APA Newsletters

NEWSLETTER ON FEMINISM AND PHILOSOPHY

Volume 12, Number 2 Spring 2013

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APA Newsletter on

Feminism and Philosophy

Margaret A. Crouch, Editor | Spring 2013 | Volume 12, Number 2

From the Editor

This issue of the newsletter focuses on gender and ethics in the profession of philosophy. The discipline of philosophy includes the study of ethics. However, the actual behavior of philosophers to one another and to their students does not seem to be any more ethical than that of any other group of academics. Many of us have witnessed or been subject to unethical behavior in teaching, mentoring, research, administration, and collegial relationships. While there are some institutional policies or laws addressing specific forms of unethical behavior—sexual harassment, theft of intellectual property, plagiarism, and conflict of interest, to name a few—there are many other forms of behavior not included under any official policy or law. Even when there are laws or policies prohibiting certain forms of conduct, they are often insufficient to protect those subject to such behaviors, in part because of the structure of academic institutions, as Naomi Zack points out in her article (this issue.)

All of the articles on gender and ethics in the profession focus on different aspects of the structure of academe. It is a peculiar one, both intensely hierarchical, and allegedly self-governing and democratic. Academe also allows a great deal of individual freedom of behavior, relying primarily on individual ethics and self-control to maintain a functioning environment. The institutional features of academe make possible particular kinds of unethical behavior, including individual abuses of power, but also, as Naomi Zack points out, collective abuses of power.

In "Pluralism in 'Academic Politics': The Collateral Damage of Cronyism and Legal Aspects of Common Misconduct," Naomi Zack addresses the sexism and racism that takes place within philosophy departments, with particular attention to what she terms "cronyism." Zack argues that white male cronyism is a form of discrimination that harms women and members of other minority groups, but that is either invisible to or ignored by those in academe charged with preventing discrimination. She explains how cronyism can exist in allegedly democratic forms of departmental self-governance, and the failure of institutional attempts to address discrimination, such as "facilitated conversation," to affect cronyism. She suggests some alternative ways of responding to cronyism, none of which are likely to eliminate the harm of cronyism. In an appendix, Zack considers possible legal responses to the effects of cronyism on its victims.

Erin C. Tarver examines the question whether dismissal of feminist philosophy as legitimate philosophy is itself a form of sexism in "The Dismissal of Feminist Philosophy and Hostility to Women in the Profession." There have been consistent denials of the claim in fora such as the Leiter blog, but Tarver argues convincingly that "it is not obvious that one can dismiss feminist philosophy as "not worthwhile" without being sexist, and that, moreover, it is either very unlikely or impossible to dismiss feminist philosophy as such without engaging in sexism." Tarver shows quite clearly that what might seem at first sight an issue of individual ethical behavior—one person's sexist or discriminatory attitudes toward a group of colleagues—can have, in the institutional structure of academe, serious implications for an entire discipline.

In "Is There an Obligation to Tell?" Elizabeth Sperry takes up the issue of whether those subject to sexual harassment have an obligation to make this known to others in their institutions or in the profession generally. Sperry provides reasons why persons subject to such behavior would not want to tell anyone about it, and these reasons have to do with the institutional structure of academe and what one can and cannot do and maintain one's academic reputation. Sperry then takes up the question whether, given these reasons, one has an obligation to tell. Keeping such behavior secret and anonymous has deleterious effects on the profession. She concludes that, given the very good reasons for individuals not to tell, and the good that may come from telling, "telling is an act of altruism, and is supererogatory."

Clara Fischer considers ethical issues raised by the ever-increasing practice hiring part-time lecturers to teach, while decreasing the number of tenure and tenure-track faculty, in "Moral Musings on Philosophy, Gender, and the Academic Precariat." She focuses particularly on tenured philosophers who teach and write on oppression, such as feminist philosophers. What are the obligations of tenure and tenure-track faculty to their exploited colleagues? Fischer also raises ethical concerns about hiring procedures, especially the advertising of positions that are not really open, putting job seekers through the stressful interview process and the failure to get the job, when an internal candidate has already been identified. What is the ethical responsibility of faculty and administrators involved in such "fake searches" for the harm caused to those seeking employment? Though administrators have interpreted labor and anti-discrimination laws to require this charade, this does not make it ethically acceptable. Fischer ends her piece with suggestions about how tenure and tenure-track faculty can join in solidarity with the "precariat," rather than contributing to their exploitation.

Finally, Heather Rakes continues the discussion of globalizing feminist philosophy begun in the previous issue of the newsletter in "Pluralizing the Local: The Case for an Intersectional, Relational Subject in and for Feminist Philosophy." Rakes argues that to be responsibly transnational, feminist philosophy must address its own white subjectivity, "by theorizing a relational subject," not just in extending feminist philosophy beyond the boundaries of North America and Europe, but here at home. She argues for a way to "pluralize the local domains" of feminist philosophy.

About the *Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy*

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

Submission Guidelines and Information

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

2. Book reviews and reviewers: If you have published a book that is appropriate for review in the newsletter, please have your publisher send us a copy of your book. We are always seeking new book reviewers. To volunteer to review books (or some particular book), please send the editor a CV and letter of interest, including mention of your areas of research and teaching.

3. Where to send things: Please send all articles, comments, suggestions, books, and other communications to the editor: Dr. Margaret A. Crouch, Department of History and Philosophy, 701 Pray-Harrold, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI 48197, mcrouch@emich.edu.

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

News from the Committee on the Status of Women

The members of the APA Committee on the Status of Women (CSW) have been working to establish and promote the following initiatives.

Diversity in philosophy conference

The APA CSW is pleased to be co-sponsoring a conference on Diversity in Philosophy to be held May 29 to May 31, 2013, at the University of Dayton in Dayton, Ohio.

This conference will examine and address the underrepresentation of women and other marginalized groups in philosophy. Participants will focus on hurdles and best practices associated with the inclusion of underrepresented groups. It will focus on such questions as the following:

- Why do white males continue to be over-represented among philosophy majors, graduate students, and faculty members, especially given that most other fields in the sciences and humanities are increasingly diverse?
- What are some effective ways to improve the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women and other underrepresented groups?
- What roles do implicit bias and stereotyping play in who advances in philosophy?
- How can the climate for women and other marginalized groups be improved?
- What role can philosophers who study marginalized groups play in advancing underrepresented groups in philosophy?
- What can philosophy learn from National Science Foundation ADVANCE initiatives that address how to recruit and advance women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields?
- How can we improve the climate for all underrepresented groups in philosophy, including those who are LGBTQ, disabled, first generation in college, or economically disadvantaged?

Goals of the conference include creating opportunities for networking and building supportive communities as well as sharing cutting edge research. To find out more, go to the CSW website at www.apaonlinecsw.org.

Site visit program

The CSW has led the initiative to establish an APA-sponsored site visit program. Peggy DesAutels, Carla Fehr, and Sally Haslanger will serve as the first directors of this program. Specific goals of the APA-CSW-sponsored site visits include the following:

- Gaining information in a systematic way about the range and variety of women's and minorities' experiences in philosophy that contribute to the ongoing underrepresentation of women and minorities in the field.
- Informing departments, where necessary, about challenges women and philosophers of other underrepresented groups face, drawing on first-person reports and social-science research.
- Helping departments analyze the climate issues particular to their own setting.
- Making recommendations based on proven best practices.

A workshop to train site visit team members will be held on June 1, 2013, at the University of Dayton in Dayton, Ohio.

APA ad hoc committee on sexual harassment

Members of the CSW helped to select the members of an APA Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Harassment. This committee will examine the phenomenon of sexual harassment as it arises in professional philosophy, e.g., its prevalence and the contexts in which it occurs. To this end, the committee will develop a protocol by which it can obtain anonymous information. It will aspire to obtain information from undergraduates, graduate students, staff, postdocs, part-time instructors, and faculty of a variety of sexual orientation and gender identifications, mindful of the distinctive vulnerabilities of LGBTQ philosophers. The committee will then recommend how the APA should implement its nondiscrimination policy in regard to sexual harassment. It will produce a report recommending best practices regarding sexual harassment in the discipline to be implemented by the APA, philosophy departments in which APA members are employed, and conferences and other professional events hosted by either.

Articles

Pluralism in "Academic Politics": The Collateral Damage of Cronyism and Legal Aspects of Common Misconduct

Naomi Zack
University of Oregon

"Sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants."
–US Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis,
"What Publicity Can Do," *Harper's Weekly*, 1913

As women, people of color, disabled people, veterans, older people, and LBGT people, when we enter the academy, we come with disadvantaged identities from real life. As such, we minority academic immigrants are components of the demographic pluralism within higher education, generally, and the pluralism of gender, race, and so forth, in our departments, more specifically. There are policies that have supported our admission or hire, but we need to remember that these policies not only benefit us, but reward and glorify hiring and admissions authorities for promoting diversity by letting us in.[1] There are few policies in higher education that specify what kinds of sexism and racism are not permitted within departments and other units. And such extant policies are neither scrupulously followed, nor broadly known. Those who rape women, molest children, or murder their colleagues will lose their jobs soon after the nightly news. But thousands of less extreme offenses occur on a daily basis in higher education without attention, reprimand, or punishment.

Women and members of other minority groups who have experienced injustice within the academy based on their disadvantaged identities may, of course, complain. This means that as individuals, they may recount specific incidents to campus Affirmative Action (AA) or Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) administrators on their campuses. These administrators have little power and are obligated to represent their employers through processes that are shrouded in secrecy to protect the reputations of institutions, departments, and offenders. (There is scant evidence that union representatives have been any more effective in responding to discrimination complaints.) Retaliation against complainants is widespread and well known, even though at the end of many official reviews and investigations institutional standards of proof for alleged offenses may not be met. Outside legal representation for victims is expensive, and recourse to it is met with intense suspicion, anger, and feelings of betrayal.

Any form of institutional complaint is likely to begin within a given department, or else the department chair will soon be advised of it by other administrators. In general, colleges and universities have at this time no effective mechanisms for addressing institutional discrimination *within* institutions. Not only is little attention paid to race or gender in selecting top administrators but administrators on all levels seem to prefer to keep themselves ignorant about the treatment of minorities *within* departments. Such chosen ignorance by administrators is a great disadvantage of the departmental structure in higher education. In supporting academic freedom, the departmental structure does have the virtue of self-governance. But when self-governance is unjust—because it is presumed to be democratic when it is not—respect for the autonomy of a department as a whole can work as an excuse for administrators not to intervene and correct abuses that occur within that unit.

The overall structure of administrative power over departments as whole units also enables deans and other administrators above the departmental level to deal only with one or a few people as representatives of a department. Since those with whom administrators interact tend to be dominant over others in their unit, who administrators may not even know, there is little opportunity for administrators to be directly informed about the quality of work life of those with whom they do not directly interact. Such ignorance tends to foreclose concern. Because they should be concerned about the quality of work life of all members of the academic community, the lack of administrative knowledge about quality of work life within departments is a form of *negligence* (or a breach of a duty owed).

In this paper, I will focus on one factor concerning bias, discrimination, and administrative negligence that is evident in some contemporary US philosophy departments—*white male cronyism*. The appendix to the paper sketches a legalistic diagnosis of harms that may attend and result from white male cronyism in higher education, which include the torts and crimes of battery, bribery, negligence, recklessness, coercion, defamation, conspiracy, and retaliation for engaging in the legally protected speech of making complaints about discrimination. This legalistic diagnostic may be useful toward more precise understanding than that yielded by the euphemism "academic politics." The paper proceeds through four sections: (1) The present normative and structural context of diversity; (2) The white male aspect of white male cronyism; (3) What cronyism is and why it is bad for women and other minorities; and (4) What can be done? Overall, these sections provide a usual sort of moral critique.

1. The present normative and structural context of diversity

Ethical professionalism in academia today is based on assumed standards of excellence in research and pedagogy, transparent administrative decision-making processes, and non-discrimination. In terms of affirmation of the presence of members of previously excluded groups, diversity is not mere inclusion; diversity is inclusion plus equality after inclusion: *Diversity = inclusion + equality.* Diversity is thus egalitarian *demographic* pluralism in any given work unit. Where there is complete diversity, with both inclusion and equality, meritocracy

should be expected. Those who are not both white and male (NWMs) are the current *academic immigrant minority* in US philosophy departments. They have moral and legal rights to expect ethical professionalism after their admission or hire, and those who are white males, as well as all in positions of authority and power, have a negative obligation to avoid discrimination and a positive obligation to take measures to correct the behavior of those who practice it.

If a reasonable person in a workplace reports an experience of sexism or racism, in terms of our current public morality, such report is cause for further inquiry. While the law may require a measure of objective damage to the individual's career or income, professional ethics, which should be the basis of collegiality, accepts more subjective criteria. If a NWM feels disrespected, harmed, or insulted, on the grounds of gender or race, others should be concerned about his or her report. If the report is accurate concerning objective events that the complainant says caused harm, others with power and authority in the institution should take and support punitive and corrective measures. This holds for both verbal and physical sexual harassment and verbal and physical expressions of hatred and contempt based on race, ethnicity, or gender. It holds because those actions are morally wrong in all cases, illegal in some cases, and deeply damaging to their victims in most cases. Because everyone should have and display minimal humanistic concern for the psychic well-being of colleagues, as well as behave in ways that are non-discriminatory according to moral as well as professional, administrative, and legal standards, when a person reports abuse related to minority identity, her claim needs to be taken seriously. Instead, all too often in contexts dominated by cronies, there is a mad rush to comfort the accused and deny everything. White male cronyism works against diversity and protection from abuse based on race or gender within institutions and departments, as well as against criticism of the microcultures giving rise to such abuse.

2. The white male aspect of white male cronyism

After women or racial minorities are hired, they often do not have power within departments, because the departments are controlled by white male cronies. That the cronies are white males is a historical and sociological fact quite distinct from anything inherent in race, ethnicity, or gender. Neither having a white male identity nor a privileged background is sufficient for that person to be sexist, racist, or a crony. Still, there are several contingent background reasons for the white male identity of cronies in philosophy departments: the history of American philosophy has been dominated by white males, as has Western philosophy; the top leadership structures of colleges and universities, as well as their major donors, have been and still are mostly white males; and white males have advantaged and privileged identities outside of academia. These reasons favor white males to already have the default identities for those in any position of power and authority in both philosophy and real life. However, not all white males are cronies, and these reasons or causes of the likelihood of white male identities of cronies in academic philosophy departments do not explain what cronyism itself is and why it is bad for women and other minorities.

3. What cronyism is and why it is bad for women and other minorities

Cronyism occurs when any group whose formation is based on affective and instrumental relationships, such as a group of friends or allies, has and uses more power than is fair or professionally merited according to the standards of merit or fairness held by a larger group that contains the crony group. When cronies run things, power becomes concentrated in their hands to serve the interests of a group that is smaller than the whole unit; cronies serve themselves. White males are not the only ones who practice cronyism in academia and throughout other work units in the United States. Indeed, throughout the world, there are myriad instances of NWM cronyism. However, in American colleges and universities in general, and philosophy departments in particular, white males have been the majority, with both more power than other demographic groups and greater numbers. This tells us something else that is important about our kind of cronyism, namely, that it is typically accessible to those who have traits or histories that give them advantages in perceived entitlement and access to power, as well as the authority to exercise power. But again, this is not an issue of identity politics. In academic philosophy departments, white male cronies may exercise their illegitimate power over other white males, as well as NWMs, so that being a white male is not a sufficient condition for becoming one of the cronies in any given department.

Cronies typically pursue agendas that benefit them, so that benefit to them, rather than harm to others, is their primary goal. Cronies do not hold themselves accountable to all members of the whole unit within which they have disproportionate power. And they give sincere and truthful accounts of their actions only to their fellow cronies. When they report positive things about their departments and those department members outside of their crony group, it is mainly because they believe it will reflect well on themselves. It is very important to note, although it is not exculpatory, that white male cronies need not be racist or sexist or in any other way biased in their hearts and minds for their affiliations and self-serving actions to result in racist or sexist experiences for NWMs. Much of the harm experienced is collateral damage resulting from cronies' self-serving perspectives and actions.

White male cronies often do not think of the good of the *whole* department over which they have leadership authority, but mainly (sometimes only) focus on what is good for them. They permit themselves to remain blind to the harm of their self-service because they do not ask themselves what is required of everyone, especially leaders, in a democratic, meritocratic, demographically diverse context. In such contexts, a moral duty is owed, the duty is breached, and damage results; this is negligent. When such moral negligence is pointed out to them, white male cronies tend to dismiss complaint, especially if allegations concerning sexual harassment or racism are made about a fellow crony. Such dismissal and often attendant cover-up is reckless if they have knowledge of a possible offense and choose to ignore it to serve themselves. When the cronies get angry and express that anger against those reporting bad conduct, they are engaging in retaliation.

Cronies in a department get their way despite structures of self-governance and democratic voting practices. How? Cronies are apt to make agreements among themselves about how they will vote before important meetings occur, and they may coerce one another into going along with a unified position based on their crony-group allegiances. They ensure that their side will be the winning side by making deals with those outside the crony group or subtly holding the threat of withholding tenure, promotion, or the allocation of scarce resources over the heads of otherwise dissenting colleagues—this is duress, consent given because a person's freedom is limited in some external way. Others may yield or vote with the cronies for a perk (which in state institutions is bribery), to avoid confrontation, or out of a generalized fear of offending those in power. If the deals are made before the actual vote occurs, they are conspiracies, or agreements to do legal acts in illegal ways. Ensuing votes that are determined by a numerical majority of the entire unit have

only the form of a democratic procedure if the outcome of the vote has been pre-determined by coercion, duress, bribery, and conspiracy.

The crony group usually has one of its members serve as department chair. But sometimes a NWM, usually a woman, may serve as chair to serve the cronies. In philosophy departments, where faculty decisions about curricula, hires, and admissions have direct effects on the quality and content of work done in the department, a ruling crony group may police the disciplinary rigidity or purity of the entire department. Cronies may in this regard view themselves as serving some larger professional contingency that they believe is persecuted and embattled (for example, analytic philosophy under siege from post-modernism or experimental philosophy; continental philosophy under siege from analytic philosophy). Such splits typically involve large discrepancies in how each side views itself and the other side. These gross misunderstandings support *ideological* views of the philosophical world through the lens of one specific subfield or another.

In policing disciplinary boundaries within a department, cronies may present themselves as the departmental leaders of a crusade that extends far beyond the department. Such disciplinary enforcement is often referred to as "fit" in discussions of job candidates and graduate student applicants, and it can become a form of corruption when admissions or hires are supposed to be based on "non-political" or non-ideological academic merit. Disciplinary enforcement can be brought to the shrill point of accusing visitors who disagree with the host's crony-consensus or who work from the assumptions of a different subfield of "not doing philosophy," a form of professional defamation. Such disciplinary enforcement is deadly for intellectual pluralism. Insofar as NWMs may work in philosophical subfields requiring an intellectual pluralistic approach, the ideological police work constrains their intellectual freedom and limits opportunities they might otherwise have to professionally interact with others who share their pluralistic perspectives.

Cronies may also construct myths about themselves as individuals. Mistaking their ill-gotten professional power in a department for being personally exceptional, they may become deluded about their own charisma and attractiveness. Some may become sexual predators who believe that students and others with less power have consented to their advances or are pursuing them, when in fact such "quarry" are dazed, repelled, and afraid.

Work-centered forms of crony myth-making employ rhetoric against the perceived opposition and narrow criteria for acceptable philosophy. Cronies tend to draw professional boundaries around their own levels of achievement, scholarship, and philosophical creativity. Their illegitimate power emboldens them to simply assume that they are brilliant and that their work is on the highest level of professional excellence. On that basis, they may attack the work and professional reputations of those who surpass them in achievement, scholarship, and philosophical creativity. By contrast, those outside the crony group, particularly NWMs, have had no choice but to develop their academic careers based on the highest standards that they have experienced or hold as ideals. These "outsiders" who are forced to proceed without a ready-to-hand delusional system to inflate success and hide failure are in the long run better off. But if NWMs are daunted by that struggle, they may try to become members of a white male crony group. However, such entry is likely be blocked, because you have to be a friend or an ally of a crony to belong to the crony group, and most adults choose their friends and allies from the same race and gender as themselves.

All of the foregoing occurs, unchecked, within the privacy of an academic department because, in the absence of physical bloodshed or blatant crime, members of the wider academic community are about as loathe to intervene in departmental "politics" as they are to intrude on the family lives of their neighbors. Most administrators in higher education, from presidents to deans, place a high rhetorical value on "diversity," which they take to mean no more than the mere inclusion of undergraduate, graduate, and faculty, who are "members of underrepresented groups." In earlier years, crony groups in many philosophy departments have regarded administrative support of such inclusion antithetical to their self-serving agendas. They grudgingly complied with the program by "diversifying" their hiring and admissions "pools," only to continually find that there were not enough qualified NWMs to achieve substantial levels of diversity in their units. This older crony reaction to affirmative action is basically a non-starter in terms of diversity and it is likely to result in the most explicitly racist and sexist experiences for those NWMs who are admitted or hired as "tokens." Tokens generally have to devote a great deal of energy toward deflecting and correcting demeaning stereotypes about themselves. There is a significant body of progressive literature about such experiences during the late twentieth century and I am not going to reprise that material here. The ways that cronies deploy affirmative action and diversity for their own purposes is more interesting for our purposes because it is the current battleground for NWM academic philosophers.

Some crony groups leap onto the diversity bandwagon and admit and hire as many NWMs as they can, gaining glory for those deeds within their institutions and beyond. However, as cronies who are more interested in what benefits them professionally as individuals than in the good of a whole department, they are unlikely to take the contribution of NWMs seriously after admission or hire. They have already got what they wanted from them in letting them in. It has been noted how complaints of discrimination within a department are likely to be ill received by the cronies in power. Also, where departmental governance is monopolized by the cronies, a number of key positions and decisions may not be available to NWMs based on merit or the needs of the unit as a whole: department chair, chairs of major committees, certain teaching assignments, curriculum design, position descriptions for new hires, outside speaker selections, and so forth. The result is lack of opportunity for many important kinds of professional development, including advancement into administration, if that is desired. Clearly, this does not add up to diversity in the sense that includes equality.

Summing up: the defining characteristics of cronies and cronyism are that their decision-making process is shared only among themselves, and they make decisions based on what benefits them as individuals or a small group in power rather than what will benefit others in the larger context in which they have power, that is, the whole department. The power of cronies lies in their allegiance and loyalty to one another and they are interested neither in principles nor in the good of a whole unit. Cronies thus use social processes to form allegiances and produce outcomes that are anti-social concerning the well-being of larger wholes or other individuals who might have equally justified claims to leadership or power. *Cronies hijack power* for themselves and once they have it, everything they do is primarily about them. That is the present face of institutional racism and sexism in many daily working lives in US philosophy departments, and it inevitably has strong effects on the life and work of those of us who belong to groups that have just been let in.

4. What can be done?

Because the damage that cronies do to NWMs is now usually collateral damage, it has been called "implicit bias." Some NWMs believe that they can dissolve implicit bias through various institutionally "facilitated conversations" or discussions conducted by AA or EEOC administrators between an individual experiencing racism or sexism and the relevant offender. Such conversations may temporarily make individuals feel better, but they rarely address the lack of democracy within a unit or the wider institutional structure supporting such injustice. Moreover, there is no reason to believe that cronies give up power voluntarily, and the "implicit bias" in question is a very natural consequence of the unjust power they grasp. We should now consider three practical ways of responding to white male cronyism, which may be more effective than "facilitated conversation."

First, there is the opposing crony-group strategy. NWMs seek allies so as to practice their own cronyism. While this measure may thwart the efforts of any given group of white male cronies in power, it will not shift the collective focus within the unit to the good of the whole. Also, in the long run, it is not likely to be effective within institutions where NWMs are minorities, because the white male cronies will make end runs to members of higher level crony groups in institutional administration. In the short run, the opposing crony-group strategy can result in confrontations and disputes that can openly divide a department. Previously fragile collegial interactions will fracture and tempers will flare as more and more people get drawn into the opposition or become upset by it. The department could, as a result, fail to fulfill its basic teaching functions, and the confrontation will distract scholars from their research. If the conflict attracts outside attention, the department might go into receivership, or, if it is not highly valued by the administration (and few philosophy departments are), it could be dissolved.

Second, a more individualistic but devious response to white male cronyism is for one or more NWMs to make an alliance with the cronies in power, supporting the crony agenda in return for something that the NWMs want. But the NWMs who thus become *crony lackies* will thereby compromise their own principles and send very mixed messages to others. They may be called upon to do dirty work for the cronies, such as defending them against well-grounded criticism and complaints by other NWMs, attacking their perceived enemies and/or a certain amount of lying, fabrication, manipulation of students, or retaliation. It is a poor bargain for any individual to thus make herself morally abject in exchange for a few scraps from those who are unjust and corrupt. Also, it is highly likely that such lackeys will be publically blamed for the cronies' misdeeds, in addition to their own, when the cronies themselves lose power—which they inevitably will if a major scandal or lawsuit erupts.

Third is the single-opponent strategy, an individual path of overt and covert opposition that consists of taking a stand against the major self-serving and professionally unethical actions of members of any given crony group. This strategy is only suitable for full professors with enough publications and standing in the wider profession to weather a storm. It has the potential of reducing one's minority standing in a pluralistic department to a numerical minority of one. The stresses of such a position are obvious and it may not be sustainable, but it has advantages over the other two strategies: because it involves only one individual, unlike the first opposing crony-group strategy, it is unlikely to either split or destroy the department; unlike the second lets-make-a-deal strategy, it does not compromise a NWM individual's integrity, because she is continually making it more difficult for cronies to get their way by becoming a thorn in their side.

I do not know how widespread cronyism within philosophy departments is at this time. If it is not ubiquitous then most who suffer from it, beyond braving the danger of fully reporting discrimination, may be best advised to leave the department in question or withdraw as much as possible from its compromising "politics." One great advantage of being a NWM philosopher at this time is the potential to develop collegial relationships outside of one's department. It is important that junior faculty develop their individual careers so that they can get tenure; graduate students need to finish their degrees and get jobs. But on the other hand, and counter to these ameliorative remarks, white male cronyism is a violation of very basic professional ethics, and it seems a shame not to oppose it. *If you don't speak up while you're young, when do you think you will you do it?*

Whatever path one chooses, the factor of stress should be kept in mind. Individual experiences, including emotional distress and stress itself, are theoretically important because much contemporary discussion of racism and sexism has moved away from the idea of discriminatory intent or prejudicial motivation and toward consideration of the effects of discrimination and how people react to it. Stress can result in illness, accidents, decreased productivity, disruptions of all of a person's relationships, chronic anxiety, and a general knowledge and feeling that one is not happy. However, some people thrive on situations of challenge and selected confrontation, and there is no way to know if you are like that unless you try to do something.

Finally, those who choose not to act but nonetheless keep accurate records of misdeeds are likely to gain in several ways. First, writing creates distance, which minimizes stress. Second, keeping a record may spur more theoretical ideas and abstract generalizations about workplace injustice, which, as devised by philosophers, can be shared with impunity. And third, if the more outrageous behavior of the cronies one knows is ever the subject of civil litigation or criminal prosecution, written records not only revive the memories of potential complainants and witnesses but in some cases may qualify as evidence in their own right. Unjust systems tend to be unstable so that those who thrive by abusing power today are very likely to be subject to abrupt reversals of fortune tomorrow.

Appendix: Legalistic Diagnostics

First, I identify some preliminary considerations about law and morality, practicality, and the difference between crimes and torts. Generally speaking, over recorded history in the West, morality or ethics, logically and often chronologically, comes before law. Law and laws are restricted to geographical jurisdictions, e.g., the laws of New York State, the United States, France, and so forth. Morality presumes to be universal, e.g., that human life is intrinsically valuable, that everyone's dignity should be recognized, that children require special care, and so forth. Some moral principles are also legal principles, e.g., that it is wrong to kill, but other moral principles are not backed up by law, e.g., that one should be loyal to one's friends, treat one's parents with respect, or not lie. Also, there are certain ethical principles accepted in the American workplace such as principles of honesty and fairness, which (although they resemble legal principles) are not always, or even usually, backed up by law.

The law provides ultimate normativity in our society by defining and punishing both torts and crimes. Torts are non-criminal wrongs according to a tradition of civil law that can be the basis for victims' (plaintiffs') legal actions to collect monetary damages. Tort law in the United States is a development of English common law, which is decided on a case by case basis; its plaintiffs and defendants are private

individuals. Crimes are violations of specific statutes that are prosecuted by government authorities as plaintiffs and result in punishment of a defendant if guilt is determined.

In keeping with the scope of morality being more broad and universal than the scope of law and legal action, not every wrong that one person does to another, or every action that appears to be criminal, has a tradition of tort or criminal action. A wrongful action is only a tort or a crime if it is recognized as such in common law or criminal law. The "diagnostic" that follows here is thereby more "legalistic" than legal. It relates some moral wrongs that occur in our academic workplaces, which may have no legal history of tort actions or criminal prosecutions, to wrongs already widely recognized in the legal system. The definitions below of the recognized legal wrongs of battery, bribery, coercion, defamation, negligence, recklessness, conspiracy, and retaliation for the protected speech of making complaints about bias are followed by commentary about their relation to white male cronyism as discussed in the paper. At the end, I will speculate as to why these common offenses, so often committed by academic philosophers, and sharing a structure with torts and crimes, have not usually given rise to legal action.

Relevant Torts and Crimes

> **Battery,**[2] as both a crime and a tort, is the application of force to the person of another, without consent; it includes the least offensive touching of another, or even touching their clothing or close possessions.

There are policies against sexual harassment on all campuses, but the crime of battery is rarely mentioned, except for incidents in "campus crime reports" after students are accosted off campus or near campus by persons who are described as non-members of the university community. Non-violent batteries that occur between faculty and students, students and students, or senior and junior faculty, which may also be instances of sexual harassment, are rarely referred to as batteries.

> **Bribery** is the offer and acceptance of a reward for performing an official duty in a way that breaches or does not fulfill one's official duty. Under some state jurisdictions, bribery committed by state employees is a felony, i.e., punishable by more than a year in prison.

Issues of bribery arise when cronies make deals among themselves or with others to exchange votes on matters of self-governance toward an outcome desired by the cronies, which may not be the meritocratic outcome or the outcome initially desired by the person bribed, for some advantage to the person bribed.

> **Coercion** is not in itself either a crime or a tort. But when people are coerced to make certain choices or enter into certain agreements, those agreements often have no legal standing and cannot be enforced.

If junior faculty consistently vote how cronies in a department direct because they fear not getting tenure if they vote freely, then they are coerced, and faculty self-governance has been undermined. If faculty self-governance is a right, rather than a privilege, then coercion violates that right. Even if self-governance is not a right but a series of voluntary actions, coercion unjustly interferes with freedom and is a form of duress.

> **Conspiracy** occurs when two or more people agree to commit an unlawful act or to commit a lawful act in an unlawful way, and some action is taken by one or more members of the conspiracy to further that goal.

Many decisions secretly made by cronies in a department, which should be shared by members of the department outside of the crony circle, and which are acted upon, may be lawful acts performed in unlawful ways.

> **Defamation** involves broadcasting or publishing untruths about individuals that are harmful to their reputation or appropriative of their identities. Slander is spoken defamation and libel is written defamation.

As an agonistic disciplinary practice, philosophers slander and libel the work of other philosophers all the time, but most of that is protected as free speech. However, unprotected instances of slander and libel may occur as retaliation by cronies against those who have complained about sexual harassment or racially discriminatory actions of a member of the crony group.

> **Negligence** is a tort pertaining to damage resulting from the failure of a person or institution to exercise due care, either the due care of an ordinary person regarding risks of harms to others, or the due care specially required of those discharging duties stemming from their employment or occupation.

It is negligent of cronies not to exercise due care toward the rights of NWMs in their academic departments so as to avoid race and gender discrimination. It is also negligent when they fail to follow through on complaints of discrimination or harassment when they are charged to do so. Administrative officials who supervise departments with crony structures are also negligent in not attending to complaints in timely ways, as required by statute or good professional practices.

> **Recklessness** is failure to exercise a duty of due care when it is known that certain harmful results are likely to occur from that failure.

If administrators know that cronies in a department have been negligent concerning issues of discrimination or sexual harassment, their failure to take disciplinary action against the cronies or remove them from positions of authority over NWMs may be reckless.

> **Retaliation** may occur when employees complain about discrimination within organizations, as well as when they make reports to external authorities. Jurisdictions vary on the protections offered "whistleblowers," but depending on the harm suffered as a result of retaliation it may be either a crime or a tort, or both.[3] Courts have generally ruled according to the principle that anti-discrimination laws imply that legal action can be taken if whistleblowers who report violations experience retaliation. The standard for what constitutes retaliation is action that would have "dissuaded a reasonable worker from making or supporting a charge of discrimination."[4]

Fear of retaliation is quite common when students or faculty try to decide whether to file complaints or grievances against discriminatory conduct by cronies.

About the Gap Between Legality and Life on Campus

Assuming that such practices are widespread, why are not more tort cases brought by academics and why have (so far as I know) no white male philosophers been criminally prosecuted for behavior arising from their cronyism? One reason, pertaining to criminal prosecution, is that most crimes that get prosecuted are physical actions committed by poor people who have low social status. That is, most of the energy of the criminal law system is directed toward regulating the behavior of people who have high school degrees or less. There are "white collar crimes," of course, but they are not vigorously prosecuted unless connected to actions that can be viscerally experienced, such as identity theft or crimes of rich or famous people, like Bernard Madoff or Martha Stewart. The public understands what it means to bribe a police officer or steal a car, but the idea of one academic philosopher bribing or coercing a colleague concerning a matter of importance only within their department, which is

itself a little-known component of a university, is simply arcane. Many outside of academia do not even know that colleges and universities are divided into semi-autonomous departments.

Another reason for the lack of a real legal connection is that the torts or personal damage of discrimination experienced by women, people of color, and other minorities within academic units are new offenses because members of minority groups are themselves new to those departments. Just as Foucault observed that new forms of power create new forms of sexuality, we need to understand that new forms of access create new forms of oppression—at least initially. Overall, cause for hope lies in the moral power of exposure based on the ability of some people to speak up and stand their ground. As Justice Brandeis is quoted as saying at the beginning of this article, sunlight is indeed the best disinfectant. But it should be kept in mind that although the general structures of some wrongs can be stated loudly and publically, the specifics of concrete cases and the identities of alleged wrong-doers should be kept confidential unless or until there is legal protection for publicity. Not only is such discretion prudent so as to avoid committing defamation, but it also preserves the reputations and rights of those against whom there are allegations until those allegations are proved and the proof is in some way officially or legally accepted.

Acknowledgments

A previous version of this paper was presented as "Ethical Professionalism versus Cronyism: How Women and Minorities are Affected," Invited Symposium – Problems for Philosophers: Implicit Bias and the Perception of Merit, Pacific Division Meeting, American Philosophical Association, Seattle, WA, April 2012. I gave the penultimate version as "Pluralism in Academic Politics: Cronyism and Collateral Sexism and Racism," at the Society for Analytic Feminism, 3rd Conference, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, Oct. 6, 2012. I am grateful for audience questions and comments at both these conferences.

I am especially grateful to Margaret Crouch and Janet Kourany for their inquiries regarding the subject matter of this article, and I very much appreciate the sunlight offered by this opportunity for publication in the *APA Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy*. Also, I am indebted to my colleague in philosophy, Cheyney Ryan, for supportive and incisive comments on the penultimate version of this paper.

Notes

1. Ever since *Bakke v. University of California* in 1977, it has been clearly evident that most administrators in higher education favor affirmative action in the face of skeptical judicial examination. However, in both legal representation and amicus curiae briefs in such cases, minority voices are often not heard. See Derrick A. Bell Jr., "Bakke, Minority Admissions, and the Usual Price of Racial Remedies, 67 Cal. L. Rev. 3 (1979). http://scholarship.law.Berkeley.edu/californialawreview/vol67/iss1/2.
2. The definitions of these common legal terms are derived from Bryan A. Garner, ed. *Black's Law Dictionary* (St. Paul, MN: Thompson Reuters, 2009) and Stephen H. Gifis, ed. *Law Dictionary*, 6th ed. (Hauppage, NY: Barrons Educational Series, 2010).
3. For a summary of recent state regulations concerning retaliation, see E. S. Callahan and T. M. Dworkin, "The State of State Whistleblower Protection," *American Business Law Journal* 38 (2000): 99–175. doi:10.1111/j.1744-1714.2000.tb00286.x.
4. Robert N. Covington, *Employment Law*, 3rd ed. (St. Paul, MN: Thomson Reuters, 2009), 282.

The Dismissal of Feminist Philosophy and Hostility to Women in the Profession

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In the past year, there have been multiple online discussions of the connection, or lack thereof, between the dismissal of feminist philosophy and the fact of hostility to women in the philosophical profession. The user-generated content site "What Is it Like to be a Woman in Philosophy?" contains a sub-section entitled "feminism isn't philosophy," in which all of the entries recount individual women's experiences with philosophers who dismiss feminist philosophy as misguided, of poor quality, or not properly philosophical. The inclusion of these posts on a website that highlights, for the most part, experiences of discrimination, harassment, trivialization, and other forms of sexist mistreatment of women in philosophy has the effect of suggesting—as Brian Leiter notes in a reflection on the site—that the dismissal of feminist philosophy is of a piece with recounted instances of hostility to women. That is, these posts imply that these instances of the dismissal of feminist philosophy are themselves instances of sexism.

Leiter takes issue with this implied characterization and writes that it is "a mistake to think that opposition to sexual harassment and commitment to gender equality mandates that all philosophers take feminist philosophy seriously . . . nothing is more familiar to philosophers than the diversity of opinion about what kinds or styles of philosophy are worthwhile, and what kinds are not."[1] An unnamed interlocutor, whom Leiter describes as a "well-known female philosopher," adds an assent, and a caveat: "I'm just not clear on what the problem with [skepticism about] feminist philosophy is supposed to be. It's one thing to argue that (1) people are dismissing feminist philosophy because of sexism. It's another to argue that (2) if people are dismissing feminist philosophy, it must be because of sexism. It's right to ridicule the second claim. It's wrong to ridicule the first one."[2] In contrast to these claims, in this paper, I will argue that it is not obvious that one can dismiss feminist philosophy as "not worthwhile" without being sexist, and that, moreover, it is either very unlikely or impossible to dismiss feminist philosophy as such without engaging in sexism. For this reason, contra Leiter's claim, if one is interested in eliminating sexism from the philosophical profession, one must take feminist philosophy seriously.

First, it is important to clarify that I do not claim or believe that taking feminist philosophy seriously as a philosophically viable position (or, better, constellation of positions) is a sufficient condition for avoiding sexist beliefs or practices. It is entirely conceivable that one may believe, for example, that feminist claims about the social construction of gender are plausible—or even correct—while still believing, either explicitly or implicitly, that women are less capable philosophers than men, simply by virtue of their gender. Indeed, as I will suggest, it is even possible that one may identify oneself explicitly as a feminist philosopher and engage in sexist behaviors. Feminist philosophy alone is not a corrective to sexist behavior, just as (to borrow Leiter's analogy) Marxist philosophy is not necessarily a corrective to classist exploitation. One *may* be impressed or convinced by either while still holding beliefs or engaging in practices that it would condemn.

Additionally, it is important to note that when I address the dismissal of "feminist philosophy as such," I do not have in mind the rejection of a particular philosophical position that happens to be feminist. Instead, I have in mind what I

think both Leiter and the "What Is It Like…?" posts suggest: the dismissal of feminist philosophy as an area of philosophy or body of literature *qua* feminist. One may or may not, in such cases, agree that this dismissal is *because of* the feminist character of this literature. In either case, though, a discussion of the dismissal of feminist philosophy (such as Leiter's) is directed at feminist philosophy *as such*, not of individual instances of feminist literature. If one wants to maintain, on the contrary, that such acts of dismissal are merely directed at individual instances of philosophy that happen to be feminist, then one is either using a misleading descriptor in claiming to have "dismissed feminist philosophy" or confused about the reach of one's acts of dismissal.

The status of such acts of dismissal depends upon the meaning of three terms: dismissal, sexism, and feminist philosophy. I will take each in turn.

One may characterize her or his relation to some philosophical literature as a "dismissal" in one of two ways. On one hand, one may "dismiss" a position as *prima facie* wrong, or as having been clearly refuted, and thus being unworthy of careful consideration. (It is with such acts of dismissal that philosophers of race might dismiss biological or natural kind explanations of the origins of racial identity.) On the other hand, one may "dismiss" a position in the sense of rejecting it as misguided, untenable, or otherwise wrong *after* careful consideration of the arguments supporting it. This latter sense of dismissal is weaker than the former—so much so, indeed, that the word "dismissal" seems an unusual choice to describe it. Typically, when we describe someone as having "dismissed" a position, we have in mind the former, stronger, hand-waving gesture. Indeed, this latter "dismissal" is better understood as rejection: it engages philosophically with a body of literature or position but ultimately finds it wanting. When Socrates, for example, ultimately finds that "doing good to friends and harm to enemies" is an insufficient account of justice, he does not dismiss Polemarchus' position, but rejects it in the course of a careful argument. True dismissal—of the sort described in various posts on "What Is It Like…?"—does no such thing.[3] Since it is not clear which form of "dismissal" Leiter and his interlocutor have in mind, however, I will treat both dismissal and rejection below.

Considered rejection of a philosophical position is, of course, much more difficult than pure dismissal of it, and this is especially true in the case of feminist philosophy. The reason for this difficulty is simply that feminist philosophy is not, strictly speaking, a philosophical position. It is, instead, a body of literature containing a variety of philosophical interests and positions, just as are (for example) philosophy of mind, ancient Greek philosophy, and American pragmatism. Just as these areas of philosophical inquiry contain a wide variety of metaphysical, ethical, and epistemological commitments, so too does feminist philosophy. What unites philosophy of mind, ancient Greek philosophy, and American pragmatism (apart from our disciplinary interest in categorizing AOSes) are a few shared concerns and/or shared origins. Feminist philosophy as a body of literature is united most clearly by a few shared concerns (and also arguably by its origins, having emerged in the comparatively recent past). Though it is notoriously difficult to come to agreement on what the shared concerns of feminism are, I would suggest, minimally, that feminist philosophy is concerned with gender—and perhaps more strongly, the philosophical implications of women's subordination, which is understood in some way or other as problematic. Beyond this minimal threshold, however, there is wide disagreement—and indeed, a wide variety of philosophical interests and methodologies.

As feminist philosophers are well aware, there are significant bodies of literature within the wider area of feminist philosophy: feminist epistemology, feminist philosophy of science, feminist ethics, feminist approaches to various periods in the history of philosophy, feminist philosophies of identity (and other classical metaphysical concerns), feminist environmental philosophy, and feminist phenomenology, just to name a few. And, of course, within each of these subfields, there are ongoing debates and controversies: there is hardly, for example, feminist agreement on the moral status of pornography—or even on whether "pornography as such" could be adequately addressed as an object having moral standing, given the wide variety of its instantiations. We should not be surprised by the existence of such wide-ranging views within feminist philosophy any more than we should be surprised that philosophers of mind have ongoing disagreements about whether physicalist accounts of emotion are correct. What *should* surprise us, on the contrary, are declarations that such an enormous body of literature, containing innumerable philosophical perspectives and commitments, could obviously be unproblematically dismissed.

Leaving aside for the moment considerations about sexism, the possibility of reasonable dismissal (of the hand-waving sort) of such a wide range of positions and methodologies looks vanishingly small, and displays a startlingly anti-philosophical sentiment.[4] In order to do so, one must—minimally—characterize the shared feminist interest in gender and the fact of women's subordination as *prima facie* mistaken or philosophically irrelevant. A great many professional philosophers do just this—but the problem is that the philosophical relevance of gender and/or women's subordination is *precisely what is at issue in feminist philosophical arguments*. Such wholesale, hand-waving rejection is thus question-begging, insofar as it presumes the truth of its own (highly contestable) anti-feminist premise.

Reasonable considered rejection, in contrast, is in principle possible. However, given the wide variety of feminist philosophical methodologies and positions, even reasonable considered rejection of feminist philosophy as such (again, as distinct from the rejection of particular works of philosophy that happen to be feminist) would be quite difficult. For example, since considered rejection of the claim that gender is socially constructed does not, on its own, give grounds to reject the value of standpoint epistemology (or a wide variety of other feminist claims), considered rejection of feminist philosophy as such would involve careful attention to a wide variety of feminist literatures and positions if it is to avoid a hasty generalization.

Now, while the above considerations show that it is philosophically (indeed, logically) irresponsible to dismiss feminist philosophy as such, and philosophically difficult to reasonably reject it, they do not speak to my primary concern about the correlation between the dismissal of feminist philosophy and sexism. In order to show that it is not obvious that one can dismiss feminist philosophy without engaging in sexism, and moreover, that for this reason, philosophers who value the elimination of sexism from the profession ought to take feminist philosophy seriously, it is necessary to discuss a final concept: sexism.

I (and many other feminist philosophers) use "sexism" in two related senses. First, we may speak of sexism as a cognitive or affective disposition on the part of individuals to treat or regard a person or persons unfairly because of her or their gender. This is the more widely accepted and used understanding of sexism. Alternatively, we may also speak of sexism as an institutional or social phenomenon in which the effect of some set of practices is to unfairly disadvantage a group of people because of their gender, irrespective of

any individual's beliefs, intents, or dispositions. On this latter meaning of "sexism" (primarily used by feminists), in other words, one need not believe that individuals have sexist motives or cognitions in order to believe that *a situation or practice is characterized by sexism*, nor would individuals without such motives or cognitions necessarily be exempt from contributing to or engaging in sexism.

When philosophers who are not feminists—such as Leiter's unnamed interlocutor—use the term "sexism," it appears to me that, most of the time, they have the first meaning (sexism as individual disposition) in mind. Hence the claim that if "people are dismissing feminist philosophy because of sexism"[5] this ought to be documented and condemned. However, it is not clear to me that this is the only meaning intended. In Leiter's post, for example, although his stated interest is in claiming that "opposition to sexual harassment and commitment to gender equality" and a "suitable professional climate for women" need not entail taking feminist philosophy seriously, his interlocutor treats the opposite of these institutional practices as, simply, "sexism." In other words, although Leiter's description of equitable treatment of women in philosophy is at least partly concerned with *what we do* as a discipline, his interlocutor responds with an apparent reference to the dispositions of individual people. Leiter does not offer further comment on his interlocutor's implicit suggestion that the failure to address or be concerned with institutional features like "climate for women" or "gender equality" constitute "sexism," so it's unclear whether he or his interlocutor has dispositional sexism, institutional sexism, or both, in mind. If their concern is simply with dispositional sexism, then the primary question left to answer (to address their concerns) is whether one may clearly dismiss feminist philosophy in the absence of such a problematic disposition. If, on the other hand, they are also concerned with institutional sexism, then it also remains important to address the question of whether one can dismiss feminist philosophy without participating in or contributing to institutional sexism (whether or not one is individually sexist). I will address both questions and argue that we ought to be concerned with both dispositional and institutional sexism.

I have already argued that wholesale, hand-waiving dismissal of feminist philosophy as such is question-begging, and thus a surprising position for a philosopher to take, particularly given the wide variety of methodologies and positions that go by the name "feminist philosophy." In principle, of course, the motive for such a dismissal could be that one is *simply* unreasonable, and not also dispositionally sexist. But it is far from obvious that this is often, or ever, the case in practice, since sexism, as an individual disposition, is very often held without conscious intent.[6] Indeed, as has been well established by social psychological research,[7] even persons who do not explicitly hold biased beliefs will rate work they believe to have been produced by women as of lower quality than work they believe to have been produced by men—to the point of rating *identical* pieces or resumes differently when they are presented with different names.[8] Moreover, at least one study also shows that reflecting on one's own ability to affect a neutral stance of judgment exacerbates this sexist dispositional effect, rather than mitigates it.[9] Feminists refer to this phenomenon as implicit bias, since one need not be explicitly sexist in one's stated beliefs in order to display the dispositional effect. Nor, by the way, does one have to be a man. Indeed, because implicit biases function apart from one's reflective intent to discriminate, feminists themselves, whether women or men, are also subject to them. So, neither philosophical pretensions to neutrality nor explicitly feminist alliance is demonstrably sufficient to cancel out the dispositional effect of implicit bias.

We ought to be concerned about implicit bias against women in the context of a dismissal of feminist philosophy as such for two reasons. The primary reason is a consideration of *who* is producing the philosophical work being dismissed. As the repeated inclusion of instances of the dismissal of feminist philosophy on the "What Is It Like…?" blog suggest, feminist philosophy is overwhelmingly produced by women. A search of the contents of *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy* (the premier journal of feminist philosophical work in North America) reveals that, for the past two years, between 85 and 92 percent of its articles were authored by women. (The infrequency with which "top" philosophy journals publish feminist work makes it difficult to glean reliable statistical information here. However, Haslanger's 2008 study of "top" journals appears to corroborate the conclusion that philosophers producing feminist writing are usually women: the two (n.b., *two*) journals that published articles with any feminist content in the five years studied *also* had the two highest representations of women contributors.[10]) Of course, it is true that women in philosophy write on many areas beyond feminism (though the necessity of such efforts as the Gendered Conference Campaign suggests that the work of women in non-feminist philosophy is routinely devalued or overlooked), but women are clearly over-represented in feminist philosophy, given that our numbers in the wider discipline hover around 20 percent. Since we have ample empirical data to suggest that implicit bias continues to have marked effects on individuals' dispositions and judgments about women—even when individuals do not consciously or intentionally discriminate against women—we ought to be very concerned about the proximate causes of hand-waving dismissal of work produced *almost entirely by women*.

The second reason we ought to be concerned about implicit bias against women in the context of feminist philosophy is that dismissal in the strong sense—that of a quick, hand-waving judgment of being "not worthwhile"—is known to further exacerbate the effects of implicit bias. Perhaps unsurprisingly, research suggests that quick judgments are more likely to show the effects of unfair bias against women's work.[11] Again, since women are, for the most part, the ones producing feminist philosophy, it is both reasonable and prudent to be suspicious of what causes underlie cavalier dismissals of this work.

Neither of the above two points proves definitively that, as Leiter's interlocutor puts it, "if people are dismissing feminist philosophy, it must be because of sexism." Taken together, though, they strongly suggest that it is far from easy to be certain that one's dismissal of feminist philosophy—as a body of literature largely produced by and clearly associated with women—is untainted by sexism, even if one normally thinks of oneself as non-sexist. In other words, even accepting Leiter's interlocutor's distinction between (1) and (2) in principle, in practice, it is extremely difficult to be sure that (1) has not occurred. Additionally, since (as I have argued) the hand-waving dismissal of feminist philosophy as such is question begging—a flaw in reasoning otherwise out of character for professional philosophers—it is *not unreasonable* for feminist philosophers to infer that some additional cause must be behind such instances of dismissal. Indeed, for feminist philosophers who are aware of the prevalence and reach of implicit bias against women, absent another obvious causal explanation for this apparent lapse in judgment, the inference Leiter's interlocutor names as (2), "if people are dismissing feminist philosophy, it must be because of sexism," is not only *not* deserving of ridicule, it is, in fact, completely reasonable as an abductive inference.

This concern about individual dispositional sexism is not, however, the only one that concerns feminists. Many feminists (and perhaps Leiter, as I suggested above) are concerned less

with locating the causes of sexism in individual beliefs and dispositions than with locating its ongoing *perpetuation in large-scale institutional practices* that disadvantage women, irrespective of individuals' beliefs or dispositions. So, if one is concerned with the possibility of dismissing feminist philosophy without *engaging* in sexism (in the institutional sense), then one must investigate whether the practice of dismissing feminism unfairly disadvantages women in the profession. In other words, given this alternate understanding of sexism (which, as I'll suggest in a moment, there are good reasons to adopt), the most pressing question is *not* whether individuals are dismissing feminist philosophy *because of* sexist beliefs, but whether the dismissal of feminist philosophy *itself causes or contributes to* the disadvantaging of women in the discipline.

To answer this question, it is necessary to reflect again on who is producing feminist philosophy, and what kinds of work women are doing in the profession as a whole. First, given that feminist philosophy is overwhelmingly produced by women, its dismissal will necessarily disproportionately affect women. If feminist philosophy as such is thought to be *prima facie* of poor quality, then it will necessarily be more difficult for those who produce it to be published in the most prestigious journals, get jobs, and get tenure. Since women are, for the most part, the ones doing feminist philosophical work, women will feel these negative effects at a greater rate than men.

Moreover, feminist philosophy appears, given the limited data we have available to date, to comprise a significant portion of the philosophical work done by women in the profession. Sally Haslanger's 2010 survey of 1,450 philosophers found that "feminist philosophy" was the single largest area of specialization for women philosophers, with more women claiming it as their primary area of interest than any other area. In contrast, "feminist philosophy" was the least cited area of specialization by men who responded to the survey.[12] Although it is not clear that this data gives a completely accurate representation of the gender breakdown of AOSes in the profession as a whole (as yet the APA has not acted on the Committee on the Status of Women's request to collect this data[13]), it does confirm the following: women in philosophy are likely to work or have interests in feminist philosophy, are *much* more likely than men to do so, and may (depending on the reliability of this data) be more likely to work in feminist philosophy than any other area. Thus, the dismissal of feminist philosophy as such not only disproportionately negatively affects the career prospects of women, it also disadvantages women to an extent that dismissal of no other area does. Finally, we might also note that none of the AOSes most frequently held by men are subject to the same types of dismissal as a matter of course.[14]

Operating with an institutional understanding of sexism, then, it is clear that the dismissal of feminist philosophy is sexist in practice (and is so, again, regardless of the intents or dispositions of individuals). That is, the practice of dismissing feminist philosophy disadvantages women in the profession—by making it more difficult for women on the whole to publish in prestigious journals (as Haslanger's 2008 study indicates) and, in turn, to secure non-contingent jobs and, ultimately, tenure (this is consistent with other data that suggest that women's representation in philosophy is inversely correlated with job prestige and security[15])—at a much higher rate than men. Moreover, it appears to have this sexist effect at a greater rate than does the dismissal of any other area of philosophical interest. Insofar as sexism is understood to be present in any set of practices that consistently limit the career prospects of women in ways that they do not limit men, the dismissal of feminist philosophy as such must constitute a sexist practice.

It is possible, of course, that one may not find this institutional understanding of sexism compelling, holding that sexism as such only occurs when individuals have or act on beliefs or dispositions that devalue women and their work. (Even maintaining this position, though, it is important to note that such individual sexism need not be, as has been empirically demonstrated, intentional or even conscious.) However, if one has, in Leiter's words, a "commitment to gender equality" in the profession, one should not be content with states of affairs that materially disadvantage women, as long as they are not demonstrably caused by sexist individuals. If I am truly concerned with fostering social equality for people who use wheelchairs, I should not be content with buildings that are only accessible by staircase, regardless of whether the folks who built or planned that staircase have beliefs or biases against persons with disabilities. In such cases, the beliefs or dispositions of individuals are irrelevant to the importance of redressing a set of unfairly disadvantaging circumstances. Similarly, if one is actually concerned with improving the situation of women in philosophy—a situation that is measurably worse than all of the humanities and many of the sciences—then one *must* be concerned with large-scale disciplinary practices that negatively affect women in ways that sexist individuals never could. One must, in other words, take institutional sexism seriously, and work to change disciplinary practices that are discernibly sexist.

The dismissal of feminist philosophy is a disciplinary practice that is just so discernibly sexist. Philosophers who would claim a desire to improve the situation of women should repudiate it.

Notes

1. Leiter, "Some Reflections."
2. Ibid.
3. See, for example, an entry in which a search committee member refuses to hire a feminist philosopher because she will be "angry all the time" and "only publish in 'fake' journals like *Hypatia*" (Anonymous, "We Can't Hire a Feminist"); an entry in which a professor appears to approve dismissing feminism as "the philosophy of having a vagina" (Anonymous, "Philosophy of Having a Vagina"); an entry in which a chair suggests that "a good chunk" of feminist philosophy is worthy of dismissal, merely by virtue of being included in this group (Anonymous, "Reasons to Dismiss Philosophy").
4. The claim that "nothing could be more familiar" than this sentiment in professional philosophers (if true) does not speak to its reasonability. As we know too well, professional philosophers are entirely susceptible to bad habits.
5. Leiter, "Some Reflections."
6. Lee and Shunn, "Philosophy Journal Practices."
7. Biernat and Kobrynowicz, "Gender- and Race-Based Standards"; Foschi, "Double Standards"; Norton, Vandello, and Darley, "Casuistry and Social Category Bias."
8. Moss-Racusin et al., "Subtle Gender Biases"; Steinpreis, Anders, and Ritzke, "Impact of Gender."
9. Uhlmann and Cohen, "Hiring Discrimination."
10. Haslanger, "Culture of Philosophy."
11. Valian, *Why So Slow?*
12. Sixty-four percent of the survey respondents identified themselves as men, and 34 percent identified themselves as women. Two percent either refused to answer or did not identify as men or women.
13. Women in Philosophy Task Force, "Open Letter to the APA."
14. We do not, for example, see discussions on mainstream philosophy blogs about whether it is problematic to dismiss the whole of metaphysics and epistemology, or political philosophy.
15. See Norlock, "Update to 'Women in the Profession'," which suggests that women are 26 percent of part-time philosophy

instructors in higher education in the United States, but only 16.6 percent of the total full-time faculty. Compare this with the National Center for Education Statistics (2010), which shows that women have consistently earned more than 30 percent of the philosophy and religion PhDs over a ten-year period. See also Van Camp, "Tenured/Tenure-track Women," which shows correlation between higher numbers of tenured/tenure-track women and lower rankings in the Philosophical Gourmet Report.

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Is There an Obligation to Tell?

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At a recent gathering of feminist philosophers, A told me about her conversation with B. B had explained in detail how male philosophers in B's department made work and life consistently difficult for their female colleagues. "I can't tell you any of those details," A said, "but what B is dealing with is so horrific that I can't imagine how she stands it." I understood that A needed to express her outrage, while also respecting B's request for privacy. But at the same time, I wondered: Why do we frequently stay silent? Many female philosophers have experienced bad treatment whose apparent source is sexism. Why do so few of us openly name names? Why do we keep our full stories to ourselves?

Investigators have determined that half of all women employed outside the home will experience sexual harassment, either as pressure for sexual favors or as a hostile working environment.[1] Not surprisingly, then, many women philosophers also experience gender harassment and persistent undervaluing of their abilities and contributions.[2] Yet female philosophers who explain their experiences often expurgate the names of the perpetrators or describe their difficulties in merely general terms. I believe, based both on my own experience and on extensive conversations with other female academics, that there are at least six reasons why women in philosophy regularly fail to tell the full story of their bad experiences in the discipline, and numerous sexual harassment studies support these experiential conclusions.

First, some women have legal reasons not to name the offenders. No one wants to suffer at a perpetrator's hands, explain their experience with the perpetrator, and then get sued for slander or libel by that perpetrator. Kristin Schrader-Frechette experienced harassment including stalking, physical threats to her safety, and documented underpayment compared to male colleagues. Her personal account of that harassment includes a note explaining that "my attorney advised me to delete various names throughout this chapter."[3] Discretion is a tool of self-protection, a way to avoid being further attacked by one's attacker.

Second, even if there is no fear of legal action, women often fear other forms of retaliation.[4] For many this is a reason not to pursue redress in the first place; and if a woman does take action, it remains a reason not to tell others what the problem was.[5] Many women find reporting sexual harassment as stressful as experiencing the harassment itself.[6] Especially if the campus climate is not supportive of women's right to fair treatment, a woman may want to avoid making the incident any more public than is necessary.[7] If she is not yet tenured, her job may be on the line.[8] Even if she is tenured, she may fear that colleagues, students, and administrators will punish her for calling attention to the offender's misdeeds: she might be given undesirable teaching assignments, for instance, or she might not receive a pay raise to which she was otherwise entitled. In fact, studies show that women do commonly experience retaliation for making a sexual harassment complaint, so this fear is all too well-founded.[9]

Third, women may fear a more subtle form of retaliation: women who complain too loudly risk getting a bad reputation, not only on their campuses but in the wider profession. They may be perceived as liars, as exaggerators, or as overly sensitive. If the offender is powerful and well-established in the profession, it is especially easy for outsiders to doubt the woman's testimony. Hence women have reason to fear that explaining the sexism they have experienced can be damaging to their credibility. Even if a woman's account is not doubted, she may be derided for drawing attention to the problem, on the grounds that doing so is not properly philosophical. Observers may marginalize such women as "political"; true intellectuals, it is sometimes believed, engage in philosophical inquiry instead of activism. Another threat to the reputation of women who tell is philosophy's climate of toughness. Philosophy is widely understood as a discipline for those who dominate in argument, excel in analysis, and withstand critical attack. Whiners don't belong.[10] Problems are to be solved by mustering one's intelligence and courage. Consequently, women who tell of sexist mistreatment risk looking weak and ineffectual—in other words, non-philosophical.

Fourth, women may avoid telling the full story of their bad experiences because they must continue to work with the perpetrator. Often the woman and the offender are colleagues and are required to cooperate in the work of the department. It is not only uncomfortable to work in an atmosphere of overt warfare; it is impractical as well. Thus, the woman may downplay the offender's behavior to avoid enraging him and causing departmental gridlock.

Fifth, a woman may experience some ambivalence in her understanding of the merits of her own case. The first four reasons for a woman's reluctance to explain her bad experiences revolve around external consequences. But bringing a case against an offender has internal consequences as well. Even when these consequences are unwarranted, they are experienced as real. Academic institutions do not always deal effectively with sexual harassment and hostile environments, and when they do not, a woman may feel she was mistaken to pursue redress. She may even feel a sense of shame. Outsiders may imagine that women who stand up to sexism are courageous crusaders; but for many, the fight against sexism is marked by self-doubt, anxiety, and confusion.[11] While this ambivalence does not lessen these women's courage (in fact, their pursuit of justice despite internal turmoil is a mark of great courage), it may cause disinterest in replaying the case afterwards. Telling a story can be like reliving the story's events, and if those events were fraught and painful, one might prefer not to.

Finally, some women may resist disseminating their stories out of a sense of decency. Due to a woman's gender socialization, she may hold laudable but situationally fraught "values that emphasize responsibility to others and restoration of harmony."[12] Furthermore, a woman who has experienced sexist mistreatment has learned what it feels like to be treated as unworthy. She may believe that telling others about the perpetrator amounts to mistreating him in turn. Clearly there is an important distinction to be made between disrespecting someone because of their gender and disrespecting someone based on their unfair, unprofessional, and immoral behavior. Nevertheless, a woman who has felt persecuted may have developed an aversion to behavior that feels like persecuting someone else. She may prefer not to draw attention to the offender's misdeeds if doing so feels morally tainted.

Given all these reasons not to describe the gender-based mistreatment one has experienced, why do women ever tell? One obvious reason to do so is that it can be a tool for ending the mistreatment. Sometimes administrators and colleagues do the right thing, particularly when they are made fully aware of the problem. Another reason for women to tell their stories is to warn other women away from offenders, from problem departments, and from questionable situations. Women who are able to avoid proximity with perpetrators may thereby avoid being mistreated. Yet another reason to tell is that doing so can put offenders on notice so that they begin to restrain themselves. Little by little, increased awareness of sexism in philosophy is making it less acceptable to be a sexist philosopher. Sharing our stories also has the benefit of letting us know that we are not alone, that others have dealt with similar problems, and that we may be able to end the mistreatment we have experienced. Telling enables solidarity.[13]

Is there then an obligation to tell? Clearly there are reasons to tell. But the reasons against telling also have merit. Those subjected to bad treatment have already suffered and may suffer further in the process of seeking an end to their mistreatment. We should not require them to suffer more than they can bear. The cost of this conclusion, however, is that even as the profession is coming to realize the extent of its problem, it does not yet have all of the information that is needed to enable full self-understanding. The recent emergence of the "What is it Like to be a Woman in Philosophy?" blog has helped a great deal; but it has done so by enabling women to tell their stories without identifying either themselves or the perpetrators. Many men in philosophy still do not know the extent to which their female colleagues have been mistreated; both men and women still do not know which philosophers are the most frequent perpetrators of that mistreatment.

The burden of ending sexual harassment cannot rest primarily on its victims. The discipline of philosophy must overtly pursue the truth and justice it too often treats as mere abstractions. Apparently, some men find it hard to understand the effect of gender harassment on women, believing that hostile work environments exist only in women's over-sensitive imaginations; discussion and education can promote empathy and thus lead to change.[14] Intentionally educating male philosophers about sexual harassment, and about the fact that hostile climates can be as painful for women as quid pro quo harassment, could make a real difference for the profession.[15]

Even without an obligation to tell, real good can be accomplished by telling. That good is likely to be experienced by others—by other women philosophers and by the profession in general—while the teller risks suffering, at least in the short term. Thus, telling is an act of altruism,[16] and is supererogatory. Women who feel able to take on the dangers that they incur by telling help to make philosophy safer for other women and more intellectually complete for all. The problem of sexual harassment in philosophy is not just a question of social justice. It is also a matter of whether or not the discipline will grow more welcoming of women's philosophical insights. Having been socialized differently from the men who currently dominate in the profession, women (along with persons of color, LGBTQ persons, and others outside the mainstream) are well situated to provide the philosophical challenges and alternate perspectives needed to help advance the discipline. Any woman who feels able to tell makes both a moral and an intellectual contribution.

Notes

1. Evidence suggests that the hostile climate form of sexual harassment is more pervasive than the quid pro quo form. See Berdahl, "Sexual Harassment of Uppity Women." See also Paludi, "Sexual Harassment Policies"; Saunders and Senn, "Should I Confront Him?"
2. Psychological and sociological studies provide what I take to be plausible explanations for the persistence of gender

harassment in philosophy: there is reason to believe that harassers target egalitarian women, assertive women, and women with traditionally male-linked traits, perhaps because such women are experienced as a threat to these men's masculine identity (see Berdahl). Gender harassment also appears to be more common in male-dominated environments (see Berdahl; Dall'Ara and Maass, "Studying Sexual Harassment"). As philosophy is not only numerically dominated by men, but also culturally positioned as a male endeavor, it makes sense that articulate, intellectual female philosophers might strike some male philosophers as interlopers.

3. Schrader-Frechette, "Whistle-Blower, 152, n. 5.
4. Avina and O'Donohue, "Sexual Harassment and PTSD"; Balogh et al., "Effects of Delayed Report"; Dodd et al., "Respected or Rejected"; Marin and Guadagno, "Perceptions"; Vijayasiri, "Reporting Sexual Harassment"; Wasti, "Coping in Context."
5. So-called "non-assertive" responses to sexual harassment occur much more frequently than do assertive responses, according to the findings of multiple investigations (Anonymous, "Campus Life"; Benavides et al., "Observers' Reporting"; Krokokke, "Women"; Saunders and Senn, "Should I Confront Him?"; Schneider et al., "Psychological Effects"; Vijayasiri, "Reporting Sexual Harassment"; Wasti, "Coping in Context").
6. Bergman et al., "(Un)reasonableness"; Paludi, "Sexual Harassment Policies."
7. The institutional climate has a strong impact on the likelihood a female employee will experience sexual harassment, and on the likelihood that her report will be taken seriously if she does experience it. Intentionally egalitarian organizations have been found to have much lower occurrences of sexual harassment, while those organizations that do not work to foster equality have higher occurrences. See Benavides et al., "Observers' Reporting"; Saunders and Senn, "Should I Confront Him?"
8. Krolokke, "Women," 103.
9. Bergman et al., "(Un)reasonableness"; Cortina and Magley, "Raising Voice"; Diekmann et al., "Double Victimization"; Dodd et al., "Respected or Rejected"; Lenhart and Shrier, "Potential Costs"; Saunders and Senn, "Should I Confront Him?"; Vijayasiri, "Reporting Sexual Harassment."
10. A similar climate for women obtains in medicine, particularly during medical school. See Wear and Aultman, "Academic Medicine."
11. This confusion prevents some women from labeling their experiences as sexual harassment, even to themselves. See Magley et al., "Outcomes."
12. Balogh et al., "Effects of Delayed Report," 339.
13. Other reasons to tell have received some support in psychological studies: women who respond assertively to harassment experience increased feelings of self-control and self-reliance (Cortina and Magley, "Raising Voice"; Dodd et al., "Respected or Rejected"; and Saunders and Senn, "Should I Confront Him?"). Assertive respondents are also more likely to be believed by onlookers, while passive respondents may find themselves doubted and judged harshly (Diekmann et al., "Double Victimization").
14. Bonate and Jessell, "Educational Intervention"; Diekmann et al., "Double Victimization"; Wright and Fitzgerald, "Angry and Afraid."
15. Antecol and Cobb-Clark, "Change Attitudes"; Benavides et al., "Observers' Reporting."
16. My thanks to Sally Holt for putting it this way in personal conversation.

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Moral Musings on Philosophy, Gender, and the Academic Precariat

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There is little doubt that the life of an academic—for those lucky enough to have an academic job—can be taxing, yet rewarding. Taxing, as contrary to popular belief, academia is actually quite demanding if one is to have a successful or even a reasonable career—books must be written and reviewed, courses prepped and "refreshed," students mentored, exam scripts marked, and so on—and rewarding, as one has the opportunity to teach and research a subject that generally one is interested in, and even passionate about. Being an academic is, of course, also a privileged position. How many people get to develop their expertise and knowledge of a specific field or fields over many years, contributing to knowledge and scholarship while relatively unencumbered by the dangerous or oppressive aspects of other work environments? There are, by and large, no health and safety risks attached to the job, nor is one subjected to a clocking-in system, payment on commission, or unsociable work hours. The pay is reasonable, especially if tenured, and there is a certain prestige that comes with the position, or perhaps with the title. Overall, the picture is quite rosy—or is it?

Just below the prestigious, respectable surface of most universities lurks an underbelly of low-paid, exploited, casual labor, the ranks of which are swelling every year—perhaps with the aim of ultimately one day entirely replacing the relatively rosy picture and revealing the ugly reality short-term contracts, part-time hours, and lack of benefits entail. Indeed, most parents would be horrified to know what esteemed university X pays its growing number of adjunct staff to provide an education for students, particularly as fees and related costs for said education are increasingly expensive.

Naturally, philosophy and the humanities subjects more generally are not excluded from this trend toward increased casualization of labor. In fact, it seems that the humanities and social sciences have, in a lot of instances, been disproportionately targeted with cuts, staffing reductions, and research funding slashes, as much of the ideology and managerialism precipitating the global financial crisis and its fallout have not been challenged by university administrators, funding bodies, and governments, but have been further embraced.[1] What use have we for critical thinkers, engaged citizens, or creative types?—so the mantra goes—What wealth do they produce? Don't they know we have a serious crisis on our hands—a crisis that can only be solved with more of the same? And so the stipulations for including research results in project proposals—that is, for research not yet carried out—become more stringent, the resourcing of philosophy and other humanities subjects is restricted, and the cohort of PhD graduates keen to teach and exercise their skills is largely denied the chance of employment, certainly steady employment.

What Guy Standing calls the newly forming class of the "precariat" is increasingly prevalent also in academia. Standing identifies this group as being trapped in a globalized labor market that expects people to be "flexible" and "employable." In effect, this means short-term contracts or multiple jobs and entails a lack of social security and occupational identity.[2] While part-time, casual teaching and research is, of course, not in itself a new phenomenon, the extent of non-tenured labor within universities is novel and needs to be understood in the context of the global economic crisis.[3] With higher levels of graduated PhDs on the job market, academic employers are in a strong bargaining position, and given shrinking public education budgets universities make savings by hiring on an hourly, part-time, or semester basis. The result is a two-tiered system where junior, exploited academics work alongside tenured academics, who benefit from secure employment, social security, research grants, and the university's resources (such as photocopying, equipment, office space, and administrative support).

This twin-track approach to employment is not only intellectually demoralizing and materially impoverishing for those in insecure situations but it also raises a number of moral questions concerning the treatment of exploited academics by colleagues, employers, and would-be-employers. Is there an onus on tenured academics to act toward casual teaching or research staff in particular ways? Who is responsible for improving working conditions for exploited academics, and how could such conditions be changed? Do tenured philosophers, particularly those steeped in liberatory discourses, such as feminist philosophers, have a special moral responsibility to act or to stand in solidarity with their exploited counterparts? How are feminist liberatory discourses connected to the practices of the profession in the context of inequality in academia?

While some academics have called for a redressing of employment inequality in universities, there appears to be a distinct lack of a strong, coherent campaign or united front against exploitative working arrangements for junior academics. Some scholars and teachers, particularly those working in liberatory fields, have called for increased taxes on exorbitant remuneration in a bid to see privileged senior academics contribute their fair share to universities that are struggling financially and that frequently make savings in terms of adjunct recruitment and increased student fees. Despite this, though, there is plenty of anecdotal evidence to suggest a number of morally questionable practices, particularly in relation to hiring, which require greater scrutiny.

As readers of the newsletter are well aware, women are already significantly disadvantaged when it comes to hiring processes and practices. Owing to implicit bias, women's CVs, research proposals, and job applications are often unfairly evaluated. For instance, a study by the Swedish Medical Research Council on postdoctoral funding found that women needed significantly more publications to achieve the same ratings as men, except for when they knew somebody on the panel.[4] Given this existing disadvantage, which manifests itself in discriminatory treatment of women in hiring processes, should we not expect, particularly from feminist academics, a recognition of the difficulties junior women philosophers face—not just by virtue of being women and the implicit biases that may entail, but also by virtue of being members of the academic precariat?

As philosophy blogs and websites run by and for junior academics attest, junior women scholars may be on the job market for several years post-qualification and may be submitting their 300th job application, sitting their fiftieth interview, or writing their thirtieth postdoctoral proposal before coming across a senior academic's desk.[5] They are likely to experience significant stress levels, trying to make a living on insecure, short-term teaching or research jobs, while feeling largely alienated from the universities they are meant to represent. In this context, it is all the more worrying that junior women academics should be used to make up interview short lists and be invited to interviews for jobs that have already been

allocated to existing favored candidates, or to people already working in the department.[6] This practice is not uncommon, as human resource departments have become more vociferous over recent years in making hiring processes as unassailable as possible. Ironically, this means that contracts normally simply up for renewal must now be publicly advertised, and research funding obtained for a specific protégé can no longer be allocated to that person without a public competition for the job.

For women members of the academic precariat, this results in additional burdens, as job applications, interview preparation, and attendance for fake jobs sap energy and time. Moreover, the psychological effects of failing to get yet another job are extremely damaging to junior academics' confidence and well-being. For obvious legal reasons, pseudo-jobs and false hiring processes are not disclosed, and candidates can often come away from such experiences feeling responsible for having underperformed, when, in fact, there was never a job to be had in the first place. The upshot, for many junior women academics, is a continuous Kafkaesque cycle of futility and dejection, which senior academics and university administrators knowingly participate in. Here, indeed, is where the moral crux of the matter lies: given search committee members' and administrators' knowing participation in fake hiring processes, should they be held morally responsible for causing additional and unnecessary distress to junior academics?

Senior academics might—and do—justify their involvement in such hiring charades by stating that the fake interview process is good practice for the junior academic, or by insisting that the HR department's or the funding body's policies give them no other option. This, however, seems instinctively wrong: surely the decision on whether interview practice is required should be left up to the junior academic? In light of liberatory discourses' strong emphasis on agency, there is a particular onus on scholars working within said discourses not to rob junior academics of their agency, but to give them the respect and deserved ownership over decisions directly affecting them.

Nor should junior philosophers—in the Kantian sense—be treated merely as means, rather than ends in themselves. While human resources and funding policies might stipulate the need for a lengthy interview list or the public advertising of previously internal positions, such policies do not constitute a moral justification for using members of the precariat in fake hiring processes. In the majority of cases, academics on search committees and university administrators involved in hiring occupy stable positions with tenure and job security. The people they unnecessarily put through futile interview processes, on the other hand, hold precarious and unstable positions. There is, then, a significant power differential between the panel of relatively empowered, secure senior academics and administrators, and the disempowered members of the academic precariat they mislead. Again, feminist philosophers and others similarly working in social justice research and teaching bear a particular moral responsibility here, as it is they who make a living from identifying, analyzing, and questioning power imbalances and exploitative structures.

What, then, should be done by academics and administrators to avoid these morally onerous and damaging situations? If a job has already been earmarked for a specific candidate, shortlisting other candidates and submitting them to pseudo-hiring processes is morally repugnant and runs counter to feminist and social justice principles. The obvious course of action lies in simply not shortlisting other candidates, or in avoiding public advertising of the post altogether. Pointing to HR departments as the enforcers of shortlisting or public advertising is not an excuse, certainly not when the choice lies between rejecting HR policies or engaging in exploitative practices that are harmful to already exploited junior philosophers. Tenured academics can utilize their relative power to question and oppose such policies, while junior academics cannot. The onus lies on tenured philosophers to do so.

Returning to the question posed earlier with regard to tenured academics' moral obligation to act in certain ways toward non-tenured philosophers, it should be clear that there are indeed behaviors that are more or less damaging to junior colleagues and would-be colleagues. There are many ways in which tenured philosophers can resist becoming part of the exploitative university system that perpetuates inequality among academics. Some have been noted above, and it is worth highlighting the good work that is already being done by certain scholars and organizations seeking to ameliorate the worst excesses of junior academics' exploitation.

For instance, the New Faculty Majority is an advocacy body seeking more equitable treatment of adjunct and contingent faculty. It includes members of the academic precariat, as well as tenured academics, and works toward the creation of "stable, equitable, sustainable, non-exploitative academic environments." Research also shows that contingent academic staff benefit significantly from union membership,[7] although such membership may not always be possible given the highly transient and insecure nature of the precariat's work.[8] However, there are other, innovative ways for junior academics to be supported by their more established counterparts. The SWIP mentoring schemes, for instance, are a great resource for scholars in precarious situations. Senior philosophers give freely of their time and expertise to help develop the career and academic skills of junior women philosophers, and such assistance is often invaluable and can really make a difference not just to a person's career prospects, but also to her confidence and intellectual development. Some good guides and reports for more equitable hiring practices and the general treatment of women faculty and/or contingent faculty have also been developed over recent years.[9]

Ultimately, though, the increased casualization of academic labor is a structural issue. This means that a coherent, thoroughgoing approach opposing such casualization and its attendant exploitation of junior academics is required. Despite economic shortfalls and difficulties, universities must be forced to think about their current trajectory, particularly in light of the linkages between academic standards and the treatment, or maltreatment, as the case may be, of contingent faculty.[10] One would have thought that the cataclysmic events issuing from the global economic crisis would have spurred such a re-thinking, and yet there doesn't seem to be any careful deliberation concerning the sustainability of universities and their capacity to best cater to students' and academics' needs. As feminist philosophers we are perhaps best placed to encourage critical appraisals of universities' current thinking. However, this must also be matched by activism both within and outside the academy, which challenges exploitative practices and expresses solidarity with those currently experiencing inequality and precariousness. Only then will the structures of academic exploitation, which create and maintain the precariat, be undermined.

Notes

1. Martha Nussbaum outlines this undermining of the humanities and provides a persuasive counterargument in *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).
2. Guy Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011).

3. Research by the Pullias Centre shows that two-thirds of academic positions in the United States were insecure and/or part-time in 2009 (in 1969 this was only the case for 21.7 percent of academic positions). Pullias Centre for Higher Education, "The Changing Faculty and Student Success": 1. http://www.uscrossier.org/pullias/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Delphi-NTTF_National-Trends-for-Faculty-Composition_WebPDF.pdf.
4. Christine Wenneras and Agnes Wold, "Nepotism and Sexism in Peer Review," *Nature* 387 (1997): 341–43.
5. One notable example for philosophy is the Philosophy Smoker. http://philosophysmoker.blogspot.com.
6. Apart from having first-hand experience of this, anecdotal evidence both from applicants and interviewers confirms the prevalence of such practices.
7. A study by the CAW shows that contingent faculty, who are represented by unions, have higher pay, benefits, and better working conditions. Coalition on the Academic Workforce, "A Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members," 2012. http://www.academicworkforce.org/survey.html.
8. Junior academics might go several months, especially during the summer, without academic employment, which means that union fees cannot be paid.
9. Several of these are listed on the APA Committee on the Status of Women's website. http://www.apaonlinecsw.org/advancing-women.
10. Chronicle of Higher Education, "Accreditation is Eyed as a Means to Aid Adjuncts," March 25, 2012. http://chronicle.com/article/Accreditation-Is-Eyed-as-a/131292/.

Pluralizing the Local: The Case for an Intersectional, Relational Subject in and for Feminist Philosophy

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Linda Martín Alcoff begins her "Pluralism and Diversity as Intrinsic Philosophical Concerns" with the following question: "Why would anyone think that the world's philosophy might be adequately developed and exhaustively thought through by one small subset of one small grouping of people located in one relatively small section of the globe?"[1] I begin here by insisting that there are *already* many transnational feminisms that approach the globe in politically responsible, ethical ways, although these feminisms may not be counted as philosophy. Feminist philosophy, both continental and Anglo-American or analytic, should be accountable to global feminisms that originate from neither the European nor the Anglo-American continents. At the same time, the whiteness of feminist philosophy must be challenged in order to pluralize subjectivity from within, if it is to ever have a global scope. We have no business applying our (white) feminist philosophies to the globe at large; we should start by "cleaning our own house," pluralizing our own theories, seeking accountability to difference rather than reproducing sameness.[2] This essay will address these mechanisms that reproduce sameness by theorizing a relational subject—not usually fully understood *as such*, as the primary means to pluralize the local domains of feminist philosophy.

I will argue for what I call "pluralizing the local" by engaging the works of two women of color feminists who are not working within the discipline of philosophy—Sara Ahmed and Aimee Carrillo Rowe. I engage these transnational and postcolonial feminisms that trouble the east/west binary as immanently helpful for contending with the limitations of what *does* count as feminist philosophy, as calls for plurality and difference that are otherwise ignored or disclaimed "here at home." Although I think that we should take seriously the claims of feminist thinkers who insist that their work is philosophical when it is not deemed so by the gatekeepers of (feminist) philosophy, I also believe that (feminist) philosophers need to be careful about crediting works in other disciplines or outside of academia entirely as having philosophical merit, as if this philosophical merit is what makes something worth reading. The impetus for my essay is two-fold: one of the questions that prompts this collection—"what would it mean to 'globalize' feminist philosophy"; and a longstanding conviction I have, as a feminist philosopher, about feminist philosophy's willingness to be self-reflexive and to be accountable to interdisciplinary feminisms: transnational feminisms, women of color feminisms, queer theory feminisms, transgender feminisms, disability feminisms. Invoking these, I draw attention to both the plurality of these feminisms and the specificity of their areas of focus in order to diagnose the difficulties of achieving what María Lugones calls "plurality in the structure of the theory."[3] I will focus on one particular shared intellectual history that frames this structural plurality in its theorizing, that of intersectionality and standpoint feminisms, because these are significantly trapped between continental philosophy's and Anglo-American philosophy's dismissive gestures on either side, in ways that are instructive for the question of globalizing the feminisms that are housed in these two approaches.

On one side, the continental approach says these approaches are too rigid and reifying in the naming of their specificities, or that they come too close to the problems of "naïve identity politics," and on the other side an analytic approach says they are too messy and lacking in conceptual clarity. To put it another way, these interdisciplinary feminisms are too static for continental philosophers, including feminist continental philosophers, and too shifty/shifting for analytic philosophers, including feminist analytic philosophers.

What results is an intellectual terrain in which many feminist philosophers are keen to dismiss intersectionality as a framework, and the conviction that feminist philosophy, on the whole, has not offered a preferable alternative to intersectionality that can do what intersectionality does. That is, feminist philosophy of both predominant types has not found ways to think the specificities of plurality and difference without continuing to *other* those who are least represented in the institution and even less so in the discipline. Intersectionality and standpoint feminisms are particularly salient places where the work is *here*, local, proximate, if we white feminists would only reorientate ourselves, as Sara Ahmed's work[4] inflects. Thus, I engage contemporary queer and feminist women of color theorists who take the intellectual histories of intersectionality theorizing seriously, earning the right to critique its limitations and move toward new frameworks without discarding all of the insights that intersectionality has brought when it has been carefully brought to bear. Ahmed's recent work takes up the trends in "happiness studies," insisting we recognize the unequal terms of conditionality for happiness—that those who are already *in place* are those whose happiness comes first.[5] If Ahmed is right, we can say that it is the happiness of long-tenured white, "western"-born, straight, nondisabled, (secularized) Christian, nontransgendered men, which comes first in philosophy departments. Although their age range may sometimes mean they are not taken as seriously as they used to be, these are the ones with the "legacy." It is their presumed conditions for happiness that must be maintained. It is their *philosophical* conditions for happiness that are central to what is deemed philosophical pursuit, and what is deemed

"unphilosophical." These legacies maintain conditions in which we witness a "sigh of relief" when feminist philosophers dismiss intersectionality—and when we *con-descend* to it, by the ways we orientate ourselves. This sigh of relief is a counterpart to what Ahmed calls the "feminist killjoy" effect, the way the atmosphere of the room changes when feminists enter, or speak up.

Feminist philosophers have important choices to make as to whom we align ourselves with, as Aimee Carrillo Rowe indicates.[6] As to whom we re/orientate ourselves toward and away from, whose philosophical happiness we privilege *in our thinking*. These questions of re/orientation lead me to argue for a refiguration of subjectivity as intersectional, relational, and moving. The important intervention into the history of philosophy's theorization of subjectivity: the insistence that intersections of normative identity are just that—*intersectional*. This is how we begin to pluralize the subject. As we see in the above example of the normative intersections of the philosopher, age or other aspects of identity may attenuate one's privilege of normativity, but we need the full picture in order to begin taking both plurality *and* specificity seriously. As we consider what it would mean to globalize feminist philosophy, we need this attention to both plurality and specificity, less because specificity will indicate oppressed identities—of course it does—but more so because specificity indicates privilege, however attenuated, and its *episteme*, often its epistemologies of ignorance. And this means that when a white feminist "thinks the difference," she thinks her own primary difference from most philosophers: that she is a (nontransgender) woman.[7] This does not mean that she cannot engage other differences, treating them with equal importance to "sexual difference," but it does mean she is less likely to notice and attend to them *on her own*, or exclusively with the tools offered by her home or local discipline.[8] We need intersectionality, or another frame that approaches both plurality and specificity, to begin to critique these episteme as they do or do not relate to theorizing subjectivity.

Hence my reframing of subjectivity is in contradistinction to what I call the "subject-as-subject-matter" of philosophy, the limited and narrow movement between historical philosophers (white, straight, nontransgender, nondisabled, (secularized) Christian, financially secure males) and their subject matter (white, straight, nontransgender, nondisabled, financially secure male being, rights, politics, subjectification, interpellation, deterritorialization, reterritorialization.[9]

What follows will carry through the implicit critique of this subject-as-subject-matter by way of an explicit attempt to show us how we can turn *away* from this subject and *toward* a relational, dynamic, moving subject. To do this, I begin to build a new archive, writing contemporary queer feminist theorists of color—and the interdisciplinary intellectual histories they draw on—into philosophy. In some cases I read these thinkers as philosophers, at other times I read them explicitly for what philosophy cannot and perhaps should not do, but could nevertheless be accountable to, listen to, and be moved by. This is ultimately about who we expect to *be* philosophers, *and* how we expect philosophy to be doing something more important or valuable or critical than other disciplinary endeavors. Ahmed and Carrillo Rowe show us how to be accountable to, relate to, women of color feminism, to local difference, here, in the texts we choose, the authors we reorientate toward as interlocutors, rather than con-descend to.

Whose intellectual histories show us where and who we are?

Whose movements show us who we are?

Both Carrillo Rowe and Ahmed specifically name their commitments to the intellectual histories of women of color feminist theorizing, while questioning the limit-points of this theorizing through engaging rather than ignoring, dismissing, or con-descending to it. At least implicitly, these three thinkers issue a call to stop blaming the thinkers who offer the only means of thinking certain problems of both plurality and specificity for not being able to solve them entirely. For example, Ahmed's understanding of the role of the phenomenologist is to bring into perception what tends to recede from perception, that which we might like to avoid and that privilege, as part and parcel of its role *as* privilege, continuously and consistently obfuscates. I take this to be one way that important critiques are dismissed: "don't make us think about racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism, orientalism, ageism, religious persecution if: (a) we don't usually need to in order to go about our business, and (b) *you* can't fix it." Ahmed cites her indebtedness to feminist standpoint theories, putting these in a phenomenological register to center questions of orientation—how bodies and objects are considered as orientated spatially and temporally in proximity to and distance from each other. Carrillo Rowe also engages the discourses of standpoint feminism to argue for a politics of relation and alliance. Where both of these theorists recognize limit-points to standpoint and intersectionality theorizing, they each have counterpoints that interact with and relate to those theories.

These counterpoints in the forms of affective and relational politics, and orientation, share an emphasis on movement. In a longer version of this paper I engage a thoroughgoing critical disability studies analysis in order to address the normative, ableist, and liberalist metaphors and meanings of movement as the privileged image of freedom. I allude to these here in order that we have them in mind as we proceed. The Deleuze and Guattarian inflections of the ontological primacy of movement and becoming, found in Ahmed and Carrillo Rowe to varying degrees, mean that I could easily avoid any disability critique of movement because this critique occurs so much at the level of norms, metaphors, and discourse, whereas movement's ontological priority would mean that it is behind and before anthropocentric understandings of it. Yet, if movement is part force and part effect, and we cannot observe force but can only observe effects,[10] then the frameworks through which we apprehend force and effect—movement—will affect how we observe these effects. Here are three of these effects: the cosmopolitan, US, or EU passport-wielding subject's globe-trotting; the relative ease of movement on the part of temporarily able-bodied people; certain queer expressions of radicality. In each of these three, the effects are apprehended through the liberalist, normative lens of negative freedom: freedom from borders; from dependences or limitations; from norms or ideology. We can critique these norms of subjectivity while also acknowledging the need for movement across and against borders, acknowledging a plurality of diasporas: religious, ethnic, racial, economic. But we tend to observe and apprehend movement as a kind of freedom from limitations, whether those limitations are normative or bodily—as if these can ever really be separated.[11] We need a relational understanding of movement, of the moving subject who is orientated toward and away from, who leans in or pulls away, is alongside or behind.

Their emphases on movement is one way in which Ahmed and Carrillo Rowe are both significantly influenced by postmodern, poststructuralist, and queer theory feminisms, at the same time that they do not concede what Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw terms "the vulgarized social construction thesis," which reasons that "since all categories are socially constructed, there is no such thing as, say, Blacks or women, and thus it makes no sense to continue reproducing those categories by organizing around them."[12] Crenshaw, as

one of the central contributors to the intellectual history of intersectionality theorizing, specifically intervened in legal scholarship to point to the extent to which racial discrimination and gender discrimination cannot be disentangled, and that legal and institutional structures demand exactly this pulling apart, because they have structured themselves around these categories. The legal, normative, and institutional subject is exposed, in Crenshaw's work, as implicitly intersectional though explicitly non-intersectional. To my mind, the best conception we have is that of intersectionality; yet, even those who might recognize intersections of oppression do not insist that the subject is intersectional in his plurality of normative privilege. The non-intersectional subject, then, does not actually exist, but most structures act as if it does, and thus can only recognize one trajectory or line of oppressed identity, or experience of discrimination, at a time—even when it looks for more than one, it searches for two discrete lines that intersect. Likewise, the work of Ahmed and Carrillo Rowe has something to tell philosophy. These thinkers are not widely recognized as philosophers, and this is a central aspect of the value of their work in a philosophical project. I am calling for philosophy to engage with—rather than appropriate, con-descend to, or ignore—interdisciplinary interlocutors, in such a way that the question "what is philosophy?" is in fact recognized as an actual question—as a philosophical question[13]—rather than a foregone conclusion, and the theorizing of the subject, or even its dissolution, can be accountable to the insights of interdisciplinarity.

Will to knowledge, will to affect

Ahmed is concerned that standpoint is focused more on social hierarchies and on fixed or semi-fixed locations in those hierarchies than on the moving and changing subject. For Carrillo Rowe, the move is from a politics of location to a politics of relation, from these fixed points to the ways in which we are moving toward or away from others. Feminist standpoint theory has argued for the episteme of the various points from which people with different identities *know*. It has been important—and still is, especially in certain spaces—to demand respect from academic interlocutors in the register of epistemology and intellectual knowledge.[14] This demand for respect is deeply intertwined with the work of claiming the specificities of voices, where otherwise a "universal" and "unified" subject is supposed to be able to speak to all experiences and all relevant forms of knowledge. Carrillo Rowe asks, "How do you name the liminal space you occupy? How do you explain that you imagine this liminality to hold tremendous promise for all of us in reimagining who we are becoming? Becoming in alliance?"[15] It is vital to recognize that these framings of episteme and experience, related to identity, have always been contested from *within* these frames, and even the frames themselves have been interrogated and reworked by women of color standpoint theorists. As Carrillo Rowe notes, "the notion of building a theory from experience is established, if contested, within the realm of feminist and cultural studies. The epistemological claim of standpoint theory is that where one stands [or sits, perhaps in a wheelchair] in relation to society determines, or frames, how one will interpret the world. It is this question of 'determination' that remains contested."[16]

These debates and contestations are the contributions that make up an intellectual history that should be treated as such, and not as a straw woman (of color) who (naïvely) argues that *being* "x" means she and others like her *think* "y." These are the critiques that often get wielded against standpoint and its epistemologies. This con-descending and reductive claim is how many philosophers rehearse the intellectual history of standpoint, a rehearsal that is not representative of that intellectual history. How could we, in good conscience, advocate globalizing such (white) (feminist) philosophical prejudices?

A final, important intervention must be made as to *even* the extent to which standpoint, intersectionality, and related frames in the intellectual history of women of color feminism actually concede a narrow, epistemological frame of knowing. Quite a few indicate directly "other ways of knowing," and many thinkers in this movement have indirectly or implicitly indicated other-than-epistemic ways of knowing. These other ways of knowing are what Carrillo Rowe and Ahmed are unearthing, are opening us to. And it might just be the case that we cannot do so unless we keep certain (intellectual) company. We need not concede that epistemological or other dominant modes of knowledge are the only forms of knowledge, in the binary of knowing versus feeling.[17] This may be one of the most central reasons why it is so difficult for feminist philosophers to understand this intellectual history and its complexities: the capacity to hear the interwoven affect and intellect is something one must cultivate, if affect is that which is othered and therefore what we white feminists are supposed to trade for intellectual endeavors when we enter academia. Or, when we carve out our spaces in our departments, orientated toward the affects we are meant to exercise for the benefit of white men in our departments, rather than for ourselves and for other kinds of relating.

Obviously, I have been arguing for the engagement with philosophical/intellectual traditions other than our (white feminists') own. The prompt for this collection also asks, "Are we educated to do this?" Here I've been alluding to an answer: "No." But we have an opportunity to disrupt dominant frameworks of "education" and to think through the significance of *unlearning*, perhaps over and above learning. Subjects who embrace their[18] intersectional, relational, orientated selves must do so by unlearning the lies that privilege confers about who and what is important, independent, powerful, rigorous, epistemologically sound. At this juncture, white feminist philosophers have the chance to unlearn some of the most basic assumptions of our discipline, assumptions I am certainly not the first to point out, about universality, subjectivity, close reading as the primary if not only notion of responsibility to texts and persons (continental philosophy), or bringing conceptual clarity as the primary if not only notion of responsibility to texts and persons (Anglo-American philosophy).

Pluralizing the local

I insist, with Ahmed and Carrillo Rowe, on the importance of women of color feminist intellectual history because opting for the discourse of subjectivity has, in philosophy's binary of identity versus difference, enabled a presumed avoidance of identity (politics) that only reifies the constitutive exclusions, as Judith Butler calls them, on which the subject depends. Exposing this erased or obfuscated plurality is the work of pluralizing the local.

Carrillo Rowe writes, "the politics of location frames 'location' through articulations of identity in which the relational conditions productive of that location are erased."[19] Just as Crenshaw has noted the production of intersectional identities as institutionally and structurally normed through the division into discrete categories or lines, much of this broader intellectual history is centrally concerned with the erasure or obfuscation of these constitutive conditions. The arrogant perception of most misreadings (or non-readings) is evidenced in how they so often position themselves as if they are bringing insights that women of color theorizing failed to realize—as if these thinkers did not notice the problem of reification in the very act of naming, or of the potential for their work to be co-

opted. There is a certain failure of relating that often happens in both the dismissal of—and in some attempts to engage with—women of color theorizing. We need to cultivate sustained attention to the affective structures that lead us to assume that something (philosophically) new is being conceived or offered, rather than crediting it to a woman of color or to women of color intellectual history.[20] Again we see a mechanism of privilege and disciplinary superiority that either deigns to bring what is lacking (conceptual clarity) or critiques what is overdone (reifying rigidity, identity politics). Both are sexist and racist.

As Carrillo Rowe argues, "Alliances are the interface between intimacy and institutionality. The institutional function of our belongings is often difficult to detect precisely because we tend to experience these connections affectively—in our bodies and hearts."[21] These are the constitutive exclusions on which institutions like academia and philosophy, even feminist philosophy, build a house of indifference. It is our alliances and alienations, these affective dis/connections, these intimacies, which determine and redetermine our politics and our thinking, how we pluralize the local. We must do this work before we can hope to responsibly endeavor upon globalizing feminist philosophy.

Notes

1. Linda Martín Alcoff, "Pluralism and Diversity as Intrinsic Philosophical Concerns," Pluralist's Guide. Accessed May 13, 2012. http://pluralistsguide.org.
2. See Alison Bailey, "On Intersectionality and the Whiteness of Philosophy," *The Center Must Not Hold: White Women Philosophers on the Whiteness of Philosophy*, ed. George Yancy (Lanham, MD: Lexington Press, 2010). In this piece Bailey uses Susan Bordo's compelling set of examples in which philosophers (Locke, Quine, Danto) define philosophy as a kind of housekeeping with regard to messier disciplines in order to critique white feminist philosophers for our tendency to want to "clean up" discourses we deem "messy." I trope the metaphor to suggest that we have our own epistemic messes and ignorance to clean up, our own conceptual cobwebs to sweep out.
3. María Lugones, "On the Logic of Pluralist Feminism," *Pilgrimages/Peregrinajes: Theorizing Coalition Against Multiple Oppressions* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 65–75, 74.
4. Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (New York: Routledge, 2004); Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006); Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010).
5. Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness*.
6. Aimee Carrillo Rowe, *Power Lines: On the Subject of Feminist Alliances* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008).
7. I am, of course, thinking of Luce Irigaray. A more sustained analysis would address the important critiques offered by theorists of "epistemologies of ignorance." But my broader claim is that when we start to engage these questions of who has to think about what and who can afford not to think about whole regions or continents of experience, we realize that the trends are pervasive: queer theory has embedded white male normative assumptions, critical philosophy of race sometimes has assumptions about maleness or masculinity and heteronormativity, and much of critical disability studies has a heterosexual, white, masculine subject at its center, as many feminist disability scholars have pointed out.
8. See María Lugones, "On the Logic of Pluralist Feminism."
9. See Luce Irigaray, "The Question of the Other," *Democracy Begins Between Two*, trans. Kirsteen Anderson (New York: Routledge, 2001, 1994), 121–41. This essay presents her most direct and sustained critique of "the many and the One" stemming from Plato, wherein concrete singular men with a specific identities composed the theoretical model for theorizing the ideal singular subject, the One, whose plurality is subsumed into this unified, ideal subjectivity as the ideal for all subjects.
10. See Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham and London: Duke University Press), 2002.
11. See Eli Clare, *Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness, and Liberation* (Cambridge: South End Press, 1999); Shelley Tremain, "Foucault, Governmentality, and Critical Disability Theory: An Introduction," *Foucault and the Government of Disability*, ed. Shelley Tremain (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2005).
12. Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color," *Stanford Law Review* 43, no. 6 (1991): 1241–99, at 1296.
13. Thanks to my colleague and friend, Marie Draz, for this observation.
14. See Linda Martín Alcoff, "On Judging Epistemic Credibility: Is Social Identity Relevant?" *Women of Color and Philosophy*, ed. Naomi Zack (London: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 235–62.
15. Carrillo Rowe, *Power Lines*, 16.
16. Ibid., 14.
17. See Audre Lorde, "Poetry is Not a Luxury" and "The Uses of the Erotic," *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Berkeley: The Crossing Press, 1984).
18. I use the plural possessive here because it is gender neutral without reifying the binary of only two genders, and it pluralizes the subject.
19. Carrillo Rowe, *Power Lines,* 28.
20. I am taking a cue from Roderick Ferguson's insistence that, as queer theory is attempting to be accountable to race and racism, it should look to the intellectual history of women of color feminism, which thought sexuality and race before queer theory though sexuality without thinking race. See Roderick Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black, Toward a Queer of Color Critique* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004); "Of Our Normative Strivings: African American Studies and the Histories of Sexuality," *Social Text 84–85: What's Queer About Queer Studies Now?*, eds. David L. Eng, Judith Halberstam, and José Esteban Muñoz (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 85–99.See also Barbara Christian, "The Race for Theory," Gender and Theory: Dialogues on Feminist Criticism, ed. Linda Kaufmann (New York: Blackwell, 1989).
21. Carrillo Rowe, *Power Lines*, 22.

Book Reviews

Why Have Children? The Ethical Debate

Christine Overall (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2012). $27.95. ISBN 978-0-262-01698-8.

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Christine Overall is one of the most under-appreciated feminist philosophers in North America and almost certainly the finest feminist philosopher in Canada. Overall, who is University Research Chair and professor of philosophy and gender studies at Queen's University, was the first feminist philosopher elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and has received a host of other accolades and honors, including the Royal Society's Gender Studies Award (2008) and both the Royal

Society's Abbyann D. Lynch Medal in Bioethics (2006) and Canadian Philosophical Association's Book Prize (2005) for her monograph *Aging, Death, and Longevity: A Philosophical Inquiry* (University of California Press, 2003). A specialist in feminist bioethics, applied ethics, and social theory, Overall has also published several other academic books, as well as numerous articles, book chapters, and review essays on a broad range of topics, such as reproductive technologies, feminist politics and practice, free speech, religious belief, disability, transgender, and heterosexuality.[1] In her recent book *Why Have Children? The Ethical Debate*, Overall brings many of these (and other) topics together in a series of critical reflections on the ethics of human procreation, reflections motivated by an unwavering feminist outlook expressed in relentlessly probing philosophical argument. Written in non-technical, straightforward prose that welcomes a wide readership, Overall's arguments manage to carefully dismantle or at least compromise virtually every one of the philosophical claims about and positions on human procreation with which she disagrees or that she finds unsatisfactory in some way.

The question that Overall asks in the title of her book offers a case in point. The question suggests that the decision to have children requires philosophical justification. As Overall points out, however, philosophers and bioethicists have seldom given the question the critical attention it warrants, that is, have seldom acknowledged the ethical import of procreative decision making. For example, although bioethicists have written a great deal about reproductive technologies, about procreation and disability, and about pregnancy and childbirth, they seem to assume that the decision about *whether* to procreate is itself a pragmatic and prudential judgment without moral repercussions. To take another example that Overall notes, although population ethicists discuss abstract utilitarian issues with respect to overpopulation, quality of life, and the ideal number of people who should inhabit the world, they have rarely considered the question "Why have children?" as a concrete moral issue for individuals. Overall thinks that these kinds of philosophical discussions are "radically incomplete" and, therefore, aims to show how this "large gap in philosophical thought can be filled" (13). As she puts it, "our specific reasons for procreating matter morally:" procreative decisions not only concern whether to take responsibility for a new life (or new lives), but rather are also connected to our own self-definitions, condition our interactions with our social and physical environments, have implications for our consumption of resources, concern fundamental institutions such as education and health care, and so on. Nevertheless, Overall remarks, many of the standard reasons people offer to explain why they procreate are mistaken. Thus, Overall's main objective in the book is to show what should count as the *best*, that is, the most ethical reason to have children (12–17).

That Overall's argument in the book derives from a resolutely feminist analysis is especially noteworthy, for she is concerned to underscore the *gendered* character of procreative decision making. Women remain largely defined in terms of their relationships with children, including their capacity to bear them; hence, the context of procreative decision making is "imbued with differences in power, authority, prestige, wealth, and future prospects" (9). In other words, procreative decisions are made within a political context. Overall argues that because the context within which procreative decision making takes place is political, such decision making cannot be realistically discussed outside of a feminist framework, but rather *requires* a feminist analysis. In mainstream philosophical work on reproductive ethics, there is little recognition of the social, economic, and political differences that shape the context in which procreative decisions are made. Non-feminist bioethicists and moral philosophers have generally approached matters in this area of ethical inquiry as if they were gender-neutral, that is, as if the questions asked in the field of the ethics of procreation and the claims advanced in response to them do not have different practical implications and concrete consequences for the lives of women than they do from the lives of men. Overall emphasizes, however, that decisions—for women—of whether to have a child can be multifactorial, requiring negotiation of a variety of factors at various moments, which may include decisions about whether to conceive a future child or prevent conception, whether to carry the fetus to term or abort it if one has conceived, and whether to rear the child to adulthood or let others take up this task if one has borne a baby (8–11). Indeed, Overall also shows that in fact some of the allegedly gender-neutral topics that non-feminist bioethicists and philosophers discuss with respect to the ethics of procreation, and some (if not many) of the purportedly universal arguments they advance on these topics, rely upon sexist and even misogynistic presuppositions and premises or have sexist and misogynistic implications.

The scope of reproductive rights is one of the subjects associated with procreative decision making for which a number of non-feminist (or mainstream) authors have claimed gender-neutrality; that is, these authors have argued that feminists often fail to adequately account for men's reproductive rights. Men, they argue, have the same array of positive and negative rights to reproduce or not reproduce as do women and, furthermore, the recognition of these rights is as morally compelling as is the recognition of women's reproductive rights. To the contrary, Overall states, although no woman has the right to demand that a given man relinquish some of his sperm in order that she may conceive, because women become pregnant (she sets aside the issues that the potential of pregnancy for transmen raise) and cannot simply "walk away" from a pregnancy as a man can, women's reproductive freedom and autonomy are foundational in ways that men's reproductive rights are not. Women's bodily freedom (including reproductive freedom) and autonomy are the *sine qua non* for women's equality and full citizenship (21). No woman should be coerced or forced to carry a pregnancy to term against her wishes, nor should she be coerced or forced to terminate a wanted pregnancy (cf. Tremain 2006). But what about situations in which "inseminators" and "gestators" disagree? As I have noted, various authors have argued that under certain circumstances men's reproductive rights would be violated if women's reproductive rights were regarded as fundamental and unconditional to the extent that Overall contends they are. What if a given pregnant woman has deceived her inseminator for whom the pregnancy is unwanted? Why should a man be held financially or personally responsible for a future child he did not wish to conceive in the first place? What if a man wants his lover to carry to term the fetus that she wants to abort? Shouldn't the pregnant lover acknowledge the significant role that the male lover's gametes played in conception of the fetus by (for instance) carrying it to term and fulfilling his desire for a child that, if necessary, he will rear alone? "No," says Overall, who, in a chapter comprised of refreshingly pointed, no-nonsense arguments, shows why none of these or the other hypothetical situations that her interlocutors propose provides a justificatory basis for the alleged gender-neutrality of positive and negative reproductive rights and freedoms (37–55).

Notwithstanding women's reproductive autonomy, is there an obligation not to reproduce? Is bringing another human being into the world ever inflicting harm on the one brought into being? David Benatar, in his "chillingly titled" (96) book *Better Never to Have Been: The Harm of Coming into Existence*, answers both questions in the affirmative. For Benatar, "coming

into existence is *always* a serious harm" (Benatar 2006, 1, in Overall, 96; emphasis in Overall). The main argument behind Benatar's claim is this:

> Although the good things in one's life make it go better than it otherwise would have gone, one could not have been deprived by their absence if one had not existed. Those who never exist cannot be deprived. However, by coming into existence one does suffer quite serious harms that could not have befallen one had one not come into existence." (Benatar 2006, 1, in Overall, 96)

In a set of several arguments, Overall shows that Benatar's theory is "fatally flawed" (97) and does not establish the strong argument against all procreation that it claims to do. She also shows that Benatar's theory has negative implications for women and could have detrimental effects for women and girls were it to be accepted and widely adopted. Overall argues, for instance, that Benatar's theory implies that women's reproductive labor produces bad consequences. As she explains, "the idea that it is better in every case never to have been implies that women's reproductive labor in pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding, and even rearing children contributes to the accumulation of net harm on this planet" (Overall, 115). Downgrading procreation in this way is unlikely to elevate women's status, she points out, especially in societies where women's status is centered primarily on their role as child-bearers. Indeed, Overall is concerned to show that Benatar's theory relies upon misogynistic presuppositions insofar as it implies that one of women's primary social contributions is a liability. Would this view, she asks, if widely endorsed, lead to an increase in the rate of infanticide of girls or to assaults on pregnant women?

Overall identifies the utilitarian Principle of Procreative Beneficence (PPB)—whose overtly ableist presuppositions would have dire consequences for the diversity of the human population were they widely endorsed and adopted—as another example of a mainstream theoretical approach to the ethics of procreation that has gender-specific negative implications for women who reproduce, although the principle has been promoted and discussed as if it were gender-neutral. Until now, that is, the adverse implications for women (including for women's autonomy) of the PPB have gone unrecognized and unremarked upon. Advanced by Julian Savulescu and Guy Kahane, the PPB articulates "the moral obligation to have the best children." As Savulescu explains it, "Couples (or single reproducers) should select the child, of the possible children they could have, who is expected to have the best life, or at least as good a life as the others, based on the relevant, available information" (Savulescu 2001, 415, in Overall, 125). Overall points out that despite the fact that Savulescu never refers specifically to women, but rather to "couples" or "single reproducers," the PPB would put greater onus on women than on men to facilitate achievement of the ideal (or "best") race of humans that the PPB is designed to ensure. As she notes, the achievement of procreative beneficence, in Savulescu's sense, necessitates the use of preimplantation genetic diagnosis after in vitro fertilization (Overall, 125). Every prospective mother would be required to undergo the expensive, invasive, and possibly fatal procedures that these technologies involve. Furthermore, "Procreative Beneficence implies couples should employ genetic tests for non-disease traits in selecting which child to bring into existence, and that we should allow selection for non-disease genes in some cases *even if this maintains or increases social inequality* (Savulescu 2001, 415, in Overall 125-26; my emphasis). Overall asks, who is the "we" to whom Savulescu refers? And what non-disease traits are "we" to select against? Savulescu and Kahane have in fact supplied an incomplete guide of characteristics for "us" to select against that includes clinical depression, autism, negative affect, Asperber's syndrome, cognitive and physical abilities, personality traits, propensity to addiction, and sexual orientation (Savulescu and Kahane, 2009, 276, in Overall, 126). In short, the reach of the PPB, according to which certain allegedly natural characteristics should be selected (viz. as the consequence of de-selecting others) in order to produce the "best" offspring, is potentially limitless. Indeed, because the reach of the PPB is potentially without limits, it should never be advanced as the "best" reason to have children.

Notes

1. From 1993–2006, Overall also wrote a weekly feminist column entitled "In Other Words" for the *Kingston Whig-Standard*, the daily newspaper of Kingston, Canada, where she lives and works, and wrote a column entitled "It's All Academic" from 2008–2011 for *University Affairs*, Canada's academic magazine.

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The Second Sexism: Discrimination Against Men and Boys

David Benatar (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012). 287 pages. $29.95. ISBN 978-0470674512.

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This book is a defense of the claim that men are the victims of sex discrimination. David Benatar terms this phenomenon "the second sexism." Over the past thirty years, sex discrimination against women has been discussed widely in the scholarly and popular discourse of many societies. Sexism against women, which he terms "the first sexism," has been taken seriously as a form of social injustice. Benatar agrees that wrongful discrimination against women is a persistent problem, and he celebrates that "great inroads have been made against anti-female sexism in many parts of the world" (175). *The Second Sexism* draws attention to the overlooked phenomenon of sexism against men. Benatar argues that people who value gender equality should oppose wrongful discrimination on the basis of a person's sex whether the victim is male or female.

The Second Sexism includes seven substantive chapters. In the first chapter, Benatar explains why disadvantage on the basis of being classified as male amounts to sexism. The concept of disadvantage is the foundational concept in his case that sexism against men exists. Disadvantage and discrimination are distinct concepts, and not all disadvantage and discrimination is wrongful. Benatar argues that discrimination is wrong only "when people are treated differently without there being a relevant difference between the people that justifies the differential treatment" (4). In his view, most but not all

disadvantages of being male or female are the result of wrongful discrimination.

In the second chapter, Benatar presents a range of detailed examples of disadvantages that only men experience. For example, in many countries men are conscripted and forced to serve in combat roles on the basis of their sex. Boys experience disadvantage by being more likely to receive corporeal punishment. Men are more likely than women to be the targets of violence on account of their sex. Sexual assault against men is more likely not to be taken as seriously as sexual assault against women. The bodily privacy of men is not given as much respect as is afforded to women. Benatar defends these claims with empirical research and identifies clearly which conclusions are well established and which hypotheses are contested because it is not clear how to interpret the existing data. Disadvantage and discrimination in education is an area in which his conclusions are tentative. That statistics show that more men drop out of high school and more women receive college degrees does not prove that either men or women experience disadvantage on the basis of their sex.

Chapter three focuses on the beliefs about men and the differences between men and women that many people contend justify differential treatment. These views include normative beliefs about how men and boys ought to behave and descriptive beliefs about sex differences. In chapter four, he returns to the specific examples of male disadvantage identified in chapter two and argues that most of these cases of male disadvantage are the result of sexist beliefs, social practices, and public policies.

In chapter five, Benatar responds to objections to the specific examples of male disadvantage and to his thesis in general. He first articulated his view that a second sexism exists in a 2003 article in *Social Theory and Practice*. The criticisms and the counterarguments offered by Carol Quinn and Rosemarie Tong, James Sterba, Kenneth Clatterbaugh, and Tom Digby in response articles that were also published in the issue receive detailed consideration in this part of the book.

In chapter six, Benatar examines the issue of affirmative action. He defends policies that aim "to remove impediments to equality of opportunity," but he rejects the policy of showing preference to job candidates of one sex in professions in which that sex is underrepresented (235). In his view, sex-based affirmative action policies constitute sex discrimination. A job candidate's sex is irrelevant to his or her capability to carry out job-related responsibilities. Employers should hire the best possible person for the position. In chapter seven, Benatar examines the ancillary questions whether feminism discriminates against men and whether men are worse off than women.

Why might someone reject the position that men experience sexism or wrongful discrimination? Benatar presents and responds to many objections to his interpretation of evidence and to his arguments. I consider three challenges.

First, many scholars do not wish to characterize discrimination against men as sexism. Marilyn Frye argues that sexism exists only when discrimination on the basis of one's sex is systemic, and Catharine MacKinnon maintains that the primary feature of systemic sexism is that the meaning of being classified as a member of one sex is that one exists in a relation of subordination to another group of human beings. Kenneth Clatterbaugh, James Sterba, and Tom Digby denied in their 2003 responses that discrimination against men constitutes sexism. Benatar rejects definitions of sexism that require wrongful discrimination to reflect a system of gender inequality that involves domination, subordination, and oppression. He argues that this definition of sexism is stipulative and does not reflect the use of the word in ordinary language. Benatar defines sexism as the activity of treating people differently on the basis of sex without a justifiable reason. In his view, this definition better shows why "prejudicial and discriminatory 'isms'" are evaluated negatively (8). He urges readers to compare the similar structure of his definition of sexism to the common understanding of racism and Peter Singer's conception of "speciesism." Racism is the differential treatment of people on account of their race; speciesism describes the practice of valuing human life over non-human animal life on the basis of arbitrary and irrelevant differences.

The second challenge stems from the belief that the interests of women and girls are more important than those of men. Benatar terms people who hold this belief "partisan feminists." Partisan feminists are interested primarily in advancing the position of women. "Since its goal is the advancement of female interests irrespective of whether this promotes or compromises equality, it will sometimes advance the interests of women even when this is unfair to men" (240). On his view, many feminists claim to be concerned with gender equality but actually "slip into a partisan form of feminism" (14). Benatar does not go as far as Janet Halley, who catalogs the harms of feminist theory and practice in *Split Decisions: How and Why to Take a Break from Feminism*.[1] He simply exhorts feminists to assess carefully their efforts to correct unfair discrimination against women by eliminating the unearned advantages enjoyed by men. Proponents of gender equality for women should be consistent in their defense of equality by being "willing to diminish women's relative position when that is necessary to promote equality" (240).

The third challenge is issued by people whom Benatar describes as "gender role conservatives." Gender role conservatives defend traditional gender roles. They believe that there are differences between men and women and that social policies and practices should reflect these anatomical, physiological, and biological facts. Descriptive beliefs about the differential capabilities of men and women justify normative beliefs about personal behavior and the proper allocation of responsibilities. Benatar responds by presenting alternative interpretations of what accounts for the biological differences between the sexes and by undermining the purported normative implications of these differences.

What implications follow if Benatar's thesis about sexism against men succeeds? People who are committed to gender equality and are moved by his argument should, as a matter of principle, consider the second sexism equally pernicious and as no less worthy of eradication than the first sexism. "The first step to taking the second sexism seriously is to acknowledge its very existence" (254). Public recognition that anti-male sexism exists will confer legitimacy on research into male disadvantage and attempts to modify policies and practices so that men and women will enjoy both formal and substantive equality.

The Second Sexism has a number of shortcomings. I identify two. First, Benatar's response to gender role conservatives is weak. Philosopher Harvey Mansfield recently devoted a monograph to defending the thesis that women should be expected to be "womanly" and that men should be expected to be "manly."[2] Instead of directly addressing sophisticated defenses of traditional gender roles, Benatar points his readers to the work of others: "Feminists have written volumes effectively refuting defenses of traditional gender roles. There is little point in rehearsing those arguments" (173). He brackets the questions whether sex is ever a morally relevant feature in specifying rights, liberties, and opportunities and whether working to eliminate the first and the second sexisms will produce a gender-neutral society. Benatar should have taken

up these questions because the legitimacy of the arguments offered by Mansfield and other gender role conservatives depend on the answers.

Second, Benatar's presentation of the book's substantive content is strangely distant. Detachment from emotions and interests is uncharacteristic of the tone of feminist scholarship on sexism. He claims that *The Second Sexism* "is not a work of armchair philosophy" because he appeals to "facts about the world" (19). I suspect that many readers will find off-putting his philosophical methodology and that this judgment will likely undermine their willingness to consider him competent to make knowledge claims about sex discrimination. Although Benatar makes extensive use of observational data, he does not convey to readers a sense that men experience themselves as being the victims of sexism. For example, personal accounts of experiences with which female readers have no familiarity, such as registering for the United States Selective Service System, would be enlightening. Although we should not consider first-person accounts the final word on the matter, Benatar's claim that wrongful discrimination against men exists should be echoed in the narratives of men. Readers would likely find Benatar's philosophical arguments more persuasive if he included the testimony of men describing the experience of wrongful discrimination on the basis of their sex as a feature of their lives. In recent years men have become increasingly comfortable speaking about the ways in which the male gender-role stereotype is constraining. Yet stereotypical beliefs are distinct from discriminatory policies. The absence of familiar narratives framed in the language of discrimination lends support to the intuition that men are not the victims of sexism.

Benatar offers many keen comments in *The Second Sexism*, and I find that many of his arguments are well founded. I agree that men experience wrongful discrimination on the basis of their sex in many spheres of human activity. Versions of feminism that do not permit recognition of wrongful discrimination against men to be taken seriously fail to reflect the norm that all human beings have equal moral status. I also share Benatar's sense that making general statements about whether one sex is oppressed or subordinated does not advance the cause of gender equality. "[P]ower is spectral rather than binary," he notes (9). A social and political order comprises many domains of activity, practices, and patterns of behavior and belief. A judgment about the relative distribution of advantages and disadvantages is not synonymous with the claim that members of one group are dominated by the other.

I recommend *The Second Sexism* to scholars who investigate gender relations, and I urge academic feminists to take Benatar's thesis seriously and to respond to it with respect rather than with disbelief or derision. Evaluating the strength of his arguments is a welcome opportunity to reflect on whether feminist premises and conclusions have become dogmas. Benatar's book raised my hackles on many occasions, but it also provoked reflection. Students enrolled in introductory level courses in women's studies and in feminist philosophy would also benefit from engaging with his positions. Benatar's rigorous argumentation would complement personal narratives or sociological descriptions of the different ways in which boys and girls are reared and men and women are treated in specific domains of social life. In my view, raising awareness in the current generation of the possibility that boys and men can be the victims of sexism will facilitate an increased public recognition of gender-based harm and an enriched public discourse on how to achieve gender equality.

Notes

1. Janet Halley, Split Decisions: *How and Why to Take a Break from Feminism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006).
2. Harvey Mansfield, *Manliness* (Yale University Press).

The Ethics of Gender-Specific Disease

Mary Ann G. Cutter (New York: Routledge, 2012). 151 pp. $125.00. ISBN 978-0-415-50997-8.

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Philosophers familiar with research ethics may recall that medical research performed on men was once used as the basis of treatment decisions for women. The corresponding lack of research on how women experience diseases shared by both men and women—heart disease, diabetes, asthma, etc.—is often cited by feminist bioethicists as an example of the classic assumption that "man is the measure of all things," by which we really do mean "man." As Lyerly et al. note, though progress has been made on this front, pregnant women are still generally excluded from research to their detriment and treatment of conditions in pregnancy is often poorly justified.

Mary Ann Cutter's recent book addresses the ethical implications of just such gender-specific diseases. By this, she does not intend only the classic examples of prostate cancer and uterine cancer, but also gender-specific manifestations of diseases shared by both men and women. However, she emphasizes diseases that primarily affect women. Her study therefore focuses on "women's health care."

A preliminary note is in order regarding terminology. Like many in philosophy and the larger world, Cutter at first seems to conflate sex and gender: many of the conditions she refers to as "gender-specific" are commonly referred to as "sex-specific." One need only think of effective drag, in which a member of one sex is able to convincingly be taken as a member of the opposite sex, to be reminded that gender—man, woman, or gender queer—is distinct from the biological concept of sex, which itself is not a simple binary. However, unlike many who conflate these notions in their language use, Cutter uses this to very deliberately include both biological and cultural differences in her analysis. Using "gender" in this way allows her to apply concept of "gender-specific disease" not only to potential neurological differences in how depression manifests in men versus women but also to cultural differences in how it manifests due to gender stereotypes. As she puts it, "this inquiry focuses . . . on *gender or sex*" as an important variable in research and treatment (9). She proves well aware of arguments for the sex-gender distinction and those critiquing it, some of which argued for "feminine gender identities as expressing a social standpoint defining the lives and possibilities of women" (9–10). Cutter ultimately adopts Young's position and "retains the categories of gender and sex in the context of gender-specific medicine" (11). Cutter's analysis in the book as a whole "calls into question the possibility of arriving at an unequivocal unambiguous sociological account of gender and biological account of sex, as well as a binary account of woman and man, and female and male" (11). This account of sex and gender allows her to address the ethics of how gender-specific diseases are conceived and handled.

From her own experiences as a patient and caregiver, as well as her training in philosophy of medicine and applied ethics

at the Kennedy Institute of Ethics, Cutter seeks to correct blind spots within medical ethics. Though others have discussed some of these issues piecemeal and in disparate literatures, her methodology is to "bring together some of the more recent discussions of gender in medicine found in feminist ontological, epistemological, bioethical, and sociological literature in order to forge a needed dialogue about the character of gender-specific disease" (xi). Indeed, Cutter's ability to draw on tools from a wide range of fields within the medical humanities provides her readers with a similarly broad toolset and shows the value of pairing philosophy with other humanities.

Cutter's first chapter gives quite good "Background" matter for her study. Therein, she explains several feminist analyses of gender and sex, discusses the history of gender-specific diseases, and lays out useful medical terms for the philosophically trained reader or someone new to the study of medicine. In so doing, she introduces the reader to the notion of disease as a concept with differing definitions, a classic issue in philosophy of medicine and one with great social power, as Conrad noted long ago in his early studies of attention deficit disorder. This background chapter, alone, is useful for readers and could also productively introduce students to these considerations.

Cutter's next three chapters each address gender-specific disease from one of three perspectives: descriptive analysis (chapter 2), prescriptive analysis (chapter 3), and contextual analysis (chapter 4). In considering descriptive analysis of gender-specific disease, Cutter identifies and critiques the concepts behind naturalist views of gender and sex, and of disease and disease-causation. She does the same for nominalist views and concludes the chapter by noting that competing descriptive frameworks may in fact be "discovering a creation." In other words, investigation of gender-specific disease does in fact provide information about a clinical world that "we do not simply make up," while still leaving room for "the recognition that human knowers in part create a clinical reality" by creating language and the goals that are sought (33). This she terms the "methodological naturalist view of gender-specific disease," in opposition to the strict naturalist or strict nominalist views. Readers interested in philosophy of science more generally, and in the classic debate over whether science studies an objective reality or a socially constructed one, should find this chapter particularly interesting. Chapter 3, in considering prescriptive views of gender-specific disease, rejects a value-neutral (neutralist) account in favor of a "normativist view of gender-specific disease," which "recognizes that gender-specific disease serves to judge a clinical phenomenon as dysfunctional, to enlist the actions of health care professionals, and to guide treatment recommendations" (35). Here, Cutter follows in the steps of Conrad and others who have argued that medicalization of human conditions—the process whereby a condition becomes a fit consideration for medicine—enforces not only descriptive notions of what is or is not occurring but also normative ones of what should or should not be occurring with a patient's behavior or body. Cutter gives a brief, successful account of the fact-value distinction and its troubling implications for objectivity in accounts of gender-specific disease (45). She resolves the issue in a manner worthy of consideration: the values that frame diseases, if they are objective rather than subjective, do not necessarily undermine the objectivity of value-laden accounts of disease. She concludes that "gender-specific disease is a "both/and" factual and evaluative concept in its meaning and use" (48). In chapter 4, her contextual analysis makes intriguing use of historical and cultural "frames" for gender-specific disease, arguing for a "*trans-local account.*" This avoids the pitfalls of a global, universalist account of disease that ignores epistemic frames altogether, and yet also seeks to avoid the subjectivist problems posed by an entirely too local account of frames. Herein, she analyzes the WHO and UN discussions of gender and disease, herself concluding that this trans-local account will allow the concept of gender-specific disease to "be attentive to shared notions of gender, disease, and their relation, and yet accommodate differences across local communities and cultures" (59). In these three chapters, Cutter gives a whirlwind tour of epistemology of medicine and medicalization with respect to her subject, yet from it gleans three descriptive, normative, and contextual frameworks that allow for a nuanced and coherent account of gender-specific disease. These frameworks ameliorate the ethically problematic implications of simplistic and reductionist accounts of disease, and are quite promising in this respect.

By this point, it will not surprise the reader to learn that Cutter's remaining substantive chapters focus on rethinking nomenclature and taxonomies for gender-specific disease (chapter 6) and on moving toward an integrative bioethical approach to gender-specific disease (chapters 5, 7, and 8). Such an integrative approach "sees gender-specific disease as biological dysfunction brought about by gender-specific factors explained via etiological laws, generalizations, or associations within particular historical and cultural frameworks for purposes of developing treatment warrants" (60). As with the earlier chapters, these highlight Cutter's approach to treating knowledge of gender-specific diseases as "both/and," an intriguing hybrid of scientific realism and social constructivism. She thus rejects gender-neutrality in favor of gender-inclusivity for both medicine and bioethics, calling in chapter 7 for an "eclectic" view of ethical appeals that draws on some of the most influential feminist bioethics of the last quarter century.

After resolving the meat and potatoes of her view on the nature of gender-specific disease and ethical appeals within a gender-inclusive—rather than gender-neutral—bioethics, Cutter considers (chapter 9) the ethical implications for men, children, and members of the LGBT communities. This reinforces the inclusivity and eclectic nature of ethical appeals. Therein, she considers how the implications of her analysis of women's health care bear on these other groups. In particular, Cutter notes that, while men are generally the beneficiaries of the attention paid them in medical research, "a study of how men's diseases are understood reveals some claims and assumptions about men that may be challenged" (111). She makes an analogy between the silence on AIDS in women's health, which led to poor care, and the silence on depression in men, which is denied both by patients and providers because of the expectation that men will be "strong" or "tough," and that "men are not emotional" (ibid.). In fact, men are more likely to die of suicide than are women. Conversely, and also because of damaging norms of masculinity, men may be overdiagnosed with erectile dysfunction (ibid.). She suggests a men's health movement that would attend to how gender stereotypes affect health care delivery to men. Similarly, she argues that there is a widespread tendency in pediatrics to ignore gender-specific aspects of disease in children, especially for conditions such as ADHD, asthma, autism, obesity, violence, and sports-related head and other injuries. The latter is especially the case for boys who, again due to gender stereotypes, are expected to not only play rough but continue to play on after getting roughed up. The notion that "boys will be boys" is contrary to health, suggests Cutter.

And finally, we come to the portion of this chapter that reveals an area where I find Cutter's study wanting: the implications of gender-specific disease for members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities.

Her discussion runs two pages altogether and yet offers far more potential for her subject. Cutter focuses here on how the identification of these communities with their sexual behavior has led to overattention in training to STDs and other infectious diseases. This has the pernicious effect, she argues, of "fueling the stereotype that LGBTs are riddled with sexual and infectious diseases" (117). I would have liked to see a great deal more discussion on this and related issues. Cutter leaves the analysis here, saying, "certainly more can be said about how LGBT's health is understood in medicine on par with a more extensive analysis of women's health found in the earlier chapters. But that is a matter for another time" (118). LGBT issues present far more of a challenge to research, treatment, and the patient-provider relationship than Cutter may be aware, especially trans individuals whose status has far more to do with gender and sex than with sexuality. For instance, transgender individuals challenge the traditional binary of male-female and its assumed equivalency with man-woman. Treatment of trans individuals thus presents real problems for physicians with fixed notions of sex and gender, and of gender-specific disease. Trans men—born female—routinely avoid preventive care such as PAP smears or mammograms even when they still possess the relevant anatomy. According to the Institute of Medicine, the most commonly cited reason is fear of enacted stigma, though physicians also often simply have no idea that a trans man would need such sex-specific treatment. Trans folk's embodied experience with medicine is so distinct from that of LGB folks and hetero-gender-normative folks that it provides a powerful lens through which to question research and treatment of gender-specific disease. Of course, no one can do everything in a single text, and Cutter has done much of value here. Readers who wish to follow up on this issue can find out more by visiting the Queer Bioethics website (www.queerbioethics.org) and perusing the recent theme issue of *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry* (9, no. 3), which focused on bioethics, sexuality, and gender issues.

Ultimately, this work is in the fine tradition of feminist analysis questioning how the status quo of gender and disease are damaging to all concerned. Cutter goes further to propose a particular gender-inclusive, eclectic vision of bioethics itself rather than turning her gaze only on the practice of medicine. In doing so, she utilizes an impressively wide array of tools within the medical humanities. That her study is, in the end, not entirely as radical as I would like makes it no less radical for the target audience of mainstream bioethicists and health care providers who may read it as part of Routledge's Annals in Bioethics series.

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Ethics, Aging, and Society: The Critical Turn

Martha B. Holstein, Jennifer A. Parks, and Mark H. Waymack (New York: Springer Publishing Company, 2011). 298 pp. $55.00 ISBN 978-082611634-5.

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At last, here is a book that engages the many philosophical issues pertaining to aging. It is not that such issues have been completely ignored in the philosophical literature. There are numerous writings devoted to end-of-life and palliative care, although those concerns are not solely the domain of aging persons. Notably, George Agich has examined questions of autonomy as they pertain to aging individuals, but his work is focused on long-term care.[1] Christine Overall's book *Aging, Death and Human Longevity* must also be noted as a systematic study of the desirability of living longer, which is attentive to the way in which such a possibility is tied to concerns about justice.[2] There have been several edited volumes and special journal issues that have included essays on some of the dilemmas pertaining to aging, such as the moral status of persons with dementia and equitable access to support and care. However, this book is not a collection of essays, and it is authored by three academics: two philosophers and a gerontologist. The fact that Holstein, Parks, and Waymack come from these two disciplines adds to the strength of the book, in my opinion. It allows for a broader analysis, and it anchors the book on the lived realities of aging persons. These realities are often taken to be solely negative; significantly, the authors take a brighter view of aging. If much of the previous literature focuses on loss and disease, Holstein, Parks, and Waymack are concerned with the quality of life of older individuals, and the authors proceed from a perspective that allows for a good and meaningful life in advanced old age and in the context of dementia.

This book makes an important contribution to the literature in at least two ways. First, it highlights the ethical concerns that come from aging and the ethical and philosophical implications of the realities of aging. From the assessment of the concept of autonomy as it is used in bioethics, to the critical deconstruction of the manner in which persons in late capitalist societies are expected to age, the authors focus on questions that are in dire need of sustained critical reflection. Second, the book illustrates how a contextual approach is crucial to sound conceptual inquiry; theorizing about ethics and applying ethics cannot be divorced from each other. The book can be utilized easily by those who have a background in feminist theory, narrative ethics, and care ethics, but it also gives a solid synopsis of the crucial developments and debates in these alternative ethical approaches, so it can also be used by those who are less familiar with these frameworks.

Holstein, Parks, and Waymack proceed in a systematic and detailed manner. They are aware that the issues they are discussing are not characteristic of philosophical work, although the issues surrounding cognitive impairment, for example, have gained more currency. The book is divided into three large sections. First, the authors discuss the ethical frameworks that are most used in bioethics and explain why such approaches are wanting. Second, they explain how aging and aging bodies are portrayed and discuss the consequences of these ideals. In the final section, the authors discuss the concerns that stem from giving care to aging individuals.

The first section critically reviews the ethical frameworks most employed for solving medical dilemmas. As the authors

point out, autonomy is a central value in health care. They explain the evolution of ethical thinking that led to the four principles approach or principlism. If this framework is most favored by bioethicists, it has shortcomings when it is applied to the situations faced by aging individuals. As the authors note, and they refer to the work of Agich on this, the value of autonomy is one that may be more damaging to aging individuals. What the authors name "household issues," such as who is to care for whom and what to do when family members disagree, call for more than principles to guide individuals, families, and professionals (8). The authors' worry centers on "the moral poverty that a singular emphasis on the language of autonomy suggests" (16). It is not that the freedom to make some choices is not important; rather, it is the reductionist view of autonomy as self-sufficiency and independence that is highly problematic. This criticism of autonomy, as the authors acknowledge, has been expressed by many feminist theorists.

Once attention has been drawn to the problems associated with the standard view autonomy, Holstein, Parks, and Waymack make the case that the contexts in which individuals are embedded should be taken into consideration. This is essential in the case of aging individuals as they often rely on networks of support, and an adequate ethical approach should reflect this reality. For the authors, the notion of relational autonomy is far more promising because relational autonomy takes "the self-in-relationships as the root of autonomous choice and action" (28). In this final part of the first section, the authors present a more suitable framework grounded on this notion of autonomy.

Having established the manner most apt for analyzing issues relevant to aging, the authors look at the ways late capitalist western societies portray aging. Holstein, Parks, and Waymack might have left this section out and still would have presented us with a strong work of analysis. However, this second section is crucial and really completes the book. It might not be considered essential to look at the ways in which aging is depicted, but, as the book makes clear, the mainstream discourses on aging and the emphasis on the "third age" serve to hide issues of dependency. The cultural ideals hiding behind clichés such as sixty is the new forty serve to perpetuate the myth of agelessness. A focus on anti-aging medicine also implies that aging can be defeated. If older persons are to be portrayed as dependent, the hope is that this might occur later on in the fourth age. This snapshot of frailty as occurring late in life serves to make us hold on to the myth of the individual who is bodyless and, hence, ageless. Dependency is erased for most of us. However, these cultural ideals are sustained at a cost.

If it is vital to understand how ideals affect real people, the hope is that "using ethics as a source of critical consciousness, we can raise questions about the unexamined commitment to norms that are potentially damaging to many" (82). Crucially, norms and ideals either translate directly into policies or at the very least influence them. This point is worth exploring, as the book does, and is central to any discussion of aging. The authors ground their argument by using concrete examples, such as the limitations of the President's Council on Bioethics' report *Taking Care: Ethical Caregiving in Our Aging Society*[3] and issues that have broader scope such as the impediments to generational solidarity. The authors locate some of the obstacles in the neoliberal frameworks adopted by many countries. Although it is essential to understand how the neoliberal agenda sets up a vision of the citizen as a self-sufficient individual, Holstein, Parks, and Waymack go further and suggest ways in which the present agenda can be overcome by setting out a normative foundation by proposing "that the feminist ethics of care serve as framework for policy" (115).

The next two chapters look at the specific instances of aging at home and within a nursing home. Both venues present their own challenges, and the authors take this opportunity to consider how questions of vulnerability, dependence, care, and justice unfold in these settings. The point is not simply to understand the dilemmas germane to these particular sites; rather, it is the way in which an analysis of the issues in these settings requires thinking about justice and ethics with an awareness of context.

The next step is to examine care-giving practices, and the final section is devoted to those issues. Specific problems such as elder self-neglect and abuse are studied with a focus on the proper way of addressing these problems without overwhelming paternalism. The use of scenarios becomes more important in this section as these have great explanatory power and show how conventional or traditional ethics fails to capture the contentious elements of particular situations. Through a sustained analysis of caring at the end of life, to coping with disasters, this section emphasizes how dignity and respect should be foundational values. Ageist and overly paternalistic attitudes play into the power relationships that can exist between caregivers and the persons requiring assistance. As Holstein, Parks, and Waymack note, the question of respecting an older individual's choice when she has limited capacity to make choices is not easily resolved. However, one concern that is not addressed by the authors is the manner in which paid caregivers are treated and trained. The goal of respect and understanding of those who require care cannot be dissociated from the manner in which paid caregivers are treated.[4] Issues of justice, such as equitable training and remuneration for staff, and the time to provide care adequately not only impact retention but have deeper consequences. Eva Kittay has made clear in her work that if those who are cared for are valued then those who care for them will also be valued. The institutional structures that allow paid caregiving to remain a low-paying job cannot simply be taken for granted.

Holstein, Parks, and Waymack recommend that jurisdictions plan for long-term care. Some countries, provinces, and states have devoted considerable energy and time to better serving aging individuals along the continuum of care;[5] however, such efforts must be widespread. The authors do not address the specific needs of communities in this book as it would have required much lengthier treatment and considerable more resources, but they do mention that such issues are important. We have much to learn from each other, and this is where further research would be important: learning about long-term care from different cultural perspectives. Not only would it help address care needs in an appropriate manner but it would also improve care-giving practices through fruitful exchange.

For those of us who have been working on the philosophical issues related to aging and impairment, it was often difficult to find systematic analyses of these issues, and this book is a welcomed resource. I want to add that we also face marginalization by the philosophical community because aging is perceived as a contingent matter, and not the subject of bona fide philosophical reflection. However, Holstein, Parks, and Waymack demonstrate how the issues surrounding aging are worthy of philosophical analysis. In conclusion, this book can serve as a mentoring tool for those who may have contemplated the issues of aging. I hope the challenge will be taken up; philosophy and society have much to gain.

Notes

1. See George Agich, *Dependency and Autonomy in Old Age: An Ethical Treatment for Long-term Care* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

2. Overall, *Aging, Death, and Human Longevity: A Philosophical Inquiry* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2003).
3. President's Council on Bioethics, *Taking Care: Ethical Caregiving in Our Aging Society*, 2005. Accessed March 5, 2013. http://bioethics.georgetown.edu/pcbe/reports/taking_care/fulldoc.html.
4. Although Eva Kittay discusses the care of persons with mental retardation, her analysis is relevant to the caregivers of older individuals. See Eva Kittay," Caring for the Vulnerable by Caring for the Caregiver: The Case of Mental Retardation," in *Medicine and Social Justice: Essays on the Distribution of Healthcare*, eds. R. Rhodes, M.P. Battin, and A. Silvers (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 290–300. I discuss the uncertainties faced by paid caregivers that make their work and their status precarious in Monique Lanoix, "Shades of Gray: The Environment of Care Labor," *International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics* 2, no. 2 (2009): 31–50.
5. An example is the province of Nova Scotia in Canada. The province faces distinct challenges as much of its population is rural. The government has made it a priority to examine access along the continuum of care. Nova Scotia, Canada, Continuing Care Programs. Accessed December 2012. http://www.gov.ns.ca/health/ccs/.

Shifting Ground: Knowledge and Reality, Transgression and Trustworthiness

Naomi Scheman (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). 264 pp. $35.00 ISBN 978-0-19-539510-5).

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Reading Naomi Scheman's work is always an oddly personal experience for me, even though I have only met her a handful of times. In graduate school twenty years ago, I made sense of my constellation of budding philosophical commitments and began to find my own philosophical style while reading her early essays. Her work has always explored the meeting point of epistemology, philosophy of mind and language, and liberatory political philosophy—a synthesis that was wholly new to me at the time. I was inspired by the fact that she clearly took philosophical writing as a literary art in its own right. At a time in my own development at which I felt a serious tension between my passion for rigorous treatments of fundamental philosophical questions, on the one hand, and my need for concrete political engagement, on the other, Scheman spoke to me in a philosophical voice that reinvigorated my faltering commitment to a career in academic philosophy. At least as importantly, I could not help but experience a powerful identification with her as a woman raised in a secular, diasporic, intellectual Jewish household, with an unstable sexual orientation, and even as someone who had lived on both sides of the Canadian-American border. Although it may be presumptuous of me to say so, it even seemed to me that our writing styles were similar.

It is hard to capture just how important it was for me, in my early twenties, to happen upon a philosopher who not only served as an intellectual role model but also as a point of personal identification, especially since Scheman was just about exactly a generation ahead of me and hence presented me with a concrete vision of a future for myself that made sense. Not only had I never previously been able to identify, even vaguely, with any philosopher I had read, but at the time I did not even have enough consciousness of the issue to notice that this was something that I was missing, or that missing it had anything to do with my crisis of confidence in my choice of vocation. All of this, I admit, makes it difficult for me to review her new collection of essays, *Shifting Ground*, as a disinterested bystander—a stance she would be unlikely to judge as epistemically privileged in any case.

Shifting Ground consists of Scheman's essays published since her last volume of collected papers, *Engenderings: Constructions of Knowledge, Authority, and Privilege*, which came out in 1993. As she did in her earlier essays, in this volume Scheman moves seamlessly among traditional philosophical analysis, autobiography, and analyses of literary texts, and the reader does not have to work hard to see how all three genres are mutually illuminating in her work. In these essays, we see her develop and riff on the intersecting themes that she has explored throughout her career, and in an evolving voice. Some of these include the following:

- Her development of a concrete and pragmatically useful account of objectivity, and relatedly, her portrayal of knowledge not as an abstract epistemic goal but as something we fight over and need for various purposes.
- The role of trust and authority in knowledge, and in self-knowledge in particular.
- Her argument that mental states become determinate only in the context of social narratives and only slowly, through time, as those narratives unfold; along with this, her interest in how the determinacy of our mental lives can be "potentially and unpredictably retroactive" (100).[1]
- Her Wittgenstein-inspired meta-project of beginning theorizing from messy and unstable starting points rather than cleaned-up idealized ones.
- Her articulation of an inherently diasporic conception of home and identity—that is, a conception of home and identity as always in the process of being forged rather than found, and always involving a mix of belonging and strangeness.

Many of these themes come together in her ongoing argument that self-understanding and personal identity are achievements and (unequally distributed) privileges rather than given. One important thread in this ongoing argument is her claim that we can neither understand ourselves nor make ourselves understood without cultural resources and language available to us that are suited to our needs, while such resources are unevenly available. Although, as far as I know, Scheman has not identified herself explicitly as a feminist "standpoint epistemologist," I see both her earlier essays and those in this volume as classic examples of the best sort of standpoint epistemology—the sort that is tempted by neither essentialism nor relativism, but rather explores the kind of social and material work and resources it takes to be well-positioned as an epistemic agent. She emphasizes the epistemic disadvantages of *both* privilege and marginalization. Privilege can blind us to our own investments in distorted and false pictures,[2] while marginalization can leave us with a poverty of "culturally available story lines [that] help give shape to the stuff of some lives . . . while leaving others gappy and jerky" (113).

Inevitably, as I have aged, so has Scheman, and this new volume offers me new and sometimes painful points of identification. For instance, in chapter 3, her autobiographical essay, "On Waking Up One Morning and Discovering We Are Them," she reflects on the complexities in her close friendships with graduate students as she ages into being "senior" faculty: "I worry about inappropriately using [my graduate students]

to satisfy my need to appear to myself and others as genuinely radical, as not having sold out, not having accepted the implicit bribes that went along with academic success. . . . Please reassure me that I haven't been coopted, that you don't see me as an irrelevant relic of a faded radicalism, or, perhaps worse, as just another liberal intellectual infatuated with radical chic. Tell me that I haven't become one of 'them'" (55). She rightly follows up, "It's too much to ask. But, worse, it's the wrong sort of thing to ask. It's asking, in part, to be accepted as one of them, to be granted, not visiting privileges in the community they've created, but full membership" (ibid.). This wise and poignant passage, which I found hard to read, is not merely autobiographical; it also exemplifies her theoretical reflections on diasporic identities and the fine line between visiting a space and being at home in it as a resident who does not bear the "essential" markers of traditional residency.

I cannot possibly say anything useful, in this short review, about each of the eleven essays in the book, all published between 1995 and 2008; instead, I will confine myself to exploring a few points of tension that I encountered along the way.

Objective judgments as "shareable"

Several of the essays play with the notion of objectivity and its uses, but her most explicit positive account shows up in chapter 6, "Feeling Our Way Toward Moral Objectivity." There she proposes that objectivity is a kind of intersubjectivity, although she doesn't use that term (and I wonder why). Objectivity, she says, "must be commonable, that is, stably shareable across a maximal diversity of perspectives" (106). Shortly after, she expands: "We have defined objective judgments as those that we have good reason to believe have been subjected to effective critique, existing in contexts that allow for the future possibility of further critique—that is, judgments that we have good reason to believe are stable across a wide range of different perspectives and that will shift, if they do, not capriciously but intelligibly" (110). While I think that this kind of commonability is a useful epistemic ideal, I am not sure I understand how it is supposed to work as a conception of objectivity. Since she elsewhere discusses in detail, as have others, how various perspectives can be partial and distorting and incomplete, wouldn't we want to say that there could be important facts or features of the world that are both objective and difficult for many to access?

Now perhaps the emphasis is on the "able" in common*able* and share*able*; I am not quite sure how to read the modality there, and Scheman does not do enough to explain it. Perhaps the point is that the objective must be *in principle* accessible to all. This would fit nicely with her excellent point that perspectivalism actually presupposes some sort of realism, since real things support multiple and shifting perspectives on them in a way that hallucinations, for instance, do not (23–24). But I am not sure what sort of in-principle possibility this is supposed to be, or how it is supposed to be pragmatically mobilizable. Nor does that reading fit with the second quotation just above, which equates objective judgments with those that *are* stable and *have been* criticized, rather than with those that could be.

I would think that we—and Scheman in particular—would want to save room for insisting that judgments that are (as yet?) unstable and difficult to share can be objective. It seems to be both politically and epistemologically important that there are some objective truths that require special expertise or a specific history of experiences to see. And conversely, don't we think that some dangerously stable judgments (about religion, perhaps, or differences between the sexes), which have remained stubbornly in place despite having been "subjected to effective critique," are not objective at all?

Queer identities

Chapter 7 is Scheman's classic paper, "Queering the Center by Centering the Queer." In this essay, she uses secular Jewish and trans identities as focal points for arguing that apparently problematic, hard-to-define, unstable identities can be used to call into question the stability of the "original" identities (i.e., as a cis-gendered woman or a religious Jew). "Problematic" gender identities, for instance, highlight for us our inability to point to what locks down anyone's gender: "I couldn't understand the gender identity of transsexuals in part because I thought I understood my own—or, more accurately, could take it for granted, as not in need of understanding" (123). She uses her notion of diasporic identity to argue that we should reject three problematic approaches to identity: first-person essentialism ("I infallibly and unproblematically know what I am"), expert essentialism ("Medical [or other] experts will use science to tell me who I am"), and voluntarism ("I am whatever I want to claim that I am").[3]

I found this paper tremendously helpful when it was first published in 1995. But now it is one of the places where I most acutely felt the limits of Scheman's choice not to revise or update the papers in the collection. In both theory and practice, there has been enormous evolution surrounding trans issues over the last seventeen years. I find it difficult, in 2013, to read Scheman referring repeatedly to "the transsexual"—an oddly homogenizing and reductionist term that feels like it erases personhood. We speak now of trans men and women, or of trans* folks whether gender identified or not, and this respects both the complexity of the multiple trans identities and the personhood of those who inhabit them. I understand that this is just a matter of terminology, but in a contemporary context her language feels uncomfortably transphobic, as does her limited defense of cis-women-only spaces (132). It would not have changed any of the meat of her argument to update her language and a few of her points, and this would have helped me to read the essay as respectful of the trans women she takes as her objects of analysis.

Perhaps lack of updating explains another jarring comment in this paper, an offhand reference to "the frightening rise of respectable homophobia." I am not sure what she had in mind when she wrote this, but in a book published in 2011, after the fall of DADT, the viral character of the "It Gets Better" campaign, the proliferation of same-sex marriage laws, and the dizzying explosion of general cultural acceptance of same-sex relationships, this is a very odd comment. Of course, there are many LGBTQ-acceptance battles still to be won, but it seems to me hard to deny that the unacceptability of homophobia is one area in which history is trending quickly in the right direction.

(While this was the chapter in which I felt the lack of updating most acutely, it seemed to me there were several essays that it would have been worth Scheman's time to update a bit. Several of the later chapters on epistemic trust and autonomy clearly foreshadow lines of thought that Miranda Fricker, for instance, has since developed in detail. While there are a few footnotes to Fricker, I really would have appreciated seeing Scheman take Fricker on as a serious interlocutor. More generally, the last decade or so has been a fecund one in social epistemology, both explicitly feminist and otherwise, and it has seen the rise of more materially and socially anchored conceptions of objectivity.[4] I repeatedly found myself wishing to know how Scheman would recast or refine her points in light of such recent, sophisticated literature.)

Community-based research

Chapter 9 and some of chapter 10 argue for the epistemological benefits of community-based research, and grow out of a

collaborative project between Scheman, a pediatric neurologist, and a community activist. Typically, calls for community engagement in research focus on the welfare and autonomy of the community members who compose the population under study. Scheman and her collaborators argue in detail that community engagement has *epistemic* benefits at all stages of the research process. It can lead to sharper research questions, better-designed experiments that will be able to recruit and sustain participants and be implementable, better interpretation of results, and more effective dissemination and application. All this serves one of her larger ends, which is to argue that trustworthiness is a specifically epistemic virtue, because only trustworthy knowledge is usable as knowledge.

I find her case here compelling and helpful, although I would have liked her to explore how generalizable these benefits are. Her case study is of a research project concerning ways of addressing the risk of lead poisoning in a community, and hence it is not surprising that special knowledge of that community's dynamics was epistemologically important. It is less clear to me whether a community-based research would be epistemologically helpful in the context of a research project that is not trying to answer community-specific questions. I also think that Scheman and her co-authors are unfair to contemporary research ethics and practice. They describe "traditional" research as committed to norms of detachment and the like but do not mention the rich and voluminous debates concerning, for example, the therapeutic misconception, duties of ancillary care, or many other hot topics in research ethics that are premised on the need to think through the complex relationships between researchers and participants. Cases like that of the Havasupai tribe, whose DNA was used in ways that turned out to be disrespectful to the community, have received vigorous attention and are now stock examples of the importance of community engagement in most introductory bioethics classes. This part of the book would be stronger if it acknowledged its continuity with contemporary concerns about research ethics rather than caricaturing the field.

Objects, narratives, salience

One of the most substantial new themes in this collection, in contrast to her last, is Scheman's ontology of objects. She outlines an account in which things are unified and individuated by having their own intelligible *narratives*. In turn, she defines "narrative as time and space made salient" (196). That is, objects are foci of ongoing salient relationships to the things around them; for a given object, we can tell an intelligible story of where it came from, how it impacts its surroundings, and so on. This seems to me an exciting and productive avenue for development—one that eschews both voluntarist nominalism and metaphysically bloated essentialism.

However, she repeatedly makes a slide that I don't understand and that seems implausible to me: from the claim that objects bear salient relations to their surroundings to the idea that their surroundings are salient *to the objects themselves* (197 and elsewhere). I have no grip on the notion of salience except from a humanistic—or at least animalistic—point of view. It seems to me that something can only be salient to a being who has interests, desires, and attentive perception (or *Sorge*, as Heidegger might put it). I am receptive to the idea that object-integrity is dependent upon salience to us critters who have such things, but the idea that rocks and so forth take things as salient *to them* strikes me as, well, at least in need of serious motivation, let's say. For the most part, Scheman does not argue for this slide. When she does, it is through examples that seem to miss the point. For example, she claims that we cannot understand the narrative ontology of plants without attending to their significance in religious and medicinal rituals (199). This may be so, but these are of course human significances in the context of human rituals; this doesn't help support the idea that the plants themselves are loci of *their own* saliencies or perspectives.

Furthermore, the slide seems to me to compromise important political goals close to Scheman's heart. For example, in insisting on our "respecting the perspectival autonomy of the thing" (197), she undercuts the work many feminists have done to argue that autonomy is a complex form of relational agency, which can only be protected and enabled through careful attentiveness to how someone is embedded in thick social relationships of the sorts that rocks and other things don't enjoy. If rocks can have autonomy, then autonomy must be something much thinner and more widely available than we thought. I worry this does an injustice to the pressingness and difficulty of struggling for the autonomy of *people*, and I don't really see what her anti-humanism is earning her, either politically or metaphysically.

In these last few sections I have emphasized the places where I struggled or became frustrated with *Shifting Ground*. As I hope I have made clear, these struggles were against a background of deep admiration for this book along with the rest of Scheman's work. Naomi Scheman continues to be an important, original, and distinctive voice in feminist philosophy, whose lovely and philosophically penetrating writing defies categorization.

Notes

1. This is a familiar point of hers—and one that has shaped my thinking deeply. I think her most lucid and lovely articulation of it was in her early essay, "Anger and the Politics of Naming," where she speaks of "the awesome sweet pain of discovering, after a blithely obtuse parting . . . that *that* had been love. Not a new feeling, caused by the parting, but the old one, revealed and interpreted by it" (Scheman, *Engenderings*, 23 n. 2).
2. "We as knowers, whatever else we know about ourselves, are notoriously susceptible to mistakes, distortions, deception, oversights, over-simplifications, hasty generalizations, prejudices, and fallacious reasoning. Especially when some or all of these are motivated by their role in maintaining one or another useful bit of ideology, we are notoriously good at protecting ourselves from seeing the truth by dismissing critical voices as methodologically unsound" (49).
3. My glosses, not hers.
4. Such as, for instance, the multivocal account developed in Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison's influential tome, *Objectivity* (Zone Books, 2007).

Violence and the Philosophical Imaginary

Ann V. Murphy (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012). 146 pp. $23.95, ISBN: 978-1438440309.

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Ann Murphy's first monograph, published by the SUNY series in Gender Theory, provocatively inquires into tropes of violence in continental philosophy, especially in feminist ethics of non-violence and the vulnerable body (e.g., Butler, Cavarero, Diprose, Oliver).[1] These tropes have framed a vast array of theories over the past half-century, from Levinas' critique of Heidegger's imperialism of ontology and Derrida's analysis of the violent coming-to-appear of phenomenality, to Foucault's genealogies of disciplinary and normalizing institutions, to Irigaray and Kristeva's invocations of matricide (11). Violence

and the vulnerable body have been especially vexed themes for feminist philosophy, which "has been marked by the idea that identity itself entails a kind of constitutive violence" (20). Murphy finds that we encounter "a theoretical landscape in which the possibility of thinking identity without violence comes dangerously close to being foreclosed" (47), in which "violence is not only that which we see, but that which we now see through" (14). The fear is that violence may dominate the philosophical imaginary and foreclose other, potentially more reconstructive vocabularies. In response to this fear, Murphy cultivates the reflexive vigilance of critique to turn on itself and to interrogate the overflow of images, metaphors, and symbols in which our theories traffic. There are no simple answers to be found in *Violence and the Philosophical Imaginary*, which concludes with Simone de Beauvoir's insistence we must "realize" rather than overcome our ambiguity.

The first half of Murphy's book considers the sheer variety of violent images: "material, revolutionary, sexual, transcendental, symbolic, divine, linguistic, or immanent to the formation of the subject, the ubiquity of this motif is provocative" (11). One may worry that this omnipresence—particularly in modes of inquiry unrelated to ethics or politics—risks naturalizing violence and obscuring harms against oppressed groups. Should tropes of violence then be circumscribed to maintain a sense of urgency when violence is evoked? Murphy replies: it's complicated. While, for instance, symbolic violence may seem ethereal next to rape or genocide, we cannot ignore the unconscious habits of life-as-usual, the backdrop against which crises occur. Murphy puts it succinctly: "cultural matrices of intelligibility delineate in a very real sense the contours of the flesh" (22). Critique attempts to expose and/or reconstruct these cultural matrices but remains bound to their conditions of intelligibility, constraining (as they also enable) imaginative possibility. Rather than judging the value of specific violent tropes, *Violence and the Philosophical Imaginary* performs this critical turn to its own imaginary.

This self-reflexive scrutiny tarries with what Murphy calls, following Michèle Le Doeuff (1989), philosophy's shame: its inability to "reconcile its aspirations for abstraction and universality with the requisite recourse it must take to images" (29). Philosophy, much like consciousness, is always philosophy of something; yet, having defined philosophy in opposition to imagistic, narrative, empirical, and/or emotively persuasive works of literature, psychology, anthropology, or myth, the philosopher finds herself in the double-bind of reaching toward the images she has disavowed in order to make her claims concrete: "the greater its claims to universality, the more amplified [are a theory's] vulnerabilities to contingency," and the greater its liability for shame (34). Murphy cites Le Doeuff that images tend to become especially overt at the vulnerable points of an argument (32). For example, earlier waves of feminism have been criticized for their racist, homophobic, and classist myopia in theorizing "woman" as a coherent category, such that contemporary feminisms exhibit a lasting shame-relation to the notion of "identity." Thus, in her third chapter, Murphy considers feminist theories of identity and "the ethical stakes of a discourse in which both visibility and invisibility are said to be violent" (50). Importantly, to interrogate an "imaginary" differs from "ideology critique" in that there is no "universal matrix" of social meanings to make sense of these loaded images (12). Most promising here are not bold conclusions but rather the moments of hesitation, hiccups in the march from ontological description to ethics. It is in these ambivalent moments that shame might open space for self-examination, unsettling and making strange what one previously took to be natural or unworthy of questioning; yet, shame does not inherently generate an ethics and may inspire paranoid and aggressive as well as reparative responses.

In the second half of *Violence and the Philosophical Imaginary*, a similar ethical ambiguity arises from attention to the exposed, vulnerable body. Following Judith Butler and Adriana Cavarero, among others, Murphy asks: Can we derive a prescriptive ethics of non-violence from that ontological description of our porous social selves? Complicating such a move from ontology to ethics, Murphy writes: "If vulnerability is understood as availability to another, then it is surely the case that the specter of violence casts a shadow here" (65). Butler also recognizes that passive experiences of grief, mourning, and dispossession may lead to retributive violence; yet, she theorizes an ethics in which we are called to "tarry" with our own "precariousness"—to tolerate exposure without lashing out and without attempting to conceal it (71). While this toleration forces one beyond the limits of comfort and, thus, could be said to "undo" the self, it is less obvious what prescriptions arise from this productive dispossession or what political orders support it (73). Furthermore, to tolerate such exposure demands "trust that one's own vulnerability will be respected and not subject to abuse," perhaps unimaginable for one whose vulnerability has been "injuriously actualized as suffering at the hands of others" (74). Murphy counters: the descriptive fact of precariousness raises but does not answer the question of our response-ability to the exposure of others.

While in *Undoing Gender* (2004) and *Precarious Life* (2005) Butler preserved the ethical ambiguities of our fragile human condition, her 2009 monograph *Frames of War* insists upon the "radical substitutability" of our precarious state as a generalized condition, one that places ethical obligations on us to others and even offers "a more robust conception of human rights" (82). My only criticism of *Violence and the Philosophical Imaginary* is the absence of a necessary step in Butler's trajectory, her intervening monograph *Giving an Account of Oneself*, which formulates an ethics from the experience of partial opacity to oneself. There are many good reasons why Murphy would bypass this text in an account of violence and corporeal vulnerability. For instance, the text focuses on the incompleteness of self-narratives rather than on bodies; additionally, it weaves together unorthodox readings of continental philosophers, particularly Levinas, which unnecessarily stretch the scope of Murphy's project. Yet, Butler's direct engagement with Cavarero (2000) in *Giving an Account* clarifies the differences between substitutability and singularity as it also demonstrates a misreading of Beauvoir and a misunderstanding of our ambiguous freedom.[2]

Where Butler finds the pull to ethical obligation in the precariousness, Cavarero turns to "human uniqueness" in the Arendtian sense, attentive to "who" rather than "what" somebody is (86). Uniqueness "can only ever be recognized in plurality" because speech and action need "an audience, the presence of others" (89). In her emphasis on singularity, Cavarero contests an implicit morality of pronouns—the decadence of the "I," the contingency and superfluity of the singular "you," antagonism of the "they," potential alliance of the plural "you," and positive privileging of the collective "we"—against which she upholds the singular "you" animating the scene of address: "The 'you' comes before the we . . ." (Cavarero, 9/Butler, 32). Butler finds inspiration in Cavarero's singularity and, in *Giving an Account*, attempts to rehabilitate the "we" through formulating a collective condition of substitutable singularity: "The uniqueness of the other is exposed to me, but mine is also exposed to her. This does not mean we are the same, but only that we are bound to one another by what differentiates us, namely, our singularity" (Butler, 34). Here, Butler modifies Cavarero's guiding question, "Who Are You?," through appeal to

Hegel's indexicals in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*: the "this" or "here" or "now" that never specifies without also generalizing: "it constitutes a collective condition, characterizing us all equally, not only reinstalling the 'we' but also establishing a structure of substitutability at the core of singularity" (Butler, 35). Yet, Butler bases this claim on a straw man, a caricature which, following Murphy, we must critically interrogate:

> The notion of singularity is very often bound up with existential romanticism and with a claim of authenticity, but I gather that, precisely because it is without content, my singularity has some properties in common with yours and so is, to some extent, a substitutable term . . . singularity has no defining content other than the irreducibility of exposure, of being this body exposed to a publicity that is variably and alternately intimate and anonymous.[3]

In this brief and dismissive mention of existential freedom, Butler does not define the content of "authenticity," nor does she specify who claims it, nor to what end. Authenticity has become an outmoded concept for postmodern feminist inquiry; and yet, if we look to what Simone de Beauvoir actually implied by the term, we find not the recovery of a "true" self but rather the evasion of self-deception about one's situation and the conscious crafting of projects that give each life its singular existential meaning.[4]

While she effectively argues that Butler moves too quickly from an ontology to an ethics, I bring in these passages from *Giving an Account* to show, in support of Murphy's thesis, that Butler's ethics furthermore rests on a disavowal of ambiguity in the Beauvoirian sense. Murphy eloquently defines Beauvoir's concept of ambiguity as marking a being at once "vulnerable to others in its finite corporeality and whose intentions were undone in a temporal unfolding, such that the narrative of the subject's relation to the world and to others could never be one of mastery" (111). Though she does not address this implicit critique of Beauvoir in *Giving an Account*, Murphy affirms Beauvoir's concept of freedom as a practice of assuming and working through the very ambiguities she finds lacking in Butler's ethics. Feminists such as Butler have criticized Beauvoir for her insensitivities to racial and cultural difference, but we might also note "that her conception of freedom—while frequently conceived as absolute and outdated—is one that recognizes the vastly different shapes that authenticity can assume in different circumstances and the many ways in which freedom, or self-realization, can be actualized" (116). Murphy finds that Butler's appeal to precariousness provides an impetus toward an ethics rather than the answer as such, encouraging us to elaborate "the exercises of imagination" that would expand (rather than narrow) our horizons of obligation (81). In short, Murphy's exciting book returns our attention to the ambiguity of our precarious lives and the overflowing imaginaries that animate them; we move from descriptive to prescriptive claims only through exercising critical restraint, such that we might do justice to our lived complexity.

Notes

1. Judith Butler, *Precarious Life* (London: Verso, 2004); Judith Butler, *Frames of War* (London: Verso, 2009); Adriana Cavarero, *Relating Narratives*, trans. Kottman (London & New York: Routledge, 2000); Adriana Cavarero, *Horrorism*, trans. McCuaig (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); Rosalyn Diprose, *Corporeal Generosity* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2002); Kelly Oliver, *Witnessing: Beyond Recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001).
2. Butler, *Giving an Account of Oneself* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), 30–35.
3. Ibid., 34.
4. I make this argument about Butler's misreading of Simone de Beauvoir in greater detail elsewhere. See Lauren Guilmette, "Reading Butler Reading Beauvoir Reading Sade: On Ethics and Eros," *Philosophy Today* 55 (SPEP Supplement Vol. 36), ed. Willett & Lawlor (Chicago: Depaul University, 2011), 292–301.

Contributors

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Naomi Zack received her PhD in philosophy from Columbia University in 1970. She was then absent from academia for twenty years. Since 1990, Zack has taught at the University at Albany, SUNY, and is now professor of philosophy at the University of Oregon. Her latest book is *The Ethics and Mores of Race: Equality after the History of Philosophy* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2011). Zack's recent books are *Ethics for Disaster* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2009 and 2010), *Inclusive Feminism: A Third Wave Theory of Women's Commonality*, and *The Handy Answer Philosophy Book* (Visible Ink Press, 2010). Zack's earlier books include: *Race and Mixed Race* (Temple, 1993), *Bachelors of Science* (Temple, 1996), *Philosophy of Science and Race* (Routledge, 2002), *Inclusive Feminism* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), and the short textbook *Thinking About Race* (Thomson Wadsworth, 2nd ed. 2006). Zack has also published a number of articles and book chapters and spoken widely about race and feminism; her work on disaster ethics has been received internationally. Zack's current project is a philosophical examination of how race is dealt with in the law, both within the United States and globally.