Moral Bias and Corrective Practices: A Pragmatist Perspective

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1. SOME PRAGMATIST DOUBTS ABOUT DOMINANT METHODS IN MORAL PHILOSOPHY

My topic for this lecture is the epistemology of morality. Here, I focus on morality in the narrow sense of what we owe to each other.[1] It is possible to infer the implicit moral epistemology of analytic moral philosophy from its dominant methods. I am particularly interested in the implicit *social epistemology* of analytic moral philosophy. Philosophers presume that they can learn what we owe to each other under the social conditions in which we practice moral philosophy.

These presumptions can be tested. We can investigate historical cases in which society implemented moral philosophy's dominant practices, and see whether they yielded satisfactory moral conclusions. We can consider whether alternative practices have done a better job, and why they might have done so. To adopt more effective practices of moral inquiry in light of such testing in experience is to adopt pragmatism as a moral methodology. I will argue that to do so is a more promising path forward for moral philosophy than to continue our currently dominant methods.

Let's first consider some dominant methods in moral philosophy today. I'll focus on two: the ascent to the *a priori*, and reflective equilibrium. The ascent to the *a priori* purports to yield "fact free" moral principles—fundamental moral principles that are true in all possible worlds. G. A. Cohen spelled out the method as follows. Suppose we begin with a moral principle that depends on a fact. We ask what makes that fact

morally relevant. The answer will have to be a normative principle that does not depend on that fact. If it, in turn, depends on some other fact, we can iterate the process of abstraction from facts. Each new principle functions as a stepping stone that takes us further away from contingent facts, ultimately ascending to a domain of fundamental moral principles that are true regardless of the facts—true in all possible worlds.[2]

Here is a slight modification of Cohen's example. Suppose someone advances a principle of freedom of religion, justified by the fact that religion is important to people. We ask: Why care about what is important to people? The advocate might answer: Because people merit respect. Again, we ask what justifies *this* principle and receive another appeal to fact: people are rational beings. We now ask what makes *that* fact morally relevant and receive the answer that *any* rational being merits respect. That principle depends on no further facts. It is true in all possible worlds, and so counts as a fundamental moral principle.

The method of reflective equilibrium is even more dominant.[3] Here we move between intuitively appealing general moral principles and intuitions about particular cases. We use each to modify the others until we arrive at a set of principles that accounts for our moral judgments of all particular cases. Carried to its logical conclusion, this method can also lead to moral principles for all possible worlds, as long as we entertain thought experiments about sufficiently bizarre cases to elicit intuitions against which to modify our general principles.

These do not exhaust the methods used in contemporary moral philosophy. However, they are illustrative of a common aspiration embodied in its most important methods. This is to seek fundamental principles of morality that could, in principle, settle all moral problems (at least of a particular structure—e.g., regarding saving lives, or distributing goods) in all circumstances.

I have a pragmatist doubt about this aspiration. Our subject is principles of moral right, which tell us what we owe to each other. These principles have a *function*. They are *tools* for solving moral problems—problems that arise from the facts that people need to live together, and need each other's assistance and cooperation, to survive and realize nearly everything worthwhile in life. Because of these facts, we regularly make claims on one another to act or avoid acting in various ways, and call upon one another to affirm and enforce these claims by applying moral sanctions and expressing moral sentiments—by praising, blaming, punishing, and by expressing outrage, disgust, resentment, and other moral sentiments. The claims we make on each other frequently conflict.

Morality supplies principles for adjudicating those conflicts, and for fairly and impartially evaluating and revising other tools, such as laws, nonmoral social norms, and bargaining, that we have developed for managing them. Given that our 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 than 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.

If the quest for ultimate, fact-free, or at least highly general and abstract principles of moral rightness is dubious, how else can we advance moral inquiry? Pragmatists argue that we should replace the quest for ultimate or highly general principles with methods for intelligently updating our current moral beliefs. There are two basic types of intelligent updating. The first is bias correction. We can empirically investigate whether certain biases—thought tendencies that we have reason to reject for purposes of adjudicating moral differences—have distorted our moral thinking. Such investigation may also discover methods for blocking or counteracting these biases. Implementation of these methods may then yield different beliefs, which are more trustworthy for avoiding the biases in question.

A model of this type of strategy may be found in double-blind, placebo-controlled, clinical trials of medical treatments. Blinding and placebo controls block the effects of wishful thinking on observation. When neither the patient nor the clinician knows whether the patient has received a drug, their hope that the treatment works will not distort observations of actual health outcomes. While clinical trials are hardly guaranteed to generate accurate causal knowledge, we have much greater reason to trust the evidence generated from double-blind, placebo-controlled trials than from other types of evidence in medicine. Conclusions drawn from less biased methods of inquiry are likely to be better.

The second basic method for intelligent updating of moral beliefs consists in experiments in living. We act in accordance with new moral principles, and see whether doing so solves the problem we wanted it to solve, better than the old principles, with side effects we can live with.

I have discussed experiments in living elsewhere.[4] Here I focus on bias correction. Some dominant methods of moral philosophy incorporate a

limited recognition of the need for bias correction, to bar the distorting effects of self-interest on moral judgment. Philosophers typically use two explicit techniques to correct this bias. (1) In a table-turning exercise, we regard an action under our consideration not only from our own point of view, as the agent, but from the point of view of those likely to experience its effects. We do this through a thought experiment: we imagine that we are someone other than the agent who is affected by it—and simulate our responses to the action and its effects. The Golden Rule, which tells us to do unto others as we would be done by, in effect directs us to avoid any actions that we would reject in such a simulation.[5] (2) In the veil of ignorance, we consider the impact of general principles of justice on the assumption that we don't know our own identities or social position.[6] The veil of ignorance generalizes the thought experiment of the Golden Rule by asking us to simulate our responses to the proposed principle from every social position.

Let's turn our attention to the social conditions of the practice of moral philosophy. While it is doubtful whether these have been designed to counteract biases, in practicing moral inquiry under these conditions, philosophers presuppose that those conditions are not themselves distorting our moral thinking. Philosophers engage in moral reflection in the "cool hour," at points and sometimes on whole matters in which we do not have immediate stakes. Often, philosophers undertake moral reflection monologically, or simulate dialogue in their own minds. Even when dialogue is actual, it typically takes place around a seminar table or classroom composed of largely relatively privileged people—faculty and college students who have leisure to reflect, and who are overwhelmingly white, male, and middle class. The dominant methods appear to presuppose either that the social position of philosophers doesn't matter, or that whatever biases social position imparts are easily correctable by the table-turning and veil of ignorance thought experiments.

If moral inquiry were like mathematical inquiry, these conditions might make sense. With respect to mathematics, it is plausible to suppose that the social identities of inquirers are irrelevant to how we think about the subject matter. This idea is harder to credit with respect to moral inquiry. Moral reasoning is supposed to help diverse people live together, come to terms with their differences, and promote peaceful cooperation on fair terms by supplying mutually acceptable principles for adjudicating the conflicting claims they make on each other, and for coordinating our moral sentiments to fit the demands of living together. We should expect that people's social positions affect the claims they regard as intuitively legitimate, as well as their moral sentiments.

These reflections suggest several questions about dominant philosophical methodologies. First, why should anyone place confidence in the moral intuitions they have in thought experiments that are very remote from experience? To generate moral principles that claim to apply in all possible worlds, or at least at a high level of abstraction from facts, philosophers often consider bizarre thought experiments. For example, in exploring the morality of abortion, Thomson appeals to moral intuitions about scenarios in which people reproduce by means of "people seeds" that embed themselves in one's carpets.[7] Yet, if this were how people reproduced, all of the other conditions of social life would be radically different. Why trust our ability to legislate morals for creatures like that? Why think that what would be reasonable for them would be equally reasonable for us? Even thought experiments that seem closer to home, such as ticking time bomb scenarios or trolley problems, tend to presuppose degrees of certainty that are never encountered in real life, and omit consideration of how other people would react to actors in these scenarios.

These doubts about the reliability of moral intuitions about bizarre cases are reinforced by considering intuitions from a naturalistic point of view. The standard case in which we entertain moral intuitions arises in deliberation.[8] In every act of deliberation, we conduct a thought experiment in which we imagine the consequences of actions open to us, and simulate our evaluative responses to these actions and their consequences, with a view toward choosing one of the alternatives. When philosophers elicit moral intuitions about particular cases in thought experiments, they simulate deliberation, only without immediate stakes or intention to choose an action on the basis of the simulation. Such speculation is less serious than planning, since it is often undertaken merely for the sake of argument. Deliberation is more reliable when it stays close to past experience. This is not simply because of difficulties in predicting the objective consequences of actions. It is also because we are often surprised by our and others' moral reactions to actions and their consequences once they are performed. Simulation does not always track reality, which is why we often feel regret even when we follow our best judgment at the time. Intuitions elicited in philosophical thought experiments therefore cannot be more reliable than deliberation, which is not more reliable than intuitions elicited in actual experiments in living, when we experience real consequences, and actual moral reactions to them.

A second question that can be raised about philosophical intuitions is, why rely on the intuitions of philosophers over the intuitions of the folk? Experimental philosophers have raised this challenge with

respect to nonmoral normative intuitions.[9] It applies with special force to intuitions about what we owe to each other. Public opinion polling consistently finds that people's views about justice and public policy are affected by their social identities—in particular, by ethnocentric bias in favor of groups they affiliate with—*independently* of the impact of these principles and policies on their personal self-interest.[10] We also have theoretical reasons for thinking that important challenges to morality arise from group interests and perspectives defined by social hierarchy, independent of self-interest.[11] Bias correction techniques for blocking self-interest need not work against ethnocentric biases. This matters for philosophy because philosophers, as already noted, 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. Research-active philosophers enjoy a leisure to contemplate that the less privileged lack.

Various rationales for this exclusion and narrowness are suspect. The traditional Aristotelian view that leisure is needed for rational reflection may be challenged by the thought that direct experience of manual labor and economic necessity makes salient the importance of certain claims of justice that the privileged are liable to ignore, dismiss, or misunderstand.[12] Philosophers' emotional detachment—their confidence that reflection in the "cool hour" yields better understanding—looks suspect in view of the fact that this was a traditional rationale for excluding the propertyless from the franchise, who were thought to be too upset about their poverty. We see the same view reflected in complaints that people of color are "hypersensitive" about racial insults. Cognitive science suggests rather that emotions help us focus on normatively relevant features of urgent problems,[13] and that the lack of emotion of the privileged may reflect their indifference to the plight of others.[14] Against the thought that having practical stakes in the outcome biases moral thinking, I suggest that *lacking* stakes—the typical condition of philosophers when they undertake speculative thought experiments—may make moral reasoning irresponsible and unaccountable to those to whom the outcomes matter.

A third question that may be raised about dominant methodologies is as follows: Why think our moral intuitions are reliable now when past ones were clearly prejudiced? Consider this intuition advanced by Hastings Rashdall, the distinguished Oxford philosopher and utilitarian theorist: "[P]robably no one will hesitate [to agree that] . . . the lower Well-being . . . of countless Chinamen or Negroes must be sacrificed that a higher

life may be possible for a much smaller number of white men."[15] This is not a good start for a moral epistemology that purports to deliver, from reflection on intuitions, moral principles true in all possible worlds.

A fourth closely related question is this: Why think our moral intuitions are reliable now when they have changed quite radically over time? Consider the recent dramatic changes in Euro-American views about the morality of LGBT sexuality, divorce, and premarital sex. About a century ago, beliefs about the morality of killing for honor also changed.

I do not draw skeptical conclusions about the possibility of moral knowledge from such doubts about the reliability of our moral intuitions. Nor shall I argue that moral relativism is the best way to explain the phenomena. Nor do I think that we have some alternative route to moral knowledge that avoids intuition altogether. Rather, if our instruments are flawed, the task before us is to discover ways to improve them. This returns us to the pragmatist strategy of seeking methods for intelligently updating our moral beliefs.

We can learn from the history of moral change how we might make progress in improving our practices of moral inquiry. Consider what may be the most dramatic worldwide progressive change in moral beliefs that has ever occurred. Three hundred years ago, few people in the world thought that slavery was morally wrong. Today, almost no one is willing to defend it. Although still practiced in many parts of the world, slavery is illegal everywhere. In this lecture, I shall take it as a fixed point that this change in moral views is progressive—a case of moral learning.[16] By studying *how* we managed to improve our moral beliefs about slavery, we can gain insight into how to improve our moral beliefs more generally. To make this study manageable, I focus on the U.S. case.

2. POWER, MORAL BIAS, AND THE INEFFECTIVENESS OF DOMINANT PHILOSOPHICAL METHODS

I have suggested that we can improve our moral beliefs by improving our methods for correcting, blocking, or counteracting biases in moral thinking. Here I shall focus on a specific class of biases, rooted in social inequality—in the ways power and privilege bias our thoughts. Adam Smith and John Dewey are two philosophers who offered insights into such biases.

Smith focused on moral biases of observers, when differentially valuing the targets of their moral sentiments according to their social status,

rather than according to morally relevant features. Much of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* investigates such moral biases. Smith claimed that "the disposition to admire, and almost to worship, the rich and the powerful, and to despise . . . persons of poor and mean condition, . . . is . . . the great and most universal cause of the corruption of our moral sentiments."[17] It leads observers to have "ten times more compassion" for the great than for the lowly, when they suffer equally.[18] Of those who have "equal degrees of merit," "the rich and the great" enjoy more respect from nearly everyone than "the poor and the humble."[19]

John Dewey and James Tufts considered moral biases of the powerful. They argued that

> it is difficult for a person in a place of authoritative power to avoid supposing that what he wants is right as long as he has power to enforce his demand. And even with the best will in the world, he is likely to be isolated from the real needs of others, and the perils of ignorance are added to those of selfishness. History reveals the tendency to confusion of private privilege with official status. The history of the struggle for political liberty is largely a record of attempt to get free from oppressions which were exercised in the name of law and authority, but which in effect identified loyalty with enslavement.[20]

The applicability of this observation to belief in the justice of slavery, over which a war had been fought in Dewey's lifetime, is evident. Not only slaveholders, but many other whites who identified with them, many of whom expected to own slaves, or at least to hold a superior position to those deemed eligible for slavery, held that slavery was a just institution. The moral bias Smith observed was also pervasive in the antebellum U.S. Not only advocates of slavery, but its opponents, too, despised slaves and free blacks, who occupied a markedly lower social position in both the North and the South to whites. Racism was endemic throughout the U.S.

The antebellum conflict over the morality of slavery remains important for moral epistemology because white abolitionists deployed the same methods of moral thinking that are so prominent in moral philosophy today. Their arguments thus offer a pragmatic test—a test in *practice*—of the powers of today's methods for correcting or counteracting moral bias.

The first white Anglo-American abolitionists were Quakers. They held that the fundamental principle of morality was the Golden Rule. John Hepburn argued that slavery and the slave trade violated the Golden Rule and led to the violation of every one of the Ten Commandments.[21] His tract is a splendid piece of analytic moral philosophy, packed with logically rigorous arguments. David Brion Davis, the great intellectual historian of slavery, writes of Hepburn's pamphlet that it "anticipated and answered virtually every proslavery argument that would appear in the next century and a half."[22]

Given his commitment to the Golden Rule, Hepburn used table-turning arguments—a key method still used to check self-interested bias. He challenged slaveholders to consider whether they would want to be enslaved: "[T[he Tyranizing over and making Slaves of our Fellow Creatures, the Negroes, every one knows, or may know, this is not the way they would be done unto."[23] Table-turning enables us to see the immorality of the slave trade as well.[24]

Yet proslavery thinkers had a ready answer to table-turning arguments. Presbyterian preacher James Henley Thornwell argued that the Golden Rule, as interpreted by abolitionists, reduced morality to the "caprice" of subjective desire. Of course, slaveholders do not want to be slaves; but criminals don't want to be punished, either. The Golden Rule must be interpreted in light of the unequal social stations ordained by God and necessary for social order:

> If I am bound to emancipate my slave because if the tables were turned and our situations reverse, I should covet this boon from him, I should be bound, upon the same principle, to promote my indigent neighbors around me, to an absolute equality with myself. That neither the Jews . . . nor the Apostles . . . ever applied it in the sense of the Abolitionists, is a strong presumption against their mode of interpretation. . . . Our Savior directs us to do unto others what, in their situations, it would be right and reasonable in us to expect from them. . . . The rule then simply requires, in the case of slavery, that we should treat our slaves as we should feel that we had a right to be treated if we were slaves ourselves.[25]

Thornton Stringfellow, Baptist pastor of Virginia, agreed: the Golden Rule, if interpreted to reject slavery, would require leveling all social inequalities.[26] Properly interpreted, it leaves them intact.

Abolitionists also used the method of reflective equilibrium against slavery advocates. Yet, for every intuitive wrong charged against slavery, proslavery thinkers pointed to the intuitive permissibility of the same act in other domains. Abolitionist arguments were to little avail in a society where such practices were accepted against other subordinate groups. For example, abolitionists objected to the chaining of runaway slaves. James Hammond, former representative and governor of South Carolina, and soon to be its senator, replied to abolitionist Thomas Clarkson: "Look to your army and navy." Soldiers and sailors, too, were put in manacles if they deserted their posts.[27] Abolitionist classics such as Theodore Weld's *American Slavery as It Is* (1839) stressed the shocking violence of slavery, with its floggings and other physical punishments. But proslavery writers observed that workers, wives, and pupils were subject to violent discipline at the hands of bosses, husbands, and schoolmasters.[28] Abolitionists objected that slaveholders forcibly separated husbands from wives and parents from children when they sold their slaves to different plantations. Proslavery thinkers replied that impressed seamen were also torn from their families, as were criminals sentenced to transportation.[29] Abolitionists complained of the injustice of forcing slaves to work for no wage. Proslavery thinkers noted that fathers had the right to force their children to labor for them without pay.[30] Abolitionists documented the meager food, ragged clothing, and miserable shelter of slaves. Proslavery thinkers pointed to the misery of wage slaves in England, who were materially worse off, they claimed, than American slaves.[31] But what of the fact that slaves, even those of talent, were deprived of all opportunities for advancement? Former senator of South Carolina William Harper replied, "Females are human and rational beings. They may be found of better faculties, and better qualified to exercise political privileges, and to attain the distinctions of society, than many men; yet who complains of the order of society by which they are excluded from them?"[32]

Today we have no difficulty accepting what were then radical implications of abolitionist arguments for other subordinate groups. Many abolitionists, however, were reluctant to carry their arguments so far. Wives suffered many of the same legal disabilities of slaves, lacking the rights to own property, make contracts, sue or be sued, or move about without their husband's permission, and women generally lacked opportunities for advancement, but only a few abolitionists questioned these disadvantages. The patriarch's right to use violence to discipline subordinate members of his family was largely uncontested. No congressional advocate of the Thirteenth Amendment was willing, when challenged, to argue that it overturned a husband's right to his wife's (or a father's right to his children's) labor and wages.[33] Of course, slaves

suffered more from the abuses abolitionists objected to than other subordinates. Yet, in their eagerness to point to the genuine distinctions between chattel slaves and wage slaves, abolitionists undercut their stress on the material deprivations of slavery, the very point on which the differences between chattel slaves and the poorest free laborers of Britain were smallest. Abolitionists faced a difficult choice between drawing arbitrary lines in a continuum of abuses against subordinates, or laying themselves open to proslavery charges that their arguments led to anarchism, in an era where many kinds of severe authority were accepted as necessary for social order.[34]

Reflective equilibrium also put abolitionists under pressure because both sides accepted the Bible as a source of moral knowledge. Abolitionists such as Hepburn used the Bible to derive abstract moral principles that put slavery in question. Against this, proslavery thinkers focused on close, literal readings of the Bible, showcasing dozens of passages in which God, Jesus, or the Apostles authorized slavery.[35] They also stressed the Christian doctrine of original sin, used since Augustine to justify slavery, and to postpone the liberating, egalitarian promise of the Bible to the afterlife.[36] Thus, Christian morality exposed difficulties on both sides. In response to textual evidence that the Bible authorized slavery, William Lloyd Garrison had to argue that the Bible was written not by God, but by many fallible humans, not all inspired by God.[37] While most philosophers today would agree with Garrison, his argument sat uncomfortably with the dominant Christian beliefs of the day.

Above all, racism profoundly distorted whites' moral intuitions, whether they favored or opposed slavery. Racism plays multiple roles in the conflict over slavery. Here I focus on how ideologies of black inferiority led slavery advocates to a delusional representation of slaveholders as benevolent paternalists toward their slaves, who supposedly would perish, like helpless children, without their masters' support and guidance.[38] As preposterous as it seems to us today, and to abolitionists then, letters and diaries of slaveholders and their wives testify to their apparently sincere self-image as dutifully providing for the welfare of their slaves, even at a burden to themselves.[39] This led to further delusions that their slaves were happy and loyal, and would stand by them in the event of war against the North,[40] and that their slaves didn't mind the deprivations of slavery—being denied personal liberty, rights to live with family members, education, even the honor associated with having recognized rights against rape and whipping.[41] Less delusionally, proslavery thinkers observed that free blacks in the North were disproportionately represented in the prisons and among the destitute and unemployed.[42] They deployed these facts as proof of

black inferiority, of their incapacity to manage freedom in competition with whites. This claim was more difficult for white abolitionists to refute, since, affected by their own racism, they were reluctant to blame their own racist practices for these outcomes.

Thus, the moral biases of slavery advocates proved largely immune to correction by the dominant methods of moral philosophy, which were deployed by white abolitionists. Ascent to the a priori led to abstract moral principles—the Golden Rule, the equality of humans before God—that settled nothing because their application to this world was contested. Table-turning exercises were ineffective for similar reasons. Reflective equilibrium did not clearly favor the abolitionists, given authoritarian, Biblical, and racist premises shared by white abolitionists and slavery advocates. No wonder only a handful of Southern whites turned against slavery on the basis of pure moral argument.[43]

3. PRAGMATIST METHODS OF COUNTERACTING MORAL BIAS: CONTENTION AND INCLUSION

Yet, moral beliefs about slavery did change. After the Civil War, while Southern whites insisted on white supremacy, most came to accept sharecropping as superior to slavery.[44] The practical success of emancipation led them to drop all of the arguments they had previously made in support of the supposed necessity of slavery. The full story of how this change in moral beliefs came about is too complex for this lecture. Here I stress two major factors. First, to change moral beliefs, slavery had to be challenged not only in pure moral arguments but in practical, collective action. Second, slaves and free blacks had to actively participate in those challenges.

In social theory, "contention" refers to practices in which people make claims against others, on behalf of someone's interests. "Contentious politics" consists of coordinated contention by groups around a shared agenda, involving governments as "targets, initiators of claims, or third parties."[45] Contentious practices span a spectrum from pure moral argument at one end, to riots, war, and other violent acts on the other. Between pure argument and violence is a wide range of contentious activities that are more or less disruptive of habitual ways of life, from petitioning, publicity campaigns, theatrical performances, candlelight vigils, litigation, and political campaigns, to street demonstrations, boycotts, teach-ins, sit-ins, picketing, strikes, building occupations, and other forms of civil disobedience. As people move beyond the pure moral argument pole, they manifest in action and not only words their

refusal to go along with the moral norms they are rejecting. Once it gets beyond pure moral argument, contention consists in the collective, concerted repudiation of morally objectionable practices by means of actions that disrupt the routine functioning of those practices, and that express rejection of the moral authority of people to practice them.

Contention aims to secure the satisfaction of claims by eliciting the recognition of those in power of the legitimacy of those claims, and thereby the incorporation into social institutions of an established recognition of those claims.[46] It might seem that violent acts, on this definition, could not count as contention, even if they have political aims. To be sure, political violence used simply to get one's way by force, as in cases of genocide and ethnic cleansing, does not address the victims as agents of whom it is demanded that they respond to claims. But other kinds of violence do aim at eliciting the practical recognition from authorities of legitimate claims. For example, the American War of Independence aimed not simply at obtaining *de facto* independence from Britain but at securing recognition from Britain of the United States as a sovereign nation. The war was a form of violent contention.

I claim that, in some circumstances, practical contention brings about collective moral learning—learning on the part of societies—that pure moral argument cannot. We have evidence that moral change induced by contention counts as learning—as an improvement of moral beliefs—if the contention blocks, counteracts, bypasses, or corrects cognitive or moral biases that supported the status quo ante, such that the new moral beliefs embodied in altered practice are not, or at least less, distorted by those biases. In such cases, we have similar grounds for claiming that the new moral beliefs are more reliable as in cases of belief change on the basis of blinded placebo-controlled clinical trials.

Practical contention, not just individual moral persuasion, is needed to effect collective moral belief change because collective moral beliefs are embodied in social norms. Social norms are sustained by reciprocal expectations of conditional conformity. They involve tacit or explicit agreements within a society to conform to the norm, on condition that enough others conform. Collective moral beliefs are embodied in social norms of discussion, joint deliberation, and claim-making. A group shares a belief if that belief shapes discourse within the group: the group takes it for granted as a premise for further argument, not needing independent justification; its truth is treated as a settled matter; disputing it is regarded as, if not beyond the pale, requiring a heavy burden of proof; disputants are liable to censure or even social exclusion for calling such convictions into question.[47] For belief

in a *moral principle* to be collectively accepted also requires that the principle regulates interpersonal claim-making: members are free to make claims in accordance with the principle and generally do so when they are victimized by violations of it; other members acknowledge the legitimacy of such claims; the principle is widely if not completely obeyed by group members; the group punishes disobedience; members take steps to transmit the principle to future generations.[48]

Because collective moral beliefs are sustained by reciprocal expectations, an individual can privately dissent while still participating in the practices that sustain the belief for the group. Hence, merely changing an individual's mind through moral argument need not change the collective belief. Furthermore, individuals may resist acting on their personal conclusions because a belief is held collectively. This is not simply because they lack the courage of their convictions. They may wonder whether they have reasoned correctly if they reach conclusions contrary to the group consensus, and think that the group's belief is more reliable than their own reasoning. Pure moral argument may also lack a certain degree of seriousness, insofar as it is advanced in contexts outside of interpersonal claim-making, by people who lack direct stakes in what they are saying.

Contentious politics avoids these weaknesses of pure moral argument. In contentious political practices, people advance moral beliefs in the context of actual claim-making: the stakes are real and serious. Because these practices involve mass action in public repudiation of existing norms, they destabilize the shared expectations that hold those norms in place, casting doubt on the robustness or authenticity of the purported consensus around them. Their mass public nature may give courage to those who privately dissented, proving that their doubts about existing norms were not merely the product of idiosyncratic reasoning. To the extent that contentious politics disrupts the routine operation of challenged norms, it forces genuine practical deliberation about what to do, not mere idle speculation. In refusing to concede legitimacy to the enforcement of challenged norms, contentious politics threatens a loss of honor on the part of those who do enforce them—something that may inspire the enforcers to reconsider them.[49]

Contentious politics thus serves to awaken societies to serious practical reflection on entrenched moral beliefs. More is needed, however, to ensure that the direction their reflection takes is less biased. Many features of contention can play this role. Here I stress one: the participation of the victims of injustice in challenging the norms that oppress them.

So far I have discussed the moral arguments made by white abolitionists such as Hepburn, Clarkson, Weld, and Garrison. As we have seen, their strategies were ineffective against the slaveholding culture of the South. Racism posed powerful obstacles to their efforts. Despite the abstract commitment of white abolitionists to the equality of blacks before God, and hence their equal moral considerability, racism biased their representation of the evils of slavery. They overwhelmingly represented slaves as victims of cruelty and material deprivation. Weld's *American Slavery as It Is* (1839) (the inspiration for Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which, with Weld's work, constituted the two most influential white abolitionist publications in the U.S.) documents in exhaustive detail the material deprivations inflicted on slaves and their subjection to cruel tortures. Notably, these wrongs can be suffered equally much by animals. By contrast, Weld's work passes relatively lightly over slavery's manifold assaults on slaves' specifically human, dignitary interests in their agency and in recognition from others: the deprivation of autonomy, legal rights, education, and opportunities for self-advancement; the theft of the fruits of their labor; the dishonor inflicted on female slaves through slaveholder rape; the dishonor imposed on male slaves by denying them authority over family life, powers to protect their wives and children, and access to avenues for developing and exercising military virtues. White abolitionists thus tended to cast slaves more as objects of pity than as subjects of dignity entitled to command respect. They were notably weak in addressing slaveholders' claims that blacks lacked intelligence, talent, foresight, and capacities for self-governance, and so would be unable to compete with whites in a free labor market, but sink into destitution, vagrancy, and crime if they were freed—key elements in slaveholders' patriarchal defense of slavery as necessary for blacks' welfare and social order.

Black abolitionists placed greater emphasis on the ways in which slavery deprived slaves of dignity, honor, and access to distinctively human rights and achievements. The central theme of Harriet Jacobs's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl Written by Herself* was the vulnerability of slave women to sexual harassment and rape at the hands of their masters. The female slave "is not allowed to have any pride of character. It is deemed a crime in her to wish to be virtuous." Jacobs rated this injury as far worse than slavery's material deprivations or consignment to a life of drudgery. She hid in a tiny, dark attic for almost seven years to avoid sexual assault, judging this fate better than slavery, even though she had never been whipped, beaten, or overworked as a slave.[50] Frederick Douglass agreed with Jacobs's priorities. Worse than the whip was slavery's consignment of slaves to ignorance and incapacity to think for themselves. Indeed, the fundamental point, and greatest injury,

of material deprivation and brutal physical punishment was to disable slaves from aspiring to freedom, to the exercise of rational capacities, to any kind of estimable activity.[51] From this dignitary perspective, Douglass exposed slaveholders' boasts of the material indulgence they granted their slaves on holidays, when they were encouraged to get drunk and discouraged from any work, as a great fraud, designed only "to disgust their slaves with freedom, by plunging them into the lowest depths of dissipation."[52]

Black abolitionists' alternative critique of the evils of slavery led them to advocate a different strategy for bringing about moral change—one addressed as much to antislavery Northerners as to advocates of slavery. Their critique identified *racism*—the widespread, deeply entrenched contempt for blacks, based on prejudicial feelings of their being unfit for freedom and equal dignity with whites—as the core moral bias upholding slavery. To counteract this prejudice, much more than pure moral argument was required. Blacks needed to *demonstrate in action* their *interest, capacity, and worthiness for freedom and dignity*. "We . . . wish to see the charges of Mr. Jefferson refuted by the blacks themselves" for, if blacks fail to try, "we will only establish them."[53] As James McCune Smith, the first African-American to earn a medical degree, and editor of Douglass's *My Bondage and My Freedom*, put the point:

> The real object of that [antislavery] movement is not only to disenthrall, it is, also, to bestow upon the Negro the exercise of all those rights, from the possession of which he has been so long debarred. But this full recognition of the colored man to the right, and the entire admission of the same to the full privileges, political, religious and social, of manhood, requires powerful effort on the part of the enthralled, as well as on the part of those who would disenthrall them. The people at large must feel the conviction, as well as admit the abstract logic, of human equality; the Negro . . . must prove his title first to all that is demanded for him; in the teeth of unequal chances, he must prove himself equal to the mass of those who oppress him . . ..[54]

Without such effort by blacks themselves "to disprove their alleged inferiority, and demonstrate their capacity for a more exalted civilization than slavery and prejudice had assigned to them," whites would "reconcile themselves" to blacks' "enslavement and oppression, as things inevitable, if not desirable."[55]

This task stood in tension with white abolitionists' strategy to present slaves as objects of pity. Douglass grated under their requests that he merely "give us the facts," and "we will take care of the philosophy." They implored him to speak to audiences with an uneducated plantation accent, lest Northern whites think he wasn't really a fugitive slave. They objected to his establishing a paper of his own, preferring that he continue to lecture under their sponsorship, oblivious to the importance Douglass saw in demonstrating blacks' capacities and inspiring, through his achievements, other blacks to that call.[56]

In this dispute, black abolitionists proved to be far keener moral psychologists than their white counterparts. White abolitionists, in stressing the pathos of slavery, operated on the assumption that the core moral bias of slavery advocates was heard-heartedness. On that assumption, the key strategy for counteracting that bias should be to highlight those facts about slavery that arouse people's sympathies and to cultivate social practices that encourage sentimentality and open-heartedness, so that people feel free to respond appropriately to those facts. Black abolitionists identified the core weakness of this strategy: "Human nature is so constituted, that it cannot honor a helpless man, although it can pity him; and even this it cannot do long, if the signs of power do not arise."[57] If the core moral bias of slavery advocates was racist contempt, then this can only be counteracted by *resisting* subordination and oppression, *demanding* respect, and *seizing* it, by force if necessary, from those who withhold it. To demonstrate *worthiness* of respect, one must conduct oneself as *entitled* to it. Failing that, the contemptuous will think their targets uninterested in, incapable of, and hence undeserving of respect.

On this point, black abolitionists were united. Their writings repeatedly testify to the power of blacks' standing up for their rights, and the supreme importance of their doing so. Jacobs "resolved never to be conquered" and resisted her master's sexual advances. Escaping North, she successfully opposed racial discrimination in hotel service by telling the black servants that they should stand up to oppose it.[58] Douglass admired the unbowed resistance of Nelly to overseer Mr. Servier's blows, noting that he never whipped her again.[59] This incident prefigured his own triumphant struggle against the slavebreaker Covey, from which he drew his central insight into the moral psychology of overcoming oppression: to obtain recognition of one's respectability from others, one must manifest self-respect in action by exacting respect from others.

This call to resistance was the core of David Walker's *Appeal*.[60] And resist the slaves did, taking deeds, more than words, as the key to

progressive moral change. Slaves exploited the legal codes of the South to extract recognition of rights through innumerable acts of resistance on the plantations, including, in some cases (astonishingly!), the right to kill their masters in self-defense.[61] There was no better proof that slaves desired freedom and repudiated enslavement than the steady flow of fugitives North, without regret or reversal. Toward the end of the Civil War, the Confederacy, running out of soldiers, debated whether to draft slaves into the army. Howell Cobb, one of the founders of the Confederacy, answered, "If slaves will make good soldiers our whole theory of slavery is wrong."[62] But fugitive slaves demonstrated, in their courageous service in the Union Army, that slaves did make good soldiers. They thereby heeded Walker's call for blacks themselves to refute Jefferson's aspersions on their race and shattered the South's "whole theory of slavery." While their actions did not end racism, they did force a momentous retreat of this profound moral bias. Slavery advocates were forced to concede that the case for slavery was spurious, and that blacks were fit at least for the autonomy that the emergent sharecropping economy conceded to them. This was not full freedom by any means, but it was a giant step up from slavery.

4. SOME PRAGMATIST PATHS FORWARD FOR MORAL PHILOSOPHY

Let us step back and draw some lessons from this monumental episode of collective moral learning. Recall that pragmatism replaces the quest for ultimate criteria of moral rightness, true in all possible worlds or at least at high levels of abstraction, with methods of intelligent updating. I argued that one important type of intelligent updating involves blocking, counteracting, or reducing the influence of moral biases. We have reasons to believe that *social power* biases moral reasoning in systematic ways. First, as Smith argued, people tend to feel more sympathy, and more esteem, for the rich and powerful relative to the poor and powerless, controlling for equal suffering and equal merit. The latter unjustly suffer *contempt*. He could have added that such contempt tends to be rationalized by biased notions of group inferiority. Second, as Dewey and Tufts argued, the powerful—who shape social institutions to benefit their social groups at others' expense—tend to confuse what they want with what is right so long as they have the power to enforce their demands.

Faced merely with pure moral argument, we have seen that the powerful, and their advocates, typically have substantial resources at their disposal, from the intuitive moral ideas and principles available in their society, to

rationalize their side of the debate. Nor does purely speculative, a priori moral argument typically activate real practical reasoning. Hence, the powers of pure moral argument to dislodge prejudice and bias tend to be weak.

Stronger methods are needed to counteract the biases induced by social power. My case study of a society-wide change in moral belief, from proslavery to abolitionist, focused on two such methods. First, contentious politics—active, practical, mass resistance to the moral claims embodied in social institutions enforced by and catering to the powerful—is needed to activate genuine practical reasoning across all levels of society. The powerful won't really listen to reason—that is, to claims from below—until they no longer have the power to routinely enforce their desires. Second, the subordinated and oppressed must actively participate in that contention. They must manifest in deed and not only words their own interest, capacity, and worthiness for the rights and privileges they are demanding. For if they meekly submit to oppression, this tends to make observers—not only the powerful, but *anyone*, as Smith held—think that the downtrodden have no interest in or capacity for uplift and do not deserve it. The oppressed must show their determination to cast off oppression in order to arouse the esteem and thereby enlist the support or at least the acquiescence of others.

Walker, Jacobs, McCune, and Douglass understood this. Respect is obtained from others not by abstract argument but by *dignified exaction*. No wonder Douglass lost all patience for abstract moral argument:

> [W]here all is plain there is nothing to be argued. . . . Must I undertake to prove that the slave is a man? . . . The slaveholders themselves acknowledge it . . . when they punish disobedience on the part of the slave. What is this but the acknowledgement that the slave is a moral, intellectual, and responsible being . . . [I]t is not light that is needed, but fire. . . . The feeling of the nation must be quickened; the conscience of the nation must be roused; . . . the hypocrisy of the nation must be exposed; and its crimes against God and man must be proclaimed and denounced.[63]

In the language of contemporary moral philosophy, Douglass was calling for a shift from third-person to second-person address, from abstract impersonal argument to interpersonal claim-making, founded on an assertion of authority to demand respect from others.[64] To be called to account, to be addressed as a bearer of duties to the addresser, to be

upbraided for failure to do what is authoritatively demanded—these are essential experiences needed to become a morally responsible being, fit for living with others. And these are the experiences to which slaveholders, holding irresponsible totalitarian power over slaves, were least exposed before the Civil War. Yet, in the perverse corruption of moral sentiments Smith identified, until the enslaved actively repudiated their subjection, it was the slaves, rather than the slaveholders, who were thought unfit for living freely with others.

From our current moral perspective, it is easy for us to see the errors of the past, with respect to slavery. A skeptic might wonder whether we are merely begging the question in favor of our current moral beliefs. The pragmatist answers that this change can be seen to be progressive, a case of moral learning, because it was brought about through practices that tend to counteract or reduce known moral biases rooted in human psychology. As clinical conclusions reached on the basis of blinded, placebo-controlled clinical trials are more reliable, due to the ways they check the biases of wishful thinking, moral conclusions reached on the basis of practical methods that counteract the biases of power are similarly more reliable.

This pragmatist perspective suggests an alternative research program for moral philosophy, reaching beyond the a priori methods to which we philosophers are so wedded. My point is to expand the tools we use, and to reduce our excessive reliance on the old tools. Just as a bolt will turn uselessly without a nut to fasten it, or glued joints will be weak if they haven't been clamped, our abstract moral arguments will spin without conclusion or fall apart uselessly unless they are used in conjunction with empirically grounded tools. We can make better progress by working in close conjunction with the social sciences and history to consider empirically how different circumstances, including social relations, shape our moral thinking. If we discover an influence on our moral thinking that we can't justify, or that experience shows us to lead to untoward consequences, we have discovered a moral bias. Then we can seek empirically reliable methods to correct, block, counteract, or bypass those biases, keeping in mind that pure reasoning may not be enough. Some methods may be practical, not just speculative or theoretical, and involve concerted action in the world, sometimes collective political action.

This alternative research program does not reject intuitions. They are a basic material of moral thinking; we have no way around them. But we must be alert to the possibility that our intuitions might suffer from bias and would be improved under alternative conditions.

My case study raises an alarm for philosophy as we currently practice it. Without active participation of the oppressed and disadvantaged, the moral views reached by philosophers are liable to be biased—ignorant of and unresponsive to the concerns and claims of those not present.[65] Dewey and Tufts identified that problem, too. Morality, understood as what we owe to each other, arises from the need to adjudicate the claims that everyone makes on everyone else. If the claims of the subordinated are suppressed, silenced, ignored, or misunderstood, the conclusions reached on the basis of the subset of claims that are considered are liable to be systematically biased. My case study indicates that purely a priori methods of bias correction are unlikely to reliably counteract such biases.[66] There is no reason to think that ever-more-elaborate exploration of the contours of one's own moral thoughts, or of the thoughts of similarly situated persons, will capture everyone's moral concerns. Knowledge of what we owe to each other can only be generated through processes of interpersonal claim-making that include those occupying the full range of diverse situations in society. For moral philosophy to make progress, it must practice inclusion of diverse philosophers.

In this lecture, I have focused on bias correction as one basic pragmatist method. Another is experiments in living. The conclusions we reach from real experiments in living are likely to be more reliable than the conclusions we reach from thought experiments. Thought experiments are *at best* no more reliable than deliberation. We often find that our deliberations have gone astray once we act on them and experience unexpected results—some of which may inspire us to revise the initial terms in which we formulated the stakes in our decision.[67] Ascent to the a priori offers no protection from such revision. We know from the history of morals that conceptions of value thought to be immutable do, in fact, change over time.

Just as bias correction requires collaboration with history and the social sciences, so does assessing the results of experiments in living. Pragmatism thereby invites us to naturalize moral inquiry at the same time as expand the range of participants in it. It is high time that we philosophers expand our toolboxes, as well as our collaborators. In doing so, we have nothing to lose but our prejudices.

NOTES

1. Thomas Scanlon, *What We Owe to Each Other* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).
2. G. A. Cohen, "Facts and Principles," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 31, no. 3 (2003): 211–45.

3. John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), §9.

4. Elizabeth Anderson, "John Stuart Mill and Experiments in Living," *Ethics* 102 (1991): 4–26; Elizabeth Anderson, "The Quest for Free Labor," Lecture 9, Amherst Lecture in Philosophy. Amherst College, 2014a, http://www.amherstlecture.org/anderson2014/index.html.

5. Golden Rule reasoning would also require us to consider the impact of forbidding the agent from performing the action.

6. Rawls,*A Theory of Justice*, §24.

7. Judith Jarvis Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 1 (1971): 47–66.

8. Discussing with others about what shared principles should govern their interaction, when decisions are to be made, counts as joint deliberation.

9. Jonathan Weinberg, Shaun Nichols, and Stephen Stich, "Normativity and Epistemic Intuitions," *Philosophical Topics* 29, nos. 1–2 (2001): 429–60.

10. Donald Kinder and Cindy Kam, *Us Against Them: Ethnocentric Foundations of American Opinion* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

11. Anita M. Superson, *The Moral Skeptic* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

12. John Dewey, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916), ch. 19.

13. Antonio Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1994).

14. Michael Kraus, Paul Piff, and Dacher Keltner, "Social Class as Culture: The Convergence of Resources and Rank in the Social Realm," *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 20, no. 4 (2011): 246–50.

15. Hastings Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1924), 237-38.

16. The case for this conclusion is not based on begging the question in favor of our current moral beliefs. Rather, it is vindicated by pragmatist methods themselves, as I argue in "Social Movements, Experiments in Living, and Moral Progress: Case Studies from Britain's Abolition of Slavery," Lindley Lecture, University of Kansas, 2014b, http://kuscholarworks.ku.edu/handle/1808/14787; and "The Quest for Free Labor."

17. Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. D. D. Raphael and A. L. Macfie, *Glasgow Edition of the Works and Correspondence of Adam Smith* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1759 [1976]), I.3.3.1.

18. Ibid., I.3.2.2.

19. Ibid.

20. John Dewey and James Hayden Tufts, *Ethics* (New York: H. Holt and Company, 1932), 226.

21. John Hepburn, *The American Defence of the Christian Golden Rule, or An Essay to Prove the Unlawfulness of Making Slaves of Men* (New York(?), 1715).

22. David Brion Davis, *Challenging the Boundaries of Slavery*, The Nathan I. Huggins Lectures (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 64.

23. Hepburn,*American Defence of the Christian Golden Rule*, 2.

24. Ibid., 38.

25. James Thornwell, *The Rights and Duties of Masters* (Charleston, SC: Steam-Power Press of Walker & James, 1850), 42-43.

26. Thornton Stringfellow, "The Bible Argument, or Slavery in the Light of Divine Revelation," in *Cotton Is King, and Pro-Slavery Arguments*, ed. E. N. Elliott (Augusta, Ga.: Pritchard, Abbott & Loomis, 1860), 479-80.

27. James Hammond, "Letters on Slavery," in *The Proslavery Argument as Maintained by the Most Distinguished Writers* (Charleston: Walker, Richards & Co., 1852), 129.

28. William Harper, "Slavery in Light of Social Ethics," in *Cotton Is King, and Pro-Slavery Arguments*, ed. E. N. Elliott (Augusta, GA: Pritchard, Abbott & Loomis, 1860), 573.

29. George Fitzhugh, *Cannibals All! or, Slaves Without Masters* (Richmond, VA: A. Morris, 1857), 219; Hammond, "Letters on Slavery," 130.

30. David Christy, "Cotton Is King: Or, Slavery in the Light of Political Economy," in *Cotton Is King, and Pro-Slavery Arguments*, ed. E. N. Elliott (Augusta, GA: Pritchard, Abbott & Loomis, 1860), 314.

31. Fitzhugh,*Cannibals All!*, 13-14; Harper, "Slavery in Light of Social Ethics," 585–87; Hammond, "Letters on Slavery," 122.

32. Harper, "Slavery in Light of Social Ethics," 554.

33. Lea VanderVelde, "The Labor Vision of the Thirteenth Amendment," *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 138 (1989-90): 457.

34. Thornwell,*Rights and Duties of Masters*, 12; Hammond, "Letters on Slavery," 160.

35. Stringfellow, "The Bible Argument"; Harper, "Slavery in Light of Social Ethics," 105–108.

36. Thornwell,*Rights and Duties of Masters*, 27-28.

37. William Lloyd Garrison, "Divine Authority of the Bible," in *Selections from the Writings and Speeches of William Lloyd Garrison* (Boston, MA: R. F. Wallcut, 1852).

38. Stringfellow, "The Bible Argument," 520; Hammond, "Letters on Slavery," 161–63; Harper, "Slavery in Light of Social Ethics," 573.

39. Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Vintage Books, 1976), 75–86.

40. Fitzhugh,*Cannibals All!*, 17; Hammond, "Letters on Slavery," 112.

41. Hammond, "Letters on Slavery," 132; Harper, "Slavery in Light of Social Ethics," 575–80, 586, 593.

42. Thomas Dew, "Abolition of Negro Slavery," *American Quarterly Review* 12 (September-December 1832): 236; Stringfellow, "The Bible Argument," 539.

43. In "The Quest for Free Labor," I discuss the case of William Henry Brisbane, one of the rare Southerners who was convinced by abolitionist arguments to give up his slaves. I show how even in his case, pure moral arguments in the mode of dominant methods of moral philosophy led to less satisfactory normative outcomes than pragmatist methods.

44. Roger Ransom and Richard Sutch, *One Kind of Freedom: The Economic Consequences of Emancipation*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 95–97.

45. Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, *Contentious Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 4.

46. This is consistent with changing the people in power, as in the case of elections. It is also consistent with changing structures of power, as in constitutional reforms. When constitutional change is effected through popular ratification, the people act as the sovereign, and they are, collectively, the addressees of contentious politics.

47. Margaret Gilbert, "Modeling Collective Belief," *Synthese* 73 (1987): 185–204.

48. Elizabeth Anderson, "The Social Epistemology of Morality: Learning from the Forgotten History of the Abolition of Slavery," in *The Epistemic Life of Groups: Essays in Collective Epistemology*, ed. Miranda Fricker and Michael Brady (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

49. Appiah argues that abolitionists' threat to withhold honor from the enforcers of slavery in Britain played a critical role in ending slavery in the British Empire. He is correct, although the U.S. case shows that under other social conditions, the threat may lead to the attempted secession and violent resistance of the dishonored community. Kwame Anthony Appiah, *The Honor Code: How Moral Revolutions Happen* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2010), ch. 3.

50. Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl Written by Herself*, ed. L. Maria Child (Boston, MA, 1861), 25, 104, 137.

51. Frederick Douglass, *My Bondage and My Freedom*, ed. James M'Cune Smith (New York: Miller, Orton & Mulligan, 1855a), 427, 263.

52. Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (Anti-Slavery Office, 1845), 73.

53. DavidWalker and Henry Highland Garnet, *Walker's Appeal, with a Brief Sketch of His Life by Henry Highland Garnet* (New York: J. H. Tobitt, 1829 [1848]), Kindle loc. 289-90, 306-307

54. Douglass,*My Bondage and My Freedom*, xvii.

55. Ibid., 389.

56. Ibid., 361, 393.

57. Ibid., 247.

58. Jacobs,*Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl Written by Herself*, 14, 164.

59. Douglass,*My Bondage and My Freedom*, 94-95.

60. Walker and Garnet, *Walker's Appeal*.

61. James Oakes, *Slavery and Freedom: An Interpretation of the Old South* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990), ch. 4.

62. Howell Cobb, Letter to J. A. Seddon, Secretary of War of the Confederate States of America, Macon, GA, 8 January. Published in *The American Historical Review* 1.1 (Oct. 1895): 97–98.

63. Frederick Douglass, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?" In *My Bondage and My Freedom*, ed. James M'Cune Smith (New York: Miller, Orton & Mulligan, 1855b), 443–45.

64. Stephen Darwall, *The Second-Person Standpoint: Morality, Respect, and Accountability* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), ch. 1.

65. Charles Mills, *The Racial Contract* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997).

66. As Mills (ibid.) argues, sometimes bias can be built into the very questions we ask, so even if the answers were unbiased, this would not remove the parochialism of the concerns built into the questions.

67. Anderson, "John Stuart Mill and Experiments in Living," 4–26.

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