

STANCE

AN INTERNATIONAL
UNDERGRADUATE
PHILOSOPHY JOURNAL



STANCE

AN INTERNATIONAL UNDERGRADUATE PHILOSOPHY JOURNAL

Stance: An International Undergraduate Philosophy Journal is produced and edited entirely by undergraduate students. We aim to enrich student learning by providing an opportunity for undergraduate students to have their original scholarly work reviewed by, or published in, a peer-reviewed academic journal.

Stance is published annually in April. The deadline for submissions is mid-December. All papers are carefully considered in multiple anonymous reviews. Notification of initial decision is in February. All authors receive constructive feedback concerning submissions.

Stance requires first publication right. All other rights reside with the author. Having an international standard serial number [ISSN 1943-1880-print; ISSN 1943-1899-electronic], *Stance* is registered with the U.S. Library of Congress. *Stance* is listed in *The Philosopher's Index*.

Further information regarding *Stance* is available at:
stancephilosophy.com

Back issues can be found on the Ball State University Virtual Press at:
<http://www.bsu.edu/libraries/beneficencepress/stance/>

Inquiries should be directed to David W. Concepción, PhD,
dwconcepcion@bsu.edu.



STAFF

Editor-in-Chief

Cameron McNeely

Managing Editor

David W. Concepción, PhD

Associate Editors

Kaley J. Rittichier

Dillon Roberts

Quintin Thompson

Kayla Williams

Editorial Board

James Ferguson

Chris Guion

Daniel Klinestiver

Eliza Sandlin

Julian Schock

Daniel Wills

Lead Copy Editor

Eliza Sandlin

Copy Editor

Taylor Wicker

Production/Design

Eric Lawler

Julia Voigt



Assistant Editorial Board

Taylor Bunge (Regis University)

Katie Deaven (New Mexico State University)

Thomas DePietro (University of Delaware)

Jason Krivo Flores (Portland State University)

Jessica Hepler (SUNY Genesco)

Matthew Maler (Westmont College)

Keagan Potts (Loyola University, Chicago)

Stephen Ross (St. Thomas University)

Daniel Ryon Sweet (Ohio Wesleyan University)

Ryan Woods (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign)

External Reviewers

Marjorie Burgeson (University of Colorado, Boulder)

Michael Collins (Villanova University)

Allison Escobar (University of Memphis)

Kévin-Orly Irakóze (Connecticut College)

Nicole Lorsung (Minnesota State University, Moorhead)

Quyen Pham (Trinity University)

Laura Skelton (University of Reading)

Belissa Suloski (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign)

Jessica Thadickal (York University)

Zach Thanasilangkul (Southern Illinois University)

Gordon Wilford (Williams College)

Stance gratefully acknowledges Ball State University's extremely generous support of the publication of Stance since 2007.

.....

Since 2014, Stance has partnered with the Steven Humphrey Student Philosophy Colloquium at the University of Louisville. Stance staff attend the conference and select one or two papers to consider for publication. We are grateful to the University of Louisville Philosophy Department for their support of our partnership and especially to Steven Humphrey for his gracious hospitality. We look forward to the enduring exchange of ideas fostered by this partnership between Stance and the Humphrey Colloquium.

.....



CONTENTS

- Does the *Dao* Support Individual Autonomy and Human Rights?** 9
Caroline Carr
- Just Visiting: A Working Concept of “Wilderness” for Environmental Ethics and Ordinary Language** 17
Raquel Robles
- If “Everyone Does It,” Then You Can Too** 27
Charlie Melman
- Scientific Minimalism and the Division of Moral Labor in Regulating Dual-Use Research** 33
Steven Dykstra
- “Hood Politics”: Racial Transformation in Hip-Hop** 41
Richard Spradlin
- Criminal Justice Without Moral Responsibility: Addressing Problems with Consequentialism** 51
Dane Shade Hannum
- The Academic Animal is Just an Analogy: Against the Restrictive Account of Hegel’s “Spiritual Animal Kingdom”** 59
Miguel D. Guerrero
- Moral Vegetarianism and the Philosophy of Mind** 67
C.J. Oswald

- 73 **Purity Balls: Virtue Ethics, Sexuality, and Moral Development**
Nicole B. Doolen
- 85 **Feminism, Speaking for Others, and the Role of the Philosopher: An Interview with Linda Martín Alcoff**
- 106 **Author Biographies**
- 108 **Supporters of *Stance***

Does The *Dao* Support Individual Autonomy And Human Rights?

Caroline Carr

Abstract: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights lists what have come to be called “first” and “second” generation rights. First generation rights are civil and political; second generation rights are social, economic, and cultural. Western and Asian nations are in disagreement about whether each of these rights is universal. While Western nations strongly believe that first generation rights should be universal, many “Confucian” nations insist that second generation rights precede first generation rights. After analyzing the Confucian values in detail, I conclude that Confucianism supports both generations of rights.

Introduction

Although first generation rights are prized in Western nations, these rights and the freedoms they offer are foreign to many Asian nations, namely those that identify with Confucianism.¹ China, for instance, identifies with Confucianism and denies first generations rights to its people.² The 2014 World Report on Human Rights notes that China “places arbitrary curbs on expression, association, assembly, and religion; prohibits independent labor unions and human rights organizations; and maintains Party control over all judicial institutions.”³ Contrary to what many Confucian nations might proclaim, I argue that Confucianism actually supports first and second generations of rights. This paper explains fundamental aspects of Confucianism, then goes on to assess how they mandate both generations of rights.

What is Confucianism?

What exactly is Confucianism, and what about it seems to preclude first generation rights? Confucianism (which originated

¹ Francis Fukuyama, “Confucianism and Democracy,” *Journal of Democracy* 6, no. 2 (1995): 23.

² Nathan Gardels, “Xi Launches Cultural Counter-Revolution to Restore Confucianism as China’s Ideology,” *TheWordPost*. Huffington Post, n.d. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/nathan-gardels/xi-jinping-confucianism_b_5897680.html>.

³ “World Report 2014: China,” *Human Rights Watch*, <http://www.hrw.org/world-report/2014/country-chapters/china>.



from Confucius in 6th century BCE) is a tradition that advocates a certain way of life marked by the achievement of virtue (*de*) and a proper following of the Way (*Dao*).⁴ According to the Confucian tradition, one's ability to cultivate these virtues will be imperative to one's ability to follow the *Dao*.

According to Herbert Fingarette, following the *Dao* is the ultimate goal and highest good for every Confucian. Indeed, in *Confucianism: The Secular as Sacred*, he explains that the "following of the Way ... is of ultimate and absolute value."⁵ According to Fingarette, the *Dao* does not offer any crossroads. Rather, it is a strict, one-way street structured by ritual propriety (*li*).⁶ In effect, Confucians lack a true ability to make choices when it comes to pursuing it: "either one follows the Way or one fails ... neither the doctrine nor the imagery [of the *Dao*] allows for choice ... there is presumed to be only one right thing to do."⁷ Given the static nature of the *Dao*, Fingarette concludes that Confucians cannot have any degree of autonomy in following it.

Although I agree with Fingarette's claim that the good of every Confucian is to follow the *Dao*, I disagree with his view that the *Dao* prohibits individual autonomy entirely. From my reading of Confucianism's Four Books, I have concluded that the *Dao* not only has space for some degree of individual autonomy, but actually requires it. However, in order for individuals to be autonomous, they need to be granted first generation rights. Additionally, I argue that Confucianism calls for both first and second generation rights.

What is the *Dao*?

In order for one to be able to follow the *Dao*, one must first understand what exactly the *Dao* is. "*Dao*" is translated as the "Way," but can refer to "The right Way of life, the Way of governing, the ideal Way of human existence, [and] the Way of the cosmos."⁸ It most often refers to the Way in which society is ruled and organized.⁹ Since this essay focuses on the rights of the individual in a Confucian society, we should discern the *Dao* in this latter context. Naturally,

⁴ It is important not to confuse the Confucian *Dao* with the Daoist *Dao*, as these are two different traditions whose conceptions of the *Dao* differ significantly.

⁵ Herbert Fingarette, *Confucius: The Secular as Sacred* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 20-22.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁹ Bryan W. Van Norden, *The Essential Mengzi: Selected Passages with Traditional Commentary* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2009), 141.

all governments are ruled and organized in order to achieve a certain goal. According to the *Great Learning*, the goal of every Confucian society is also “to illustrate illustrious virtue; to renovate the people; and to rest in the highest excellence.”¹⁰ Ultimately, if the goal of every Confucian society is to exhibit virtue, then the *Dao* of a Confucian society is to illustrate virtue.

If the *Dao* refers to an illustration of virtue, then the aim of all Confucians should be to cultivate virtue. To be clear, the Confucian tradition has four cardinal virtues: *ren*, *li*, *yi*, and *zhi*. *Ren* can be translated as authoritative conduct, benevolence, or humaneness, and refers to a “graded love for all human beings” that begins in the family.¹¹ It is also the highest of all the virtues.¹² *Li* can be translated as ritual propriety; it refers to society’s traditional norms, customs, and practices. *Yi* can be translated as “righteousness” and refers to carrying out the right action at the right time and in the right place. Finally, *zhi* can be translated “wisdom” or “knowledge.”

According to the *Mengzi*, the cultivation of virtue is more than possible, because human nature is actually to become virtuous. Indeed, Mengzi says that all humans have within their hearts certain feelings: compassion, disdain, deference, and approval and disapproval.¹³ These feelings are important because they are the “sprouts” of virtues. Compassion is the sprout of benevolence, disdain is the sprout of righteousness, deference is the sprout of propriety, and approval and disapproval is the sprout of wisdom.¹⁴

The Cultivation of Virtue and Second Generation Rights

Although it is clear that all humans can cultivate the virtue necessary to follow the *Dao*, does Confucianism offer any explanation on how this is done? According to the *Great Learning* and the *Analects*, people can cultivate virtue by acquiring knowledge (*zhi*) and observing ritual propriety (*li*). In the *Great Learning*, Confucius says that in order for people to cultivate their persons, they must “first rectify] their hearts ... s[seek] to be sincere in their thoughts ... [and] extend to the utmost their knowledge. Such extension of knowledge lay in the investigation of things.”¹⁵ In order for the

¹⁰ K’ung-fu Tzu, *Confucius: The Great Learning*, trans. James Legge (Forgotten Books, 2007), 1.

¹¹ May Sim, “Harmony and the Mean in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Zhongyong*,” *Remastering Morals with Aristotle and Confucius* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 117.

¹² Van Norden, *The Essential Mengzi*, 137.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 6.4.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.5.

¹⁵ Tzu, *Confucius*, 1.



people to cultivate the virtues for which the *Dao* calls, they need to extend their knowledge and investigate reality.

Although it is clear that Confucians need to acquire knowledge (*zhi*) and observe ritual propriety (*li*), does this automatically mean that they have the right to do so? In “A Confucian Approach to Human Rights,” May Sim explains that the “good,” the *Dao*, is not only an ideal for Confucians to achieve but also a right. She explains that because of Confucianism’s emphasis on relationships, all people in a Confucian society are obligated to help others achieve any “Confucian goods” that may exist.¹⁶ Conversely, all people are entitled to pursue such goods. The good becomes a right to which all Confucian people are entitled. As Sim succinctly explains, since “there are basic goods and an obligation to foster them, there are ‘basic’ or human rights.”¹⁷

Since it has now been established that the *Dao* is a good which all Confucians have a right to pursue, it follows that a Confucian society has an obligation to provide its people with a right to education. In order to ensure that all people have this right, a Confucian society ought to provide them with second generation rights. This generation of rights is social, economic, and cultural in nature. It includes the right to education, housing, health, and employment. Ultimately, since a right to education is a second generation right, a granting of these rights will ensure that Confucian citizens can obtain the knowledge (*zhi*) necessary to cultivate virtue and follow the *Dao*.

In the *Analects*, Confucius says that observing ritual propriety allows one to achieve the highest Confucian virtue, *ren*: “Through self-discipline and observing ritual propriety, one becomes authoritative [*ren*] in one’s conduct. Do not look at anything that violates the observance of ritual propriety; do not listen . . . do not speak . . . do not do anything that violates the observance of ritual propriety.”¹⁸

Since *ren* is the summation of human virtue, one’s ability to practice it will have the largest effect on one’s ability to follow the *Dao*.¹⁹ In fact, the *Mengzi* explicitly articulates that “The Way [*Dao*] is simply to harmonize with benevolence [*ren*] and put it into words.”²⁰ Therefore, in light of what Confucius said in the

¹⁶ May Sim, “A Confucian Approach to Human Rights,” *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (2004): 348.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 348.

¹⁸ *Analects*, 12.1.

¹⁹ Van Norden, 137.

²⁰ *Mengzi*, 7B16.1.

Analects, a Confucian society should promote a strict adherence to ritual propriety (*li*). By providing second generation rights, a Confucian government can encourage the people to observe ritual propriety. Indeed, since *li* refers to a society's cultural practices, and second generation rights embody a society's cultural rights, then by promoting these rights a Confucian government can effectively promote ritual propriety (*li*).

The *Dao* and Autonomy

At this point, Fingarette's conclusion about the *Dao* is easy to understand. Fingarette views the *Dao* as a single path with virtually no room for any choice or freedom. This explanation seems logical because the characteristics of the *Dao* do seem specific. In order to follow it, one must illustrate virtue, become educated, and adhere to society's norms and customs embodied in ritual propriety (*li*). With such a specific prescription of the *Dao*, is there any room for independent choice? Despite the fact that the *Dao* seems fixed, the *Mengzi* and the *Analects* explain how it also requires individual autonomy.

The ability to practice the virtue *yi* (righteousness/appropriateness) requires one to have the freedom to make an independent choice. Since *yi* is one of Confucianism's four cardinal virtues, an exhibition of it will be imperative to one's ability to follow the *Dao*.

What is it about *yi* that demands autonomy? The appropriate (*yi*) action varies depending on one's social role. For instance, in the story of Feng Fu, Feng Fu is mocked for helping a mob catch a tiger because he is a distinguished official. "Feng Fu rolled up his sleeves and got out of his carriage to assist with the tiger. The mob was pleased, but those who were officials laughed at him."²¹ We can conclude that Feng Fu's behavior is not appropriate for his role as an official because the *Mengzi* uses this story to explain to Chen Zhen why his own social role does not permit him to ask for famine relief.

Yi is also situational. Since no two situations are exactly alike, the appropriate action can vary by situation. For instance, imagine if the tiger were going after Feng Fu's mother. Since *xiao* (filial piety) is one of the most important Confucian virtues, it would be more appropriate (*yi*) for Feng Fu to try to save his mother by capturing the tiger than it would be for him to behave like an

²¹ *Ibid.*, 7B23.2.



official. Therefore, in order to ensure that Confucian citizens have the ability to choose the appropriate action, they need to have the ability to think autonomously. In this hypothetical story of Feng Fu, Feng Fu certainly needed to make an independent choice in order to perform the appropriate (*yi*) action of saving his mother. Since the ability to be autonomous lies in first generation rights, Confucian citizens will need first generation rights in order to exercise *yi*. Without such freedoms embodied in first generation rights, Confucian citizens may be discouraged, mocked, or even legally restrained from the ability to practice *yi*. An ability to practice *yi* is important because it allows one to follow the *Dao*. Ultimately, since it is clear that first generation rights allows one to fully exercise *yi* and follow the *Dao*, then a Confucian government should grant its citizens first generation of rights.

The *Analects* also provides evidence that the *Dao* requires a degree of individual autonomy. According to Confucius, the *Dao* can be “broadened.” “It is the person who is able to broaden the way (*Dao*), not the way that broadens the person.”²² If it is true that people can broaden the *Dao*, then they need the institutional space to do so. Since the *Dao* refers to the way in which society is ruled and organized, citizens will only be able to broaden it if they have access to first generation rights. Only through the right to vote and the freedoms of press, speech, and assembly can Confucian citizens have the appropriate means to broaden the Way in which society is ruled and organized.

In a later passage, Confucius also explains that the *Dao* is able to grow from the *junzi*: “Exemplary persons (*junzi*) concentrate their efforts on the root, for the root having taken hold, the way (*Dao*) will grow therefrom.”²³ *Junzi* can be translated as an “exemplary” person, and refers to someone who is extremely virtuous. The possibility for the *Dao* to grow from the *junzi* is noteworthy because, even though the *junzi* has cultivated enough virtue to follow the *Dao* with precision, it is clear that he or she is still able to expand upon it. More importantly, all people have the potential to become a *junzi*. According to the *Zhongyong*:

The proper way (*dao*) of exemplary persons (*junzi*) is both broad and hidden. The dullest of ordinary men and women can know something of it, and yet even the sages (*sheng-ren*) in trying to penetrate its furthest limits do not know it all

²² *Analects*, 15.29.

²³ *Ibid.*, 1.2.

... The proper way of exemplary persons has its start at the simple lives of ordinary men and women, and at its furthest limits sheds light upon the entire world.²⁴

Ultimately, since all people have the potential to become a *junzi*, it follows that the *Dao* can grow from all people.

Further supporting the idea that all people have an ability to contribute to the *Dao* is *Analects* 19.22, in which Confucius says: “The way (*Dao*) of Kings Wen and Wu has not collapsed utterly—it lives in the people ... Everyone has something of Wen and Wu’s way in them. Who then does the Master not learn from? Again, how could there be a single constant teacher for him?”²⁵

Despite the fact that Confucius is a sage, he is still able to learn more about the *Dao* from the people. This has significant implications on a Confucian government. If a Confucian society wants to better know the *Dao*, then it should ensure that it learns from all of its citizens. In order for a Confucian government to learn from its people, it needs to provide them with means of expression. Since first generation rights provide one with the appropriate means to express their knowledge of the *Dao*, a Confucian nation needs the rights to freedom of speech and assembly.

Ultimately, it is clear that all people have a potential to grasp the *Dao* and expand upon it. However, in order for them to do this, they need access to first generation rights. All people are entitled to the rights necessary to pursue the *Dao* because the *Dao* is the Confucian good. By granting its citizens the right to participate in politics and the rights of free speech, assembly, and press, a Confucian government is effectively granting its citizens the means necessary to achieve the good to which they are entitled.

Conclusion

All Confucian peoples are entitled to pursue the good. According to Fingarette, one can effectively choose the good by following the *Dao*. Although I agree that the *Dao* is the good, I disagree with Fingarette’s view that it offers no room for individual choice. Although the *Dao* requires one to illustrate virtue, acquire an education, and observe ritual propriety (*li*), it also requires individual autonomy. The *Mengzi* explains that *yi* (appropriateness or righteousness) is also required to follow the *Dao*. Since *yi* varies

²⁴ *Zhongyong*, 12.

²⁵ *Analects*, 19.22.



by situation, Confucian citizens need the ability to make their own choices in order to achieve this virtue. Since the ability to be autonomous lies in first generation rights, Confucian citizens need first generation rights in order to practice *yi* and follow the *Dao*.

In the *Analects*, Confucius provides evidence that the *Dao* is not entirely predetermined; people, in fact, contribute to its growth. Since the *Dao* refers to the way in which society is ruled and organized (i.e. the way in which a government is structured), then people can only contribute to it through the political and civil rights offered by the first generation protections. By participating in politics and freely expressing oneself, one can effectively contribute to the way (*Dao*) in which society is ruled and organized.

The *Dao* also supports second generation rights. Indeed, the *Great Learning* and the *Analects* explain that one can cultivate virtue by acquiring knowledge and observing ritual propriety (*li*). Since the right to education and other cultural rights are embodied in second generation rights, a Confucian government is obligated to provide its citizens with these as well.

Although scholars disagree on the compatibility of Confucianism and human rights, and given the significance of Confucianism in many Asian countries, hopefully this work can contribute to a shifting view of the role of first and second generation rights in Confucian societies.²⁶

²⁶ I would like to thank the Mellon Summer Research Program (#21100645) and Holy Cross for providing me with a grant and opportunity to conduct this research.

Just Visiting: A Working Concept of “Wilderness” for Environmental Ethics and Ordinary Language

Raquel Robles

Abstract: This paper argues for retaining the concept of “wilderness” as a significant ethical category and considers arguments by J. Baird Callicott and William Cronon for abandoning it. Counters by Paul M. Keeling and Scott Friskics are evaluated and defended. Lastly, the paper recommends thinking of the term “wilderness” as belonging to a certain range of meanings on a spectrum of naturalness.

A Brief History of the Term Wilderness

The evolution of the concept of wilderness is commonly understood as a shift from wilderness being thought of as a dangerous place to being thought of as a resource for human use.¹ This shift is due to the change in culture over time. Before the Industrial Revolution in America, wilderness had no value independent of humans. When Romanticism became popular in the United States, “wilderness” began to be understood in a way that resembles what is commonly thought of today. People started to value wilderness as an escape from industrialized society. Writers like Emerson, Thoreau, and Muir argued that wilderness was God’s Cathedral, and that it was healthy for the human spirit to escape the civilized world and return to wilderness. Human action upon nature was considered to be negative. Many painters and writers at the time advocated for an escape to wilderness and valued it for more than just its ability to be harvested as resources. By the late 19th century the U.S. began to establish the first National Parks.

The Wilderness Act of 1964 is considered to be a significant accomplishment for environmentalists who wanted wilderness areas to be preserved. It was aimed to “establish a National Wilderness Preservation System for the permanent good of the whole people,

¹ Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale UP, 1982).



and for other purposes.”² These wilderness areas were to be set aside for recreational and possible future use by the U.S. The wilderness definition as stated in the Wilderness Act of 1964 has been widely accepted by many philosophers as the definition of wilderness. It states:

A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man’s work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.³

Callicott cites this definition of wilderness from the Wilderness Act, but argues that: “This definition assumes, indeed it enshrines, a bifurcation of man and nature.”⁴ However, this human-nature dichotomy is not explicitly supposed in the Wilderness Act. It makes more sense to read the Wilderness Act as allowing humans to be a part of wilderness. It is important to note that nowhere does the wilderness act explicitly say that wilderness is that place where humans cannot exist. “In contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape,” “where man himself is a visitor who does not remain,” and “with the imprint of man’s work substantially unnoticeable”⁵ are some examples of phrases that allow

² Carl Levin, “The Wilderness Act of 1964,” *The Great New Wilderness Debate: An Expansive Collection of Writings Defining Wilderness from John Muir to Gary Snyder*, ed. J. Baird Callicott and Michael P. Nelson (Athens: U of Georgia, 1998), 121.

³ *Ibid.*, 121.

⁴ J. Baird Callicott, “The Wilderness Idea Revisited: The Sustainable Development Alternative,” *The Great New Wilderness Debate*, 349.

⁵ Levin, “The Wilderness Act of 1964,” 121.

for humans to be a part of wilderness. Man is allowed to be a part of the wilderness, he just cannot be the dominating force.

Arguments For and Against the Use of the Term “Wilderness”

The first common argument philosophers pose against using the term “wilderness” in environmental ethics is that it perpetuates an outdated notion that there exists a human–nature dichotomy. An example of this argument is presented by Cronon: “This, then, is the central paradox: wilderness embodies a dualistic vision in which the human is entirely outside the natural. If we allow ourselves to believe that nature, to be true, must also be wild, then our very presence in nature represents its fall.”⁶ According to Darwinian thought, if humans are a part of nature why aren’t their creations also a part of nature? Callicott argued in his article: “If man is a natural, a wild, and evolving species, not essentially different in this respect from all the others, as Gary Snyder reminds us, then the works of man, however precious, are as natural as those of beavers, or termites, or any of the other species that dramatically modify their habitats.”⁷

Before evaluating this argument, it is important to help clarify the use of another term in many of these writings, namely “nature.” Like many words we use in ordinary language, “nature” has a range of meanings. The two most important to this discussion are: (1) the primitive natural world that exists without human interference and (2) the natural world with all of its living things. These definitions of nature are sometimes used by philosophers interchangeably when defining wilderness, when in reality they are referring to two seemingly different concepts. This twofold definition of “nature” makes it seem as if there exists a paradox in the wilderness concept, since nature is often used in defining wilderness. We can agree that using “nature” to refer to the primitive natural world that exists without human interference, and the term used to refer to the natural world with all of its living things, cannot be used interchangeably because humans exist as a part of one definition and not the other. The incoherence that some philosophers suggest occurs in the wilderness definition is rather a problem of equivocation between two different concepts of nature.

⁶ William Cronon, “The Trouble with Wilderness; Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature,” *Environment: An Interdisciplinary Anthology*, ed. Glenn Adelson (New Haven: Yale UP, 2008), 302.

⁷ Callicott, “The Wilderness Idea Revisited,” 350.



In Cronon's first statement, that man is opposite from nature, he is supposing that "wilderness" involves the definition of "nature," that is, the primitive natural world that exists without human interference. Cronon then continues to argue: "If we allow ourselves to believe that nature, to be true, must also be wild, then our very presence in nature represents its fall."⁸ He is arguing that if "wilderness" assumes humans are opposite from nature, simply having them in these wilderness areas takes away those areas' wildness. If we were to define wilderness in the way that Cronon seemingly does, then there is a paradox present in the wilderness definition of the Wilderness Act when it suggests that humans can visit nature.

According to Friskics, Cronon is defining wilderness in a way that resembles that of the nineteenth century: "This idea conceives of wilderness as a 'pristine' or 'virgin' nature unsullied by the damaging influence of humankind."⁹ The more widely recognized definition of wilderness today is that which is consistent within the Wilderness Act. This definition does not perpetuate the human-nature dichotomy, however. The Wilderness Act allows for humans to have a place within wilderness. Friskics notes that, "Wilderness areas are places without 'permanent ... human habitation."¹⁰ "According to the [Wilderness] Act, wilderness is a place we visit, not a place where we establish permanent residence."¹¹ Just because humans are unable to set up residence in wilderness areas does not mean they are not allowed in them. This definition of "wilderness" implicates the definition of "nature" as the natural world and all its living things since humans are not absent from nature and in this case, wilderness. Friskics follows up with: "In wilderness areas, human influences are not absent; they are just minimized. Like everything else about wilderness, it is not a question of human or natural, but a matter of degree."¹² Since Cronon's definition of wilderness is outdated, we can argue that our current concept of wilderness does not suffer from the human-nature dichotomy.

Another common philosophical argument is that "wilderness" is ethnocentric. Callicott reasons that since many early wilderness writers consider Native Americans as a part of wilderness and settlers as disruptions of wilderness, the term is inherently prejudicial.

⁸ Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness," 302.

⁹ Scott Friskics, "The Twofold Myth of Pristine Wilderness," *Environmental Ethics* 30, no. 4 (Winter 2008): 382.

¹⁰ Levin, 121.

¹¹ Friskics, "The Twofold Myth of Pristine Wilderness," 385.

¹² *Ibid.*

Callicott argued: “[u]pon the eve of European landfall most of temperate North America was not . . . in a wilderness condition—not undominated by the works of Man—unless one is prepared to ignore the existence of its aboriginal inhabitant and their works or to insinuate that they were not ‘man,’ i.e., not fully human beings.”¹³ He reasoned that Native Americans have significantly altered the environment around them, but since this impact was different than what the settlers were accustomed to, it was still considered wilderness. These nature writers accepted that Native Americans were a part of wilderness because they believed Native Americans had little impact or were primitive, like the animal inhabitants of the wilderness. The traditional concept of wilderness therefore is unacceptably ethnocentric, placing differential value on activities of some humans over others.

This argument is valid if one assumes the notion of wilderness that presupposes that no human activity is allowed in the wilderness. If you were to accept that definition, and that Native Americans were a part of wilderness, you would in fact be insisting that they were less than human. While it is true that the definition of wilderness, as Callicott is interpreting it in this section, is inherently racist, this is not the case for the concept of wilderness that the Wilderness Act puts forward. The current conception of wilderness allows for humans to have a role in the wilderness as long as it, “generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man’s work substantially unnoticeable.”¹⁴

Another argument is presented by Callicott was that the definition of wilderness ignores the fact that natural areas are ever-changing. He argues that when the concept of wilderness is used in environmental ethics, it implies a goal of freezing the natural processes to the condition it is in now. He thinks this is problematic because in managing “wilderness” we are treating natural processes as static rather than as the dynamic processes they are. We are not allowing the natural processes to take their course by managing preserved areas because, “[e]cological succession is continually reset by one or another natural disturbance.”¹⁵

Friskics responds by arguing “that the idea that, once designated, wilderness areas will maintain themselves in a state of self-perpetuating equilibrium is a myth.”¹⁶ He argues that even

¹³ Callicott, 352.

¹⁴ Levin, 121.

¹⁵ Callicott, 354.

¹⁶ Friskics, 396.



though natural areas are dynamic by nature we have to manage them in order to maintain their “wilderness character.” Since the areas surrounding the wilderness have both been radically altered by human activity and are strictly managed, we must help to facilitate natural processes within the wilderness areas. Forest fires, for example, are prevented in the areas surrounding wilderness in order to protect [their] inhabitants. This extreme form of fire prevention necessitates the planned burning of wilderness areas. Since, according to the Wilderness Act, human activity is acceptable when “[wilderness areas] are protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions.”¹⁷ Therefore the concept of “wilderness” implied in the ethics of preservation and management does not imply that we must preserve wilderness in a static state.

The last argument to be discussed is that wilderness areas are used as an escape from the reality we created in order to avoid responsibility for our non-sustainable actions. According to Cronon, “The core of wilderness represents the false hope of an escape from responsibility, the illusion that we can somehow wipe clean the slate of our past and return to the *tabula rasa*.”¹⁸ Cronon argues that thinking of wilderness as an example of how the world is supposed to be makes humans escape to this vision that is unattainable. Since humans can use the wilderness as an escape from their artificial lives, there is no incentive for humans to positively impact their lives at home. It “gives us permission to evade responsibility for the lives we actually lead,” which is why Cronon argues wilderness is a problematic term for environmental ethics.¹⁹ He argues that if we are only our true selves when we are in the wilderness, then when we are in civilization we have no responsibility to live sustainably.

I am sympathetic to this fourth argument, that the old notion of “wilderness” problematically allows us to evade responsibility. I disagree with the source of the problem, however. The problem does not stem from the definition of wilderness itself but rather from our conceptions of both our roles within wilderness and civilization. There needs to be a shift away from valuing wilderness areas because of their absence of humans, and towards an idea that they are valuable because of their ability to let natural processes thrive. I recommend attributing value to the natural processes at work in the wilderness because then we can begin to understand the value of natural

¹⁷ Levin, 121.

¹⁸ Cronon, 301.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 302.

processes even in our “artificial” world. This will further explain our role in the wilderness as protectors of natural processes. This value system is beneficial because we can take it and extend it to the “artificial” world we live in. If we aim to promote natural systems because they are valuable, then we can start positively impacting where we live to be more sustainable. The value of natural processes can be grounded in a number of ways. Natural processes could be considered valuable intrinsically, for their spiritual relationships, or even instrumentally in that they are necessary for human survival. The exact reason natural processes are valuable does not have to be determined here. It is only important to understand that if we shift the value of wilderness away from its absence of humans towards a place that promotes natural processes, we can better our relationship with both wilderness areas and those places we call home.

A Working Suggestion for the Wilderness Spectrum

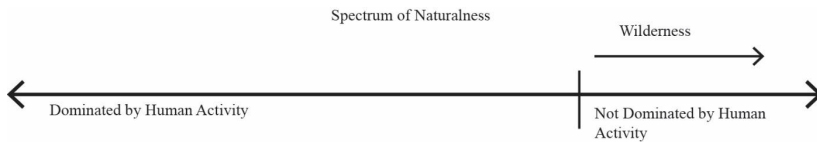
I am sympathetic to the definition of wilderness presented in the Wilderness Act. This definition is good for practical reasons such as its role in aiding the preservation of wilderness areas, but it is not perfect. There are many areas that we would consider to be wilderness that would not be included in the Wilderness Act. For example, many wilderness areas on the East Coast are not, “at least five thousand acres of land.”²⁰ To achieve a working concept of wilderness, Keeling argues that we should look towards our ordinary language. He took a Wittgensteinian approach to thinking about defining “nature” that I feel should be extended to “wilderness.” Keeling argues, “To give meaning of a word is to specify its *grammar*, which is the system of unarticulated, constitutive rules governing its use.”²¹ When constructing our wilderness concept we must first look at all the ways we use the term. When we take these usages into account we become familiar with the “language games” we are playing. We do not need to have one single definition of any word, because in ordinary language the meanings of our words depend on the ways in which we use them. This would allow us to talk about a larger variety of wilderness areas that might not have been included in the Wilderness Act. Keeling raised the idea of a spectrum for different purposes, but I feel “wilderness” would benefit from being defined as part of a spectrum because of its multitude of uses.

²⁰ Levin, 121.

²¹ Paul M. Keeling, “Does the Idea of Wilderness Need a Defense?” *Environmental Values* 17, no. 4 (2008): 509.



The uses of the term “wilderness” should be thought of as lying along a certain portion of the spectrum of “naturalness.” In particular, it indicates those forms of naturalness that escape the domination of humans; “wilderness” will refer to those places in which natural processes are allowed to operate on their own. The ideal wilderness would be that place in which natural processes were able to operate independently with no interference by humans. Some philosophers such as Vogel and McKibben would claim that since the ideal end of the spectrum is that place left fully to its own natural processes, and humans have had some kind of impact on every place, there is no ideal wilderness.²² While I agree that there is no example of ideal wilderness here on Earth, it is easy to think of distant planets that humans have in no way impacted. Those places could work as the ideal wilderness. Even if the ideal “wilderness” does not exist, it is a valuable concept. Keeling argues that “this empirical objection to wilderness appears to have no more merit than would similar empirical objections to ‘freedom,’ ‘justice,’ ‘empowerment,’ ‘cultural diversity,’ or almost any other widely or deeply held human ideal, based on such ideals being ‘impossible’ in practice.”²³ We do not need to have a single definition of a concept in order to use it. We simply need to understand how that concept is being applied. Consequently, we can understand “wilderness” being used to indicate many degrees of “naturalness,” including its use in the ideal sense, even if nothing exists that satisfies the concept.



Defining wilderness as a portion of the spectrum of naturalness is not subject to the human-nature dichotomy, because instead of valuing wilderness for its separation from humans it is valued in its concern for “naturalness.” Wilderness areas should be visited accordingly, and be used by humans as a place to appreciate our role in protecting the “naturalness” of natural processes. Those places closest to the ideal wilderness will give humans a better

²² Steven Vogel, “Why ‘Nature’ Has No Place in Environmental Philosophy,” *The Ideal of Nature: Debates about Biotechnology and the Environment*, ed. Gregory E. Kaebnick (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2011).

²³ Keeling, “Does the Idea of Wilderness Need a Defense?,” 506.

learning experience as “visitors who do not remain.”²⁴ The idea of acting as visitors who do not remain should become a part of our understanding of our relation to wilderness. This kind of behavior can then be extended to those “ideal” wildernesses in space. If we are able to fully understand ourselves as visitors we would be more likely to go these distant places without spoiling their “wildness.”

However, even more importantly, by thinking of ourselves as visitors on the Earth rather than masters over the Earth, we can not only change how we interact with wilderness areas, but also those areas we call home.²⁵ The better we are able to understand sustainable living in an attempt to protect natural processes, the more we are able to protect those natural processes that we interact with everyday. This could increase the quality of life by promoting sustainable living in our own communities. By thinking of ourselves as visitors, we are able to show respect to the natural processes that function all around us.

Conclusion

Many of the arguments put forward by Cronon and Callicott are either based on an outdated definition of wilderness that involves a human–nature dichotomy, or equivocate on two different concepts of “nature.” The “Wilderness Act” definition, despite its critics, works well with our current views of the human–nature relationship. However, it does not fully capture the flexibility of our ordinary language concept of “wilderness.” It is instead valuable to think of the term “wilderness” as possibly referring to that range on the spectrum of naturalness that is not dominated by humans. This allows for humans to learn about their relationship with natural processes, and be sensitive to “naturalness” outside of wilderness. This concept of wilderness could be valuable to environmental ethics because it can be molded to the types of landscapes present in the community we live. This concept is ultimately better adept than the “Wilderness Act” at allowing natural processes to thrive.

²⁴ Levin, 121.

²⁵ Many philosophers assume that there is a pervasive belief that we are masters over nature. Mirjam de Groot, Martin Drenthen, and Wouter T. de Groot gathered research and found that, “[m]astery over nature has all but disappeared as anything desirable in the minds of most people in Western societies. Virtually all respondents believe that humans are morally responsible for nature and recognize the intrinsic value of nature.” Mirjam de Groot, Martin Drenthen, and Wouter T. de Groot, “Public Visions of the Human/Nature Relationship and Their Implications for Environmental Ethics,” *Environmental Ethics* 33, no. 1 (Spring 2011): 39.



If “Everyone Does It,” Then You Can Too

Charlie Melman

Abstract: I argue that the “But Everyone Does That” (BEDT) defense can have significant exculpatory force in a legal sense, but not a moral sense. I consider whether legal realism is a better theory of the law than the more orthodox view of respecting the law as it is written. I next examine what the purpose of the law is, especially attending to how widespread disobedience is treated. Finally, I attempt to fit BEDT within Paul Robinson’s framework for categorizing defenses. I conclude that, first, BEDT can have significant exculpatory force; second, a BEDT plea does not comport with either Robinson’s definition of an excuse or other commonly held conceptions and so needs its own classification; and finally, BEDT does not exonerate the offender in a moral sense—only in a legal context.

Two competing views about the nature of the law underlie the debate about whether the BEDT plea has any exculpatory significance at all. On the orthodox view, the law is what is written in the official statutes of a particular society or community. If one wants to know how fast one can go on a particular road, whether one is allowed to steal from one’s neighbor, or what the legal drinking age is, one need only consult one’s corpus of laws. Violating any of these rules constitutes a breach of the law, for which one is culpable and liable to be punished by the criminal justice system. Even if a person *P* joins most members of her community in breaking the written law, she is just as liable to be punished and is just as blameworthy as she would be were she the only person who transgressed. This would remain true even if those in charge of enforcing the law in question broke that law as well.

A legal realist conception of the law is entirely different. On this view, the written law is meaningless *vis-à-vis* determining what the law actually is. Instead, *P* should consult judges’ decisions and the actions of law enforcement officials to figure out what she *actually* can and cannot do. If the statute “on the books” sets the speed limit on a particular road at thirty-five miles per hour, but people are only forced to pay speeding tickets when they exceed forty-five miles per hour, then the speed limit is really forty-five miles per hour. The



written law thus has no intrinsic meaning; it is merely ink on paper. What matters is what people are actually allowed to do, not what an official text says they are allowed to do.

Which of these views is correct depends largely upon what the purpose of law is. If it is true that law is meant to set absolute and objective standards for permitted and prohibited actions, then these standards cannot lose their force over time. If the people who make law are accepted as infallible, then the orthodox view is probably correct. But this is not, in fact, how people and the legal system actually operate. Law fundamentally exists to ensure and promote standards of conduct that society wants. A community could formalize its desire to prohibit driving at any speed over ten miles per hour by establishing it as a law and using this statute as a tool to prosecute people who drive faster than this speed. If the community later decided that it wanted to keep people from going faster than thirty miles per hour, it could either change the written law or simply stop prosecuting people who did not obey this threshold. Writing an amendment to the law and prosecuting people in accordance with this amendment would be much more effective, since it would both clearly inform community members what is expected of them, and apply punishment in a manner consistent with these expectations. But both the realist and orthodox methods of changing the law intend to enforce the community's will through legal means, and both, properly enforced, have the same effect.

Thus, the fact that a law is written in a certain way does not preclude people from rejecting it through disobedience. A law cannot have any force if it bans conduct for which the actor is not deemed worthy of blame by a significant portion of the community. Jaywalking, to use a common example, is illegal in New York City. But any native New Yorker knows that it is perfectly acceptable to jaywalk in the city, and it is even common for pedestrians to do so directly in front of police officers without being punished. If person *P* gets prosecuted for jaywalking in New York City, she would likely feel aggrieved and claim that she was wronged because "everyone does that." This is a perfectly valid plea. While *P* did *technically* break the law, she did not *effectively* break the law. In other words, she acted wrongly according to the criminal statute "on the books," but not according to the majority of people in her community. What intrinsic or instrumental value is there, then, in prosecuting *P*? If the other members of her community have plainly demonstrated that they do not want to prohibit the sort of conduct for which she is being prosecuted, then her prosecution is

instrumentally unjustifiable. The law, as written, has ceased to serve its purpose. Since its purpose is to reflect and promote the standards of conduct that the community wants, it only has instrumental value.¹ *P* will rightly feel that she is being discriminated against, for her conduct alone does not provide a good enough reason for the state to prosecute her. In the context in which she acted, she is not blameworthy.²

One may wonder exactly when *P* ceases to be liable for prosecution. What proportion of the population needs to disobey the written law for the BEDT plea to have significant exculpatory force? Douglas Husak notes that when *P* asserts BEDT, *P* does not claim that literally *everyone* in her community would do what she did if put in the same circumstances.³ Rather, she asserts that the “average” person *and* most people would do the same thing in the same situation.⁴ While this is the strongest and most easily defended formulation of BEDT, it is not the only one that works. It is difficult to draw a bright line that defines what proportion of people have to consider a written law invalid for the BEDT plea to have exculpatory significance. But there does not seem to be anything inherently special about the fifty percent threshold. Surely no one would consider a law very effective or forceful if, say, forty-five percent of community members routinely violated it and did not believe themselves worthy of punishment. It is thus better to say that the exculpatory force of the BEDT plea admits of degrees. If, for example, *P* violated a written law that was commonly disobeyed by twenty percent of people in her community, a judge should still convict her if BEDT was her only defense but consider it as a mitigating factor in determining her quantum of punishment. Fifty percent is a useful threshold for determining whether BEDT should totally exculpate because past this point we can say that most people would do the thing in question. However, it seems difficult to justify punishing *P* for an action that is technically illegal but slightly less than half the people in her community commit anyway. It is

¹ The only law that can have intrinsic value is a “moral law,” or a law given by God, if either of these exists. Thus, the sort of law with which we are concerned here can only *reflect* these intrinsically valuable laws. Even if they did, they would only be instrumentally valuable insofar as they enforced these moral laws.

² As Husak notes, the force of the BEDT plea depends significantly on the community in which the action in question was done. If *P* jaywalked in a community that made jaywalking illegal through written law *and* adhered to this law, *P* would be blameworthy and liable for prosecution. Douglas Husak, “The ‘But-Everyone-Does-That!’ Defense,” *Public Affairs Quarterly* 10, no. 4 (October 1996): 309.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*



impossible to avoid disputes about the importance of various levels of disobedience, and when there is enough of it for the BEDT plea to work by itself, but that does not mean that we should dismiss the importance of BEDT altogether. A “most or nothing” approach seems too analytically facile.

When might someone reasonably be able to claim BEDT? Husak mentions several instances in which people are punished for behaving, or not behaving, as others would have if put in the same situation: negligence (how do we determine what constitutes a significant “deviation from a standard of care that a reasonable person would observe?”) and duress (“but everyone would have aided the robber’s escape if a gun was put to their head!”) are two particularly persuasive examples.⁵ However, we should also consider laws that draw clear distinctions between what is legal and what is illegal. Salient examples include speeding, underage drinking, jaywalking, drunk driving, and trespassing. It is very easy to determine if a person is guilty of one of these crimes by consulting the written law. The legal drinking age is twenty-one, the speed limit is thirty-five miles per hour, the boundaries of the crosswalk are painted on the street, one cannot have a blood alcohol content of over 0.08, etc. These cases are particularly useful for illustrating how one can violate the written law and still be excused. Husak does not consider these offenses as a category, but they seem to elicit the BEDT plea most often in the real world. BEDT tends to be more applicable when it is relatively easy to determine whether a crime has been committed than in cases where the exact conditions of an individual incident are more difficult to specify. Determining whether the “average” community member would also have violated the written law in the same situation is necessary for evaluating BEDT’s exculpatory significance, and this is possible only when we know what the accused is supposed to have done.

If BEDT is a valid defense, what type of defense is it? Among others, Paul Robinson enumerates justification and excuse defenses.⁶ BEDT can only be a Justification if the written law is flawed, such that *P*’s following the law in the given circumstance does not prevent a greater harm than would be realized by not following the law. This is usually not the case in many of the situations in which BEDT is applied. The world is not *better* for *P* having jaywalked or exceeded the speed limit; in fact, it is usually better, *ceteris paribus*, for people to drive slower and walk within the crosswalk at designated

⁵ *Ibid.*, 311.

⁶ Robinson, “Criminal Law Defenses,” *Columbia Law Review* 82 (1982): 221.

times. In short, these two laws generally serve a clear purpose. But the value of the law in question does not matter *vis-à-vis* *P*'s guilt or innocence based on the BEDT plea. What matters is whether *P*'s act comported with her community's accepted standard of action in her particular circumstance. Thus, in pleading BEDT, *P* makes no claim about the instrumental benefit of her action.

If BEDT is an excuse, then *P* acknowledges that her action was wrong and, in making the BEDT plea, asserts that she has a condition that absolves her of responsibility for her action. While BEDT seems to fit this definition more closely than it fits the definition of a justification, it does not work if we assume that *P* acts with full agency and knowledge of the law. I propose a special exception to Robinson's definition of an excuse for the BEDT plea. If *P* pleads BEDT, she asserts not that there is a quality about *her* that makes her not responsible for her action, but that there is a feature of the *community* in which she acted that absolves her of legal culpability for her action. That quality is the disobedience of a substantial portion of her fellow community members in the same circumstances, viz., the fact that “everyone does that.” Assuming that *P*'s claim is true, she can justifiably claim that she would be discriminated against if convicted and the law, as written, has no force.

The BEDT plea will not satisfy moral philosophers who rightly worry about groupthink determining what is permissible and impermissible in a society. It could, in theory, enable a majority to discriminate against a minority. For example, many, if not most Hutus, would have killed their Tutsi neighbors during the Rwandan genocide regardless of Rwanda's laws regarding murder or hate crimes. The BEDT plea says nothing about what we ought to do; rather, it endorses a particular method of determining whether disobeying the written law makes one liable to criminal prosecution, and if so, what quantum of punishment one deserves. Thus, it is entirely possible for a community to let flagrantly immoral actions go unpunished. That does not, however, reduce the BEDT plea's exculpatory significance in a legal context. Judges should take it seriously, and consider it as a mitigating factor during sentencing if it does not have enough force to fully exonerate the alleged wrongdoer.⁷

⁷ I owe thanks to Professor Douglas Husak for helping me hone my understanding of many of the ideas discussed in this paper.



Scientific Minimalism and the Division of Moral Labor in Regulating Dual-Use Research

Steven Dykstra

Abstract: In this paper I examine the merits of a “division of moral labor” regulatory system for dual-use research. I borrow an argument from Thomas Douglas against scientific isolationism to show that researchers must be morally responsible for resolving at least some dual-use problems. I then argue that there are key benefits of scientific isolationism that are preserved in a position I call scientific minimalism. I then demonstrate that scientific minimalism, in a division of moral labor system, succeeds in maximizing both scientific freedom and moral efficiency, which I hold to be an essential aim for any proposed alternative regulatory model.

Introduction and Clarifications

The term “dual-use research” has evolved from its first conception to its present-day use. Originally defined as research that could be used for both military and civilian interests, it now refers to any research that can be used for both beneficial and harmful purposes.¹ For the purposes of this paper I will borrow a clarification from Thomas Douglas, and refer to research wherein the potential negative consequences are sufficiently large, such that it is unclear whether or not the research should be pursued.² This clarification allows the discussion to focus on the research that is most problematic and in need of investigation. Further, the phrase “dual-use problem” will refer specifically to a situation in which an agent is faced with the unclear decision of whether to pursue some form of dual-use research, rather than the debate about dual-use research in general.

The debate surrounding dual-use research is multi-faceted and has been accelerated in the last two decades by certain significant catalytic events. Researchers who took part in key discoveries regarding atomic fission were clearly involved in an early instance

¹ Michael Selgelid, “Dual-Use Research Codes of Conduct: Lessons from the Life Sciences,” *Nanoethics* 3, no. 3 (2009): 175, doi:10.1007/s11569-009-0074-y.

² Thomas Douglas, “The Dual-Use Problem, Scientific Isolationism, and the Division of Moral Labour,” *Monash Bioethics Review* 32 (2014): 86, doi: 10.1007/s40592-014-0004-9.



of dual-use research, being aware of both its beneficial uses in medicine and energy and its malevolent uses in creating dangerous atomic weapons. This case shows that dual-use research is not a new concept, it is not confined to the life sciences, and has extreme consequences.

Recent events and research cases have shifted the focus of dual-use research debates to the life sciences and greatly accelerated their significance. The anthrax attacks following the September 11 attacks in the U.S. greatly augmented fears of bioterrorism around the world.³ Additionally, in recent studies, scientists accidentally produced a strain of mousepox that could kill mice that had been vaccinated against it, manufactured a polio virus from scratch based off a publicly accessible genome of the virus, and created a synthesized replica of the 1918 flu virus that had killed between 20 and 100 million people.⁴ These studies include clear instructions on how to replicate them and are accessible to the public, allowing malevolent agents to potentially follow their instructions to create biological weapons. A very recent controversy in the debate regards gain-of-function research on certain viruses, by which changes to biological agents may cause them to become better at infecting their hosts. Replication of these studies by malevolent actors, as well as the possibility of an accidental release of a deadly synthetic virus from a laboratory, could be devastating. Hence, a moratorium on such research was called on October 17, 2014 to give time for experts to assess the dangers of dual-use, gain-of-function research.⁵ Considerations such as these shed light on the need for research into effective and efficient ways of regulating dual-use research. Considering the precedent set by such a moratorium, as well as a recent growth of academic interest in regulation and governance of dual-use research, I take the need for at least some form of regulatory measures as a given in this paper.

The Moral Obligation for Individual Researchers

The first questions to answer in an ethical discussion of dual-use research are these: are there any moral responsibilities concerning the decision to pursue dual-use research and, if so, why should they

³ Selgelid, "Dual-Use Research Codes of Conduct," 177.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Andy Kilianski, Jennifer B. Nuzzo, and Kayvon Modjarrad, "Gain-of-Function Research and the Relevance to Clinical Practice," *The Journal of Infectious Diseases* (2015): 1-2, doi: 10.1093/infdis/jiv473.

fall on the researcher, as opposed to on some external regulatory agency? The position that an agent is exempt from making moral considerations when choosing whether or not to pursue dual-use research is what Douglas calls “scientific isolationism.” This position holds that the direction of scientific inquiry can be decided solely on scientific considerations, and without respect to moral considerations at all. He first considers the broader position of “full isolationism,” in which all agents, including scientists, the government, and the public, are exempt from moral considerations when faced with a dual-use problem. The rejection of this position entails that there is at least some moral responsibility tied to the pursuit of dual-use research. He then considers the narrower yet stronger position of “restricted isolationism,” in which the exemption of moral responsibility applies only to the individual researcher or group of researchers. The rejection of this position entails that, in at least some cases, the individual researcher or research group has moral responsibilities when pursuing dual-use research.

The presumption Douglas raises against scientific isolationism is that knowledge is a tool that can be used both beneficially and harmfully. When decisions are required about the production of other types of tools of this sort, such as weapons or computers, we can reasonably expect that, at least in some cases, decisions about whether to create and distribute the tool are accompanied by an assessment of the likely uses of the tool. This “use-assessment” of the uses that a tool is likely to have is an obligation that we expect from producers and distributors, at least in some cases, regardless of whether it is always necessary. The idea is that there is an obligation, prior to producing and distributing a tool that is susceptible to both good and bad uses, to determine that it will not likely be used in primarily bad ways. Douglas argues that scientific knowledge, as a tool with both good and bad uses, carries the same obligation in at least some cases.⁶

The full scientific isolationist, in attempting to overcome this presumption, may argue for the intrinsic value of scientific knowledge. According to Douglas, this argument rests on two claims. The first is that scientific knowledge has “noninstrumental value.” It is valuable outside of any additional value that it creates; it is *intrinsically* valuable, regardless of any morally good or bad instrumental uses it may have.⁷ The second claim is that this intrinsic value is sufficient to determine whether dual-use research should

⁶ Douglas, “The Dual-Use Problem,” 93.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 94.



be pursued. This position holds that a research question with likely harmful instrumental uses or applications could be pursued solely on the grounds that it is a scientifically interesting question. It also frees all agents from moral obligations when deciding whether to pursue dual-use research. However, Douglas points out that, while it is true that scientific knowledge has intrinsic value, it does not follow from this that it should be the sole criterion by which research questions are pursued.⁸ Considering that scientific knowledge has both intrinsic and instrumental value, one would assume that both ought to be taken into account when resolving a dual-use problem. In order for the argument of the full isolationist to hold, then, it must be shown that the intrinsic value of scientific knowledge outweighs its instrumental value. However, such a claim is likely to be implausible when considering some implications it would have. For example, institutions representing the instrumental use of scientific knowledge, such as education, the military, or health care, would likely be found to be receiving a disproportionate amount of resources and would have to operate only to the extent that they contribute to scientific progress.⁹ More extremely, it could imply that funding should be taken away from helping terminally ill patients and relocated into pursuing scientifically interesting research. This argument by the full scientific isolationist does not hold, therefore it can be said that there is at least some moral responsibility involved in resolving a dual-use problem.

Douglas goes on to consider a narrower version of scientific isolationism that he claims to be a stronger position than that of full isolationism. In restricted isolationism, only individual researchers and research groups are exempt from the obligation to consider likely morally good and bad uses of their research.¹⁰ This position differs from full isolationism in that it accepts that there is some moral responsibility in deciding whether to pursue dual-use research. Full isolationism denies this responsibility altogether, whereas restricted isolationism simply deflects the responsibility from the individual researcher or research group to some external agency. Douglas explores an argument by the restricted isolationist that appeals to a division of moral labor system.¹¹ In this system, external agencies are given the moral responsibility of conducting use-assessments, and individual researchers are given the moral responsibility to freely pursue scientific goals within the system of

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., 97.

¹¹ Ibid., 99.

external regulations set up by these agencies. The argument is that the most efficient scientific system for serving the public good is one that allows free pursuit of research questions without regard to the potential uses and misuses knowledge. Scientists can disregard potential misuses of knowledge in this system because there is an external agency ensuring that the system does indeed serve the common good. Additionally, Douglas points out that this system is morally efficient for three reasons. First, it ensures that two separate agents do not redundantly perform the same moral job. Second, it ensures that different moral responsibilities are assigned to agents who are best suited to do them. Third, it allows for agencies to direct their moral assessments and regulations at categories of research, such that regulations and use-assessments are not always required for individual research projects.¹²

While this system is morally efficient, it still cannot fully exempt the researcher from moral responsibility concerning dual-use research in all circumstances for two reasons. First, a problem arises regarding the successful implementation of this system. The reason for this is that this system represents an ideal in which it is likely that external agencies, such as the government, will not fully or properly perform their moral duties consistently. If this were to happen, the moral responsibility would have to fall on the researcher at least until reform is made. Second, a situation can be imagined in which the implications of a dual-use research question is likely to cause significant harm despite external agencies fully performing their moral responsibilities. Consider a research question regarding scientific knowledge about a newly discovered type of biological weapon. In this situation, the external regulatory agencies could not have anticipated this new mechanism and, while they work to find a way to regulate it effectively, there is a period of time during which the pursuit of this research would result in significant harm despite the existing regulatory measures. In this situation, the moral responsibility to not pursue this research until proper regulation is created and implemented would fall on the researcher. This is due to the researcher lacking confidence in the moral capacity of the system. When this situation arises, a researcher is no longer able to have confidence. Hence, even in an efficient and fully functioning division of moral labor system, designed to deflect moral responsibility away from the researcher, individual researchers or research groups cannot be fully exempt from moral responsibility when deciding whether or not to pursue some dual-use research.

¹² *Ibid.*, 101.



The “Scientific Minimalist” in the Division of Moral Labor System

Because Douglas aims to reject scientific isolationism rather than affirm an alternative position, his analysis, while compelling, lacks some considerations that I find useful. First, an inversion of his argument against giving assent to the intrinsic value of scientific knowledge serves to demonstrate the importance of this intrinsic value, especially with respect to increasing its instrumental value. Second, viewing the division of moral labor system from a position that accepts moral responsibility for dual-use problems, in at least some circumstances, presents the system as a potentially successful model of regulation. It may be problematic to implement this ideal system, but exploring it has value in that it sheds light on some considerations that should be made in any inquiry into alternative regulatory models.

Douglas considers the implications of giving assent to the intrinsic value of scientific knowledge, but he does not consider the alternative position, in which instrumental value outweighs intrinsic value. It is easy to see how the instrumental value of scientific knowledge owes much to research pursued primarily for its intrinsic value. Take radium, for example, which was discovered in the name of science before it was known to be medically useful, or penicillin, which was discovered by accident. These beneficial instrumental applications of scientific knowledge came from the curiosity of scientific inquiry, without regard to its instrumental uses. Such examples demonstrate that scientific knowledge would likely not be as instrumentally valuable if it were not for scientific questions being pursued primarily for their intrinsic value. Pursuing only instrumentally beneficial scientific knowledge, paradoxically, results in less instrumentally beneficial knowledge being produced. It is reasonable to conclude that both intrinsic and instrumental knowledge should be considered when resolving dual-use problems. A regulatory system then, also should take both into consideration without giving assent to either.

The previously mentioned division of moral labor system is problematic for the scientific isolationist because it does not fully exempt her from moral responsibility in resolving dual-use problems. However, this is not a problem for what I call the “scientific minimalist,” who accepts that she may have moral responsibility in dual-use problems, but prefers for this to be as infrequent of an occurrence as possible. The less often the scientific minimalist is

faced with a dual-use problem, the freer she is to pursue scientifically interesting questions, which are both intrinsically and potentially instrumentally valuable. Something interesting happens to the dual-use problem in the division of moral labor system that is beneficial to the scientific minimalist. Recall that a dual-use problem arises when the likely harmful consequences are significant such that it is unclear whether or not to pursue the research. By this definition, many research questions that would pose a dual-use problem outside of the division of moral labor system do not pose a dual-use problem within it. This is because the researcher can clearly pursue most potentially harmful research questions with the confidence that she is operating in a system that is regulated to serve the common good. This confidence is shaken only when it is likely that the research will cause harm under the current regulatory measures or when an external agency fails to perform its moral responsibility. Under this system, then, the scope of the term “dual-use problem” narrows considerably, allowing the researcher to pursue many scientifically interesting questions that would pose a dual-use problem outside of it. Additionally, the benefit of the moral efficiency of the system is retained. Hence it can be said of this system that it attempts to maximize both the intrinsic and the instrumental value of scientific knowledge without systematically prioritizing either.

Conclusion

The “division of moral labor” approach to dual-use problems is not without its flaws. For example, it is an ideal that would be difficult to realize. If external agencies consistently failed to perform their moral responsibility to regulate the system properly, it would break down. Both moral efficiency and scientific freedom would return to the state they were in outside of the system. Moral responsibility would largely be in the hands of researchers, who do not wish to have it because it impedes their ability to pursue scientifically interesting research. If external agencies failed only occasionally to perform their moral responsibilities, the success of the system would depend on how frequently they failed, and whether fewer failures could be achieved. Two key characteristics make the division of moral labor approach desirable. First, it always has some agency responsible for moral considerations, because the researchers accept that it must sometimes be their responsibility. This is beneficial because in any system, there is always the possibility that some research will likely have harmful consequences within the



framework of the system that can only be resolved by the agency of the researcher. Further, it allows for the system to enhance the scientific work of researchers by mostly relieving them of moral responsibility and allows for researchers to enhance the moral work of the system, by taking moral responsibility if the system fails. Second, it recognizes the equality and interdependence of the instrumental and intrinsic values of scientific knowledge and seeks to maximize both of them. Seeking to maximize each value contributes to both the scientific efficiency and the moral efficiency that the division of moral labor system has. It is also important to recognize the interdependence of the two values of scientific knowledge because its intrinsic value often serves to advance its instrumental value, and the instrumental value is a vital part of modern society that serves to produce much good as well as prevent much harm. Lastly, the two values must have equality because prioritizing one over the other results in undesirable implications.

“Hood Politics”: Racial Transformation in Hip-Hop

Richard Spradlin

Abstract: This paper explores the possibility of music to transform the way we understand each other. In particular, it looks at the genre of hip-hop and the ways in which it can serve as a vehicle for understanding black experience. I argue that hip-hop’s structural elements allow artists to convey their living narrative in a way that recognizes, challenges, and changes our conceptual understanding of the black body. Using the works of Darby English and Harry Nethery, I examine hip-hop and apply their arguments to two specific rappers in order to illustrate my argument.

Introduction

Although music has been a relevant topic of philosophical conversation for centuries, rarely afforded this same privilege is the genre of hip-hop. The rough, aggressive sounds and lyrical content can turn many would-be listeners away. It is often critiqued for its sexism, misogyny, violence, and generally hedonist attitudes. It is fundamentally “different.” I’m interested in the location and identification of difference, as I believe hip-hop can reveal a larger cultural and social compartmentalization and confinement of the differently identified. These larger systems can shape our experience and influence our understandings of others—particularly black bodies.¹ I argue that hip-hop has the ability to inspire a reconstruction of the narrative of self. It challenges how we understand the capturing and appropriation of black experience through the musical articulation of that experience. Using the language of conceptual terrain, inherited from Darby English, I argue that hip-hop can deconstruct and rebuild our larger schematic relationships with black art, and thereby our relationship with black bodies. My analysis is supplemented and enriched by Harry Nethery’s comments in *Jay-Z, Phenomenology, and Hip-Hop*, which demonstrates hip-hop’s possibilities for the construction of individual narrative and identity.² Finally, I introduce two examples of rappers actively working with this project in mind and address some pertinent concerns.

¹ Darby English, *How to See a Work of Art in Total Darkness* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2007).

² Harry Nethery IV, “Jay-Z, Phenomenology, and Hip-Hop,” *Newsletter on Philosophy and the Black Experience* 11, no. 1 (2011).



D'Evils: Forced Black Identity

In *How to See A Work of Art in Total Darkness*, English describes “black representational space” as a terrain occupied by works of art and representational messages from artists who identify or are identified as being black.³ Following the Civil War, during the period of Reconstruction and racially martial-laws of the Jim Crow era, this terrain was born from a struggle for black identity wherein cultural representation became a survival tactic against the onslaught of socio-political systems of racial domination. However, the horrifically oppressive intimacy of black bodies and white America solidified this place as a region of “otherness,” or a white construction of a black space, where all action is subsequently oriented towards the observatory fulfillment of the desires of the dominant. The systems of power at work transformed the form, conduct, and meaning of existence for black bodies by normalizing difference, resulting in the need for harmonious consensus on the importance and meaning of that difference. English explains,

In its determination to manage the divisive texture of American culture, rather than be modified by it, the rhetoric of consensus tactically reproduced cultural and social limits ... consensus's indifference to difference in fact reserves a special place for it, eliding difference in the social terrain and thus constituting dissent as enemy to harmony.⁴

This appears to be a revival of the logic of “separate-but-equal,” because identity politics which seek to include all racial identities (and require consensus on their distinct characteristics) do not protect from or acknowledge the racial biases which follow that inclusion. In other words, consensus on identity markers solidifies the asymmetrically juridical power that taints and limits any vacuous, superficial notion of true equality.

These markers define the boundaries of a “cultural territory” and “conceptual terrain,” which are historically shaped and individually received cultural signifiers and concepts which define and govern black experience.⁵ Because this territory was birthed from a larger, racially dominated system, it exists as separate from the identities and values of its progenitor while remaining governed

³ English, *How to See a Work of Art in Total Darkness*, 34.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 29-30.

by them—tightly tethered on a restrictive and socially (re)-enforced leash. The space is monitored, limited, and reined in by those who reap the racial benefits of consuming and appropriating the products of the racially schematic terrain. This formation of definitive racial politics establishes a narrative of black personhood as an identity against the opposition of historically grounded and evolving mechanisms of racial exclusion. As a result, a cultural as well as conceptual terrain is created which defines what constitutes acceptable action and movement. The subject of this space is forced to produce works to be evaluated in a racialized way, and this racialization is internalized and opposed to the core of one's identity.

Black art, as a complex web of interpersonal artistic relationships, becomes sets of pre-formed understandings and associations that force a work of art to be seen and *felt* as specifically, uniquely, and differently black. This reduction "presupposes a correlation between the work's significations and a set of race concepts, it attaches the object's denotators to a predetermined range of possible connotators," which causes us to "devise 'relevant' external correspondences, which ground a more decisive third move that establishes equivalences with what we are considering and have already considered, suspected, or perhaps just wondered."⁶ Our everyday usage of these concepts erodes our connection to what they are meant to represent, aggregating vague, inaccurate understandings and representations of black experiences into an object to be witnessed and understood as different. In terms of black art and black representational space, the identity of the subjects confined by that space must confront the contradictions of the expectations of socio-racial conceptions, evaluated by those who perpetuate and use the concepts to reify their ontological limitations. As an answer to this question, English posits that "We need a more concerted attention to the difficulty we seem to have in imagining the work of 'artists whose skins are black' apart from the notion of racial art," because "what has been impossible is not the conception of a black artist who doesn't make black art but rather a substantial basis upon which to advance, defend, and/or demonstrate such a claim."⁷ In order to tear down the walls of black representational space, works from black artists must challenge the limitations of identity through expression of the experience of those limits, recapturing, deconstructing, and reconstructing the concepts, as

⁶ Ibid., 34-35.

⁷ Ibid.



discursively prescriptive tools for identity construction. In the next section, I explore the ability of hip-hop to perform this function.

Represent: Contradiction, Narrative, and Identity

Music exists as a unique communicative opportunity where the interplay of different structural, musical elements is affective on our being as a result of being a subversive, experiential, communicative vessel of identity. This vessel is thrust into a milieu of contradiction, always rubbing against it as it moves through and beyond it, armored by the musical bracketing of shared narrative experience. Beyond the restrictive and juridical muck lies an opportunity for breaking beyond the identity politics of black representational space, re-creating conceptual and representational terrain that allow us to see works of art outside of and without their being surrounded in *darkness*. Harry Nethery notes that this is clearly at work in hip-hop, in that experiential expression has the “ability to conjoin oppositions, rather than treating them as mere disjunctions ... it also has a unique ability to *communicate* them in a way that is *not* a so-called rational argument ... through inducing the listener to *feel* the experience itself, or perhaps to experience-with the artist.”⁸ Where standard structural impediments might prove to be overwhelmingly obtrusive in terms of physical, legal, or economic means of representation, hip-hop is a ubiquitously available means of self-expression, much less subject to physically confining, racially schematic discourses of “rationality,” that exclude and limit black voices.

For example: well-decorated Compton rapper Kendrick Lamar’s latest album, *To Pimp A Butterfly*, speaks to a culture of fetishizing and racial commodification of black experience. By clearly providing examples of contradiction in his lived experience, he aims to pull in his listeners and force them to realize their situatedness within a structure of racial violence in the hopes that they will recognize and adjust their individual, social, and systemic behavior. The entire album is produced utilizing jazz instrumentation and soulful music to create a hip-hop sound designed to really *move* the listener, physically, emotionally, and consciously. At the same time that the bass, drum, and accompanying elements of the songs invite the listener to tune in for its entirety, the album’s consistently disjointed and syncopated elements work to create a cohesive musical

⁸ Nethery IV, “Jay-Z, Phenomenology, and Hip-Hop,” 23.

sound which conveys the experience of conflict and contradiction, paralleled beautifully by Lamar’s voice, lyrics, and rhymes.

What enables this expression to be effective at circumventing black representational space (both for the individual artist and their audience) is the structure and its ability to cause a perceived *expansion* of time, opening up a vacuum for a new perceptive space to take hold. Hip-hop, according to Nethery, is comprised of four elements which intersect unique, disparate, and melodic elements to produce this transformative sound that connects the listener to the artist: *beat, flow, music, and rhyme*. The beat and music comprise the foundational elements of the song, just as concrete slabs and erected walls create the foundation for a space to be filled in, situated, and incorporated into one’s being. They are a three-four minute bracketed moment in time meant to redefine terrain by recreating a space for the creation and mobilization of artistic and representational images. Mechanistically, the beat and music enact an “affective pull” on our consciousness, forming a rhythmic structure of expectation which keeps us constantly in tune with the musical elements, and what occupies this new conceptual soundscape.⁹ In Kendrick Lamar’s song *The Blacker the Berry*, the beat is composed of dark sounding melody and drums reminiscent of a battle march, designed to put the listener in a particular headspace to process what follows. This works as “a kind of motivational allure on consciousness,” in which “the percussive sounds that constitute a beat pull our attention into the song itself ... due to the structure of internal time consciousness—when we hear the sounds or phrases repeated ... this expectation draws us into the song through the focusing of attention.”¹⁰ The melodies and forms of noise in our daily lives structure certain attitudes and behaviors, and hip-hop (at the foundational level) pulls the listener into the experientially protective vessel and blocks all this noise from coloring their conceptual perceptions.

The music and flow (the stylistic vocalizations of the rapper) dilate the new, bracketed, conceptual terrain: they fill in and “*widen*” the percussive and rhythmic gaps of the beat, “[augmenting] how this beat is experienced ... specifically as an articulation motivated through how the rapper *lives* the music and the beat taken together.”¹¹ The listening translates to a *feeling* by embracing the spatially expansive and transformative elements of the music, allowing the blurring of the experience of self and other to occur

⁹ Ibid., 26.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.



so that the mutually constitutive relationship shifts away from the ontologically confining concepts of black representational space. It is the subsequent entrance of the lyrics—the rhyme and experience of the artist—that completes this process through the reconciliation of expected lived experience (constructed and oriented pre-reflectively by black representational space) with the contradiction of actually living that experience. The poetic articulation and connection of *concepts* is at the heart of flow and rhyme: rhyming in hip-hop allows (1) “for the listener to *hear* these two concepts as *belonging* together” and (2) “one to *experience* a connection between disparate elements that circumvents or bypasses logical argumentation,” which ultimately results in the listeners being “motivated to take-up the contradictory experiences related by the artist through their connection in rhyme.”¹²

One of the most important moments of this type conceptual engagement for Lamar, *The Blacker the Berry* is a testament to individual and social hypocrisy, targeted specifically at relationships between music, lyrics, and interpersonal personhood. The music is composed of a dark sounding melody and an atmosphere of anger is quickly established with a heavy hitting beat and Kendrick’s heated flow and aggressive lyricism. He writes:

Pardon my residence / Came from the bottom of mankind /
My hair is nappy, my d**k is big, my nose is round and wide
/ You hate me don’t you? / You hate my people, your plan
is to terminate my culture / You’re f***n’ evil I want you
to recognize that I’m a proud monkey / You vandalize my
perception but can’t take style from me.”¹³

This song is defined by contradiction, in that it reveals the experience of white expectations of behavior and the confinement felt from socio-racial schemas. Engaging with the conceptual terrain of black representational space, Lamar engages with and directly challenges the *concepts* which impose on and construct his (and other black bodies’) existence, utilizing music as a way to communicate the aesthetically parasitic relationship black bodies have with the rest of the world. He asks a chilling question which makes this painfully clear: “So why did I weep when Trayvon Martin was in

¹² Ibid., 27.

¹³ Kendrick Lamar, *The Blacker the Berry*, by Jeffrey Campbell, Matthew Samuels, Brent Kolatalo, Kendrick Lamar, Ken Lewis, Stephen Kozmeniuk, Alexander Izquierdo, and Zale Epstein, © 2015 by Top Dawg Entertainment.

the street / When gangbangin' make me kill a n***a blacker than me? Hypocrite!"¹⁴ This is the result of the conceptual sovereignty of black representational space and its schematic domination of black art. We determine what makes a black male, a rapper, and what to expect in his/her music, their culture, and their interactions. It is a sociological reconstruction that begins at the level of representational identity politics. Lamar calls listeners to act as advocates beyond their headphones, to go beyond what is heard and to really listen and *feel* the affective pull of his music.

Other hip-hop artists are advancing similar afro-centric and racially transformative messages in their music, recognizing the music's potential for liberating themselves and others through the expression of existence. Marlanna Evans, known as Rapsody, is a female emcee from North Carolina who shares in Lamar's vision for an artistic liberation of hip-hop. She is motivated by the effervescent masculinity inherent to the music industry to challenge people's perceptions of a female artist. Similar to the ways in which Darby English seeks to explore and remove the confines of black representational space, Evans wants to challenge the musical and aesthetic differences assigned to females (particularly black females) in hip-hop. She doesn't create revolutionary sounds *per se*, but she uses the *beat*, *rhyme*, *music*, and *flow* to out these elements as being not limited to the masculinity that she's experienced as a dominating force in the industry and in her life as a woman. Rather than highlighting herself uniquely as a woman in hip-hop, she attempts to move away from rhetoric of difference, emphasizing the level playing field afforded to all of us in our words and in our musical possibilities. Her message is especially powerful when conveyed through the sound of her predecessors: when she chooses to remix a song by Shawn Carter ("Jay-Z"), or uses an instrumental from James Yancey ("J-Dilla"), she's embodying the Netheryian elements of male artist's songs, using them as a means of expression to engage the precise conceptual terrain she aims toward. She does so not to divide listeners along racial or sexual lines, but to unite all people with a love for the music regardless of any differences that may divide them. Knowing that a patriarchal world works to silence voices of all shapes and sizes, she tackles such a contradictory and oppressive experience head on, and as loudly as she can.

Using the elements of hip-hop Nethery describes to place listeners alongside them, Lamar and Evans break through the

¹⁴ Ibid.



confines of black representational space, forcing people to confront contradiction in their own lives related to structures of oppression, and creating an impetus for examination and change. They recognize that the expression of experience must always take into account the affective nature of that expression, especially when that expression is musical. The content and effects of hip-hop very much control the discursive circulation of the *concepts* that define the ontologically restrictive space for “black art,” and so it very much matters that the message, the questions, and the implications of the music advance the restructuring possibilities present in each bar, each verse, and each successive, percussive, rhythmic indentation.

Trap Queen: Challenges and Considerations

In light of all this, it’s crucial to consider whether or not all hip-hop is created equally in terms of its communicative and transformative possibilities. In the context of Lamar, Evans, and the framework provided by Nethery, it might be easy to accept that *some* hip-hop can be successful in this way, but it remains an open question for some. For instance, Kathy SaeNgian with the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette cites researcher Carolyn West of the University of Washington, who feels that hip-hop exploits the lives of black girls as a result of its sexualization and resulting financial incentive to sell sexually provocative media. Her claim is that “when young black women listen to lyrics and watch images that promote sexual conduct, they take on the persona that is illustrated in the music and treat themselves as sexual objects,” and that it “sets the foundation for future victimization and causes teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.”¹⁵ Beyond the lyrical circulation of *concepts*, West’s argument targets the visual reproduction of and preference for certain sexual characteristics which exist outside of and juxtaposed to the elements which make up hip-hop. Whether it is different elements of storytelling in some songs, heavily sexualized music videos in others, or outright misogyny and sexual violence in others still, West claims that hip-hop has created different conceptual personae for black girls who consume hip-hop to aspire to be, all of which end in consensual sexual objectification. By extension, other themes which are more or less prevalent in hip-hop could be indicted for their potential emulation, i.e. drug use and

¹⁵ Kathy SaeNgian, “Researcher Cites Negative Influences of Hip-hop,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* (June 13, 2008), accessed March 15, 2016, <http://www.post-gazette.com/life/lifestyle/2008/06/13/Researcher-cites-negative-influences-of-hiphop/stories/200806130124>.

violence. This means certain thematic components of hip-hop as a genre, may make difficult, and even halt, the transformation of black representational space.

Hip-hop appears to exist in a state of tension with what it aims to practically produce, insofar as its aims and actual products are not as clearly beneficial or harmful as they seemed at first glance. However, what I think is important to note in these concerns is whether things like sexual objectification, materialism, and drug use exist as an essential component of hip-hop, because if they are not then we may have renewed faith in hip-hop's transformative possibilities. Alternatively, if the existence and circulation of these concepts can be seen to be necessary or valuable, we may have the same result. Firstly, because artists like Lamar and Evans are actively working to challenge the overtly oppressive circulation of concepts in this way, it seems plausible that hip-hop can adapt and respond positively, insofar as the emulation of their content is meant to challenge social and racial norms. Without diminishing the potential consequences West cites, I think we are also capable of moderating the media we ourselves consume, meaning problems of production and emulation seem to exist outside of what is inherently called for by hip-hop. Secondly, we ought to be wary at a certain point to resist thematic expression, because if they are indeed a reality of experience then to deny them legitimacy on the grounds of potential emulation is to hide ourselves from the realities that we exist alongside and are called to hear by the voices of the otherwise silent. While we should not promote (self-)destructive behavior, we should promote active authentic expression, as well as active listening and engagement.

Conclusion

As a vehicle that informs and shapes experiential structures, music contains the possibilities for radical transformation of self and society. Though it welcomes and transports authentic experience, hip-hop music in particular stands as an oft-overlooked opportunity for the exploration of identity and the ways in which music can reconstruct a conceptual space. The historically codified, socially reinforced racial images, symbols, and *concepts* that arose out of a historical necessity to protect the existence of identity have created such a space worthy of challenge, fluidly inserting themselves into banal, benign mechanics of social, physical, and structural power which constantly reinforce the politics of difference, and establishes a



separate, “black” zone of representation. The structured expression of hip-hop challenges the confines of this realm by fostering the articulation of authentic experience, challenging and breaking down the symbolic and linguistic symbols that construct the notion, identity, and cultural significance of “blackness.” As Kendrick Lamar and Marlanna Evans demonstrate with the purpose, content, and goal of their music, we are called to experience the contradiction of those notions and concepts, interrogating ourselves in relation to them, understanding their mechanisms and functions, and tearing down the conceptual terrain they have built for us, rebuilding it by scratch with the assistance of sound.

Criminal Justice Without Moral Responsibility: Addressing Problems with Consequentialism

Dane Shade Hannum

Abstract: This paper grants the hard determinist position that moral responsibility is not coherent with a deterministic world view and examines hard determinist alternatives to traditional punishment. I claim that hard determinist accounts necessarily involve consequentialist reasoning and discuss problems stemming from them. I also argue that a revised model of traditional consequentialism called complex consequentialism, a view in which multiple values may be considered as ends, provides the best moral framework for a hard determinist account. Ultimately, I examine a criminal justice model that draws heavily on public health ideals and argue that it should be considered a complex consequentialist account.

It is generally held that in order for individuals to be responsible for their actions they must have a hand in choosing these actions. However, in the past few decades there has been significant research in fields such as psychology, sociology, and neuroscience that suggests much of our behavior is not as much in our control as previously thought. Some philosophers have taken the stance that all our actions are determined by forces beyond our control. In making this claim, that all our actions are determined, these philosophers must then make sense of our notions of moral responsibility. Those who conclude that determinism is true and incompatible with moral responsibility are generally referred to as hard determinists.

In this paper I take for granted the hard determinist position, that moral responsibility is not coherent with a deterministic world view, and examine several views on how we are then to deal with the criminal justice system. I begin by examining a few common models for crime management that function without moral responsibility and some common objections to these models. I argue that the hard determinist position necessitates at least some degree of consequentialist reasoning and discuss some possible ways the problematic implications of consequentialist approaches to crime can be addressed. I argue that complex consequentialism, a view in which multiple values may be considered as ends to be maximized,



provides the best moral framework for a hard determinist account. Ultimately, I examine a criminal justice model provided by Greg Caruso that draws heavily on ideals found in public health. Though not explicitly noted by the author, I believe that Caruso's model is a complex consequentialist account, and I argue that it provides the best hard determinist model.

Quarantine Model

Derek Pereboom defends a quarantine model for criminal detention as the best policy for dealing with crime in the absence of the notion of moral responsibility. Pereboom presents his theory for criminal detention as analogous to the commonly recognized right to quarantine. Pereboom argues that if we are allowed to quarantine people who serve as carriers of serious communicable diseases in order to protect society, then we are also allowed to "isolate the criminally dangerous."¹

Pereboom begins his analogy by noting that just as we do not hold carriers (or victims) of disease morally responsible for their condition, we would also not (under this model) hold criminals to be morally responsible. And, like quarantine, the degree to which detainment is acceptable would depend on the degree of danger to society. According to Pereboom, just as less dangerous diseases allow for less invasive and preventative measures, the less dangerous the criminal, the less invasive and legitimate preventative methods would be as well.²

Rehabilitation

Another important aspect of the proposed quarantine model is the need for rehabilitative measures as a part of the system. Pereboom ties the need for rehabilitation into his quarantine model by claiming that when society quarantines a sick individual, it is, to some degree, obligated to provide medical care. According to Pereboom, when society quarantines a sick individual, that individual is made to experience deprivation that she did not merit because she is not morally responsible for being ill. However, society benefits from this deprivation. Thus, it is a matter of fairness that society does what it can (within reasonable bounds) to make the quarantined individual

¹ Derek Pereboom, *Living Without Free Will* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 174.

² *Ibid.*

safe and ready for reentry into society. Similarly, it becomes a matter of fairness that society does what it can within reason to make those detained for criminal behavior, behavior for which they are not morally responsible, fit for release and reentry into society as soon as possible.

There is an inherently consequentialist rationale in the hard determinist approach to crime management. Without moral responsibility, we limit our available reasons for justifying what we would generally think of as punishment. No longer can punishment be justified on the ground of desert. Punishment must now be justified as a means to some ends that serve to benefit society.

Common Criticisms

Some critics argue that hard determinist alternatives to punishment would result in untenable conclusions that raise concerns for our general conceptions of human dignity.³ These arguments tend to take issue with what I have argued is the necessarily consequentialist reasoning involved in hard determinist alternatives to punishment. Critics argue that hard determinist alternatives to punishment do not have the same obvious limits to the amount of time one could spend in incarceration for a given crime that traditional punishment has. Thus, they argue, if someone was determined not to be sufficiently rehabilitated, or there was not much hope for an individual's rehabilitation, their indefinite incarceration may be justified by this model. Another concern is the possibility of preventative detention for those deemed to be an inevitable danger to society.⁴ There are also concerns with the idea of treating criminality as one would an illness. Some critics claim that treating those who commit crimes as people who are in some way ill would lead to unfortunate and unnecessary psychological consequences for those being "treated."

These criticisms indicate some common concerns. They identify a need for limitations, claiming that there are not obvious limitations in the hard determinist alternative to punishment like there are in our traditional conceptions of actual punishment. Thus, these criticisms suggest that a working account would need to involve other moral value systems in addition to traditional consequentialism.

³ *Ibid.*, 179.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 176.



Responses to the Need for Tempering Consequentialism

A weakness of standard consequentialist views is the inability to consider non-utilitarian values. While hard determinist punishment alternatives have a large and necessary degree of consequentialist reasoning, consequentialism as it is traditionally conceived is not sufficient to address the common practical concerns faced by these punishment alternatives. The supplementation of additional values provides limits on what is justifiable but may also involve goods we wish to maximize in their own right, even if they themselves are not justified by utilitarian reasoning. Thus, I wish to defend a more sophisticated account of consequentialism which Neil Levy calls “complex consequentialism,” in which a series of moral values are taken into account as ends. Levy places this complex consequentialist account in contrast with what he calls “simple maximizer” consequentialist positions.⁵

Simple maximizer views seek to maximize a single good. Levy brings up hedonistic utilitarianism as an example of this type of simple maximizing view. In Levy’s conception of consequentialism there is not just one good, or one value, which the view seeks to maximize. Instead, there can be a series of values between which actors must seek a balance.⁶ Thus, values like human dignity or fairness may be considered final ends in themselves that actors can seek to maximize in their own right. Complex consequentialism is the view in which ends other than utility are considered intrinsically valuable and interact with other values to influence the consequentialist outcomes.

Complex consequentialism serves as the most coherent framework under which hard determinist alternatives can function. Hard determinist accounts of criminal justice cannot exist without relying, at least in part, on consequentialist reasoning. Once we abandon retributivist justifications for punishment, in which punishment can be administered in the direct service of justice itself, we can only be justified in using criminal sanctions as a means to some betterment of the society. However, I wish to contend this does not rule out values such as justice and autonomy from playing a role in the complex consequentialist model.

⁵ Neil Levy, “Skepticism and Sanction: The Benefits of Rejecting Moral Responsibility,” *Law and Philosophy* 31 (2012): 484.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 486.

Quarantine Model Updated

Greg Caruso presents a formulation of hard determinist punishment alternative that is in many ways similar to the quarantine model provided by Pereboom. Caruso uses a justificatory framework that I think can be seen as relying on a complex consequentialist reasoning, though not recognized as such by Caruso himself. Caruso calls his model the “public health quarantine model.” Like Pereboom it takes the quarantine analogy as its starting point, but Caruso seeks to develop the model within a “broader justificatory framework drawn from public health.”⁷

The public health quarantine model focuses not entirely on the individual in need of treatment (as is more the focus in other quarantine models) but on benefitting the population as a whole. Caruso argues that much like public health is a communal good, so too is public safety. Thus, it is important to understand the community as a whole when examining and sanctioning criminal behavior. This theory’s shift in focus from the individual to the communal, while still primarily consequentialist, leads to some more acceptable conclusions than alternative theories—especially when it comes to preventative measures.

The preventative measures advocated by Caruso’s model do not involve preventative detention, which for many seems like a fundamental flaw in consequentialist views, and instead focuses on addressing the social issues that lead to criminal activity. This again returns to the commitment to social justice entailed in the public health model, saying, the “public health model would advocate addressing the systematic cause of crime, such as social injustice, poverty, systematic disadvantage, mental health issues, and addiction.”⁸ Caruso then argues that under his model this type of prevention would become the main focus of the criminal justice system, and in cases in which an individual did need to be incapacitated, treatment and rehabilitation would be the goal.

In addition to supplementing these consequentialist grounds with social justice concerns, Caruso also leans on principles found in traditional medical ethics to help guide his theory. These principles are autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence and justice. Caruso sets it as his task to provide a justification for quarantine that relies on public health ethics but incorporates the values found in

⁷ Greg Caruso, “Free Will Skepticism and Criminal Behavior: A Public Health–Quarantine Model,” *Southwest Philosophy Review* 32, no. 1: forthcoming.

⁸ *Ibid.*



traditional medical ethics. In this way, Caruso achieves a complex consequentialist justificatory framework for his approach. Because both the principles of beneficence and nonmaleficence are largely concerned with the maximization of good and the minimization of harm, they can be considered as part of a more traditionally utilitarian approach. Thus, I will focus on autonomy and justice in further explaining how these principles function to create a complex consequentialist account.

Caruso's model incorporates a concern for autonomy by emphasizing "the liberty, privacy, and informed consent of individual persons in the face of a health intervention carried out by other parties."⁹ Thus, autonomy can be understood as acknowledging the rights of individuals to act in accordance with their personal beliefs. The possible sacrifice of autonomy in the quarantine model is regrettable. However, in a complex consequentialist account, autonomy can still function as a value to be sought within the quarantine model, and because hard determinists hold that criminals do not justly deserve punishment, the justificatory burden remains with those who wish to limit the individual's autonomy.¹⁰ When addressing the problem of when to preserve autonomy and when to override it, Caruso turns to John Stuart Mill's harm principle according to which the only justification for interfering with the liberty of an individual against their will is to prevent harm to others. Caruso holds that while this harm principle is an important central factor in respecting individual autonomy, it "should always be coupled with the principle of least infringement, which holds that the least restrictive measures should be taken to protect public health and safety."¹¹ Here the public health-quarantine model has an advantage over other non-retributive accounts concerning common objections. It is often argued that only retributivist accounts of justice can provide for proportionality in punishment since there is an upper limit for the harshness of response allowed. However, the public health-quarantine model ensures that the harshness is proportional to the danger posed by an individual to the public safety, and anything exceeding this is unjustified.

Caruso also develops the principle of justice, which demands that individuals are treated equitably and that benefits and burdens are distributed fairly. According to Caruso, when applied to quarantine, this principle means that decisions "for the application of

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

quarantine be made using a fair process, include a publicly available rationale for those decisions, a mechanism for dispute resolution, and a regulatory body to enforce decisions.”¹² Justice is essential to ensure the proper application and rationale for quarantine, but the importance of this principle as it functions within public health ethics extends far beyond this. In the version of public health ethics Caruso defends, social justice is viewed as foundational. With social justice as a value in public health ethics, the failure of public health institutions to secure the social conditions necessary for adequate health is considered a serious injustice. In discussing how this approach applies to criminal behavior, Caruso says that a “core moral function of the criminal justice system is to identify and remedy social and economic inequalities responsible for crime.”¹³ Caruso argues that while poverty, racism, and other systematic inequalities are recognized problems for public health, they also have clear negative effects on public safety. Thus, the broad approach to criminal justice that Caruso advocates places social justice at the forefront of their concerns and prioritizes the reduction of harmful social inequalities.

Further Objections Considered

Caruso argues that his public health approach to the quarantine model focuses less on the individual and their own motivational set and more on the social causes behind crime as a social phenomenon. Thus, Caruso’s approach offers a new understanding of what is meant by preventative action under the quarantine approach. With social justice as one of its cornerstones, it focuses on addressing the social issues that result in crime. The kind of preventative focus offered by Caruso is much more tenable than one possibly justified by other quarantine models in which an individual’s dangerous behavior is deemed so inevitable as to justify their preventative detainment.

However, if we grant ourselves the liberty of imagining a future in which Caruso’s suggested approach has been successfully applied, we may find it has some problematic conclusions of its own. Though practically unlikely, it is possible to imagine a future in which Caruso’s approach has been so successful as to result in its own dystopia, a future in which there is no longer the rich diversity of human behavior that makes up society today. Because of our enthusiastic use of social remedies for anti-social behavior, we will

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.



have created a society in which crime is no longer an issue. Instead, the population is so managed that people are turning out to be much too similar and much too tame.

Conclusions

Throughout this paper I have claimed that consequentialism is an inescapable justificatory facet for hard determinist accounts of criminal justice. However, when examining criticisms of the view, it becomes clear that this is also one of the aspects of many hard determinist accounts that people find the most worrisome. Most criticisms of the consequentialist aspects of hard determinism take for granted a certain, perhaps more traditional, formulation of consequentialism that seeks to maximize a single utility or good (e.g. hedonistic utilitarianism). However, complex consequentialism provides an account of consequentialism that can take into account a number of variables and involve a number of values believed to have intrinsic worth. By supplementing the traditional notions of consequentialism, we can address some of the conclusions brought on by the simple maximizing of individual or social benefit that seem to go against our moral intuitions.

This sort of supplementary or “complex” approach to consequentialist reasoning is exemplified by Caruso’s model. Using a complex consequentialist public health framework, we can avoid many of the criticisms generally launched at hard determinist theories of criminal sanction. In addition to standing up better to criticisms aimed at consequentialism, this view also addresses critics concerned with practicality by extending the quarantine analogy and placing it in a more fully developed framework with clearly defined values and methods. By teasing out the implications of the quarantine model and adapting it to the public health model, Caruso provides the most plausible account of criminal justice without moral responsibility.

However, even Caruso’s model has its potential objections. Just as all values in the complex consequentialist model must be balanced between a number of concerns, this balance will need to be re-calibrated if it were to impact the diversity of ways of life.

The Academic Animal is Just an Analogy: Against the Restrictive Account of Hegel's "Spiritual Animal Kingdom"

Miguel D. Guerrero

Abstract: The "Spiritual Animal Kingdom" is an often-misunderstood section of G.F.W. Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Many scholars interpret the 'Spiritual Animal Kingdom' as being analogous to intellectual life. While the intellectual life analogy is useful, the restrictive account takes it to be the sole content of this section. In this essay, I argue that the restrictive account misidentifies what Hegel means by *die Sache selbst* (in English, "the matter in hand"). Such a mistake will affect the ability of consciousness to progress to absolute knowing, the ultimate project for Hegel's *Phenomenology*.

In Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, the "Spiritual Animal Kingdom" section comes at the end of the chapter on *Reason*, which can be roughly separated into three sections.¹ In the first section, solipsistic self-consciousness is confronted with an "other" consciousness beyond itself. In the second section, consciousness finds itself as an individual in society and must consider how to act. This is the problem of individuality. In order to be truly free, individuals must choose for themselves how they will act. Such choices, though, are arbitrary.² This section concludes with a selfish morality under which an individual acts out of self-interest.

In the third section of the *Reason* chapter, the socially embedded individual acts, producing a public work. As such, a work's meaning will be interpreted and determined by others. The original goal, which informed the action that produced the work, vanishes. This is the "contingency of action," wherein the action's goal is itself only determined by acting.³ The resulting work is *die*

¹ G.F.W. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977). Except where noted otherwise, all of my translations come from Miller.

Miller translates Hegel's *das geistige Tierreich* as the "Spiritual Animal Kingdom." Hereafter, references to the realm discussed in this section of the *Phenomenology* will be to *das geistige Tierreich*; references to the section itself will be to the "Spiritual Animal Kingdom."

² Terry Pinkard, "Shapes of Active Reason: The Law of the Heart, Retrieved Virtue, and What Really Matters," *The Blackwell Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Kenneth R. Westphal (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 139.

³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §409, 246.



Sache selbst, or the “matter in hand.” Because it is found in actions, the matter in hand is always obtained; the goal is always achieved. In this way, the action of the individual just is the matter in hand. So while individuals might take themselves to be concerned with the matter in hand, they are really only concerned with it in terms of their own actions.

This is the deception of the “Spiritual Animal Kingdom,” wherein individuals are deceived about why it is that they are acting. In *das geistige Tierreich*, individuals are concerned with the matter in hand only to the extent that they attend to it. Like animals, individuals in this realm are only concerned with their own sustenance.⁴ However, the deception is twofold. Not only are members of *das geistige Tierreich* self-deceived about why they are acting, they are also deceiving others by claiming that they are truly concerned with the matter in hand.⁵ Now, others might express hurt or anger that any individual would act self-interestedly and not for the sake of the matter in hand. However, those individuals would be engaging in the same deceptions, for they too are acting (hurt or angry) out of self-interest. Furthermore, Pinkard notes that *Werk* in Hegel has a “double meaning of [1] something like an artistic or literary product and [2] its quotidian meaning where it simply denotes the results of what one has done.”⁶ The very word Hegel uses here can be understood as the work of intellectuals.

Based on this reading of Hegel, the analogy with the intellectual life is a useful one. Take philosophers as an example. Philosophers might contend that they are concerned with the advancement of philosophy. To this end, they produce articles, books, and lectures. However, what they are really concerned with is their own work and how it is that they *themselves* will advance philosophy. Philosophers then produce works criticizing others and vehemently defending their own works, all for their own advancement, though they might continue to profess their concern with the advancement of philosophy.

So, intellectuals seem like proper members of *das geistige Tierreich*. Just as members of the natural animal kingdom must be the fittest to survive, individuals in *das geistige Tierreich* must “publish or perish.” Or so the analogy goes. Some interpreters, though, take the intellectual life analogy to be the sole content of the “Spiritual Animal Kingdom” and intellectuals to be the only members of

⁴ J.M. Fritzman, *Hegel* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014), 68.

⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §416, 250.

⁶ Pinkard, “Shapes of Active Reason,” 144.

das geistige Tierreich. This is the restrictive account of the “Spiritual Animal Kingdom,” which is given by interpreters like Royce, Loewenberg, and Shapiro.

Royce begins his assessment of the “Spiritual Animal Kingdom” by merely utilizing the intellectual life analogy. Royce likens the individual producing works in *das geistige Tierreich* to “the artist who pursues art for art’s sake, [or] the scholar, who loves learning just for learning’s sake.”⁷ These might be taken as mere examples, yet Royce continues, describing Hegel as a “reflective man who is confessing the only too natural defects incident to his own calling.”⁸ Royce takes this section to be a sort of confession for Hegel (himself an intellectual “animal”).⁹ According to Royce, this section is just about intellectuals. Moreover, in the final paragraph of his assessment of this section, Royce translates *das geistige Tierreich* as “The Intellectual Animals.”¹⁰ Under such a translation, it is no wonder that Royce takes this section to be merely a description of the intellectual life.

Loewenberg starts in a similar vein writing, “Hegel himself definitely belongs to the class of ‘animals’ he castigates.”¹¹ Again, we are told to listen for an autobiographical note being struck in Hegel’s “Spiritual Animal Kingdom.” Loewenberg, too, translates *das geistige Tierreich* to the “intellectual animals.”¹² Professions (like those of scholars and artists) whose members appeal to some abstract higher goals are simply engaging in deception. This deception, though, is merely the deception of others. Scholars and artists, according to Loewenberg, are acting not for some abstract higher goal, but merely for themselves.¹³

Shapiro continues the interpretations of Royce and Loewenberg.¹⁴ According to Shapiro in the “Spiritual Animal Kingdom,” Hegel is just describing the intellectual life of which he (and the *Phenomenology* itself) is a part. So, Hegel is not describing anything new. As Shapiro observes, Hegel has already developed

⁷ Josiah Royce, “Lecture VIII: The Dialectical Progress of Hegel’s *Phaenomenologie*,” *Lectures on Modern Idealism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1919), 196.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 198.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 199.

¹¹ J. Loewenberg, *Hegel’s Phenomenology: Dialogues on the Life of Mind* (La Salle: Open Court Publishing, 1965), 169.

¹² *Ibid.*, 170.

¹³ That Loewenberg fails to note the double deception in *das geistige Tierreich* might be a product of his engagement with the intellectual life analogy. Nevertheless, this point does not affect my argument.

¹⁴ Shapiro is concerned also with Kojève’s interpretation of the “Spiritual Animal Kingdom.” Due to the piecemeal nature of Kojève’s interpretation of this section, I will not consider it here. Suffice it to say that Kojève also engages in the restrictive account.



the animalistic self-interested individual elsewhere.¹⁵ So, according to Shapiro, in the “Spiritual Animal Kingdom,” Hegel is showing that the problem of individuality exists for even the most educated among us. It is just animal instinct all the way down the line.

Shapiro is quick to sidestep the objection that the interpretations of Royce and Loewenberg are based on a reading of Hegel that holds the *Phenomenology* to be a historical account of Western civilization. Such an objection might contend that [identifying] “the various shapes of consciousness with particular historical developments would rob the work of both philosophical necessity and relevance to the present.”¹⁶ This objection, Shapiro notes, is based on the false supposition that, being historical, we have already moved past this shape of consciousness (the intellectual life). That the intellectual life analogy obtains to this day, though, is an indication that such a historical account remains significant.

Despite the usefulness of the intellectual life analogy, these restrictive accounts fail. Each of the above interpreters suggest (and even outright claim) that in the “Spiritual Animal Kingdom,” Hegel is just writing from his experiences in the academic community. Nevertheless, *das geistige Tierreich* is more widespread than just the academic community. In his analysis of this section, R.C. Solomon acknowledges that Hegel is describing the “familiar pretensions of the academic life,” but that he only “does this ... as part of a much larger picture. His discussion focuses on the notion of meaningful work and individual expression, which are by no means the unique domain of the scholars.”¹⁷ *Das geistige Tierreich* is not merely inhabited by intellectuals. This would make sense, for, according to H.S. Harris:

Once we take seriously [Hegel’s] claim that Reason now engulfs all the previous shapes— “that its account with them is closed” —it is clear that we must not look for the “spiritual kingdom of animals” in a restricted compass (such as the University, the “learned world,” or the world of art).¹⁸ The “spiritual animal kingdom” is as *universal* as its “natural” counterpart.¹⁹

¹⁵ Gary Shapiro, “Notes on the Animal Kingdom of Spirit,” *The Phenomenology of Spirit Reader*, ed. Jon Stewart (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 230.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 232.

¹⁷ Robert C. Solomon, *In the Spirit of Hegel: A Study of G.W.F. Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 515.

¹⁸ H.S. Harris, *Hegel’s Ladder: A Commentary on Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit, Volume II: The Odyssey of Spirit*, 136 (footnote 5). The quotations are Harris’s translations of Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §394, 236.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Here, Harris argues that the restrictive account fails to recognize that, in the beginning of the third part of the *Reason* chapter, Hegel takes himself to be discussing a new shape of consciousness. *Das geistige Tierreich* is not just the same account of individuals from the second section of *Reason* dressed up in new clothes (i.e. those of the academic). Instead, *das geistige Tierreich* is yet another universal shape of consciousness that Hegel is considering in the *Phenomenology*. That is, as individuals, we are *all* members of *das geistige Tierreich*. In this way, Hegel's analysis in the "Spiritual Animal Kingdom" is far more widespread than the restrictive account allows.

While the restrictive account might give a narrow interpretation of the "Spiritual Animal Kingdom," this does not by itself constitute a failure for the restrictive account. Both Harris and Solomon recognize that intellectuals are members of *das geistige Tierreich*. As such, the intellectual life analogy is still useful for understanding the "Spiritual Animal Kingdom." That is, the restrictive account fails only if the intellectual life analogy somehow unacceptably misrepresents the content of the "Spiritual Animal Kingdom."

I argue that the restrictive account fails for exactly this reason. Due to its engagement with the intellectual life analogy, the restrictive account mistakenly identifies what the matter in hand (*die Sache Selbst*) truly is. We can easily see this if we distinguish between (a) the initial and (b) the universal matters in hand. The initial matter in hand is that which individuals in *das geistige Tierreich* take to be their goal for acting in the first instance. In the end, though, as Fritzman notes, these individuals (even though they are acting self-interestedly) promote the matter in hand nevertheless.²⁰ Under the intellectual life analogy, the initial matters in hand are intellectual fields of interest. So, in our philosophy example, the initial matter in hand would be the advancement of philosophy. Philosophers, by acting purely out of self-interest, inadvertently advance philosophy, and so achieve the initial matter in hand.

Nevertheless, the intellectual life analogy takes the universal matter in hand to be identical to the initial matter in hand. However, the initial matter in hand is distinct from the universal matter in hand. In the final passage of the "Spiritual Animal Kingdom," Hegel writes that *die Sache selbst* is arrived at not merely by the action of any one individual, but also by *all individuals*.²¹ This is the universal

²⁰ Fritzman, *Hegel*, 69.

²¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §418, 252.



matter in hand, which is determined by the self-interested action of all individuals. Whereas the initial matter in hand is something individuals identify prior to (and that serves as the reason for) action, the universal matter in hand can only be determined retrospectively. So, the universal matter in hand could look nothing like what individuals initially took it to be. Furthermore, any resemblance between the universal and the initial matters in hand would be merely coincidental. In the intellectual life analogy, though, individuals are always advancing their respective fields of interest; moreover, if they do not advance their respective fields of interest, they are not truly achieving the matter in hand. However, these fields of interest are not necessarily the universal matters in hand. The universal matters in hand can only be discovered after the fact, that is, given the self-interested action of everyone. Under the universal matter in hand, then, intellectual fields of interest might not be advanced.

It might be contended, here, that the intellectual life analogy could accept the universal matter in hand. If so, the restrictive account could be salvaged. In order for the intellectual life analogy to accept the universal matter in hand, though, intellectual fields of interest would have to be composed of and advanced by every single contribution from their respective intellectual communities. So, in the example of philosophy, the field of philosophy would be composed of all of the articles, books, and lectures of every philosopher. That being said, each further work within the field of philosophy (that is, by a philosopher) just becomes the field of philosophy.

In response, I argue that this is an untenable conclusion for intellectual fields of interest. Surely, it is not the case that every work by a philosopher advances the field of philosophy. Even though it becomes included in the philosophical corpus (by being published or presented), a philosophical article, book, or lecture cannot be said to meaningfully contribute to the field's advancement merely by existing. Such a conclusion, where every contribution counts, seems less like philosophical advancement and more like chaos.

This response, though, should not to be misunderstood as arguing against the conclusion that every contribution counts toward the universal matter in hand. What my response contends is merely that the universal matter in hand does not look like advancement in intellectual fields of interest. Furthermore, if the matters of intellectuals are not necessarily achieved, then the intellectual life analogy breaks down, and with it, the restrictive account.

My argument thus far has been that the restrictive account fails to represent the content of the “Spiritual Animal Kingdom” because the intellectual life analogy cannot accept the universal matter in hand. As such, the restrictive account—which takes the intellectual life analogy to be the sole content of the “Spiritual Animal Kingdom”—fails. Under the intellectual life analogy, the universal matter in hand is identical to the initial matter in hand, but, according to Hegel, the two are distinct. Therefore, my argument suggests an interpretive shift in reading the “Spiritual Animal Kingdom.”²² Because the intellectual life analogy cannot accept the universal matter in hand, it cannot be understood as the sole content of the “Spiritual Animal Kingdom.” With my concluding paragraphs, I will argue that an interpretive shift away from the restrictive account will ensure that the individual consciousness progresses toward the ultimate goal of the *Phenomenology*, absolute knowing.

The “Spiritual Animal Kingdom” is one of the final sections before the chapter on *Spirit*, which concerns societal consciousness. Therefore, the universal matter in hand will be pivotal to the progression from the individual consciousness of the *Reason* chapter to the societal consciousness of the *Spirit* chapter. This progression must take place, for, as Hegel notes in the *Preface*, “each [shape of consciousness] is necessary.”²³ That is, understanding the “Spiritual Animal Kingdom” is necessary to progress toward absolute knowing.

Furthermore, the “Spiritual Animal Kingdom” might be paramount to understanding the whole of Hegel’s text. While I will not attempt a detailed argument for this claim, I will give two points that might be useful for making such an argument. First, both Donald Phillip Verene and Michael Forster note the importance of the “Spiritual Animal Kingdom” for the *Phenomenology*. According to Verene, Hegel’s consideration of the universal matter in hand in this section emphasizes a theme that runs throughout the *Phenomenology*. That is, in the progression toward absolute knowing, Hegel is considering distinct shapes of consciousness, each of which is merely concerned with the initial matter in hand. In this way, each shape of consciousness is flawed. It is only the acceptance of the universal matter in hand, which has “no specific object,” that

²² Solomon and Harris might be said to have already made this interpretive shift. Nevertheless, that articles like Shapiro’s (i.e. those that engage in the restrictive account) continue to be recognized in Hegel scholarship suggests that an explicit interpretive shift has not yet been made.

²³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §29, 17.



leads us to absolute knowing.²⁴ Similarly, Forster writes that the “Spiritual Animal Kingdom” encompasses “the core of Hegel’s own philosophical position.”²⁵

Second, absolute knowing is the dissolution of subject and object, that is, knowledge which sees itself in its content.²⁶ If so, then the “Spiritual Animal Kingdom,” which represents the turning point from individual to societal consciousness, is paramount to understanding the individual’s (subjective) place in the broader framework of (objective) society. While these last two points do not together suffice for an argument for the importance of the “Spiritual Animal Kingdom” in Hegel’s *Phenomenology*, they do call for a reevaluation of this section and its place in the *Phenomenology* as a whole.²⁷

²⁴ Donald Phillip Verene, *Hegel’s Recollection: A Study of Images in the Phenomenology of Spirit* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985), 98–99.

²⁵ Michael Forster, *Hegel’s Idea of a Phenomenology of Spirit* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 346.

²⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §804, 490.

²⁷ I thank J.M. Fritzman, Raymond Torkelson, and the editorial board of *Stance* for their useful comments on previous drafts of this essay.

Moral Vegetarianism and the Philosophy of Mind

C.J. Oswald

Abstract: Most arguments for moral vegetarianism rely on the premise that non-human animals can suffer. In this paper I evaluate problems that arise from Peter Carruthers' Higher-Order Thought theory of consciousness. I argue that, even if we assume that these problems cannot be overcome, it does not follow that we should not subscribe to moral vegetarianism. I conclude that we should act as if non-human animals have subjective experiences for moral reasons, even if we cannot be certain that they do.

Over the last few decades, contemporary moral philosophy has seen a growth in arguments supporting moral vegetarianism. Moral vegetarians are distinguished from others who are vegetarians for non-moral (e.g. dietary) reasons. Regan's deontological, and Singer's utilitarian approach to moral vegetarianism both hold the crucial premise that meat eating involves the suffering of non-human animals (hereafter, animals). We can roughly sketch the argument commonly employed by moral vegetarians as:

- P1: Animals can suffer.
- P2: The meat-consumption industry causes unnecessary suffering to animals.
- P3: We should not cause any unnecessary suffering.
- C: Therefore we should not consume meat.

In this paper, I focus on the first premise, and its relation to developments in philosophical theories of consciousness. My rationale for this is two-fold. First, much of the debate regarding meat consumption hinges on the veracity of the premise that animals experience pain and suffering. We must consequently evaluate the arguments within the philosophy of mind to determine if any theory of consciousness might disprove it. Second, the objections to moral vegetarians from the non-existence of animal consciousness are powerful. In evaluating arguments that stem from Carruthers' Higher-Order Thought theory of consciousness and the problem of other minds, I argue that even if we assume these notions are correct, the argument for moral vegetarianism still stands.



Preliminary Remarks on Consciousness

It is important not to take consciousness as a primitive term that requires no further elucidation. When speaking of consciousness, I mean what Block calls phenomenal consciousness.¹ To attempt to describe an already vague concept, phenomenal consciousness is reminiscent of Nagel's "what is it like to be" any particular subject, and is more akin to what we refer to as subjective experience (hereafter experience).² Singer relies on this very concept—that animals, in varying degrees, experience pain and pleasure—to argue that we must take their interests into account.³ Many of our arguments pertaining to animal suffering, then, depend on the assumption that at least some animals have the capacity for experiences.

Further, I want to make a distinction between physical sensations and experiences. As Kripke's famous modal argument states, we can differentiate between the physical processes of pain and a subject's being in pain. It could very well be the case that my experience of pain is distinct from the physical processes of pain. My experience of pain may be present when the relevant causal features associated with pain are absent and the causal features of pain may be present without a corresponding experience. Such instances are conceivable, so that there is a possible world in which the phenomenology of pain occurs without the usual physical causes. According to Kripke, this shows that there is no necessary connection between brain and mental states.⁴

Simply put, arguing that animals experience pain and pleasure on account of their physiology is not sufficient to prove that meat eating is morally problematic. This stems from Chalmers' so-called hard problem of consciousness and the inability to determine why any particular brain state corresponds to any particular phenomenal state or any phenomenal state at all. In other words, why do we have experiences of physical sensations in the first place? We will need to determine whether animals have pain experiences independent of physiological evidence.⁵

¹ Ned Block, "On a Confusion about a Function of Consciousness," *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 18 (1995): 227-287.

² Thomas Nagel, "What Is It Like to Be a Bat?," *The Philosophical Review* 83, no. 4 (1974): 435-450.

³ Peter Singer, "The Place of Nonhumans in Environmental Issues," *Social and Personal Ethics* (8th ed.) ed. William H. Shaw (Wadsworth Pub. Co., 2013), 133-136.

⁴ Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 1981), 144-155.

⁵ David J. Chalmers, *The Conscious Mind: In Search for a Fundamental Theory* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), xii-xiii.

Higher-Order Thought Theories of Consciousness

Carruthers has argued that conscious experiences are mental states which are capable of being consciously thought about. To have an experience, a being must be able to think about it. If I am in pain, I am having the thought “I am in pain.”⁶ Carruthers’ position is one of the Higher-Order Thought (HOT) theories of consciousness. As Rosenthal states, HOTs consist of agents having thoughts about our mental states. Despite our not being aware of these HOTs much of the time (as that would require a third-level thought), they nonetheless entail our awareness of the initial mental states, such as being in pain. Our inferences to human consciousness on this position involve our verbal reports, as these reports require our having a HOT about a mental state.⁷

Carruthers distinguishes between non-conscious and conscious mental states, and concludes that animals’ experiences are primarily non-conscious. If a necessary condition for having a conscious experience is indeed having a HOT about said experience, then the inability of animals to have conscious experiences if the conventional wisdom that animals are incapable of HOTs is true, which it seems to be since they lack language. Carruthers goes so far as to say that we have no moral obligations to these “brutes” and should feel no sympathy for any injuries they might have. Animals are only capable of non-conscious pain, and do not suffer precisely because this pain is not-conscious. Our sympathy toward others is restricted to those that have conscious experiences or to those that will eventually have conscious experiences, for only these individuals can suffer.⁸

HOT theories of consciousness are far from uncontroversial, but for our present purposes, I will assume that Carruthers’ account is correct. If verbal reporting is a criterion for determining conscious experiences, is moral vegetarianism no longer justifiable? *Prima facie*, it seems obvious enough that the inability of animals to provide verbal reports would bring into question their experiences, assuming that Carruthers is correct.

I believe that Carruthers is mistaken because he discounts multiple forms of communication and language. Surely humans are able to provide verbal reports of experiences, but reports come in

⁶ Peter Carruthers, “Brute Experience,” *The Journal of Philosophy* 86, no. 5 (1989): 258–269.

⁷ David M. Rosenthal, “Higher-Order Theories of Consciousness,” *The Oxford Handbook of the Philosophy of Mind*, eds. Brian P. McLaughlin, Ansgar Beckerman, and Sven Walter (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 243–244.

⁸ Carruthers, “Brute Experience,” 265–269.



many varieties. When one exclaims in pain after stubbing her toe, do we not infer that she is in pain—that she suffers? We often ascribe mental states to others from these instances that have little to do with verbal reporting. In such cases, reporting does not rely on the human capacity for language. Given that we justifiably infer conscious experiences in humans, I see no reason why we should not make an analogous inference in many animal cases. Behavioral dispositions of animals seem to be accurate enough indicators of consciousness. When hearing the cries from animals being abused in factory farms, we can rationally infer that the animals are experiencing pain in the same way that we could infer said experiences from humans.

Carruthers can very well offer a rebuttal here. First, according to HOT theories of consciousness, a mental state must be *capable* of being thought about. Verbal reporting is not a necessary but a sufficient condition for a mental state to be conscious. Second, perhaps we are mistaken about ascribing mental states through behavioral dispositions alone, even in humans.

Regarding the first reply, Rosenthal points out that there is ample empirical evidence that human infants and many mammals are capable of thought, and it is therefore an open question if they have HOTs.⁹ Perhaps animals are capable of HOTs. The fact that we cannot access the thoughts of animals does not entail that thoughts are not present.

Second, if we are not certain about the experiences of either humans or animals, it might be the case that relying on behavioral dispositions is all we have available. My replies here, though, are best made in relation to the problem of other minds, which I will discuss below. What I have merely attempted to do in this section is refute Carruthers' notion that HOT theories of consciousness disprove that animals can suffer and that therefore moral vegetarianism is a flawed position. Seeing that Carruthers has not definitively shown that animals do not have HOTs, I see no reason why we cannot subscribe to both HOT theories and moral vegetarianism.

The Problem of Other Minds

Where Carruthers attempted to show that animals *cannot* suffer, the problem of other minds is an epistemological problem concerning how we *know* that animals can suffer. What reasons do we have for ascribing experiences to others? Imagine that all others

⁹ Rosenthal, "Higher-Order Theories of Consciousness," 244.

around us behave exactly the same, but have no corresponding experiences. Our interactions with these philosophical-zombies (p-zombies) would be identical to how we currently interact with other people. We can compare this to Carruthers' notion of brutes and non-conscious experiences. The problem Carruthers presented in the previous section was that animals are simply brutes (p-zombies) that lack experiences. Here, however, we are inquiring whether we can *know* that animals are not brutes. On what grounds do we claim that animals have experiences?

A solution to this problem still evades us. But the problem is not insuperable for the moral vegetarian. Earlier, I noted that the lack of language does not entail that experiences are not present. Similarly, we can further establish that language does not indicate the occurrence of experiences. Granting that the form of verbal reporting seems to indicate HOT and experiences, we still have no access to the thoughts and experiences in and of themselves, and therefore these verbal reports may simply be an automated function. Nevertheless, we ascribe humans as having experiences due to these behavioral dispositions when in pain, or through verbal reporting. Despite this lack of epistemic access to the potential experiences of humans, we assume that humans have experiences. Having no set of criteria for ascribing experiences to other humans entails that there is no salient difference between ascribing experiences to humans and animals. Carruthers' theory of consciousness may be correct, but our inaccessibility to the HOTs of others means we have the same difficulty in determining whether humans have experiences as animals.

However, moral vegetarianism may still be criticized since it requires that animals are capable of experiencing pain and pleasure. I suggest that an amendment to this premise is in order. Rather than asserting that animals *can* suffer, we ought to recognize that this is no more than an assumption. If I am correct in claiming that the problem of other minds applies equally to humans as well as animals, then our moral consideration for humans is based on a similar assumption. Since behavioral dispositions are sufficient in the human case, they should also be taken as sufficient in the animal case. If we assume that humans experience pain and pleasure, we should assume animals do as well. It would be arbitrary to assume that the dispositions and reporting of humans alone are sufficient for inferring consciousness.



The assumption we must make then, is more Pascalian in nature. What would be preferable, assuming that others are conscious or unconscious? If we assume that animals are unconscious and treat them as such we may discover that they were conscious all along and have unnecessarily caused them suffering. Conversely, we can assume that animals are conscious and treat them accordingly. It may turn out that animals are not conscious. I think the preferable solution is to assume that animals have experiences to avoid the rather horrendous results of the first scenario. We lose relatively nothing of value by treating animals as conscious beings compared to the suffering they might be enduring otherwise.

Nagel may be correct in asserting that there is an epistemic gap between our imagining the experiences of other animals and knowing what it is like to be an animal *qua* said animal.¹⁰ If this is the case, then there is little we can say about the qualitative experiences of animals. Much of moral philosophy, however, requires making decisions without complete knowledge. This is why I propose that we recognize that so far this is nothing more than an assumption. We allow other humans to enter our moral calculus on a similar assumption, and given this we ought to extend this consideration to other potentially conscious beings as well. Notice that all we are assuming here is that animals are conscious and following the logical consequences of this assumption. Assuming that animals have the capacity to suffer leads us to infer that our practices of meat consumption are immoral insofar as they cause unnecessary suffering to the animal. Regardless of the ethical theory we adopt, this should hold true. As I see it, moral vegetarianism still stands despite the lack of definitive proof that animals can suffer.

Conclusion

I have attempted to defend moral vegetarianism from certain arguments in the philosophy of mind regarding the premise of animal suffering. Whether animals have experiences remains an open question. Nevertheless, I believe that the common argument presented for moral vegetarianism can be defended in a Pascalian way, without certainty that animals have experiences.

¹⁰ Nagel, "What Is It Like to Be a Bat?," 435–450.

Purity Balls: Virtue Ethics, Sexuality, and Moral Development

Nicole B. Doolen

Abstract: In this paper, I draw on the principles of Aristotelian ethics, the work of modern virtue ethicists, and previous feminist critiques of purity balls to interrogate the effects of this practice on moral development. I argue that purity balls discourage young women from making autonomous, informed, and virtuously motivated decisions regarding their sexuality. While most critiques of purity balls are rooted in the explicitly patriarchal structure of these events, my analysis emphasizes the negative impact they have on moral agency. I conclude that purity balls are unethical because of the detrimental effects they have on the becoming of virtuous agents.

Introduction

Although chastity may be thought of as an “old-fashioned virtue,”¹ the emergence of what some term “new virginity”² and others the “virginity movement”³ makes it clear that this virtue has not died out in modern society. As practices such as abstinence pledges and purity balls gain popularity and attention, it is necessary to explore their ethical basis and the moral effects they have on those who participate. The purity ball, a practice that ostensibly centers on the virtue of chastity, is a topic that has remained largely unexplored, particularly on an ethical basis. The few analyses that do exist utilize feminist approaches to argue that purity balls unfairly limit and devalue female sexuality.⁴ While feminist evaluations offer important insight into the damaging effects of purity balls on female sexuality, additional analyses are necessary in order to identify the effects of such practices on females’ overall moral development and ability to develop moral agency.

In this essay, I will argue that sexuality is inherently linked to morality in order to illustrate the effects that purity balls can have

¹ David Carr, “On the Prospects of Chastity as a Contemporary Virtue,” *Sex and Ethics: Essays on Sexuality, Virtue and the Good Life*, ed. Raja Halwani (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 90.

² *Ibid.*, 99.

³ Jessica Valenti, *Purity Myth: How America’s Obsession with Virginity is Hurting Young Women* (Berkeley: Seal Press, 2009), 23-60.

⁴ *Ibid.*



on ethical development as a whole. I will then evaluate purity balls under a virtue ethics framework to conclude that purity balls are not an ethical practice insofar as they prevent the growth of sensible virtuous agents. Given the lack of both breadth and depth of ethical analysis on purity balls, this article provides crucial insight into the potentially harmful effects of this practice, particularly the effects that it has on the young women who are at the center of it all.

Purity Balls

The first purity ball was held in 1998 by Randy and Lisa Wilson⁵ as an event in which a father signs a pledge to “cover [his] daughter as her authority and protection in the area of purity,” and the daughter lays down a white rose as a symbol of her “commitment to purity.”⁶ According to Lisa Wilson, by signing the pledge, fathers commit to serve as models of purity in order to guide their daughters’ physical, moral, and emotional purity to “help them enter marriage as pure, whole persons.”⁷ In a culture that Randy Wilson states “lures them into the murky waters of exploitation,”⁸ purity ball supporters place the responsibility of protecting girls on their fathers’ shoulders.

However, in an increasingly sexualized culture, taking the responsibility of one’s sexuality from these young women may have negative consequences on their ability to act as moral characters in their own lives. This concern necessitates further evaluation of how this practice prepares or fails to prepare daughters to live moral and good lives. Virtue ethics provides a valuable framework for doing this because it sets up guidelines on how to become an ethical person, with the underlying notion that practicing certain virtues facilitates moral development.

Virtue Ethics

Virtue ethics emphasizes various virtues, or sets of ideals, that are necessary for moral development.⁹ According to virtue ethicists,

⁵ Ibid., 66.

⁶ Randy Wilson, *Father-Daughter Purity Ball*, <http://generationsoflight.com>.

⁷ Ovetta Sampson, “Broadmoor Formal Aims to Reinforce Importance of Father-Daughter Bond,” *The Gazette* (March 2001), accessed April 28, 2015, <http://www.generationsoflight.com/html/news.html>.

⁸ Neela Banerjee, “Dancing the Night Away, With a Higher Purpose,” *The New York Times* (May 2008), accessed April 28, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/19/us/19purity.html?_r=0.

⁹ Rosalind Hursthouse, “Virtue Ethics,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward Zalta (Fall 2013), <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-virtue/>.

moral development requires people to continuously perform acts that a virtuous person would do in order to cultivate a disposition towards virtue.¹⁰ Practiced over time, virtuous choices and actions become integrated into one's character and result in ethical development. Virtue ethics is, therefore, not focused on individual acts, but on the becoming of virtuous agents and the motivations that influence their disposition toward acting virtuously.

Acting virtuously not only requires virtuous motivations, but also practical wisdom that enables the possessor of good intentions to act accordingly.¹¹ Practical wisdom, based in Aristotelian ethics, is understood in contemporary virtue ethics as the knowledge that allows people to identify the important moral features of a decision.¹² Virtue ethicists, therefore, stress the importance of moral education that instills virtuous motivations and provides developing moral agents with the practical wisdom necessary for making virtuous decisions.¹³ From a virtue ethics perspective, purity balls can only be considered ethical if they provide daughters with the knowledge and experiences necessary for developing virtuous motivations and the practical wisdom to act on these motivations.

One Aristotelian virtue that particularly relates to sexuality, and therefore purity balls, is the virtue of temperance.¹⁴ Although Aristotle does not include sexuality in his discussion on temperance, modern virtue ethicists often extend his ethical evaluation of bodily pleasures to include sex.¹⁵ According to Aristotle, a temperate person desires the right objects in the right amount on the right occasion. This principle touches on the importance of virtuous motivations and desires that define a virtuous agent, a concept that Stramel also expresses in stating that "the right act is the choice endorsed by proactive wisdom informed by virtuous concern."¹⁶ By this perspective, a virtuous agent is able to reach a decision based on the knowledge they have about the situation and the awareness they possess of their motivations for that decision. Stramel's point that virtuous agents "have a clear understanding of one's motivation for disclosing"¹⁷ exhibits the virtue ethics focus on motivations rather

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Howard Curzer, "Aristotle's Account of the Virtue of Temperance in *Nicomachean Ethics* III. 10-11," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 35, no. 1 (1997): 5-25.

¹⁵ Ibid.; Roger Scruton, "Sexual Morality," *Sex and Ethics: Essays on Sexuality, Virtue and the Good Life*, ed. Raja Halwani (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 77-88.

¹⁶ James Stramel, "Coming Out, Outing, and Virtue Ethics," *Sex and Ethics*, 167.

¹⁷ Ibid., 168.



than individual acts and stresses the importance of self-awareness. Both Aristotle and Stramel indicate a central motif that virtuous agents must be fully aware of their desires and motivations in order to act for the right reasons. Combining this idea with that of practical wisdom, virtuous decisions can only be made by a moral agent who is fully aware of and knowledgeable on the salient features of a particular decision.

Human flourishing, the ultimate goal of virtue ethics, is therefore achieved through the performance of virtuous acts based in virtuous motivations and guided by practical wisdom.¹⁸ The concept of human flourishing extends beyond the more subjective concept of happiness, indicating that there are better and worse ways to live as humans. Flourishing is understood by virtue ethicists as practicing to become excellent people in order to live well.¹⁹ Living well requires practices and social contexts that allow for the development of virtuous agents who are aware of their own desires and motivations, have obtained the practical wisdom necessary for acting on these desires, and are able to practice the virtues that lead them toward a virtuous disposition. In evaluating purity balls through a virtue ethics framework, it is therefore necessary to consider whether this practice provides young women with the information and experiences necessary for making virtuous decisions about their sexuality based in full knowledge and understanding of the various factors influencing these decisions. A practice that fails on any of these accounts is at risk of preventing virtuous becoming and hindering human flourishing.

Sexuality and Moral Development

In *Sexuality and the Unity of the Virtues*, Jacobs presents virtuous development as “complex and integrative,”²⁰ rather than “an aggregate of dispositions.” He warns against defining virtues as specific only to certain contexts; maintaining that recognizing the integrative nature of moral agency is central to the “realization of human good overall.”²¹ Rituals, such as purity balls that compartmentalize sexuality by focusing on a very specific aspect of development, run the risk of misconstruing the role of sexuality in overall moral development in one of two ways.

¹⁸ Hursthouse, “Virtue Ethics.”

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Jonathan Jacobs, “Sexuality and the Unity of the Virtues,” *Sex and Ethics: Essays on Sexuality, Virtue and the Good Life*, ed. Raja Halwani (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 65-76.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 74.

First, as Valenti discusses, chastity pledges, purity balls, and other movements and events that are centered on female sexuality result in the conflation of sexuality and morality.²² According to Valenti, “idolizing virginity as a stand-in for women’s morality means that nothing else matters.”²³ In the context of virtue ethics, this would imply that one’s overall disposition toward acting virtuously is solely based on the decisions one makes about their body, bodily pleasures, and sexuality. However, according to Jacobs, “grasping the good of one virtue in the agent’s life cannot be done in isolation; the agent needs to see how the various goods in her life are related and adjusted.”²⁴ Any practice that solely focuses on one aspect of development fails to make its participants aware of the impacts their decisions and actions within other realms of development can have on their overall virtuous disposition.

A second potential consequence of isolating sexuality as an independent aspect of development is conveying the message that ethical actions regarding sexuality only influence one’s sexual agency, rather than one’s overall character as a virtuous agent. This consequence is equally as detrimental as the first because it could lead people to disregard the ethical ramifications of the decisions they make about their sexuality on moral development at large. As Jacobs states, “a virtue is incomplete if confined to just one or another context.”²⁵ Given that virtuous development involves an integration of dispositions, sexuality should not and cannot be treated as an ethical entity independent from all other dispositions. However, it is important to note that this connection between sexuality and morality holds only for individuals for whom sexuality is an important part of their identity and existence, and therefore individuals who do not experience sexual attraction are equally as capable of moral development as those who do. These characteristics of sexuality warrant a virtue-centered approach because it allows discussions of ethics to move beyond defining individual acts as right or wrong, instead focusing on the dispositions and motivations that become integrated into a virtuous agent’s character. When analyzing purity balls using a virtue ethics framework, it reveals the effects of this practice not only within the the narrow lens of sexual morality, but also the larger context of overall moral development.

²² Valenti, *Purity Myth*, 24.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Jacobs, 69.

²⁵ *Ibid.*



Virtuous Decisions

Although virtuous acts are important to human flourishing, virtue ethics focuses on the motivations behind the decision to act, signifying that an ethical practice promotes virtuous acts through equally virtuous motivations.²⁶ Additionally, it is the virtuous agent that must make these decisions for their own sake²⁷ based on the relevant ethical features of a situation.²⁸ Making a moral decision for oneself requires the moral agent to be informed, aware of the reason behind, and attentive to the value of their decision.²⁹ Therefore, a decision is virtuous when the individual acknowledges and appreciates the worth of that decision and the influence it has on their moral development. Purity balls fail on all of these accounts: by preventing girls from making informed decisions for their own sake, for the right reasons, and on the right occasions.

Some might object that purity balls are guided by virtues such as integrity and commitment to honor and therefore enable girls to make morally-guided decisions. From this perspective, purity balls facilitate the development of ethically responsible individuals by empowering girls to live virtuously according to these principles. However, upon further examination, purity balls inhibit girls from establishing virtuous dispositions by leading them to act on motivations that do not reflect the inherent value of acting virtuously.

In her discussion of virginity pledges, Valenti argues that purity balls and the virginity movement “shame women into being chaste.”³⁰ Purity balls appear to discourage girls from making moral decisions for the right reasons because fear of being shamed is not a reason in which a virtuous person should base a decision. Badhwar touches on the importance of making decisions for the right reasons in his discussion of the “insensible lover,”³¹ who lacks the “knowledge specifically of bodily goods and the ready ability to take the right means to one’s own good.”³² Girls who participate in purity balls appear to give up the power over their own bodily desires for some greater good as they “commit to live pure lives before God,”³³ an indication of Badhwar’s insensibility that he asserts results in devaluation of bodily desires. As Valenti discusses, “if virginity is a

²⁶ Hursthouse, “Virtue Ethics.”

²⁷ Neera Badhwar, “Carnal Wisdom and Sexual Virtue,” *Sex and Ethics*, 139.

²⁸ Jacobs, 73.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 66.

³⁰ Valenti, 24.

³¹ Badhwar, “Carnal Wisdom and Sexual Virtue,” 144.

³² *Ibid.*, 135.

³³ Wilson, *Father-Daughter Purity Ball*

gift, or something ‘worth saving,’ that means that those who don’t save it are somehow lacking- or, even worse, sullied.”³⁴ Purity balls perpetuate this idea that female sexuality is a commodity that should be sacrificed, rather than a pleasure that should be enjoyed. This further discourages girls from making moral decisions for the right reasons because shame, rather than knowledge of the bodily desires, becomes the primary motivator behind decisions concerning their sexuality.

Additionally, information provided on Randy Wilson’s website does not show evidence that girls are adequately prepared for the act of pledging their purity prior to the balls.³⁵ While “daughters symbolize their commitment to purity by laying down a white rose,”³⁶ they are not required to actually articulate or demonstrate their understanding of what a purity pledge signifies. Failing to ensure that girls are fully informed and aware of the implications of decisions regarding their sexuality is particularly harmful to their virtuous development because purity balls involve girls pledging their purity until marriage, which inhibits situational-based moral decisions even after the event itself. According to Jacobs, virtuous agents are not only informed and aware, but they are also able to take into account “the multiple features of situations and their ethical relevance.”³⁷ From the time they take their pledge to the time they are married, girls who participate in purity balls would seemingly be unable to make situational-based decisions concerning their sexuality because they have essentially been given an ultimatum against sexual activity during this time. In this way, purity balls prevent girls from being able to develop into virtuous individuals with the ability to evaluate whether their desires are felt for the right objects and on the right occasion.

The Virtuous Agent

In addition to preventing girls from making informed decisions based on ethically relevant contextual features, purity balls also inhibit virtuous development by making girls passive participants in pledging their purity, consequently failing to teach the practical wisdom for controlling sexual desires. Given that “‘the project of the moral life is to become a certain kind of person,’ a

³⁴ Valenti, 32.

³⁵ Wilson, *Father-Daughter Purity Ball*

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Jacobs, 73.



virtuous person who, in Aristotle's language, knows how to act and feel in ways appropriate to the circumstances,"³⁸ an ethical practice must provide people with the knowledge, skills, and experience to make moral decisions in different situations. In his evaluation of sexual ethics, Dagmang states that "if ethics provides the direction and impulse toward building a setting or condition favorable for the formation of responsible persons, then such an ethics must be sound."³⁹ Therefore, the ethics of purity balls are largely dependent on the degree to which they create a social context that promotes personal responsibility and growth, and it is precisely this personal growth that leads to human flourishing.⁴⁰

Content on the Wilsons' website indicates that girls do not take an active role in pledging their purity, providing grounds to reject purity balls as unethical because they do not encourage personal responsibility. While fathers sign a pledge to be an example of purity for their daughters, the extent of the daughters' role is that they "silently commit to pure lives before God through the symbol of laying down a white rose at the cross."⁴¹ One girl is quoted on the Wilsons' website as saying, "my father pledged to protect me and promised to lead a life of integrity and purity for me."⁴² Not only do girls take a passive role in pledging their purity at the ball itself, but they do not seem to be encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions in the future as their fathers are the ones who hold the responsibility of leading a pure life *for* them.

Although an argument in support of purity balls is that a father serves as a role model for his daughter in his pledge to live a life of integrity and purity,⁴³ purity balls fail to move beyond this and encourage girls to be responsible for their own decisions and actions. According to Scruton's account of sexual morality, the transition from "minimal" to "maximal self," or what other virtue ethicists would term the becoming of the virtuous agent, "occurs when the minimal self ceases to be merely a vehicle for the transmission of impersonal forces and becomes instead an active subject."⁴⁴ Based on the Wilsons' explanation of purity balls, girls are not treated as active subjects either during the ball or throughout the remainder

³⁸ Michael Lawler and Todd Salzman, "Virtue ethics: natural and Christian," *Theological Studies* 74, no. 2 (2013): 442-473.

³⁹ Ferdinand Dagmang, "The Sociological Sciences and Sexual Ethics," *Asia Pacific Social Science Review* 6, no. 1 (2006): 19.

⁴⁰ Lawler and Salzman, "Virtue Ethics," 444-445.

⁴¹ Wilson, *Father-Daughter Purity Ball*.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Scruton, "Sexual Morality," 79.

of their purity pledge. Additionally, a father's role in purity balls cannot truly be seen as role modeling due to the different standards of purity for a father and a daughter. While daughters pledge to be pure until marriage, the father's pledge to "be pure in [his] own life"⁴⁵ clearly involves different expectations given that he is already married and is not pledging his virginity. By preventing daughters from accessing the experiences and responsibilities to facilitate the personal growth necessary for human flourishing, the father's roles appears to be that of an enforcer, rather than a role model for his daughter.

The Virtues

Virtue ethicists stress the importance of virtues in guiding decisions. For example, Stramel identifies the importance of "other-regarding virtues" such as "respect for individual persons and their rights, autonomy, and dignity" and "self-regarding virtues of honesty, self-respect, dignity, and integrity."⁴⁶ From this perspective, an ethical practice is one that facilitates self- and other-respect and teaches moral agents to emulate these virtues. Considering the effects of society⁴⁷ and personal relationships⁴⁸ on behavior and development, an ethical practice must create a social context that facilitates the development of the positive relationships necessary for virtuous development.

Purity balls emphasize the importance of a strong father-daughter relationship and encourage fathers to be role models for their daughters and to guide their daughters' development.⁴⁹ It could, therefore, be argued that a father's commitment to protect his daughter and to live a life of integrity for her serves as an important example of respect for others. Where this argument falls short, however, is that "other-regarding virtues" require people to treat others as autonomous individuals capable of making their own decisions and acting for themselves, rather than (as is the case with purity balls) disregarding their autonomy and acting in their stead.

By not providing girls with the opportunity to take personal responsibility for decisions regarding their sexuality, purity balls fail to promote respect for others as autonomous beings. Valenti's

⁴⁵ Wilson, *Father-Daughter Purity Ball*.

⁴⁶ Stramel, "Coming Out, Outing, and Virtue Ethics," 172.

⁴⁷ Dagmang, "The Sociological Sciences and Sexual Ethics," 5.

⁴⁸ Paul Amato, "Father-Child Relations, Mother-Child Relations, and Offspring Psychological Well-Being in Early Adulthood," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 56, no. 4 (1994): 1032.

⁴⁹ Wilson, *Father-Daughter Purity Ball*



feminist analysis of purity balls aligns well with my virtue ethics analysis because she provides important insight into the consequences of not teaching girls to be autonomous and perpetuating the idea that their sexuality can be owned⁵⁰. A practice that perpetuates this idea discourages respect for other people's autonomy and dignity. Because purity balls place responsibility for girls' purity in the hands of their fathers, this practice disregards girls' autonomy, resulting in a social context that does not facilitate the development of "other-regarding virtues."⁵¹

Although an argument in favor of purity balls is that they enable girls to develop strong relationships with their fathers that promote self-worth and identity,⁵² findings from psychological research combined with a virtue ethics perspective indicate that this practice does not facilitate flourishing. Research shows that closeness to one's father can lead to improved psychological well-being, but research has also shown that closeness to one's father does not significantly contribute to increased self-esteem.⁵³ While identity and psychological well-being may be important to happiness, virtue ethics does not focus on happiness, and "psychological studies repeatedly indicate that one of the greatest threats to healthy human flourishing is poor self-esteem."⁵⁴ Because self-esteem facilitates development of self-respect, practices that cultivate individuals with high self-esteem could be regarded as ethical. However, attempting to justify purity balls on the basis of the psychological benefits of a close relationship with one's father is not sufficient justification on the grounds that research shows that self-esteem is not a benefit of such a relationship. By failing to promote either other- or self-respect, purity balls again do not meet the ethical standards of virtue ethics.

Additionally, the apparent lack of involvement of the mother in purity balls combined with the central role of the father creates a gendered social context that also does not meet these ethical standards. Situating the father as the "high priest" of the family who is responsible for protecting and "covering" his daughter⁵⁵ devalues not only the daughter's individual autonomy but that of all other women as well. As Valenti argues, these traditional "gender norms

⁵⁰ Valenti, 67.

⁵¹ Stramel, 172.

⁵² Wilson, *Father-Daughter Purity Ball*

⁵³ Amato, "Father-Child Relations, Mother-Child Relations, and Offspring Psychological Well-Being in Early Adulthood," 1031.

⁵⁴ Lawler and Salzman, 471.

⁵⁵ Wilson, *Father-Daughter Purity Ball*.

of ownership, dependence, and perpetual girlhood”⁵⁶ contribute to a social context that is “increasingly antagonistic to women.”⁵⁷ In promoting this model of the passive female and dominant male, purity balls appear to be based in a framework that does not allow for the development of the virtues, particularly that of self- and other-respect, or the establishment of a society that is based in sound ethics.

Conclusion

Upon further evaluation of purity balls using a virtue ethics framework, this practice can be deemed unethical because it does not enable ethical actors to make informed and autonomous decisions, preventing them from becoming responsible virtuous agents and sustaining social contexts that fail to promote respect for self and for others. Because promotion of these virtues is necessary for cultivating people who are able to work toward human flourishing, purity balls are an obstacle to this goal. Given the inherent connection between sexuality and moral development, purity balls not only have negative effects on sexual development but on moral development as a whole. As purity balls gain attention from pop culture, it is necessary to promote awareness of the consequences they have not only on the girls who participate, but also on society in which such practices can negatively impact the ultimate goal of human flourishing.

⁵⁶ Valenti, 13.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 44.



Feminism, Speaking for Others, and the Role of the Philosopher: AN INTERVIEW WITH LINDA MARTÍN ALCOFF

Stance: *In Visible Identities, you briefly discuss a double vision that can be experienced by mixed persons because of their identity. You suggest that people who recognize their privilege may see from a similar double vision. Do you think that a double vision should be a goal to strive for to create a more equal world or that having populations who have double vision allows for them to understand multiple viewpoints or horizons?*

Linda Martín Alcoff: The concept of double consciousness originated with the work of W.E.B. Du Bois, and I think that's what you're referring to by "double vision." What it means is seeing the world or seeing a particular event through more than one perspective. Du Bois talks about oppressed groups seeing the world the way white supremacists or white dominant groups see them, but also knowing that there's another way to see the world. Some people see not only through the eyes of white dominant groups, but through their own community's eyes, which yields a sense of bifurcation between two perspectives.

I don't think we can strive to achieve double vision in the way you ask. I'm not sure that by reading a book, or by a kind of philosophical thought experiment, we can achieve double vision. I think it's something that emerges more organically from our position in society and our lived experience. Many people in the United States today know that there's more than one way to experience the world. When you hear what Donald Trump says, even if you're not Muslim – today we hear Muslim voices in the news, we read Muslim voices in the newspaper – you have a sense that Muslims in the United States probably don't feel just angry at Trump like many other Americans do. They probably also feel scared. We are aware of others' affective reactions because our public domains of discourse have become more multidimensional than they were when I was growing up. There are many more different kinds of voices in our neighborhoods and in our schools and in



our workplaces. More and more people know that their way of seeing things is not the only way. So double vision comes not from an effort or a thought experiment, but just from the kind of reality that we live in today.

Also, the fact that you can know how other people see the world can be used for good or for bad. You could use it to try to control people. Trump or somebody running a corporation could use double vision – that knowledge of how their words will be seen in multiple ways – to control and manage populations for the purposes of maintaining those people's oppression. So I don't think having access to multiple perspectives will necessarily lead us to liberation. But there's a potential there that can be tapped. Du Bois is writing at a time when most white people don't have to think about how black people saw the United States of America. They may not have realized that Blacks did not have the same relationship of patriotism to the United States as whites had, for example. Today, I think that double vision or double consciousness is more available to whites, and so that's what I am interested in.

What Du Bois is talking about is how African Americans saw themselves through racist stereotypes and also how white people viewed African Americans through racist stereotypes. The double vision of whites today may be similar structurally, in that there's more than one perspective, but it may have very different political content because the way white people are viewed by people of color may not be based on a racist stereotype against whites. It may actually be accurate, and may have some factual truth to it that would enhance the understanding of white people about the history of the United States, about the way in which slavery still affects the U.S., and how racism is still an important feature of our society. When Du Bois is talking about it, he's talking about it mostly in the sense that black people can push back against the white supremacist viewpoint because, while black people see the world in that way and themselves in that way, they also have access to an experience that goes beyond racist stereotypes. This allows black people to push back against that dominant white perspective, but it's based on an experience whites don't have.

Stance: In "Does the Public Intellectual Have Intellectual Integrity?" you talk about how intellectuals

in this country are expected to remain out of politics and the public eye. Similarly, in “On Judging Epistemic Credibility,” you talk about how philosophy in America strove to become apolitical to avoid raising suspicions during the Cold War, thus creating a generation of philosophers who held proper philosophy to be void of political motivations. In light of this, what can aspiring philosophers do to reverse these trends, to bring intellectualism and philosophy back into the public eye and use them to leverage positive social change?

Alcoff: We have a unique situation in the United States, and if you’ve been to other countries you’d know it’s pretty uncommon: we don’t listen to philosophers. I was just in Dublin last week and was interviewed by *The Irish Times*, which has a regular column on current philosophers. They interview all sorts of philosophers from the United States who come through Dublin, and the column is pretty widely read. This is also true in Germany, Mexico, Colombia, and most other countries. If you get into any taxi in New York City, the driver, 9 times out of 10, has a view about philosophy, not just current political events, but also the nature of religion, life after death, and the nature of truth. Philosophy is a topic that is of wide interest to a lot of people, even if they don’t pursue it systematically in the way that we do. So it’s a real question: why there isn’t more public philosophy done in the United States. I believe the history of the Cold War is part of the answer of the move to meta, meta, meta level, arcane, technical work. Like, “Is that cow on the side of the road really a cow, or is it painted to look like a cow?” Not too many taxi drivers are interested in that question, but they are interested in questions like “What is propaganda?” or “How do you know who to believe?” or “Can society become more just?”

There’s a combination of reasons why philosophy in the United States has been so cut off from the public. But we can do something to change this. In fact, many philosophers are working at this, by writing in more accessible ways and engaging with the public. *The Stone* is a series of short essays that *The New York Times* has on its website, and a lot of philosophers have written for that, including me. It generates a lot of comments. People are interested. I know there are a number of paper prizes that students can submit to that involve essays on public policy questions, and I think those are really good. You should try your hand at winning one



of those because they give you the practice to address a topic of concern and write in such a way that broad members of the public can follow your reasoning and your argumentation.

Stance: Do you believe non-philosophers often do what we would call philosophy, but aren't quite aware that they are doing so?

Alcoff: I strongly believe that. Many of the topics that we're interested in—the meaning of life, the nature of truth, the nature of the good, if there is a single category of the good, is it relative or cultural—are of interest. I think sometimes our methodology is different. We try to be a little systematic and organized in the way we answer those questions. We look for what everybody in the history of philosophy says about those questions, but I think there's a wide interest in those questions, especially among young people.

Stance: In your work "Justifying Feminist Social Science," you speak of the androcentric bias that the sciences hold. Do you feel that some of the problems that bring out androcentrism in these fields are perpetuated by curricula taught by universities, and perhaps even at the high school level?

Alcoff: Yes! Emphatically. There's this great book I recommend by the philosopher of science Elizabeth Lloyd called *The Case of the Female Orgasm*. It's a great read. It's about the science of the female orgasm. This is not about 19th-century science or the science discussions going on in the 1940s. It's about today. It's about post-2000 research on the question of how to explain why the female orgasm evolved given that it plays no role in conception. It doesn't enhance the likelihood that a given act of sexual intercourse will lead to pregnancy or conception. Of course it doesn't diminish the likelihood either. It doesn't play any role whatsoever. So evolutionary biologists can't figure out for the life of them why the female orgasm, certainly a significant feature of human embodiment, evolved.

There's been a tremendous amount of research and debate trying to prove that there is a link between female orgasms and conception, and Lloyd shows that most all of it is incredibly bad science. So Lloyd asks, how has this happened? Why do the high standards of empirical evidence fall so drastically when female orgasm is the topic? And what becomes clear is that the standards fall

because female orgasm is a touchy issue, connected to our forms of family and marriage, sexual relations and heterosexual sexuality, our beliefs about women and pleasure, and old ideas about the women who pursue pleasure as being sort of monstrous and dangerous and chaotic. All of these old Christian ideas and views play into it.

This is just one example of how androcentrism is still embedded in ways that our scientific methods are not identifying, and this is still the standard methodology taught in universities today. More than that, if we think that science is value-free, if we think that science is politically neutral, then we are more likely to make these mistakes because we're more likely to avoid asking questions about how our political, moral, religious, and unconscious views about sexuality and women are affecting our judgment of scientific evidence and which hypotheses have enough plausibility to be supported.

“As long as we continue to teach our students that science and politics are easily distinguishable, we will disable them as scientists, and also disable the public from being able to assess scientific claims.”

So our values, politics, morals, and our own personal histories inform the generation of hypotheses, as well as the determination of what kind of evidence would be relevant, of how much evidence is needed to establish a claim, of the interpretation of a claim, and the application of a claim. In other words, every step of scientific practice. As long as we continue to teach our students that science and politics are easily distinguishable, we will disable them as scientists, and also disable the public from being able to assess scientific claims. We're going to confuse ourselves and the public about how politics and values enter into science, especially for certain kinds of issues that are very politically volatile. So yes, unfortunately, we are still teaching—sometimes even in philosophy of science classrooms—that the proper way to do science is in an apolitical way. What Lloyd shows is that that's just not true, because science is practiced in a real world context where political values and other kinds of values inform its judgment, interpretations, and applications.

Stance: As someone who works in feminist philosophy, why do you think there is an underrepresentation of women in undergraduate philosophy programs?

Alcoff: I don't know entirely. I wish we could get some anthropologists to come study our discipline. We need them to come live in our departments for a year and follow people around and take notes.



There are two basic answers that are being debated about that question right now. One is about the style with which we do philosophy and the other is the content of philosophy. Some people argue that the style of philosophy turns women off because philosophers argue and fight and criticize. We're aggressive sometimes and we cut people off, and women just don't like this kind of adversarial argumentation. I don't think this argument is persuasive because more than half of students in law school in the United States today are female. The legal profession is all about adversarial argumentation, where the stakes are very high. So it's clear that one cannot say women as a whole just aren't into argumentation.

However, I think there might be different styles of argumentation. When I was a student we talked a lot about how trying to slash down somebody's argument as quickly as possible is not necessarily the best route to truth. Sometimes it can be useful not to jump to criticism of somebody's claim. Rather, we could say, "Okay, let's assume that's true. Let's go with it. Let's push it further. Let's think that through." Generosity, receptivity, even passivity, being open to somebody else's argument before you shoot it down—which are normally traits we associate with a certain traditional femininity—might be useful for finding out what's true. In some cases, these approaches might be more useful than the impulse to shoot somebody's argument down as quickly as possible. So, the question of style of argument may be relevant here, because it may be that certain styles of argument that are associated with traditional masculine behaviors are considered the gold standard in philosophy. And when we exhibit traditional feminine behaviors, we're seen as soft and not as intellectually strong, assured, or confident as others. If we're receptive to other people's arguments, we may be judged by our teachers and peers as less smart or confident. So, style is important and relevant to gender.

The other issue is the content. I'm more interested in this idea. What are we teaching? What problems are we teaching? Who are we reading? Whose voices are included? I think also that a lot of students of color are turned off by philosophy because many times people want to address problems in their communities, and they don't see a whole lot of that in our textbooks. The work on racism in philosophy is pretty recent, and there's still not as much of it as you would think in political

philosophy or ethics, which should be domains that talk a lot about racism. But it's often the last week of class when you might read maybe one article. So I think it's the content of what we do, who we're reading, and how narrow our focus is that make some people feel like philosophy isn't for them. As I said before: everybody's interested in the topics we work on, but I think if you talk about theories of democracy and you don't talk about how you actually can build democracy in non-ideal, real-world conditions, post-slavery, post-genocide, post-colonialism, then for a lot of students it just doesn't feel like it's going to go anywhere productive.

Stance: Do you think there could be a little more outreach to underrepresented groups to show them how they can bring philosophy into their lives and how it can possibly be used to help themselves?

"I think outreach is important, and I think it's just as important to realize that as philosophy becomes more inclusive and diverse, philosophy will change. It's not going to stay the same. We bring with us new questions and new points of view."

Alcoff: I think so. There are a few departments that have done a lot of outreach, and have had a lot of success, by going to historically black colleges and universities, Hispanic serving universities, or women's colleges. I think outreach is important, and I think it's just as important to realize that as philosophy becomes more inclusive and diverse, philosophy will change. It's not going to stay the same. We bring with us new questions and new points of view. So it's about outreach and also about being receptive to the new work, the new questions, and the new formulations that emerge from this new group of philosophers.

Stance: In "The Problem of Speaking for Others," you claim that the desire to speak for others is a desire for mastery and domination. Is there a possibility of speaking with others that does not presuppose these desires?

Alcoff: I don't think the impulse to speak for others is always motivated by a desire for mastery and domination, but sometimes it is. We have to think about that when we try to speak for others. In some ways it's easy to speak for animals, because they can't tell you that you messed up or criticize you. We have to think about our motivations and how speaking for others who cannot speak back can make us feel like the hero and the heroine. Then it's really about us, rather than about what we're trying to accomplish or change. The motivation can be selfish even when we don't realize it. But I don't



think it's always about this sort of motivation. I don't want to overstate the case.

What I tried to say in that article is that you can't entirely avoid speaking for others. Some have argued that there are so many problems with speaking for others that we should just stop doing it. But that's not always possible. There are refugees who don't have access to the media. There are animals who cannot speak directly. There is the environment that cannot speak. We cannot put a complete ban on speaking for others, but it's always preferable to be a conduit that makes it possible for others to speak, and to "speak with" rather than "speak for," to get more voices heard.

The example I used of President Bush the first in Panama, I hoped, was a good example. Consider the structure of the sentence: "The Panamanian people want democracy." If you analyze that sentence, you get identical propositional content from the statement that the Panamanian opposition made. But when President Bush the first is making this claim a week before he launches a unilateral strike against Panama City, it means something different. It resonates in the public domain in a different way. It resonates in the media and the United States in a different way. Different connotations arise in people's minds, connotations about the United States being the vanguard of freedom and democracy in the world, in this hemisphere, and about being able to teach Latin America what freedom and democracy are and what free and fair elections are. Americans don't even know half the time what the struggles of democracy are in Latin America. The United States has destroyed numerous democratic movements in Central America, Chile, different parts of South America, and the Caribbean, so that when President Bush spoke for the Panamanian people, I wanted to argue that he was doing exactly the reverse of what his statement ostensibly said. He was helping to continue to thwart democratic processes by concealing the U.S. role in the region. You can look like you're speaking for other people, when you're really speaking for another agenda.

So, what would have been better? What would have been better would have definitely been speaking with the opposition movement. My father and brother were both involved in the opposition movement that was quite strong within Panama against Noriega. The better

alternative would have been to work in coalition and to help give voice to that opposition movement because the media was getting constrained by the military dictatorship in Panama at that time. Speaking with would have been a very different communicative practice that could have unseated Noriega, disempowered him, and led to real democracy. But what happened after the invasion of Panama in 1989 was that a new president was sworn in by the United States, and he was found to be involved in narcotrafficking, and the challenges to a real democracy continue. So I would argue that speaking with is always preferable when it is possible.

Stance: Given your view on the appropriate times to speak for others and the view that you demonstrate in “Immanent Truth” on listening to others working especially well in small-scale discussions, how do we determine how small-scale these discussions should be?

Alcoff: I don't think there's a formula for determining how small it can be. I know some anarchists oppose representational democracy and want to have only direct participatory democracy where decision-making is done in small enough groups where everybody can hear each other. This leads to meetings that can be hours and hours long, as we found out at Occupy Wall Street. Sometimes you need representational government that has fewer actual decision-makers sitting in a room together, but through the practices of political representation, these decision-makers are making decisions for larger groups. Decisions don't have to be made in just face-to-face encounters. With crowdsourcing that involves political debate and social media, people are finding ways to participate even globally. Sometimes this can become a very bad process, where social media becomes a mechanism of community stoning. But I'm very interested in the democratic potential of methods that can put a check on the mainstream corporate media by providing alternative venues that more people can participate in without credentials or without owning a newspaper.

Representational methods can be productive sometimes, and very large groupings can work sometimes too. At a recent large public event in South Africa, where Jacob Zuma, the current president, has lost a lot of his popular support, he was loudly booed by a great number of the crowd. This expressed a political will and indicated that



Zuma has lost a lot of popular support. He's lost the imagination of the people, as some have put it. This is just one example of the way in which true democratic expression can occur even in a large-scale situation.

Stance: When it is difficult for us to have these "small-scale" discussions directly with people who are under-represented, how much should we depend on statistical analysis to find out what people really believe?

Alcoff: I use Pew research all the time, Quinnipiac. They're very useful, but you have to be very careful about how you interpret them because you can get very skewed results. We all have to become more sophisticated in our understanding of how opinion surveys and social science instruments are used. The media seems to be in love with numbers and graphs. They think if you've got a graph, you've got knowledge, and you see that a lot on the newspaper opinion pages. We have to remember that quantitative measures are subject to interpretation and can be skewed to produce certain results. So we have to become more sophisticated and smarter about the gathering of statistics, the instruments of empirical work that the social sciences use, to be able to judge what we're really seeing and raise questions about it.

Trump recently put up a big sign that gave the percentage of black people killed by police, the percentage of white people killed by police, the percentage of black people killed by other black people, and the percentage of white people killed by black people. He wanted to prove that so-called black-on-black crime is the principle problem, not the police. It turns out that his statistics came from a fictitious agency, a fact that was itself not widely reported. There's a great YouTube video where this guy goes through that graph very carefully, explaining what's faulty about the reasoning. But just the numbers themselves, the percentages, the graph, make some people think that we have some knowledge here, that this isn't just anecdotal or individual experience. Trump's fictitious numbers are then considered more real than the information we're getting from the Black Lives Matter campaigns about individual cases.

But I don't think that becoming more critical and sophisticated about statistical reasoning, and the preference for quantitative over qualitative data, means that we throw it all out. Quantitative data is one part of what builds our knowledge. It is never sufficient

“It is never sufficient unto itself because the practice of formulating the questions and deciding what questions to ask involves non-quantitative reasoning. Hence philosophy and hermeneutics are always involved in the production of empirical data and statistics.”

unto itself because the practice of formulating the questions and deciding what questions to ask involves non-quantitative reasoning. Hence philosophy and hermeneutics are always involved in the production of empirical data and statistics. There’s no philosophy-free gathering of statistics. We need to think critically and philosophically about how the question was formulated: who had the ability to participate in the formulation of the questions? Who got asked? How the data was generated involves a lot of political questions, a lot of ethical questions, questions of moral epistemology, and questions of philosophy of science. So quantitative data collection can be a part of how we improve our knowledge, but it can’t be a substitute for the knowledge that’s generated in the humanities. The STEM disciplines need to work with the humanities, and humanities needs to be informed by the STEM disciplines.

Stance: We often see that when a tragic event happens to a group of people, those outside of this group will try to show their solidarity by wearing signifying colors or announcing their support over social media. Do you see a connection between these types of solidarity and speaking for others?

Alcoff: I was mostly thinking of the Black Lives Matter movement, but it could be in regard to other movements. I know there’s been some real discussion and debate about the role of white people in relationship to those struggles. There’s talk about who has got skin in the game and who doesn’t have skin in the game in regard to various kinds of struggles: who is directly affected and who can only be allies. Some expressions of solidarity are open to criticism on the grounds that they are fairly easy. What do they call it?

Stance: Slacktivism?

Alcoff: Yes, exactly—people who only do Facebook and tweets from the safety of their own home—that kind of activism. It is a legitimate charge. Although, I like that kind of activism. I think it is important too. But I think it’s true that you shouldn’t feel too good about yourself if that’s all you do. It doesn’t really cost you anything. Also, I don’t think you’re going to learn a lot. Social movements are really important to get involved in because you learn so much from them about so many things, not only issues but ways of acting in concert and



negotiating differences and learning the scope of what you do not know. So I think there are many grounds for concern about solidarity that's too easy, that's too safe. But I also think solidarity across community lines is incredibly important. I have many examples from my own experience.

Once, we had a strike of the campus workers at a university where I was teaching. It was a strike of the janitors, the people who worked in the food service, and the people who cleaned the rooms. They were really being jerked around by the administration and had to take action. The administration thought the faculty would simply step over the picket lines and go about our business and teach our classes as usual. If we had, the strike may not have had any success because the university could replace the campus workers in the type of economic climate we were in. They could have just replaced all those six hundred and fifty people with other people who were desperate for work and paid them less, subcontracted out their jobs, gotten rid of the union, and it would have been fine. But the faculty did not just step over the picket lines, and the students got involved too. We refused to teach on campus, and we joined the marches, the pickets, and the rallies. The strike was won in one week. They only had to strike for one week, but it was because we had solidarity across groups.

You could say that the faculty didn't have skin in the game. Those of us with tenure had it easy. We had job security, at least. But it's just lousy to teach at a university where the administration sucks and where people are being mistreated. It's demoralizing to everyone. And this is the work force that we the faculty depend on to make it possible to do our teaching—we cannot do what we do if they don't do what they do. Bad employer treatment creates a high turnover of employees and that isn't good for the quality of the work. Plus, a lot of those folks had kids in my classes because they had tuition benefits. I knew them. So we supported the strike for many different reasons, and we got in trouble for it. The administration wanted to garnish our wages, and they used their influence on the media to criticize us up one hill and down the other. We did take some risks to support the strike, and that's what made the strike work. I'll give you one other example. In Miami, Florida, more than twenty years ago, there was a rebellion in an African American section of the city called Liberty City.

It was one of a series of urban rebellions in the 1980s in which there were barricades and fires, businesses were burned down, et cetera. The city responded by blocking off Liberty City, so that people were not allowed to travel freely into that area of Miami. Liberty City was also cut off from the media by the police department so that people outside couldn't find out what was going on there. That's a very dangerous situation, when you have black people cordoned off and there's no media around. But some of the folks in Liberty City who were politically involved had allies in other parts of the city. They had allies in some of the Cuban areas, some of the other Latino areas, and white areas as well. They reached out to the ministers and community leaders and the media in other parts of the city so that the word got out about what was happening in Liberty City, what the police were doing there, and that's what saved the situation from becoming much more violent and harmful for the people who were living in that area of town. They were just too small of a community to win against the Miami police force. They needed allies to win, and people stepped up. They came in with cameras. They documented what was happening. They organized demonstrations in other parts of Miami, and the situation cooled down. So I think solidarity—with people who aren't affected in the same way or directly—is vital, absolutely vital, to win. But that doesn't mean that every expression of solidarity is a good one. You have to negotiate and do a speaking-with to find out what kind of solidarity would be useful, welcomed, and lead to the outcomes that the people in struggle are trying to get to. I don't think we should underestimate the importance of solidarity even if we criticize some of the more shallow forms of its expression.

Stance: Do you ever feel that shows of solidarity could undermine the oppressed group's efforts? I'm thinking of cases where someone may actually distort what the group is truly trying to go for.

Alcoff: In the 1960s there was a moment in civil rights when there was kind of a push back against white leadership or even white participation in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committees [SNCC] that had been the main organizations in the south struggling for voting rights. SNCC had been integrated in the beginning. Bob Zellner, who was a friend of my husband, just wrote a fascinating book. He was a white



kid from southern Alabama who got hired by SNCC to be their first field organizer out of Atlanta. He was beaten and arrested many times. I think he was arrested twenty-eight times in the first three months on the job, sometimes put in solitary with 100 degrees of heat for weeks at a time. He suffered a lot.

By 1965 the Civil Rights Movement had undergone a lot of political debate, and they were concerned about having a lot of white leadership. They wanted to show that black people could lead, speak in public, strategize, fundraise, and that they didn't have to be dependent on others. It was an understandable move on their part because the racism in the United States was so strong that it was portraying black people as incapable of leading a movement and having the strategic savvy to really succeed. Oftentimes, what would happen is that you'd have various kinds of black struggle in different parts of the south, and the politicians would say, "It's Yankee Jewish communists coming down here leading people astray," because they couldn't imagine African Americans leading this kind of struggle, writing the op-eds that were so brilliant and rhetorically effective, or figuring out how to organize. So they blamed "Yankee Jewish communists," or sometimes just Yankees, sometimes just communists, or sometimes just Jews. It is understandable in those conditions that people wanted to show that black people could do it themselves. Similar things sometimes happened with feminist groups, because you'd have mixed male and female groups struggling for gender equality, and the guys would usually be better at public speaking or making an appeal to student government for funds. So they would do most of the public speaking, and the only way to get the women used to public speaking and skilled at public speaking was to kick the guys out. You then had to find a woman in the group to do the publicity, speak on TV, or speak to the press. That's what I think is behind this concern about the adverse effects that allies can have on movements.

Bob Zellner, though he was no longer a field organizer for SNCC after 1965 because of their decision to be black-led, stayed involved in the movement his whole life. He's still involved. He went on and did union organizing cross-rationally among the Gulf Coast Pulpwood Cutters in Mississippi. He did all kinds of anti-racist struggles throughout the south. He was a brilliant leader, so his

talents weren't wasted even though he stepped back in that moment from the leadership role he had in SNCC. His book is great. It's called *The Wrong Side of Murder Creek*. He's a lower-middle-class southern white boy, a total redneck, and truly amazing. And he played an incredibly important role. Everybody was getting beat up and arrested, and black people were suffering, a lot of torture, being shot at, and some, of course, were killed during the movement. The only difference for Zellner is that when he was at a demonstration, he was easier to spot because he was the white person. He was the white guy in the front lines, so the police always went after him. They went after everybody, but they always made sure to beat him to the ground because they were worried about the example that he set for other white people who crossed lines of solidarity. It's not that he got it worse than other people, but he always got it.

Stance: Is it fair to say that most philosophers don't approach the profession the way you do? Could you say why you study what you do, and why you study it the way you do?

Alcoff: After I got tenure, I felt like I could pursue some questions that I was very interested in that weren't being widely written about, such as the topic of mixed race. That was one of the first things I worked on. I started working on questions of mixed race identity, which is a really thorny and rich metaphysical issue. I was always interested in metaphysics, but it hadn't been applied to the issue of mixed race or mixed ethnic identities. Nietzsche said that all philosophy is a little bit of autobiography. He was a little reductive in this, but he was onto something. A lot more of philosophy refers back to individuals than we may realize. He thought that Kant's orientation toward prudence and caution led to his ethics. He thought Bentham had certain predilections that led to his utilitarian calculus, his idea that you could solve ethical problems through a quantitative formula. You can see a person's personality, life experience, and idiosyncratic history in a lot of philosophical ideas. With Frege and the development of logic we often think, "Well, that's pure." But actually, it wasn't. If you go back and read the development in the late 1800s, early 1900s, Frege and other logicians writing at the time really thought that logic would stem the tide of the irrational forces going on in Europe—which later would become the emerging Fascism—of ethnic hatreds, war, and militarism. They had a political motivation for

"Nietzsche said that all philosophy is a little bit of autobiography. He was a little reductive in this, but he was onto something. A lot more of philosophy refers back to individuals than we may realize."



the development of logical positivism, which tried to separate out logic from the realm they thought would lead to political debacle.

My work, too, is totally connected. I thought I could make a contribution by addressing topics that hadn't been addressed so much. I didn't think we needed yet another book on Plato, although maybe we do. But I knew we need work on Latin American philosophy that receives so little attention in North America. I thought I could make a contribution in arenas that were relatively neglected. For example, right now I'm working on a book about sexual violence, another neglected topic. Race and identity have not been well represented until fairly recently. I have had an interest in these topics and believe that they need more philosophical work than they have been getting. So that's what motivated me to go into those areas.

I also have to say that I'm a typical philosopher in that I just get excited. I still laugh sometimes when I'm reading philosophy books. I just get excited by crazy, arcane, esoteric debates that my husband has no interest in whatsoever (he's not an academic). Some of it is just interesting and fun and sort of addicting. Once you get it, man, it's like heroin. You can't get it out of your system. I have mostly applied that interest to general topics that I think have not gotten the attention they deserve, topics I might be able to make some contribution toward or have some particular interest in because of my own lived experience and history.

Stance: *What do you see as the significant differences in studying philosophy when you were pursuing your degrees versus today, and how do you see the field changing in the future?*

Alcoff: The field has changed a lot since 1973 when I took my first philosophy courses in college. There was one article on racism that was published by Irving Thalberg Jr. You might recognize his name because his father was a famous Hollywood director who won Oscars in the 1930s. His son became a philosopher. He taught at the University of Illinois at Chicago and wrote a paper that was called "Visceral Racism," published in 1972 [*The Monist* 56(1): 43-63]. That was pretty much it for a long time. Feminist philosophy and critical race philosophy were just beginning to emerge. We weren't doing any Latin American philosophy except in a few

places. One thing that was better back then than it is now—because it hasn't all gotten better, some of it has gotten worse—is that Chinese philosophy and Indian philosophy were more regularly taught. Those fields are much worse off today than they used to be. It used to be that any major department of philosophy felt like it had to have somebody who could cover it, because there's so much incredible ancient Chinese philosophy and ancient Indian philosophy. Nowadays it's very rarely covered because the history of philosophy has kind of lost its market share in the field.

I guess it is natural or inevitable that any discipline is going to change what it chooses to focus on. If you look at sociology or political science, you'll see similar changes over forty years in terms of what people are interested in. But there are some definite patterns. We didn't pay attention to these questions before, and the philosophy profession was a lot less diverse back then than it is now. What's changed is that although numbers are small, way smaller than they should be, there's now a critical mass of women and people of color. There are enough numbers that you can get a lively critical discussion going on where nobody agrees. We're all philosophers, so we don't agree with each other. There's a critical mass of feminist philosophy journals. There are multiple journals now, multiple debates and disagreements, and various problems are being pursued. The same is true of critical race philosophy and even in Latin American philosophy. LGBTQ philosophy is another field that is emerging. If you're interested in those areas today, you can actually pursue study in a systematic way.

I was self-taught in these areas. I'm from the generation where if we were interested in certain topics, we just had our own study groups. There were no classes you could take. There was no journal you could read. There was very little publication. Now, there's enough of a critical mass that you can join an online community just like you can if you're into modal logic or neopragmatist, Gricean philosophy of language, or whatever else it is that you're interested in. In philosophy, you join a particular group, go to their small conferences, and follow their work. You can do that now with these other fields, and that's good. We can be a little bit more systematic in our study and get criticism of our views from people who actually know something about the field and can criticize us more effectively when we are wrong and not thinking



through our argumentation. For a long time I received criticism when I gave talks from people who were thinking off the top of their heads and knew absolutely nothing about the fields of feminist philosophy, critical race philosophy, or Latin American philosophy.

Having a critical mass of experts, even if it is small, means the work is getting better. It means that there is an avenue for people who are interested in various kinds of topics. I am very hopeful about the field. I think it is going to open up and become a discipline that engages more with issues of larger public concern and provides avenues for multiple problematics to be pursued within ethics, political philosophy, and metaphysics. Consider the metaphysics of gender. How complicated is that these days, right? Is the body relevant to gender? These are really big, thorny metaphysical questions. There are more and more people interested in using our metaphysical tools of analysis, and the history of metaphysics, to think about the problem of the one and the many in relationship to gender, or the problem of the ship of Theseus in relationship to transgender. So that's what's changed.

I think these topics are becoming more widely of interest. It's not just women doing feminist philosophy. All women, of course, don't do feminist philosophy. Now, there are loads of men contributing to feminist philosophy. Your identity doesn't predetermine your areas of philosophical interest or your ability to contribute to the field. That's changing and opening up, too. It's good to see that. There are lots of people involved in the debate about the biology of race and racial categories in the philosophy of science. The topic areas have changed. The content has changed. Change has been sparked by the changes in the philosophy faculty. We're only about 17% female in tenured and tenure-track faculty. The numbers go up if you include adjuncts and instructors and other kinds of non-tenure-track positions. The gender inclusivity is pretty low still, but it is better than it used to be. Philosophers of color are also increasing a little bit. In some ways I think LGBTQ people are the worst off. There are so few out LGBTQ people in philosophy, but that's slowly slowly changing as well. I'm looking forward to seeing what the new debates are going to be.

Stance: So you're happy that there are now men getting involved in feminism, for example, that this shows that a person's identity doesn't predetermine what they're going to be interested in. This ties back to speaking for others. You've said we need to be careful when speaking for others. Do you think that men should let women take the lead in feminism?

Alcoff: If you think about feminist philosophy and the issues that are covered in feminist philosophy, some are such that men don't have direct experience. But others are such that men do have direct experience, such as the nature of gender binaries and gender categories. In fact, men have more direct experience of masculine gendering than women would. So men could speak, perhaps, in a richer way about the phenomenology of masculinity than women. A part of feminist philosophy is masculinity studies and thinking about masculinity in reference to the gender binary, and women have contributed a great deal because we see normative masculinity's effect in our lives, but we cannot give the whole analysis. If you think about something like sexual violence, which is something I'm working on right now, lots and lots of men and boys are subject to sexual violence. The percentages aren't as high as for women and girls, but there's a lot out there we're just finding out about. Prisons in the United States have finally been gathering statistics and developing policies against it. It used to be the topic of jokes, but now we're beginning to think about it, notice it, and come up with policies around rape in prison, as well as other institutions like the Catholic Church where boys were targeted quite often.

So what does that mean? Does that mean that sexual violence is something general to all of us? I don't think so. I think it takes different forms for males and females and others as well. Certainly the silencing of victims works differently for both males and females. When the victims are male, the silencing often works through homophobia, because the perpetrators are usually male and the victim is male, and there's a specter of homosexuality that's raised. If you read certain male memoirs that involve bodily experiences, you may be able to relate to those better if you share male embodiment than a woman does. You may know how masculinity is working in today's society and what kind of pressures boys and men are put under to achieve a certain norm of heteromascularity in sexuality and other matters. So I think in



this domain we can enact a speaking-with. We can speak with each other about what liberation would really look like. I always have male students in my feminism class who read all this stuff I make them read and then begin to see sexism everywhere. They're afraid of perpetrating more sexism. They ask me how to do it, how to be a guy, an anti-sexist, anti-heterosexist guy, and I can't really answer that question as well as some male folks can. There are a lot of things men can contribute. But with all of these issues there needs to be some speaking with each other and not just exclusivity.

About *Linda Martín Alcoff*



Linda Martín Alcoff received a Ph. D. in philosophy from Brown University in 1987. Before becoming a distinguished Professor of Philosophy at Hunter College and the CUNY Graduate Center, she held positions at Syracuse University, SUNY Stony Brook, and Kalamazoo College. She writes prolifically on eclectic topics, including social identity and race, epistemology and politics, sexual violence, Foucault, Dussel, and Latino/a issues in philosophy. In 2005 she was named Distinguished Woman in Philosophy by the Society for Women in Philosophy. Alcoff has authored a combined total of 51 books and articles, notable among these *Visible Identities*, which won the Frantz Fanon Award in 2009. She is currently working on two book projects: *Rape After Foucault* and *Decolonial Epistemology*. For more information visit <http://www.alcoff.com/>.

SUPPORTERS

Lifetime Contributions

Major Donor:

\$99,000-\$50,000

Ball State University

Sustainers Circle:

\$4,999-\$1,000

Dr. George Barker

Dr. David Concepción

Thought Smoke Circle:

\$999-\$500

Dr. Steven Humphrey

Dr. Juli Thorson

Univ. of Louisville Philosophy

Dept.

Originality Circle:

\$499-\$250

Isaac Brooks

Daniel Cole

Kristen Ruhl

Significance Circle:

\$249-\$100

Chris Coy

Belkisa Hrustanovic

Kelli Huth

Trevor Krogman

Kevin Mager

Kalli McBride

Harrison Null

Tim Pierz

James Robinson

Eric Roesch

Ryan Zerfas

Clarity Circle:

\$99-\$50

Lorrie Caskey

Debra Harvey

Emily Hinman

James Lacey

Jeff Neff

Elizabeth Palmer

Whitney Pike

Mike Reynolds

Josh Savage

Dr. Gina Schouten

Dr. Jeanine Weekes Schroer

Jenna Tomasello

Adam Vaughn

I ♥ Stance:

\$49 or less

Christine Baker

Devon Chapman

Jeremy Christman

Rachel Crawley

Karen Cummings

Lauren Fosnight

Ashli Godfrey

Tracy Graves

Kayla Gurganus

Vivek Hadley

Waleed Ma'arouf

Dominic Martyne

Micah McCauley

Zack Medford

Caleb Mosier

Kiley Neal

Cassandra Reed

Ben Rogers

Richard Storey

Rosamae Swoape