The Well-Being of Philosophy

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1. INTRODUCTION

I have been writing about well-being and about how to think about well-being when we are trying to help people, especially our friends.[1] My Humean, constructivist, and fairly pragmatic tendencies have led me to think that how we think about well-being (and other normative concepts) should be guided by the kind of practical problem we face. In the case of helping friends, that practical context is one that has several features. We share some values with our friends, but not all. When we want to help, we want to help in ways that seem helpful to our friends rather than threatening or alienating, ways that do not risk rupturing the relationship. We also want to help in ways that are sustainable without our constant attention, given our friends' motivations and abilities. Yet, we don't want to pander to friends' bad judgment and poor choices by failing ever to risk harming the friendship, even when the stakes are high.

In this practical context, I believe the way to think about well-being is to focus on the values of the person we are trying to help and on how those values could be improved in light of shared norms and the facts about personality and environment. Well-being, on this view, is success in terms of appropriate values over time, or "value fulfillment" as I call it. What it means to fulfill or succeed in terms of our values depends on the various standards of success we have for them, and these standards—more than our ultimate values themselves—change (and should change) over time to adapt to our changing bodies, minds, and circumstances.

To help a friend flourish, then, we ought—ideally—to try to understand what the friend's values are, what standards of success she takes to

define them, how these values fit together, what the friend is like, how she is likely to change, and how her circumstances are likely to affect the fulfillment of her set of values over time. No one can know all of these things, of course. But that's OK. What it's most important to know will depend on the situation. For example, for a young friend who is choosing a career path, poised to take on a lot of debt to go to a professional school for law or medicine or business, what may be most helpful is help with thinking about what values really are appropriate for her at all—What suits her interests and talents? What motivates her? Where are her passions? For an older friend who is struggling to cope with an injury that prevents him from enjoying his lifetime avocation of playing the violin, the most helpful strategy may be to help him find a way to redefine the value of music in his life so that he can fulfill it in other ways.

Because most of us have multiple values and because our values typically take long-term commitment to realize, how our values fit together in a life is extremely important both for living well and for helping people live well. Values that flat out cannot be pursued together—or that are interpreted by a person such as to make them contradictory in this way—are not good for people. A person who values parenting and who thinks that being a good parent means being a *stay-at-home* parent, and who also values a career as a scientist and thinks that this demands getting a Ph.D. and working long hours, is in some trouble. These values cannot be fulfilled in the same life understood in this way.

Much of my interest in the topic of well-being and friendship has been personal. I've been motivated by my own friendships—friends I've been worried about, friends who have asked for my help, friends who have been trying to figure out how to help other friends. The main topic of this address is also partly motivated by personal concerns. As many of you, I have been worried about philosophy. In part this is because I've become a department chair and have been called upon to defend the discipline to administrators and parents. In part it's because I've been working more closely with the APA and therefore more aware of department closures across the country. In part it's because of the scandals I've read about in the blogs (and *The Chronicle* and sometimes even the *New York Times*) detailing ugly cases of sexual harassment and other climate problems in philosophy. And in part it's because of a mid-life crisis: I've now devoted half my life to this field—should I stick with it for the second half?

Given my research, I started thinking . . . what if PHILOSOPHY were my friend? I might worry. Philosophy, what are you doing with your life? You're in the news, and not in a good way.

Thinking about philosophy as my friend led me to wonder what would happen if I took my own approach to helping and applied it here. And that led me to creating a survey, which was distributed at the end of the summer of 2016, called "The Value of Philosophy Survey." As I would do if I were approaching an individual friend in need of help, I wanted to know the following: What are your values, philosophy? As is inevitable, I came to the encounter with my own values to discover what we have in common, philosophy and I. Given my own research and experience, I had particular interests in interdisciplinarity and in how philosophy engages with questions and problems that matter to people beyond philosophy. Looking at the discipline, I thought diversity was another value worth considering. I also convened an advisory board of people from different types of institutions and with different backgrounds who helped me generate more questions, and then I tried to reach as many participants as possible.

My hope here was to find out what philosophers value about philosophy. I anticipated finding some conflicts among these values, and my goal was to use this information to recommend a "healthy" and sustainable path that we can follow, given our values, given what philosophy is like (our "personality") and given the academic, economic, and political environment in which we have to work. I was not thinking primarily about pragmatic strategies or tactics for surviving in an anti-intellectualist and fractured society. Rather, I was thinking more in terms of a path that we'd like to follow if we can.

2. SOME DETAILS ABOUT THE SURVEY

The Value of Philosophy Survey was developed through an iterative process of item generation and testing, including feedback and item piloting with a consulting advisory board and with different groups of subject matter experts. The survey was made available, via email, blog postings, etc., to as many members of the Anglo-American academic philosophy community as possible. The survey contained a total of twenty-four questions, of which five asked for open-ended responses.[2] There were 2,531 responses.

The survey respondents were largely male (70.2%) and white (79.2%). Over half (51.1%) were forty years of age or younger. Almost half (49.4%)

were tenured (full or associate professor), while 14% were on the tenure track, 8.4% were non-tenure track, and 22.8% were graduate students. Most respondents were APA members (58.8%) employed at public (65%) doctoral institutions (58.8%) in the United States (63.8%). Nearly half of respondents reported a specialization in metaphysics and epistemology (46.7%), with ethics specialization numbers nearly as high (46%). Representativeness is difficult to determine, but we know that when compared demographically to APA membership, survey respondents were broadly similar in terms of tenure-track status, sex, and ethnicity.[3]

3. WHAT DO WE VALUE?

Overall, it seems that we do value interdisciplinarity, relevance, engagement, and diversity. In general, we do not value "sticking to tradition" in a way that excludes new methodologies, though we tend to think it's more important to emphasize traditional methods and questions in undergraduate education. Some of us value these things more than others, of course, and on average all of us value them in some *ways* more than others. In particular, it's worth noting that women endorse these values more strongly than men; gender was the only demographic variable that predicted significant widespread differences in degree of endorsement. I'll say more about this later. For now, the important point is that on every question about how much these values are favored, the mean answer is above the scale mid-point and the answers are more or less normally distributed. (So it's not that two thirds of philosophers love interdisciplinarity and one third hate it; rather, there is support for interdisciplinarity in general, across the board). That said, there are disagreements, conflicts, and differences—of course! First, there are different degrees of support depending on the specific question. Second, there are real people at both ends of the normally distributed curves, which means that there could be *some* hostile conflict among philosophers. And third, the values revealed by the survey are not necessarily easy to fit together (which might create non-hostile conflict). Just as in the individual case, even values that are not flat out inconsistent with each other—career and family, for example—compete with each other for time and attention. I'll come back to these three kinds of conflict as they arise.

After reviewing the data from the survey, I'm in the position of someone who has just finished a very long conversation with my struggling friend about her values. I might venture to articulate a path forward. So here's my advice, Philosophy: What I think you really want is to broaden, to open up, to become a more welcoming field, without losing what makes

you *you*. You don't want a radical transformation; you want to be less isolated and narrow than you have been in the past, not by rejecting your past but by achieving a balance between valuing the old and the new. That is the theme of the rest of the talk: "broaden and balance." In short, the message of the talk is that our values will be fulfilled by *broadening* our community and our conception of what counts as philosophy, and by *balancing* our attention and rewards between traditional and non-traditional approaches to philosophy.

I want to tell you why the survey data led me to this view of things. I also want to explain some of the details—what kind of breadth, what kind of balancing, what do these values mean to us? But before I get to that, there's a prior question to tackle. If, after my long conversation with my friend, I were to discover that her path was one of self-destruction or moral depravity, I would be unlikely to embark on a project of figuring out how to help her better walk that path. Though I am, at heart, a subjectivist about individual well-being, I know that we can sometimes ultimately do better by our own lights when we veer from the path that looks brightest to us at the moment. It's rather a long story about how much a subjectivist about well-being can insist that actual values are "correctable." The question at issue here is whether the "broaden and balance" path that I think we (in general) favor is a healthy one—and I think it is. There is no complete overhaul of values needed in our case. It will be easier to explain why I think this is the case once we have a more detailed picture of the path, so I'll turn to that now.

3.A. DIVERSITY

We asked questions about diversity in philosophy with respect to disability, gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status. Responses to the survey showed strong support for the view that diversity is important to academic philosophy, with mean ratings well above 5 (on a 1–7 scale) for all five listed types of diversity (see Figure 1).[4] In the open-ended questions, we saw very strong support for other kinds of diversity: political orientation and religion, most notably.

When it came to particular ways of addressing problems with diversity, respondents expressed moderately strong support for actively recruiting people from underrepresented groups into the major and into graduate programs, with mean ratings for these items somewhat above 5. The item "Philosophical research benefits when it incorporates the views and perspectives of philosophers who are members of underrepresented groups" received the strongest support (between 5 and 6). The fact that this item—which requires support for the benefits of diversity in

the abstract, without thinking about the effort required for increasing diversity—receives greater support than the items that ask about recruitment strategies is interesting and is part of a pattern in the survey data. I'll say more about this later as the pattern emerges.

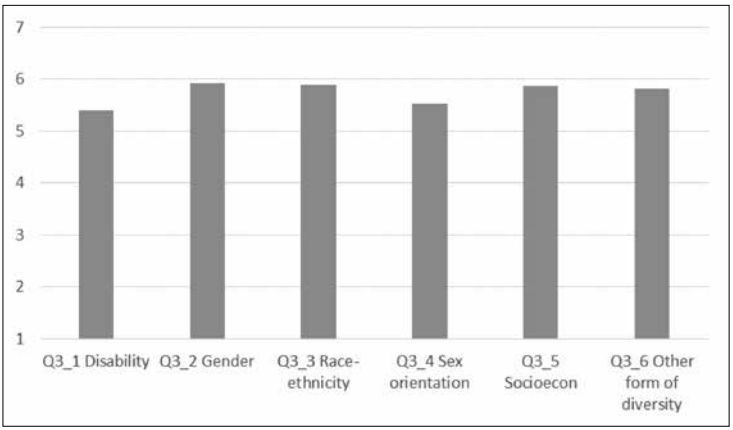

Figure 1. Responses to the survey showed strong support for the view that diversity is important to academic philosophy, with mean ratings well above 5 for all five listed types of diversity.

Respondents were divided on the questions of whether the culture of academic philosophy is unwelcoming to members of underrepresented groups, and whether philosophical research disadvantages those groups (the average ratings on these questions was close to the scale midpoint of "neither agree nor disagree," with a slight inclination toward agreement with both questions). Disagreement on this topic can certainly influence how well we do at achieving the value of diversity: those who think the culture is already welcoming will not think there is as great a need to make changes. Further, as I mentioned earlier, not everyone agrees that increasing diversity is good for the field.

Differences among the members of any community are to be expected and, often, a good thing. Differences can prod us to converse, share experiences, argue, and reach better conclusions. Of course, differences can also cause fighting and hostility. In the individual case, conflicting values can provoke soul-searching and creative solutions, but if the conflicts are too great they can cause mental breakdowns. To figure out which case is our case—are we functioning with healthy conflict, or are we on the verge of a nervous breakdown?—I looked at the qualitative data where there were hundreds of comments about diversity. Many of these were comments that elaborated on the importance of it or advocated for a different kind of diversity than the five identified in the survey. Some,

though, were against diversity, and these were the comments that are relevant to the question. We found two interesting things here. First, the "against diversity" comments were a definite minority of the comments. Second, the "against diversity" comments divided into two types: the first group thought that diversity is just irrelevant to philosophy because, as one person put it, "diversity is neither a positive or a negative, as regards the unified goal, which is the search for truth." The second group expressed the view that diversity is weakening or undermining philosophy; these comments expressed concerns about political correctness running amok, self-serving ideology, and the dangers of anti-meritocratic policies. For those of us who think that increasing diversity is a value we want to uphold and promote, the comments in this second group can be disheartening and it can seem to us that this group is large. But what we learn from the survey is that this is not at all the case. There were approximately 25 comments in the "diversity is pernicious" group out of the 580 who wrote comments and the 2,500 who took the survey. There were five times as many comments like this one: "Diversity is ESSENTIAL to philosophy. Our discipline is about perspective on the world around us; we can't have depth of perspective without substantial diversity." Or this one: "Diversity can nourish the curiosity we need to maintain as philosophers. Diversity introduces us to new worlds, ways of perceiving and the limits of our thinking." In promoting the value of diversity to philosophy—and to philosophical research—we are not going against the majority of philosophers; indeed, we are right in line.

3.B. INTERDISCIPLINARITY AND RELEVANCE

In this section we asked questions about the value of interdisciplinary research and teaching (see Figure 2). These questions included general questions about whether interdisciplinary research is worthwhile, whether it lowers the quality of philosophical work, and whether philosophy benefits from engagement with other humanities, social sciences, or STEM fields. We also asked whether graduate students should be encouraged to pursue interdisciplinary research and whether undergraduate courses should feature interdisciplinary research. Finally, we asked whether "high-quality papers published in academic non-philosophy journals should be given weight equal to that given to high-quality papers published in academic philosophy journals when making hiring, promotion, and tenure decisions."

Survey respondents evinced fairly strong support for interdisciplinarity. All of the individual items had mean ratings above 5 on a 7-point scale. The aggregated interdisciplinarity variable (that is, the variable that we created by combining several questions on this topic) had a mean of

5.58, well above the scale midpoint of 4. Interestingly, the item that received the lowest support was the very practical question about whether publications in non-philosophy journals should be given equal weight. This is part of the pattern I mentioned a moment ago: we tend to have somewhat less strong support for specific strategies for promoting our values than we do for the general idea that these values should be promoted.

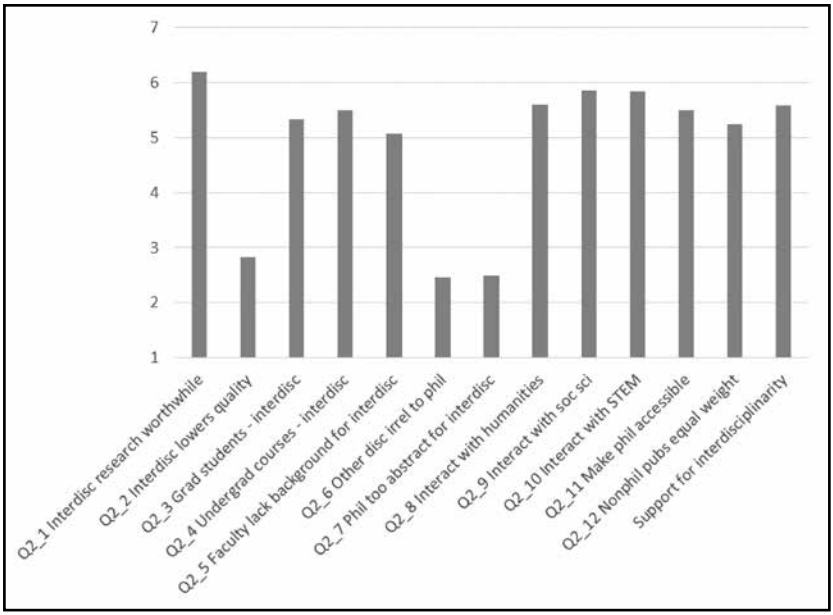

Figure 2. Survey respondents evinced fairly strong support for interdisciplinarity. All of the individual items had mean ratings above 5 on a 7-point scale (or below 3, for negatively phrased items). The aggregated interdisciplinarity variable had a mean of 5.58, well above the scale midpoint of 4.

Another set of questions asked about philosophy's "relevance" to societal problems and public intellectualism (see Figure 3). Survey respondents expressed moderate support for the idea that philosophy should engage with the "real world," with mean ratings for these five items above 4.5, and a rating of 5.2 for the aggregated variable (that combines all the questions about real-world engagement). The notion that graduate and undergraduate education should emphasize "real world" problems received markedly less support than the thought that philosophical research should address such problems. This is interesting because it suggests (contrary to what one might have assumed) that the concern for relevance does not reduce to a concern for marketing our courses. Support was stronger when it comes to public intellectualism.

Responses to the four items having to do with philosophy and public discourse were substantially stronger, with mean ratings of 5.7 or above, and a rating of almost 6 for the aggregated variable. The item that received the lowest support in the aggregated "relevance variable" was this one: "Professional philosophers should be rewarded within the profession for their contributions to public debates through editorial-writing, blogging, public speaking, etc." I want to make two observations about this. First, notice the repeated pattern: people are (a little bit) more in favor of diversity, interdisciplinarity, and engagement in the abstract than they are in favor of particular strategies for promoting these values. I would predict that this difference will be bigger when it comes to taking real action so that if we could measure how many people actually do give credit to public engagement in promotion cases, we would see a smaller number than we do for those who report in the survey that they favor doing this. Second, there is still a lot of support for these strategies. Agreement that philosophers should be rewarded for contributions to public debates and so on was close to a 6 on a 7-point scale!

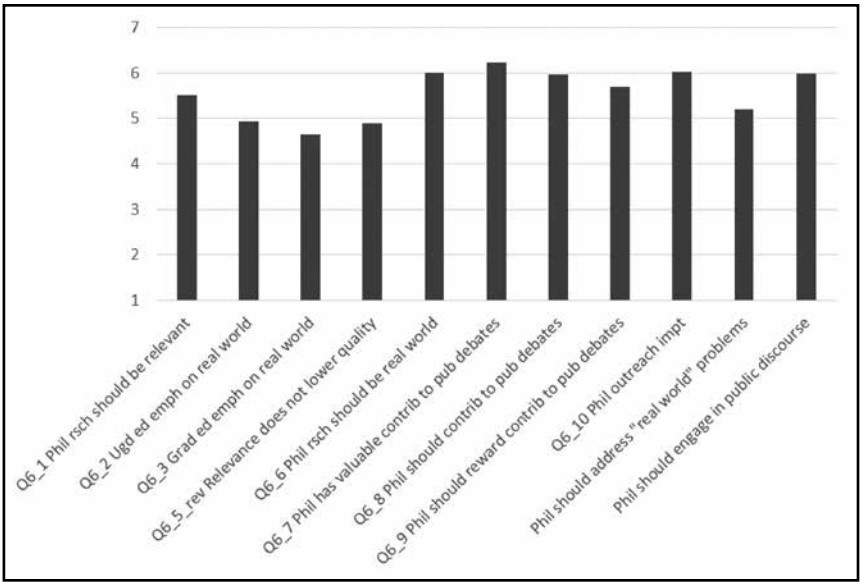

Figure 3. Survey respondents expressed moderate support for the idea that philosophy should **engage with the "real world."** Responses to the four items having to do with **philosophy and public discourse** were substantially stronger.

Perhaps not surprisingly, subfield made a difference to how survey respondents responded to questions about interdisciplinarity and relevance. The most significant difference was for philosophers in

logic/math and metaphysics/epistemology (M&E), though even in these areas, support was above 5 on the 7-point scale. We see in the open-ended questions about interdisciplinarity and relevance quite a few comments expressing the view that not all philosophers *should* be "engaged" (either with other fields or with social issues). What I think this means is that the specific way our values are manifested here can be fulfilled by the "broaden and balance" approach. In general, it seems that philosophers think it's a good thing for philosophy to be open to input from other fields, written in a way that allows it to be beneficial to other fields, communicated to the public in ways that are helpful, At the same time, it need not be that everyone does interdisciplinary or engaged philosophy—just as in the case of an individual trying to live a good life, valuing social interactions doesn't mean that you have to spend all of your time hanging out with friends; if you also value your work, it's OK to spend some time doing that too. Analogously, to promote the values of engagement and relevance without abandoning those who do more abstract philosophical work, we should find ways to balance our attention and rewards.

One thing we learn from looking at correlations between subfields and the degree to which interdisciplinarity, diversity, and relevance are seen to be important is that fields that have more women and more people of color are quite a bit more in favor of these values. What this points to is that there are ways in which some of our values might be mutually reinforcing. If more women and people of color are in fields that value interdisciplinary work more highly, then when we promote the value of interdisciplinary research, we may also help to create a more welcoming environment for a more diverse group of philosophers.

3.C. SUBFIELDS AND "TRADITIONALISM"

We asked people what subfields they thought were "unjustly marginalized." We asked people about the place of the "traditional subfields" of logic, ethics, metaphysics, epistemology, and the history of philosophy in research and teaching. And we asked people to identify their own subfields. As I discovered, lists of subfields are contentious and lists of "traditional sub-fields" are downright bitterly divisive. So, what we did here was to go with well-known resources in the field such as PhilJobs and the APA's website, not because they are correct, but because they are public and, therefore, a good starting point for discussion.[5]

Several questions on the survey had to do with different aspects of what we might broadly call *traditionalism*. Of these questions, some focused on

education while others address philosophical research so that we could compare the views of respondents with respect to whether traditionalism is more important in philosophical education or philosophical research. We found that the survey responses displayed a conspicuous pattern, with respondents more strongly in favor of traditional approaches when it came to education (both graduate and undergraduate) than in philosophical research (see Figure 4). The most dramatic difference was on the set of questions: "Philosophy does best when it focuses on traditional questions using traditional methodologies," with which people disagreed on average, and two questions on curricula, with which people tended to agree: "Undergraduate curricula in philosophy should prioritize the "traditional subfields," and "Graduate curricula in philosophy should prioritize the "traditional subfields." Perhaps (and this was suggested in some of the open-ended responses) these results are explained by philosophers thinking that we need a foundation of certain skills, distinctions, theories, and arguments before we should be encouraged to do creative work that engages other fields or challenges aspects of our tradition.

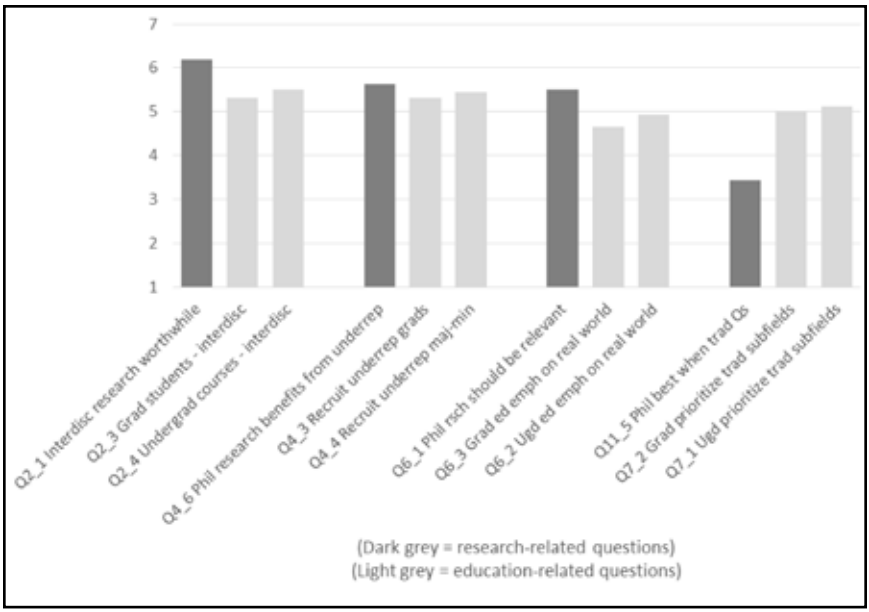

Figure 4. Several questions on the survey had to do with different aspects of what we might broadly call *traditionalism*. Of these questions, some focused on education while others addressed philosophical research. The survey responses displayed a conspicuous pattern, with respondents more strongly in favor of traditional approaches when it came to education than in philosophical research.

There was also a clear distinction between the philosophical subfields that were thought to be unjustly marginalized and those that were not. The fields most frequently identified as unjustly marginalized were the following:

- African/Africana Philosophy
- Arabic and Islamic Philosophy
- Asian Philosophy
- Native American Philosophy
- Latin American Philosophy
- Feminist Philosophy
- Philosophy of Race
- Continental Philosophy
- Philosophy of Gender
- Aesthetics

There was a tendency for people to find their own subfield to be unjustly marginalized, but the fields that were most frequently identified as unjustly marginalized were not so identified only by people in those fields. The fact that these are the fields that tend to be viewed as unjustly marginalized fits with our valuing diversity: if we did not think it was important to include the perspectives of groups that are underrepresented in philosophy, we would be unlikely to think there is anything unjust about marginalizing these perspectives within the field.[6]

Responses in the open-ended questions about subfields provide some insight about how our values are consistent with the "broaden and balance" theme. Many people commented that the so-called traditional subfields overlap tremendously with fields that are practical, relevant, diverse, and interdisciplinary. The problem, according to many, is that the traditional subfields are often construed too narrowly so that nontraditional approaches to traditional questions do not count as a legitimate part of the subfield. As one person put it, "We should be open to expanding what counts as part of a subfield. For example, one often hears people say that feminist epistemology isn't "really" epistemology. If that's the attitude we have, the subfields are limiting. But if the subfields are inclusive, there's no problem with them." There were also many comments about the need to value nontraditional approaches—particularly approaches that come from the unjustly marginalized subfields—more than we do without ceasing to value work that isn't from these marginalized approaches. Very few people said that the traditional subfields are outmoded and should be abandoned. In other words, there was a definite demand for balance: in general, we don't want to abandon our philosophers of the hyperabstract, but we

do want to make room for and support other kinds of work. Further, as I mentioned, we tend to be more "traditionalist" when it comes to our views about educating undergraduates and training graduate students; so it seems that we may have different ideas about the right balance to achieve depending on the context.

This evaluative perspective is not homogeneous, but, fortunately, it also doesn't embody conflicts among values that cannot be achieved together. If we were to broaden our conceptions of what the traditional subfields include, we would be able to demonstrate that we value work from diverse perspectives by recognizing that such work makes important contributions to *philosophy* as a whole, and by including such work in our "core" courses. If we were to balance our attention, respect, and recognition so that philosophers whose work is more practical, more interdisciplinary, or less "traditional" felt equally valued by the profession, we would likely find ourselves better able to learn from each other about the contributions of these different areas of philosophy. We would also likely find ourselves in a better environment for doing the high-quality nontraditional research that many of us value.

4. ARE OUR VALUES GOOD FOR US?

At the beginning of this address, I said that I would come back to the question of whether our values are any good. As I mentioned, in conversation with a struggling friend, discovering what she says she values is just the first step. With friends, I think it's usually the case that people's basic values are pretty decent—basic ultimate values like family, friendship, work, health, and security are appropriate things to pursue in life. What goes wrong is the way in which these values are interpreted or pursued: people don't have the right standards for what counts as succeeding in terms of these values, or they have false beliefs about effective means to them, or they haven't prioritized them very well. That said, there are questions we can ask about ultimate values: we can ask about internal consistency and sustainability, and we can also bring moral standards to bear.

On consistency, many of our basic values in philosophy work well together, and where they pull in different directions, there are ways of turning this into an advantage. This is what I've just been arguing about "traditionalism" and the values of interdisciplinarity, diversity, and relevance. There *are* two directions here insofar as research and teaching that is deemed traditional is not particularly interdisciplinary or engaged with real-world problems or diverse perspectives. But we

do not have to think that to respect traditionalism we must relegate nontraditional approaches and questions to a kind of "special" other-than-core domain. Indeed, given our other values, this seems to be an unhealthy standard of success for our values. My own experience in the fields of moral psychology and well-being indicate that it is possible to broaden our conception of what philosophy is without abandoning the uniquely philosophical questions (often normative questions) that we started with. When this happens, I suggest, it's our notion of what counts as succeeding at doing philosophy, what counts as "doing philosophy" at all, that is changing in order to make our values more harmonious.

Our values, then, are not, for the most part, in dire conflict with each other. What about sustainability? One of the other constraints on an appropriate set of values for an individual is that it should be sustainable over the course of a life. As Aristotle taught us, whether someone is thriving or not is a question that can only be answered by looking at a whole life. On my view, we are better off when we pursue values that can adapt to change and carry us to old age. This seems even more important when we think about the well-being of an institution or a discipline. Institutional change is slow; therefore, we need values that will be sustained through the long period that it takes to change. What kinds of values are likely to be sustainable for philosophy? First, values that we already have—even if radical change were needed, it's difficult to produce. Second, values that are supported by the environment. I think the lack of public support for the humanities (and philosophy in particular) is an environmental factor that supports the values I have been highlighting. Lack of public financial support for the humanities creates a pragmatic argument for making some effort to show why philosophy is important to society at large—again, given our values, not by rejecting the important things we do that do not have this connection, but by finding ways to make the connection, and respecting and rewarding those who do this well.[7] The economic context also argues for retaining something that is distinctively valuable about *philosophy* courses and curriculum, which may be the way we think (the skills we teach), or our history and our answers to specific problems (content).[8]

Finally, applying moral standards to our values does not undermine—and may even strengthen—the case for them. The increasing public hostility toward many of the very people who are underrepresented in philosophy, increasing tolerance of racism, sexism, anti-immigrant prejudice, and so on, adds to the moral case for the values of diversity and public engagement in philosophy. Notice also that the moral case contributes to the argument that our values can be sustained over time. Moral passions and commitments can motivate and unite people. We are

(sadly) in a moment in which many of our moral values are threatened, and this may help to bolster commitments to the values of diversity, relevance, and engagement.

5. PUTTING OUR VALUES INTO PRACTICE

To sum up what I've said so far, we value interdisciplinarity, diversity, engagement, relevance, *and* many of our traditional philosophical strengths (skills, methodologies, and content). I've said that these values will be fulfilled by *broadening* our community and our conception of what counts as philosophy, and by *balancing* our attention and rewards between traditional and non-traditional approaches to philosophy.

Before we turn our attention to the practical question of how to broaden and balance, it will be worth pausing to think about the "we" that I've been freely using. It is true that, in general, we philosophers value interdisciplinarity, diversity, engagement, relevance, and many of our traditional philosophical strengths (skills, methodologies, and content). But descriptions of average tendencies based on survey research hide important individual differences. There *are* individuals who think that large parts of our philosophical tradition are irredeemable and ought to be scrapped entirely. And there are individuals who think departures from tradition are disastrous for philosophy. There may be no reason that compels these critics to accept the mission I've been promoting. That's OK, and, really, there had better be room in philosophy for those who are critical of a mainstream position. However, given the averages, most of us do endorse the "broaden and balance" program; we are a community of people who are united by these values, though we may not all hold each one of them to the same degree. For these folks, there are reasons to get on board, reasons that come from a commitment to the philosophical community to which we belong.

So if you've come with me this far, I think you are part of the "we" who should take the "broaden and balance" approach. The first thing to say about how we might do this is that many people are already doing it. There has been truly heartening attention to diversity issues in philosophy lately. When I was in graduate school, there was a surge of concern about the gender imbalance in philosophy, which seemed to kind of die out after a few years despite the fact that nothing actually changed. But to me the current attention seems different: people are investigating in new ways, trying new things, and assessing how those strategies are working. You can see the increased serious attention in blogs, journals, conferences, and APA meetings. Also, many women

have risen in the ranks to positions of power, which—given the gender differences in support for these values—raises the level of concern and the seriousness with which these concerns are taken. There are also many interdisciplinary movements in various subfields of philosophy that have gained steam.

The analogy between individual flourishing and the well-being of philosophy may add something to this healthy trend. I'm not the first philosopher to analogize the well-being of the individual to the well-being of a community. Plato had the idea that the parts of our individual souls are analogous to different subpopulations, each of which performs a different function. In the individual case, the Platonic model of explicit governance by reason has been challenged by a profusion of research suggesting that much of what we do (or at least much more than we previously thought) is determined by unacknowledged influences rather than explicitly guided by reason. Even those of us who are still fond of the ideal of a reflective life have come to realize that we human animals are not as susceptible to rational control as we once believed. And when it comes to philosophy itself, the idea that we would rely on "philosopher regents" within our community who shall do the work of leading us to flourish doesn't seem very promising.

In the individual case, I came to think that reflection "in its place" is what we need. We should be reflective about what matters to us, sometimes, but we should also recognize the limits of reflection. We don't reflect in a vacuum: we can only reflect on what we're aware of, and we need unreflective experience to give us the right "inputs" to reflection. Further, reflection on the ways it would be good to change isn't enough to secure that change: we need help from our environment and from each other to improve our ability to live in accordance with the values we reflectively endorse.

To illustrate, I offer a personal (only slightly fictionalized) example. I value my mental and physical health. In a reflective moment, I think these are important things. In a reflective moment, I may also think I'm doing pretty well at achieving them until I consider my experiences . . . of chronic headaches, interrupted sleep, constant worrying about the emails piling up in my inbox. Then, on reflection, I think I need to get my act together and I decide that I ought to try meditation. At this point, if you asked me on a survey how much I value a daily practice of "quieting the mind," I would say, "very strongly." If you asked me to what degree I think that I should sacrifice time doing something else in order to spend some time meditating, I would say, "somewhat agree." And if you observed my behavior, you would find that I rarely actually

do this. Recalling the pattern that turned up in the survey results, you'll notice the parallel to the situation we philosophers are in with respect to our values: "Yes!" in the abstract. "Pretty good idea!" when assenting to strategies in a survey. And (my speculation is) "Meh" when it comes to what we actually do. What helps in the personal case? Attending to your experiences, changing your environment, and adding social support. Putting a "meditation" app on my phone that beeps at me when it's time to do some deep breathing, promising a friend to attend a meditation class together, even simply proclaiming to my family that I'm intending to change my ways. This is what is sometimes called "taking ecological control."[9]

Do these ideas help in the case of changing a community? They should, because, of course, communities are made up of individual people. Let's see how this would go.

I've already made the case for a set of basic values that I think survives reflection. At the highest level of abstraction, I've argued that we want to do a better job of valuing diversity, interdisciplinarity, and relevance without losing the aspects of our tradition that we care about. Listening to our collective experience reveals that there is room for improvement. But now, to think about *how* to improve, we need to articulate some more specific goals. What's the equivalent of "meditating every day" for Philosophy? I think that many of the best practical strategies are developed in the specific context where there is a problem to be solved. But I'll offer some examples anyway, to illustrate the general point I want to make.

We can look for opportunities for recognizing and appreciating philosophers whose work, teaching, or service is helping to change philosophy for the better. Recognition can take the form of departmental awards and ceremonies, acknowledgement in department newsletters, and simple expressions of gratitude. We can give credit for philosophical research that aims to promote our values in searches, promotion and tenure cases, and even in the grading of student work. We can refrain from discouraging graduate students from working on certain topics and instead help them to work on those topics in rigorous ways. We can try to integrate nontraditional approaches into the curriculum by coteaching with our colleagues who know something that we don't. We can sponsor departmental or interdepartmental conversations about why diversity matters to philosophy (to start: conversations about why some think diversity is irrelevant while others think it is essential to philosophy), about why the environment isn't welcoming, about how to give credit for nontraditional work and publications, and about how

nontraditional work strengthens philosophy. We can organize seminars, colloquia, or brownbag lunches focused on how to broaden a syllabus, how to teach a diverse group of students, or how to write an op-ed piece or get it published.

Many of us do these things already, of course, but I think it's encouraging to think of these actions as part of a larger strategy.[10] Coherence between your reflective evaluations and your actions reinforces both. It can seem unnecessary to thank someone publicly, say, at a department meeting, for helping you to add some feminist epistemology to your M&E syllabus, but it will seem less so when we see how this action supports important values. And, of course, many of us do *not* do these things already. Women in philosophy often share stories about search committee meetings that result in very homogenous short lists of candidates despite everyone's professed commitment to diversifying philosophy. And this is where ecological control can help.

In the individual case, as I've mentioned, you can make public declarations of your intentions to change, team up with friends who will hold you accountable, or put actual money on the line. Except for using public money to tie yourself to the mast (say, by agreeing to donate your research funds to some nefarious cause if you don't live up to your commitments), these strategies can be put to work in a department or a community. Stating our intentions explicitly to the other members of our community can have the effect of increasing the degree to which we do things that promote our values rather than being sidetracked by our nit-picking philosophical brains. Department chairs, DGSs, and chairs of search committees or P&T committees can change the environment by publicly implementing policies and reviewing best practices. To take an example from my own department, our tenure code states explicitly that "Interdisciplinary work is recognized, including publications in venues serving mainly disciplines other than philosophy, provided the work has significant philosophical content." This clause is there because of Minnesota's long-standing strength in the philosophy of science, but it has also made a difference to our feminist philosophers. There are many other ways in which chairs (of departments or committees) can insist on procedures or promote informal norms that will reduce biases and promote our values. Of course, policies are no good if they're not followed. But they certainly won't be followed if they aren't there. Once there, people in leadership positions need to highlight them, to draw our attention to them, to insist that they are followed.

Ecological control is not limited to those in leadership positions. An individual who sort of knows that diversity is important, or who values

philosophers who serve as public intellectuals, but who doesn't really support these values in any tangible way can pre-commit to following certain self-imposed norms. For example, I might learn from a junior colleague that young women philosophers have more invited papers than refereed papers on the CVs as compared to their male peers, and I might learn that this is for reasons that have to do with sexism (e.g., maybe women get more invitations because no one wants a volume with no women in it and their aren't enough of us, or maybe women are, on average, less confident about the brilliance of their ideas and so more risk averse in the publication market). And I might declare to myself or to my colleagues at a search committee meeting, "Because I value diversity, I am not going to discount invited papers on the grounds that they are invited." Declaring it, particularly to others, makes it more difficult to ignore. We also cannot ignore that doing things like this will feel weird. You may feel like you're on uncertain ground—as you might when you decide to stop to take a five-minute breathing break in the middle of your day because your phone beeped at you. But the way to succeed in value fulfillment is to suck it up: do the things that you've decided support your important values even if, in the heat of the moment, those things might seem awkward or unnatural.

The last point I want to make about change is motivated by an interesting finding in the survey data that I haven't said much about yet. As I said at the beginning of this talk, most divisions among philosophers (older/younger, white/nonwhite, tenure track/not TT) had little systematic effect on the views they expressed on the survey. But there were many differences in the responses of male and female philosophers; in fact, there were few questions on which the two groups did *not* differ significantly and substantially. The effect sizes were systematically larger than any of the other bivariate comparisons (see Figure 5), often over half of a standard deviation. Compared to their male colleagues, female philosophers

- agreed more strongly that philosophy should address "real world" concerns and engage in public discourse;
- agreed much more strongly that every form of diversity listed was important to the field of philosophy;
- were significantly more likely to think that underrepresented groups are disadvantaged in philosophy and were much more likely to favor steps to integrate members of underrepresented groups into the discipline;

- agreed more strongly that grad students should be prepared for careers outside the academy, and should be prepared to be good teachers;

- were significantly less likely than men to take a traditional approach to philosophy, and were less likely to think that either graduate or undergraduate education should prioritize the traditional subfields.[11]

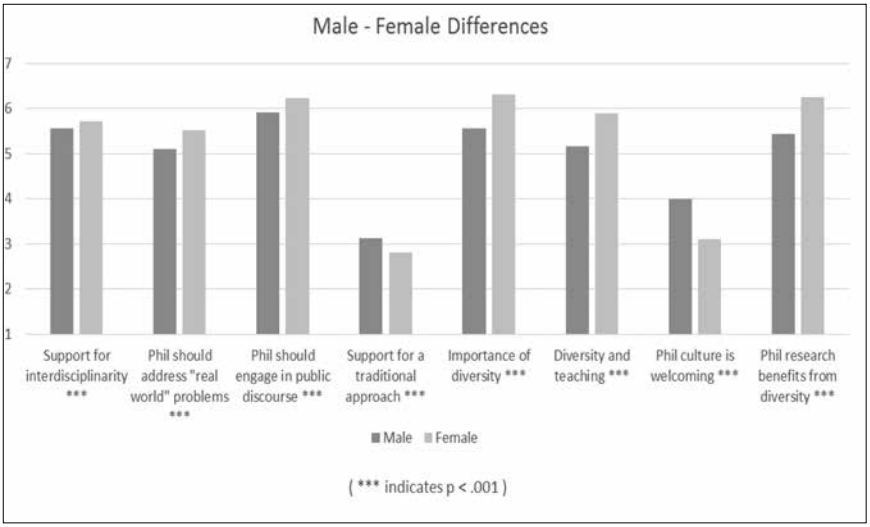

Figure 5. There were many differences in the responses of male and female philosophers; in fact, there were few questions on which the two groups did not differ significantly and substantially. Almost all of the differences between male and female philosophers were genuine, in the sense that they were not the result of correlations between gender and other variables. The one exception was support for *interdisciplinarity*. When subfield was controlled for, gender no longer significantly predicted support for interdisciplinarity.

Given these differences, if we want to "broaden and balance" philosophy, there is a good reason to encourage women to take leadership positions in philosophy. I have benefited from this trend, but I would add a note of caution about it: When I have looked around the table at various board meetings (of the APA and at my colleges) and I've seen a greater percentage of women on these academic boards every year, I've worried that academic service will come to be seen as "women's work." It can be time-consuming, difficult, and not always personally rewarding—a little like keeping the house clean. So, while women philosophers are likely to play an important role in ensuring the flourishing of philosophy, we should exercise caution here. It's well known that when women enter a

field, pay and prestige drop. Perhaps being more aware of the risks will help us avoid this trap in philosophy.

Except for this last cautionary point, what I've said may seem optimistic, maybe even pie-in-the-sky. It is true that I'm generally optimistic, but the survey has given me reason to think that in this case my optimism is not Panglossian. We philosophers are not really as divided as we might fear. There are differences, but not irreconcilable ones—and many of the differences that exist are actually valued by us. Overall, I think we do have a healthy set of values to work to uphold. But we do have some work to do. We're like the person who wants a demanding career, some challenging hobbies, and a family too—and, at the moment, we're realizing that there's more we could do to fulfill all of our values. As anyone who has tried to live a life will know, change is hard and it usually requires short-term sacrifice for long-term gain. In our case, broadening our curricula and our notions of subfields to include areas of philosophy that are unjustly marginalized, changing what we teach, rewarding philosophers for their efforts at public engagement, reconsidering our standards for tenure and promotion, and doing all this without alienating each other, will take effort and time. Effort and time are seen to be worthwhile expenditures when they are in service of things we take to be important and, really, not otherwise. That is the contribution of the value fulfillment approach: it gives us reasons we can act on to improve how things go for us.

The alternative to improvement here is not death but stagnation. Philosophy has had a very long life, and, of course, it's going to survive in one form or another. But I think it can do better than survive—if it can find a path that realizes its own values, I think it can thrive.

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NOTES

1. See my *The Reflective Life: Living Wisely with Our Limits* (Oxford University Press: 2008) for an early elaboration of the value fulfillment theory of well-being. I

develop the view in the context of friendship relationships in *Well-Being as Value Fulfillment*, which will come out in 2018.

2. The full survey is available online at http://bit.ly/2y6bYRF

3. The response rate is not known, because we know neither the size of the sampling frame (how many philosophers we reached with the various survey announcements) nor the size of the whole population. Response rate is important mainly because it is an indicator of how representative our results are of the views of the whole population, and given APA data, our sample does seem reasonably representative. Another thing to note is how few differences there were between subgroups of respondents (aside from women versus men, as I'll discuss later). So if, say, more younger philosophers responded than older ones, but younger and older philosophers tend to respond in the same way, this difference doesn't matter to the representativeness of the results. However, of course, if pro-diversity people were for some reason more inclined to fill out the survey than anti-diversity people, then obviously that would matter. I don't see any reason to think this is the case, though. You might think the APA membership is more pro-diversity than the general population of philosophers, but our sample was close to 60 percent APA members (so, over 40 percent nonmembers), and we did not see meaningful differences between these two groups.

4. Support for the importance of this diversity was quite uniform—responses to the different items were highly and significantly correlated (the lowest R^2 was 0.766).

5. PhilJobs has a list of forty-one subfields. For the purposes of making meaningful generalizations and comparisons, we grouped these subfields into seven groups: ethics, history, logic/math, M&E, philosophy of science, social and political, and a category we called RIGS, which includes feminist theory, philosophy of race, and non-Western philosophical traditions. "RIGS" comes from a University of Minnesota's College of Liberal Arts initiative. It is an acronym for Race, Indigeneity, Gender, and Sexuality. This isn't the perfect acronym for the group of subfields in philosophy, but it functions as a decent working title.

6. More than 20 percent of respondents identified these fields as unjustly marginalized. It is worth noting that the fact that someone did not say that a field is unjustly marginalized does not necessarily mean that the person thinks it *isn't* unjustly marginalized—there were many people who reported not having enough information to say. So there may actually be greater consensus about marginalization than it appears if there were more information.

7. There were a number of comments about the pressing need for philosophy to do a better job of demonstrating its value to nonphilosophers. One respondent connected this to interdisciplinarity: "Making philosophy something that people see as a useful tool for interdisciplinary work is a great way to have others take philosophy seriously again."

8. In the survey data, close to 60 percent of philosophers think that skills and content are equally important for undergraduate philosophy majors.

9. See Andy Clark, "Soft Selves and Ecological Control," *Distributed Cognition and the Will* (2007): 101–22.

10. I don't think this is the right forum to endorse particular campaigns or programs that can change relatively quickly. There are various philosophy websites that have good information about recent efforts, for example: http://dailynous.com/, https://feministphilosophers.wordpress.com/, and http://www.apaonline.org/.

11. Women also expressed significantly stronger support for interdisciplinarity, but this difference turned out to be predicted by subfield (so it's the fact that there are more women in feminist philosophy, philosophy of race, and social and political philosophy that explains this difference).