dismissal or rejection of the target's contributions. It can also operate pre-emptively, when an audience prevents a target from contributing when certain content is anticipated.

In both cases, the underlying prejudices concern women and people with chronic pain. While Sammi experiences an identity-based testimonial injustice, in virtue of her social identity as a woman with chronic pain, Preston experiences a content-based testimonial injustice, in virtue of his attempt to engage others in a discourse *associated with* women and persons with chronic pain. The epistemic harm to Sammi is direct; her epistemic interests as a knower and contributor have been severely hampered by her doctor, affecting not only her standing as an

⁶ Relatedly, see Dembroff and Whitcomb (forthcoming) who argue for the existence of "content-focused epistemic injustice," a similar phenomenon, which they distinguish from testimonial injustice. Though our accounts developed independently, I take our shared recognition of the importance of content in epistemic injustice to be mutually supportive.

epistemic agent, but also, more broadly, her health and well-being. In Preston's case, James's dismissal reflects an attitude of epistemic denigration towards women and people with chronic pain and derails a discursive exchange in which a group of doctors might have learned something from their peer about fibromyalgia. In this way, James's dismissal of Preston harms the epistemic interests of people with chronic illnesses and of women, more generally, in their capacities to be known, valued, and understood. Insofar as content-based testimonial injustice results in the dismissal and rejection of contributors whose contributions are associated with or concern the interests of persons with unjustly devalued social identities, it takes on a broader epistemic (and social) significance.

For our purposes, then, I contrast the following two forms of testimonial injustice:

Identity-based: prejudice or other unjust assessments regarding *a contributor's social identity* (e.g. gender, race, ability, etc.) influence an audience's evaluation of the contributor's epistemic standing (e.g. credibility, competence, value, etc.), compromising the audience's willingness to consider or fairly engage the contributor and contribution.

Content-based: prejudice or other unjust assessments regarding *social identity-coded content* (e.g. gender-coded, race-coded, ability-coded, etc.) of a contributor's contribution influence an audience's evaluation of the contributor's epistemic standing (e.g. credibility, competence, value, etc.), compromising the audience's willingness to consider or fairly engage the contributor and contribution.

Importantly, identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice can occur independently. That is, persons with non-dominant social identities can experience epistemic harms via identity-based testimonial injustice, regardless of the content of their contributions. Similarly, persons whose contributions are non-dominant social identity-coded can experience epistemic harms via content-based testimonial injustice, regardless of their social identities. It is also possible, however, for a contributor to be vulnerable with respect to both forms of testimonial injustice simultaneously. In such cases, the overlapping and intersecting epistemic effects for such contributors may be difficult to disentangle. As I show, however, the distinction is nonetheless conceptually and practically useful.

Let us now turn to philosophy. To see how identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice disadvantage diverse practitioners in philosophy, consider the following. Lina is an undergraduate woman of color who has taken a few philosophy courses but has yet to add it as a major. Lina greatly enjoys the ideas explored in her classes and values the skills she is developing. One of her professors has even suggested she consider pursuing a career in philosophy. But several experiences have rendered her uncertain about whether philosophy is the right

choice for her. (N.B. Although these cases are presented as vignettes, they are not hypothetical.)

Page Forty-Five

Lina is the only woman and the only student of color in her small in-class discussion group. The group has been assigned to discuss what (white male) philosopher *P* means when he says *x*. Lina suggests several times that the group turn to page forty-five in the assigned text, a page she believes contains crucial clues concerning what philosopher *P* means by *x*. The first few times Lina proposes the suggestion she is ignored, until finally one student jumps in quickly to respond that one should not read too much into any single passage. Throughout the exchange, the professor either does not notice she is being unfairly dismissed or simply does not intervene on her behalf. Lina stops participating in the conversation. After the discussion goes in circles for nearly ten minutes, another student states that he has found something important on page forty-five. The rest of the group dutifully turns to page forty-five, while that student reads aloud the passage Lina had underlined and starred in her own copy. At least she had the right idea, she thinks to herself.

Student Colloquia

Lina has finished a philosophy final paper exploring the influence of women in the meditative tradition before Descartes. Lina's professor was very pleased with it and encouraged her to present the paper at the philosophy student colloquia club in order to get feedback and to meet more of the majors. As she is marking her name on the sign-up sheet to present, a male peer—who happens to be the organizer—says he is happy to see that Lina is interested in presenting, since it's usually the same few people, and the club could really use some new participants. The organizer then asks Lina what she is going to present on. After Lina shares her topic, the organizer scrunches up his face and says, "Here's a suggestion—don't present on *that*. Nobody wants to hear about that! Do you have any other papers?"

Animal Ethics

Lina is taking a course on animal ethics. She is intrigued, but not quite convinced, by the arguments she has been studying. In order to think through one of the arguments further, Lina decides to discuss it with another philosophy student with whom she has had a prior class, since he seemed to know a lot about philosophy. When Lina tries to start a conversation with him, he is dismissive of the topic and mocks Lina's enthusiasm. Before walking away, he jokes about shooting animals for the fun of it. Lina never broaches the subject again with him. A few months later, Lina discovers that this student has become a committed vegan. Surprised, Lina asks a mutual friend when this student became vegan. The friend reports that the student heard about moral veganism from another male peer

(who also took the animal ethics class), which subsequently sparked his interest. Lina wonders why she was not able to sustain this student in conversation on the topic a few months prior.

As these cases demonstrate, Lina is consistently denied the opportunity to make valuable contributions to discussion, to receive acknowledgement for suggestions that are originally her own, to start a conversation with peers that might result in philosophical insight (even personal growth), and to secure uptake for and generate interest in a new idea, where each of the aforementioned is integral to the pursuit of philosophy. While Fricker's account of testimonial injustice primarily concerns assertions, Christopher Hookway (2010) has persuasively argued that something like testimonial injustice affects a much wider range of epistemic contributions. In contrast to Fricker's "informational perspective," Hookway draws our attention to what he calls the "participant perspective" (157), a perspective from which other aspects of an epistemic exchange—for example, "asking questions, floating ideas, [and] considering alternative possibilities" (155)—become salient. I follow Hookway in acknowledging the epistemic significance of these further modes of participation. Thus, though I continue (for the sake of terminological parsimony) to refer to the phenomena under investigation as "testimonial injustice," I am expressly concerned with barriers to epistemic participation in this much broader sense.7

In each case, Lina's interlocutors preclude her participation, but the distinction between identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice can provide a more nuanced diagnosis of each case. In "Page Forty-Five," Lina is the only woman and the only person of color in her discussion group. It is presumably because of her social identity as a woman of color that she has difficulty securing the epistemic standing she needs to ensure that her contribution—which contains no ostensible identity-coded content—is taken seriously by her interlocutors; for the same exact contribution, when offered by a white male student, is received by her peers with no difficulty at all.

In "Student Colloquia," Lina is preemptively dismissed by her male peer because of *what* she intends to contribute, namely, a paper concerning the philosophical influence of women in the meditative tradition before Descartes. For the organizer doesn't object to the fact that Lina is signing up to present. In fact, he seemed quite happy at first. His reproach only comes *after* he discovers her proposed paper topic. What marks Lina out for dismissal in this case—i.e. "don't present on *that*"—is the gendered content of her intended contribution. (Indeed, it's not hard to imagine that even a white, male student intending to present on the same topic might encounter *some* pushback.)

 $^{^7\,}$ For those who prefer to adopt a different term instead of testimonial injustice, perhaps "epistemic participation injustice" would suffice.

In "Animal Ethics," Lina has difficulty sustaining her peer in a casual conversation on the topic of animal welfare, while another male student successfully sparks interest in the same topic on a different occasion. This case may be best theorized as a hybrid case. Lina's peer may be dismissive of her both because of her social identity and because he perceives animal ethics to be an "un-masculine" topic. That Lina's peer at least loosely connects animal ethics and masculinity might be evidenced by his comments about shooting animals for fun—a reference to hunting, stereotypically characterized as a (white) "man's sport." If some combination of identity-based and content-based dismissal is at work in this case, this could explain why Lina's peer demonstrates increased willingness to engage the topic when it is later broached by a fellow male student. If my analysis is plausible, then "Page Forty-Five" illustrates identity-based testimonial injustice, while "Student Colloquia" illustrates content-based testimonial injustice. "Animal Ethics" illustrates a hybrid case.

When epistemic injustice occurs with frequency in a given domain, those targeted have reason to participate less often in such spaces or to avoid those spaces altogether (so as to avoid the annoyance, anger, or embarrassment associated with being targeted). Striving to succeed in a domain in which one is systematically and unjustly subjected to externally imposed epistemic and communicative disadvantages is, minimally, frustrating; at worst, it compromises one's ability to reach one's full potential in that domain. Lina is interested in philosophy. She has taken several courses. She has even received encouragement from faculty. In many ways, this is a best-case scenario. Nevertheless, it would hardly seem shocking if Lina's experiences lead her to conclude that, despite philosophy's attractions, people with her identity or people with her interests, or both, are better off in other disciplines instead.

3. Social Identity-Coded Discourses in Philosophy

On the view I am developing, content-based testimonial injustice occurs when the content of a contributor's contribution becomes identity-coded, such that associations with a particular social identity become affixed to the content in question. But how does this happen? Taking gender and race as our starting point, let me develop this idea.

Carol Cohn defines gender as "a system of meanings," comprised of "ways of thinking, images and words that first shape how we experience, understand, and represent ourselves" (1993, 228–9). Profoundly entrenched and oppressively

⁸ For discussion, see Ruby and Heine (2011) and Rothgerber (2013).

resilient, the gender system permeates many facets of human life—from the toys and clothes with which children are outfitted, to the bathrooms people are expected to use, to the amount of compensation allotted for equivalent performances, to the opportunities available for social, political, and economic advancement, and so on. Gender associations usher in normative expectations that inform social practices of valuation and devaluation in accordance with prevalent gender stereotypes and ideologies (Valian 1998). Often, the association of a devalued gender identity with particular activities, traits, objects, or spaces transfers attitudes of devaluation thereto.

Race, alongside gender, permeates and structures human activities and the spaces in which those activities take place. For example, race influences which regions receive aid in natural disaster (and how quickly); which neighborhoods are allocated effective resources for self-protection, economic development, and education; and which persons are presumed innocent or guilty when shopping in stores or walking down the street. Race gives rise to normative expectations, which determine, among other things, which spaces, places, and activities are valued and which persons within those spaces are treated with respect. Accordingly, Charles Mills argues that:

[t]he norming of space is partially done in terms of the racing of space, the depiction of space as dominated by individuals... of a certain race. At the same time, the norming of the individual is partially achieved by spacing it, that is, representing it as imprinted with the characteristics of a certain kind of space. So this is a mutually supporting characterization that...becomes a circular indictment: "You are what you are in part because you originate from a certain kind of space, and that space has those properties in part because it is inhabited by creatures like yourself." (1997, 40–1)

As Mills suggests, the "racing" and "norming" of persons is co-constructed through the racing and norming of spaces (and the properties and characteristics thereby associated with them).

Just as physical spaces can become gendered and/or racialized, so too can dialectical spaces. A discourse, taken broadly to include spoken, written, signed, etc. forms of communication, becomes gendered or racialized when, as a result of race or gender associations, perceptions of the discourse and its practitioners are consciously or unconsciously shaped by gender or race ideologies. When a particular identity is socially devalued, this devaluation likewise serves to underwrite the devaluation of discourses associated with that social identity. To see how gender and race ideologies influence value perceptions of philosophical discourses and their practitioners, consider this memory recounted by feminist bioethicist Hilde Lindemann (2006, W15):

A few months ago, I attended a workshop on metaethics. One morning at breakfast, as a handful of guy-philosophers and I lingered over our coffee, we played the game of ranking the various specializations within philosophy according to the prestige they enjoy—which not coincidentally, also inversely tracks gender. Here's what we came up with:

Philosophy of mind, philosophy of language, and metaphysics: The alpha-dominant philosophy, done by Real Men

Epistemology and Philosophy of Science: Done by manly enough men

Metaethics: Done by men who aren't entirely secure in their masculinity

Ethics, Social and Political Philosophy: Done by girls

Bioethics: Done by stupid girls.

The entire hierarchy is presumptively white, and explicitly gendered discourses were not even ranked. But one can imagine what greater inclusivity might have looked like. Feminist philosophy, according to this logic, might be said to be done by *angry*, stupid girls; philosophy of race done by angry, stupid girls *of color* and angry, men of color who—depending on the racial stereotypes at play—either aren't entirely secure in their masculinity or are hyper-masculine (but not in the "right" ways). And so on and so forth. Some variation of this prestige hierarchy is likely familiar to many philosophers.

The imbedded juxtaposition of identity descriptors alongside relative intelligence descriptors (e.g. "stupid girls") expressed in this hierarchy reflects a long history of prejudicial beliefs concerning the amount of intellect traditionally associated with each discourse, where discourses towards the top of the hierarchy are thought to require more intelligence than those down below. Consider, for example, the sentiments expressed by P. F. Strawson—philosopher of language and mind, whose most widely discussed contributions to philosophy were, perhaps ironically, in ethics—who was known to have frequently joked that "he would turn to moral philosophy only when his powers were waning" (Snowdon and Gomes 2019). Indeed, Strawson openly characterized the subfield of ethics as less "intellectually gripping" than the other areas of philosophy to which he directed most of his attention. Against a backdrop in which only "Real Men" are purported to be endowed with the "powers" required to engage in "gripping" philosophy, the perception that philosophical ethics is easy and that it is "done by girls" is no innocent pairing.¹⁰

⁹ Strawson regarded his two ethics papers to "effectively embody all I have thought or have to say in a philosophical area which, important as I recognize it to be, I have never found as intellectually gripping as those to which I have given more attention" (Snowdon and Gomes 2019).

¹⁰ While some may be tempted to view Strawson as an outlier, see Lloyd (1984) and Rooney (1991) for discussion concerning the association of women and irrationality in the history of philosophy. See also Leslie et al. (2015) for discussion concerning expectations of innate brilliance and gender distributions across academic disciplines.

Likewise, Charles Mills observes the existence of two separate "worlds":

on the one hand, the world of mainstream (i.e., white) ethics and political philosophy, preoccupied with discussions of justice and rights in the abstract, on the other hand, the world of Native American, African American, and Third and Fourth World political thought, historically focused on issues of conquest, imperialism, colonialism, white settlement, land rights, race and racism, slavery, jim crow, reparations, apartheid, cultural authenticity, national identity, indigenismo, Afrocentrism, etc. These issues hardly appear in mainstream political philosophy, but they have been central to the political struggles of the majority of the world's population. (1997, 4)

As Mills' characterization illuminates, systemic racist, settler-colonial, and western-centric biases are activated within smaller intellectual spaces, shaping the ways in which racialized content is positioned within the field (if it is granted a position at all). Referring to this practice as "exceptionalism," Kristie Dotson argues that this philosophical practice "involves the unfounded [...] exclusion of large bodies of investigation based upon the privileging of one group (or set of groups) and their investigations over others" (2012b, 11). The hierarchy informs, facilitates, and justifies exclusionary practices that govern not only *who* (i.e. what social identities) can participate in philosophy, but also *about what* (i.e. the content) one must contribute.

Given these observations, we can articulate at least three ways in which a discourse can become social identity-coded. A discourse can become social identity-coded in virtue of:

- (1) assumptions concerning who the contributors in the discourse are;
- (2) assumptions concerning whose attitudes or interests the discourse reflects or serves;
- (3) assumptions concerning the relative ability or intellectual "power" (e.g. brilliance, objectivity, rationality, gravitas, etc.) believed necessary to engage in the discourse.

Any of the aforementioned can produce epistemic injustice, but we should distinguish (1)–(3) for several reasons. First, certain discourses may turn out to be identity-coded in virtue of some, but not all, of these options. For example, ethics, as characterized by Strawson, may be gender-coded in virtue of (1) and (3), but not necessarily in virtue of (2). Second, the kind of testimonial injustice prompted by (1), (2), and (3) may differ, where (1) and (3) may be more likely to yield an identity-based testimonial injustice and (2) more likely to produce a content-based testimonial injustice. This distinction is important, as practices aimed to

reduce the harms of identity-based testimonial injustice (e.g. anonymous grading or peer review, etc.) will likely fail to address the harms of content-based testimonial injustice; for how does one effectively "anonymize" the content of a contribution? Finally, the exclusionary effects mediated by (1), (2), or (3) may vary in intensity for different contributors and discourses, and they may combine together to produce novel harms.

A gendered and racialized hierarchy of discourses largely determines who fashions the philosophical terrain, which questions are characterized as philosophically interesting, and what conversations are deemed worth pursuing. Higher in the hierarchy are those discourses that are thought (via 1) to be engaged primarily by "Real Men"; (via 2) to serve the interests or reflect the attitudes of "Real Men" (or to be so highly abstract as to serve the interests of no "man" in particular); or (via 3) to require a high level of "power" (e.g. innate intellectual ability, objectivity, rationality, gravitas, etc.) associated with "Real Men." Situated much lower in the hierarchy are non-dominantly gendered and racialized discourses; that is, those discourses thought (via 1) to be engaged primarily by women, gender minorities, and/or non-whites; (via 2) to serve the interests or reflect the attitudes of women, gender minorities, and/or non-whites; or (via 3) to not require high levels of ability or "power" for meaningful participation (where this last assessment also involves classist and ableist associations).

Thus, identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice constitute dual mechanisms through which the epistemic norms of a prejudicial hierarchy are structurally preserved in philosophical spaces. Illustrating the first mechanism at work, black woman philosopher Anita Allen recalls the disturbing way in which a colleague attempted to discourage her from philosophy, openly asserting that she did not possess "enough candle power (i.e., intellect)" but possessed "too much juice (i.e., sensuality)" for the profession (Allen and Yancy 2018). Likewise, Yolanda A. Wilson (2017) writes of a philosophy professor who claimed that philosophy lacks black participants because they can't pass a logic requirement and of a white male peer who prevented her from collecting her department mail because he didn't think a woman of color could possibly be a graduate student in the department. Or Sally Haslanger (2008), who tells of her professor, who shared that he believed women were incapable of being first-rate philosophers, owing to their inability to have seminal ideas. In these cases, demeaning race and gender stereotypes are mobilized to launch discipline-specific attacks. Such attacks target practitioners in virtue of their social identities (e.g. qua woman, qua black person, qua black woman, etc.) to undermine their capacities as epistemic and philosophical contributors.

Illustrating the second mechanism at work, consider the statements of black feminist philosopher V. Denise James who recalls the following (2014, 192–3):

After [a] senior philosopher questioned the possibility of my existence as a black feminist philosopher, I started calling myself a pragmatist because Dewey's work on democracy came closest to helping me answer the "what do you do?" question without betraying my growing desire to do philosophy differently. Pragmatist was a name I could stand on. I could locate myself in the profession... Without a "guy," my status as a philosopher in these settings was tenuous... With Dewey as my "guy," the looks of confusion, of misunderstanding, of suspicion lessened, although they did not disappear. Dewey gave me access to a professional philosophical community. Although I smuggled in black feminist thought from outside of the discipline, as long as pragmatist was the name I called myself, I could be understood.

As James reports, the association of a discourse (e.g. black feminist philosophy) with a devalued social identity (e.g. black women) serves to exclude and discredit the discourse and its primary investigators in academic philosophy; but that same discourse, once associated with a *valued* social identity (e.g. Dewey, the white "guy"), is permitted greater inclusion and accreditation within the field. Likewise, feminist ethicist Margaret Urban Walker states that practitioners engaged in feminist philosophy are "vulnerable to being discredited for not knowing the more professionally central discourses," while practitioners engaged in dominant discourses are permitted to "be blithely ignorant...or to have mistaken or cartoonish impressions" of feminist discourses (Walker 2005, 161). This profound failure of epistemic reciprocity divests marginalized discourses and their contributors of value, creates non-reciprocal responsibilities for those contributors, and ensures that when such discourses do collide, it is disproportionately on dominant terms. As James and Walker illustrate, their epistemic and philosophical participation is threatened *in virtue of social identity-coded content in their contributions*.

4. Not Another Version of ...

On the hypothesis I am developing, epistemic injustice constrains a contributor's full epistemic participation in a given domain, providing targets with a reason to participate less often in such spaces or to avoid such spaces altogether. Contributors with non-dominant social identities and contributors engaged in non-dominant social identity-coded discourses are both targets of epistemic injustice in academic philosophy; thus, both kinds of contributors have reason to participate less in academic philosophical spaces or to avoid them altogether. In this section, I distinguish my proposal from three alternative accounts, namely, the "different voices," "schema clash," and "culture of justification" accounts.

Consider first the "different voices" hypothesis. While many versions exist, the proposal generally seeks to explain demographic asymmetries in philosophy by appealing to "intrinsic" differences—either natural or socialized—between different identity groups (e.g. gender, culture, etc.). On this hypothesis, philosophy's lack of diversity would be explained by the fact that diverse practitioners are selected (or self-selected) out of the field, owing to intrinsic, group-based unsuitability or disinterest. To this end, theorists have hypothesized differing group-based propensities or preferences concerning philosophical intuitions (Weinberg et al. 2001; Machery et al. 2004; Buckwalter and Stich 2014), argumentation styles (Moulton 1983), or modes of reasoning (Gilligan 1993; Orr 1989). Challenging this view, Louise Antony argues that, "the offending characteristic in philosophy must track some stable difference...or the explanation fails" (2012, 229). The existence of stable, intrinsic differences between social groups concerning their philosophical intuitions, their reasoning modes, or argumentation styles has not been reliably demonstrated, and the hypothesis is empirically unsupported.¹¹ Moreover, the "different voices" hypothesis assumes controversial and unsubstantiated forms of essentialism, and so we might also reject it on these grounds.

In contrast to this hypothesis, my account proposes a stable—though, importantly, not intrinsic—difference shared by underrepresented practitioners: namely, an increased susceptibility to epistemic injustice in a range of philosophical spaces. First, my proposal explains the underrepresentation of persons with non-dominant social identities in virtue of their increased susceptibility to identity-based testimonial injustice. But the amount of credibility or epistemic standing a person is afforded is a decidedly *extrinsic* feature of that person in that it depends, in large part, on an audience's *perceptions* of the contributor and contribution. Thus, my proposal does not depend on essentialist claims about these contributors concerning, for instance, their actual abilities, interests, intuitions, or philosophical preferences. Unlike the "different voices" hypothesis, my account is sensitive to the intrinsic heterogeneity within non-dominant social identity groups, while honing in on a key similarity: namely, their increased susceptibility to epistemic injustice. On my view, the lack of identity diversity in philosophy is partially explained by this "stable difference."

In addition, however, my proposal also offers an explanation for the lack of content diversity observed in the field. As I have argued, not only are contributors with non-dominant social identities increasingly susceptible to epistemic injustice in philosophy (via identity-based testimonial injustice), but so too are contributors engaged in discourses *associated* with non-dominant social identities (via content-based testimonial injustice). On my account, the dual and compounding effects of each form of testimonial injustice unify and partially explain

¹¹ For example, see Fine (2010); Lam (2010); Adleberg et al. (2015), Kim and Yuan (2015).

the pervasive lack of both identity and content diversity in the field. Thus, my account explains more, while making fewer assumptions.

Second, my view should be distinguished from the hypothesis discussed by Cheshire Calhoun (2009) and Sally Haslanger (2008) according to which the lack of identity diversity in philosophy is attributable to the difficulty diverse practitioners may have in "imagining" (Calhoun 2009, 218) themselves as philosophers, owing to divergence between their conceptions of themselves and their conceptions of philosophy as white and hypermasculine. Drawing on Virginia Valian's (1998) notion of a schema, Haslanger refers to these divergences as "schema clashes" (2008, 212). Haslanger states:

It is difficult for women to feel "at home" in a hypermasculine environment since it requires sublimating potentially important aspects of identity; because some of the specific elements of masculinity that are emphasized in philosophy are also associated with whiteness, the same is true for [racial] minorities. (217)

As my analysis shows, I agree with these theorists that philosophy is white and hypermasculine, that it is broadly perceived as such, and that some (or even many) diverse practitioners must sublimate important aspects of their identity to feel "at home" in the discipline. On the hypothesis I am proposing, however, diverse practitioners do not feel "at home" in philosophy because they must contend with epistemic and communicative injustices when attempting to participate in the field. Thus, my hypothesis avoids generalizations concerning the self-conceptions of diverse practitioners. The problem that I have elucidated, namely, a disproportionate susceptibility to epistemic injustice in the field, is explanatory even in the absence of any schema clash on the part of diverse practitioners themselves. For on my account, it is not the diverse practitioners, but rather their interlocutors, who possess the comparatively curbed imaginations.

Moreover, my account suggests that at least some of the characteristics that Haslanger associates with hypermasculinity (and hence, philosophy)—for example, competitive, combative, non-nurturing, and judgmental (217)—may be the wrong ones on which to focus. Consider the findings of a study by Thompson et al. (2016), which directly examined several hypotheses proposed to explain the underrepresentation of women in philosophy. The study examined the ease with which women participate in introductory philosophy classrooms, and—consistent with my proposal—revealed that women scored "significantly lower than men" with respect to their comfort speaking in class (2016, 9). Yet the researchers found no evidence to support the hypothesis "that women find Intro classes to involve overly aggressive or confrontational discussions" (13). This finding suggests that traits like competiveness and non-nurturance may be insufficiently explanatory. The researchers did note, however, that no questions directly

tested the hypothesis "that men in Intro classes dominate class discussion and may be called on more by Instructors, which women notice and dislike" (13). Concerning *this* hypothesis, a survey of existing empirical research cited several studies supporting it. The survey found "that women are less comfortable than men speaking in class, including expressing their opinions and asking/answering questions, and that this difference partially accounted for the relationship between gender of respondent and their willingness to take more philosophy" (Thompson 2017, 7).

Particularly illuminating are the findings of a qualitative study (Lockard et al. 2017) utilizing female-identified focus groups. 12 In describing the epistemic role of social identity in their classroom experiences, several students noted that, with the exception of a "selected" few women, "men dominated the class conversations" (12) and that there were more men than women in their classes. Concerning her professor, one student reported that "the girls at the beginning of the semester had to have a little more weight behind what they said" (13), while several other students mentioned that professors played "favorites." Alternatively, other students noted the role of identity-coded content, stating that they "wished that gender was a topic of conversation even when the material was not explicitly about women or gender" (12). The researchers concluded that "students' 'classroom experiences'...might be a more pronounced factor in students' overall assessments of philosophy" (18). Of course, this data is limited both in terms of sample size and concerning the range of social identities studied. If, as I have been arguing, diverse practitioners are experiencing (or anticipate experiencing) epistemic and communicative disadvantages in philosophical exchanges in virtue of both identity and content, then our investigations ought to continue to explore this hypothesis further.

Finally, let me distinguish my proposal from Kristie Dotson's (2012b) assessment of the field's inability to sustain diverse practitioners, in which she identifies philosophy's symptomatic "culture of justification" as a major contributing factor. Typified by the centrality of the question "How is this paper philosophy?," Dotson's account raises concerns about philosophy's valorization of "justification as a method," which privileges practices of legitimation preoccupied with a singular set of "presumed commonly-held, univocally relevant justifying norms" (6). She argues that philosophy's privileging of this method—and the ensuing culture—creates an inhospitable environment for diverse practitioners in the field, who must disproportionately shoulder the burden of justifying their practices, projects, canons, and methodologies. She advocates instead for a culture of praxis

Diverse practitioners—especially at the undergraduate level—may not readily identify class-room discomfort as a consequence of injustice and discrimination or may interpret epistemic barriers as evidence of their own philosophical, intellectual, or communicative inadequacies. Consequently, qualitative data in which practitioners describe their classroom experiences in greater detail are especially useful.

which recognizes a variety of canons, multiple methodologies of disciplinary validation, and the value of studying live concerns.

I share with Dotson the view that a culture of praxis within philosophy would contribute to the development of a more attractive working environment. But my account should be distinguished from Dotson's for two reasons. 13 First, content-based testimonial injustice identifies a more general—and in some instances, more superficial—phenomena than that with which Dotson is primarily concerned. Because a philosophical discourse can become identity-coded in the absence of methodological divergence or departure from accepted legitimizing norms, content-based testimonial injustice may identify a broader range of contributions with respect to which diverse practitioners may be epistemically targeted. Second, however, the proposal I am developing suggests that operating alongside—perhaps even prior to—the burden of legitimizing specific projects, practices, or methodologies in philosophical spaces, practitioners with non-dominant social identities are first/also saddled with the burden of simply trying to participate in any capacity at all. On my proposal, a contributor may experience barriers to philosophical participation solely in virtue of social identity—regardless of content, project, practice, or methodology. That is, contributors with non-dominant social identities may experience an inhospitable epistemic environment in philosophy, via identity-based testimonial injustice, while at the same time violating no justificatory norms. 14 Thus, while a shift to a culture of praxis would undoubtedly increase the range of habitable options within the profession (thereby improving the environment for contributors engaged in non-dominant social identity-coded discourses), it would not necessarily improve the experiences of contributors with non-dominant social identities—and especially novice contributors—who (attempt to) engage philosophy's more conventionally credited discourses. The epistemic environment in those discourses would likely remain inhospitable for people with their social identities. To this end, the dual mechanisms of identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice cast a wider explanatory net.

Ultimately, determining which factors contribute to the demographic disparities in philosophy is an empirical matter, and it is no doubt true that myriad

¹³ It should be noted that Dotson states that she is focused on the "environment of professional philosophy for diverse practitioners *who have made the choice to pursue philosophy as a career path*" (emphasis added), and not—as I am presently—on "why traditionally conceived diverse peoples…are not attracted to philosophy as a career path" (5). Thus, while the view she articulates contributes to our understanding of this latter question, she did not intend to provide an explanation. Nonetheless, I consider her account here to highlight the relevant differences between our views.

¹⁴ Unless, for example, simply possessing a non-dominant social identity in the philosophy classroom constitutes a departure from justificatory norms on Dotson's view. If this is the case, then I would argue that we ought to distinguish between justificatory norms that exclude persons in virtue of their social identities and justificatory norms that exclude persons in virtue of characteristics of their contributions. This distinction would not preclude the possibility that some justificatory norms could exclude on the basis of both, but it would allow us to track each phenomena independently.

factors converge to create what Antony (2012) has called "The Perfect Storm." In differentiating my proposal from related accounts, I am not claiming that these proposals have no explanatory role, nor am I suggesting that my proposal is the only, or even the most important, consideration at play. While my proposal does not purport to offer a full explanation, it can, I think, inform our understanding of why we continue to make so little progress in our efforts to diversify the field and especially why we see a substantial decrease in the proportion who pursue philosophy after their first experiences with it. Thus, the account I am proposing here should be understood to illuminate *a* hypothesis which warrants further investigation. As Gina Schouten notes, "we have a long way to go before we really know which mechanisms are at work. In the meantime, philosophers can deploy our own tools of inquiry to improve our discipline" (2016, 276). As I have been arguing, the distinction between identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice is one such tool.

5. The 'Philosophical Uniqueness' Objection

One might worry that insofar as diverse contributors are at an increased risk for testimonial injustice, this will be true in *any* academic field and not just in philosophy. Thus, one might object that my proposal is not suited to explain philosophy's peculiar demographic disparities. Indeed, philosophy fares particularly poorly in comparison to other humanities disciplines (instead, more closely resembling non-humanities fields like computer science and engineering) and this indicates there is something unique about philosophy's diversity problem. Because the mechanisms (e.g. epistemic injustice) deployed in my hypothesis are generally widespread, my hypothesis would not explain the exceptional disparities observed in philosophy. Does my account have anything to say about this?

I admit that the effects of epistemic injustice—both identity-based and content-based—are undoubtedly widespread (though perhaps not evenly spread) throughout the academy. The fact that my proposal can help explain why diverse practitioners may likewise be underrepresented in other academic disciplines is a virtue of my account. Despite the broader application of my proposal, however, I want to suggest several ways in which the effects of pervasive epistemic injustice will result in unique disadvantages for *philosophers*, and especially for novice philosophers at early stages of exposure.

First, it seems to me that the effects of epistemic injustice will be uniquely problematic in the discipline of philosophy, a discipline which Laurence BonJour has characterized—in a book written for and taught to students—as "essentially dialectical in character" (2010, viii, my emphasis added). According to BonJour, philosophical practice consists of "arguments and responses and further

arguments and further responses back and forth among the different positions on a given issue" (viii). While BonJour thinks engagement in this dialectical practice is essential for all practitioners in the field, he suggests that such participation is especially important for students in the beginning stages of philosophical inquiry. Indeed, BonJour states, it "is important for a student who wants to understand this dialectical development to become, to some extent at least, a participant rather than a mere observer" (viii).

While thoughtful practitioners may challenge BonJour's conception, this conception of philosophy is commonly held and frequently communicated to many students upon their introduction to the field. Insofar as targets of epistemic injustice are denied an equal opportunity to participate in open-ended dialectical exchanges, a practice widely characterized as essential to doing philosophy, their ability to participate in the field will be greatly diminished. Indeed, if we recall the sorts of difficulties faced by the targets of testimonial injustice (lack of recognition for one's contributions, difficulty shaping the direction of conversation, limited opportunities to disseminate ideas, frequent interruptions, being ignored or dismissed), this is precisely the sort of interference that renders participation in a dialogic exchange incredibly difficult (not to mention utterly unenjoyable), if not completely impossible. In addition to other challenges associated with "doing philosophy"—for example, parsing out difficult texts, constructing and evaluating arguments, etc.—targets of testimonial injustice must overcome substantial epistemic and communicative hurdles to engage in basic levels of inquiry. Thus, while testimonial injustice is no doubt present in other disciplines, its effects will likely introduce discipline-specific disincentives in the philosophy classroom. Insofar as novice philosophers are taught that the very practice of philosophy essentially transpires through participation in dialectical exchanges, testimonial injustice in the philosophy classroom poses a distinct disadvantage. This is particularly important considering the fact that for many people, their first and perhaps only exposure to philosophy as a discipline is in a college classroom, where this is not the case for other disciplines like, for instance, English.¹⁵

Second, epistemic injustice likely occurs with greater frequency in fields like philosophy *precisely because* diverse practitioners are so seriously underrepresented

¹⁵ One might object that English is similarly dialectical but does not share philosophy's demographics. A difference may partly consist in the space between the characterization of a discipline as primarily (even centrally) dialectical and as essentially dialectical, where the latter is far more restrictive. Many students in English departments study creative writing, technical writing, grammar, English language education, etc., none of which are typically characterized as "essentially dialectical" in BonJour's narrow sense. More importantly, however, it seems to me no accident that while English has long validated a variety of communicative media (e.g. plays, autobiography, short stories, poetry, oral history), philosophy has not. For a variety of reasons, including economic necessity, expressive potential, political utility, and the preservation of marginalized intellectual traditions, the philosophical contributions of diverse thinkers have historically emerged in an abundance of media beyond the singularly prized "philosophical treatise." Diverse practitioners may find happier homes in academic fields where the inclusion of these contributions is regarded as a feature, not a bug.

in those spaces. There is good reason to think that the effects of identity-based testimonial injustice are less pronounced in exchanges between individuals with shared social identities, or, in the case of content-based testimonial injustice, between individuals with shared openness towards the content of a discourse. This is plausible for two reasons. First, shared knowledge of the reality of what it is actually like to have a certain social identity (or shared knowledge of the value of a discourse) fosters epistemic familiarity, removing the epistemic function of stereotypes or false ideologies on which non-group members or non-participants often rely to (mis)assess their interlocutors. Second, when non-dominantly situated persons experience and reflect upon the false and invalidating nature of the prejudicial evaluative practices to which they have been subjected, they are often better equipped than their dominantly situated counterparts to identify other instances of such practices at work. If this is correct, then the likelihood that diverse practitioners will experience testimonial injustice in a given exchange decreases as their representation in that environment increases.

Two observations follow. First, philosophy classrooms and spaces in which contributors with non-dominant social identities occupy a critical mass—as opposed to being grossly outnumbered—generally reduce (although do not entirely eliminate) the likelihood of identity-based testimonial injustice. Second, philosophy classrooms and spaces in which contributors are engaged together with shared openness to non-dominant identity-coded content—as opposed to environments in which this content is denigrated or wholly absent—generally reduce (although again, may not entirely eliminate) the likelihood of content-based testimonial injustice. Each of these environments provide different benefits, and thus they do not perform the same ameliorative role, but both kinds of environments offer more favorable spaces in which diverse students could consider a future in philosophy. This observation is thus bittersweet. It is sweet, in that small but consistent shifts in the demographics of the field can produce more

¹⁶ Indeed, the average philosophy classroom is typically inadequate in one or both capacities and thus provides a subpar environment in which to recruit students to the field. Programs like PIKSI (Philosophy in an Inclusive Key Summer Institute), Compass Workshops, and the Rutgers Summer Institute for Diversity in Philosophy have served to develop the first sort of environment, in which diverse students are engaged in a broad range of philosophical discourses in spaces in which they occupy a critical mass. Unlike these programs, many departments do not have direct control over the identities of the students in their classrooms, but departments do have control over the content offered at the introductory level (and beyond!). Thus, one way to shift demographics is to provide adequate support for and encouragement of content diversity in classes. This extends beyond diversifying the contents of a "generalized" introductory syllabi but to also diversifying the range of courses that could be offered at the introductory level: for example, Philosophy of Race, Philosophy of Gender, Social and Political Philosophy, Chinese Philosophy, Philosophy of Disability, etc. In this way, diverse students would be able to choose from a wider range of content through which to engage philosophically, and such courses would naturally provide environments in which students enrolled would be more likely to share with one another an openness to the course content. The aim of cultivating classrooms in which students demonstrate openness to diverse content and to diverse identities is crucial, as merely diversifying a syllabus does not by itself reduce the possibility of testimonial injustice in the classroom.

sizeable impacts down the road. It is bitter, however, in that attracting diverse students into philosophy under the auspices that the field will thereby be hospitable to them is morally suspect. Indeed, there is an undeniable moral tension in recruiting diverse practitioners into an inequitable working environment because the environment needs more diverse practitioners to become equitable. From this perspective, it appears as though philosophy needs to have its diversity problem fixed before it can truly fix its diversity problem.

6. A Distinction without a Difference?

Utilizing a distinction between identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice, I have developed a two-pronged epistemic explanation for the lack of diverse practitioners in academic philosophy. I argued that (i) contributors with non-dominant social identities and (ii) contributors engaged in non-dominant social identity-coded discourses are both susceptible to epistemic injustice in the field. While the former are targeted in virtue of their social identities, the latter are targeted in virtue of the content of their contributions; the injustices experienced by contributors at the intersections are dual and hybrid.

One advantage of my proposal, then, is that it connects the underrepresentation and marginalization of (i) and (ii), while avoiding circular analysis. But one might wonder whether a non-circular analysis is useful. There is evidence to suggest that philosophers engaged in gender discourses in the field are more likely to be women and gender minorities and that those engaged in race discourses are more likely to be people of color.¹⁷ Given this overlap, why not just explain the underrepresentation of one in virtue of the other, or vice versa? Indeed, one might wonder whether a non-circular analysis—and hence the distinction between identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice—is useful. That is, does the analysis employ a distinction without a difference?

First, although (i) and (ii) overlap, they are not identical. For instance, many (though not all) philosophers of race are people of color, and not all people of color in philosophy have interests in philosophy of race (or other race-coded

¹⁷ Haslanger (2010) found that feminist philosophy was among the most frequent areas in which women published and was the least frequent area for men. Schwitzgebel and Jennings (2017) found that the proportion of women in ethics—broadly construed to include social and political philosophy, philosophy of race, gender, and sexuality, aesthetics, normative ethics, applied ethics, and philosophy of law—"substantially exceeded the proportion in other areas of philosophy among U.S.-ranked faculty [Philosophical Gourmet Report], recent job placements, APA program participants, authorship in elite journals, highly cited authors, and targets of extended journal article discussion" (29). Paxton (n.d.) reported that the philosophical subfield of philosophy of race, gender, and sexuality is 81 per cent women. Botts et al. (2014) found that the top areas of specialization for US black philosophers were Africana, race, social and political, ethics, and continental philosophy; for black women philosophers, these areas were race, ethics, continental, social and political, and feminism.

discourses). Likewise, while most practitioners engaged in gender discourses are women and gender minorities, many women and gender minorities in philosophy are not engaged in these discourses. My proposal is compatible with existing overlap without presuming overlap or relying on overlap to generate an explanation. Persons with non-dominant social identities possess a variety of philosophical strengths and interests. Our efforts to diversify the field must be attentive to overlap without blurring the distinction between identity and philosophical interest. If we treat (i) and (ii) interchangeably or collapse them, we risk foreclosing a wide range of philosophical opportunities for persons with non-dominant social identities—especially for those in the earlier stages of philosophical exploration.

Second, distinguishing between (i) and (ii)—and thus between identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice—is useful because it enables us to articulate why structural and institutional efforts aimed to ameliorate one form of injustice can fail to address (and can even exacerbate) problems of the other. Consider, first, how efforts to ameliorate identity-based testimonial injustice can proceed in the absence of attention to content. Imagine a philosophy graduate program that, during the five years in which a graduate student might be enrolled, facilitates approximately 30 invited philosophy talks (averaging, say, 6 talks a year). Suppose that during this time, 100 per cent of the speakers are white and 80 per cent of the total speakers invited are cisgender men. Moreover, all of the invited speakers-regardless of social identity-give talks in mainstream epistemology, metaphysics, philosophy of language, mind, and, perhaps, occasionally ethics or history. Suppose, further, that the department eventually becomes concerned with the demographics of their department colloquia and diligently works to introduce greater diversity in the race and gender identities of their speakers. Yet, as it turns out, none of the newly invited speakers work in areas outside the mainstream. While the department has made efforts to alleviate the effects of identity-based testimonial injustice, they have done nothing to remedy the effects of content-based testimonial injustice. Concerning the kinds of discourses in which invited speakers are engaged, the resulting colloquia looks exactly the same as it did before.

These exclusions are detrimental to the epistemic and professional lives of those practitioners who are pre-emptively passed over, but these harms have a more expansive reach. Invited talks serve to expose graduate students to philosophy's breadth and to demonstrate the range of inquiries it is possible for one to undertake as a philosopher; they provide students with opportunities to learn from and interact with other professionals who share their interests and to develop conversational competence in areas of philosophy about which they are less knowledgeable. Patterned content exclusions deprive students of these opportunities, effectively communicating to them that such content does not belong in philosophy departments. (This message is likewise communicated through

curricula, concerning the kinds of courses offered and required for students to advance professionally.) Students unfamiliar with diverse discourses will continue to remain ignorant of them due to lack of exposure, and students with interests (or potential interests) in these areas will be less likely to pursue them if they perceive that such interests have no place in the profession more broadly. Some students may leave the discipline to pursue these interests elsewhere. Because graduate students already provide a substantial portion of existing undergraduate instruction (especially at the introductory level) and constitute the pool from which the next generation of faculty and instructors are selected, the effects of content-based testimonial injustice reverberate throughout the profession. Transformative interventions at the level of colloquia and curricula require a collective expectation that familiarity with and respect for diverse discourses are an integral part of a philosophy education; such interventions demand the intentional inclusion of valued and adequately compensated practitioners who knowledgeably engage in these investigations in their teaching and research. In the absence of explicit attention to content, efforts that increase identity diversity may produce limited effects at the level of discourse.

By the same token, interventions aimed at increasing content diversity in philosophy can fail to address identity-based inequalities. Consider, for example, the recent publication of a journal symposium on Black Lives Matter, in which no contributions from black philosophers were included. In an open letter to the editors, Chris Lebron (2017)—a black philosopher who has written extensively on Black Lives Matter—observed that, in the five years leading up to the symposium's publication, the journal:

has not published a single article on the philosophy of race: voting, elections, immigration, global markets, and animals have gotten their time in the journal's sun. But as black Americans, and the philosophers who study racial inequality—a political philosophical problem—have directly engaged one of our era's most sinister moral and political quandaries, the journal has failed to represent race in its pages. Maybe more damning, so far as I can tell, not one black philosopher has seen her or his work appear in the pages of your respected journal, on race or any other topic.

As Lebron notes, the journal's publication record reveals a systemic two-fold lack: the contributions of black philosophers (regardless of content) and contributions to race discourses (regardless of the identities of the contributors) are perpetually absent. ¹⁸ Against this backdrop, the publication of a special symposium on Black Lives Matter in which no black philosophers are included is particularly glaring.

¹⁸ One might respond that if the problem lies in the fact that black contributors did not submit their work, then the fault does not lie with the journal. This response is inattentive to the mechanisms

By failing to include any black thinkers—not even flagging the troubling irony of this deficiency—the possibility of black participation in that platform was pre-emptively foreclosed. To be clear, the claim that black-identified perspectives were wrongfully erased should not be confused with the claim that no non-black voices ought to have been included. As Lebron states, "[i]t is important that there be a range of viewpoints on a matter that is democratically urgent—we are all involved in this problem." But the wholesale absence of black perspectives disregards the contributions of persons whose identities are most centrally relevant to the content considered. What such a case illustrates is that efforts towards greater content inclusivity in a given domain can further exacerbate identity-based testimonial injustice. While identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice are inextricably linked, their remedies have not necessarily advanced hand in hand.

Finally, the distinction between identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice allows us to identify the potentialities and pitfalls associated with various positions which diverse practitioners in the field may occupy. This understanding can facilitate the development of more accurate guidance and mentoring structures for less advanced diverse practitioners as they navigate their own place in the discipline. Furthermore, efforts to implement institutional, structural, and interpersonal changes in the field will be more successful with greater knowledge of the unique forms of vulnerability or advantage that attach to each position. Indeed, not all who are marginalized in the field are *equally* marginalized. Those with comparative social privilege may enact epistemic injustice within the margins, and institutional remedies often favor the most privileged.

To this end, consider first the position occupied by contributors picked out by (i) above exclusively. Because their primary engagements are in dominantly credited discourses, they are not generally at risk for content-based testimonial injustice. Such contributors are, however, more likely to find themselves to be "the only one" with their identity in a given domain. Because, as I have argued, severe underrepresentation increases the likelihood that one will be targeted, such contributors may face exceptional epistemic barriers—in the form of identity-based testimonial injustice—in exchanges with dominant interlocutors. In many instances, such barriers may entirely preclude opportunities for participation. This may explain the continued, disproportionate underrepresentation of persons with non-dominant social identities in dominantly credited philosophical discourses; occupation within those spaces may be lonely and discouraging. When successfully attained, however, acceptance within a dominantly credited discourse can usher in sizeable advancements in one's epistemic (and professional)

through which testimonial injustice—operating pre-emptively and structurally—could unjustly produce this effect.

standing. For such contributors, the deployment of language and conceptual frameworks associated with dominantly valued discourses renders one's participation acceptable—even welcomed—insofar as one's philosophical contributions do not generally disrupt underlying hierarchies of value and displacement. Nonetheless, the privileged positions attained by such individuals provide unique platforms from which to actively implement structural change. What is called for are seismic shifts in the practices of inclusion, visibility, and accreditation, and those occupying a position of enhanced professional legibility can utilize their status to help facilitate these goals.

By contrast, contributors picked out exclusively by (ii) above may experience increased susceptibility to content-based testimonial injustices in virtue of their engagement in dominantly devalued discourses, but their comparatively privileged social identities largely shield them from more systemic forms of epistemic disadvantage. Because a privileged social identity can sometimes (though not always) inoculate against the force of content-based testimonial injustice, these contributors may be better positioned to engage devalued discourses in certain domains. For such contributors, however, increased susceptibility to content-based testimonial injustice is perfectly compatible with the fact that their participation in those discourses may itself perpetuate further epistemic inequalities against others. For example, some contributors may lack an appropriate standing—they may coopt contributions developed by more marginalized contributors or they may produce false or distorting information within a discourse. (This, too, can happen when contributors with devalued social identities are engaged in discourses associated with devalued social identities that are not their own.) Thus, mere participation in a discourse does not guarantee that one's contributions within that discourse will be justified, even if one assumes some epistemic risk via content-based testimonial injustice—in participating. Institutional change requires networks of allied participants transforming the practices through which knowledge is collectively produced, but such networks will foster further inequality if the participation of the relatively privileged serves to crowd out or appropriate contributions of those whose interests are centrally at stake.

Consider, finally, those practitioners occupying positions at the intersections of (i) and (ii). These practitioners are vulnerable to an assemblage of identity-based and content-based testimonial injustices. Perhaps, owing to frequent acts of dismissal or discrediting, they have been prevented from participating in dominantly credited discourses in which they have genuine interests. Perhaps they have been pigeon-holed into discourses concerning their identities, as these discourses are prejudicially deemed more "fitting" for persons like them (Davis 2016). Some may be pressured or coerced into engaging in such discourses, where their epistemic labor is thereby exploited for the benefit of dominant interlocutors and institutions (Berenstain 2016). Others may engage non-dominant discourses to

enrich connections with communities or to preserve and develop intellectual traditions that are centrally important to them. For others, engagement in such discourses constitutes what Camisha Russell identifies as deliberate occupation, much like "the way that one might occupy a lunch counter, an administrative building, or Wall Street...in protest or as a sort of demand for recognition" (2019, 184).

Because of the unique relationship between their identities and the discourses they engage, these practitioners negotiate a constellation of epistemic double binds as they navigate the profession. Does one become a discredited contributor in a dominantly credentialed discourse or a credentialed contributor in a dominantly discredited discourse? Such practitioners may discover that the only discourses in which their contributions are not actively rejected are those discourses which centrally concern their social identities. Alternatively, they may be discredited for participating in identity-coded discourses *precisely because* they are judged to lack objectivity with respect to the subject matter. They may be assessed as too partial in their investigations or find that their contributions are dismissed as self-serving or self-interested. A double bind tightens into a Gordian knot.

Since marginalized discourses remain largely separate from dominant-occupied discourses, however, these discourses may provide practitioners with intra-discursive epistemic advantages. Practitioners with non-dominant social identities are more likely to constitute a critical mass in these spaces, and many practitioners may find that such spaces offer comparably better epistemic environments in virtue of this fact. With greater freedom from the dictates of dominant voices, marginalized discourses have long provided increased opportunities for philosophical participation, collective contestation, professional affirmation, and enhanced disciplinary (and interdisciplinary) imagination. But this observation by no means justifies their institutionalized marginalization. As Margaret Urban Walker states, "[s]egregation, here as elsewhere, does not conduce to equal respect" (2005, 160). Persons with non-dominant social identities deserve equal access to philosophical institutions, and institutionalized marginalization does not constitute such access.

This is the overarching institutional context into which diverse students arrive. The interrelation between identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice is mediated by a plurality of individual perceptions and biases, systemic ideologies, organizational practices, structural hierarchies, and institutional networks of entrenched power. Epistemic justice in philosophy thus requires increased attention to the multiple ways in which these influences work together to advantage or

¹⁹ To say that an epistemic environment is comparably "better" is not to deny the real effects of unjust exclusionary practices or intra-level prejudices and hierarchies. The environment need not be an epistemic utopia to appear better than the alternatives.

disadvantage differently situated contributors across a wide range of contexts. As Lebron (2017) puts it, "diversity really is an ethically important ideal." As this chapter has argued, diversity is also an epistemically important ideal.

7. The Epistemic Harm of Content-Based Testimonial Injustice

Part of the task of this chapter was to conceptually distinguish between two forms of testimonial injustice. One might worry, however, that I have not adequately shown that content-based testimonial injustice is an epistemic injustice, in that I have not articulated its unique epistemic harm. The precise nature of the epistemic harm of testimonial injustice is a matter of ongoing debate. On one view, for instance, testimonial injustice constricts a targeted contributor's exercise of one's own epistemic subjectivity, in accordance with dominant interests (Pohlhaus Jr 2014). On another view, epistemic injustice objectifies targeted contributors and demonstrates a basic lack of respect for their capacities as knowers (Fricker 2007). In central cases, the relevant social identities (and attendant prejudices) are the sort that "track" targets across a variety of social contexts—rendering them susceptible to further injustices in various domains (e.g. legal, economic, etc.). A commonality across various accounts is that testimonial injustice harms contributors in their epistemic capacities and takes on a broader—that is, systemic—epistemic significance. Given this understanding, how ought we characterize the harm of content-based testimonial injustice and to whom does it befall? Two worries present themselves in answering this question. First, one might worry that because content-based testimonial injustice is not directly (or, in hybrid cases, not exclusively) prompted by the targeted contributor's social identity, it is not obvious in what way the contributor is harmed. Second, one might worry that because content-based testimonial injustice arises in fairly localized contexts, the associated harm therefore lacks any systemic significance. I address each in turn.

Let me first articulate the epistemic harm experienced directly by targeted contributors. Consider two cases introduced by Fricker. The first case concerns a group of scientists who, upon submitting a manuscript to a journal, receive a credibility deficit from a panel of referees harboring a "dogmatic prejudice" against the authors' research method. The second case involves a small group of philosophers of science at an international science conference—predominately attended by research scientists and historians of science—where "simply falling into the identity category 'philosopher of science' renders one's word likely to be dismissed as...vain speculations" (28). Though Fricker does not distinguish between identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice, she characterizes both cases as instances of testimonial injustice. But the testimonial injustices involved are, she says, *incidental*, rather than systematic. That is, the relevant

prejudices—about a scientific research method or the professional identity 'philosopher of science'—are restricted to the highly localized academic contexts in which they arise. Thus, these are not the sort of structural prejudices that "render the subject vulnerable to any other kinds of injustice" (27) in additional domains, such as visiting a doctor's office, filing through airport security, or taking out a loan, etc.

To say that incidental testimonial injustices generally lack the broader social significance of systematic cases, however, is not to say that such harms are necessarily morally inconsequential for those targeted. Indeed, says Fricker, "localized prejudices and the injustices they produce may be utterly disastrous for the subject, especially if they are repeated frequently [...] the accumulation of incidental injustices may ruin their life" (29). Thus, while systemic and incidental testimonial injustice are different in kind, incidental testimonial injustice may nonetheless be harmful (and especially so when persistent).

With this distinction in mind, what are we to make of the cases I have considered throughout this chapter, in which contributors engaged in non-dominant social identity-coded discourses experience testimonial injustice in academic philosophy. One might think these cases—which I have identified as content-based testimonial injustices—are analogous to the academic science cases described above. Accordingly, one could argue that the testimonial injustices experienced by contributors engaged in gender or race discourses in philosophy are incidental; that is, they are to be explained by the fact that such contributors employ methods against which mainstream philosophical audiences harbor "dogmatic prejudices" or that the professional identities "feminist philosopher" and "philosopher of race" are subject to localized identity prejudices in the field. Supposing this were true (as it may well be in some instances), classifying these testimonial injustices as incidental would not be to say that the targeted contributors are not experiencing testimonial injustices. Rather, it is to say that they experience epistemic harms that only disadvantage them in a particular domain. But the localized nature of the harm does not dissolve the claims to justice that those targeted have against those who unjustly target them within that domain. Indeed, even if the harm did not take on any larger social significance, it would nonetheless warrant some ameliorative response within the localized contexts in which it arises.²⁰

²⁰ Because there is some risk that this conceptual tool will be misappropriated, I emphasize here that testimonial injustice picks out epistemic exclusions that are *unjust*. Thus, testimonial injustice cannot be used to theorize the justified marginalization or rejection of epistemic contributions that, for example, have been shown to be untenable (e.g. phrenology) or which exclusively serve to foster and preserve injustice (e.g. white supremacy). Excluding such content is not appropriately theorized as an injustice, not even incidental. Consequently, testimonial injustice will not be an appropriate mechanism for explaining all instances of epistemic exclusion in a given domain, and not all exclusions require an ameliorative response.

This analysis of the harm of content-based testimonial injustice—as it affects the targeted contributor directly—concerns one mode of epistemic subjectivity, namely, regarding epistemic subjects in their capacities as subjects who know (who inquire, understand, etc.). Epistemic subjectivity, in this mode, concerns persons in their capacities to testify, to share, to investigate, and to otherwise engage meaningfully in an epistemic exchange. Both identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice can harm targeted contributors in this first mode. Identity-based testimonial injustice thwarts a contributor's epistemic subjectivity in virtue of one's social identity, where this harm is appropriately characterized as systemic. Content-based testimonial injustice thwarts a contributor's epistemic subjectivity in virtue of identity-coded content in one's contribution, where this harm is appropriately characterized as incidental. Because it is incidental, the epistemic significance of content-based testimonial injustice for the targeted contributor will thus depend upon a range of contextual factors. For example, when targeted contributors occupy comparatively privileged social positions, the constraints on their epistemic subjectivity introduced by content-based testimonial injustice may be highly localized or infrequent (and in some cases, the effects may be rendered morally insignificant). For less privileged contributors, however, the epistemic harm will be more substantial, especially when the injustices are persistent. For those contributors who are vulnerable to both identity-based and content-based testimonial injustice, incidental content-based testimonial injustices may intertwine with and magnify the wider range of systemic constraints on their epistemic subjectivity.

But an analysis that locates the epistemic harm of content-based testimonial injustice exclusively at the level of targeted contributors in individual exchanges will obscure its broader significance. This is because the cases I have considered are not wholly analogous to Fricker's cases. As I have argued, content-based testimonial injustice is mediated by a perceived link between the content of a contributor's contribution and social identities that are systemically devalued. Thus, in the cases with which I have been concerned, it is not—or at least not exclusively—a disfavored methodology or a highly localized professional identity that is the object of prejudice. Rather, contributors engaged in non-dominant social identity-coded discourses are subject to epistemic injustice because of identity prejudice concerning people with non-dominant social identities. Unlike prejudice against a disfavored method or professional identity, this prejudice is neither locally restricted nor domain specific; rather, the underlying prejudice is systemic-so systemic, in fact, that it not only serves to discredit people with non-dominant social identities themselves, but also serves to discredit those who are engaged in discourses variously associated with them (and, especially, those discourses perceived to advance their interests). Thus, more can be said in defense of the claim that the harm of content-based testimonial injustice is not merely incidental, but also systemic.

To identify the systemic epistemic harm of content-based testimonial injustice, we must consider a second mode of epistemic subjectivity. Epistemic subjectivity, in this second mode, concerns persons in their capacities as *subjects to be known*; that is, as subjects about whom knowledge can be produced and disseminated. As subjects to be known, persons and their interests are taken seriously, their experiences are rendered legible, and their collective perspectives are engaged and understood. Content-based testimonial injustice tracks content by, about, and associated with persons with non-dominant social identities. By fostering the idea that such content does not matter, content-based testimonial injustice precludes broader engagement with discourses through which marginalized persons can be understood and appropriately valued. It thereby serves as a mechanism through which dominant audiences remain willfully ignorant of those discourses (Pohlhaus Jr 2012), despite the fact that they exist and that there are contributors who work to cultivate and share them (Mason 2011). In this way, content-based testimonial injustice contributes to a process of systemic erasure and foreclosure through which marginalized persons are rendered "unknowable," a concept Kristie Dotson (following Fannie Barrier Williams) theorizes as "a trifold structure of disappearing" (2017, 426) constituted by disregard, disbelief, and disavowal. As subjects to be known, persons and their experiences are regarded both as knowable and worth knowing. Thus, content-based testimonial injustice systematically thwarts the epistemic interests of marginalized persons in this second mode.21

²¹ One might wonder how content-based testimonial injustice relates to hermeneutical injustice. Do the two overlap in some capacity or does one contribute to the other? Hermeneutical injustice picks out "the injustice of having some significant area of one's social experience obscured from collective understanding owing to a structural identity prejudice in the collective hermeneutical resource" (Fricker 2007, 155), where contra testimonial injustice, "no agent perpetrates hermeneutical injustice—it is a purely structural notion" (159). Like hermeneutical injustice, content-based testimonial injustice involves structural identity prejudice, which, in the latter case, operates mechanistically through social identity-coded content. But while content-based testimonial injustice can operate purely structurally (consider, for instance, academic journal practices), many of the cases I have considered are perpetrated by identifiable agents in testimonial or otherwise dialectical exchanges. Moreover, unlike hermeneutical injustice, content-based testimonial injustice need not involve any conceptual lacuna or obscured intelligibility on the part of the marginalized, and it rejects the notion of a "collective" hermeneutical resource as neutral with respect to issues of group domination and marginalization. While it is possible for content-based testimonial injustice to thwart the creation of conceptual resources (and hence, for it to contribute to this aspect of hermeneutical injustice), it more frequently targets the broader dissemination of already existing resources. In this sense, the problem of content-based testimonial injustice is primarily communicative, rather than conceptual. It should be noted, however, that Fricker (2016) has since distinguished between midway, minimal, and maximal cases of hermeneutical injustice, where midway cases do not involve "any confused experiences whatever, but only frustratingly failed attempts to communicate them to members of an out-group" (167). Content-based testimonial injustice may overlap more extensively with these "midway" cases, but if the central problem of midway cases is largely communicative, it less clear why they should be

The cooperative interplay between these two modes of epistemic subjectivity—to know and to be known—illuminates the interdependent nature of identity-based testimonial injustice and content-based testimonial injustice. Describing what she calls "imperial harm," Camisha Russell (2019) argues that marginalized persons can be harmed in their capacities to be known when dominant others regard them as mere objects of knowledge. Such harms occur when dominant interlocutors and institutions purport to have produced exclusive or exhaustive knowledge concerning the marginalized, or where dominant discourses supersede discourses produced by those occupying the very subject positions under consideration. As Russell's analysis reveals, respect for marginalized persons in their capacities to be known therefore requires respect for them in their capacities to know (and especially, for instance, about themselves, their identities, their communities, their histories, their needs, and their experiences). A proper regard for marginalized persons in their capacities as subjects who know, then, necessitates a proper regard for those discourses associated with their collective inquiry, for such discourses are both process and repository of their knowledge. Thus, identity-based testimonial injustice and content-based testimonial injustice are inextricably linked. If epistemic justice requires the elimination of one, it requires the elimination of both.

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characterized as hermeneutical injustices, and not, for example, as structural testimonial injustices (Anderson 2012).

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