Hubris and Humility in the Practice of Moral Epistemology

Theresa W. Tobin & Alison M. Jaggar

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1. Introduction

This paper is taken from an in-progress draft of a chapter from a book that Alison Jaggar and I are co-authoring on the topic of moral justification. We investigate how people who are culturally diverse and socially unequal can rationally resolve moral disputes and validate unbiased moral conclusions. We think that cultural diversity and social inequality are the usual rather than unusual situations in which moral disputes occur. In our book, we argue that a good model of moral justification is, at a minimum, usable by, plausible to, and capable of producing feasible outcomes for those who are supposed to use it, and does not easily allow or exacerbate abuse of social power. We argue further that none of the contemporary Western philosophical models of moral justification we analyze in the book reliably meets these minimal standards when used in contexts of diversity and inequality. In particular, all of the models, in greater or lesser degree, recommend forms of moral reasoning that provide inadequate constraints on the ability of the most powerful to rationalize their own perspectives.[1] Alison's paper evaluating a cluster of intuitionist methods presents one example of this larger pattern that we establish in our book.

We are grateful to use this workshop as an opportunity to brainstorm the seeming persistence of this pattern. We think it may be partly due to intellectual arrogance manifest in the methodology of 20th century moral epistemology, which is enabled and sustained by hubris in the broader discipline of academic philosophy. Although virtue and vice are typically characterized as features of an individual's moral psychology, some of these traits can also be manifested by social structures and institutions. Institutions can be said to have a "character" and to manifest characteristic dispositions and encourage these in the personalities of the people who populate the institution, and influence the behavior of those

[1] We have developed this argument with reference to the methods of appealing to universal moral principles and domination-free discourse (Jaggar and Tobin 2013; Tobin and Jaggar 2013; Jaggar and Tobin 2017). Chapters still unpublished address original position reasoning and communitarianism.

individuals (Bartky 2005; Solak & Jost, et al 2012; Bjornsson & Hess 2016). Anyone who has visited St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican and some of its neighboring churches will be struck by the spiritual posture of the believer that these very different sanctuaries encourage and the perspective about the believer's relationship to the divine each of these structures embodies. Considered as a structural vice, intellectual arrogance leads a community to inflate its standing and role as a contributor to knowledge and influences the way the community relates with other relevant bodies of knowers. Here we suggest that intellectual hubris in the broader culture of Western academic philosophy is at least a partial culprit for our blind spots in the practice of moral epistemology, and that intellectual humility may serve as an important corrective.

Even at the level of individuals it is difficult to discern a person's character because identification of character traits requires more than observing behavior. One's character includes internal attitudes, affective attunements, perceptual capacities, and motivational structures that are not easily perceived, including by the person in whom they are embodied. In order to identify what we think are manifestations of intellectual hubris in the culture of academic philosophy we focus on two things. First, we look at the content of certain shared understandings that reflect a self-conception of our discipline as a contributor to knowledge production. Shared understandings are not necessarily formally endorsed or written down but operate as "common sense" in the collective consciousness of a community or as norms and expectations implied in its intellectual practices. These include assumptions about what "real" philosophy is and how it is done and ideals implied in its intellectual aims and dominant methods. We also examine evidence from what might be called the sociology of the discipline, which includes practices of program rankings, job placement, and publication and review processes.

2. Intellectual hubris

At the level of individuals, intellectual virtues are enduring dispositions that orient a person or group to function well in pursuing and transmitting knowledge and understanding. Intellectual vices are enduring traits that do just the opposite, that in some way diminish our ability to function well in

knowledge production and transmission (Roberts and Wood 2007, 59-60; Medina, 30). Intellectual arrogance is one of the vices of intellectual pride. The basic structure of pride involves feeling a surge in standing as a result of: (1) perceiving that something valuable and worthy of praise is (2) in some sense mine (Roberts 2009). Intellectual pride is an elevated sense of one's status as a knower in virtue of one's assessment of their epistemic abilities or achievements.

Not all pride is vicious. Virtuous pride backs self-respect and delivers an accurate sense of one's high standing in some domain of human activity. Given its basic structure, pride can become vicious when (1) there is something inordinate about my valuation of the object of my pride, or when (2) there is something inordinate about my emphasis on its being mine, or both.

Generally speaking, hubris may result if:

1. there is something inordinate about my valuation of the object of my pride either because:
    a. I am proud of something that is not of value or worthy of praise (e.g., my skill in maiming people) or
    b. The thing about which I am proud is worthy of praise but I overestimate its value. (e.g., being good at spelling)

OR

2. there is something inordinate about my emphasis on the thing of value being *mine* either because:
    a. I am mistaken about the thing of value being mine (I think I'm good at something that I am not good at and so it is not mine), or
    b. I am not mistaken about its being mine, but I render an illicit inference from this fact to a judgment about my extended or overall superiority to others. I infer from the fact that I have some superior ability or skill, for example, that I am a superior human being (or, in this case, a superior knower) in an extended sense.

OR both (1) and (2).

We are interested in hubris that errs in both ways and operates as an intellectual vice at the level of social structures and institutions. At this level, intellectual hubris involves a community's unjustly inflated sense of itself as a contributor to knowledge (*superiority as a knower*) that leads the community to disregard others as potential knowers and to treat their participation in relevant epistemic practices with disdain (*disregard of and disdain for others as knowers*). We suggest that the methodology of 20th century moral epistemology exhibits hubris in the way it overestimates the epistemic value of the philosophical methods it privileges by assuming they can do more than they are capable of doing (1b), and overextends the role and status of philosophical contributions to understanding what can count as sound moral reasoning (2b).

But is this really arrogance? Arrogance in the individual is a motivated disposition. Intellectually arrogant individuals are hyper-concerned with self-importance and status, and they use intellectual activity as a vehicle to secure and maintain a puffed up sense of self (ibid). (Roberts and Wood *forthcoming* "Humility and Understanding," p8).[2] It is odd to speak of a methodology as having a motivated disposition and as being arrogant. Our claim is not quite this. We propose that the methodology of 20th century Western moral epistemology is marked by the same intellectual arrogance that is manifest in the academic culture from which it emerged. In the next section we briefly summarize what we find mistaken about this methodology, and in the following section we consider where in these flaws we detect intellectual hubris. We then discuss some recent evidence, offered by philosophers, suggesting that intellectual hubris is manifest in certain shared understandings and social practices that partially constitute the culture of our discipline, and encourages us as a community sometimes to value status over knowledge and understanding.

3. Brief summary of our critique of the methodology of 20th century Western moral epistemology

Western philosophers within the 20th century analytic tradition have assumed that a primary mission for moral epistemology is to establish a singular model of moral justification that can be used to validate unbiased moral conclusions in all contexts. In pursuing this mission, philosophers have typically utilized

[2] [See also Marilyn Frye on arrogant vs. loving perception].

so-called armchair methods such as conceptualizing the logical constraints of moral reasoning under ideal conditions or imaginative role reversal. We have come to think that the very idea that there would be just one model of moral justification that could, in principle, rationally resolve moral disputes among people wherever they crop up (mission), and that philosophers from their armchairs are in the best or a unique position to discover or invent it (method) is suspect. We were very pleased when Elizabeth Anderson made a similar claim regarding philosophers' search for "fundamental principles of morality that could, in principle, settle all moral problems…in all circumstances (Anderson 2015, 22). She puts the point this way:

> Given that our [moral] conflicts are rooted in empirical realities that differ across societies and ages, there is no particular reason to think that there is any single, fundamental moral tool that would settle all our conflicts, or even all conflicts of a particular structure, everywhere. That is no more plausible that to suppose that there is one ultimate tool that will perform every task needed to build a shelter, no matter the climate, economic, and social conditions (Anderson 2015, 22).

An analogy between medical research and moral epistemology may illuminate why we think this mission and method are mistaken. Clinical trials conducted in the 1990s in the United States of the HIV drug AZT delivered very promising results in that context but, this same drug regimen proved ineffective and potentially harmful when introduced to populations in sub-Saharan Africa that were struggling with epidemic levels of dehydration, malaria, and malnutrition, as well as a lack of sufficient health care infrastructure to support the complicated AZT regimen. There are enough physiological similarities among human beings to predict that when human beings are similarly situated they are likely to respond similarly to a given medical intervention. However, the controlled features of the clinical trial in the U.S. were designed for a population situated very differently from many populations in sub-Saharan Africa, rendering the results of the U.S. trial often inapplicable and even harmful in the African context.

Similarly, we think that a model of moral justification developed under the controlled conditions of the philosopher's imagination and relying on his or her acknowledged or unacknowledged assumptions may or may not be capable of justifying moral claims under the conditions of real life. This may not be because the model has been applied incorrectly or unfairly, but because it has been developed assuming a

context with a particular set of features and then prescribed for all contexts, some of which have features that are radically different from those assumed in the philosopher's imagination. For example, the controlled conditions of philosophical thinking have tended to assume conditions for moral justification in which interlocutors exchanging reasons have equal social power. Reasoning models relying on this assumption may work well in situations where people are social equals, just as the AZT drug regimen worked well in populations who had adequate infrastructure and their basic health needs met. Yet a model of moral justification designed for conditions of social equality may be ineffective in situations where people have unequal social power, and may even be harmful if the model obscures or makes it easy to rationalize power abuse. In that context, such a model is unlikely to reliably validate unbiased moral conclusions.

4. Methodological hubris: Intellectual hubris in the methodology of 20th century moral epistemology

It is one thing to argue that the mission of contemporary moral epistemology is mistaken and that its characteristic methods are overvalued; it is another step to argue that these mistakes manifest intellectual arrogance. Why think this? We think hubris lurks in the way this methodology inflates philosophy's contribution to determining what is and what is not good moral reasoning, and encourages philosophers to establish hierarchical and non-reciprocal relationships with other relevant communities of knowers. We see hubris lurking in at least five places:

4.1 Hubris lurks in the mission to discover or invent the one-size-fits all model of moral justification. This is a grandiose fantasy if we take seriously the complexity of moral understanding in a diverse and unequal world and if we remember that moral justification is a practice that is both social and situated. When philosophers take this as their mission, they seem to assume either that "our" Western philosophy is the most advanced form of philosophical thinking (that we are exceptional) or that "we" are universally human, not culturally marked. Anderson argues that the growing body of empirical evidence showing that peoples' political and moral views are affected by their social identities matters for philosophy,

> because philosophers…are demographically unrepresentative of humanity at large, overwhelmingly drawn from advantaged social groups. Their professional situation mostly insulates them from the challenges faced by less privileged groups, and professional norms promote emotional detachment from the issues they contemplate" (Anderson 2015, 24).

The mission to discover or invent a one-size-fits all model of justification encourages philosophers to bracket difference and seek sameness (Mills 2005). The "sameness" among situations that philosophers imagine they see when they engage in conceptual analysis or fictional dialogues is not culturally neutral, as we often assume. Instead it is likely to project or reflect (or at least to be highly vulnerable to reflecting) the reasoning and concerns characteristic of our relatively shared social position, and is likely to obscure the reasoning and concerns of other social demographics.

4.2 Hubris lurks in the inflated epistemic worth assigned to armchair methods. This methodology places more stock than is warranted in the ability of its methods to enable impartial and unbiased reasoning. Moral philosophers are trained to think that our skills in conceptual analysis, logic, imaginative thought experiments or role reversal make our reasoning especially impartial and exceptionally good at objectively evaluating evidence. The idea seems to be that these methods enable philosophical reasoning to "rise above" unwieldy, often self-interested or dogmatic everyday moral thinking and allow philosophers to see more clearly than non-experts which kinds of reasons are morally rational and which are biasing.[3] Training in these methods can make philosophers good at identifying logical inconsistencies or conceptual incoherence, and exposing a certain range of background assumptions, but not necessarily at perceiving wide-spread forms of cultural or social bias, which a relatively homogenous social demographic is likely to share, making these biases largely invisible. Additionally, Schwitzgebel and Cushman (2012) found that professional training in philosophy does not appear to reduce the influence of a common cognitive bias, order effect, (the order in which data

[3] Peter Singer has famously argued that these skills make philosophers candidates for moral experts (Singer 1972). While Singer's view has been contested, it is still largely assumed that these methods are especially good at making the reasoning of philosophers more "objective" than the reasoning of non-academics.

is presented), in moral philosophers' judgments about and endorsements of moral principles. This does not mean that training in logic, conceptual analysis, or imaginative thought experiments are worthless, but it should put some pause in our confidence in the ability of these tools significantly to reduce certain forms of cognitive and social bias in philosophical reasoning.

4.3 *Hubris lurks in the inflated epistemic status granted to armchair methods*. This methodology assumes not only that its dominant methods can do more than they are capable of doing, but also that its methods are the only ones we need in order to produce sound knowledge about how people can achieve moral justification under non-ideal conditions. Philosophers may believe that forms of reasoning used by other scholarly disciplines, or perhaps by some "smart" non-academics have some bearing on how philosophical knowledge can be applied, but are irrelevant at the level of making recommendations about how people should reason. The methodology treats philosophical reasoning as radically independent or self-sufficient in generating this kind of knowledge.

4.4 *Relatedly, hubris lurks in the way this methodology encourages its practitioners to develop hierarchical epistemic relationships with other intellectual communities*. Arrogant people perceive themselves as superior to and as having nothing to learn from others, and so treat others with disdain or disregard (Tiberius and Walker, 382; Roberts and Wood 2007, 253). The epistemic superiority this methodology grants its dominant methods reflects an assumption that philosophy is uniquely positioned to tell people what it means to reason well about morality and does not have much to learn about this from either other scholarly disciplines or non-academic people. A methodology that rests on this assumption encourages its practitioners to set up hierarchical, non-reciprocal epistemic relationships with both groups.

As Alison's paper notes, in recent decades this tendency has softened with a greater emphasis on interdisciplinarity and with the development of experimental philosophy. And moral philosophers often call for applied ethics to be empirically informed and seem to welcome "relevant facts" from

other disciplines. However, this methodology seems to position "fact-gatherers" from other disciplines in the role of "informants" offering "data," and to position philosophers as the arbiters of which facts are relevant, how to deploy them, and the extent to which they ought to shape moral concepts. Furthermore, this push for interdisciplinary partnerships sometimes reflects vestiges of intellectual hubris in seeing "real knowledge" as coming from the hard sciences and so viewing cognitive science or psychology as respectable intellectual partners, for example, but not gender or de-colonial studies, which are often dismissed as special interests or as politics and not philosophy.

4.5. *Finally, we think hubris may lurk in resistance to methodological change:* One important way we come to discover our vices is when others point them out to us but the arrogant are cut off from this source of self-knowledge precisely because the vice leads them to disregard any perspective but their own (Tiberius and Walker, 382). The arrogant are quite literally close-minded. We wonder if a seeming resistance to methodological revision in moral epistemology may be partly due to hubris that discourages recognition or acknowledgement of our limitations. For example, philosophers who propose to expand the domain of the moral or to blur the lines between the moral, the cultural and the religious are often considered relativists or anthropologists. Philosophers who argue that consideration of gender and race are highly relevant to philosophical thinking are often accused of doing politics rather than philosophy, of using philosophy in the service of a political agenda, or of seeking special interests rather than timeless truths. Some of this resistance to change might be due to the fact that paradigm shifts are slow to take root. But it may also be due in part to a collective communal self-conception that seeks to defend the status of philosophy as the sole arbiter of moral reason, and so may disregard perspectives that would deflate this pretension.

To summarize thus far, we detect hubris in the methodology of 20th century analytic moral epistemology to the extent that this methodology sets up a grandiose, unrealistic intellectual goal, overestimates the epistemic value of armchair methods in pursuing this goal, assumes that philosophers

trained in these methods are uniquely qualified to say definitively which forms of reasoning can justify moral claims and to oversee the significance of facts gathered from other disciplines or "the folk", and encourages hierarchical, non-reciprocal intellectual relationships with other relevant bodies of knowers.

We do not wish to devalue or under-estimate the value of philosophical training and skill for understanding which forms of reasoning can validate unbiased moral conclusions under conditions of cultural diversity and social inequality; indeed, we think such training is indispensable. However, we propose that we should conceive of philosophy as providing epistemic skills that need engagement with and the support of many other kinds of epistemic competencies in order adequately to understand the complex phenomenon of how people can achieve warranted moral understandings under these conditions. We think it is a grandiose pipe dream to believe that philosophy could answer this question all by itself from the armchair. In the next two sections, we suggest that this pipe dream may be enabled and sustained by intellectual arrogance manifest in the broader culture of academic philosophy.

5. Disciplinary Hubris: Intellectual hubris in the organizational culture of academic philosophy

Intellectually arrogant individuals either mistakenly surmise that they are superior in a set of worthy intellectual competencies or they mistakenly construe those epistemic skills in which they do excel as the most or the only valuable ones for knowing, or both. Because the overriding concern of the arrogant personality is to establish and maintain self-importance, the intellectually arrogant are motivated to protect both the superior status of the intellectual competencies they take themselves to excel in, and *their* status as someone (or the only one) who excels in these allegedly superior methods or abilities.

This need to protect their status as a superior knower generates at least three characteristics of the intellectually arrogant personality: (1) rigid policing of intellectual borders, (2) radical epistemic independence, and (3) intellectual domination (Roberts and Wood *forthcoming*, 13-15). Intellectually arrogant people tend to police what counts as a relevant epistemic competency and who counts as a potential contributor to knowledge in order to protect their inflated self-conception as someone who excels at the only epistemic skills that matter. Intellectual competencies at which they do not excel must

be denied as relevant or denigrated as unworthy, and other people who threaten their standing as authoritative knowers must also be denied or denigrated as knowers. Intellectually arrogant people also tend to perceive themselves as radically epistemically independent; they can learn nothing, or at least nothing of value, from others. And intellectual arrogance breeds relationships of intellectual domination in which a person perceives and treats others as their epistemic subordinates (Roberts and Wood, *forthcoming*, 11).

We suggest that these three characteristic features of the intellectually arrogant individual—(1) rigid policing of intellectual borders, (2) purported hyper-autonomy of intellectual agency, and (3) intellectual domination—can also be detected in currently shared understandings within philosophy and in some of its prevailing social practices. To the extent this is true, it suggests that arrogance is a characteristic disposition of the academic culture that encourages those of us who inhabit this culture to value and seek status and prestige over understanding and knowledge.

Is it really hubris? Well, even in the individual it is hard to say with certainty. But there is a growing body of evidence put forth by philosophers that makes this a plausible suggestion that is worth investigating further.

5.1 What counts as "real" philosophy and who counts as a "real" philosopher?

We detect hubris in both explicit and implicit disciplinary norms and practices that unjustifiably and defensively close philosophy's borders to certain forms of reasoning and modes of reflection, certain topics and questions, whole intellectual traditions, and whole groups of people. We are not talking about arrogant behavior shown by particular individual philosophers; instead we focus on features of the culture of academic philosophy that to greater or lesser extent influences the behavior of all of us who inhabit this culture. In the final section, we reflect briefly on its influence on us as we have pursed our collaborative work in moral epistemology and the humbling lessons we've learned along the way.

5.1.1 Policing topics, questions, and whole intellectual traditions

It seems healthy for a discipline to engage in fairly regular self-reflection about its aims, methods, and what distinguishes it from other disciplines. The policing we see is not this, but is rather a kind

of premature and defensive closing of philosophy's borders to whole sets of questions and topics, forms of reasoning and reflection, and even whole intellectual traditions from entire geographical regions. For example, feminist and de-colonial philosophy is often excluded and sometimes denigrated because it is construed as politics or ideology in contrast to the construal of philosophy as culturally unmarked and unencumbered by political commitments (Dotson 2012).[4] On the *PhilosopHER* blog, Meena Krishnamurthy remarks on the omission of figures such as Dubois, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and Malcom X from the "official" story of twentieth century Western political philosophy.[5] Sally Haslanger reports the almost total absence of work in feminist philosophy in six of the discipline's premier journals including those that specialize in ethics and political philosophy (2008, 6). The paucity of feminist contributions in these journals is not by itself evidence of bias; it could be that no one submits feminist work to these venues or that the feminist articles submitted are not of high quality. However, there is a growing body of anecdotal evidence documenting a pattern of exclusion that suggests that something more may be going on.[6] Haslanger recounts her own and other philosophers' experiences of having their articles in philosophy of language routinely sent to reviewers while their articles on feminist topics are routinely sent back from the editorial desk without being sent to reviewers (2008, 6).

Philosophers working in Asian Philosophy, Islamic philosophy, African philosophy, and Indian Philosophy regularly confront skeptical questioning—"How is this philosophy?"—or outright denial that the thinkers, texts, and modes of reflection characteristic of these traditions count as philosophy.[7]

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[4] Kristie Doston argues that academic philosophy is a culture that privileges legitimation as the primary means of validating what counts as real philosophy ("What makes this paper philosophy?" 2012). Legitimation is a form of validation that requires people to demonstrate how their work, the questions they are asking, and modes of reasoning they are using are congruent with prevailing norms about what philosophy is that are assumed to be univocally accepted within the discipline. Dotson writes that academic philosophy is "a cultural that privileges legitimation according to presumed commonly-held, univocally relevant justifying norms, which serves to amplify existing practices of exceptionalism and senses of incongruence within the profession" (2012, 4).

[5] (Meena Krishnamurthy, "Decolonizing Analytic Political Philosophy," *https://politicalphilosopher.net/2016/06/03/meenakrishnamurthy/* Accessed 21 Jan 2017).

[6] As reported on blogs such as *Feminist Philosophers*, *What it is like to be a Woman in Philosophy*, and *PhilosopHER*.

[7] See Nicholas Tampico "Not all things wise or good are philosophy" published online at *Aeon*, accessed December 15, 2016. In "Philosophical Vanities, "Amy Olberding addresses this post, which was cited approvingly by Leiter.

For example, in a recent Facebook post, a philosopher who has one book on Aztec philosophy and a substantial number of articles, shares the reasoning used by NEH reviewers for rejecting his proposal for a book on Mexica ethics. One reviewer writes that although the Aztec conception of the good life "is indeed a philosophical question…the Aztec answer seems radically detached from anything we would recognize as an adequate answer". After acknowledging that this is also true of much ancient western philosophy, the reviewer nonetheless concludes that this project in Mexica ethics is "more anthropological than philosophical".

Under the pseudonym, Prof. Manners, Amy Olberding writes about the logic of this form of policing.[8] Philosophy presents itself as the sole claimant to a "host of *generally desirable and admiration-worthy traits,"* including critical thinking, fearless curiosity, freedom from unexamined commitments, and readiness to challenge the status quo, and then denies these traits to thinkers, texts, or whole intellectual traditions it wants to exclude (emphasis in the original).[9] Olberding points out not only how "wildly arrogant" it sounds when philosophy lays sole claim to these intellectual competencies, as if philosophy is the only discipline interested in critical thinking and fearless curiosity, but also that philosophy routinely fails to exhibit many of the intellectual traits it claims for itself. Our discipline does not seem fearlessly curious or especially ready to challenge the status quo within philosophy when it claims with certainty and with no serious exposure to them, that some topic, text, thinker or intellectual tradition is not philosophy.

Its also worth pointing out that the logic often used to exclude Islamic and Confucian thought on grounds that it is steeped in religion or culture seems rarely if ever applied to philosophers like Aquinas and Augustine whose work is squarely within a religious tradition that they do not take to be

[8] "Philosophical Vanities" on *Feminist Philosophers*, September 17, 2016, accessed December 15, 2016.
[9] Olberding points out that there are important debates among scholars of Confucianism, for example, about whether philosophy is an appropriate term to apply to this tradition since it is not an indigenous concept in Confucian thought. The point is not to avoid these debates or conclude from the outset that everything is philosophy. Rather, her point is that philosophy displays both its arrogance and ignorance when, it claims with certainty and with no serious exposure to what it wants to exclude that some topic, text, thinker or intellectual tradition is not philosophy.

open to question. These figures are not denied pride of place in philosophy even if Medieval Christian philosophy is not widely studied or appreciated in the discipline today.[10]

The policing this arrogance generates produces significant social and material risks for people working in the discipline who find themselves on the wrong sides of what is considered real philosophy. They risk exclusion and marginalization of their work, and an inability to get funding for research, but also losing their jobs if this policing influences tenure decisions, and/or being passed over for merit raises or promotion if this policing results in their work being undervalued. These forms of exclusion also diminish philosophy to the extent that valuable contributions that stand to improve our understanding and wisdom about enormously complex questions are ignored, dismissed, or meet with stubborn refusal to be understood or taken seriously.

5.1.2 *Defining "real" philosophy as the academic journal article*

Another kind of policing involves rigid disciplinary norms about what constitutes a valuable intellectual contribution in philosophy and a variety of practices that conspire to maintain these norms. Eric Schwitzgebel describes this eloquently on his blog, *The Splintered Mind*.[11]

> Academic philosophers in Anglophone Ph.D.-granting departments tend to have a narrow conception of what counts as valuable philosophical work. Hiring, tenure, promotion and prestige turn mainly on one's ability to write an essay in a particular theoretical, abstract style, normally in reaction to the work of a small group of canonical historical and 20th century figures, on a fairly constrained range of topics, published in a limited range of journals and presses.[12]

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[10] Joseph Prabhu writes: "If philosophy consists in systematic attempts to address fundamental questions about the nature of reality, the nature and methods of knowledge, the basis of moral aesthetic values and judgments, the self, and the meaning and goal of religion, then there is abundant philosophy in Indian, Chinese, and Islamic thought" ("Philosophy in an Age of Global Encounter" 2001, 30). He concludes that it cannot be on philosophical grounds that these traditions are excluded but that something else is going on here (ibid). Referencing Prabhu's essay, Kristi Dotson suggests that this "something else" is an academic culture the manifests exceptionalism. She writes,

> "Exceptionalism involves the unfounded exclusion of large bodies of investigation based upon the privileging of one group…and their investigations over others. Excluded groups might actually meet many of the demands proposed by operative, justifying norms. However, they are still excluded due to historical privileging of investigative enterprises produces by privileged populations" (2012, 10).

[11] Eric Schwitzgebel, "What Philosophical Work Could Be" at *The Splintered Mind*, published online, June 11, 2015: Accessed December 19, 2016.

[12] Schwitzgebel does not wish to denigrate the academic journal article but to question why it is privileged as the only genre for legitimate philosophical reflection and expression? He points out that the invention of the internet gives rise to new possibilities for modes of reflection and intellectual engagement that are not inherently un-philosophical (just as the rise of the printing press did).

As Schwitzgebel points out, this view of research is both extremely narrow and historically recent. Philosophers dating back to Plato and through the mid-20th century have engaged a plurality of genres for serious philosophical reflection—e.g., in the 20th century Sartre, de Beauvoir, and Camus wrote fiction; Russell and Dewey's political activism and popular writing, Wittgenstein's fragments.

The policing happens by labeling as service rather than research forms of writing or thought expressed in media other than the academic journal article (e.g., writing for popular presses, blogs, twitter feeds, online magazines, fiction, or presenting in more public venues such as TED talks).[13] Service is typically held in less esteem in the discipline, and is less materially valuable in terms of tenure, promotion, and merit raises. This narrow view discourages philosophers from pursuing public engagement and collaboration if they want to be taken seriously in the discipline, and it penalizes philosophers who don't conform. It also trains the next generation of philosophers in this narrow mode of philosophical reflection and to protect this border if they want to be bona fide philosophers.

Schwitzgebel thinks that behind this narrow view of research may be the disciplinary assumption that popular writing involves ""dumbing-down" pre-existing philosophical ideas "for an audience of non-experts whose reactions one does not plan to take seriously"". This promotes the discipline's self-conception as epistemically independent of and superior to non-experts and denigrates engaged forms of reflection and communication. This form of policing is also a way of implicitly denigrating philosophy departments that emphasize teaching and service over research or emphasize a more inclusive conception of research. It serves to prop up the status of departments that privilege highly technical, abstract reflection as being the real authorities in the field, rather than simply experts in one way of doing philosophy about certain kinds of topics.

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[13] In UK, apparently the REF process, which assesses departments every five years of so, places a lot of weight on a factor called **impact**, which means making a difference in the world. Jenny Saul's "impact" in addressing the underrepresentation of women in philosophy means that Sheffield rates high and the work of the Global Ethics Centre in Birmingham enabled Birmingham to win second place in the most recent rankings resulting from the REF assessment. Maybe part of the difference is that more of the funding for UK universities is public, so "impact" seems a relevant criterion of assessment

5.1.3 *Program rankings and job placement*

Another way that the discipline holds tightly to fairly rigid and narrow views of what counts as real philosophy is through program rankings, and perhaps even job placement. The Leiter report has been criticized but is still widely used.[14] The report ranks departments on the basis of "faculty quality and reputation," and "philosophical distinction" as voted on by a board of advisors, most of whom come from universities that appear in the rankings (PGR, "What the rankings mean"). The very idea of rankings suggests concern with status as opposed to, for example, providing discerning students informative descriptions about the topics and traditions that various schools emphasize, the kind of intellectual work people in different kinds of departments produce, and data about placement in a broad range of academic positions, as well as alternative academic and non-academic jobs.[15]

In recent years, some previously excluded specializations such as philosophy of race, feminist philosophy, 20th century continental philosophy, and Chinese philosophy have been included in the break down by department specializations. The report contains sub-rankings based on these specializations of the schools listed in the general rankings. It also includes lists of schools that are newly recommended for evaluation in these specialized areas. However, none of the schools newly recommended for evaluation in these previously excluded specialty areas is listed in the overall rankings. This makes it seem as if being considered excellent or distinctive in a sub-discipline such as feminist philosophy or Chinese philosophy, for example, does not carry enough weight to establish a school in the general rankings. If this is correct, the extent to which schools are judged distinctive in previously excluded areas of philosophy, but have never been judged as some of the best *philosophy* departments may provide

[14] See for example: http://blog.talkingphilosophy.com/?p=7859, and http://rgheck.frege.org/philosophy/aboutpgr.php. See also: https://philosophyrankings.com/tag/philosophical-gourmet-report/. And http://dailynous.com/2015/12/14/a-detailed-critique-of-the-philosophical-gourmet-report/.

[15] In one facebook discussion a philosopher suggests that the APA provide and manage "an informational website with lists of/links to every single philosophy department in every country….Let the institution get information from each department about what faculty members (and perhaps also graduate students) work on, and provide links to faculty (grad student) websites and PhilPapers profiles, and allow the overall lists to be restricted to those with one or more faculty members working in a given area or topic."

additional evidence of how the discipline has excluded whole topics, sets of questions, and methodologies from being considered real philosophy.[16]

Someone might object that the rankings are useful because they are tied to job placement, which is a serious consideration for a student thinking about advanced study in philosophy. The best schools have some of the best placement records. But best placement records where?[17] My own unranked department has a 63% placement record (between 2005-2013) in tenure-track and fixed-term academic appointments (most of these are tenure-track), and about a 22% placement record in related non-academic fields. Within academia, we tend to place students in small liberal arts, teaching-oriented schools.[18]

Taking these first three points together, intellectual arrogance seems to lurk in a defensive, sometimes hostile policing of philosophy's borders that privileges a narrow set of intellectual competencies, on a limited range of topics and questions, presented in the academic journal article or scholarly single-authored monograph, which a small group of philosophers in a few places do especially well. All of these things feed into each other to generate an elite, closed-minded intellectual community.

5.1.4 *Demographic policing*

Much of what we've already discussed bears on how our discipline polices who counts as a real philosopher, but there are additional ways that demographic policing in philosophy happens.

[16] We remain unclear about this point and would appreciate clarification if we have misinterpreted this part of the rankings. But it seems like the following is the case: Schools already in the general rankings were then reviewed to see which of those already ranked schools were top in feminism or philosophy of race or Continental philosophy. But schools now being *newly* considered for evaluation as distinctive in a specialized area such as feminism or race are not in the general rankings, and so have never been judged as some of the best *philosophy* departments. This gives the impression that being really excellent in one of these areas is insufficient for being considered a top philosophy program because these areas of philosophy are not "real" philosophy, whereas being really excellent in analytic metaphysics or epistemology or philosophy of mind makes a department a top philosophy program. But we may be misinterpreting this part of the rankings. Thoughts?

[17] We are trying to locate the info we read a few years ago regarding how few departments are involved in training new Ph.D.s who get jobs in research departments with grad programs. Anyone know what article we are thinking of and where do locate it?

[18] There seem to be circles or clusters of placement within philosophy—schools that specialize in American Pragmatism, Catholic schools that place well in religiously-based, liberal arts colleges and pluralist departments that are increasingly placing well in departments with increasingly demographically diverse populations or in institutions trying to attract scholars capable of interdisciplinary teaching and research.

Women and especially people of color of both genders remain significantly underrepresented in the profession.[19] Demographic policing takes a number of forms:[20]

Outright discrimination: Women and people of color in the field report that outright discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment remain all too common.[21] In a 2008 interview, six black women Ph.D.s in philosophy report a mixture of supportive and encouraging individual mentors in an academic culture fraught with messages of exclusion, invisibility, double-standards (Allen, et al, 2008).

Implicit bias and subtler forms of discrimination: There is also a growing body of evidence suggesting that implicit bias contributes to subtler forms of discrimination in hiring, tenure and promotion, admissions, and publication review processes (Haslanger 2008, Saul 2013). Jacqueline Scott suggests subtle demographic policing in the way we often teach philosophy (Allen et al, 2008). Our teaching often aims to bring students up to a level of understanding that uses technical vocabulary and thinks about questions in a highly abstract theoretical way, and then we tend stay at that level. This pedagogy presents philosophy as "a foreign language, that talks about a world very different from the one [most of our students] and most other people inhabit and care about" (Allen, et al, 184).[22] It makes philosophy seem intimidating and irrelevant leading many students to assume that they don't belong. The problem is exacerbated for students of color and women who also do not see people who look like them or from their communities represented in syllabi or as canonical figures in the discipline.

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[19] For data on people of color see: http://dailynous.com/2014/08/28/blacks-in-philosophy-in-the-us/. For the most recent data on women in philosophy that we've come across see: Eric Schwitzgebel and Carolyn Dicey Jennings, "Women in Philosophy: Quantitative Analyses of Specialization, Prevalence, Visibility, and Generational Change" *forthcoming in Public Affairs Quarterly* (posted online here: http://faculty.ucr.edu/~eschwitz/SchwitzAbs/WomenInPhil.htm.

[20] These forms range from broader forms of structural injustice which create lack of access for racial minorities and many women to opportunities and credentials required to become highly educated, let alone a highly educated philosopher, to who is represented in the canon of philosophy and who shows up on undergraduate syllabi or in graduate level course offerings, to overt and covert forms of racism and sexism in academic philosophy that makes philosophy a relatively hostile environment for many women and racial minorities.

[21] See *What it is like to be a woman in philosophy* at: https://beingawomaninphilosophy.wordpress.com/.

[22] Scott does not diminish the value of using and coining technical vocabulary or the value of abstract theoretical thinking, but argues that philosophy should also be able to explain its ideas and insights to non-experts, and it should bear on the lives of real people inhabiting the actual world. This idea isn't foreign to Western philosophy; Ancient Greek philosophers understood philosophy as an important tool for discerning how to live well. Scott suggests that if we cannot or will not do this, we risk being as irrelevant as we are often perceived to be.

Internalized policing: Finally, there are features of the culture that may promote a kind of internalized policing in which members of underrepresented groups self-sabotage or leave the profession concluding that they aren't smart enough or don't belong. Stereotype threat is a psychological phenomenon in which a person gets primed under certain conditions/in certain environments to "live up to" the negative stereotypes that stigmatize their social group in that context. Haslanger (2008) cites a variety of ways that the culture of academic philosophy makes women and people of color vulnerable to stereotype threat and thus to actually underperforming. She recounts her own struggle with this in experiences of "feeling tongue-tied and "stupid""…watching "myself unable to follow an argument or clearly articulate my question" (2008, 9). While any individual may experience feeling "struck dumb" with anxiety when struggling with complex ideas, stereotype threat creates a culture in which members of social groups who are stigmatized by negative stereotypes are systematically vulnerable to feeling and believing that they are "stupid" and routinely underperforming as a result (Haslanger 2008, 9).

Is demographic policing evidence of intellectual hubris in the culture? It is hard to say if explicit and subtler discrimination against women and other minorities in philosophy is itself a manifestation of intellectual arrogance.[23] But we think hubris can be detected in the virulent defensive backlash that often happens when this data is presented, or when people suggest we should make efforts to make philosophy more demographically and topically inclusive both for reasons of justice and for reasons of philosophy.[24] This defensive and hostile posture suggests that intellectual hubris may lurk in a hyper-concern to protect status by protecting the discipline's intellectual borders from perceived intruders who might deflate its pretensions to be unbiased, and reveal it to be incomplete or mistaken.

5.1.5 *Ideology of Smartness*

[23] Some argue that racism and sexism are forms of arrogance. Robert Roberts says that the manifest vicious pride in the form of domination because they rely on the thought that a whole group of people are superior *as human beings* to whole other groups (pg #). My colleague Grant Silva has a paper in progress arguing that racism is vicious form of self-love.

[24] For one example see Jennifer Saul's description of her experience when she suggested that the department where she worked at the time make efforts toward improving demographic diversity in its hiring practices: "Do women and minorities have an advantage on the job market?" November 18, 2015 on *What is it like to be a woman in philosophy?* Accessed, January 3, 2017.

Finally, there is a small and largely anecdotal literature suggesting that the culture of academic philosophy may be preoccupied with smartness, or rather with appearing smart.[25] The best philosophers, the most promising students, are often identified as those who seem really smart sometimes without any evidence of their actually being smart, in the sense of producing careful and reflective philosophical work. Cleverness, quickness, and confidence in expression, sometimes regardless of the content of what is being expressed, seem valued traits in philosophy. If this is true, it exacerbates demographic policing within philosophy and especially the impact of stereotype threat on marginalized populations because it makes seeming smart the indication of one's status as a good philosopher in contexts in which stereotype threat may systematically work to make women and people of color both feel and be perceived as "stupid." This concern to appear smart may also play a role in the backlash against suggestions to diversify philosophy. If we make our discipline's borders more expansive or acknowledge our epistemic dependence on others, we make ourselves vulnerable to appearing less smart.

6. Disciplinary hubris lurks in philosophy's concern for epistemic independence and its manifestations of intellectual domination

6.1 Radical epistemic independence

The concern within our discipline to clearly and rigidly demarcate what counts as philosophy and who counts as a philosopher suggests a more fundamental concern to carve out and maintain an autonomous domain of knowledge to which philosophers have unique access because of our exceptional intellectual training and skills. As Olberding points out, philosophers often distinguish philosophy from

[25] See, for example, Eric Schweitzgebel, "On Being Good at Seeming Smart" *Splintered Mind*, 3/25/2010 and Eric Schliesser, "Unger Knew but Didn't Want to Know" *Digressions&Impressions*, 6/17/2014). See also, http://dailynous.com/2016/03/04/bias-subjectivity-and-superficiality-in-philosophy/. From Schliesser's blog: Schliesser recounts parts of an interview, in which Peter Unger claims to be able to do psychology better than even the really good psychologists and will be running psychological experiments to straighten out the mess that psychologists have made of their field. Schliesser notices that Unger displays a seeming "obsession with smartness; 'smart' and its cognates are repeated like a mantra through the interview. He also has a minor obsession with ranking relative smartness not just within philosophy (e.g., he says elsewhere in the interview, "I'm smarter than almost all of them. A few of my colleagues are smarter than I am,") but also within a discipline like psychology (see above 'one of the half-dozen best of the last forty years or so'), and across disciplines ("the three smartest guys in my class — I wasn't one of them, although I was very smart — two of them became theoretical physicists. But the third went into philosophy — David Lewis"). There is a hint (offered as "complete speculation") that such smartness is ultimately just something we naturally come with--a pleasing delusion not uncommon among successful people."

other disciplines by laying sole claim to competencies in critical thinking or conceptual analysis, logic and argumentation, and claiming further that these skills uniquely equip us for answering "big" questions that bear on perennial issues in human life and experience.[26] The self-conception that we are the only discipline that does these things and that can tackle these questions relies on an assumption that there is an autonomous domain of knowledge that philosophers are uniquely trained to access or produce and that we do not need input from other disciplines or non-experts in order to produce this knowledge. This seems to make us an outlier among many disciplines. In many other fields that tackle big questions there are often teams of scholars, sometimes from multiple, related disciplines who work over the course of decades in order to make progress toward answering those questions. John Hardwig (1991) cites examples from physics of experiments that ran for decades and required input from scholars in multiple sub-disciplines within physics and from outside of physics. The thought that philosophers could answers questions about the nature of justice, or morality, or the mind, or the self, all by ourselves armed only with skills in conceptual analysis and logic should be questioned.

But maybe prevailing norms and practices within philosophy no longer strive for this kind of disciplinary autonomy? Many areas of philosophy seem to be moving away from this picture. Several areas (e.g., moral psychology, cognitive science, philosophy of science, philosophy of mind, ex-phi) emphasize and pursue multi- and inter- disciplinary collaborations, recognizing and welcoming the need to approach complex questions with the intellectual resources of many disciplines. And as already noted, some areas of practical or applied philosophy have long acknowledged the relevance of empirical facts from experts in other fields or practices. Intellectual hubris can still lurk, however, in the acknowledgement that we need facts from the fact-gatherers while philosophers retain overriding authority to decide what those facts mean and whether and how they are relevant to the "big" questions

[26] Reading the transcripts of Unger's interview from Schliesser's blog: some philosophers apparently think philosophers are also the only ones who can do the scholarly work of other disciplines. Unger says that psychologists—even the good ones—have made a mess of their field and that he will run experiments to clear up that mess. ("Unger Knew, but Didn't Want to Know" *Digressions&Impressions*, 6/17/2014).

we pursue.[27] In the kinds of moral disputes our book addresses, what count as the facts, how moral issues are framed, and who has the authority to decide these questions are often hotly contested, and it is not clear on what grounds philosophers are especially or uniquely competent to decide, for example, which way of framing an issue is morally rational way and which way is biasing, even though we often have important contributions to make in these debates. The fact that philosophy increasingly sees itself partnering productively with other fields does not by itself root out intellectual arrogance. We need to evaluate the normative structure of the intellectual collaborations we pursue.

6.2 Norms that encourage intellectual domination

Intellectual arrogance breeds relations of intellectual domination. Intellectually arrogant people aim to dominate others intellectually, viewing all others as their epistemic subordinates. To the extent that philosophy does position scholars in the other disciplines with which it teams up as mere fact-gatherers who provide information for our reflection, and positions itself as the arbiter of which facts are relevant and what they mean, this may be a manifestation of intellectual domination. And to the extent that philosophers position themselves as telling non-academic people how to reason well, or what justice is, for example, but do not ask whether we have anything to learn about these questions from people who are mired in injustice or on the front lines of justice movements, this may also manifest intellectual domination. This is not to claim that philosophers have no expertise or that epistemic deference to philosophers on some questions in some contexts is never warranted; it is rather to highlight a disciplinary tendency not to recognize epistemic authority in other communities of knowers who may have crucial insights to contribute, insights that philosophers are not well-positioned to have, and instead to treat other knowers as our epistemic subordinates.[28] Robert Roberts also suggests that intellectual domination may be encouraged by academia's heavy emphasis on finding flaws in other peoples' work, and less emphasis

[27] See for example, Peter Singer's introduction to *Practical Ethics*, 2011, third edition, Cambridge University Press.
[28] A note about ideal vs. non-ideal theory in philosophy.

on what he call intellectual graciousness, which looks for what is valuable in others' contributions and not just for mistakes (*forthcoming*, "Learning Intellectual Humility").[29]

7. Intellectual humility: A structural virtue for academic philosophy?

Roberts and Wood write that in order to be a strong contributor to advancing knowledge, "people need to be willing to think outside the presuppositions of their communities, to doubt authorities, and to imagine unheard-of possibilities" (2007, 255). Philosophy's self-conception as a discipline values and claims to embody these competencies, but we think intellectual hubris in the contemporary structure of the discipline interferes with our ability as a community to cultivate and display these traits. Intellectually arrogant people are encumbered in their pursuit of knowledge by the desire to look good, for status, and are inclined to dismiss without consideration the views of others they take to be their intellectual inferiors (Roberts and Wood 2007, 252-253).[30] If intellectual hubris does lurk as a structural vice in our discipline and is influencing our philosophical methodologies, and if we care about understanding, truth, and wisdom, then we should work collectively to root it out. In this final section, we want to brainstorm what it might mean and look like for philosophy's self-conception to become more humble and for intellectual humility to infuse its social practices.

7.1 Intellectual humility[31]

[29] This is more speculative and anecdotal, but hubris may also lurk in training to be a professional philosopher, which sometimes feels like training in intellectual domination: training that models what constitutes "professional" behavior as showing people up in public setting, appearing smart, mastering the use of intellectual intimidation techniques that aims to cast doubt on the intellectual credibility of one's interlocutors (e.g., the example of how Moore related to those who had different intuitions or disagreed with him).

[30] Roberts and Wood give an example from their observations of philosophers: "Young "analytic" philosophers sometimes exemplify this vice vis-à-vis Continental or informal philosophy, just as young Continental philosophers sometimes suppose the profundity of their school to warrant dismissing the work of their analytic counterparts as superficial gamesmanship" (2007, 253).

[31] Linda Zagzebski lists the following examples of widely regarded intellectual virtues (Zagzebski 1996, 114):

- The ability to recognize salient facts; sensitivity to detail
- Open-mindedness in collecting and appraising evidence
- Fairness in evaluating the arguments of others
- Intellectual humility
- Intellectual perseverance, diligence, care and thoroughness
- Adaptability of intellect
- The detective's virtues: thinking of coherent explanations of the facts
- Being able to recognize reliable authority
- Insight into persons, problems, theories

Knowledge acquisition and transmission happens in social settings whose mood and interpersonal dynamics strongly affect intellectual processes. Intellectual humility promotes these processes by regulating the individual and regulating the social context in which she is interacting (Roberts and Wood 2007, 252). Philosophical accounts of intellectual humility as a trait of individuals are contested (Snow 1995; Roberts and Wood 2003; Grenburg 2005; Garcia 2006; Kidd 2015). The account we draw from characterizes intellectual humility as involving both *awareness* and *ownership* of one's intellectual limitations (Whitcomb et al, 2015). The intellectually humble have a keen awareness of their epistemic limitations, but humility requires more than this. Intellectually humble people also they take responsibility for their limitations—they own them—by acknowledging them when the occasion calls for it, being motivated to improve or correct for them, and responding with regret or dismay about them as opposed to hostility or defensiveness (Whitcomb et al., 15). Humble people are not concerned with self-importance and so are freed up, in this case, to pursue knowledge and understanding without concerns for their status or prestige or "looking good" getting in the way.

Intellectually humble inquirers display characteristics that are the opposite of arrogance. Humble inquirers have more potential teachers than their less humble counterparts because,

> in interacting with minds that are somewhat alien to his own the strongly un-arrogant person is better able…to achieve the sympathetic understanding of [their] views necessary for recognizing what is valuable in those views and what, therefore, needs to be incorporated into [his] own views (Roberts & Wood 2007, 253-254).

An academic culture in philosophy that manifests intellectual humility would likely generate more expansive, inclusive, evolving disciplinary boundaries that are not so permeable as to dissolve the discipline but flexible enough to maintain a healthy sense of wonder and invite ongoing discussion about what philosophy is. In a Facebook discussion of program rankings, one philosopher points out that of all

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- Teaching virtues: being communicative, intellectual candor, knowing your audience and how they respond Humility, which is the opposite of hubris is an especially important intellectual virtue and may even be a kind of meta-virtue that enables many of these other traits. It is difficult to imagine an intellectually arrogant person as an open-minded person who evaluates evidence fairly, recognizes reliable authority, and is sensitive to salient facts of a situation. Intellectual humility seems necessary for most of these other intellectual virtues, and epistemic arrogance seems to undermine most of them.

the disciplines philosophy may be the most pluralist and diverse in methodologies, canons, traditions, thinkers, and in the questions it can pursue. An intellectually humble discipline would likely embrace this pluralism rather than obscure or deny it by trying to draw a very narrow, ossified boundary around what is the "real" thing and who are the "real" philosophers. It would also likely acknowledge, value, and even embrace our epistemic interdependence on other relevant disciplines and non-academics, both because these other knowers can reveal our limitations as a discipline and because they may correct or make up for them as we pursue understanding about enormously complex questions. Relatedly, a humble discipline would encourage intellectual relationships of mutuality and reciprocity within our discipline and with other communities of knowers.

We are not entirely sure what humility in philosophy would look like more specifically. To conclude, we share some lessons we have learned about a more humble methodology for moral epistemology and then some thoughts about what a more humble academic culture might look like based on our recent participation in two different research projects.

7.2 Methodological humility in 20th century Western moral epistemology

We have learned some humbling methodological lessons in our quest to understand how moral justification can be achieved in contexts of cultural diversity and social inequality. We have come to realize the highly complex nature of this question and to believe that we philosophers cannot answer it by ourselves with only the methods of philosophy.

A more humble mission: Early in our project we did not realize this and, like our predecessors, our initial goal was to use the tools of philosophy to develop an alternative model that could be used to rationally resolve moral disputes in all contexts. But over time we came to believe that this was a fool's errand and that we needed to adjust our mission and our methods. We realized that many of the same criticisms we were making of the models of moral justification proposed by 20th century analytic philosophers applied equally to our initial proposals. Over time we concluded that there are likely to be a plurality of good models of moral justification and that the ability of any model to yield warranted moral

conclusions can be assessed only when we consider the relationship between that model and its context of use, much like the ability of an HIV drug regimen to yield improved health outcomes will depend on the relationship between that regimen and its context of use. We now defend what we think is a more humble and realistic mission for moral epistemology, one which acknowledges both pluralism—that diverse forms of reasoning are needed for moral justification—and situatedness—that the ability of a model of moral justification to validate unbiased conclusions will be partially determined by features of the context in which the model is used (for a related approach, see Marino 2015). We propose that philosophers study exemplary models of moral justification that people have used in attempting to resolve moral disputes in specific social contexts under non-ideal conditions, and to try to explain why those models seem to provide reliable guidance in those contexts.

A more humble method: This alternative mission requires empirical research into the relationships between diverse reasoning practices and the particular contexts in which they work well. We propose that philosophers investigate case studies of real-world moral disputes in which people lack shared cultural assumptions and/or are unequal in social power. Still, over time our understanding of the philosopher's role in this kind of investigation, and what kinds of answers we can expect to get has evolved. At first, we defended the idea that philosophers should make *their* study of moral justification more empirically informed by consulting knowledge from other disciplines and non-academic. But we now think that in many circumstances, multidisciplinary teamwork is the most promising approach for increasing our understanding and ability to make normative recommendations about moral justification in a diverse and unequal world. And we think ideally these teams would include philosophers, scholars from other relevant disciplines and, to the extent possible, people who are enmeshed in the real-world dispute. Testimony from members of social groups who are frequently engaged in public moral conflicts and have a good deal invested in their outcome, and who regularly find themselves on the losing side of epistemic injustice as victims of testimonial and hermeneutical injustice (Fricker 2007), epistemic smothering, or silencing (Dotson 2011) is especially important. Anderson suggests that "lacking stakes—the typical conditions of philosophers when they understand speculative thought experiments" or even when we

engage in thinking about real world conflicts about which we have no direct experience or investment "may make moral reasoning irresponsible and unaccountable to those to whom the outcome matters" (Anderson 2015, 26).[32] We investigate two case studies in our book, but our collaboration has not engaged in the kind of multidisciplinary teamwork we ultimately advocate, even though through the project we have come to see this as an especially valuable approach. But this kind of teamwork requires structural change in the discipline.

7.3 Disciplinary Humility in Academic Philosophy

Roberts proposes for individuals that deep exposure to "the disciplines we despise will usually reduce the sense of qualitative distance between them" (Roberts "Learning Intellectual Humility" 194). We think something analogous can be encouraged at the structural level as well. In recent years, we have both participated in other intellectual projects on teams comprised of scholars from other fields and non-academics. These experiences have been humbling, have confirmed for us value of the kind of teamwork we advocate in moral epistemology, and suggest some features of what an intellectually humble academic culture might look like. We conclude with very brief summaries of these two examples and some of the lessons about intellectual humility we have learned from them.

7.3.1 Measuring poverty—a more humble approach

From 2010-2014, Alison Jaggar participated in a multidisciplinary and international team effort to develop a standard for measuring poverty across the world (Ref). The team included several philosophers, a sociologist, an economist, an anthropologist, and a representative of a grassroots development organization. Here we outline some features of the project because we think it offers one alternative model for doing moral philosophy.

[32] Although emotional investment in an outcome can bias people in regard to some aspects of the situation, it can also reveal important insights about other aspects of the situation that people not so invested are likely to ignore or misunderstand. Anderson suggests that "lacking stakes—the typical conditions of philosophers when they understand speculative thought experiments" or even when we engage in thinking about real world conflicts about which we have no direct experience or investment "may make moral reasoning irresponsible and unaccountable to those to whom the outcome matters" (Anderson 2015, 26).

The goal of our research was to develop a new metric that could be used to measure poverty across the world. We wanted a test that would not only recognize when people are poor but also determine with some precision how poor they are relative to each other. Especially, we wanted a means of revealing poverty linked with gender. For us, this meant more than disaggregating existing poverty data by sex. More fundamentally, it meant rethinking what should even count as poverty data. We asked whether existing metrics might incorporate gender as well as possible cultural bias, reflecting ideas about poverty that were better suited to assessing men's lives than women's.

Poverty is sometimes assumed to be an economic concept that is entirely empirical. However, like concepts such as wellbeing and the quality of life, which have received more attention from philosophers, poverty also has a moral dimension.[33] In addition, although most people in the developed world take poverty to be synonymous with lack of money, people elsewhere understand poverty it differently, assessing wealth in terms of land, or cows, or social relationships. Yet, if we take such widely understandings of poverty at face value, it is difficult to see how cross-cultural comparisons can be made. How could we design a metric that would connect with official poverty statistics, yet would also be consistent with the understandings of poverty held by many poor people across the world?

It is sometimes thought that the distinctive contribution that philosophers can make to such projects is to help social scientists think clearly about conceptual and moral issues. In the case of poverty research, that might be taken to mean distilling the core meaning of the concept (probably as expressed in English) via conceptual analysis and armchair reflection. Through such means, philosophers might produce something to the effect that poor people lack access to the means for satisfying some vital needs crucial to their wellbeing. They might even offer a tentative list of vital human needs. However, such a

[33] In *The Wealth of Nations* (1776), the founding text of modern economics, Adam Smith recognized the moral element in poverty assessment. He famously defined poverty as the want of life's "necessaries" and he said that these included "not only the commodities that are indispensably necessary for the support of life, but (also) whatever the custom of the country renders it indecent for creditable people, even of the lowest order, to be without." For Smith, avoiding poverty required not simply access to the things necessary for physical survival but also access to the commodities necessary for a decent life, including those required to ensure self-respect and the respect of one's fellow citizens. In eighteenth century England, respectability apparently required a linen shirt. Smith believed that an element of moral judgment is involved in determining both what life's necessities consist in and how much of these necessities people should have.

"thin" or abstract definition would not take us far in recognizing poverty in the real world because people disagree in identifying vital needs and on the means necessary for satisfying them.

In the project described here, our team did not try to separate out the conceptual, moral, and empirical dimensions of our research and divide the intellectual labor among our professional specializations. Instead, the team worked collaboratively to devise a method that we hoped would synthesize the diverse perspectives on poverty held by professional "poverty experts" and by poor people, who are "experts" in their own lives. We developed a three-phase method, which began with fieldwork designed to uncover what the poorest people in six poor countries think poverty consists in.[34] Our investigation was gender-sensitive that it explored the perspectives of both poor women and poor men regarding poverty and how it should be measured. From this data, we developed a tentative list of dimensions of poverty. Our fieldworkers took this back to the communities in the form of a questionnaire and asked them to rank the dimensions in order of importance to them and also to assess the appropriateness of possible indicators.[35] In the third phase, we developed a preliminary metric and tested it out in the Philippines.

Our project was thoroughly multi-disciplinary. For instance, although we used ethnographic methods, our research was not simply anthropological. Our goal was not just to investigate what poor people think poverty is in a range of different cultures but instead to draw on poor people's ideas to inform the metrics used by academics and experts. For the philosophers on the team, this was a whole new way of doing moral philosophy. We found ourselves epistemically interdependent not only with

[34] We carried out fieldwork in six countries, with three sites in each country. The six countries were: Angola, Fiji, Indonesia, Malawi, Mozambique, and the Philippines. In each country, data were collected in three sites: a poor urban community, a poor rural community and a marginalized community. A marginalized community is a community that is disadvantaged by poverty and by other factors, such as belonging to a minority or excluded religious or ethnic group. We were interested especially but not only in differences that may exist between the perceptions of women and men who are otherwise similarly situated.

[35] The method was gender (and age) sensitive in two ways. First, we carried out structured individual interviews, thus allowing us to disaggregate responses by age, gender (and other indicators like employment status, relationship status, etc.). This enabled revealing systematic gender and/or stage of life variation in the priorities of participants. Second, we included for consideration in the list of dimensions those areas of life that are frequently discounted or excluded from measurement but may be of particular importance to women—such as leisure time, sexual autonomy, family planning, freedom from violence, and mobility.

scholars from other disciplines but also with members of some poor communities. The three-phase method allowed the lay participants in our research not only to act as informants provide experiential "data" about poverty but also to reflect critically both on their own initial reports of their experience and on the reports provided by others. Thus, our research was as epistemically democratic as possible within real-world constraints.

The team ended up proposing a new poverty metric which we call The Individual Deprivation Measure (http://individualdeprivationmeasure.org/data/IDM_REPORT.pdf). It is a modest proposal that we invite others to take forward. However, we think the distinctive value of our work lies less our tentative conclusions than in our conceptual, moral, and political approach to measuring poverty. Conceptually, we began by recognizing that poverty is a moral as well as economic and sociological concept. Morally and politically, we began with the conviction that people's lives should not be subject to coercive interventions rationalized by conceptions of poverty that may not only disregard the values of their communities but which they also have no opportunity to influence. All poverty metrics incorporate values, whether or not these are overtly recognized, therefore require explicit moral justification. Although our research project that was relatively small in scale, it incorporates the ideas of many people, including many poor people. Our research aspired to inclusive and transparent justification and, although we were able to realize these ideals only very imperfectly, we hope that our philosophical approach provides a model for further work on poverty measurement. In developing the IDM, we aimed for a measure of poverty and gendered inequality that would be more inclusive, accurate, fair, and better justified than previous metrics.

7.2.1 Understanding the nature and moral significance of spiritual violence

I began studying spiritual violence on my own and was interested to understand the nature of this distinct mode of violence as well as its moral significance in the lives of victims. As a philosopher, I started by trying to formulate a working definition of spiritual violence as the use of sacred or religious mediators (e.g., texts such as sacred scripture, objects such as a crucifix or altar or sanctuary, rituals

including individual and communal prayer, or religious teachings) to violate a person in their spiritual formation. In spiritual violence, the spiritual mediators that should foster a healthy relationship with the divine instead function as spiritual weapons, leading a person to experience the divine as hostile or abusive, for example. But getting at the nature of this harm beyond this thin definition required situating the questions because of the variety of ways people experience spirituality and faith and the variety of contexts in which this kind of harm is inflicted. In 2015, I began collaborating on this topic with Prof. Dawne Moon, a sociologist of religion, gender, and sexuality who was working on very similar themes.[36]

Our project pursues a situated set of questions which aims to understand the nature and moral significance of spiritual violence as LGBT people in conservative Christian communities in the United States in the late 20th and early 21st centuries have experienced it, how LGBT Christians are able to resist and overcome this form of violence, and to understand what motivates perpetrators of this violence to change their views and come to see their treatment of LGBT people as morally wrong and as incompatible with Christian love. Any answers we propose are likewise situated, fitted to this context, but we are also beginning to see ways in which lessons drawn from this context may have broader import and value. This research is also positioning us to contribute to understanding "bigger" questions about the importance of spirituality and faith in moral life and how by harming people spiritually we can harm them morally by damaging their moral character and undermining their prospects for flourishing.

We have had to craft a method for the project that is neither just sociology nor just philosophy, but that combines methods and approaches of both disciplines as well as methods from lay people working in the movements we are studying who are active trying to stop this form of violence in their communities. Our method is also evolving as we consider gaps or limits in our understanding. Here are some of its features:

[36] Our collaboration is funded by a Templeton grant, and at a conference with all ten of the funded research teams there was a panel addressing some of the challenges to this kind of multi-disciplinary teamwork. One panelist spoke explicitly about how humbling the process had been. He noted that while you may be a "big deal" in your own field, this kind of collaboration makes you realize how small that world is and how little you know about and have to learn from other fields.

1. We are using qualitative data collection methods of sociology—interviewing, participant observation, and coding of transcripts—to identify themes and patterns. My collaborator has trained me in these methods, and so we both conduct interviews, observation, and coding. We've learned that our different disciplinary lenses lead us to ask different questions or frame issues differently and that has enriched our data. We have also hired consultants from the communities we are interacting with to run focus groups and conduct interviews with members of these communities who may be less comfortable talking with outsiders or with white researchers. As a philosopher, this has been humbling. The data from these interviews and observations is so rich and complex and has made me realize how limited was much of my prior abstract solitary thinking about this topic. But it has also helped me appreciate the value of philosophical definitions (even imperfect ones) and attempts to clarify concepts. The working definition of spiritual violence we brought to the project has been useful not only for us, but also for the communities we are interacting with who are sometimes grappling to succinctly state or clearly define the harm they are experiencing, even as they use the term 'spiritual violence' to name that harm.

2. We are both reading and using theoretical frameworks from sociology and philosophy (moral psychology and virtue ethics) as starting points to interpret and explain the patterns and themes emerging from our respondents. We are also using the data from our respondents to intervene in theoretical debates in both disciplines. For example, our interview data suggests the need for more nuanced sociological definitions of "conservative" and "liberal" religious communities because our respondents by and large display features of both, and also features not included in either description, and so don't neatly fit into either camp. Our data also speaks in favor of certain philosophical accounts of the nature of shame as an inwardly directed emotion, and calls into question philosophical defenses of shame as a morally beneficial emotion that do not consider how shame operates differentially for people with privileged vs. stigmatized identities.

3. Our method is dynamic because we continually check our interpretations or development of concepts with our interviewees. For example, my colleague coined the term "sacramental shame" to name a phenomenon we thought we were observing in which these communities treat shame as a special, unspoken sacrament just for LGBT people. When interviewing people, we ask if this concept resonates with their experiences and to explain why or why not. Thus far, the concept overwhelming resonates with most of our respondents and their explanations for why and how this is the case are helping us develop the concept; in addition, respondents who interact with us often express appreciation for having a term to name and make intelligible some of what they are experiencing but might not have named as such. So there is a kind of dynamic interplay in which collaboratively, researchers from two disciplines and non-academics in the communities we are interacting with are developing an important concept that deepens our understanding of this form of violence as it manifests in this community, and that may have some beneficial use for people in these movements working to stop this violence.

4. We also submit our papers to the consultants and other members of these communities for critical feedback. This aspect of the method has been humbling. One interviewee helped me see how my claims linking data as evidence for a certain view were too quick, and that I needed to explore another possible explanation. This strengthened the argument and helped me see how some of my own views about these issues may have led me to overlook the explanation that she suggested.

We have co-authored several scholarly articles, and most of them depart from conventional norms for scholarship in both disciplines. For my collaborator, it is has been a new and sometimes strange experience to make moral arguments that side with a particular ethical view in these debates. Her individual research focuses on understanding how people in these movements deal with and think about normative questions/controversies, but does not defend normative claims within these debates. For me,

these articles have far more empirical data and historical context in them than would be present in an article that I would write on my own. This situates the normative claims we defend, which do not purport to settle the moral disputes in the communities we are interacting with, but to make a normative contribution to these ongoing debates. It has sometimes been challenging to find a venue for publication because our articles depart from disciplinary convention in both of our fields. We have also decided to publish a popular press book, rather than a scholarly monograph.

8. Conclusion

Our participation in these two different projects has been humbling for us as individual scholars, and we think they exhibit at least some of features of intellectually humble environments or collaborations that might inform the broader culture of academic philosophy. We conclude with these examples as starting points for brainstorming about how intellectual humility might manifest in the discipline and practice of philosophy, and specifically in moral epistemology.

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