Agency within Structures and Warranted Resistance:
Response to Commentators

Sally Haslanger

1. Introduction

I am honored and humbled by the wonderful comments on my paper. The paper was my attempt to synthesize a wide range of ideas from different traditions in order to reframe some questions of social justice and social epistemology. In writing, I felt out of my comfort zone, but also wanted to expand the conversation. The effort was not entirely successful. But it has been a valuable process; I see much more vividly now where there are hurdles to surmount, and resources to take up, in pursuing the project. In what follows, I will have to be selective in what issues I discuss, for I cannot speak to every point that was raised. I also regret that I will fail to attend to the interesting differences in commentators' perspectives.

I will take up three main themes. The first theme is a critique of my structuralist tendencies and the failure to attend to the experiences, agency, and embodiment of those engaged in the practices I describe (Beeghly, Malone, Higgins, Andrada). Are persons, on my view, reduced to mere nodes in a structure? Isn't agency crucial for constituting the social realm? The second is whether my account of ideology adequately captures the different ways individuals are situated within structures of oppression (Mills). How does ideology structure the agency of the powerful? The third challenges me to provide normative credentials for critique and resistance (Phelan, Faulconbridge, Procyshyn, Malone, McGeer). If our cognition is shaped by ideological structures, on what basis do I claim that some perspectives are better than others, either epistemically or politically? And what resources are there, under conditions of ideology, for meaningful resistance and progress towards social justice (Anderson, Jones et al, Kapusta)?

2. The Personal is Political is Philosophical

One criticism of my paper is that it fails to provide a personal frame for the discussion, so let me start there. One of the most difficult and disconcerting patterns I have found in my adult life is the tendency, in myself and others I respect, to participate in structures of injustice, in spite of our deep objections to their meaning and their effects. I do more than my fair share of housework and childcare. I conform my appearance and behavior to norms of class and race, gender and heteronormativity, age and ability. I purchase clothes that are produced in sweatshops, food that is produced by industrial agriculture; I buy from Amazon, go on Facebook. I use more resources than I need; I own too much stuff. I feed the capitalist beast. I participate in practices and institutions that promote illusions of meritocracy. I don't always speak out against wrongs I see and sometimes enact those wrongs myself. I don't go to every demonstration, or give enough to important political causes. Of course, the list could go on….Why does this happen? It isn't just me, and it isn't just sometimes.

In some cases, I conform to unjust structures due to weakness of will or implicit bias, like everyone else. But even if I wasn't biased, my choices are structured by social and material circumstances that make it difficult, if not impossible, to live a just life. I am able to avoid most of the hardships and suffering that injustice causes; but that's part of the problem, not a solution to it. I can be mindful and count my

blessings. But that doesn't change anything. The problem is that even if I have all the right attitudes and try *really* hard, I am still implicated in injustice.

3. Agency within Structures

How am I implicated?[1] In 'Two Concepts of Rules' (1995), Rawls argues that practices are defined by a set of rules that are *logically prior to* the behavior and states of mind of the participants. The practices render our action meaningful; in fact, they constitute the sort of action we perform. Standard examples of this include games: you can't perform a check-mate without playing chess; you can't hit a home run without playing baseball. Most of our practices are not governed (strictly speaking) by rules, and yet the structure of the practice constitutes our reasons for action.

For example, professional life is structured by a set of coordinated practices that I have reason to engage in.[2] Our department has a practice of holding research workshops every Thursday. This gives me reason to manage my schedule so that I can be present, that I pay attention, engage constructively, and conform my behavior to the local conventions, even if I am not interested in the topic, have other pressing demands on my time, and would rather not be there. To be a philosophy professor is to take such practices seriously and act on the reasons they provide. And one cannot evaluate my actions apart from the social context that is the source of the relevant constitutive and regulative norms (Chang 2013).

Of course, a practice itself may call for justification, and such justification may rely on practice-independent standards such as (but not limited to) utility. Yet, as long as one remains a participant in the practice the rules constrain one's options. And we can do better or worse even in deeply problematic practices. To proceed, we often must consider both the reasons for (or against) the action within the practice and the reasons for (or against) the practice. But how do we adjudicate the weight of practice-dependent reasons and the weight of reasons for the practice? If we simply assume that reasons for or against *Ø-ing* are given by the constitutive standards of the practice within which *Ø-ing* occurs, then it is not clear how to accommodate systematic critique. And yet, there may be no way to step out of the practice, or no way to change it in time.

Under nonideal conditions the structure of rules and circumstances can undermine one's agency, for instance, by creating double binds (Schapiro 2003, 340). Some practices present a forced choice: as a professor, you must assign your students a grade. The grading system is given. You can decide on the method and standards for assigning grades, but do not control what grades are available or their meanings. Even if you don't assign a grade, that too has a meaning and consequences for the student. In a forced choice, both action and inaction have significance, so there is no way to avoid a move in the practice. But grades have multiple functions and meanings: they communicate the intrinsic quality of the work produced; they situate a student in a ranking; they qualify a student for fellowships, awards, jobs; they encourage/discourage student engagement with the material; they convey improvement or decline in

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[1] The next several paragraphs draw on Haslanger (forthcoming-a).
[2] Faulconbridge and Procyshyn seem to assume a more technical notion of coordination than I intend. On my view, not all conventions are conventions in Lewis's (1969) sense, and not all coordination is a solution to a formal coordination problem. The solutions may not be arbitrary; there may not be, in any meaningful sense, common knowledge among participants; the responses may not be rational or mutually advantageous. I am dubious, especially, that preferences should be our starting point. A meaningful sense of preference with respect to the resource in question may be constituted only through the practice that organizes our responses (Anderson 2001).

quality of work. The problem with most grading systems is that the rules are not well-suited to achieve the multiple purposes of communication and coordination, so any strategy of assigning grades within the system will succeed along one dimension but will fail along another. But making up one's own idiosyncratic grading system – assigning, say, Q, L, H – will not work, because it won't serve as a basis for coordination on assessment.

Most actions depend for their identity on satisfying constitutive norms of a practice. They also convey the messages they do because others can make sense of them against the background social meanings. And they achieve their ends because of the network of others engaged in interlocking practices. However, the practices available to us now are (mostly) corrupt and the network of practices is unjust. Participating in the practices, however, reinforces them. Rarely are practices designed and maintained by an authority. We are the ones who shape and police them by conforming our behavior to them and expecting others to do the same. Tamar Schapiro captures the idea: "By regulating herself according to the rules of the practice, an agent can be regarded as "upholding" those rules. To uphold rules is to sustain the normative structure they impose on the world." (Schapiro 2001, 104-5)

Recently the food co-op in my neighborhood closed. I was a member for over twenty years. It was unable to survive after a Target moved in nearby. Because my options are much more limited, I now sometimes buy food at Target. This pains me, for it implicates me more deeply in unjust and environmentally harmful agricultural and labor practices. Like it or not, all of us are embedded in an ideological system of food production and distribution that materially and symbolically structures our options and deforms our agency. It is possible to engage in a practice, i.e., act in accordance with a set of meanings and so reinforce them, without endorsing them.

This background, I hope, provides a better context for understanding my broader project. For the most part, human agency is social agency: actions are embedded in social practices (see Schapiro 2001). This conception of agency is at odds with an instrumentalist conception according to which actions are understood simply as an agent's causal intervention in the world intended to bring about some end that is taken to be good (cf. the assumptions Faulconbridge brings to the conversation and Procyshyn's characterization of my view). The role of others in relation to my agency is not just to enable me to be (more or less) efficient in satisfying my desires or preferences. I also disagree with certain Kantian conceptions according to which an action is not simply one performed in conformity to a practice, but must also be *willed as such*. When I go to Target, I do many things: I buy food; I support industrial agriculture; I uphold the capitalist social order. These are all my actions, even though in performing them, my will has been subverted by the system.[3]

I would like to draw on this background to respond to Beeghly, Higgins, Phelan, and Malone. Individuals, on my view, are not merely "nodes in a structure" (Beeghly 7, 9; Higgins 1; Malone 5). Every individual occupies nodes in many structures, and the structures constrain, but do not determine, their

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[3] On Schapiro's (2001) view, these are defective actions because they aren't an exercise of my (free) agency. I would agree that they are defective, but not qua action. I am interested in a wide range of ways in which my agency is conditioned – both enabled and constrained - by my social context. The agency that comes from freely conforming my will to the practice is too refined for my needs.

agency.[4] As a professor, I am constrained a grading system, but I have authority to assign grades according to the standards I choose. As a consumer, I am constrained by what food is produced and distributed in nearby stores, but I can choose to buy carrots or cucumbers. In speaking English I am constrained by its grammar and lexicon, but I exercise agency in what I say. Each of us navigates these choices in different ways, but there are axes along which we are similarly constrained and enabled by options that are not of our making; these constraints are important in providing explanations both of individual action and patterns of action (Garfinkel 1981; Haslanger 2016). The claim that we are constrained does not entail that we are passive (Beeghly 9, Higgins 1). We may become fabulously creative in response to the limited options we face, e.g., we may start our own food co-op, we may engage in urban agriculture. It is part of the argument of my paper that such efforts can be meaningful forms of resistance, especially when taken up with others. Moreover, recognizing constraints on agency is not, by itself, disrespectful. To assume that we are unconstrained agents acting on our own intentions invites moral judgment of our actions that I find deeply problematic.

As several commentators point out, I don't discuss the first-person experiences of those who are engaged in ideological practices or the ways in which practices shape embodiment. This is one paper in a large project, and it is reasonable to address a complex set of issues in different pieces of work. More importantly, one point of my discussion is to challenge the authority of first-person experience (in this, Malone is correct). To insist that I turn to first-person experience to avoid the challenge ideology poses would be like proposing that we ask the dogmatist to report to the skeptic about their knowledge of the external world. Under conditions of ideology, the authority of (some? most? all?) first-person experience cannot be presumed, but must be achieved. The same is true for the alleged reliability of embodied experience. An important question is how we achieve undistorted social and moral knowledge, when we do. I will return to this below.

Moreover, a central feature of my account is that ideologies are not hegemonic. A cultural technē is a toolbox that collects together the meanings, scripts, and such. These are do not form a coherent set and do not constitute an overarching system. Experience and embodiment are shaped by distinct and often conflicting practices that we manage through strategies of compartmentalization. We can use insight gained by participation in one practice – guided by meanings and norms in place there – to critique another. Granted, we sometimes directly experience conflict between practices, but first-person experience of the tensions is not always, and need not be, the source of insight. (Due to effective compartmentalization, others are often better in noticing conflicts in one's life and prompting the reflection that leads to critique.) The claim that resistance is mysterious because, on my view, we are basically indoctrinated to be the system's robots, is a misunderstanding of my account (Beeghly 9, Malone 2, Phelan, Andrada 2). Societies are not monoliths, and my account is explicitly constructed to accommodate that.

Nevertheless, I welcome the suggestion that I learn more about enactivism and other models of social psychology that incorporate the body. I am sympathetic to Higgins' suggestion that we "bring forth a

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[4] There has been decades of debate in the social sciences over whether structuralist explanations are deterministic and eliminate agency. It is now broadly recognized that structure is not only compatible with agency, but necessary for it. Key contributions include: Sewell (1992) and Garfinkel (1981). I also recommend Einsphar (2010). See also Haslanger (2016 and 2017a, Ch. 1) for discussion of specific points that Beeghly raises, and Haslanger (2017b) for my response to Madva's claim that I'm a structural prioritizer.

world" in our interaction with others, and that we can build communities that can resist dominant social formations. In fact, I invoked counter-publics and counter-narratives to emphasize the possibility of constructing resistant social spaces within dominant structures. However, we must be careful not to obscure the materiality of social structures and the powerful incentives to conform to them. We might together create an urban garden, but have it destroyed by a drought or rezoning measures. There are many social worlds that interact with each other and with material realities. So I was not assuming (contra Andrada 3), that internalization is a purely cognitive process. I follow Aristotle in thinking that skills and habits are learned by doing, by practice, by repetition, in a social milieu. Moreover, the possibility of performing a practice depends crucially on the material conditions, because resources are a constitutive part of the practice (Haslanger 2017a; 2018). This is why the disruption of material conditions in certain forms of activism (demonstrations, direct action) is important to social movements.

4. Ideology and Interests.

Let me now turn to Charles Mills' reflections on the adequacy of my conception of ideology, ideological oppression, and the role of interests. Mills rightly notes that I draw on the critical theory tradition to distinguish *ideological oppression* from *repression*. I interpret his contribution – poignantly raising the issue of speciesism – as a way to challenge the adequacy of this distinction, at least as I have tried to capture it.

My starting point for understanding ideological oppression lies in Althusser. Althusser (1971) distinguishes *repressive state apparatuses* (RSAs) and *ideological state apparatuses* (ISAs). (No state apparatus is purely one or the other, and each depends on the other, though in modern society, ISAs are the dominant mode of social management.) RSAs include the "government, administration, army, courts, prisons," that "function by violence" or, "massively and predominantly by repression." Ideological state apparatuses, including religion, education, the family, the legal system, the political system, trade unions, communications/media, and culture ("literature, the arts, sports, etc.") "function massively and predominantly by ideology." The role of the two kinds, together, is to reproduce the productive forces within specific relations of production. Althusser highlights the educational system (or the "school-family") as the primary contemporary ISA. Learning technical "know-how" for production, however, is not enough:

> … children at school also learn the 'rules' of good behaviour, i.e. the attitude that should be observed by every agent in the division of labour, according to the job he is 'destined' for: rules of morality, civic and professional conscience, which actually means rules of respect for the socio-technical division of labour and ultimately the rules of the order established by class domination. They also learn to 'speak proper French', to 'handle' the workers correctly, i.e. actually (for the future capitalists and their servants) to 'order them about' properly…

He elaborates: "Ideology always exists in an apparatus and its practice or practices. Its existence is material." A crucial difference between an ISA and an RSA is that individuals are hailed into a subject position by an ISA, rather than violently forced into it. It is characteristic of those "good subjects" who respond to the hailing that they take up the norms as binding on themselves, so they don't need to be coercively managed: "they work all by themselves"!

My conception of ideology is Althusserian in the following sense. Ideology is a set of public meanings that guide social practices. We are "hailed" into practices in a variety of ways, e.g., we are hailed into speaking

English by having English spoken to us; we are hailed into the role of student by being sent to school and finding ourselves responding to the teacher as an authority (nudged by coercion); we are hailed into adulthood by having to pay the rent (with threat of penalties in the background). We then develop ways of being and thinking so that we are (more or less) fluent English speakers, fluent students, fluent rent-paying adults.[5] The ISAs are a mixed bag. Some are empowering and valuable; some are efficient and practical; but others function to sustain an unjust (capitalist, racist, sexist…) system.

Mills' important intervention is to ask how this model is supposed to apply if the subjects in question are not human, or not capable of higher-level cognition. Non-human animals are surely oppressed by the food production system and the ideology of omnivorism. But they are not subjects interpellated by an ISA: cows in the feedlot and chickens in the factory farm don't respond to hailing; they are not social subjects. (Domesticated animals are more complicated cases.) In the case of humans, an ISA hails individuals into a system that may be contrary to their interests and it is possible for those in subordinated positions to recognize their objective interests and resist or revolt. Non-human animals are not capable of this *en masse*; and omnivores are not going to change the food production system without being pressured to do so, for (let's grant for the sake of argument) it is in their interests to eat the meat they so enjoy.

Mills is right to press me, not simply because I believe that the extensive mistreatment of nonhuman animals, is a moral nightmare. He challenges the adequacy of my model to capture oppression. In my (and Althusser's) analysis, ideological oppression creates complicity in one's own exploitation and complicity in the maintenance of an unjust social order. However, non-human animals are exploited in a terrible form, and one could argue that they are oppressed, but it would be wrong to say they are complicit. They don't even have the cognitive resources to be complicit or not. Raising their consciousness is not part of the solution – their interests must be determined and fought for without their collective endorsement (Donaldson and Kymlicka 2013). In Jane Mansbridge's terms, the animal rights movement is a *social responsibility movement* rather than an *identity movement* (Mansbridge and Morris 2001).

Non-human animals are not ideologically oppressed, instead they are coercively managed and brutalized, i.e., they are repressed. The repression of nonhuman animals is the result of human practices, and some humans are ideologically formed to do this. The practices of cuisine in the United States are oriented towards meat consumption and American palates and bodies are conditioned to expect and respond to meat as tasty, good, healthy. The ideology of meat shapes Americans to do violence to – or consent to violence to – nonhuman animals. It doesn't, however, oppress humans. Mills is right that in order to overcome this system, we must find a way to motivate omnivores to take the interests of others – others who cannot speak for themselves and stand up for their interests – into account. (Don't let this problem keep you up at night, or you will never sleep again.)

In response, I want to emphasize the difference between *ideological* oppression from other forms of injustice. As Mills points out, it is a mistake to assume that ideological practices shape us all to occupy *subordinate* positions. To use Althusser's terminology, we can be hailed into subordinate positions and dominant positions. So we should distinguish ideological *oppression* from the broader phenomenon of ideological *formation*, and from other non-ideological forms of oppression and repression.

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[5] I am puzzled by Malone's claim that my conception of ideology is "representational" rather than "dispositional". My claim is that ideology is a set of public meanings; we take up meanings as dispositions to respond to the world in ways that are then legible (to ourselves and others) in their terms.

The process of ideological formation is complex and dynamic. I am hailed as a white, able-bodied, affluent, older, cis-woman, as a professor, a homeowner, a consumer, a neighbor, a vegetarian, a "Liberal," a friend, a mother, a wife, a dog-lover. I do not endorse all of these formations, even though I navigate their demands. Not all of them are consistent. The fragmentation of our social practices is a potential source of critical insight and resistance (cf. Malone 1). And, in principle, non-ideological social formation is possible, if we are shaped to be subjects who live together in justice. We are social animals and live in social orders, so subjectivization (as a participant in the social order) is unavoidable. But oppression is not.

I take it that Mills, although concerned about nonhuman animals, raises these questions because it has broader implications for thinking about oppression, repression, and social change.[6] I have suggested that the case of non-Whites in America is unlike the case of gender, because most non-Whites know they are unjustly dominated under American White Supremacy and usually, in some form or other, resist it. They aren't ideologically oppressed in the sense of willfully taking the norms of White Supremacy to be binding on them to the same extent that women conform their behavior to norms of femininity.[7] So I have characterized race as a "hybrid" case. Mills' discussion of speciesism brings out that racism is not a hybrid case of oppression in the specific sense of *ideological oppression*; instead, in most cases, racism occurs through the *repression* of non-Whites, enacted through the ideological formation of dominant subjects who "work all by themselves" to keep non-Whites in their place.[8] The dominant (White) subjects are ideologically formed – in Althusser's words, interpellated – but not thereby oppressed; and racial domination is enacted by force and the threat of force, and not through manipulation of the will. In such cases, attempting to change the system by appealing to the interests of the repressed typically has little effect. Just as the interests of nonhuman animals do not move the omnivores in power, neither do the interests of racially repressed groups. The point of the dominant ideology is to obscure their interests, or to shape the repressors so that their interests don't count.

Mills suggests two strategies for puncturing the epistemic and moral bubble created by ideology. One is to pursue the idea that humans, ideally, have an interest in being sensitive to moral goods beyond prudential goods, and to undertake moral education to get omnivores/racists/sexists/etc. to understand that they must cease their dominating practices to approach the ideal. Another is to show that the inclusion of and respect for the repressed is in the dominant's prudential interests (16). Probably both strategies are valuable. But honestly, I don't think that we need to wait to convince the dominant of anything. Instead, we should grow social change from the margins, expand counterpublics through activism and emancipatory critique, and build the movement until there is a tipping point, and the dominant realize that the only good option left is to yield. (See also Anderson 2014; McGeer.) We aren't going to achieve this unless we are able to work effectively in coalition across systems of oppression and repression.

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[6] Robert Gooding-Williams has raised a similar point in conversation. Thanks to him for discussion of this point.
[7] Though, this is complicated. On my view, the contemporary social order is such that those who are formed to benefit from capitalism are also held to norms of whiteliness, masculinity, able-bodiedness, and such. The result is that those of us who are successful in the current social order are complicit, implicated in the broader system of, White Supremacy, patriarchy, etc.)
[8] Note that the term 'oppression' is used broadly for both repression, ideological oppression, and other forms of injustice. It is not part of my project to change this usage. I am specifically interested in *ideological oppression* as one form of oppression. Moreover, on my account, ideological formation is always in the service of, or functions to sustain, injustice, but doesn't always do so through the *ideological oppression* of those in its grip. Ideology may produce injustice by producing subjects capable of repressing others.

But one might ask, don't we need a moral and epistemic *basis* for claiming that our movement has things right? Must we not only claim, but be entitled to claim, that we fight for justice? And, under conditions of ideology, from where do we make that claim?

5. The Problem of Normativity

Several of the commentators question whether my approach provides adequate normative resources for ideology critique. It was not part of the project of this paper to offer a moral epistemology. I am not going to offer it in this reply, either, even though I agree that I need one. However, some argue that my view *precludes* the possibility of an adequate moral epistemology (Procyshyn, Phelan, Malone; McGeer doesn't go this far, but expresses doubts). Ideology poses serious challenges for moral knowledge (that mainstream moral philosophy mainly ignores). But it is not clear to me that my view *in particular*, leads to a broad moral/political skepticism. In this section, I will begin to respond to that concern, drawing on some of the constructive suggestions offered in the commentaries (Anderson, Jones et al, Kapusta).

As I read the skeptical commentators, they raise three concerns about the possibility of a moral epistemology that might ground critique. The first concern is that, on my view, a cultural technē is hegemonic; there is no "outside" from which we can even get a reasonable perspective on it, no space to think otherwise (Phelan). I have already argued that the dominant cultural technē is not hegemonic: it doesn't control every meaning, every practice. More specifically in response to Phelan, there are multiple knowledge communities and norms for knowledge production that create space for contestation. A more moderate version of the skeptical concern is that emotion is an important source of moral knowledge, but if our emotions are shaped by the ideological technē, then a source of moral knowledge is undermined. Fortunately, some of the commentators (Anderson, Jones et al) offer valuable insight into this issue, to which I will return.

Second, even if we enact multiple social practices and embody different social roles, on my view, there is no "pre-theoretic [first personal] anchor" (Malone 2) that can be used to ground critique. (See also Beeghly.) However, I reject the foundationalist epistemic assumptions according to which all knowledge must be grounded in first-person experience or a "pre-theoretical" anchor. I believe that both epistemic and moral foundationalism are unsupportable. The epistemic task in addressing ideology isn't to justify particular claims, but to shift to a different paradigm. As Quine would say, beliefs "face the tribunal of sense experience not individually, but only as a corporate body. (1953 [1980], 41). We need not limit ourselves to beliefs, or the tribunal of *sense* experience, as Quine did, and can expand the attitudes to include cognition generally, including intuition, emotion, and other affective states.

Third, a moral epistemology must not only explicate how we can know moral truths, but also how such knowledge can engage members of a community who seek not just coordination but also cooperation (Procyshyn). The concern is that because I am committed to a strategic conception of action that seeks only (rational) coordination, I cannot provide the normative and motivational basis for genuine cooperation. I have argued above that my practice-based conception of action is at odds with a strategic or instrumentalist conception. I have also argued elsewhere that we should be pluralist about value and that different practices give us the resources not only to appreciate different values but to constitute different things as valuable (Haslanger 2017a, 2018; see also Anderson 1993). We are highly motivated to participate in the social practices of our milieu, and not just for self-interested reasons.

Nevertheless, there is more to say in response to all these concerns. Let me start by distinguishing two projects that are sometimes conflated in discussions of ideology critique. Suppose that we are aiming to undermine binary gender roles because we take them to be oppressive. One normative question is on what basis we can claim to know that a binary gender regime is oppressive, i.e., how do we know that the critique in question is offering *emancipation* from injustice rather than disrupting a just order, or promoting a different form of oppression? Call this the *justification problem*. Another question is how we can reveal to others who are in the grip of binary gender ideology that this regime is oppressive, i.e., how do we get others to recognize their oppression so they too can be free and join our movement? Call this the *illumination problem*. These two questions are connected in critical theory because ideology critique is supposed to be emancipatory – it is supposed to unmask our ideological investment in oppressive social orders so that we can together reconstitute the world in ways that are more just. The idea of emancipatory critique links justification with illumination.

However, even if we need answers to both questions, the answers can come apart. We may gain knowledge that the current social order is oppressive, without a method of critique that will engage those who are in the grip of the ideology that sustains it. Our own method of illumination may not be one that speaks to others; they may not even be able to access it due to their background, psychological dispositions, or social position. Or they may be ineluctably committed to a set of practices that we must undermine to achieve justice. However, we do not need consensus to move forward. It may be that we will have to exert power (nudges, legislation, disruption) rather than depend on rational engagement to change things for the better. And that's especially why we need to have some confidence that our critique is justified.

The task of justification is not best approached through a moral epistemology narrowly construed. The question isn't first-personal (what should I do?) or second-personal (what do we owe each other?). It also isn't a question about how an ideal community would be organized (what would we choose from behind the veil of ignorance?). Rather, critique is addressed to the failings of a particular community of people living together in a particular place and time, with a particular history and culture, under particular biological, geographical and climate conditions. The project is anti-utopian: in the first instance, we are seeking to remedy existing oppression, not provide a blueprint for an ideal society. It is also on behalf of a group: *we* are oppressed; *we* demand justice. I may find the way things are currently organized acceptable; but this is compatible with a new social order actually being better for me, and for the community, than what I imagine. Moreover, what is better for the community may not be better for every individual in it.

What counts as justification, what promotes illumination, and how they are related, are questions that need further attention. McGeer vividly points out that we cannot rely simply on reasons and reasoning with those invested in the oppressive order, but we can't give up on engaging with them either. We need moments of separatist solidarity, and moments of outreach. We need careful thought, but also attention to the material conditions that make social movements "catch on" and reach a tipping point. How do we balance these demands? And can justified critique ever be more than a hope, given that "there is no Archimedean point" or at least, none that we can access?

I find these concerns pressing. Interestingly, several of the commentators offer valuable resources to ground moral critique in affective and embodied responses (Anderson, Jones et al, Kapusta). Anderson

argues that "moral sentiments can function as epistemic and motivational resources even in the face of oppressive cultural technē," especially if we engage in "(1) direct cultivation; (2) practices of accountability; and (3) group integration." Jones et al argue that emotions, in contrast to belief, are resistant to self-validation because "ideology can rearrange the facts, but it cannot rearrange the values." Kapusta points to the phenomenon of *cognitive estrangement* as a resource to generate warranted critique. Consciousness raising gives us tools to interpret the world anew, and in doing so, it illuminates morally relevant facts that were previously obscured or distorted. This can create the kind of cognitive estrangement that Kapusta describes, and can prompt "outlaw" emotions that liberation movements can cultivate (Jones et al).

Unfortunately, social movements across the spectrum – including White nationalist, male supremacist, anti-LGBTQ, and other hate groups – offer alternative interpretations of society and cultivate "outlaw emotions." Regressive movements also prompt cognitive estrangement from the dominant social order. They create counter-publics that contest both orthodoxy and doxa. On what basis do we distinguish a social *justice* movement from the others? What justifies feminist, antiracist, (etc.) movements in contrast to theirs?

I am sympathetic to suggestions from my commentators. In my own experience, what appears to be moral disagreement is often based on empirical disagreements, and fundamental moral disagreement is rather rare.[9] It is notable, as Anderson points out,

> …oppressive regimes have to resort to false or misleading empirical claims to hijack people's moral sentiments in the service of oppression…It is often supposed that people readily converge on empirical facts, whereas nothing stops them from arguing interminably over moral principles. Yet oppressive regimes typically find it easier to misrepresent the facts than to subvert basic moral intuitions. (6)

We know that ideology often works by entrenching false ideas (often generics) in the cultural technē, e.g., that women are best suited for caregiving, that the poor are lazy, that capitalism makes us free. Social critique, first and foremost, offers a different interpretation of the social order. There are epistemic standards for adequate interpretation: it isn't that "anything goes." Even when ideologically guided practices can make ideology true, due to looping effects, there are (modal) falsehoods in the neighborhood. So the task of social critique is not always normative; regressive social movements often to satisfy basic epistemic requirements, such as empirical and explanatory adequacy and consistency.

Some commentators have emphasized that we can also draw upon evidence provided by moral sentiments, under the right conditions, about what is valuable. One might argue, however, that the ability to know what we feel is fraught, and "labelling and regulation are not two discrete processes" (Jones, et al; also McGeer 2007; Barrett 2017). So how reliable are our emotions? Note that labeling and regulation also happen together in perception. But perceptual experience, under the right conditions, provides evidence supporting our beliefs. Skepticism doesn't follow. The process of developing an adequate view of the world – both descriptive and evaluative – is a complex, fallible, process that draws on all our mental capacities (Railton 2014).

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[9] There is a substantial literature on the issue of "fundamental" moral disagreement, beginning with Brandt (1959).

What's needed is the possibility of a critical *standpoint*. A standpoint is a position occupied by a group, not an individual. It arises from being embedded in multiple – perhaps conflicting – practices, and from engaging with others who are embedded in different practices, or who face some new circumstances or conditions that render the existing practice questionable. Kapusta's idea of cognitive estrangement is valuable here, for estrangement allows one to gain critical perspective. However, a standpoint is not achieved simply by having a recalcitrant experience or "outlaw" emotion. Rather, through collective evaluation of the testimony and insights of others in spaces open to heterodox ideas and feelings, together with empirical investigation, and experimentation with new tools in a counter-cultural technē, a standpoint – a critical political standpoint – is achieved as a group. An adequate standpoint will illuminate injustice in the current social order. The justification of critique goes along with the epistemic credentials of the standpoint from which it arises.[10] The standpoint of a regressive social movement can be tested, then, and shown to be inadequate, e.g., if it fails to satisfy other constitutive epistemic norms, if it is closed to reflective review and critique, or if silences or undermines the credibility of stakeholders.

My commentators are correct that I see ideology is not just as a source of injustice, but is also a threat to a moral epistemology based on first-person experience. Are gender roles oppressive? People disagree about this. My mother felt deeply fulfilled by her very traditional role as mother and wife and couldn't understand why I was "angry all the time." But my mother's experience of her traditional role was not sufficient to draw conclusions about how we should organize ourselves around love, sex, parenting, and childcare. The practices she participated in were a source of value for her, and for me. But that value is outweighed by their harm; and the harm cannot be evaluated from the first-person perspective. Consciousness raising is needed, a social theory is needed; we need to construct an epistemically legitimate standpoint. But this need is familiar. For most questions about the world, first-person experience is not epistemically authoritative. This is why we engage in science and other collective and systematic knowledge practices. We need the full range of human experience and the full resources of theory, practical skill, and creativity, to understand the world as it is, and to envision how it should be.

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[10] It is valuable to compare this idea with Longino's (1990) conception of scientific objectivity. These comments are only a gesture towards what constitutes an acceptable standpoint.

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