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### FW

#### I value morality.

#### Inquiry begins with the drive for some practical end—for example, I’m only concerned about creating a lamp when it’s dark—thought is based on response to problems.

Charles S. Peirce 1878 [philosopher], “How to Make Our Ideas Clear”, Popular Science Monthly 12, January 1878, BE

The principles set forth in the first part of this essay lead, at once, to a method of reaching a clearness of thought of higher grade than the "distinctness" of the logicians. It was there noticed that the action of thought is excited by the irritation of doubt, and ceases when belief is attained; so that the production of belief is the sole function of thought. All these words, however, are too strong for my purpose. It is as if I had described the phenomena as they appear under a mental microscope. Doubt and Belief, as the words are commonly employed, relate to religious or other grave discussions. But here I use them to designate the starting of any question, no matter how small or how great, and the resolution of it. If, for instance, in a horse-car, I pull out my purse and find a five-cent nickel and five coppers, I decide, while my hand is going to the purse, in which way I will pay my fare. To call such a question Doubt, and my decision Belief, is certainly to use words very disproportionate to the occasion. To speak of such a doubt as causing an irritation which needs to be appeased, suggests a temper which is uncomfortable to the verge of insanity. Yet, looking at the matter minutely, it must be admitted that, if there is the least hesitation as to whether I shall pay the five coppers or the nickel (as there will be sure to be, unless I act from some previously contracted habit in the matter), though irritation is too strong a word, yet I am excited to such small mental activity as may be necessary to deciding how I shall act. Most frequently doubts arise from some indecision, however momentary, in our action. Sometimes it is not so. I have, for example, to wait in a railway-station, and to pass the time I read the advertisements on the walls. I compare the advantages of different trains and different routes which I never expect to take, merely fancying myself to be in a state of hesitancy, because I am¶ bored with having nothing to trouble me. Feigned hesitancy, whether feigned for mere amusement or with a lofty purpose, plays a great part in the production of scientific inquiry. However the doubt may originate, it stimulates the mind to an activity which may be slight or energetic, calm or turbulent. Images pass rapidly through consciousness, one incessantly melting into another, until at last, when all is over -- it may be in a fraction of a second, in an hour, or after long years -- we find ourselves decided as to how we should act under such circumstances as those which occasioned our hesitation. In other words, we have attained belief.¶ In this process we observe two sorts of elements of consciousness, the distinction between which may best be made clear by means of an illustration. In a piece of music there are the separate notes, and there is the air. A single tone may be prolonged for an hour or a day, and it exists as perfectly in each second of that time as in the whole taken together; so that, as long as it is sounding, it might be present to a sense from which everything in the past was as completely absent as the future itself. But it is different with the air, the performance of which occupies a certain time, during the portions of which only portions of it are played. It consists in an orderliness in the succession of sounds which strike the ear at different times; and to perceive it there must be some continuity of consciousness which makes the events of a lapse of time present to us. We certainly only perceive the air by hearing the separate notes; yet we cannot be said to directly hear it, for we hear only what is present at the instant, and an orderliness of succession cannot exist in an instant. These two sorts of objects, what we are immediately conscious of and what we are mediately conscious of, are found in all consciousness. Some elements (the sensations) are completely present at every instant so long as they last, while others (like thought) are actions having beginning, middle, and end, and consist in a congruence in the succession of sensations which flow through the mind. They cannot be immediately present to us, but must cover some portion of the past or future. Thought is a thread of melody running through the succession of our sensations.¶ We may add that just as a piece of music may be written in parts, each part having its own air, so various systems of relationship of succession subsist together between the same sensations. These different systems are distinguished by having different motives, ideas, or functions. Thought is only one such system, for its sole motive, idea, and function is to produce belief, and whatever does not concern that purpose belongs to some other system of relations. The action of thinking may incidentally have other results; it may serve to amuse us, for example, and among dilettanti it is not rare to find those who have so perverted thought to the purposes of pleasure that it seems to vex them to think that the questions upon which they delight to exercise it may ever get finally¶ settled; and a positive discovery which takes a favorite subject out of the arena of literary debate is met with ill-concealed dislike. This disposition is the very debauchery of thought. But the soul and meaning of thought, abstracted from the other elements which accompany it, though it may be voluntarily thwarted, can never be made to direct itself toward anything but the production of belief. Thought in action has for its only possible motive the attainment of thought at rest; and whatever does not refer to belief is no part of the thought itself.¶ And what, then, is belief? It is the demi-cadence which closes a musical phrase in the symphony of our intellectual life. We have seen that it has just three properties: First, it is something that we are aware of; second, it appeases the irritation of doubt; and, third, it involves the establishment in our nature of a rule of action, or, say for short, a habit. As it appeases the irritation of doubt, which is the motive for thinking, thought relaxes, and comes to rest for a moment when belief is reached. But, since belief is a rule for action, the application of which involves further doubt and further thought, at the same time that it is a stopping-place, it is also a new starting-place for thought. That is why I have permitted myself to call it thought at rest, although thought is essentially an action. The final upshot of thinking is the exercise of volition, and of this thought no longer forms a part; but belief is only a stadium of mental action, an effect upon our nature due to thought, which will influence future thinking.¶ The essence of belief is the establishment of a habit; and different beliefs are distinguished by the different modes of action to which they give rise. If beliefs do not differ in this respect, if they appease the same doubt by producing the same rule of action, then no mere differences in the manner of consciousness of them can make them different beliefs, any more than playing a tune in different keys is playing different tunes. Imaginary distinctions are often drawn between beliefs which differ only in their mode of expression; -- the wrangling which ensues is real enough, however. To believe that any objects are arranged among themselves as in Fig. 1, and to believe that they are arranged in Fig. 2, are one and the same belief; yet it is conceivable that a man should assert one proposition and deny the other. Such false distinctions do as much harm as the confusion of beliefs really different, and are among the pitfalls of which we ought constantly to beware, especially when we are upon metaphysical ground. One singular deception of this sort, which often occurs, is to mistake the sensation produced by our own unclearness of thought for a character of the object we are thinking. Instead of perceiving that the obscurity is purely subjective, we fancy that we contemplate a quality of the object which is essentially mysterious; and if our conception be afterward presented to us in a clear form we do not recognize it as the same, owing to the absence of the feeling of unintelligibility. So long as this deception lasts, it¶ ￼￼¶ obviously puts an impassable barrier in the way of perspicuous thinking; so that it equally interests the opponents of rational thought to perpetuate it, and its adherents to guard against it.¶ Another such deception is to mistake a mere difference in the grammatical construction of two words for a distinction between the ideas they express. In this pedantic age, when the general mob of writers attend so much more to words than to things, this error is common enough. When I just said that thought is an action, and that it consists in a relation, although a person performs an action but not a relation, which can only be the result of an action, yet there was no inconsistency in what I said, but only a grammatical vagueness.¶ From all these sophisms we shall be perfectly safe so long as we reflect that the whole function of thought is to produce habits of action; and that whatever there is connected with a thought, but irrelevant to its purpose, is an accretion to it, but no part of it. If there be a unity among our sensations which has no reference to how we shall act on a given occasion, as when we listen to a piece of music, why we do not call that thinking. To develop its meaning, we have, therefore, simply to determine what habits it produces, for what a thing means is simply what habits it involves. Now, the identity of a habit depends on how it might lead us to act, not merely under such circumstances as are likely to arise, but under such as might possibly occur, no matter how improbable they may be. What the habit is depends on when and how it causes us to act. As for the when, every stimulus to action is derived from perception; as for the how, every purpose of action is to produce some sensible result. Thus, we come down to what is tangible and conceivably practical, as the root of every real distinction of thought, no matter how subtile it may be; and there is no distinction of meaning so fine as to consist in anything but a possible difference of practice.

#### Thus, rather than codified rules, practices must develop through habits that can be changed and revised.

Todd Lekan 3 [prof of phil @ Muskingum University], “Making Morality PRAGMATIST RECONSTRUCTION IN ETHICAL THEORY”, Vanderbilt University Press, 2003, BE

I begin with some commonplace observations about skilled expertise in practices. Any developed practice such as cooking or playing a musical instrument can only be successfully pursued by people who have internalized practical norms. Cooking a gourmet meal well requires years of training. Those educated in norms of cooking are able to interact skillfully with a practical context consisting of implements, tools, materials, and the like. An ex- pert cook sees ingredients as potential constituents of certain dishes. She sees tools as implements for certain tasks. The novice, when confronted with the same kitchen as the expert chef, does not see the situation in the same way because he lacks the relevant skills and knowledge required to prepare the meal. This brings me to the first important fact of practical life: skilled expertise involves a know-how that is not best represented as action resulting from judgments about rules. When one has acquired expertise, one transcends the use of rules and simply does what the situation calls for.8¶ The second fact of practical life is that activities change over time as a result of the solution of novel problems. In a quite straight- forward sense, the activity of cooking precedes the particular projects of an individual cook. Cooking is a tradition with a his- tory. Over time, new ways of doing things are discovered and old ways modified or rejected. This continual modification of the activity is the result of the trials and experimentation of particu- lar cooks. But it is also the result of other changes that indirectly modify the practice of cooking (e.g., electric ovens; food proces- sors; imported spices, fruits, and vegetables; etc.). The expert cook is able to frame problems and devise solutions in ways that go beyond existing practical knowledge. The problem solving of an expert cook advances and modifies the activity. That is, the ex- pert is able to modify the activity in significant ways unavailable to a novice (except, perhaps, by accident). These advances may be written down in a set of practical propositions, perhaps in a new cookbook. However, this general knowledge is always sub- ject to modification, revision, or reinterpretation in light of par- ticular circumstances.¶ The sheer complexity of practical life is a third fact that fol- lows close on the heels of the fact of novelty. The expert cook does not mechanically follow directions laid down in a textbook of cooking. She is able to modify, change, and further her practice through skilled execution. The pursuit of a complex enterprise such as cooking can never be encapsulated in a set of rules or directions. The considerations that go into practicing this art well are highly circumstantial: for example, What ingredient may be substituted for this dish? What sorts of people frequent this restaurant? What sorts of economic resources are available to purchase new equipment? The permutation of circumstances rel- evant to a cook’s particular judgments does not imply that her responses are arbitrary. Rather, it implies that the sort of skilled judgment or sense of propriety she must exercise can never be encapsulated in a code of propositions or rules.¶ So far I have focused on expertise, offering what we might think of as a brief phenomenology of salient facts about such expertise. Let’s briefly to turn to the novice. Notice that with re- spect to our three facts, know-how, novelty, and complexity, the novice’s actions are less fluid than the expert’s. The novice needs to engage in more reflective deliberation about her actions be- cause she does not have the skill to see things in ways that trig- ger immediate, appropriate response. She is not able to solve novel problems in such a way as to significantly modify the ac- tivity. The activity itself is novel to her. With respect to complex- ity, the basic skills, tasks, tools, and instruments that the expert can take for granted are experienced by the beginner as a bewil- dering array of foreign material.¶ From these facts about practical life we can infer a plausible conclusion about practical rules. Beliefs about such rules are usu- ally indispensable for the beginner. The novice uses such rules as guides for learning about what is important in some activity, es- pecially through a process of decomposing a practical endeavor into its component parts. Although it seems likely that assimilat- ing rules is often a necessary condition for development of skill in some activity, we can think of cases in which such assimila- tion is not required. Language use is a good case. One learns rules of grammar long after gaining a solid grasp of the language. In short, practical rules, for the novice, are usually necessary but far from sufficient for the successful assimilation of a skill or prac- tice.¶ Similar points can be made about the expert. From time to time the expert will need to fall back on beliefs about rules when she faces novel situations or problems. These practical rules are modified as novel problems are solved. However, intellectual grasp and application of practical rules are far from sufficient for displaying skilled expertise. The complexity of circumstances, the need for skilled know-how, and the novelty of problems all sup- port the hypothesis that practical rules are at best useful intellec- tual tools for efficient organization of practical life when we need to learn new things. Whether one is a novice or an expert, rules function to help us learn about our circumstances so that we may solve problems and reach new levels of mastery, efficiency, and control. Practical judgments and responses can never be com- pletely encoded in a set of rules or principles.¶ The fixed-end view of intentional action holds that practical knowledge is knowledge of how best to accomplish some end a person regards as good. The explanation of action turns on iden- tifying an end held as good and on certain key beliefs about how best to realize that end. The conclusion that I have reached thus far is that the beliefs about what is appropriate to do—beliefs about the relevant practical rules—play a limited role in struc- tured practices. Do similar points apply to intentional actions out- side structured practices? Take simple intentional actions such as flipping light switches, waving hello, turning on a faucet, open- ing a window, or flipping a yo-yo. It seems odd to say that these actions involve complex circumstances on the grounds that they cannot be codified in practical rules or that they sometimes re- quire creative improvisation. Why wouldn’t the fixed-end account be appropriate to explain these simple intentional actions?¶ Simple actions seem different from actions within structured practices because we tend to take for granted the complex back- ground required to make sense of even very simple bits of be- havior. Turning off a light switch may be further described in any number of ways, depending on the context.9 It may be “the first step in preparation for love-making,” “closing the act of a play,” “getting ready for bed,” “saving electricity,” and so forth. The best description in a given case may simply be, “This is the action a person does when entering and exiting rooms in her house.” But even so, such a description will be part of a larger network of assumptions about what she tends to do in her house.¶ Typically, we do not focus on the complex background of such simple acts. We engage in such analysis of simple acts when we have some concern or special purpose—usually when something has gone wrong. We may be interested in why the light switch was flipped when, for example, a stagehand misses a cue during a performance of a play. We may then set out to learn who flipped the switch and what that person took herself to be trying to do. When we do engage in such an analysis, we be- come aware of a complex background of assumptions needed to comprehend the meaning of a particular intentional act. This background is also needed to determine whether a particular act is intentional.¶ When I deny that intentional action is best explained in terms of beliefs about practical rules paired with accepted ends, I do not mean to deny that beliefs and accepted ends are in no way involved in intentional actions. The point is that belief-end pairs do not adequately explain what it is to have practical knowledge. The practical knowledge that figures in both first- and third-per- son explanations of intentional actions is better accounted for in terms of interpenetrating, shared habits. I turn now to the more adequate view of practical knowledge. A few preliminary words are in order.

#### The same is true for moral standards—they’re indistinct from nonmoral activities.

Todd Lekan 3 [prof of phil @ Muskingum University], “Making Morality PRAGMATIST RECONSTRUCTION IN ETHICAL THEORY”, Vanderbilt University Press, 2003, BE

Many philosophers maintain that moral considerations have a special authority that other practical considerations lack. Morality is a domain of important values that trump other kinds of values. Moral considerations have an authority that should weigh heavily in our practical deliberations. Pragmatism views the norms of morality as interpenetrating with other nonmoral norms. Thus, although moral norms do have a special importance, they do not comprise a domain of activity separate from the nonmoral activities and practices of communities. The pragmatist answer that I defend is that the authority of moral norms is grounded in the fact that they express responsibilities for important social ties and relationships. We find ourselves born into ties and relationships—morality is “built into” these. Grounding the authority of moral norms in contingent facts about the social nature of hu- man life might appear inadequate. After all, if moral claims ex- press “contingent truths” that might be otherwise, how can we maintain that they have a special “necessity” or “force”? Dewey has a neat reply to those who would complain that the mere fact that morality is a contingent part of human life does not answer the question of why we ought to take it seriously. Dewey argues that the same question could be asked with the same force for theories that view morality as transcendent of human practices. Dewey writes:¶ What claim have they [moral standards] upon us? In one sense, the question is unanswerable. In the same sense, however, the question is unanswerable whatever origin and sanction is ascribed to moral obligations and loyalties. Why attend to metaphysical and transcen- dental ideal realities even if we concede they are the authors of moral standards? Why do this act if I feel like doing something else? Any moral question may reduce itself to this question if we so choose.¶ But in an empirical sense the answer is simple. The authority is that of life. Why employ language, cultivate literature, acquire and de- velop science, sustain industry, and submit to the refinements of art? To ask these questions is equivalent to asking: Why live? And the only answer is that if one is going to live one must live a life of which these things form the substance. The only question having sense which can be asked is how we are going to use and be used by these things, not whether we are going to use them. Reason, moral principles cannot in any case be shoved behind these affairs, for reason and morality grow out of them. But they have grown into them as well. . . . In short, the choice is not between a moral au- thority outside of custom and one within it. It is between adopting more or less intelligent and significant customs.11¶ Now, the worry about “force” or “authority” of moral norms may not be so much about its metaphysical status as it is about hu- man failure to comply with, or respect, moral rules. A basic goal of moral education is to instill habits that insulate its students from decision problems. The pragmatist need not deny that fail- ure to follow moral rules is a reality with which any human com- munity must deal.¶ DEWEY’S THEORY OF DUTY¶ The reply just given to the skeptic’s “why” question is negative, challenging the questioner to admit that pragmatism is not espe- cially prone to its bite. However, pragmatism can offer positive suggestions about “authority.” The trick is to find an account of moral authority that does some justice to the supposed “force” behind moral rules yet also accommodates the pragmatist claim that in principle no moral rule should be immune to possible criticism. We can find much insight by taking a close look at Dewey’s theory of “right” in his 1932 Ethics. Dewey’s account of right is meant to capture what he regards as partially correct in- sights of deontological theories of obligation. Dewey thinks that deontology, consequentialism, and virtue ethics are all partial truths about ethics that need to be combined into one theory that includes “three independent factors of morals.” Although I agree with this value pluralism, I am not following Dewey’s own intent in focusing on the connection between obligation and so- cial relationships. Dewey seems to consign the connection to rela- tively well-developed relationships between individuals. My aim is to capture the authority of all moral requirements in terms of different kinds of relationships. With that caveat in mind, I turn more closely to his text.¶ Dewey holds that the “right” as a moral category should not be reduced away to arbitrary commands or desires. Nor should the “right” be thought of in reductively instrumental terms, as when we view all obligation claims as mere means to satisfy nar- row egoist desires. Rather, obligation claims arise out of, and re- inforce, relationships that contribute to basic interests. Dewey puts it this way: “Right, law, duty, arise from the relations which hu- man beings intimately sustain to one another, and their authori- tative force springs from the very nature of the relation that binds people together.”12¶ Obligations in general are built into norm-governed activi- ties that make possible various internal values and goods.13 People can use obligation claims to express judgments about the proper pursuit of a practice or activity. These obligation claims are tied to the very nature of the relationship at issue, so they do not need to be justified by reference to some property of obligation outside all relationships. Nor are these obligation claims the ar- bitrary expressions of will. Dewey writes, “A child may be sub- ject to demands from a parent which express nothing but the arbitrary wish of the latter, plus a power to make the child suffer if he does not conform. But the claims and demands to which a child is subject need not proceed from arbitrary will; they may issue from the very nature of family life in the relation which exists between parent and offspring.”14 He goes on to say later, “The duties which express these relations are intrinsic to the situ- ation, not enforced from without. The one who becomes a par- ent assumes by that very fact certain responsibilities. Even if he feels these to be a burden and seeks to escape from them, he flees something which is part of himself and not from something imposed by external force.”15

#### Intelligent revision of our beliefs requires us to test our moral principles in real-life experiments.

Elizabeth Anderson 14 [UMich chair of philosophy dept, pragmatist], “The Quest for Free Labor Pragmatism and Experiments in Emancipation”, The Amherst Lecture in Philosophy, Lecture 9, 2014, BE

I shall explore these questions from a pragmatist point of view. Pragmatists such as John Dewey argue that we should replace the quest for a foundational principle of moral rightness (such as the Golden Rule, the Categorical Imperative, or the Principle of Utility) with methods of intelligently updating our current moral beliefs. Some of these methods – such as testing moral claims for consistency, raising intuitive counterexamples to proposed moral principles, drawing conceptual distinctions to better track normative intuitions, and running thought experiments – are among those already found in the standard toolbox of moral philosophers working in a priori mode. However, pragmatists stress the importance of other methods that require empirical inquiry and practical action. A key reason for this is that, while we cannot do without moral intuitions, they can also be biased, apt only for by- gone circumstances, or otherwise poor guides to present action. From a naturalistic point of view, moral intuitions are largely, but not wholly, the felt awareness of internalized, socially instituted moral norms and habits. They therefore tend to embody both the wisdom and the limitations of their origins. We need methods to improve our intuitions, not only to ratio- nalize them by means of an internally coherent set of abstract moral principles. Proslavery thinkers had plenty of arguments to rationalize their proslavery intuitions.¶ Pragmatists offer two broad strategies for intelligently updating our moral principles. First, we can figure out ways to counteract the operation of systematic biases in moral think- ing. For example, we know that, in judging questions of justice in which they are interested parties, individuals tend to be biased in favor of their own self-interest. A classic practical way to counteract this bias in real cases is to ask an impartial judge to adjudicate interper- sonal claims of justice. While this method is far from perfect, since judges may have identity- based, ideological, or other biases, it at least helps to block biases of purely personal favorit- ism from affecting judgments of justice in particular cases.¶ Because individuals occupy different social positions, are affected by different circum- stances, and have distinct personal experiences, educational backgrounds, temperaments, personal histories, skills and habits, they are liable to vary somewhat in their biases. These interpersonal differences can be turned into epistemic resources if societies open up their processes of moral inquiry to wide participation. The biases of some can check those of oth- ers, if social practices enable this.4 John Dewey argued that democracy, considered in its broadest sense as a cultural practice of wide participation in inquiry into the solutions of problems faced by society, offered the most effective means of improving moral and political practices.5¶ The second broad pragmatist strategy for intelligently updating our moral principles is to test them in experiments in living. The moral principles in question are practical prin- ciples, embodied in social practices. We can test our moral principles by putting them into practice and seeing whether we can live with the results. More precisely, pragmatism inter- prets moral norms as attempted solutions to practical problems that involve calling upon the cooperation and assistance of others.6 When we put them into practice, we can determine whether they solve the problem they were supposed to solve, with acceptable side effects. The assessment of moral principles thus begins with an instrumental evaluation. But it does not end there. As we gain experience of the effects of a practical implementation of a moral principle, we may come to revise our conception of the problem that needs to be solved. For example, we may add an expectation that the solution enable us to cope with or avoid certain side effects. Or experience with a new practice may enable us to envision new and potentially better ways of life than were imagined or thought feasible before it was imple- mented. This may lead to a more expansive view of the problem to be solved, and a more ambitious ideal of what would solve it.

#### Thus, the standard is engaging pragmatically oriented experimentation, which means using the best ways of testing moral hypotheses to intelligently update our beliefs—not all experiments are valuable, but we should do experiments that challenge our moral biases to help implement better policies in the future. For example, the abolition of slavery was an experiment that challenged anti-Black bias—even if the consequences were initially bad, it resulted in long-term change.

Nicholas Dixon 99---1999 (“Handguns, Violent Crime, and Self-Defense,” *International Journal of Applied Philosophy*, 13.2 (1999):239-260

To allow considerations of realpolitik to influence our judgments about the morality of a practice or policy would effectively lock us into the status quo, and sabotage the role of applied ethics as a vehicle for proposing social change. Absurd consequences are easy to find. For instance, when the abolitionist¶ movement first began, little doubt exists that it had no realistic chance at that time of persuading Congress to abolish slavery. Does this mean that its members were wrong to morally condemn slavery and call for its abolition? Similar comments apply to the suffragette movement in its early days. Worse¶ still, if applied ethicists are to confine themselves to defending positions that have a realistic chance of currently being legally enacted, prolife philosophers will have to stop writing papers in which they condemn abortion, since, given the current composition of the Supreme Court, legislation banning¶ "regular" abortion is virtually impossible to enact and defend against constitutional challenges. ¶ Granted, the abolitionist movement did indeed take heed of political realities and worked incrementally to restrict slavery to certain states before finally pushing for its complete abolition. This is because it, like the suffragette movement, was a political movement, whose goal was to bring about concrete social change. Nonetheless, underlying both movements were moral arguments that made no compromise for political realities in their condemnation of slavery and the oppression of women. And this is precisely the role that applied ethicists should play in discussing handgun control: providing a moral¶ vision of the handgun policy that would best reduce violence and respect rights. How to realize that moral vision is an important question, but a secondary one, and one that is best left to political organizations that are more knowledgeable about political realities. It may well tum out that Handgun Control, Inc.'s strategy of proposing moderate restrictions on handgun ownership is a shrewd first step that is a necessary prelude to the more radical proposal advanced here. But moral arguments for handgun prohibition are¶ needed to guide and motivate even incremental change to achieve that goal.

#### Prefer it additionally—

#### 1] Appeal to universal principles without revision and learning is regressive, which pragmatism avoids.

Todd Lekan 3 [prof of phil @ Muskingum University], “Making Morality PRAGMATIST RECONSTRUCTION IN ETHICAL THEORY”, Vanderbilt University Press, 2003, BE

The pragmatist model of deliberative events questions this division between application and justification. The division is yet another example of the fixed-end view of justificatory structure, applied now to moral judgment. We have general principles that are justified in some special way. These are held fixed antecedently to deliberation. The task of moral judgment is to discern the particulars of the situation so as to determine whether or not a principle applies. The pragmatist response to this model is that at best it represents settled cases where routinized procedures are deployed with relative ease. However, the model does not adequately account for the learning that goes on when the situation itself is indeterminate—when established norms fail us. I want to turn now to a closer look at Onora O’Neill’s efforts to de- velop a neo-Kantian model of moral judgment, which, I argue, makes an untenable separation between justification and appli- cation.¶ Recent work in Kantian ethics has shown that it is possible to develop a more nuanced view of moral judgment than that usually attributed to Kant’s approach. Kantian ethics is frequently attacked for being overly rigid in its account of absolute rules that block the more nuanced responses needed in the thick of ambiguous and vexing moral problems. Kant’s own application of his categorical imperative supports the objection. One need only consider his absolute prohibition against lying, even if do- ing so will save a life. Nevertheless, with careful attention to ev- erything Kant has to say, neo-Kantians can make a good case for the suggestion that the categorical imperative does not in- volve, strictly speaking, the application of a principle to concrete situations. Some neo-Kantians claim that there is a place for non- rule-governed judgment at the level of the formulation of the maxims that are tested by the categorical imperative procedure. The idea in rough is that prior to testing maxims of action we must judge the morally salient facts of the case in order to con- struct the maxim. Such judgment is not itself a matter of apply- ing moral principles or even of using Kant’s categorical testing procedure. Principles are indeterminate. They alone cannot tell us what to do. At some point in deliberation we must judge that this case must be subsumed under some principle P.¶ The argument for the necessity of non-rule-governed judg- ment is simple. When I am faced with the need to decide whether the principle that says “if any act is one of lying, then that act ought not be done” applies to some action that I am consider- ing, I cannot make this decision by reference to a principle on pain of infinite regress. That is, I must first recognize the action as falling under the appropriate description “lying,” and only then can I determine that it violates some more general moral principle, thus yielding the particular moral judgment that this ac- tion ought not be done.3 The point here is that the judgment or perception of this case as being one of lying—as falling under that general moral principle—is not itself an application of a moral rule. Assume, for a moment, that it is. Then my recognition that an action A is an instance of some general principle P must be decided by reference to some principle P’ that indicates that ac- tions of this type fall under P. But then, how do I know that P’ applies to this case? On the basis of our initial assumption, this can only be determined by reference to some other principle P’’ that indicates that P’ applies to those cases in which P applies to A and so on ad infinitum. The point is that we cannot rely on moral rules to escape “judgment.” The very claim that we should rely on these rules (as opposed to any of the other myriad rules that might apply to this case) shows that judgment has been made. O’Neill illustrates this idea of non-rule-determined judgment by way of Kant’s notion of “reflective judgment.” She says, “The situation of agents is in the first place one that requires reflective judgment: Only when an account or description of a particular case has been given—only when a process of reflection has pro- duced an appraisal of the case—can principles be applied and a solution sought.”4 O’Neill draws on some remarks from Kant’s Critique of Judgment to show that Kant’s moral theory is not un- duly rigid. That is, we need not read Kant as believing that his categorical imperative provides us with some sort of algorithmic decision procedure for determining moral obligation. Rather, Kant recognizes that moral principles are of themselves indeter- minate with respect to their application in a specific situation. People need to develop a kind of perceptive skill in noticing the¶ relevant features of situations.¶ Notice that O’Neill claims that first a person must “appraise”¶ or “reflectively judge” a situation, and then principles can be ap- plied so as to arrive at a solution of what one morally should do. Another way of putting this point is that “without minor pre- mises reasoning cannot be practical,”5 meaning that we must ex- ercise judgment about the particular situation (minor premise) in order to determine whether some general moral principle (ma- jor premise) is applicable in guiding action in some situation. This judgment cannot itself be an application of a rule, for the rea- sons just given in the regress argument.¶ For O’Neill, there are two basic phases of practical delibera- tion: (1) that of appraising or reflectively judging a situation and (2) that of applying principles to the situation described or judged in order to come to some decision about the rightness or wrong- ness of an action. One of O’Neill’s aims is to argue against Wittgensteinian writers who believe that moral reflection should be centered on examining “what we want to say” about various hy- pothetical examples (usually drawn from literature). She—I think rightly—points out that the Wittgensteinians, by focusing on ex- amples whose moral significance has more or less already been¶ assumed, fail to account for the fact that oftentimes our difficul- ties lie precisely in determining what sort of case it is that we are dealing with. Is this case one in which the relevant description is that of a person (doctor) killing another (a patient), or is it one in which someone is serving a client’s requests in an appropriate way? Is the case one in which a person is lying to a friend or one in which she is helping to build a friend’s confidence? In short there are myriad ways one might describe a case, and sometimes there are controversial and conflicting accounts of what sort of classification is appropriate. A good example of such deep con- flict can be found in the debate over abortion. Some describe the case as “the murder of a baby”; others describe it as “a woman’s decision to abort unwanted fetal tissue.”¶ As has been mentioned, O’Neill points to Kant’s Third Cri- tique in order to develop an account of judgment that will do justice to it. Although Kant believes that reflective judgment is not determined by rules, we can adopt what O’Neill calls “strat- egies of judgment” and what Kant calls some “maxims of reflec- tive judgment” to help guide deliberators in their construal or description of the situation. These are “regulative principles.” Kant suggests three: seeking consistency in our judgments, en- larging our thought/attempting to take the standpoint of others, and thinking for oneself.6¶ I have no quarrel with these Kantian regulative principles. Instead I want to examine the claim that ethical deliberators first construe a case and then bring principles to bear in order to ren- der some decision or particular moral judgment. One way of in- terpreting this claim is that in any piece of ethical deliberation we need first to determine the facts of the case before applying norms or moral principles. One might be tempted to make this claim partly on the grounds that the semantic content of any moral principle has a descriptive part. A moral principle like “if any action is one of lying, then that action is forbidden” includes within it a descriptive meaning governed by general semantic rules that enable us to refer descriptively to those actions that are lies.¶ The problem with this last move is that we are not here deal-¶ ing with the semantics of moral terms but with the psychological processes by which deliberators come to see that a bit of moral discourse applies in a certain way. Appeal to “meaning rules” is of no help here for much the same reason that the application conditions of a rule cannot themselves be applied by rules.¶ Furthermore, the description of a case already involves the mobilization of moral or normative considerations. That is to say, it is already a moral achievement (as opposed to simply a cogni- tive achievement) for a person to recognize the moral salience of the features of a case. O’Neill herself admits that the power of judgment that deliberators develop in order to construe cases is a power of moral judgment. That is to say, we are talking about a moral construal (or description) of a case here. But since this construal is guided by moral norms, we need to ask in what sense it is correct to view deliberation as involving two distinct steps: (1) construing the case and (2) applying a moral principle. What would be left for practical reason to do after the case has been construed? After all, if our construal of a case already presup- poses that we classify the case as having morally salient features of a certain sort, then haven’t we already applied a certain set of moral principles P1 . . . Pn? Or if we haven’t literally brought them out explicitly as applicable to this case, aren’t they at least presupposed in our construal?¶ The question is, What is left to test after a case has been con- strued by judgment? That is, once we have formulated a descrip- tion of the case as “a patient is suffering and requests that life support be ceased,” which includes such moral considerations as the “rightness of preventing unnecessary suffering” and the “right- ness of respecting the autonomy of people by honoring their wishes,” one wonders whether there is any further step that in- volves the application of principles. Perhaps what an O’Neillian Kantian would say is that once we have made out the case by making clear these moral principles, we go on to test these sa- lient moral features of the case by the categorical imperative test- ing procedure. This suggests that what is actually tested by the categorical imperative are general maxim types (e.g., maxims that include the consideration of unnecessary suffering, the making¶ of a promise, and so on). But if this is the case, it would seem that the categorical imperative procedure would be used to test not the specific maxims of a case but rather the general features of specific maxims. Furthermore, such testing would presumably already be done prior to any deliberation. That is, we would al- ready know what the general moral considerations are that could be willed universally. The only task for deliberation would be to see what considerations are relevant to just this maxim made out in just this case and this would not be decided by the categorical imperative.7¶ We have just seen how this interpretation suggests that the categorical imperative really does no work in testing a particular maxim after the maxim has been made out. But it might be thought (as O’Neill briefly suggests) that the moral principles that could pass the categorical imperative test are employed to help construe the case. We have already granted the primacy of judg- ment as an activity that, although perhaps guided by principles of both a more regulative sort (such as thinking from a broad- minded perspective) and a more substantive sort (such as tell the truth or do not cause unnecessary suffering), can only subsume particular cases under these general principles via an act of judg- ment. But granting this already moves our account of ethical judg- ment beyond the model that says we must first construe a case and then apply pre-established indeterminate moral principles.¶ The view that we must reject is that moral judgment involves a mental act that first identifies nonmoral properties and then adds moral predicates to these properties. We should reject the idea that any moral judgment is composed of two separated fac- tors, the nonmoral property that a person might believe to be present in a certain situation and the value predicate that is hitched to the factual property identified in the descriptive predi- cate.8¶ In my view this “peeling” of the evaluative from the cogni- tive is distorting. Recognizing a situation as consisting of some set of important facts relevant to a moral judgment requires at least a tacit evaluation that these facts are relevant. Describing the situation as one in which pain occurs is already a description¶ offered by an agent concerned with noticing such features. And this concern reflects a moral ability—an ability to take certain features as salient and worth noticing in the first place. One might regard the pain of another without moral concern. One could simply note that the person is in pain, perhaps giving an account of the physical state that instantiates the pain state. But the fact that we can so regard the pain of another is no objection to the point that I am making here. After all, a criticism of such disre- gard implies that we notice a failure to take a fact as relevant that ought to be relevant. I do not want to suggest that we are always right about the ways in which we regard the situation. Nor do I deny that through discussion and critical accounting we might be able to improve our responses to and judgments about relevant features of situations. This is just to admit that fallibility.¶ The fact that our descriptions are guided by evaluative con- siderations is illuminated by our account of norms as resident in activities and practices. Learning norms involves learning the proper identification and description of a practice or activity. Identifying the kind of situation we are in implies already identi- fying what sorts of response are appropriate or proper. Con- versely, identifying what sort of responses are appropriate or proper involves identifying what kind of situation we are in. As Thomas Green puts it in reference to Will’s view that norms are “resident in practices,”¶ This fittingness of conduct to setting is often negotiated simply by recognizing what activity it is in which we are engaged. Recogniz- ing the difference between norms of school and home is largely iden- tical with learning what it means to say that this (the place where one is) just is the school, the family, or the church. It is pretty much identical with such things as being able to say that we are now not simply tossing the ball, but playing baseball, that we are not now simply stacking stone, but laying a dry-wall.9

#### 2] Exclusive focus on pleasure and pain is impossible and ignores inquiry.

Elizabeth Anderson 14, "Dewey's Moral Philosophy", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), BE

Hedonism supposes that the value of acts can be reduced to the quantity of pleasure and pain they produce. Estimating such values requires that we be able to break down the pleasures and pains of different activities and experiences into simple identical units, and then sum them up again. This theoretical demand outruns the holistic and complex character of our experiences of pleasure and pain (LJP 40–1). In fact, pleasures and pains in reflective individuals are inextricably bound up with what Dewey called “ideational” factors — that is, with articulate conceptions of what they are taking pleasure in. They are therefore not pure sensory units but already contain elements of judgment or appraisal. Critical among these are considerations of the consequences of prizing certain things for one's own moral character. Since we form our character by cultivating habits of valuing some things over others, and we prize and appraise character itself, we cannot simply take current pleasures as given (E 193–4; LJP 41–2). Good and bad people take pleasure in different things. Such facts can give us reason to cultivate different tastes from those we currently have.¶ Although hedonism fails as a theory that gives us a fixed end, it does contain a methodological insight. Nothing is good that cannot be desired. All desire contains an element of enjoyment or liking. Hence, pleasure can be seen as a sign of the good, as evidence of what is valuable. Nevertheless, what makes desire a sound guide to the good is the fact that it incorporates foresight and reflection on the wider consequences of acting on it, not just that it incorporates a liking of its object (E 195–6).¶ Ideal or objective list theories attempt to harmonize conflicting desires not, as hedonism does, by reducing them all to a common denominator, but by systematically fitting them together into an ideal or plan of life. Dewey argued that people construct ideals that make sense in view of their particular social circumstances. For example, ideals of material or political advancement make sense of the strivings of business people and politicians. Such ideals have, at best, only contextual validity and cannot be prescribed as fixed ends for all people. There can no more be a single best way of life than there can be an ideal house for all times and places. To suppose that there is forecloses the possibility of imagination inventing something even better. Yet, ideals serve a highly important function for individuals, if they are considered as hypotheses about how one should live that one can test in experiences of living in accordance with them. So understood, ideals are tools for discovering evidence about the good (LE 59–68, 229–30; E 185, 189–91, 202–210).¶ Informed desire theories of the good, which define the good in terms of what an individual would desire if fully informed, come closest to Dewey's own account of the good. Dewey spoke of the good as the object of desires of which we approve in calm, informed reflection (E 208, 212). Yet Dewey's aims differ from that of most of today's informed desire theorists. The latter tend to accept as fixed the character of the individual whose good is being judged, and alter only the individual's cognitive capacities and beliefs so as to read off the good for the individual from what his cognitively enhanced self wants. This commits the same error that Dewey charged against hedonism, of omitting critical appraisal of one's own character as an important factor in determining what one ought to desire. In identifying the good with the objects of approved desires, Dewey highlighted the importance of character to identifying the good. Before we can endorse a desire, we need to ask whether we, or an impartial observer, could approve of someone who had it (E 239–47). The good is what good people — those possessing foresight and wide sympathies — desire. Dewey also resisted the conversion of a method of inquiry into a fixed criterion of value. There is never an end to inquiry — no such thing as complete information — because circumstances are always changing and imagination constructs new possibilities for living (E 213). Nor does the projection of desires we would have if we reached an end to inquiry offer a recognizable vision of human life. Fully informed people do not desire more information. But education, inquiry, and individual development in light of new discoveries are constitutive goods of human life. The desire to skip to the end to see what is ultimately valuable is a desire to skip human life, as if the process of learning through living were merely a means and not prized in itself (HNC 194–202). What, in light of inquiry, we reflectively desire, and approve of desiring, is evidence of what is good. But it is always defeasible in light of further inquiry.

### Contention 1 – Experimentation

#### Opposition to handgun bans is biased by symbolic racism and males disproportionately oppose gun control.

Walter Forrest et al. 13 [Behavioural Studies, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia] and Kerry O’Brien [Behavioural Studies, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia, School of Psychological Sciences, University of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom] and Dermot Lynott [Department of Psychology, Lancaster University, Lancaster, United Kingdom] and Michael Daly [Institute of Sociomanagement, University of Stirling, Stirling, Scotland, United Kingdom], “Racism, Gun Ownership and Gun Control: Biased Attitudes in US Whites May Influence Policy Decisions”, PLOS One, 31 Oct 2013, BE

Conservative ideology was also significantly related to stronger support for permits to carry concealed handguns after adjusting for other explanatory variables. Similarly, stronger republican identification, being from a southern state, and anti-government sentiment were associated with opposition to gun-control policies, but not with having a gun in the home. With the exception of sex, and to a much lesser extent education, demographic variables were not related to having a gun in the home or opposition to gun controls. Although sex was unrelated to having a gun in the home, there were greater odds of males being opposed to banning handguns in the home, and being supportive of permits to carry concealed handguns, than for females. This result is consistent with other US data showing that white males display the most opposition to gun control, and greater support for liberalisation of gun laws [3]. Higher education levels were associated with lower odds of having a gun in the home, but not with the gun control outcomes. This finding mirrors national data on gun ownership and support for gun control policies [3], which also shows a poor and mixed relationship between income and age, and gun ownership.¶ In correlation analyses, greater race IAT scores were weakly associated with greater symbolic racism scores, and with the black violent stereotype. Higher IAT scores were not related to gun ownership and gun control in full models. Higher scores on black violent stereotyping were not related to any of the gun-related outcomes; the univariate relationship between black violent stereotyping and greater support for concealed handgun permits was explained by other variables.¶ Discussion¶ Opposition to gun control in US whites is somewhat paradoxical given the statistics on gun-related deaths, and such opposition may be undermining the public health of all US citizens. This study examined for the first time whether racism is related to gun ownership and the opposition to gun control in US whites. The results support the hypothesis by showing that greater symbolic racism is related to increased odds of having a gun in the home and greater opposition to gun control, after accounting for all other explanatory variables.¶ It is particularly noteworthy that the relationship between symbolic racism and the gun-related outcomes was maintained in the presence of conservative ideologies, political affiliation, opposition to government control, and being from a southern state, which are otherwise strong predictors of gun ownership and opposition to gun reform. Contrary to research showing associations between implicit racism and policy decision making [23], we did not find implicit racism to be significantly related to gun related outcomes after accounting for other variables. Similarly, the small correlations between the stereotype that most blacks being violent and gun outcomes were not significant after accounting for all other variables.¶ There are several possible reasons for the absence of multivariate associations between the stereotype of blacks as violent and race-IAT, and gun outcomes. There is considerable debate in the field regards the validity and predictive qualities of implicit measures with critical reviews and reanalyses showing weak or no association between implicit and explicit measures, and outcomes [39], [40]. Others demonstrate that non-attitudinal factors, such as, stimuli familiarity, cognitive ability, and fear of appearing racist also account for individual differences in IAT scores, that may in turn affect associations with outcome variables [39]–[43]. The implicit association test is also a conceptually difficult task for some to learn, and particularly the brief race-IAT used in the ANES which restricts training on this computerized measure [41]. Given the mean D score for the ANES race-IAT (.17) is more than twice as small as from any other studies, including one in medical doctors [44], it is also possible that participants may not have completed this complex computerized task correctly. Other authors have noted this problem with the ANES race-IAT data [45].¶ There are two plausible reasons for the blacks as violent stereotype not accounting for significant variance in multivariate models. First, the stereotype appears to be subsumed by symbolic racism. Table 4 shows that the black violent stereotype has its strongest relationship with symbolic racism (r = .24), and only weak relationships with other variables (rs = .06–.09). Thus, the association between the black violent stereotype and gun outcomes may be explained through its association with symbolic racism which captures negative affect towards blacks (e.g., fear, unease, hostility). Alternatively, because the black violent stereotype is a quite blatant measure, participants may have been reluctant to endorse a clearly negative view of blacks in order to avoid appearing racist. In support of this notion, only 10% of participants strongly endorsed the statement that most blacks could be described as violent, with a mean score of 2.2 on the 5-point scale, compared to a mean score of 3.5 for symbolic racism on a 5-point scale.¶ There are potential limitations that should be noted. The item assessing having a gun in the home does not establish that the respondent is the owner or user of that gun. This observation is born out in the absence of a sex difference to this question. Males typically have a higher rate of gun ownership than females [3]. Similarly, the gun control policy items do not assess opposition/support for assault weapons, which has been a particular focus of attention during recent gun debates in the US. Nonetheless, symbolic racism might also, quite reasonably, be related to opposition to broader gun control measures (banning assault weapons, and gun clips containing more than 10 rounds), which may or may not be effective in reducing firearms related deaths. However, although the ANES only asked participants whether there was a gun in the home, best available evidence suggests that merely having a gun in the home is associated with a marked increase in the odds of one of the members of that home dying from suicide or homicide [6], [7].¶ Another potential limitation is the focus on white US adults as it is possible that other US racial groups may display similar pattern of results. However, given that whites oppose gun reforms to a considerably greater extent than do blacks, or indeed any other non-white racial group, that whites are also the single largest (>70%) ethnic grouping in the US, and that symbolic racism in whites is related to numerous outcomes, the focus of the study on whites seems appropriate [3]. Indeed, in a sub-analysis of the black sample from the ANES panel study, we found that none of the variables reported in models for white participants were significantly related to any of the gun-related outcomes for blacks. Finally, the correlational nature of the study clearly prohibits causal inferences. While a view that racism underpins gun-related attitudes is plausible and supported by evidence on other race-related policy decisions [18], [23], it could be argued that there are other plausible but unmeasured variables that could explain the pattern of relationships we find here. Similarly, simply owning a firearm may lead whites to develop more negative attitudes towards blacks. There is some experimental research showing that participants who have recently held a firearm produce enhanced salivary testosterone levels and display increased aggression toward others [46]. Causality aside, greater control of firearms is the most logical direction for public health policy.¶ Notwithstanding these limitations, the results indicate that symbolic racism is associated with gun-related attitudes and behaviours in US whites. The statistics on firearm-related suicides and homicides in the US might reasonably be expected to convince US citizens that action on reducing gun ownership and use would be beneficial to their health. Yet, US whites oppose strong gun reform more than all other racial groups, despite a much greater likelihood that whites will kill themselves with their guns (suicide), than be killed by someone else [1]. Black-on-black homicide rates would benefit most from gun reform, and, quite logically, blacks support these reforms even if whites do not [3], [47]. Symbolic racism appears to play a role in explaining gun ownership and paradoxical attitudes to gun control in US whites. In other words, despite certain policy changes potentially benefitting whites, anti-black prejudice leads people to oppose their implementation. This finding is consistent with previous research showing that symbolic racism is associated with opposition to US policies that may benefit blacks, and support for policies that disadvantage blacks, and critically, goes beyond what is explained by other important confounders.

#### Experimentation with controversial policies is key to adequately revise moral beliefs and helps us implement policies better in the future.

John Dewey 31 [American philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer whose ideas have been influential in education and social reform], “Social Science and Social Control (1931)”, *The Essential Dewey Volume I: Pragmatism, Education, Democracy*, Edited by Larry A. Hickman and Thomas M. Alexander, Indiana University Press, 1998, BE

The point I am making may be summed up by saying that it is a complete error to suppose that efforts at social control depend upon the prior existence of a social science. The reverse is the case. The building up of social science, that is, of a body of knowledge in which facts are ascertained in their significant relations, is dependent upon putting social planning into effect. It is at this point that the misconception about physical science, when it is taken as a model for social knowledge, is important. Physical science did not develop because inquirers piled up a mass of facts about observed phenomena. It came into being when men [people] intentionally experimented, on the basis of ideas and hypotheses, with observed phenomena to modify them and dis- close new observations. This process is self- corrective and self-developing. Imperfect and even wrong hypotheses, when acted upon, brought to light significant phenomena which made improved ideas and improved experimentations possible. The change from a passive and accumulative attitude into an active and productive one is the secret revealed by the progress of physical inquiry. Men obtained knowledge of natural energies by trying deliberately to control the conditions of their operation. The result was knowledge, and then control on a larger scale by the application of what was learned.

#### Reliable experiments must attempt to counteract our moral biases—abolition of slavery proves that experimentation is a necessary means of revising our moral beliefs.

Elizabeth Anderson 15 [UMich chair of philosophy dept, pragmatist], “Moral Bias and Corrective Practices: A Pragmatist Perspective”, presidential address delivered at the one hundred twelfth Central Division meeting of the American Philosophical Association on 20 Feb 2015, BE

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.

### Contention 2 – Democracy

#### The mere existence of privately owned guns is a means of shutting down democratic deliberation.

FIRMIN DEBRABANDER 12 [associate professor of philosophy at the Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore and the author of “Spinoza and the Stoics”], “The Freedom of an Armed Society”, NY Times, 16 Dec 2012, BE

Individual gun ownership — and gun violence — has long been a distinctive feature of American society, setting us apart from the other industrialized democracies of the world. Recent legislative developments, however, are progressively bringing guns out of the private domain, with the ultimate aim of enshrining them in public life. Indeed, the N.R.A. strives for a day when the open carry of powerful weapons might be normal, a fixture even, of any visit to the coffee shop or grocery store — or classroom.¶ As N.R.A. president Wayne LaPierre expressed in a recent statement on the organization’s Web site, more guns equal more safety, by their account. A favorite gun rights saying is “an armed society is a polite society.” If we allow ever more people to be armed, at any time, in any place, this will provide a powerful deterrent to potential criminals. Or if more citizens were armed — like principals and teachers in the classroom, for example — they could halt senseless shootings ahead of time, or at least early on, and save society a lot of heartache and bloodshed.¶ As ever more people are armed in public, however — even brandishing weapons on the street — this is no longer recognizable as a civil society. Freedom is vanished at that point.¶ And yet, gun rights advocates famously maintain that individual gun ownership, even of high caliber weapons, is the defining mark of our freedom as such, and the ultimate guarantee of our enduring liberty. Deeper reflection on their argument exposes basic fallacies.¶ In her book “The Human Condition,” the philosopher Hannah Arendt states that “violence is mute.” According to Arendt, speech dominates and distinguishes the polis, the highest form of human association, which is devoted to the freedom and equality of its component members. Violence — and the threat of it — is a pre-political manner of communication and control, characteristic of undemocratic organizations and hierarchical relationships. For the ancient Athenians who practiced an incipient, albeit limited form of democracy (one that we surely aim to surpass), violence was characteristic of the master-slave relationship, not that of free citizens.¶ This becomes clear if only you pry a little more deeply into the N.R.A.’s logic behind an armed society. An armed society is polite, by their thinking, precisely because guns would compel everyone to tamp down eccentric behavior, and refrain from actions that might seem threatening. The suggestion is that guns liberally interspersed throughout society would cause us all to walk gingerly — not make any sudden, unexpected moves — and watch what we say, how we act, whom we might offend.¶ As our Constitution provides, however, liberty entails precisely the freedom to be reckless, within limits, also the freedom to insult and offend as the case may be. The Supreme Court has repeatedly upheld our right to experiment in offensive language and ideas, and in some cases, offensive action and speech. Such experimentation is inherent to our freedom as such. But guns by their nature do not mix with this experiment — they don’t mix with taking offense. They are combustible ingredients in assembly and speech.¶ I often think of the armed protestor who showed up to one of the famously raucous town hall hearings on Obamacare in the summer of 2009. The media was very worked up over this man, who bore a sign that invoked a famous quote of Thomas Jefferson, accusing the president of tyranny. But no one engaged him at the protest; no one dared approach him even, for discussion or debate — though this was a town hall meeting, intended for just such purposes. Such is the effect of guns on speech — and assembly. Like it or not, they transform the bearer, and end the conversation in some fundamental way. They announce that the conversation is not completely unbounded, unfettered and free; there is or can be a limit to negotiation and debate — definitively.¶ The very power and possibility of free speech and assembly rests on their non-violence. The power of the Occupy Wall Street movement, as well as the Arab Spring protests, stemmed precisely from their non-violent nature. This power was made evident by the ferocity of government response to the Occupy movement. Occupy protestors across the country were increasingly confronted by police in military style garb and affect.¶ Imagine what this would have looked like had the protestors been armed: in the face of the New York Police Department assault on Zuccotti Park, there might have been armed insurrection in the streets. The non-violent nature of protest in this country ensures that it can occur.

#### Democracy is an important form of inquiry and experimentation.

Matthew Festenstein 14 [Matthew Festenstein (BA Cambridge, PhD Cambridge) previously taught at the Universities of Hull and Sheffield. Matthew arrived as Professor of Political Philosophy at York in 2006. He was Director of the Morrell Centre for Toleration 2006-8, Research Director in the Politics Department 2008-9, and Head of Department 2010-15. He is currently Associate Dean for Research in the Faculty of Social Sciences and director of the Research Centre for Social Sciences], "Dewey's Political Philosophy", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), BE

This way of viewing the desirability of democracy is instrumental and minimal; instrumental, in that the desirability of democracy derives from its protecting the interests of each individual against the depredations of an elite class, and minimal, in that the rationale for popular participation is limited to the need for the elite to be informed where the shoe pinches, if its policies are not to be misguided. Dewey deepens this minimal and instrumental justification by taking democracy to be a form of social inquiry: Democracy as public discussion is viewed as the best way of dealing with the conflict of interests in a society: ‘The method of democracy – inasfar as it is that of organized intelligence – is to bring these conflicts out into the open where their special claims can be discussed and judged in the light of more inclusive interests than are represented by either of them separately’ (Liberalism and Social Action, LW11, 56). Democratic societies are thought of as both seeking to attain desirable goals, and arguing over how to do so, and also as arguing over what a desirable goal is. In other words, democratic politics is not simply a channel through which we can assert our interests (as it is for the first argument), but a forum or mode of activity in which we can arrive at a conception of what our interests are. As the experimentalist conception of inquiry insists, this does not imply that we need a priori criteria in order to establish if this process has been successful. Rather, criteria for what counts as a satisfactory solution may be hammered out in the process of searching for one. Democracy is experimental for Dewey in that it allows, or should allow, a profound questioning of the idées fixes of the established order, even if, of course, much democratic politics will not take the form of such questioning.

### Underview

#### Particularism is good—root cause claims and focus on overarching structures ignore application to material injustice.

Gregory Fernando Pappas 16 [Texas A&M University] “The Pragmatists’ Approach to Injustice”, The Pluralist Volume 11, Number 1, Spring 2016, BE

The pragmatists’ approach should be distinguished from nonideal theories whose starting point seems to be the injustices of society at large that have a history and persist through time, where the task of political philosophy is to detect and diagnose the presence of these historical injustices in particular situations of injustice. For example, critical theory today has inherited an approach to social philosophy characteristic of the European tradition that goes back to Rousseau, Marx, Weber, Freud, Marcuse, and others. Accord- ing to Roberto Frega, this tradition takes society to be “intrinsically sick” with a malaise that requires adopting a critical historical stance in order to understand how the systematic sickness affects present social situations. In other words, this approach assumes that¶ a philosophical critique of specific social situations can be accomplished only under the assumption of a broader and full blown critique of soci- ety in its entirety: as a critique of capitalism, of modernity, of western civilization, of rationality itself. The idea of social pathology becomes intelligible only against the background of a philosophy of history or of an anthropology of decline, according to which the distortions of actual social life are but the inevitable consequence of longstanding historical processes. (“Between Pragmatism and Critical Theory” 63)¶ However, this particular approach to injustice is not limited to critical theory. It is present in those Latin American and African American political philosophies that have used and transformed the critical intellectual tools of ¶ critical theory to deal with the problems of injustice in the Americas. For instance, Charles W. Mills claims that the starting point and alternative to the abstractions of ideal theory that masked injustices is to diagnose and rectify a history of an illness—the legacy of white supremacy in our actual society.11 The critical task of revealing this illness is achieved by adopting a historical perspective where the injustices of today are part of a larger historical narrative about the development of modern societies that goes back to how Europeans have progressively dehumanized or subordinated others. Similary, radical feminists as well as Third World scholars, as reaction to the hege- monic Eurocentric paradigms that disguise injustices under the assumption of a universal or objective point of view, have stressed how our knowledge is always situated. This may seem congenial with pragmatism except the locus of the knower and of injustices is often described as power structures located in “global hierarchies” and a “world-system” and not situations.12¶ Pragmatism only questions that we live in History or a “World-System” (as a totality or abstract context) but not that we are in history (lowercase): in a present situation continuous with others where the past weighs heavily in our memories, bodies, habits, structures, and communities. It also does not deny the importance of power structures and seeing the connections be- tween injustices through time, but there is a difference between (a) inquiring into present situations of injustice in order to detect, diagnose, and cure an injustice (a social pathology) across history, and (b) inquiring into the his- tory of a systematic injustice in order to facilitate inquiry into the present unique, context-bound injustice. To capture the legacy of the past on present injustices, we must study history but also seek present evidence of the weight of the past on the present injustice.¶ If injustice is an illness, then the pragmatists’ approach takes as its main focus diagnosing and treating the particular present illness, that is, the particular situation-bound injustice and not a global “social pathology” or some single transhistorical source of injustice. The diagnosis of a particular injustice is not always dependent on adopting a broader critical standpoint of society in its entirety, but even when it is, we must be careful to not forget that such standpoints are useful only for understanding the present evil. The concepts and categories “white supremacy” and “colonialism” can be great tools that can be of planetary significance. One could even argue that they pick out much larger areas of people’s lives and injustices than the categories of class and gender, but in spite of their reach and explanatory theoretical value, they are nothing more than tools to make reference to and ameliorate particular injustices experienced (suffered) in the midst of a particular and unique re- lationship in a situation. No doubt many, but not all, problems of injustice are a consequence of being a member of a group in history, but even in these cases, we cannot a priori assume that injustices are homogeneously equal for all members of that group. Why is this important? The possible pluralism and therefore complexity of a problem of injustice does not always stop at the level of being a member of a historical group or even a member of many groups, as insisted on by intersectional analysis. There may be unique cir- cumstances to particular countries, towns, neighborhoods, institutions, and ultimately situations that we must be open to in a context-sensitive inquiry. If an empirical inquiry is committed to capturing and ameliorating all of the harms in situations of injustice in their raw pretheoretical complexity, then this requires that we try to begin with and return to the concrete, particular, and unique experiences of injustice.¶ Pragmatism agrees with Sally Haslanger’s concern about Charles Mills’s view. She writes: “The goal is not just a theory that is historical (v. ahistori- cal), but is sensitive to historical particularity, i.e., that resists grand causal narratives purporting to give an account of how domination has come about and is perpetuated everywhere and at all times” (1). For “the forces that cause and sustain domination vary tremendously context by context, and there isn’t necessarily a single causal explanation; a theoretical framework that is useful as a basis for political intervention must be highly sensitive to the details of the particular social context” (1).13¶ Although each situation is unique, there are commonalities among the cases that permit inquiry about common causes. We can “formulate tentative general principles from investigation of similar individual cases, and then . . . check the generalizations by applying them to still further cases” (Dewey, Lectures in China 53). But Dewey insists that the focus should be on the indi- vidual case, and was critical of how so many sociopolitical theories are prone to starting and remaining at the level of “sweeping generalizations.” He states that they “fail to focus on the concrete problems which arise in experience, allowing such problems to be buried under their sweeping generalizations” (Lectures in China 53).¶ The lesson pragmatism provides for nonideal theory today is that it must be careful to not reify any injustice as some single historical force for which particular injustice problems are its manifestation or evidence for its exis- tence. Pragmatism welcomes the wisdom and resources of nonideal theories that are historically grounded on actual injustices, but it issues a warning about how they should be understood and implemented. It is, for example, sympathetic to the critical resources found in critical race theory, but with an important qualification. It understands Derrick Bell’s valuable criticism as context-specific to patterns in the practice of American law. Through his inquiry into particular cases and civil rights policies at a particular time and place, Bell learned and proposed certain general principles such as the one of “interest convergence,” that is, “whites will promote racial advantages for blacks only when they also promote white self-interest.”14 But, for pragma- tism, these principles are nothing more than historically grounded tools to use in present problematic situations that call for our analysis, such as deliberation in establishing public policies or making sense of some concrete injustice. The principles are falsifiable and open to revision as we face situation-specific injustices. In testing their adequacy, we need to consider their function in making us see aspects of injustices we would not otherwise appreciate.15

#### Gun rights fuel patriarchal nationalism and neolib.

Levi Gahman 14 [Centre for Social, Spatial, and Economic Justice, University of British Columbia], “Gun rites: hegemonic masculinity and neoliberal ideology in rural Kansas”, Gender, Place and Culture, 2014, BE

This valorization of the gun, and its association with exerting control over the rural frontier and ‘nation’, still resonates within the many men in Southeast Kansas. Over the span of a few generations, owning guns has produced a shared national identity that extols the virtues of defending individualism, freedom, property, and religion, and has thus become labelled ‘American’. Such discourses, while appearing noble and well intentioned, have paradoxically been used to carry out brutal assimilation projects and acts of war. In turn, the community members I spoke to in Southeast Kansas often noted that ‘doing the right thing’ and being a ‘good American’ was attained by making individual decisions that followed paternalistic moral traditions and adhered to market-based notions of personal work ethic in a fictive nation that is perceived to be meritorious.¶ Over the course of several interviews it became clear that the notion of being a ‘good American’ is a powerful influence for men in Southeast Kansas. From a feminist perspective, it is evident that these narratives are rife with patriarchal overtones; however, these hierarchical discourses often go unnoticed. Several participants performed their ‘American Pride’ by noting an acute distrust of the government. They often pointed to gun control laws, paying taxes, welfare programmes, and restrictions placed on Christian teaching in schools as ‘unfair’, ‘not right’, and being ‘discrimination against good, hardworking, Americans’.¶ A review of past literature shows that notions of white male victimization are quite prevalent when men seek to justify the oppressive and marginalizing practices they engage in (Kimmel and Ferber 2000; McIntosh 2003). These allegations of persecution, while simultaneously claiming innocence from the privileges that interlocking systems of masculinist white supremacy afford white men in settler nations, have been noted by many critical scholars and were present in many conversations that I had in Kansas (Collins 2005; Razack 1998). Harold, a 68-year-old participant, aptly summed up the widespread disillusionment and sense of victimization some men feel:¶ . . . I pay my fair share of taxes, and that is my hard earned money. I busted my ass for it and I need to feed my family with it. I don’t think it should be given to some lazy freeloaders on welfare who are working the system and looking for a handout . . . and the same people taking our money are the ones saying we shouldn’t have guns. Its in our Constitution, we have the right to bear arms, its what the Founding Fathers wanted . . . They were looking to freely practise their Christian beliefs. That’s why they came over here. And now you see ‘under God’ being taken out of the Pledge of Allegiance, you see the Ten Commandments being removed from schools, you see abortion, what I would call murder, being no big deal, and you see the government trying to take our guns – its communist . . . and don’t get me wrong, I love my country, but I don’t trust the government.¶ The emphasis on being a liberal subject, or being ‘individuals who are free to fail or succeed’ as described by one participant, thus serves as a guiding ideal for many men in the community. Such neoliberal subjectivities do not come without repercussions. As Foucault emphasized in his comprehensive analysis of technologies of the self and biopower, nothing is more suited to become influenced and molded by disciplinary power than extreme individualism (Foucault 1998, 1977). As a result, the productive capacities of the USA’ historical pillars of colonialism, capitalism, and patriarchal nationalism (that continue to be maintained predominantly by white, heterosexual, enabled, Christian, male, citizens) create ‘individuals’ who in perceiving themselves as such are paradoxically much more likely to unknowingly submit, conform, and obey. Such accounts can readily be seen in the comments of David, a 30-year-old single male, who when asked to describe his thoughts on the history of gun use in the area stated:¶ Well, the priests came here to help people – they built the church, started educating people, and shared their way of life. I’m sure the guns they had were mainly for protection and hunting. And its still like that to this day . . . we have a safe, tight-knit community. It’s a great place to raise kids and have a family. Its what our country was founded on. The pioneers that came over here were not being treated too well, they were looking for freedom, and they needed guns to protect themselves from some of the Indians and criminals that would attack them. And I know not all the Indians were dangerous, but you cannot say that some innocent Caucasian people were not attacked. Our ancestors were looking for a place to be free, work hard, and own some land to live off of. You can’t fault a guy for that.¶ . . . and when we got here its not like the Indians were all living peacefully with each other anyway . . . it’s a fact. There were tribes stealing and attacking other tribes, and if you look at how big the country is I think they could have done a better job of living with each other. It wasn’t like it was some paradise before our Founding Fathers got here. In the end, pioneers were protecting their families and defending what they believed in.¶ Several scholars have noted how the symbol of the gun is prominently woven into the historical tapestry of the USA (Brown 2008; Slotkin 1973, 1992; Wright 2001). The perceived threat of aggression from Indigenous people on the open plains meant that from its genesis, America was a society that depended upon a populace that was heavily armed (Cornell 2006). Recently, scholars have written how the conception of ‘frontier masculinity’ as a gendered narrative reinforces constructions of American nationalism by emphasizing the gun as a signifier of manhood (Melzer 2009; Via 2010). This point is particularly salient in Southeast Kansas as it was not uncommon to hear participants speak of playing ‘Cowboys and Indians’, or pretending to be admirable heroes from war movies and Westerns they watched growing up. Currently, there is an increase in research noting how the image of the gun is tied to power, security, and independence, and how such representations serve to perpetuate misleading historical accounts of white settlers conquering the frontier (Carrington, McIntosh, and Scott 2010; Melzer 2009; Via 2010).¶ Critical research also points out that the white settler myths of defending property, carrying out Manifest Destiny, and ‘civilizing Indians’ via homesteading, establishing churches and schools, and assimilation projects still permeate much of the cultural landscape of the Great Plains (Smith 2006, 2012; Via 2010). Additionally, recent discussions have suggested that the rationale behind promoting guns for community safety contradictorily erodes away a population’s sense of security (Cornell 2006). This is due to the fact that as gun possession rates increase, it creates a more defensive, heavily armed, and fractured populace that is governed by fear and suspicion, rather than by the free will it claims (Cornell 2006).¶ Despite the semantics that many participants used as being part of a ‘safe’ community, countervailing perspectives regarding the history of area suggests otherwise. The benevolent Christian narratives that dominate Southeast Kansas’ historical record, when viewed through a decolonial lens, show that ‘safe’ may not necessarily be the most accurate descriptor of the region. This can be recognized due to the region’s ongoing marginalization of historical perspectives from the Osage Nation, the chronological attempts at cultural assimilation that took place locally, and the fact that less than 0.03% of the county population identified as Native American (U.S. Census Bureau 2012). Given this information, it is apparent that the local community has been primarily exposed to masculinist narratives of colonial white supremacy at both institutional and cultural levels. Consequently, the practices and ideals that exist in the region reproduce hierarchies along lines of race, class, gender, sexuality, religion, ability, age, and nationality; which serve to covertly, and oftentimes unintentionally, shore up imperialistic discourses of disposses- sion, enclosure, and violence.¶ In looking at the gender regimes that are produced in Southeast Kansas, I borrow from Connell’s theory of hegemonic masculinity that suggests that the discourses surrounding manhood in local contexts produce marginalized, subordinated, and complicit masculinities (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). Given the particular (local) version of hegemonic masculinity that permeates most spaces in the area (white, heterosexual, Christian, enabled, citizens), such marginalizing and subordinating processes can be readily observed in routine interactions.¶ Several scholars have noted that the processes of ‘othering’ that exist in settler societies serve to reinforce structural white supremacy and predominantly take place along lines of race, class, gender, sexuality, and nationality (de Leeuw, Greenwood, and Lindsay 2013; hooks 1989; Mohanty 1984; Pease 2010; Razack 2002; Smith 1999). Consequently, discursive formations of who are defined as ‘bad’ guys, and who are marked as ‘criminals’, operate as regulatory measures that allow certain men to attain hegemonic status while prohibiting others from doing so. This policing of masculine status can readily be seen in the statements made by Jeffrey, a 22-year-old participant, when asked about news stories pertaining to gun violence:¶ I mean hell, look at all these crazy people doing all these shootings here lately. The ones I hear about are done by guys from the city, you don’t see a bunch of farmers murdering each other. Most of the people doing the killing are psychopaths or terrorists who hate America. You can’t tell me they had good Christian upbringings. The guns ain’t the problem, it’s the criminals who get them that fuck things up. And think about it, if guns were outlawed, those crazy assholes would still find a way . . .¶ One interesting discursive formation to note in the statement above that is particularly salient to geographers is the positioning of violence being perpetuated by ‘guys in the city’ Jeffrey suggests that being ‘from the city’ is in direct opposition to what many participants referred to as ‘being from the country’. Several critical scholars have noted how the way in which ‘difference’ is constructed can lead to oppressive effects (Berg 2012; Goldberg 2009; Kobayashi 2013; Sibley 2002). While not explicitly stated outright, the connotation of what being ‘from the country’ versus being ‘from the city’ means is often times loaded with racialized undertones. This subordinating rhetoric is further highlighted by a follow- up statement Jeffrey made when asked to elaborate upon what type of people he thought were responsible for gun violence:¶ Its not that I’m a racist, but most those guys are niggers. The others are fucked up in the head, or Mexican drug dealers, or gang bangers from the ghetto. Probably grew up on welfare, came from broken homes, and were never really taught how to treat a gun . . . And when I say nigger I don’t mean all black guys, I’ve worked with some good black guys, so when I say nigger I mean that anyone can be a nigger. It’s more of how someone acts, you know? A white guy can be a nigger, a Mexican can be nigger, an Asian can be a nigger, its not just skin colour . . . its like when you hear the word faggot or bitch – those are not always about homos or women, they are just ways to describe how a guy goes about the way he acts.

#### The 1AC ruptures the mindset of guns as necessary for self-defense.

John Donohue 15, “Ban guns, end shootings? How evidence stacks up around the world”, CNN 27 Aug 2015, BE

In the wake of the massacre, the conservative federal government succeeded in implementing tough new gun control laws throughout the country. A large array of weapons were banned -- including the Glock semiautomatic handgun used in the Charleston shootings. The government also imposed a mandatory gun buy back that substantially reduced gun possession in Australia.¶ The effect was that both gun suicides and homicides (as well as total suicides and homicides)fell. In addition, the 1996 legislation made it a crime to use firearms in self-defense.¶ When I mention this to disbelieving NRA supporters they insist that crime must now be rampant in Australia. In fact, the Australian murder rate has fallen to close to one per 100,000 while the U.S. rate, thankfully lower than in the early 1990s, is still roughly at 4.5 per 100,000-- over four times as high. Moreover, robberies in Australia occur at only about half the rate of the U.S. (58 in Australia versus 113.1 per 100,000 in the U.S. in 2012).¶ How did Australia do it? Politically, it took a brave prime minister to face the rage of Australian gun interests.¶ John Howard wore a bullet-proof vest when he announced the proposed gun restrictions in June 1996. The deputy prime minister was hung in effigy. But Australia did not have a domestic gun industry to oppose the new measures so the will of the people was allowed to emerge. And today, support for the safer, gun-restricted Australia is so strong that going back would not be tolerated by the public.¶ That Australia hasn't had a mass shooting since 1996 is likely more than merely the result of the considerable reduction in guns -- it's certainly not the case that guns have disappeared altogether.¶ I suspect that the country has also experienced a cultural shift between the shock of the Port Arthur massacre and the removal of guns from every day life as they are no longer available for self-defense and they are simply less present throughout the country. Troubled individuals, in other words, are not constantly being reminded that guns are a means to address their alleged grievances to the extent that they were in the past, or continue to be in the US.

#### Government-as-heuristic is not an abstraction, but rather provides a means of understanding the state and breaking it down.

Zanotti 14 Dr. Laura Zanotti is an Associate Professor of Political Science at Virginia Tech. Her research and teaching include critical political theory as well as international organizations, UN peacekeeping, democratization and the role of NGOs in post-conflict governance.“Governmentality, Ontology, Methodology: Re-thinking Political Agency in the Global World” – Alternatives: Global, Local, Political – vol 38(4):p. 288-304,. A little unclear if this is late 2013 or early 2014 – The Stated “Version of Record” is Feb 20, 2014, but was originally published online on December 30th, 2013. Obtained via Sage Database.

By questioning substantialist representations of power and subjects, inquiries on the possibilities of political agency are reframed in a way that focuses on power and subjects’ relational character and the contingent processes of their (trans)formation in the context of agonic relations. Options for resistance to governmental scripts are not limited to ‘‘rejection,’’ ‘‘revolution,’’ or ‘‘dispossession’’ to regain a pristine ‘‘freedom from all constraints’’ or an immanent ideal social order. It is found instead in multifarious and contingent struggles that are constituted within the scripts of governmental rationalities and at the same time exceed and transform them. This approach questions oversimplifications of the complexities of liberal political rationalities and of their interactions with non-liberal political players and nurtures a radical skepticism about identifying universally good or bad actors or abstract solutions to political problems. International power interacts in complex ways with diverse political spaces and within these spaces it is appropriated, hybridized, redescribed, hijacked, and tinkered with. Governmentality as a heuristic focuses on performing complex diagnostics of events. It invites historically situated explorations and careful differentiations rather than overarching demonizations of ‘‘power,’’ romanticizations of the ‘‘rebel’’ or the ‘‘the local.’’ More broadly, theoretical formulations that conceive the subject in non-substantialist terms and focus on processes of subjectification, on the ambiguity of power discourses, and on hybridization as the terrain for political transformation, open ways for reconsidering political agency beyond the dichotomy of oppression/rebellion. These alternative formulations also foster an ethics of political engagement, to be continuously taken up through plural and uncertain practices, that demand continuous attention to ‘‘what happens’’ instead of fixations on ‘‘what ought to be.’’83 Such ethics of engagement would not await the revolution to come or hope for a pristine ‘‘freedom’’ to be regained. Instead, it would constantly attempt to twist the working of power by playing with whatever cards are available and would require intense processes of reflexivity on the consequences of political choices. To conclude with a famous phrase by Michel Foucault ‘‘my point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, which is not exactly the same as bad. If everything is dangerous, then we always have something to do. So my position leads not to apathy but to hyper- and pessimistic activism.’’84

#### Policy discussions of gun control by citizens are necessary.

**Watkins 98** - (Christine [educational project consultant and writer based in Chicago] "Gun Control: The Debate and Public Policy" http://www.socialstudies.org/system/files/publications/se/6105/610502.html) GHS//GB

This classroom activity takes up a slightly different question from traditional gun control activities that pit opposing arguments regarding the rights of gun owners against gun control advocates. The central question is not whether gun control is "good" or "bad," but whether it is good policy. The lesson asks: "Can gun control laws reduce violence? If yes, which specific kinds of laws and language seem to have the best chance of being effective? If no, what other kinds of legal action can be taken to reduce gun violence?" Laws are the means to an end. Agreeing on a desirable end is the first step in making good public policy. But agreeing on the goal of reducing gun violence is much less difficult than agreeing on the best way to reach that goal. **Particularly when addressing complex social problems like gun violence, laws that use resources effectively and produce results without either abridging constitutional rights or having unexpected and undesirable consequences, are hard to craft. And it is not a job that can be left simply to politicians, the courts, and the police. Citizens must be willing to instigate and evaluate good laws, not simply to obey or ignore them.**

## 1ac – “bad”

### FW

#### I value morality.

#### Inquiry begins with the drive for some practical end—for example, I’m only concerned about creating a lamp when it’s dark—thought is based on response to problems.

Charles S. Peirce 1878 [philosopher], “How to Make Our Ideas Clear”, Popular Science Monthly 12, January 1878, BE

The principles set forth in the first part of this essay lead, at once, to a method of reaching a clearness of thought of higher grade than the "distinctness" of the logicians. It was there noticed that the action of thought is excited by the irritation of doubt, and ceases when belief is attained; so that the production of belief is the sole function of thought. All these words, however, are too strong for my purpose. It is as if I had described the phenomena as they appear under a mental microscope. Doubt and Belief, as the words are commonly employed, relate to religious or other grave discussions. But here I use them to designate the starting of any question, no matter how small or how great, and the resolution of it. If, for instance, in a horse-car, I pull out my purse and find a five-cent nickel and five coppers, I decide, while my hand is going to the purse, in which way I will pay my fare. To call such a question Doubt, and my decision Belief, is certainly to use words very disproportionate to the occasion. To speak of such a doubt as causing an irritation which needs to be appeased, suggests a temper which is uncomfortable to the verge of insanity. Yet, looking at the matter minutely, it must be admitted that, if there is the least hesitation as to whether I shall pay the five coppers or the nickel (as there will be sure to be, unless I act from some previously contracted habit in the matter), though irritation is too strong a word, yet I am excited to such small mental activity as may be necessary to deciding how I shall act. Most frequently doubts arise from some indecision, however momentary, in our action. Sometimes it is not so. I have, for example, to wait in a railway-station, and to pass the time I read the advertisements on the walls. I compare the advantages of different trains and different routes which I never expect to take, merely fancying myself to be in a state of hesitancy, because I am¶ bored with having nothing to trouble me. Feigned hesitancy, whether feigned for mere amusement or with a lofty purpose, plays a great part in the production of scientific inquiry. However the doubt may originate, it stimulates the mind to an activity which may be slight or energetic, calm or turbulent. Images pass rapidly through consciousness, one incessantly melting into another, until at last, when all is over -- it may be in a fraction of a second, in an hour, or after long years -- we find ourselves decided as to how we should act under such circumstances as those which occasioned our hesitation. In other words, we have attained belief.¶ In this process we observe two sorts of elements of consciousness, the distinction between which may best be made clear by means of an illustration. In a piece of music there are the separate notes, and there is the air. A single tone may be prolonged for an hour or a day, and it exists as perfectly in each second of that time as in the whole taken together; so that, as long as it is sounding, it might be present to a sense from which everything in the past was as completely absent as the future itself. But it is different with the air, the performance of which occupies a certain time, during the portions of which only portions of it are played. It consists in an orderliness in the succession of sounds which strike the ear at different times; and to perceive it there must be some continuity of consciousness which makes the events of a lapse of time present to us. We certainly only perceive the air by hearing the separate notes; yet we cannot be said to directly hear it, for we hear only what is present at the instant, and an orderliness of succession cannot exist in an instant. These two sorts of objects, what we are immediately conscious of and what we are mediately conscious of, are found in all consciousness. Some elements (the sensations) are completely present at every instant so long as they last, while others (like thought) are actions having beginning, middle, and end, and consist in a congruence in the succession of sensations which flow through the mind. They cannot be immediately present to us, but must cover some portion of the past or future. Thought is a thread of melody running through the succession of our sensations.¶ We may add that just as a piece of music may be written in parts, each part having its own air, so various systems of relationship of succession subsist together between the same sensations. These different systems are distinguished by having different motives, ideas, or functions. Thought is only one such system, for its sole motive, idea, and function is to produce belief, and whatever does not concern that purpose belongs to some other system of relations. The action of thinking may incidentally have other results; it may serve to amuse us, for example, and among dilettanti it is not rare to find those who have so perverted thought to the purposes of pleasure that it seems to vex them to think that the questions upon which they delight to exercise it may ever get finally¶ settled; and a positive discovery which takes a favorite subject out of the arena of literary debate is met with ill-concealed dislike. This disposition is the very debauchery of thought. But the soul and meaning of thought, abstracted from the other elements which accompany it, though it may be voluntarily thwarted, can never be made to direct itself toward anything but the production of belief. Thought in action has for its only possible motive the attainment of thought at rest; and whatever does not refer to belief is no part of the thought itself.¶ And what, then, is belief? It is the demi-cadence which closes a musical phrase in the symphony of our intellectual life. We have seen that it has just three properties: First, it is something that we are aware of; second, it appeases the irritation of doubt; and, third, it involves the establishment in our nature of a rule of action, or, say for short, a habit. As it appeases the irritation of doubt, which is the motive for thinking, thought relaxes, and comes to rest for a moment when belief is reached. But, since belief is a rule for action, the application of which involves further doubt and further thought, at the same time that it is a stopping-place, it is also a new starting-place for thought. That is why I have permitted myself to call it thought at rest, although thought is essentially an action. The final upshot of thinking is the exercise of volition, and of this thought no longer forms a part; but belief is only a stadium of mental action, an effect upon our nature due to thought, which will influence future thinking.¶ The essence of belief is the establishment of a habit; and different beliefs are distinguished by the different modes of action to which they give rise. If beliefs do not differ in this respect, if they appease the same doubt by producing the same rule of action, then no mere differences in the manner of consciousness of them can make them different beliefs, any more than playing a tune in different keys is playing different tunes. Imaginary distinctions are often drawn between beliefs which differ only in their mode of expression; -- the wrangling which ensues is real enough, however. To believe that any objects are arranged among themselves as in Fig. 1, and to believe that they are arranged in Fig. 2, are one and the same belief; yet it is conceivable that a man should assert one proposition and deny the other. Such false distinctions do as much harm as the confusion of beliefs really different, and are among the pitfalls of which we ought constantly to beware, especially when we are upon metaphysical ground. One singular deception of this sort, which often occurs, is to mistake the sensation produced by our own unclearness of thought for a character of the object we are thinking. Instead of perceiving that the obscurity is purely subjective, we fancy that we contemplate a quality of the object which is essentially mysterious; and if our conception be afterward presented to us in a clear form we do not recognize it as the same, owing to the absence of the feeling of unintelligibility. So long as this deception lasts, it¶ ￼￼¶ obviously puts an impassable barrier in the way of perspicuous thinking; so that it equally interests the opponents of rational thought to perpetuate it, and its adherents to guard against it.¶ Another such deception is to mistake a mere difference in the grammatical construction of two words for a distinction between the ideas they express. In this pedantic age, when the general mob of writers attend so much more to words than to things, this error is common enough. When I just said that thought is an action, and that it consists in a relation, although a person performs an action but not a relation, which can only be the result of an action, yet there was no inconsistency in what I said, but only a grammatical vagueness.¶ From all these sophisms we shall be perfectly safe so long as we reflect that the whole function of thought is to produce habits of action; and that whatever there is connected with a thought, but irrelevant to its purpose, is an accretion to it, but no part of it. If there be a unity among our sensations which has no reference to how we shall act on a given occasion, as when we listen to a piece of music, why we do not call that thinking. To develop its meaning, we have, therefore, simply to determine what habits it produces, for what a thing means is simply what habits it involves. Now, the identity of a habit depends on how it might lead us to act, not merely under such circumstances as are likely to arise, but under such as might possibly occur, no matter how improbable they may be. What the habit is depends on when and how it causes us to act. As for the when, every stimulus to action is derived from perception; as for the how, every purpose of action is to produce some sensible result. Thus, we come down to what is tangible and conceivably practical, as the root of every real distinction of thought, no matter how subtile it may be; and there is no distinction of meaning so fine as to consist in anything but a possible difference of practice.

#### Thus, rather than codified rules, practices must develop through habits that can be changed and revised.

Todd Lekan 3 [prof of phil @ Muskingum University], “Making Morality PRAGMATIST RECONSTRUCTION IN ETHICAL THEORY”, Vanderbilt University Press, 2003, BE

I begin with some commonplace observations about skilled expertise in practices. Any developed practice such as cooking or playing a musical instrument can only be successfully pursued by people who have internalized practical norms. Cooking a gourmet meal well requires years of training. Those educated in norms of cooking are able to interact skillfully with a practical context consisting of implements, tools, materials, and the like. An ex- pert cook sees ingredients as potential constituents of certain dishes. She sees tools as implements for certain tasks. The novice, when confronted with the same kitchen as the expert chef, does not see the situation in the same way because he lacks the relevant skills and knowledge required to prepare the meal. This brings me to the first important fact of practical life: skilled expertise involves a know-how that is not best represented as action resulting from judgments about rules. When one has acquired expertise, one transcends the use of rules and simply does what the situation calls for.8¶ The second fact of practical life is that activities change over time as a result of the solution of novel problems. In a quite straight- forward sense, the activity of cooking precedes the particular projects of an individual cook. Cooking is a tradition with a his- tory. Over time, new ways of doing things are discovered and old ways modified or rejected. This continual modification of the activity is the result of the trials and experimentation of particu- lar cooks. But it is also the result of other changes that indirectly modify the practice of cooking (e.g., electric ovens; food proces- sors; imported spices, fruits, and vegetables; etc.). The expert cook is able to frame problems and devise solutions in ways that go beyond existing practical knowledge. The problem solving of an expert cook advances and modifies the activity. That is, the ex- pert is able to modify the activity in significant ways unavailable to a novice (except, perhaps, by accident). These advances may be written down in a set of practical propositions, perhaps in a new cookbook. However, this general knowledge is always sub- ject to modification, revision, or reinterpretation in light of par- ticular circumstances.¶ The sheer complexity of practical life is a third fact that fol- lows close on the heels of the fact of novelty. The expert cook does not mechanically follow directions laid down in a textbook of cooking. She is able to modify, change, and further her practice through skilled execution. The pursuit of a complex enterprise such as cooking can never be encapsulated in a set of rules or directions. The considerations that go into practicing this art well are highly circumstantial: for example, What ingredient may be substituted for this dish? What sorts of people frequent this restaurant? What sorts of economic resources are available to purchase new equipment? The permutation of circumstances rel- evant to a cook’s particular judgments does not imply that her responses are arbitrary. Rather, it implies that the sort of skilled judgment or sense of propriety she must exercise can never be encapsulated in a code of propositions or rules.¶ So far I have focused on expertise, offering what we might think of as a brief phenomenology of salient facts about such expertise. Let’s briefly to turn to the novice. Notice that with re- spect to our three facts, know-how, novelty, and complexity, the novice’s actions are less fluid than the expert’s. The novice needs to engage in more reflective deliberation about her actions be- cause she does not have the skill to see things in ways that trig- ger immediate, appropriate response. She is not able to solve novel problems in such a way as to significantly modify the ac- tivity. The activity itself is novel to her. With respect to complex- ity, the basic skills, tasks, tools, and instruments that the expert can take for granted are experienced by the beginner as a bewil- dering array of foreign material.¶ From these facts about practical life we can infer a plausible conclusion about practical rules. Beliefs about such rules are usu- ally indispensable for the beginner. The novice uses such rules as guides for learning about what is important in some activity, es- pecially through a process of decomposing a practical endeavor into its component parts. Although it seems likely that assimilat- ing rules is often a necessary condition for development of skill in some activity, we can think of cases in which such assimila- tion is not required. Language use is a good case. One learns rules of grammar long after gaining a solid grasp of the language. In short, practical rules, for the novice, are usually necessary but far from sufficient for the successful assimilation of a skill or prac- tice.¶ Similar points can be made about the expert. From time to time the expert will need to fall back on beliefs about rules when she faces novel situations or problems. These practical rules are modified as novel problems are solved. However, intellectual grasp and application of practical rules are far from sufficient for displaying skilled expertise. The complexity of circumstances, the need for skilled know-how, and the novelty of problems all sup- port the hypothesis that practical rules are at best useful intellec- tual tools for efficient organization of practical life when we need to learn new things. Whether one is a novice or an expert, rules function to help us learn about our circumstances so that we may solve problems and reach new levels of mastery, efficiency, and control. Practical judgments and responses can never be com- pletely encoded in a set of rules or principles.¶ The fixed-end view of intentional action holds that practical knowledge is knowledge of how best to accomplish some end a person regards as good. The explanation of action turns on iden- tifying an end held as good and on certain key beliefs about how best to realize that end. The conclusion that I have reached thus far is that the beliefs about what is appropriate to do—beliefs about the relevant practical rules—play a limited role in struc- tured practices. Do similar points apply to intentional actions out- side structured practices? Take simple intentional actions such as flipping light switches, waving hello, turning on a faucet, open- ing a window, or flipping a yo-yo. It seems odd to say that these actions involve complex circumstances on the grounds that they cannot be codified in practical rules or that they sometimes re- quire creative improvisation. Why wouldn’t the fixed-end account be appropriate to explain these simple intentional actions?¶ Simple actions seem different from actions within structured practices because we tend to take for granted the complex back- ground required to make sense of even very simple bits of be- havior. Turning off a light switch may be further described in any number of ways, depending on the context.9 It may be “the first step in preparation for love-making,” “closing the act of a play,” “getting ready for bed,” “saving electricity,” and so forth. The best description in a given case may simply be, “This is the action a person does when entering and exiting rooms in her house.” But even so, such a description will be part of a larger network of assumptions about what she tends to do in her house.¶ Typically, we do not focus on the complex background of such simple acts. We engage in such analysis of simple acts when we have some concern or special purpose—usually when something has gone wrong. We may be interested in why the light switch was flipped when, for example, a stagehand misses a cue during a performance of a play. We may then set out to learn who flipped the switch and what that person took herself to be trying to do. When we do engage in such an analysis, we be- come aware of a complex background of assumptions needed to comprehend the meaning of a particular intentional act. This background is also needed to determine whether a particular act is intentional.¶ When I deny that intentional action is best explained in terms of beliefs about practical rules paired with accepted ends, I do not mean to deny that beliefs and accepted ends are in no way involved in intentional actions. The point is that belief-end pairs do not adequately explain what it is to have practical knowledge. The practical knowledge that figures in both first- and third-per- son explanations of intentional actions is better accounted for in terms of interpenetrating, shared habits. I turn now to the more adequate view of practical knowledge. A few preliminary words are in order.

#### The same is true for moral standards—they’re indistinct from nonmoral activities.

Todd Lekan 3 [prof of phil @ Muskingum University], “Making Morality PRAGMATIST RECONSTRUCTION IN ETHICAL THEORY”, Vanderbilt University Press, 2003, BE

Many philosophers maintain that moral considerations have a special authority that other practical considerations lack. Morality is a domain of important values that trump other kinds of values. Moral considerations have an authority that should weigh heavily in our practical deliberations. Pragmatism views the norms of morality as interpenetrating with other nonmoral norms. Thus, although moral norms do have a special importance, they do not comprise a domain of activity separate from the nonmoral activities and practices of communities. The pragmatist answer that I defend is that the authority of moral norms is grounded in the fact that they express responsibilities for important social ties and relationships. We find ourselves born into ties and relationships—morality is “built into” these. Grounding the authority of moral norms in contingent facts about the social nature of hu- man life might appear inadequate. After all, if moral claims ex- press “contingent truths” that might be otherwise, how can we maintain that they have a special “necessity” or “force”? Dewey has a neat reply to those who would complain that the mere fact that morality is a contingent part of human life does not answer the question of why we ought to take it seriously. Dewey argues that the same question could be asked with the same force for theories that view morality as transcendent of human practices. Dewey writes:¶ What claim have they [moral standards] upon us? In one sense, the question is unanswerable. In the same sense, however, the question is unanswerable whatever origin and sanction is ascribed to moral obligations and loyalties. Why attend to metaphysical and transcen- dental ideal realities even if we concede they are the authors of moral standards? Why do this act if I feel like doing something else? Any moral question may reduce itself to this question if we so choose.¶ But in an empirical sense the answer is simple. The authority is that of life. Why employ language, cultivate literature, acquire and de- velop science, sustain industry, and submit to the refinements of art? To ask these questions is equivalent to asking: Why live? And the only answer is that if one is going to live one must live a life of which these things form the substance. The only question having sense which can be asked is how we are going to use and be used by these things, not whether we are going to use them. Reason, moral principles cannot in any case be shoved behind these affairs, for reason and morality grow out of them. But they have grown into them as well. . . . In short, the choice is not between a moral au- thority outside of custom and one within it. It is between adopting more or less intelligent and significant customs.11¶ Now, the worry about “force” or “authority” of moral norms may not be so much about its metaphysical status as it is about hu- man failure to comply with, or respect, moral rules. A basic goal of moral education is to instill habits that insulate its students from decision problems. The pragmatist need not deny that fail- ure to follow moral rules is a reality with which any human com- munity must deal.¶ DEWEY’S THEORY OF DUTY¶ The reply just given to the skeptic’s “why” question is negative, challenging the questioner to admit that pragmatism is not espe- cially prone to its bite. However, pragmatism can offer positive suggestions about “authority.” The trick is to find an account of moral authority that does some justice to the supposed “force” behind moral rules yet also accommodates the pragmatist claim that in principle no moral rule should be immune to possible criticism. We can find much insight by taking a close look at Dewey’s theory of “right” in his 1932 Ethics. Dewey’s account of right is meant to capture what he regards as partially correct in- sights of deontological theories of obligation. Dewey thinks that deontology, consequentialism, and virtue ethics are all partial truths about ethics that need to be combined into one theory that includes “three independent factors of morals.” Although I agree with this value pluralism, I am not following Dewey’s own intent in focusing on the connection between obligation and so- cial relationships. Dewey seems to consign the connection to rela- tively well-developed relationships between individuals. My aim is to capture the authority of all moral requirements in terms of different kinds of relationships. With that caveat in mind, I turn more closely to his text.¶ Dewey holds that the “right” as a moral category should not be reduced away to arbitrary commands or desires. Nor should the “right” be thought of in reductively instrumental terms, as when we view all obligation claims as mere means to satisfy nar- row egoist desires. Rather, obligation claims arise out of, and re- inforce, relationships that contribute to basic interests. Dewey puts it this way: “Right, law, duty, arise from the relations which hu- man beings intimately sustain to one another, and their authori- tative force springs from the very nature of the relation that binds people together.”12¶ Obligations in general are built into norm-governed activi- ties that make possible various internal values and goods.13 People can use obligation claims to express judgments about the proper pursuit of a practice or activity. These obligation claims are tied to the very nature of the relationship at issue, so they do not need to be justified by reference to some property of obligation outside all relationships. Nor are these obligation claims the ar- bitrary expressions of will. Dewey writes, “A child may be sub- ject to demands from a parent which express nothing but the arbitrary wish of the latter, plus a power to make the child suffer if he does not conform. But the claims and demands to which a child is subject need not proceed from arbitrary will; they may issue from the very nature of family life in the relation which exists between parent and offspring.”14 He goes on to say later, “The duties which express these relations are intrinsic to the situ- ation, not enforced from without. The one who becomes a par- ent assumes by that very fact certain responsibilities. Even if he feels these to be a burden and seeks to escape from them, he flees something which is part of himself and not from something imposed by external force.”15

#### Intelligent revision of our beliefs requires us to test our moral principles in real-life experiments.

Elizabeth Anderson 14 [UMich chair of philosophy dept, pragmatist], “The Quest for Free Labor Pragmatism and Experiments in Emancipation”, The Amherst Lecture in Philosophy, Lecture 9, 2014, BE

I shall explore these questions from a pragmatist point of view. Pragmatists such as John Dewey argue that we should replace the quest for a foundational principle of moral rightness (such as the Golden Rule, the Categorical Imperative, or the Principle of Utility) with methods of intelligently updating our current moral beliefs. Some of these methods – such as testing moral claims for consistency, raising intuitive counterexamples to proposed moral principles, drawing conceptual distinctions to better track normative intuitions, and running thought experiments – are among those already found in the standard toolbox of moral philosophers working in a priori mode. However, pragmatists stress the importance of other methods that require empirical inquiry and practical action. A key reason for this is that, while we cannot do without moral intuitions, they can also be biased, apt only for by- gone circumstances, or otherwise poor guides to present action. From a naturalistic point of view, moral intuitions are largely, but not wholly, the felt awareness of internalized, socially instituted moral norms and habits. They therefore tend to embody both the wisdom and the limitations of their origins. We need methods to improve our intuitions, not only to ratio- nalize them by means of an internally coherent set of abstract moral principles. Proslavery thinkers had plenty of arguments to rationalize their proslavery intuitions.¶ Pragmatists offer two broad strategies for intelligently updating our moral principles. First, we can figure out ways to counteract the operation of systematic biases in moral think- ing. For example, we know that, in judging questions of justice in which they are interested parties, individuals tend to be biased in favor of their own self-interest. A classic practical way to counteract this bias in real cases is to ask an impartial judge to adjudicate interper- sonal claims of justice. While this method is far from perfect, since judges may have identity- based, ideological, or other biases, it at least helps to block biases of purely personal favorit- ism from affecting judgments of justice in particular cases.¶ Because individuals occupy different social positions, are affected by different circum- stances, and have distinct personal experiences, educational backgrounds, temperaments, personal histories, skills and habits, they are liable to vary somewhat in their biases. These interpersonal differences can be turned into epistemic resources if societies open up their processes of moral inquiry to wide participation. The biases of some can check those of oth- ers, if social practices enable this.4 John Dewey argued that democracy, considered in its broadest sense as a cultural practice of wide participation in inquiry into the solutions of problems faced by society, offered the most effective means of improving moral and political practices.5¶ The second broad pragmatist strategy for intelligently updating our moral principles is to test them in experiments in living. The moral principles in question are practical prin- ciples, embodied in social practices. We can test our moral principles by putting them into practice and seeing whether we can live with the results. More precisely, pragmatism inter- prets moral norms as attempted solutions to practical problems that involve calling upon the cooperation and assistance of others.6 When we put them into practice, we can determine whether they solve the problem they were supposed to solve, with acceptable side effects. The assessment of moral principles thus begins with an instrumental evaluation. But it does not end there. As we gain experience of the effects of a practical implementation of a moral principle, we may come to revise our conception of the problem that needs to be solved. For example, we may add an expectation that the solution enable us to cope with or avoid certain side effects. Or experience with a new practice may enable us to envision new and potentially better ways of life than were imagined or thought feasible before it was imple- mented. This may lead to a more expansive view of the problem to be solved, and a more ambitious ideal of what would solve it.

#### Thus, the standard is engaging pragmatically oriented experimentation, which means using the best ways of testing moral hypotheses to intelligently update our beliefs.

#### Prefer it additionally

#### 1] Appeal to universal principles without revision and learning is regressive, which pragmatism avoids.

Todd Lekan 3 [prof of phil @ Muskingum University], “Making Morality PRAGMATIST RECONSTRUCTION IN ETHICAL THEORY”, Vanderbilt University Press, 2003, BE

The pragmatist model of deliberative events questions this division between application and justification. The division is yet another example of the fixed-end view of justificatory structure, applied now to moral judgment. We have general principles that are justified in some special way. These are held fixed antecedently to deliberation. The task of moral judgment is to discern the particulars of the situation so as to determine whether or not a principle applies. The pragmatist response to this model is that at best it represents settled cases where routinized procedures are deployed with relative ease. However, the model does not adequately account for the learning that goes on when the situation itself is indeterminate—when established norms fail us. I want to turn now to a closer look at Onora O’Neill’s efforts to de- velop a neo-Kantian model of moral judgment, which, I argue, makes an untenable separation between justification and appli- cation.¶ Recent work in Kantian ethics has shown that it is possible to develop a more nuanced view of moral judgment than that usually attributed to Kant’s approach. Kantian ethics is frequently attacked for being overly rigid in its account of absolute rules that block the more nuanced responses needed in the thick of ambiguous and vexing moral problems. Kant’s own application of his categorical imperative supports the objection. One need only consider his absolute prohibition against lying, even if do- ing so will save a life. Nevertheless, with careful attention to ev- erything Kant has to say, neo-Kantians can make a good case for the suggestion that the categorical imperative does not in- volve, strictly speaking, the application of a principle to concrete situations. Some neo-Kantians claim that there is a place for non- rule-governed judgment at the level of the formulation of the maxims that are tested by the categorical imperative procedure. The idea in rough is that prior to testing maxims of action we must judge the morally salient facts of the case in order to con- struct the maxim. Such judgment is not itself a matter of apply- ing moral principles or even of using Kant’s categorical testing procedure. Principles are indeterminate. They alone cannot tell us what to do. At some point in deliberation we must judge that this case must be subsumed under some principle P.¶ The argument for the necessity of non-rule-governed judg- ment is simple. When I am faced with the need to decide whether the principle that says “if any act is one of lying, then that act ought not be done” applies to some action that I am consider- ing, I cannot make this decision by reference to a principle on pain of infinite regress. That is, I must first recognize the action as falling under the appropriate description “lying,” and only then can I determine that it violates some more general moral principle, thus yielding the particular moral judgment that this ac- tion ought not be done.3 The point here is that the judgment or perception of this case as being one of lying—as falling under that general moral principle—is not itself an application of a moral rule. Assume, for a moment, that it is. Then my recognition that an action A is an instance of some general principle P must be decided by reference to some principle P’ that indicates that ac- tions of this type fall under P. But then, how do I know that P’ applies to this case? On the basis of our initial assumption, this can only be determined by reference to some other principle P’’ that indicates that P’ applies to those cases in which P applies to A and so on ad infinitum. The point is that we cannot rely on moral rules to escape “judgment.” The very claim that we should rely on these rules (as opposed to any of the other myriad rules that might apply to this case) shows that judgment has been made. O’Neill illustrates this idea of non-rule-determined judgment by way of Kant’s notion of “reflective judgment.” She says, “The situation of agents is in the first place one that requires reflective judgment: Only when an account or description of a particular case has been given—only when a process of reflection has pro- duced an appraisal of the case—can principles be applied and a solution sought.”4 O’Neill draws on some remarks from Kant’s Critique of Judgment to show that Kant’s moral theory is not un- duly rigid. That is, we need not read Kant as believing that his categorical imperative provides us with some sort of algorithmic decision procedure for determining moral obligation. Rather, Kant recognizes that moral principles are of themselves indeter- minate with respect to their application in a specific situation. People need to develop a kind of perceptive skill in noticing the¶ relevant features of situations.¶ Notice that O’Neill claims that first a person must “appraise”¶ or “reflectively judge” a situation, and then principles can be ap- plied so as to arrive at a solution of what one morally should do. Another way of putting this point is that “without minor pre- mises reasoning cannot be practical,”5 meaning that we must ex- ercise judgment about the particular situation (minor premise) in order to determine whether some general moral principle (ma- jor premise) is applicable in guiding action in some situation. This judgment cannot itself be an application of a rule, for the rea- sons just given in the regress argument.¶ For O’Neill, there are two basic phases of practical delibera- tion: (1) that of appraising or reflectively judging a situation and (2) that of applying principles to the situation described or judged in order to come to some decision about the rightness or wrong- ness of an action. One of O’Neill’s aims is to argue against Wittgensteinian writers who believe that moral reflection should be centered on examining “what we want to say” about various hy- pothetical examples (usually drawn from literature). She—I think rightly—points out that the Wittgensteinians, by focusing on ex- amples whose moral significance has more or less already been¶ assumed, fail to account for the fact that oftentimes our difficul- ties lie precisely in determining what sort of case it is that we are dealing with. Is this case one in which the relevant description is that of a person (doctor) killing another (a patient), or is it one in which someone is serving a client’s requests in an appropriate way? Is the case one in which a person is lying to a friend or one in which she is helping to build a friend’s confidence? In short there are myriad ways one might describe a case, and sometimes there are controversial and conflicting accounts of what sort of classification is appropriate. A good example of such deep con- flict can be found in the debate over abortion. Some describe the case as “the murder of a baby”; others describe it as “a woman’s decision to abort unwanted fetal tissue.”¶ As has been mentioned, O’Neill points to Kant’s Third Cri- tique in order to develop an account of judgment that will do justice to it. Although Kant believes that reflective judgment is not determined by rules, we can adopt what O’Neill calls “strat- egies of judgment” and what Kant calls some “maxims of reflec- tive judgment” to help guide deliberators in their construal or description of the situation. These are “regulative principles.” Kant suggests three: seeking consistency in our judgments, en- larging our thought/attempting to take the standpoint of others, and thinking for oneself.6¶ I have no quarrel with these Kantian regulative principles. Instead I want to examine the claim that ethical deliberators first construe a case and then bring principles to bear in order to ren- der some decision or particular moral judgment. One way of in- terpreting this claim is that in any piece of ethical deliberation we need first to determine the facts of the case before applying norms or moral principles. One might be tempted to make this claim partly on the grounds that the semantic content of any moral principle has a descriptive part. A moral principle like “if any action is one of lying, then that action is forbidden” includes within it a descriptive meaning governed by general semantic rules that enable us to refer descriptively to those actions that are lies.¶ The problem with this last move is that we are not here deal-¶ ing with the semantics of moral terms but with the psychological processes by which deliberators come to see that a bit of moral discourse applies in a certain way. Appeal to “meaning rules” is of no help here for much the same reason that the application conditions of a rule cannot themselves be applied by rules.¶ Furthermore, the description of a case already involves the mobilization of moral or normative considerations. That is to say, it is already a moral achievement (as opposed to simply a cogni- tive achievement) for a person to recognize the moral salience of the features of a case. O’Neill herself admits that the power of judgment that deliberators develop in order to construe cases is a power of moral judgment. That is to say, we are talking about a moral construal (or description) of a case here. But since this construal is guided by moral norms, we need to ask in what sense it is correct to view deliberation as involving two distinct steps: (1) construing the case and (2) applying a moral principle. What would be left for practical reason to do after the case has been construed? After all, if our construal of a case already presup- poses that we classify the case as having morally salient features of a certain sort, then haven’t we already applied a certain set of moral principles P1 . . . Pn? Or if we haven’t literally brought them out explicitly as applicable to this case, aren’t they at least presupposed in our construal?¶ The question is, What is left to test after a case has been con- strued by judgment? That is, once we have formulated a descrip- tion of the case as “a patient is suffering and requests that life support be ceased,” which includes such moral considerations as the “rightness of preventing unnecessary suffering” and the “right- ness of respecting the autonomy of people by honoring their wishes,” one wonders whether there is any further step that in- volves the application of principles. Perhaps what an O’Neillian Kantian would say is that once we have made out the case by making clear these moral principles, we go on to test these sa- lient moral features of the case by the categorical imperative test- ing procedure. This suggests that what is actually tested by the categorical imperative are general maxim types (e.g., maxims that include the consideration of unnecessary suffering, the making¶ of a promise, and so on). But if this is the case, it would seem that the categorical imperative procedure would be used to test not the specific maxims of a case but rather the general features of specific maxims. Furthermore, such testing would presumably already be done prior to any deliberation. That is, we would al- ready know what the general moral considerations are that could be willed universally. The only task for deliberation would be to see what considerations are relevant to just this maxim made out in just this case and this would not be decided by the categorical imperative.7¶ We have just seen how this interpretation suggests that the categorical imperative really does no work in testing a particular maxim after the maxim has been made out. But it might be thought (as O’Neill briefly suggests) that the moral principles that could pass the categorical imperative test are employed to help construe the case. We have already granted the primacy of judg- ment as an activity that, although perhaps guided by principles of both a more regulative sort (such as thinking from a broad- minded perspective) and a more substantive sort (such as tell the truth or do not cause unnecessary suffering), can only subsume particular cases under these general principles via an act of judg- ment. But granting this already moves our account of ethical judg- ment beyond the model that says we must first construe a case and then apply pre-established indeterminate moral principles.¶ The view that we must reject is that moral judgment involves a mental act that first identifies nonmoral properties and then adds moral predicates to these properties. We should reject the idea that any moral judgment is composed of two separated fac- tors, the nonmoral property that a person might believe to be present in a certain situation and the value predicate that is hitched to the factual property identified in the descriptive predi- cate.8¶ In my view this “peeling” of the evaluative from the cogni- tive is distorting. Recognizing a situation as consisting of some set of important facts relevant to a moral judgment requires at least a tacit evaluation that these facts are relevant. Describing the situation as one in which pain occurs is already a description¶ offered by an agent concerned with noticing such features. And this concern reflects a moral ability—an ability to take certain features as salient and worth noticing in the first place. One might regard the pain of another without moral concern. One could simply note that the person is in pain, perhaps giving an account of the physical state that instantiates the pain state. But the fact that we can so regard the pain of another is no objection to the point that I am making here. After all, a criticism of such disre- gard implies that we notice a failure to take a fact as relevant that ought to be relevant. I do not want to suggest that we are always right about the ways in which we regard the situation. Nor do I deny that through discussion and critical accounting we might be able to improve our responses to and judgments about relevant features of situations. This is just to admit that fallibility.¶ The fact that our descriptions are guided by evaluative con- siderations is illuminated by our account of norms as resident in activities and practices. Learning norms involves learning the proper identification and description of a practice or activity. Identifying the kind of situation we are in implies already identi- fying what sorts of response are appropriate or proper. Con- versely, identifying what sort of responses are appropriate or proper involves identifying what kind of situation we are in. As Thomas Green puts it in reference to Will’s view that norms are “resident in practices,”¶ This fittingness of conduct to setting is often negotiated simply by recognizing what activity it is in which we are engaged. Recogniz- ing the difference between norms of school and home is largely iden- tical with learning what it means to say that this (the place where one is) just is the school, the family, or the church. It is pretty much identical with such things as being able to say that we are now not simply tossing the ball, but playing baseball, that we are not now simply stacking stone, but laying a dry-wall.9

#### 2] Exclusive focus on pleasure and pain is impossible and ignores inquiry.

Elizabeth Anderson 14, "Dewey's Moral Philosophy", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), BE

Hedonism supposes that the value of acts can be reduced to the quantity of pleasure and pain they produce. Estimating such values requires that we be able to break down the pleasures and pains of different activities and experiences into simple identical units, and then sum them up again. This theoretical demand outruns the holistic and complex character of our experiences of pleasure and pain (LJP 40–1). In fact, pleasures and pains in reflective individuals are inextricably bound up with what Dewey called “ideational” factors — that is, with articulate conceptions of what they are taking pleasure in. They are therefore not pure sensory units but already contain elements of judgment or appraisal. Critical among these are considerations of the consequences of prizing certain things for one's own moral character. Since we form our character by cultivating habits of valuing some things over others, and we prize and appraise character itself, we cannot simply take current pleasures as given (E 193–4; LJP 41–2). Good and bad people take pleasure in different things. Such facts can give us reason to cultivate different tastes from those we currently have.¶ Although hedonism fails as a theory that gives us a fixed end, it does contain a methodological insight. Nothing is good that cannot be desired. All desire contains an element of enjoyment or liking. Hence, pleasure can be seen as a sign of the good, as evidence of what is valuable. Nevertheless, what makes desire a sound guide to the good is the fact that it incorporates foresight and reflection on the wider consequences of acting on it, not just that it incorporates a liking of its object (E 195–6).¶ Ideal or objective list theories attempt to harmonize conflicting desires not, as hedonism does, by reducing them all to a common denominator, but by systematically fitting them together into an ideal or plan of life. Dewey argued that people construct ideals that make sense in view of their particular social circumstances. For example, ideals of material or political advancement make sense of the strivings of business people and politicians. Such ideals have, at best, only contextual validity and cannot be prescribed as fixed ends for all people. There can no more be a single best way of life than there can be an ideal house for all times and places. To suppose that there is forecloses the possibility of imagination inventing something even better. Yet, ideals serve a highly important function for individuals, if they are considered as hypotheses about how one should live that one can test in experiences of living in accordance with them. So understood, ideals are tools for discovering evidence about the good (LE 59–68, 229–30; E 185, 189–91, 202–210).¶ Informed desire theories of the good, which define the good in terms of what an individual would desire if fully informed, come closest to Dewey's own account of the good. Dewey spoke of the good as the object of desires of which we approve in calm, informed reflection (E 208, 212). Yet Dewey's aims differ from that of most of today's informed desire theorists. The latter tend to accept as fixed the character of the individual whose good is being judged, and alter only the individual's cognitive capacities and beliefs so as to read off the good for the individual from what his cognitively enhanced self wants. This commits the same error that Dewey charged against hedonism, of omitting critical appraisal of one's own character as an important factor in determining what one ought to desire. In identifying the good with the objects of approved desires, Dewey highlighted the importance of character to identifying the good. Before we can endorse a desire, we need to ask whether we, or an impartial observer, could approve of someone who had it (E 239–47). The good is what good people — those possessing foresight and wide sympathies — desire. Dewey also resisted the conversion of a method of inquiry into a fixed criterion of value. There is never an end to inquiry — no such thing as complete information — because circumstances are always changing and imagination constructs new possibilities for living (E 213). Nor does the projection of desires we would have if we reached an end to inquiry offer a recognizable vision of human life. Fully informed people do not desire more information. But education, inquiry, and individual development in light of new discoveries are constitutive goods of human life. The desire to skip to the end to see what is ultimately valuable is a desire to skip human life, as if the process of learning through living were merely a means and not prized in itself (HNC 194–202). What, in light of inquiry, we reflectively desire, and approve of desiring, is evidence of what is good. But it is always defeasible in light of further inquiry.

### Contention 1 – Experimentation

#### Opposition to handgun bans is biased by symbolic racism and males disproportionately oppose gun control.

Walter Forrest et al. 13 [Behavioural Studies, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia] and Kerry O’Brien [Behavioural Studies, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia, School of Psychological Sciences, University of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom] and Dermot Lynott [Department of Psychology, Lancaster University, Lancaster, United Kingdom] and Michael Daly [Institute of Sociomanagement, University of Stirling, Stirling, Scotland, United Kingdom], “Racism, Gun Ownership and Gun Control: Biased Attitudes in US Whites May Influence Policy Decisions”, PLOS One, 31 Oct 2013, BE

Conservative ideology was also significantly related to stronger support for permits to carry concealed handguns after adjusting for other explanatory variables. Similarly, stronger republican identification, being from a southern state, and anti-government sentiment were associated with opposition to gun-control policies, but not with having a gun in the home. With the exception of sex, and to a much lesser extent education, demographic variables were not related to having a gun in the home or opposition to gun controls. Although sex was unrelated to having a gun in the home, there were greater odds of males being opposed to banning handguns in the home, and being supportive of permits to carry concealed handguns, than for females. This result is consistent with other US data showing that white males display the most opposition to gun control, and greater support for liberalisation of gun laws [3]. Higher education levels were associated with lower odds of having a gun in the home, but not with the gun control outcomes. This finding mirrors national data on gun ownership and support for gun control policies [3], which also shows a poor and mixed relationship between income and age, and gun ownership.¶ In correlation analyses, greater race IAT scores were weakly associated with greater symbolic racism scores, and with the black violent stereotype. Higher IAT scores were not related to gun ownership and gun control in full models. Higher scores on black violent stereotyping were not related to any of the gun-related outcomes; the univariate relationship between black violent stereotyping and greater support for concealed handgun permits was explained by other variables.¶ Discussion¶ Opposition to gun control in US whites is somewhat paradoxical given the statistics on gun-related deaths, and such opposition may be undermining the public health of all US citizens. This study examined for the first time whether racism is related to gun ownership and the opposition to gun control in US whites. The results support the hypothesis by showing that greater symbolic racism is related to increased odds of having a gun in the home and greater opposition to gun control, after accounting for all other explanatory variables.¶ It is particularly noteworthy that the relationship between symbolic racism and the gun-related outcomes was maintained in the presence of conservative ideologies, political affiliation, opposition to government control, and being from a southern state, which are otherwise strong predictors of gun ownership and opposition to gun reform. Contrary to research showing associations between implicit racism and policy decision making [23], we did not find implicit racism to be significantly related to gun related outcomes after accounting for other variables. Similarly, the small correlations between the stereotype that most blacks being violent and gun outcomes were not significant after accounting for all other variables.¶ There are several possible reasons for the absence of multivariate associations between the stereotype of blacks as violent and race-IAT, and gun outcomes. There is considerable debate in the field regards the validity and predictive qualities of implicit measures with critical reviews and reanalyses showing weak or no association between implicit and explicit measures, and outcomes [39], [40]. Others demonstrate that non-attitudinal factors, such as, stimuli familiarity, cognitive ability, and fear of appearing racist also account for individual differences in IAT scores, that may in turn affect associations with outcome variables [39]–[43]. The implicit association test is also a conceptually difficult task for some to learn, and particularly the brief race-IAT used in the ANES which restricts training on this computerized measure [41]. Given the mean D score for the ANES race-IAT (.17) is more than twice as small as from any other studies, including one in medical doctors [44], it is also possible that participants may not have completed this complex computerized task correctly. Other authors have noted this problem with the ANES race-IAT data [45].¶ There are two plausible reasons for the blacks as violent stereotype not accounting for significant variance in multivariate models. First, the stereotype appears to be subsumed by symbolic racism. Table 4 shows that the black violent stereotype has its strongest relationship with symbolic racism (r = .24), and only weak relationships with other variables (rs = .06–.09). Thus, the association between the black violent stereotype and gun outcomes may be explained through its association with symbolic racism which captures negative affect towards blacks (e.g., fear, unease, hostility). Alternatively, because the black violent stereotype is a quite blatant measure, participants may have been reluctant to endorse a clearly negative view of blacks in order to avoid appearing racist. In support of this notion, only 10% of participants strongly endorsed the statement that most blacks could be described as violent, with a mean score of 2.2 on the 5-point scale, compared to a mean score of 3.5 for symbolic racism on a 5-point scale.¶ There are potential limitations that should be noted. The item assessing having a gun in the home does not establish that the respondent is the owner or user of that gun. This observation is born out in the absence of a sex difference to this question. Males typically have a higher rate of gun ownership than females [3]. Similarly, the gun control policy items do not assess opposition/support for assault weapons, which has been a particular focus of attention during recent gun debates in the US. Nonetheless, symbolic racism might also, quite reasonably, be related to opposition to broader gun control measures (banning assault weapons, and gun clips containing more than 10 rounds), which may or may not be effective in reducing firearms related deaths. However, although the ANES only asked participants whether there was a gun in the home, best available evidence suggests that merely having a gun in the home is associated with a marked increase in the odds of one of the members of that home dying from suicide or homicide [6], [7].¶ Another potential limitation is the focus on white US adults as it is possible that other US racial groups may display similar pattern of results. However, given that whites oppose gun reforms to a considerably greater extent than do blacks, or indeed any other non-white racial group, that whites are also the single largest (>70%) ethnic grouping in the US, and that symbolic racism in whites is related to numerous outcomes, the focus of the study on whites seems appropriate [3]. Indeed, in a sub-analysis of the black sample from the ANES panel study, we found that none of the variables reported in models for white participants were significantly related to any of the gun-related outcomes for blacks. Finally, the correlational nature of the study clearly prohibits causal inferences. While a view that racism underpins gun-related attitudes is plausible and supported by evidence on other race-related policy decisions [18], [23], it could be argued that there are other plausible but unmeasured variables that could explain the pattern of relationships we find here. Similarly, simply owning a firearm may lead whites to develop more negative attitudes towards blacks. There is some experimental research showing that participants who have recently held a firearm produce enhanced salivary testosterone levels and display increased aggression toward others [46]. Causality aside, greater control of firearms is the most logical direction for public health policy.¶ Notwithstanding these limitations, the results indicate that symbolic racism is associated with gun-related attitudes and behaviours in US whites. The statistics on firearm-related suicides and homicides in the US might reasonably be expected to convince US citizens that action on reducing gun ownership and use would be beneficial to their health. Yet, US whites oppose strong gun reform more than all other racial groups, despite a much greater likelihood that whites will kill themselves with their guns (suicide), than be killed by someone else [1]. Black-on-black homicide rates would benefit most from gun reform, and, quite logically, blacks support these reforms even if whites do not [3], [47]. Symbolic racism appears to play a role in explaining gun ownership and paradoxical attitudes to gun control in US whites. In other words, despite certain policy changes potentially benefitting whites, anti-black prejudice leads people to oppose their implementation. This finding is consistent with previous research showing that symbolic racism is associated with opposition to US policies that may benefit blacks, and support for policies that disadvantage blacks, and critically, goes beyond what is explained by other important confounders.

#### Experimentation with controversial policies is key to adequately revise moral beliefs.

John Dewey 31 [American philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer whose ideas have been influential in education and social reform], “Social Science and Social Control (1931)”, *The Essential Dewey Volume I: Pragmatism, Education, Democracy*, Edited by Larry A. Hickman and Thomas M. Alexander, Indiana University Press, 1998, BE

The point I am making may be summed up by saying that it is a complete error to suppose that efforts at social control depend upon the prior existence of a social science. The reverse is the case. The building up of social science, that is, of a body of knowledge in which facts are ascertained in their significant relations, is dependent upon putting social planning into effect. It is at this point that the misconception about physical science, when it is taken as a model for social knowledge, is important. Physical science did not develop because inquirers piled up a mass of facts about observed phenomena. It came into being when men [people] intentionally experimented, on the basis of ideas and hypotheses, with observed phenomena to modify them and dis- close new observations. This process is self- corrective and self-developing. Imperfect and even wrong hypotheses, when acted upon, brought to light significant phenomena which made improved ideas and improved experimentations possible. The change from a passive and accumulative attitude into an active and productive one is the secret revealed by the progress of physical inquiry. Men obtained knowledge of natural energies by trying deliberately to control the conditions of their operation. The result was knowledge, and then control on a larger scale by the application of what was learned.

#### Reliable experiments must attempt to counteract our moral biases.

Elizabeth Anderson 15 [UMich chair of philosophy dept, pragmatist], “Moral Bias and Corrective Practices: A Pragmatist Perspective”, presidential address delivered at the one hundred twelfth Central Division meeting of the American Philosophical Association on 20 Feb 2015, BE

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.

### Contention 2 – Democracy

#### The mere existence of privately owned guns is a means of shutting down democratic deliberation.

FIRMIN DEBRABANDER 12 [associate professor of philosophy at the Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore and the author of “Spinoza and the Stoics”], “The Freedom of an Armed Society”, NY Times, 16 Dec 2012, BE

Individual gun ownership — and gun violence — has long been a distinctive feature of American society, setting us apart from the other industrialized democracies of the world. Recent legislative developments, however, are progressively bringing guns out of the private domain, with the ultimate aim of enshrining them in public life. Indeed, the N.R.A. strives for a day when the open carry of powerful weapons might be normal, a fixture even, of any visit to the coffee shop or grocery store — or classroom.¶ As N.R.A. president Wayne LaPierre expressed in a recent statement on the organization’s Web site, more guns equal more safety, by their account. A favorite gun rights saying is “an armed society is a polite society.” If we allow ever more people to be armed, at any time, in any place, this will provide a powerful deterrent to potential criminals. Or if more citizens were armed — like principals and teachers in the classroom, for example — they could halt senseless shootings ahead of time, or at least early on, and save society a lot of heartache and bloodshed.¶ As ever more people are armed in public, however — even brandishing weapons on the street — this is no longer recognizable as a civil society. Freedom is vanished at that point.¶ And yet, gun rights advocates famously maintain that individual gun ownership, even of high caliber weapons, is the defining mark of our freedom as such, and the ultimate guarantee of our enduring liberty. Deeper reflection on their argument exposes basic fallacies.¶ In her book “The Human Condition,” the philosopher Hannah Arendt states that “violence is mute.” According to Arendt, speech dominates and distinguishes the polis, the highest form of human association, which is devoted to the freedom and equality of its component members. Violence — and the threat of it — is a pre-political manner of communication and control, characteristic of undemocratic organizations and hierarchical relationships. For the ancient Athenians who practiced an incipient, albeit limited form of democracy (one that we surely aim to surpass), violence was characteristic of the master-slave relationship, not that of free citizens.¶ This becomes clear if only you pry a little more deeply into the N.R.A.’s logic behind an armed society. An armed society is polite, by their thinking, precisely because guns would compel everyone to tamp down eccentric behavior, and refrain from actions that might seem threatening. The suggestion is that guns liberally interspersed throughout society would cause us all to walk gingerly — not make any sudden, unexpected moves — and watch what we say, how we act, whom we might offend.¶ As our Constitution provides, however, liberty entails precisely the freedom to be reckless, within limits, also the freedom to insult and offend as the case may be. The Supreme Court has repeatedly upheld our right to experiment in offensive language and ideas, and in some cases, offensive action and speech. Such experimentation is inherent to our freedom as such. But guns by their nature do not mix with this experiment — they don’t mix with taking offense. They are combustible ingredients in assembly and speech.¶ I often think of the armed protestor who showed up to one of the famously raucous town hall hearings on Obamacare in the summer of 2009. The media was very worked up over this man, who bore a sign that invoked a famous quote of Thomas Jefferson, accusing the president of tyranny. But no one engaged him at the protest; no one dared approach him even, for discussion or debate — though this was a town hall meeting, intended for just such purposes. Such is the effect of guns on speech — and assembly. Like it or not, they transform the bearer, and end the conversation in some fundamental way. They announce that the conversation is not completely unbounded, unfettered and free; there is or can be a limit to negotiation and debate — definitively.¶ The very power and possibility of free speech and assembly rests on their non-violence. The power of the Occupy Wall Street movement, as well as the Arab Spring protests, stemmed precisely from their non-violent nature. This power was made evident by the ferocity of government response to the Occupy movement. Occupy protestors across the country were increasingly confronted by police in military style garb and affect.¶ Imagine what this would have looked like had the protestors been armed: in the face of the New York Police Department assault on Zuccotti Park, there might have been armed insurrection in the streets. The non-violent nature of protest in this country ensures that it can occur.

#### Democracy is an important form of inquiry and experimentation.

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This way of viewing the desirability of democracy is instrumental and minimal; instrumental, in that the desirability of democracy derives from its protecting the interests of each individual against the depredations of an elite class, and minimal, in that the rationale for popular participation is limited to the need for the elite to be informed where the shoe pinches, if its policies are not to be misguided. Dewey deepens this minimal and instrumental justification by taking democracy to be a form of social inquiry: Democracy as public discussion is viewed as the best way of dealing with the conflict of interests in a society: ‘The method of democracy – inasfar as it is that of organized intelligence – is to bring these conflicts out into the open where their special claims can be discussed and judged in the light of more inclusive interests than are represented by either of them separately’ (Liberalism and Social Action, LW11, 56). Democratic societies are thought of as both seeking to attain desirable goals, and arguing over how to do so, and also as arguing over what a desirable goal is. In other words, democratic politics is not simply a channel through which we can assert our interests (as it is for the first argument), but a forum or mode of activity in which we can arrive at a conception of what our interests are. As the experimentalist conception of inquiry insists, this does not imply that we need a priori criteria in order to establish if this process has been successful. Rather, criteria for what counts as a satisfactory solution may be hammered out in the process of searching for one. Democracy is experimental for Dewey in that it allows, or should allow, a profound questioning of the idées fixes of the established order, even if, of course, much democratic politics will not take the form of such questioning.

### Underview

#### Particularism is good—root cause claims and focus on overarching structures ignore application to material injustice.

Gregory Fernando Pappas 16 [Texas A&M University] “The Pragmatists’ Approach to Injustice”, The Pluralist Volume 11, Number 1, Spring 2016, BE

The pragmatists’ approach should be distinguished from nonideal theories whose starting point seems to be the injustices of society at large that have a history and persist through time, where the task of political philosophy is to detect and diagnose the presence of these historical injustices in particular situations of injustice. For example, critical theory today has inherited an approach to social philosophy characteristic of the European tradition that goes back to Rousseau, Marx, Weber, Freud, Marcuse, and others. Accord- ing to Roberto Frega, this tradition takes society to be “intrinsically sick” with a malaise that requires adopting a critical historical stance in order to understand how the systematic sickness affects present social situations. In other words, this approach assumes that¶ a philosophical critique of specific social situations can be accomplished only under the assumption of a broader and full blown critique of soci- ety in its entirety: as a critique of capitalism, of modernity, of western civilization, of rationality itself. The idea of social pathology becomes intelligible only against the background of a philosophy of history or of an anthropology of decline, according to which the distortions of actual social life are but the inevitable consequence of longstanding historical processes. (“Between Pragmatism and Critical Theory” 63)¶ However, this particular approach to injustice is not limited to critical theory. It is present in those Latin American and African American political philosophies that have used and transformed the critical intellectual tools of ¶ critical theory to deal with the problems of injustice in the Americas. For instance, Charles W. Mills claims that the starting point and alternative to the abstractions of ideal theory that masked injustices is to diagnose and rectify a history of an illness—the legacy of white supremacy in our actual society.11 The critical task of revealing this illness is achieved by adopting a historical perspective where the injustices of today are part of a larger historical narrative about the development of modern societies that goes back to how Europeans have progressively dehumanized or subordinated others. Similary, radical feminists as well as Third World scholars, as reaction to the hege- monic Eurocentric paradigms that disguise injustices under the assumption of a universal or objective point of view, have stressed how our knowledge is always situated. This may seem congenial with pragmatism except the locus of the knower and of injustices is often described as power structures located in “global hierarchies” and a “world-system” and not situations.12¶ Pragmatism only questions that we live in History or a “World-System” (as a totality or abstract context) but not that we are in history (lowercase): in a present situation continuous with others where the past weighs heavily in our memories, bodies, habits, structures, and communities. It also does not deny the importance of power structures and seeing the connections be- tween injustices through time, but there is a difference between (a) inquiring into present situations of injustice in order to detect, diagnose, and cure an injustice (a social pathology) across history, and (b) inquiring into the his- tory of a systematic injustice in order to facilitate inquiry into the present unique, context-bound injustice. To capture the legacy of the past on present injustices, we must study history but also seek present evidence of the weight of the past on the present injustice.¶ If injustice is an illness, then the pragmatists’ approach takes as its main focus diagnosing and treating the particular present illness, that is, the particular situation-bound injustice and not a global “social pathology” or some single transhistorical source of injustice. The diagnosis of a particular injustice is not always dependent on adopting a broader critical standpoint of society in its entirety, but even when it is, we must be careful to not forget that such standpoints are useful only for understanding the present evil. The concepts and categories “white supremacy” and “colonialism” can be great tools that can be of planetary significance. One could even argue that they pick out much larger areas of people’s lives and injustices than the categories of class and gender, but in spite of their reach and explanatory theoretical value, they are nothing more than tools to make reference to and ameliorate particular injustices experienced (suffered) in the midst of a particular and unique re- lationship in a situation. No doubt many, but not all, problems of injustice are a consequence of being a member of a group in history, but even in these cases, we cannot a priori assume that injustices are homogeneously equal for all members of that group. Why is this important? The possible pluralism and therefore complexity of a problem of injustice does not always stop at the level of being a member of a historical group or even a member of many groups, as insisted on by intersectional analysis. There may be unique cir- cumstances to particular countries, towns, neighborhoods, institutions, and ultimately situations that we must be open to in a context-sensitive inquiry. If an empirical inquiry is committed to capturing and ameliorating all of the harms in situations of injustice in their raw pretheoretical complexity, then this requires that we try to begin with and return to the concrete, particular, and unique experiences of injustice.¶ Pragmatism agrees with Sally Haslanger’s concern about Charles Mills’s view. She writes: “The goal is not just a theory that is historical (v. ahistori- cal), but is sensitive to historical particularity, i.e., that resists grand causal narratives purporting to give an account of how domination has come about and is perpetuated everywhere and at all times” (1). For “the forces that cause and sustain domination vary tremendously context by context, and there isn’t necessarily a single causal explanation; a theoretical framework that is useful as a basis for political intervention must be highly sensitive to the details of the particular social context” (1).13¶ Although each situation is unique, there are commonalities among the cases that permit inquiry about common causes. We can “formulate tentative general principles from investigation of similar individual cases, and then . . . check the generalizations by applying them to still further cases” (Dewey, Lectures in China 53). But Dewey insists that the focus should be on the indi- vidual case, and was critical of how so many sociopolitical theories are prone to starting and remaining at the level of “sweeping generalizations.” He states that they “fail to focus on the concrete problems which arise in experience, allowing such problems to be buried under their sweeping generalizations” (Lectures in China 53).¶ The lesson pragmatism provides for nonideal theory today is that it must be careful to not reify any injustice as some single historical force for which particular injustice problems are its manifestation or evidence for its exis- tence. Pragmatism welcomes the wisdom and resources of nonideal theories that are historically grounded on actual injustices, but it issues a warning about how they should be understood and implemented. It is, for example, sympathetic to the critical resources found in critical race theory, but with an important qualification. It understands Derrick Bell’s valuable criticism as context-specific to patterns in the practice of American law. Through his inquiry into particular cases and civil rights policies at a particular time and place, Bell learned and proposed certain general principles such as the one of “interest convergence,” that is, “whites will promote racial advantages for blacks only when they also promote white self-interest.”14 But, for pragma- tism, these principles are nothing more than historically grounded tools to use in present problematic situations that call for our analysis, such as deliberation in establishing public policies or making sense of some concrete injustice. The principles are falsifiable and open to revision as we face situation-specific injustices. In testing their adequacy, we need to consider their function in making us see aspects of injustices we would not otherwise appreciate.15

#### Gun rights fuel patriarchal nationalism and neolib.

Levi Gahman 14 [Centre for Social, Spatial, and Economic Justice, University of British Columbia], “Gun rites: hegemonic masculinity and neoliberal ideology in rural Kansas”, Gender, Place and Culture, 2014, BE

This valorization of the gun, and its association with exerting control over the rural frontier and ‘nation’, still resonates within the many men in Southeast Kansas. Over the span of a few generations, owning guns has produced a shared national identity that extols the virtues of defending individualism, freedom, property, and religion, and has thus become labelled ‘American’. Such discourses, while appearing noble and well intentioned, have paradoxically been used to carry out brutal assimilation projects and acts of war. In turn, the community members I spoke to in Southeast Kansas often noted that ‘doing the right thing’ and being a ‘good American’ was attained by making individual decisions that followed paternalistic moral traditions and adhered to market-based notions of personal work ethic in a fictive nation that is perceived to be meritorious.¶ Over the course of several interviews it became clear that the notion of being a ‘good American’ is a powerful influence for men in Southeast Kansas. From a feminist perspective, it is evident that these narratives are rife with patriarchal overtones; however, these hierarchical discourses often go unnoticed. Several participants performed their ‘American Pride’ by noting an acute distrust of the government. They often pointed to gun control laws, paying taxes, welfare programmes, and restrictions placed on Christian teaching in schools as ‘unfair’, ‘not right’, and being ‘discrimination against good, hardworking, Americans’.¶ A review of past literature shows that notions of white male victimization are quite prevalent when men seek to justify the oppressive and marginalizing practices they engage in (Kimmel and Ferber 2000; McIntosh 2003). These allegations of persecution, while simultaneously claiming innocence from the privileges that interlocking systems of masculinist white supremacy afford white men in settler nations, have been noted by many critical scholars and were present in many conversations that I had in Kansas (Collins 2005; Razack 1998). Harold, a 68-year-old participant, aptly summed up the widespread disillusionment and sense of victimization some men feel:¶ . . . I pay my fair share of taxes, and that is my hard earned money. I busted my ass for it and I need to feed my family with it. I don’t think it should be given to some lazy freeloaders on welfare who are working the system and looking for a handout . . . and the same people taking our money are the ones saying we shouldn’t have guns. Its in our Constitution, we have the right to bear arms, its what the Founding Fathers wanted . . . They were looking to freely practise their Christian beliefs. That’s why they came over here. And now you see ‘under God’ being taken out of the Pledge of Allegiance, you see the Ten Commandments being removed from schools, you see abortion, what I would call murder, being no big deal, and you see the government trying to take our guns – its communist . . . and don’t get me wrong, I love my country, but I don’t trust the government.¶ The emphasis on being a liberal subject, or being ‘individuals who are free to fail or succeed’ as described by one participant, thus serves as a guiding ideal for many men in the community. Such neoliberal subjectivities do not come without repercussions. As Foucault emphasized in his comprehensive analysis of technologies of the self and biopower, nothing is more suited to become influenced and molded by disciplinary power than extreme individualism (Foucault 1998, 1977). As a result, the productive capacities of the USA’ historical pillars of colonialism, capitalism, and patriarchal nationalism (that continue to be maintained predominantly by white, heterosexual, enabled, Christian, male, citizens) create ‘individuals’ who in perceiving themselves as such are paradoxically much more likely to unknowingly submit, conform, and obey. Such accounts can readily be seen in the comments of David, a 30-year-old single male, who when asked to describe his thoughts on the history of gun use in the area stated:¶ Well, the priests came here to help people – they built the church, started educating people, and shared their way of life. I’m sure the guns they had were mainly for protection and hunting. And its still like that to this day . . . we have a safe, tight-knit community. It’s a great place to raise kids and have a family. Its what our country was founded on. The pioneers that came over here were not being treated too well, they were looking for freedom, and they needed guns to protect themselves from some of the Indians and criminals that would attack them. And I know not all the Indians were dangerous, but you cannot say that some innocent Caucasian people were not attacked. Our ancestors were looking for a place to be free, work hard, and own some land to live off of. You can’t fault a guy for that.¶ . . . and when we got here its not like the Indians were all living peacefully with each other anyway . . . it’s a fact. There were tribes stealing and attacking other tribes, and if you look at how big the country is I think they could have done a better job of living with each other. It wasn’t like it was some paradise before our Founding Fathers got here. In the end, pioneers were protecting their families and defending what they believed in.¶ Several scholars have noted how the symbol of the gun is prominently woven into the historical tapestry of the USA (Brown 2008; Slotkin 1973, 1992; Wright 2001). The perceived threat of aggression from Indigenous people on the open plains meant that from its genesis, America was a society that depended upon a populace that was heavily armed (Cornell 2006). Recently, scholars have written how the conception of ‘frontier masculinity’ as a gendered narrative reinforces constructions of American nationalism by emphasizing the gun as a signifier of manhood (Melzer 2009; Via 2010). This point is particularly salient in Southeast Kansas as it was not uncommon to hear participants speak of playing ‘Cowboys and Indians’, or pretending to be admirable heroes from war movies and Westerns they watched growing up. Currently, there is an increase in research noting how the image of the gun is tied to power, security, and independence, and how such representations serve to perpetuate misleading historical accounts of white settlers conquering the frontier (Carrington, McIntosh, and Scott 2010; Melzer 2009; Via 2010).¶ Critical research also points out that the white settler myths of defending property, carrying out Manifest Destiny, and ‘civilizing Indians’ via homesteading, establishing churches and schools, and assimilation projects still permeate much of the cultural landscape of the Great Plains (Smith 2006, 2012; Via 2010). Additionally, recent discussions have suggested that the rationale behind promoting guns for community safety contradictorily erodes away a population’s sense of security (Cornell 2006). This is due to the fact that as gun possession rates increase, it creates a more defensive, heavily armed, and fractured populace that is governed by fear and suspicion, rather than by the free will it claims (Cornell 2006).¶ Despite the semantics that many participants used as being part of a ‘safe’ community, countervailing perspectives regarding the history of area suggests otherwise. The benevolent Christian narratives that dominate Southeast Kansas’ historical record, when viewed through a decolonial lens, show that ‘safe’ may not necessarily be the most accurate descriptor of the region. This can be recognized due to the region’s ongoing marginalization of historical perspectives from the Osage Nation, the chronological attempts at cultural assimilation that took place locally, and the fact that less than 0.03% of the county population identified as Native American (U.S. Census Bureau 2012). Given this information, it is apparent that the local community has been primarily exposed to masculinist narratives of colonial white supremacy at both institutional and cultural levels. Consequently, the practices and ideals that exist in the region reproduce hierarchies along lines of race, class, gender, sexuality, religion, ability, age, and nationality; which serve to covertly, and oftentimes unintentionally, shore up imperialistic discourses of disposses- sion, enclosure, and violence.¶ In looking at the gender regimes that are produced in Southeast Kansas, I borrow from Connell’s theory of hegemonic masculinity that suggests that the discourses surrounding manhood in local contexts produce marginalized, subordinated, and complicit masculinities (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). Given the particular (local) version of hegemonic masculinity that permeates most spaces in the area (white, heterosexual, Christian, enabled, citizens), such marginalizing and subordinating processes can be readily observed in routine interactions.¶ Several scholars have noted that the processes of ‘othering’ that exist in settler societies serve to reinforce structural white supremacy and predominantly take place along lines of race, class, gender, sexuality, and nationality (de Leeuw, Greenwood, and Lindsay 2013; hooks 1989; Mohanty 1984; Pease 2010; Razack 2002; Smith 1999). Consequently, discursive formations of who are defined as ‘bad’ guys, and who are marked as ‘criminals’, operate as regulatory measures that allow certain men to attain hegemonic status while prohibiting others from doing so. This policing of masculine status can readily be seen in the statements made by Jeffrey, a 22-year-old participant, when asked about news stories pertaining to gun violence:¶ I mean hell, look at all these crazy people doing all these shootings here lately. The ones I hear about are done by guys from the city, you don’t see a bunch of farmers murdering each other. Most of the people doing the killing are psychopaths or terrorists who hate America. You can’t tell me they had good Christian upbringings. The guns ain’t the problem, it’s the criminals who get them that fuck things up. And think about it, if guns were outlawed, those crazy assholes would still find a way . . .¶ One interesting discursive formation to note in the statement above that is particularly salient to geographers is the positioning of violence being perpetuated by ‘guys in the city’ Jeffrey suggests that being ‘from the city’ is in direct opposition to what many participants referred to as ‘being from the country’. Several critical scholars have noted how the way in which ‘difference’ is constructed can lead to oppressive effects (Berg 2012; Goldberg 2009; Kobayashi 2013; Sibley 2002). While not explicitly stated outright, the connotation of what being ‘from the country’ versus being ‘from the city’ means is often times loaded with racialized undertones. This subordinating rhetoric is further highlighted by a follow- up statement Jeffrey made when asked to elaborate upon what type of people he thought were responsible for gun violence:¶ Its not that I’m a racist, but most those guys are niggers. The others are fucked up in the head, or Mexican drug dealers, or gang bangers from the ghetto. Probably grew up on welfare, came from broken homes, and were never really taught how to treat a gun . . . And when I say nigger I don’t mean all black guys, I’ve worked with some good black guys, so when I say nigger I mean that anyone can be a nigger. It’s more of how someone acts, you know? A white guy can be a nigger, a Mexican can be nigger, an Asian can be a nigger, its not just skin colour . . . its like when you hear the word faggot or bitch – those are not always about homos or women, they are just ways to describe how a guy goes about the way he acts.

#### The 1AC ruptures the mindset of guns as necessary for self-defense.

John Donohue 15, “Ban guns, end shootings? How evidence stacks up around the world”, CNN 27 Aug 2015, BE

In the wake of the massacre, the conservative federal government succeeded in implementing tough new gun control laws throughout the country. A large array of weapons were banned -- including the Glock semiautomatic handgun used in the Charleston shootings. The government also imposed a mandatory gun buy back that substantially reduced gun possession in Australia.¶ The effect was that both gun suicides and homicides (as well as total suicides and homicides)fell. In addition, the 1996 legislation made it a crime to use firearms in self-defense.¶ When I mention this to disbelieving NRA supporters they insist that crime must now be rampant in Australia. In fact, the Australian murder rate has fallen to close to one per 100,000 while the U.S. rate, thankfully lower than in the early 1990s, is still roughly at 4.5 per 100,000-- over four times as high. Moreover, robberies in Australia occur at only about half the rate of the U.S. (58 in Australia versus 113.1 per 100,000 in the U.S. in 2012).¶ How did Australia do it? Politically, it took a brave prime minister to face the rage of Australian gun interests.¶ John Howard wore a bullet-proof vest when he announced the proposed gun restrictions in June 1996. The deputy prime minister was hung in effigy. But Australia did not have a domestic gun industry to oppose the new measures so the will of the people was allowed to emerge. And today, support for the safer, gun-restricted Australia is so strong that going back would not be tolerated by the public.¶ That Australia hasn't had a mass shooting since 1996 is likely more than merely the result of the considerable reduction in guns -- it's certainly not the case that guns have disappeared altogether.¶ I suspect that the country has also experienced a cultural shift between the shock of the Port Arthur massacre and the removal of guns from every day life as they are no longer available for self-defense and they are simply less present throughout the country. Troubled individuals, in other words, are not constantly being reminded that guns are a means to address their alleged grievances to the extent that they were in the past, or continue to be in the US.

#### Government-as-heuristic is not an abstraction, but rather provides a means of understanding the state and breaking it down.

Zanotti 14 Dr. Laura Zanotti is an Associate Professor of Political Science at Virginia Tech. Her research and teaching include critical political theory as well as international organizations, UN peacekeeping, democratization and the role of NGOs in post-conflict governance.“Governmentality, Ontology, Methodology: Re-thinking Political Agency in the Global World” – Alternatives: Global, Local, Political – vol 38(4):p. 288-304,. A little unclear if this is late 2013 or early 2014 – The Stated “Version of Record” is Feb 20, 2014, but was originally published online on December 30th, 2013. Obtained via Sage Database.

By questioning substantialist representations of power and subjects, inquiries on the possibilities of political agency are reframed in a way that focuses on power and subjects’ relational character and the contingent processes of their (trans)formation in the context of agonic relations. Options for resistance to governmental scripts are not limited to ‘‘rejection,’’ ‘‘revolution,’’ or ‘‘dispossession’’ to regain a pristine ‘‘freedom from all constraints’’ or an immanent ideal social order. It is found instead in multifarious and contingent struggles that are constituted within the scripts of governmental rationalities and at the same time exceed and transform them. This approach questions oversimplifications of the complexities of liberal political rationalities and of their interactions with non-liberal political players and nurtures a radical skepticism about identifying universally good or bad actors or abstract solutions to political problems. International power interacts in complex ways with diverse political spaces and within these spaces it is appropriated, hybridized, redescribed, hijacked, and tinkered with. Governmentality as a heuristic focuses on performing complex diagnostics of events. It invites historically situated explorations and careful differentiations rather than overarching demonizations of ‘‘power,’’ romanticizations of the ‘‘rebel’’ or the ‘‘the local.’’ More broadly, theoretical formulations that conceive the subject in non-substantialist terms and focus on processes of subjectification, on the ambiguity of power discourses, and on hybridization as the terrain for political transformation, open ways for reconsidering political agency beyond the dichotomy of oppression/rebellion. These alternative formulations also foster an ethics of political engagement, to be continuously taken up through plural and uncertain practices, that demand continuous attention to ‘‘what happens’’ instead of fixations on ‘‘what ought to be.’’83 Such ethics of engagement would not await the revolution to come or hope for a pristine ‘‘freedom’’ to be regained. Instead, it would constantly attempt to twist the working of power by playing with whatever cards are available and would require intense processes of reflexivity on the consequences of political choices. To conclude with a famous phrase by Michel Foucault ‘‘my point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, which is not exactly the same as bad. If everything is dangerous, then we always have something to do. So my position leads not to apathy but to hyper- and pessimistic activism.’’84

#### Policy discussions of gun control by citizens are necessary.

**Watkins 98** - (Christine [educational project consultant and writer based in Chicago] "Gun Control: The Debate and Public Policy" http://www.socialstudies.org/system/files/publications/se/6105/610502.html) GHS//GB

This classroom activity takes up a slightly different question from traditional gun control activities that pit opposing arguments regarding the rights of gun owners against gun control advocates. The central question is not whether gun control is "good" or "bad," but whether it is good policy. The lesson asks: "Can gun control laws reduce violence? If yes, which specific kinds of laws and language seem to have the best chance of being effective? If no, what other kinds of legal action can be taken to reduce gun violence?" Laws are the means to an end. Agreeing on a desirable end is the first step in making good public policy. But agreeing on the goal of reducing gun violence is much less difficult than agreeing on the best way to reach that goal. **Particularly when addressing complex social problems like gun violence, laws that use resources effectively and produce results without either abridging constitutional rights or having unexpected and undesirable consequences, are hard to craft. And it is not a job that can be left simply to politicians, the courts, and the police. Citizens must be willing to instigate and evaluate good laws, not simply to obey or ignore them.**

## Case XT/Turns OV

### Experimentalism XT

#### Pragmatism commits us to experimental means of testing and revising our moral beliefs—people are racially biased against gun control, especially banning handguns, in the status quo for little to no good reason—experimenting with policies that are against our biases is necessary to constructively revise our beliefs—that’s Forrest and Anderson—bias locks us into the status quo and experimentalism fixes that—proves the 1AC’s experiment is good. Also, even if they win the aff has bad consequences, it doesn’t matter under our framework—that just tells us that the experiment failed and gives us insight on how to better solve problems in the future—that’s Dewey—they haven’t won a reason the experiment itself is bad.