

Autonomy and Equality

Relational Approaches

Edited by Natalie Stoljar and Kristin Voigt

First published 2022

ISBN: 978-0-367-41689-8 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-032-12287-8 (pbk)

ISBN: 978-0-367-82334-4 (ebk)

Chapter 8

How Being Better Off Is Bad for You: Implications for Distribution, Relational Equality, and an Egalitarian Ethos

Carina Fourie

(CC BY-NC-ND 4.0)

DOI: 10.4324/9780367823344-8



Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
NEW YORK AND LONDON

8 How Being Better Off Is Bad for You

Implications for Distribution, Relational Equality, and an Egalitarian Ethos

Carina Fourie

8.1 Introduction

The idea that injustice can impair not only those who are worse off but also those who are better off is widespread and far from new. There is a fairly commonplace idea, for example, that being born into money risks making you spoiled, selfish, and lazy. Theorists, especially feminists and critical race theorists, have also argued that the better off lose out in many ways, due to the injustices that favor them overall. Marilyn Frye's (2000) well-known analogy compares the oppression of women to a birdcage—if you focus only on one bar, it may not be clear that women are trapped within an overarching structure. The structure favors men and oppresses women, although the bars of the cage can create barriers for men too; they are denied nurturing roles, for example. Consider also Charles Mills (2007) on how whiteness implies ignorance: white Americans must maintain distorted cognitive practices in the face of vast racial injustice and the undeserved advantages of whiteness. The ignorance of the privileged helps to protect unjust systems and thus privilege, as I will explain in Section 8.2, but it is nevertheless, pro tanto, harmful for the privileged. While injustice can be bad for those who are better off, similarly, justice can be good not only for the oppressed but also for the privileged. An example is Paolo Freire's (1996, 25–33) claims that liberation from oppression will be freeing for the oppressor as well as the oppressed because both the oppressed and the oppressor are trapped in a relationship of dehumanization.¹

I will refer to the ways in which being better off is bad for you as the impairments associated with privilege or, for short, “the impairments of privilege.” Although the idea that being privileged can impair the privileged is not unusual, many theories of justice tend to ignore it, let alone unpack and assess it in detail. In this chapter, I aim to identify and systematize impairments of privilege and to evaluate their implications

for two theories in political philosophy. I argue that relational egalitarianism has the theoretical resources to identify and address the problems associated with the impairments of privilege, whereas distributive egalitarianism does not. Furthermore, assessment of the impairments of privilege helps us to identify, in part, how to achieve a society of relational equals.

While there are numerous criticisms of distributive egalitarianism, my chapter makes a contribution to the literature by focusing on how *privilege* is delineated. In order to do so, I bring literature on oppression to bear on literature about distributive justice.

Focusing on privilege may seem like a morally perverse shift in attention from the oppressed to the privileged, which would only reinforce injustice. I recognize that we need to be cautious about exploring the impairments of privilege. Claiming that there are impairments of privilege does not imply that the degree of harm to those who are privileged comes anywhere near the harm to those who are oppressed. The impairments of privilege are barely perceptible in comparison to the trauma, violence, and brutality of much oppression. We can still recognize, however, that such impairment exists without downplaying the damage caused to the oppressed. Furthermore, while we should not centralize the experiences of the privileged for their own sake, instrumentally we may need to tackle aspects of their experiences in order to bring about justice for the oppressed. As I will highlight, a number of the impairments of privilege are functional for maintaining injustice, and these should be tackled in order to bring about a society of equals.

8.2 The Impairments of Privilege

The impairments of privilege refer to damage done to the privileged by the same unjust system that privileges them, and through many of the same mechanisms. Who are the privileged? Thus far I have referred to both the “better off” and the “privileged.” While I recognize that these terms are often distinguished, and that even the same term can be conceived of in different ways, preliminarily I will use a broad sense of privilege that considers them to be equivalent.² Being privileged means being at the top of a social hierarchy, or it can indicate having a greater amount of the social goods significant for social justice, e.g. resources or capabilities. I use this broad understanding so that my claims about privilege are judged as unjust by both relational and distributive approaches. (see sections 8.3 and 8.4 for more details).

I will primarily consider two sets of socially constructed groups in the US, the first being women and men (take this to include girls and boys) and the second being people of color and white people.³ Both distributive and relational approaches would claim that men and whites are better off than women and people of color, respectively, all other things

being equal; men and whites are thus privileged social groups whichever approach is chosen. The underlying unjust social structures that determine privilege in these cases are patriarchy and white supremacy.⁴ Injustices of gender and race are multiple, systematic, and structural (as well as interpersonal).⁵ Another way to describe them is to say that they are examples of oppression. People suffer oppression as members of one or more oppressed groups.⁶ I will thus refer to the correlate group—the group who has less—as “the oppressed.” I take oppression to be one of the most egregious forms of social injustice, but it does not exhaust the notion.

Frequently an individual could fall into both the categories of “the privileged” and “the oppressed” according to the different social groups to which they belong—e.g. a white woman will experience the privileges of being white, but also experience oppression as a woman. However, this way of understanding the interaction of social identities has important limitations, as Black feminists particularly have emphasized (e.g. Crenshaw 1989; hooks 1981). Oppressed social groups frequently cannot have their identities neatly segmented into axes of privilege, on the one hand, and those of oppression, on the other. For example, while being a Black man in the US may hold certain privileges over Black women, Black men experience suspicion, state violence, and mass incarceration not merely because of their race but also their gender, and thus being a *Black man* constitutes a specific form of oppression, which should not be downplayed by separating their identities merely according to “male privilege” and “racial oppression.”⁷ For this reason, when I refer to male privilege, I will refer to “many men” rather than merely “men.” This is clunky but necessary to acknowledge that in some of the examples of patriarchy, not *all* men are included, and that “all other things being equal,” qualifications will not suffice to recognize this compounded oppression.⁸

I identify six kinds of impairment: epistemic; evaluative; emotional; health-related; affiliative; and moral.⁹ Many examples of these kinds of impairment are functional. Functional impairments are damaging for the privileged; however, they are also functional for injustice. They function to maintain the overall unjust social system which maintains the privilege of the privileged. In the final section, I will argue that it is particularly ethically urgent to recognize the functional aspects of impairments, which is why I highlight a number of examples of how impairments can be functional below.

8.2.1 Epistemic Impairment

This refers to the damage the privileged experience as knowers, and especially to the ignorance associated with privilege; “all privilege is ignorant at the core,” Adrienne Rich claimed (Sholock 2012, 705). In feminist

epistemology, standpoint theory has emphasized that the oppressed often have more knowledge and a better understanding of the social order, especially but not exclusively of its injustices, than the privileged do (see e.g. Harding 1991 on the epistemic advantage that women have over many men). Similarly, epistemologies of ignorance have emphasized that the privileged are often ignorant; Mills (2007), for example, has argued that whites, as a dominant social group, have systematic epistemic practices that warp their knowledge about race, human nature, social norms, and desert.

Medina (2012) divides the ignorance associated with gender and racial injustice into two forms—ignorance about the social order and ignorance about self. Yancy (2016, xi–xxviii) describes the latter form of ignorance in white supremacist societies when he claims that white people “*don’t know who they are*” (xv [his emphasis]), often believing the ideologies that help to explain and justify their privilege—such as, for example, that they have privilege because they merit it—and believing that they are independent and self-made when they are very much shaped by racist history and contemporary racist norms.

Furthermore, Medina (2012, 30–40) claims that the privileged tend to suffer from a number of epistemic vices that help constitute their ignorance: arrogance, laziness, and close-mindedness. These are epistemic, he claims, because “they affect one’s capacity to learn from others and from the facts; they inhibit the capacity of self-correction and of being open to corrections from others” (31). While these vices fit well under the heading of epistemic impairment, they point to an additional type of impairment, moral impairment, discussed below. While everyone then—the privileged and the oppressed—is shaped by the unjust system, the privileged are less likely to recognize that they are so shaped.¹⁰

Epistemic ignorance is a functional impairment because it helps to protect the privileged (see e.g. Mills 2007; Pohlhaus 2012). For example, it can protect them from experiencing cognitive dissonance at the unfairness of the social system and distress in light of their responsibility for it. Furthermore, this impairment makes it less likely that they will be motivated to change the system, which serves to protect their place in it. While this kind of ignorance plays a functional role, it is not in and of itself positive. Being ignorant is bad, at least pro tanto, even if it also has positive effects for the privileged, and hence, the ignorance that goes with privilege is an impairment of privilege.¹¹

8.2.2 *Evaluative Impairment*

This form of damage has to do with what the privileged are likely to value and devalue. Being oppressed risks distorting one’s conception of the good (e.g. Kernohan 1998). For example, if you are conditioned to

thinking that women are less likely to be able to do certain jobs, then you may, as a woman, have lower expectations for yourself. Privilege can also distort one's conception of the good by devaluing certain significant ways of being and living. For example, for many men in patriarchy, being a caregiver, such as a nurse or a full-time dad, is discouraged and stigmatized. Having a rich emotional life, close, trustworthy, and vulnerable-making relationships, and a sense of closeness with community, may also be devalued, in favor of stoicism, power, self-sufficiency, and exaggerated self-confidence (see further discussions of these examples under "emotional" and "affiliative" impairment).

These men lose out on seeing the value of certain conceptions of the good and developing certain virtues. Hence they have an impairment of privilege; indeed, we can go further and say they are unable to see the value of certain ways of living that are superior to their alternatives, e.g. that it is better to have close, trustworthy, and vulnerable-making relationships than not because it promotes flourishing. Also, it seems evident that participating in hands-on and sustained caregiving of one's children, while it has its challenges and disadvantages, makes one a better parent and is more likely to promote healthy relationships with one's children.

These kinds of devaluations thus make it more likely that many ways of living are closed off to the privileged. Evaluative impairment will have consequences for the opportunities of many men, by, for example, decreasing their opportunities for good parenting or for jobs that require caregiving. However, the impairment itself is functional because if these men valued the closed-off ways of living, the stereotypes and norms of patriarchy would be threatened. If, for example, caregiving and being in close, vulnerable-making relationships were considered especially valuable, then it may no longer seem so plausible to insist that it is the rational and self-sufficient male who should be entrusted with leadership roles and with highly rewarded business, engineering and scientific positions, while being relieved of domestic caregiving.

To put it another way, patriarchy in the US encourages many men to value something like "rugged individualism,"¹² and in turn this leads to a devaluation of vulnerability, interdependence, and community. Consider how this may also apply to white privilege. Whites and the economically advantaged may be more likely to value individualism; it protects their privileged positions by contributing to an ideology that justifies limited government and emphasizes the importance of individual choice in achievement.¹³ This commitment would then also imply, similar to the case of male privilege, a devaluing of interdependence, solidarity, and community; we could say that whites become evaluatively impaired in that many of them will struggle to appreciate a society that places greater emphasis on community and on collective efforts to ameliorate social inequalities and less emphasis on individualism.

8.2.3 *Emotional Impairment*

Privilege can have a damaging effect on emotions and their regulation. The notions of white fragility and the emotional maladaptation associated with many men in patriarchy provide instructive illustrations of this impairment.

Robin DiAngelo (2018, 2011) argues that, in certain ways, whites in the US are “fragile.” Among other effects, fragility means that they react in an exaggerated and uncontrolled emotional way to certain kinds of stressors related to their privilege, such as discussions about the prevalence of racism and indeed, the privileges of whiteness:

We perceive any attempt to connect us to the system of racism as an unsettling and unfair moral offence. The smallest amount of racial stress is intolerable—the mere suggestion that being white has meaning often triggers a range of defensive responses. These include emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and withdrawal from the stress inducing situation.

(DiAngelo 2018, 26)

Part of the reason for this fragility is that whites are used to racial comfort—they are used to not having to think about race, racial injustice, or their place in the world. When that comfort is threatened, they often do not have the psychological stamina to cope and tend to break down easily. While fragility might be described as merely a consequence of white privilege, the associated emotions and behaviors have functional components: “These responses work to reinstate white equilibrium as they repel the challenge, return our racial comfort, and maintain our dominance within the racial hierarchy” (DiAngelo 2018, 26).

Looking at patriarchal norms of masculinity provides us with illustrations of other kinds of emotional impairment. For example, many men have been socialized in ways that restrict their emotional range and the expression of emotions, as is apparent in the everyday (but rather old-fashioned) idea that “boys don’t cry.” When these men aim to live up to these stereotypes, the repression of emotion may be a consequence, and when they cannot live up to them, feelings of a failure to be a “real man” may follow. Emotional repression and feelings of failure of this kind have been surmised to contribute to destructive emotional outbursts and violence (e.g. Miles 1991).

Emotional impairments often have a functional role in preserving patriarchal oppression. If, according to a patriarchal imaginary, one needs to be hyper-rational, hyper-independent, and to be able to transcend one’s biology, in order to occupy significant social roles such as leadership positions, then men need to live up to these stereotypes

to deserve their privileged positions. In this way, while the lack of emotional range and the restriction of emotional expression are damaging, they also function to help justify and maintain many men's dominant positions; in other words, there's a way that being emotionally impaired seems to be a necessary part of what it means to be a privileged male.

In claiming that the emotional life of the privileged can be damaged by the social system in which they live, I am not claiming that privilege cannot also have a positive impact for emotions, nor am I denying the reality of how injustice negatively affects the emotional life of the oppressed.¹⁴ Thus, for example, I am not claiming that being white can lead to emotional "fragility" but being an oppressed person of color will not; indeed, of course it is the emotional vulnerability and distress of being oppressed that should be our primary concern. This is true of many of the other impairments as well—injustice can negatively affect the privileged *along with* the grievous and substantial harm it does to the oppressed along similar dimensions.

8.2.4 Health-related

While most indicators of well-being work to the advantage of the privileged, there are some indicators that do not and these have a social basis, meaning that the way in which society is organized influences these indicators. An example is the health of many men where this is indicated by life expectancy. All other things being equal, men tend to have shorter life expectancies than women worldwide.¹⁵ While some part of this appears to be biological, there are also social components—e.g. men are more likely to do hazardous jobs and to make risky lifestyle decisions (see e.g. Oksuzyan, Juel, Vaupel, and Christensen 2008; Stanistreet, Bambra, and Scott-Samuel 2005; Waldron and Johnston 1976).¹⁶ In times of war, this influence on life expectancy can be dramatic as usually men, not women, are conscripted to fight.

Notice that this is a significant and constitutive component of men's positioning in a patriarchal society—if the stereotypes are that men are strong, autonomous, and competent, whereas women are weaker, then certain social expectations are likely to follow, e.g. men need to be entrusted with more hazardous jobs. This kind of impairment—and many others—are a consequence of aspects of the unjust society that are set up to favor many men. While the health-related impairments are consequences of privilege, they are consequences of functional stereotypes that are required for the unjust social system to operate.

There is a correlate here for race. While people of color suffer a much greater burden of disease due to the health and healthcare disparities associated with structural racism and socioeconomic injustices—COVID-19 is only the latest disease to disproportionately affect people

of color (Subbaraman 2020)—research is indicating that “whiteness” is also a contributing factor to the poor health of many *white* Americans. Metz (2019) has argued that increasingly mainstream conservative political movements that fuel white racial resentment, and are often supported by lower- and middle-class whites, are encouraging policies—such as pro-gun legislation and the dismantling of the Affordable Care Act—that have a severe negative impact on the health of their white supporters. Metz claims that these whites, who are partially motivated to support conservative movements in order to maintain their position in a racial hierarchy, are “*dying of whiteness*” (9 [his emphasis]). In other words, they insist on maintaining “the wages of whiteness,”¹⁷ even though the policies associated with these “wages” are also harmful to them.

8.2.5 *Affiliative Impairment*

Privilege can also impair certain kinds of significant relationships. As a first example, consider patriarchal norms which can increase the likelihood that a man will not be able to have a close, caring relationship with his children, or be able to have a fulfilling relationship of equals with a female spouse. Think too of the ways in which certain kinds of expectations of masculinity influence the relationships between many men and how it might determine and constrain how supportive and caring those relationships are likely to be.¹⁸

A second example relates to colonialism. One of the critiques of a colonial mentality from indigenous scholars in North America has been that it has created problematic relationships between humans, on the one hand, and the land and non-human animals, on the other (Whyte 2017). When a colonial mentality demands seeing land as primarily a scarce resource over which people compete for use, this tends to make difficult, or even impossible, certain kinds of closer and more mutually beneficial relationships with the land and with animals.

Affiliative impairment seems to follow particularly from certain functional conceptions of the self which are associated with privilege. White people and many men are often portrayed as “autonomous”—this is part of their supposed superiority—but this is a problematic form of liberal autonomy that is asocial and hyper-independent, standing in the way of the formation of certain kinds of caring relationships. The ways in which the autonomy of the privileged has been formulated relies on a mythical atomistic or rugged individualism, which emphasizes self-interested rationality and ignores the ways in which the privileged are dependent, vulnerable and shaped by social relationships. Feminist theories of relational autonomy have done much to identify and reject these problematic notions of autonomy (e.g. Mackenzie & Stoljar 2000, 5–12; Sherwin 2012).

8.2.6 Moral Impairment

Being privileged also makes moral impairment more likely. While it is possible to be privileged and to fulfill moral duties, being privileged risks an increase in moral failings. For example, the privileged will be less motivated to fight injustice and create just institutions (for such duties, see e.g. Rawls 1999, 98–101) than to maintain the status quo. Research has also shown that individuals belonging to a higher socioeconomic class tend to be more focused on themselves whereas those belonging to a lower class are more likely to pay attention to and be generous to others, e.g. the rich give proportionally less to charity than those who are poorer (Koenig 2015; Piff and Robinson 2017; Piff et al. 2010). Piff and Robinson (2017) claim that individuals of higher classes tend to be more self-oriented, and this is encouraged by having “greater control and freedom of choice..., reduced vulnerability to threats..., and an emphasis on individualism and personal accomplishment” (6). In contrast, lower class individuals tend to be more empathetic and cooperative (6–7).

Furthermore, epistemic ignorance is likely to lead to moral impairment. For example, self-ignorance might lead to arrogance, exaggerated self-confidence and feelings of moral superiority. If, for example, privileged people believe they are better off due to hard work or innate talents, rather than due to inherited social position, this could lead to a heightened and false sense of self-worth and moral standing. Consider, for example, Frye (1992, 152–158) on how white privilege influenced her, including inspiring her to feel morally superior with a duty to teach others—poor people and people of color—how to be better people.

8.3 Distributive Egalitarianism and the Impairments of Privilege

The notion that the privileged are damaged by privilege is not new, but it has not been considered in-depth by theories of justice. In this section, I identify two broad conceptions of egalitarianism—distributive and relational egalitarianism—in order to assess their theoretical resources for incorporating the impairments of privilege into a theory of justice.

Distributive justice requires that we implement a fair pattern of distribution of the relevant metric(s) of justice. For distributive egalitarianism, a fair pattern is an equal one. For example, justice could require the equal distribution of resources such as income, or it could require equality of opportunity for resources, allowing for inequalities in the actual resources themselves.¹⁹ Relational egalitarianism is often contrasted to distributive egalitarianism. For both forms of egalitarianism, equality has moral value. However, whereas distributive theorists are concerned with the value of equality as a pattern of distribution, relational egalitarians maintain that morally valuable equality is foremost

a matter of people regarding and treating one another as equals (Miller 1997, 224).²⁰ Relational egalitarians may take a stand on patterns of distribution; for example, Anderson (1999, 2010a) appears to endorse sufficiency of capabilities as the pattern required by relational equality. However, relational egalitarians do not reduce social justice to the fair pattern of distributions, insisting that relationships of equals are at least as important, if not more so.²¹ In this section, I will argue that the impairments of privilege pose a problem for distributive egalitarianism, and in the next, I will demonstrate that relational egalitarianism, in contrast, has the theoretical resources to identify the impairments of privilege and the injustices underlying them.

The general argument of this section is as follows: I first show that the impairments of privilege will influence the distribution of the resources significant to justice. However, distributive egalitarianism is unlikely to identify the role that the impairments of privilege play. In particular, this form of egalitarianism will have an inadequate response to the distribution of resources due to the impairments of privilege: it will either advocate the redistribution of a troubling resource, or it will wrongly claim that the troubling status quo is just. In both cases injustice will be reinforced.²²

I develop this argument using an example—the social basis of self-respect under patriarchy. Consider a Rawlsian notion of self-respect:

it includes a person's sense of his own value, his secure conviction that his conception of his good, his plan of life, is worth carrying out. And second, self-respect implies a confidence in one's ability, so far as it is within one's power, to fulfill one's intentions.

(Rawls 1999, 386)

We cannot distribute self-respect directly; thus, it is the social basis of self-respect that is considered to be the distributive good. Rawls has described this as “perhaps the most important primary good” (386).

Under patriarchy, all other things being equal, many men are more likely to have greater self-respect than women. Women are likely to have a lower sense of their own value and believe that many of their life plans—menial or low-paid jobs, marriage, overseeing the household—are not as significant as men's. While motherhood tends to be highly valued, it is expected that women will fulfill it by virtue of being a woman; and men are often treated as the ultimate authority in the household. Women are also less likely to have the confidence in themselves that many men have. Among the reasons for this deficit could be the internalization of the norms and expectations of patriarchy and the lack of opportunities to gain positions of power and status that would boost women's sense of self-worth and their esteem in the eyes of others.

Aiming to diagnose this injustice, distributive egalitarians could say that men have more of the social basis of self-respect than women do, all other things being equal, and that this inequality is unfair because it has not been chosen by women. As egalitarians, they value equality; thus, pro tanto, flattening the inequality would be better than maintaining it. Equality could be achieved by leveling up (women receive more of the social bases of self-respect) or leveling down (men receive less), or a combination of the two (men receive less and women receive more). As pluralists, all things considered, distributive egalitarians are unlikely to prescribe leveling down, even if they value the equality that it brings; rather leveling up or, at least, a combination of the two, is likely to be prescribed in order to achieve equality.²³

However, the distributivist's recommendation to level up (or to promote a combination) will in effect promote the injustices underlying the impairments of privilege. For instance, the distributivist's response will recommend that women be provided the basis for a kind of self-respect that is available to (many) men. Yet this so-called self-respect is partially the result of impairment. Patriarchal oppression allows many men to have a false sense of confidence, and to falsely believe that they, and their plans of life, are particularly valuable. Not only do they falsely believe that their plans of life are more valuable, but, due to emotional, affiliative, and evaluative impairment, they are often encouraged to act as if they are emotionally invulnerable and self-sufficient, and to value these as superior ways of acting. Furthermore, they are often willfully ignorant of the reality of the social order and its injustice, and in turn how this impacts their sense of self and identity. How respect and self-respect are garnered then is dependent on the distortions of impairments. That is to say, the ignorance, invulnerability, and over-confidence associated with impairments of privilege become the basis for a certain attitude that is likely to boost self-respect and the conviction one's conceptions of the good are particularly important. Many men are thus provided with more of the social basis of self-respect than women, but these men's self-respect is partially due to their ignorance of gender injustice, to mythical worldviews that consider them superior, and to the valuing of rugged individualism and its associated notions of autonomy.

To illustrate the problem for distributivists, take Sheryl Sandberg's (2015) notion of "leaning in," which encourages women to "play the corporate game more deftly" (McRobbie in Rottenberg 2014a, 427).²⁴ A major component of Sandberg's claims is that women are holding themselves back in the workplace by lacking confidence and belief in themselves, and by acting in ways that will help them to be liked rather than to achieve success. Sandberg claims that whereas women often underestimate their skills and abilities, men often believe they are doing better than they really are, which is one of the factors that helps some men to succeed because they think they merit highly rewarded positions of

power. Among the numerous feminist criticisms of Sandberg's approach is that she neglects the major structural barriers that keep women from achieving valuable social positions. Women, so the criticism goes, are prevented from highly rewarded social positions because they are denied fair equality of opportunity in obtaining these positions, for example, by expectations that they are the primary caregivers in a family, and thus unable to devote enough time to career advancement. Sandberg ignores these structural barriers to fair equality of opportunity.

However, for the purposes of this argument, let us say Sandberg is correct that the advancement of women in the workplace is *also* subject to psychological barriers such as a lack of self-confidence or self-respect. Their deficit in the social basis of self-respect is then in and of itself a problem of justice, along with the other structural barriers to opportunities.

From a distributive perspective, part of what it would mean to achieve justice would be to increase women's access to the social basis of self-respect. This would encourage them to act more self-confidently than they feel, to bluff when necessary, to be outspoken, and to aggressively self-promote. This distributive response could be described as a case of trying to level up—we want women to have the resources (including publicly funded “lean-in” training?) necessary to access the heightened self-respect that many men have in business. However, trying to create equality in this way misses a fundamental problem—these men have a form of self-respect that is based on a fake sense of desert and superiority, and on a problematic notion of autonomy, that is inculcated via patriarchal gender norms and expectations. Hence, the first option open to distributive egalitarianism is troubling; it would encourage women to adopt a flawed masculine form of self-respect, only reinforcing patriarchal notions of gender.

A second option for the distributivist would acknowledge the above criticism and concede that many men have sham self-respect. The Rawlsian approach demands that the social basis of self-respect will promote a *secure* conviction that one's conception of the good is worth carrying out. When men have self-respect through an inflated sense of self and a belief in mythical worldviews—as described by epistemic impairment—they arguably do not have this secure conviction. In other words, men might not actually have (much) more of the social basis of self-respect than women do. This response seems, *prima facie*, to provide an acceptable diagnosis of the implications of the impairments of privilege.

My worry about this second response is twofold. First, it is unclear whether distributive egalitarianism has the theoretical resources to identify men's sham self-respect. In order to identify the flaws in the social basis of men's self-respect, we would have to articulate the patriarchal values, norms, stereotypes and expectations that

underlie the distribution, and it is not clear how this could be done from within a distributive framework.²⁵ Second, even if distributivism were able to identify the problem, it would then have to claim that there is greater equality between men and women, other things being equal, than we initially supposed. This distributive equality is, pro tanto, a good thing. The response implies therefore that under patriarchy, neither men nor women have much of the social basis of self-respect, and thus there is distributive equality. This conclusion ignores the problem I identify in this chapter, namely that *the underlying injustice* remains despite the distributive equality—patriarchy creates masculinities and femininities and does so in a way that subordinates and egregiously harms women, and also, in lesser ways, damages privileged men.

Two further problematic consequences could ensue from this second response. First, the distributive egalitarian could actually prescribe solutions that would impair many men (further) when these would result in greater distributive equality. For example, providing men with more false notions of their importance might seem like leveling down, “leveling” the social basis of self-respect, and thus creating greater equality between men and women in terms of genuine self-respect, by providing men with even more of a rocky basis for self-respect. In this case then, levelling down can be seen as a valuable option: men are provided with more sham self-respect in order to undermine the access they have to authentic forms of self-respect. However, in the process, we would be reinforcing men’s impairment as well as the morally problematic gender norms underlying the impairment. Second, if the kinds of impairments that distributive egalitarians value or prescribe for the sake of equality are functional, then levelling down in this case might mean that injustice is only further entrenched. As a reminder, functional impairment protects the privileged and the unjust system that makes them privileged. Giving men even more of a false sense of their own self-worth, even if it is ultimately a sham, may only entrench a sense of deserving privilege, especially if epistemic impairment has been reinforced. Thus, this second distributive response could reinforce the protection the privileged receive from functional impairments, potentially making it even harder to achieve justice.

While I have focused only on one distributive good, the social basis of self-respect, and one kind of theory of distributive justice, I believe my criticism applies much more broadly. If we measured justice according to welfare, for example, impairments of privilege could be judged to create *greater* equality between men and women, all other things being equal, as men’s welfare would be diminished by the impairments of privilege.²⁶ The gendered injustices underlying the impairments of privilege would go unnoticed if we used the distribution of aggregate welfare as a basis for assessing justice.

In short, an emphasis on distribution misses an important *qualitative* aspect of the social goods that are impacted by oppression and the impairments of privilege. The influence of patriarchy on the social basis of self-respect, and of other goods, should not be thought of purely quantitatively—it is the content of self-respect and other goods, and the underlying gendered mechanisms that contribute to their construction, that are significant. The focus of theories of equality therefore should be on analyzing the intertwining oppressive relationships between the privileged and the oppressed. This is where we turn to relational egalitarianism.

8.4 Privilege as Relational and the Egalitarian Ethos

How might relational egalitarians recognize and respond to the impairments of privilege? An investigation of these impairments highlights two broad benefits of relational egalitarianism as a theory of justice. First, it indicates that relational egalitarianism has an advantage over distributive egalitarianism: it has the explanatory power to provide a conception of privilege that makes visible the impairments of privilege and the injustices underlying them. The first part of this section explains the conception of privilege offered by relational egalitarianism. This conception recognizes how the privileged are shaped by their social standing and their relationship with the oppressed. The second part then outlines a further benefit of relational egalitarianism: uncovering and assessing the specifics of the impairments of privilege helps to illustrate the requirements of a society of equals.

Relational egalitarians are often particularly interested in identifying certain kinds of unequal relationships as antithetical to justice. A primary form of inequality ruled out by relational egalitarianism is the hierarchical relationship between those treated as inferior and those treated as superior (see e.g. Anderson 1999). Many contemporary modes of oppression are paradigms of this kind of problematic relationship. Positions in an oppressive hierarchy are shaped in relation to each other; in other words, one's position in a hierarchy is characterized by and dependent on the positions of others. For the relational egalitarian, privilege will be defined relationally; it is necessarily connected to social position in a hierarchy, and the delineation of privilege depends on its contrast to the oppressed group, as well as on the purpose of the hierarchical relationship. For example, male privilege is defined in relation to the social position of male superiority, and this is defined in relation to female inferiority. This interdependence in characterizing the ranks of the hierarchy is not a side-effect of injustice; the interdependent relationship helps constitute the unjust social system and its manifestation in formal social structure, such as regulations, and informal social norms, stereotypes, and expectations.

Understanding injustice in this way provides a framework that can recognize and respond to the impairments of privilege; they can be understood as functional for or consequences of the social hierarchy. For example, the problematic content of men's self-respect that was described in the previous section is a result of men's position in an unjust hierarchy. Many men develop impairments of privilege because they occupy the social role associated with male privilege—they are expected to value and enact traits that are gendered as masculine and in so doing they become emotionally, affiliatively, and evaluatively impaired. Furthermore, they must be epistemically ignorant so as to believe in their superiority and their place in the social order.

For the relational egalitarian, the solution to injustice requires changing the nature of relationships by creating new relationships of equals and abolishing social hierarchies. This contrasts with the options open to distributive egalitarianism, namely providing the oppressed with what the privileged have, or taking away what the privileged have, to achieve an equal distribution. Relational equality requires that the system be reformed to eradicate the oppressive relationships that shape men and women's self-respect, and to achieve a healthier and more secure self-respect that is not sustained by mythical worldviews, ignorance about gender injustice, blurred self-knowledge, and the over-valuation of rugged individualism.

Consider again the notion of "leaning in" discussed in the previous section. A distributive approach may aim to increase women's access to the social basis of the heightened self-respect that men are more likely to feel in business. In so doing, it would ignore the problems of a corporate masculinity—an impaired masculinity—that embraces an individualistic notion of a self which has exaggerated, asocial independence. However, a relational egalitarian approach has the theoretical resources to reject this kind of redistribution because it replicates a system that constructs masculinities and femininities relationally, favoring the masculine, and denigrating the feminine, while making non-binary options invisible. Relational egalitarians can insist that these interdependent masculinities and femininities, and how they confer advantage, need to be overhauled because they are based on unjust social hierarchies.

Relational egalitarianism therefore has more explanatory power than distributive egalitarianism. This explanatory power relies on its understanding of the notion of privilege. Privilege needs to be defined relationally according to social standing in a hierarchy; it should not be defined primarily or exclusively as being better off in terms of resources to be distributed independently of social standing. Thus, the initial understanding of privilege advanced in the first section—that being privileged can be defined as being better off distributively—can be rejected.

Moreover, analyzing privilege as related to position in an unjust social hierarchy has implications for how we should conceive of a society of

equals and identify the characteristics of an egalitarian ethos. A society of equals requires an egalitarian ethos—a set of egalitarian values translated into social norms, competencies, and virtues that can be used to assess and motivate attitudes and behavior that reflect, promote, or reinforce relational equality.²⁷ In the last part of this section, I will identify three ways in which a relational conception of the impairments of privilege promotes the development and content of such an ethos. In Section 8.4.1, the relational conception addresses the causes of functional impairments of privilege which serve to protect unjust hierarchies, in Section 8.4.2, it expresses respect for the oppressed, and in Section 8.4.3, it minimizes positional competitiveness. The first two considerations apply primarily to an unjust society, and thus they are particularly relevant to the process of achieving a society of equals. The third is relevant even to a society that has rid itself of the most significant injustices.

8.4.1 Moral Priority for Addressing the Causes of Functional Impairments

Functional impairments are protective. Recall that epistemic impairments can protect the privileged by justifying their position in the hierarchy, thus leading them to resist change to the system. Functional impairments that are protective of the unjust system should be accorded an urgent ethical status. While we should not prioritize addressing the impairments of privilege for their own sake, we should care that certain kinds of impairments and their causes hamper the combatting of injustice and undermine an egalitarian ethos. Thus, eliminating or rehabilitating protective factors should have a high moral priority for instrumental reasons. Social factors such as those that keep the epistemic ignorance of the privileged in place are particularly ethically problematic and are important to combat precisely because of their protective role. Challenging these protective factors is thus a means for helping to develop an egalitarian ethos. We can describe such an ethos as one that will encourage epistemic competence about privilege, inequality, and injustice. One way this might be practically achieved is through desegregation of a racially segregated society. Segregation can contribute to epistemic ignorance by shielding the privileged from exposure to diversity and to the ways in which the disadvantaged have to live.²⁸ Another practical strategy would be to promote the role of the state to counteract messages propagated by the media that advantage and disadvantage are primarily based on desert or merit.

It can be challenging to make these changes as the privileged are likely to resist them precisely because of their epistemic impairment and their vast over-representation in political power. The priority to combat functional impairments that are protective of injustice might therefore have to be taken up by grassroots movements. In setting priorities, activists

may need to orient their resistance towards protective factors, especially where policy-makers do not seem willing to change them.

8.4.2 Expressing Respect for the Oppressed

One of the primary features of oppression is the violation of respect-for-persons (or recognition) suffered by the oppressed.²⁹ Developing an egalitarian ethos will put emphasis on state policies and social norms that respect those who are disadvantaged—for example, those who have less direct political power. Acknowledging the impairments of privilege will help to advance this aspect of the egalitarian ethos. When we do not recognize how an unjust system can warp the privileged, we are in greater danger of explaining injustice in a way that insults the oppressed. For example, dismissing the choices of the oppressed—where those choices uphold their oppression—as merely conditioned is disrespectful and creates the impression that the oppressed cannot be autonomous.³⁰ While our responses to the danger of disrespecting the oppressed needs to be multifold, they should at least emphasize that the decision-making of the *privileged* is also adaptive to the circumstances of injustice. The privileged also make decisions according to the stereotypes, expectations, and social norms of unjust systems, and, like those of the oppressed, their choices are socially conditioned. Furthermore, the privileged often make decisions that are ignorant and damaging to themselves. Thus, when we recognize that unjust hierarchies generate impairments of privilege, we will avoid pathologizing the experiences of the oppressed and normalizing the experiences of the privileged. This will advance an egalitarian ethos of respect-for-persons, as it will counter the troubling idea that the values and experiences of the privileged are neutral or even positive whereas those of the oppressed are “other,” conditioned, non-autonomous, or deviant.³¹

8.4.3 Minimizing Positional Competitiveness

A society of equals is antithetical to hierarchies of superiors and inferiors. Historically, these kinds of inegalitarian relationships have been explicitly endorsed, with claims made directly that men are superior to women, whites to people of color, and so on. Although these explicit claims are now much less common, forms of treatment that imply superiority and inferiority among social groups remain,³² and these need to be combatted in order to achieve a society of equals. While it will be greeted as self-evident that treating people as superior or inferior on the basis of being white or male is morally wrong, there are two significant and much less evident implications of this discussion for relational equality.

First, a relational egalitarianism that recognizes the relationality of privilege, and thus is able to respond to the impairments of privilege, can show us that injustice is bad not only for the worse off in society, or even for society as a whole, it can also be bad for those who are better off. This provides a supplementary justification for relational egalitarianism. Second, an egalitarian ethos should minimize what are normally considered to be uncontroversial ways in which people are treated as superior or “better.” Specifically, an egalitarian ethos which recognizes the impairments of privilege will encourage the reduction of positional competitiveness.

Consider the discussion of positional goods in the literature on distributive justice: “A positional good is one which a person values only on condition that not everyone has it. Prizes, for instance, are worthless, if shelled out to all, and much of what we seek has this exclusive character” (Hollis 1984, 97). While positional goods are not necessarily always morally problematic, a society of equals would minimize competition for positional goods, or at least minimize the social value of those goods, or more likely, do both.³³ This is because increased competitions for positional goods or an increased value for such goods, or both, undermine how much individuals are able to reasonably feel that they are equals. Scanlon (2003, 204) makes the following point about the influence of material inequality on a society of equals: “those who are much worse off will feel inferiority and shame.” This could also apply to competitive societies where there must be winners and losers.³⁴ And, from the perspective of the impairments of privilege, we can surmise that even the winners are likely to be damaged—for example, those at the top are likely to experience anxiety, isolation, and lack of affiliation due to the frequent demands to prove themselves better than others. Relational equality under such circumstances may be undermined.

An example is schooling for children—a more egalitarian society, pro tanto, would lean towards fewer interpersonal competitions and fewer occasions in which students are ranked according to abilities and skills.³⁵ Additionally, when there are competitions and rankings, the rewards associated with these would not be particularly high. Early education may be a particularly significant domain in which to minimize competitiveness because it could have a strong influence on a child’s development and her understanding of how the world works. An egalitarian ethos would therefore be likely to emphasize modesty, solidarity, collaboration, and social trust and minimize the importance of competitiveness and personal reward. We value this ethos primarily because without it, the worse off would be made to feel inferior, and reasonably so, thus violating relational equality. However, it is interesting that the egalitarian ethos will also eradicate the impairments experienced by the better off. The relationality of privilege helps us to recognize this point.

My aim in this section has been to emphasize that recognition of the impairments of privilege has implications for the articulation of an egalitarian ethos. Much needs to be further explained.³⁶ I recognize that the concern with competitive positionality needs elaboration which is beyond the scope of this chapter. I also do not consider the three aspects of an egalitarian ethos that I have identified here to be the only implications. The impairments of privilege are likely to require direct intervention, including distributive solutions. We may need to improve men's capabilities for affiliation and emotional connections explicitly via a better distribution of relationship goods or relational capital,³⁷ for example, by implementing Behrends and Schouten's (2017) suggestion that boys (only) should receive mandatory home economics instruction that promotes caregiving.

8.5 Conclusion

This chapter contributes to the literature on injustice by identifying and delineating what I termed "impairments of privilege," a topic that has not yet received much attention. Using the example of the social basis of self-respect under patriarchy, I argued that distributivists would struggle to diagnose the underlying system of injustice that warps many men's self-respect. In contrast, relational egalitarianism has the resources to make visible the impairments of privilege and the injustices underlying them because it delineates privilege as relational within a social hierarchy. Additionally, assessing the impairments of privilege through relational egalitarianism helps us to characterize how to achieve a society of equals: we must address the causes of functional impairments, express respect for the worse off by not normalizing the experiences of the privileged, and minimize competitive positionality. The chapter is explanatory in the sense that it identifies a phenomenon—the impairments of privilege—and argues that relational egalitarianism provides the best framework to fully explicate this phenomenon. However, the argument also has implications for the normative justification of relational egalitarianism. Not only do we clearly need relational equality for the sake of the worse off, it will also be beneficial for the better off to avoid the impairments of privilege associated with their superior position in unjust social hierarchies.³⁸

Notes

1. For historical examples, consider Hegel on how the "master" in the master/slave dialectic becomes dehumanized, "idle and unproductive, comfortable in mere consumption," and trapped (Bulhan 1985, 102–106), and Matthew Arnold on how inequality harms those who are better off "by pampering" (Tawney 1964, 1).

2. Consider, for example, McKinnon and Sennet's (2017) distinctions between entitlement-, advantage- and benefit-privileges.
3. Among the reasons I focus on these two forms of injustice is because of my own positionality—as a white *woman*, I have experienced (white) patriarchy. As a *white woman*, I have white privilege.
4. For an influential description of patriarchy, see Hartmann (1979), and more recently on patriarchy and misogyny, Manne (2017). For an influential description of white privilege, see McIntosh (1989), and for a recent criticism of the discourse of “white privilege” as applied to racial profiling, see Zack (2015). For the influence of white supremacy on the US in the post-civil rights era, see Bonilla-Silva (2001).
5. Gender injustice is not only experienced by women. In this paper, women can refer to both cisgender and transgender women. However, transgender and nonbinary people experience multiple gender injustices under patriarchy that cannot be captured by the injustices experienced by women. Furthermore, sexuality is also a major site of oppression under the heteronormativity of patriarchy. See, for example, Butler (1997) and Bettcher and Garry (2009).
6. See Cudd (2006) and Young (2011) for understandings of oppression.
7. I thank Cody Dout for emphasizing this point. See also Curry (2017).
8. I thank Sara Goering for helping me to formulate this point. Am I not referring to white men only when I refer to male privilege? I believe that would go too far in the other direction. I am not convinced that some of the privileges I refer to are so narrowly spread, even if in some cases they may be. Furthermore, some white men, such as gay men or working-class men, will be excluded from some of the privileges of being male, as well as the impairments I describe. While I cannot assess all forms of privilege and oppression, it is important to recognize that impairments of privilege will only be relevant according to particular forms and intersections of oppression.
9. I preliminarily identified impairments associated with privilege in an earlier paper on social-relational equality (Fourie 2012, 118–120). Here I build on and revise those preliminary claims. This is not intended to be a comprehensive list of impairments; indeed, the dehumanization of the privileged mentioned in the introduction does not seem to be covered by these categories, thus further categories need to be identified and explicated.
10. A correlate then of the idea that the privileged are impaired by privilege, is that in certain ways the oppressed have advantages over the privileged, e.g. in this case, on average, they have better knowledge of self and the social order. Medina (2012), for example, identifies three epistemic virtues of the oppressed. This is not to deny that the oppressed often internalize their oppression which can have a negative impact on their epistemic standpoint, among other influences; see, for example, Lorde (2012) on this internalization.
11. This does not mean that they should not be held accountable for their ignorance, however. Consider the notions of active (Medina 2012) and willful ignorance (Pohlhaus 2012) which help explain the moral responsibility of the privileged for their ignorance. Pohlhaus argues that the privileged often refuse to acquire the epistemic resources that will undermine their ignorance *because* they are invested in that ignorance and its coordination among other privileged people.

12. Rugged individualism includes a commitment to “a view of the self as independent rather than interdependent, the emphasis on self-reliance, the primacy of self-interest, and the regulation of behavior by personal attitudes rather than social norms” (Bazzi et al. 2017, 5).
13. See, for example, Jackman and Muha on how “dominant social groups routinely develop ideologies that legitimize and justify the status quo” (Jackman and Muha 1984, 751) and the influence of individualism particularly (Jackman and Muha 1984; Jackman 1996). See also Eppard et al. (2020) on individualism and economic advantage.
14. For some of the very harmful effects of discrimination and oppression on emotions and their regulation for the oppressed, see Fourie (2018).
15. This does not necessarily mean that women are *advantaged* in terms of health. Women’s morbidity tends to be higher than men’s and, indeed, that they live longer in worse health may be a relative disadvantage in comparison to men’s shorter life expectancy (e.g. Luy and Minagawa 2014).
16. Social differences in life expectancy between men and women should definitely not be seen exclusively as a consequence of patriarchy. In the case of African-American men, their much shorter average life expectancy in comparison to whites, and women, including Black women, is due primarily to the compounded injustice they experience in virtue of being Black men in an oppressive society; for example, they experience an increased likelihood of being killed in a homicide (see e.g. Bond and Herman 2016).
17. See Roediger (2007), and the original influential idea of compensation for being white from Du Bois (1932).
18. I discussed similar concerns under “evaluative impairment” but note the distinction between these impairments. Affiliative impairment is directly about damage to relationships. Evaluative impairment is about damage to what is valued. Of course, the devaluing of relationships and of a rich emotional life are likely to influence the development of affiliative and emotional impairment, but they remain analytically distinct.
19. For a useful description and illustration of patterns and metrics of justice, see Anderson (2010a).
20. Additionally, see, for example, Anderson (1999), the various authors in Fourie, Schuppert, and Wallimann-Helmer (2015), and Scanlon (2018).
21. The distinction drawn helps illustrate these theories; I am not claiming that relationism and distributivism are necessarily incompatible. See, for example, Lippert-Rasmussen (2018) for an approach that combines relational and luck egalitarianism. A distributive theory that is susceptible to my critique may be able to avoid my concerns if it is compatible with, and can be coherently combined with, relational egalitarianism.
22. While I focus on distributive *egalitarianism* and I do not have the scope to consider other patterns of distribution here, I believe that prioritarian, sufficientarian, and maximizing distributive theories would also fail to recognize and address the injustices underlying the impairments of privilege.
23. Precisely what they will prescribe would depend on which other values or patterns of distribution besides equality are required for justice (e.g. maximizing goods), as well as the priority they give to equality versus the other values/patterns. For a description of the problem of levelling down for distributive egalitarianism, see Parfit (1997), and for a pluralist egalitarian response, see O’Neill (2008).
24. My assessment in this section and the next is highly influenced by bell hooks’ critique of leaning in “Dig Deep: Beyond Lean In.” A significant criticism that I do not discuss here but that is important to mention is that

Sandberg's feminism is one that applies primarily to privileged women—often white, middle-class women (hooks 2013). See also Rottenberg (2014a, 2014b) for a critique of Sandberg's neoliberal "feminism."

25. See Young (2011, 15–38, 111–171) on how distributive frameworks adopt dominant values.
26. I thank Kristin Voigt for emphasizing this point.
27. See, for example, Cohen (2000, 117–147) and Wolff (1998, 2010) for descriptions of and justifications for an egalitarian ethos.
28. I recognize that the oppressed may have reason to prefer segregation, for example, to protect them from abuse by the privileged and to promote community; however, here I refer to segregation which the oppressed would prefer to eliminate. I thank A.Y. Yomi-Odedeyi for emphasizing the significance of self-segregation in numerous conversations. For a classic text on the harms of segregation, see King Jr. (1968) and for a more recent description, see Anderson (2010b).
29. See, for example, Darwall (1977) for more on respect-for-persons, and Fraser (1996) on recognition and its contrast with distribution.
30. See, for example, Khader (2011) for the confusions and condescension associated with relying on intuitive notions of adaptive preferences to understand the choices made by women under patriarchy.
31. On the oppressed as "the other," see, for example, Young 2011, 58–61, 96–155. For a particularly influential discussion of women as "other," see Beauvoir (1949, 3–17).
32. Consider, for example, Shelby (2018) on how a "problematic" Black culture is often blamed for the inequalities between white Americans and African Americans.
33. See also Brighouse and Swift's (2006) suggestion that rather than necessarily distribute positional goods more equally, which may require leveling down, we need to break the causal links between certain activities and their rewards.
34. This is clearly a contingent point—I am making assumptions about how people would feel in a society that is primarily just, but which places an emphasis on competition.
35. I agree with Scanlon (2003) that a society of equals is likely to require pluralism in terms of what it values—the fewer the traits and skills that are valued, the more likely individuals are to feel inferior; however, my argument is that we should also be reducing the *competitions* for positional goods. Even if there is greater pluralism in what we value and even if that pluralism is reflected in competitions, I do not believe that a solution to relational inequality is to increase competitions to reflect a greater number and variety of skills (see Fourie 2015).
36. Elsewhere, I have described why relational egalitarians should be concerned with inequalities in the positional good of social esteem (Fourie 2015).
37. See e.g. Cordelli (2015) on what she refers to as relational resources.
38. This chapter was challenging to write, and I made slow progress with it—besides numerous other challenges, it was written primarily while I had a newborn baby, and then while I had no childcare during the COVID-19 pandemic. Natalie Stoljar and Kristin Voigt received many flawed and unclear versions of this chapter. Graciously and patiently, they provided detailed and significant comments and suggestions for each version, as I slowly built up the argument. I am exceptionally grateful for their guidance and for their continued support despite the roughness of my drafts. Many thanks also go to Agomoni Ganguli-Mitra and Sara

Goering for providing excellent comments that have helped me to improve the chapter. Participants in the “Phil Lunch” at the Department of Philosophy, University of Washington, including but not limited to Cody Dout, Justin Lawson, Michael Rosenthal, Arthur Obst, and Bill Talbott, provided beneficial comments at an early stage. I also greatly appreciate Kayla Mehl-Hutchinson’s editorial assistance. Last, many thanks to the Benjamin Rabinowitz Endowment in Medical Ethics and the Royalty Research Fund at the University of Washington for generous financial support.

References

- Anderson, Elizabeth. 1999. “What is the Point of Equality?” *Ethics* 109, no. 2: 287–337.
- . 2010a. “Justifying the Capabilities Approach to Justice.” In *Measuring Justice: Primary Goods and Capabilities*, edited by Harry Brighouse and Ingrid Robeyns, 81–100. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2010b. *The Imperative of Integration*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Bazzi, Samuel, Martin Fiszbein, and Mesay Gebresilashe. 2017. *Frontier Culture: The Roots and Persistence of ‘Rugged Individualism’ in the United States*. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Beauvoir, Simone de. 1949. *The Second Sex*, translated by Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier. New York: Vintage.
- Behrends, Jeff, and Gina Schouten. 2017. “Home Economics for Gender Justice? A Case for Gender-Differentiated Caregiving Education.” *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 20, no. 3: 551–565.
- Bettcher, Talia Mae, and Ann Garry. 2009. “Transgender Studies and Feminism: Theory, Politics, and Gender Realities (Special Issue).” *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy* 24, no. 3.
- Bond, M. Jermaine, and Allen A. Herman. 2016. “Lagging Life Expectancy for Black Men: A Public Health Imperative.” *American Journal of Public Health* 106, no. 7: 1167–1169.
- Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. 2001. *White Supremacy and Racism in the Post-Civil Rights Era*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Brighouse, Harry, and Adam Swift. 2006. “Equality, Priority, and Positional Goods.” *Ethics* 116, no. 3: 471–497.
- Bulhan, Hussein Abdilahi. 1985. *Frantz Fanon and the Psychology of Oppression*. Berlin: Springer Science & Business Media.
- Butler, Judith. 1997. “Critically Queer.” In *Playing with Fire: Queer Politics, Queer Theories*, edited by Shane Phelan, 11–30. New York and London: Routledge.
- Cohen, G. A. 2000. *If You’re an Egalitarian, How Come You’re So Rich?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Cordelli, Chiara. 2015. “Justice as Fairness and Relational Resources.” *Journal of Political Philosophy* 23, no. 1: 86–110.
- Crenshaw, Kimberlé. 1989. “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics.” *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1989, Article 8, 139–167.

- Cudd, Ann. 2006. *Analyzing Oppression*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Curry, Tommy. 2017. *The Man-Not: Race, Class, Genre, and the Dilemmas of Black Manhood*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Darwall, Stephen L. 1977. "Two Kinds of Respect." *Ethics* 88, no. 1: 36–49.
- DiAngelo, Robin. 2011. "White Fragility." *The International Journal of Critical Pedagogy* 3, no. 3: 54–70.
- . 2018. *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Du Bois, W.E.B. 1932. *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860–1880*. New York: Free Press.
- Eppard, Lawrence M., Mark Robert Rank, Heather E. Bullock, Noam Chomsky, Henry A. Giroux, David Brady, and Dan Schubert. 2020. *Rugged Individualism and the Misunderstanding of American Inequality*. Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press.
- Fourie, Carina. 2012. "What is Social Equality? An Analysis of Status Equality as a Strongly Egalitarian Ideal." *Res Publica* 18, no. 2: 107–126.
- . 2015. "To Praise and to Scorn: The Problem of Inequalities of Esteem for Social Egalitarians." In *Social Equality: On What It Means to Be Equals*, edited by Carina Fourie, Fabian Schuppert, and Ivo Wallimann-Helmer, 87–106. New York: Oxford University Press.
- . 2018. "Discrimination, Emotion, and Health Inequities." *Les ateliers de l'éthique/The Ethics Forum* 13, no. 3: 123–149.
- Fourie, Carina, Fabian Schuppert, and Ivo Wallimann-Helmer, eds. 2015. *Social Equality: On What It Means to Be Equals*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Fraser, Nancy. 1996. *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the "Postsocialist" Condition*. New York: Routledge.
- Freire, Paulo. 1996. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London and New York: Penguin Books.
- Frye, Marilyn. 1992. *Willful Virgin: Essays in Feminism, 1976-1992*. Freedom, CA: Crossing Press.
- . 2000. "Oppression." In *Gender Basics: Feminist Perspectives on Women and Men*, edited by Anne Minas, 10–16. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.
- Harding, Sandra. 1991. *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?: Thinking from Women's Lives*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Hartmann, Heidi. 1979. "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a more Progressive Union." *Capital & Class* 3: 1–33.
- Hollis, Martin. 1984. "Positional Goods." *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplements* 18: 97–110.
- hooks, bell. 1981. *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism*, 2nd ed. New York: Routledge.
- . 2013. "Dig Deep: Beyond Lean In." *The Feminist Wire*. Accessed August 21, 2020. <https://thefeministwire.com/2013/10/17973/>.
- Jackman, Mary R. 1996. "Individualism, Self-Interest, and White Racism." *Social Science Quarterly* 77, no. 4: 760–767.
- Jackman, Mary R., and Michael J. Muha. 1984. "Education and Intergroup Attitudes: Moral Enlightenment, Superficial Democratic Commitment, or Ideological Refinement?" *American Sociological Review* 49, no. 6: 751–769.
- Kernohan, Andrew. 1998. *Liberalism, Equality, and Cultural Oppression*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Khader, Serene. 2011. *Adaptive Preferences and Women's Empowerment*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- King Jr., Martin Luther. 1968. "The Future of Integration." In *Issues 1968*, edited by W.W. Boyer. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas.
- Koenig, Rebecca. 2015. "A Mismatch Between Need and Affluence." *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*. <https://www.philanthropy.com/interactives/how-america-gives-opportunity-index>.
- Lippert-Rasmussen, Kasper. 2018. *Relational Egalitarianism: Living as Equals*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lorde, Audre. 2012. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. Freedom, CA: Crossing Press.
- Luy, Marc, and Yuka Minagawa. 2014. "Gender gaps—Life expectancy and proportion of life in poor health." *Health Reports* 25, no. 12: 12–19.
- Manne, Kate. 2017. *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- McIntosh, Peggy. 1989. "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." *Peace and Freedom Magazine* (July/August): 10–12.
- Mackenzie, Catriona, and Natalie Stoljar, eds. 2000. *Relational Autonomy: Feminist Perspectives on Autonomy, Agency, and the Social Self*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- McKinnon, Rachel, and Adam Sennet. 2017. "Survey Article: On the Nature of the Political Concept of Privilege." *Journal of Political Philosophy* 25, no. 4: 487–507.
- Medina, José. 2012. *The Epistemology of Resistance: Gender and Racial Oppression, Epistemic Injustice, and Resistant Imagination*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Metzl, Jonathan. 2019. *Dying of Whiteness: How the Politics of Racial Resentment Is Killing America's Heartland*. New York: Basic Books.
- Miles, Rosalind. 1991. *The Rites of Man: Love, Sex, and Death in the Making of the Male*. London: Grafton Books.
- Miller, David. 1997. "Equality and justice." *Ratio* 10, no. 3: 222–237.
- Mills, Charles. 2007. "White Ignorance." In *Race and Epistemologies of Ignorance*, edited by Shannon Sullivan and Nancy Tuana, 11–38. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Okuzuzyan, Anna, Knud Juel, James W. Vaupel, and Kaare Christensen. 2008. "Men: Good Health and High Mortality. Sex Differences in Health and Aging." *Aging Clinical and Experimental Research* 20, no. 2: 91–102.
- O'Neill, Martin. 2008. "What Should Egalitarians Believe?" *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 36, no. 2: 119–156.
- Parfit, Derek. 1997. "Equality and Priority." *Ratio* 10, no. 3: 202–221.
- Piff, Paul K., and Angela R. Robinson. 2017. "Social Class and Prosocial Behavior: Current Evidence, Caveats, and Questions." *Current Opinion in Psychology* 18: 6–10.
- Piff, Paul K., Michael W. Kraus, Stéphane Côté, Bonnie Hayden Cheng, and Dacher Keltner. 2010. "Having less, giving more: the influence of social class on prosocial behavior." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 99, no. 5: 771–784.
- Pohlhaus, Gaile, Jr. 2012. "Relational Knowing and Epistemic Injustice: Toward a Theory of Willful Hermeneutical Ignorance." *Hypatia* 27, no. 4: 715–735.

- Rawls, John. 1999. *A Theory of Justice*, rev. ed. Cambridge and London: Belknap Press.
- Roediger, David. 2007. *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*, new ed. London and New York: Verso.
- Rottenberg, Catherine. 2014a. "Happiness and the Liberal Imagination: How Superwoman Became Balanced." *Feminist Studies* 40, no. 1: 144–168.
- . 2014b. "The Rise of Neoliberal Feminism." *Cultural Studies* 28, no. 3: 418–437.
- Sandberg, Sheryl. 2015. *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead*. London: WH Allen.
- Scanlon, T. M. 2003. "The Diversity of Objections to Inequality." In *The Difficulty of Tolerance: Essays in Political Philosophy*, 202–218. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2018. *Why Does Inequality Matter?* Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Shelby, Tommy. 2018. *Dark Ghettos: Injustice, Dissent, and Reform*. Cambridge and London: Belknap Press.
- Sherwin, Susan. 2012. "Relational Autonomy and Global Threats." In *Being Relational: Reflections on Relational Theory and Health Law*, edited by Jocelyn Downie and Jennifer J. Llewellyn, 13–34. Vancouver, Canada: UBC Press.
- Sholock, Adale. 2012. "Methodology of the Privileged: White Anti-racist Feminism, Systematic Ignorance, and Epistemic Uncertainty." *Hypatia* 27, no. 4: 701–714.
- Stanistreet, Debbi, Clare Bambra, and Alex Scott-Samuel. 2005. "Is Patriarchy the Source of Men's Higher Mortality?" *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health* 59, no. 10: 873–876.
- Subbaraman, Nidhi. 2020. "How to Address the Coronavirus's Outsized Toll on People of Colour." *Nature* 581: 366–367.
- Tawney, R. H. 1964. *Equality*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Waldron, Ingrid, and Susan Johnston. 1976. "Why Do Women Live Longer Than Men?" *Journal of Human Stress* 2, no. 2: 19–30.
- Whyte, Kyle Powys. 2017. "Indigeneity and US Settler Colonialism." In *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Race*, edited by Naomi Zack, 91–101. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wolff, Jonathan. 1998. "Fairness, Respect, and the Egalitarian Ethos." *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 27, no. 2: 97–122.
- . 2010. "Fairness, Respect and the Egalitarian 'Ethos' Revisited." *The Journal of Ethics* 14, no. 3/4: 335–350.
- Yancy, George. 2016. "Introduction." In *White Self-Criticality beyond Anti-Racism: How Does It Feel to Be a White Problem?*, edited by George Yancy, xi–xxvii. London, UK: Lexington Books.
- Young, Iris Marion. 2011. *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, rev. ed. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Zack, Naomi. 2015. *White Privilege and Black Rights: The Injustice of U.S. Police Racial Profiling and Homicide*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.