Making Up Knowers:

Objectivity and Categories of Epistemic Subjects

by

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Abstract

The aim of this dissertation is simple: to defend the epistemic concept of objectivity as one that has done and continues to do good ethical and epistemic work for some communities. Because of this good work, I argue, in contrast to philosophers like Richard Rorty and Lorraine Code, that objectivity should not be removed from epistemic discourse—it is a valuable ideal to have. Relying on work from Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, I will identify objectivity as a concept with a layered and changing history. There are multiple different conceptions of the concept of objectivity currently identified, and more new conceptions being suggested. So, when I claim that objectivity is a valuable ideal to hold, what I mean is that specific conceptions of the concept of objectivity have had ethical and epistemic virtues in their times and places, and there are current suggested conceptions of objectivity that also seem to have ethical and/or epistemic virtues. These virtues are a result of the effect that the role of objectivity as an ideal has on epistemic subjects who adopt it. I will defend objectivity as an ideal, not as an attainable epistemic perspective. I argue that all conceptions of objectivity share a structure that unifies them under the concept of objectivity. All conceptions of objectivity aim at overcoming something identified as problematically subjective (What this thing is will vary in given times and places). This recognition of the relationship between objectivity and subjectivity allows me to give an analysis of how different conceptions of objectivity yield different conceptions of the epistemic subject. Relying on work done by Ian Hacking, I will argue that the ideal

of objectivity serves as a mechanism for making up knowers. Self-reflection and self-policing are at the heart of this method by which categories of knowers are created. Using the examples of the U.S. suffrage movement and Marine-Protected Areas, I will demonstrate that the ideal of objectivity obligates self-reflective persons which has been and continues to be both ethically and epistemically beneficial.

Table of Contents

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Dedication

For my knight in orange gortex who followed me across a mountain range. He pushed me on when he knew I could go further, and insisted I rest when he knew I'd gone too far.

Chapter 1: The Path Ahead

Only a male intellect clouded by the sexual drive could call the stunted, narrow-shouldered, broad-hipped and short-legged sex the fair sex: for it is with this drive that all its beauty is bound up. More fittingly than the fair sex, women could be called the unaesthetic sex. Neither for music, nor poetry, nor the plastic arts do they possess any real feeling or receptivity: if they affect to do so, it is merely mimicry in service of their effort to please. This comes from the fact that they are incapable of taking a ***purely objective interest*** *in anything whatever, and the reason for this is, I think, as follows. Man strives in everything for a direct domination over things, either by comprehending or by subduing them. But woman is everywhere and always relegated to a merely indirect domination, which is achieved by means of man, who is consequently the only thing she has to dominate directly. Thus it lies in the nature of women to regard everything simply as a means of capturing a man, and their interest in anything else is only simulated, is no more than a detour, i.e. amounts to coquetry and mimicry.*[1]

Legislators, priests, philosophers, writers and scientists have striven to show that the subordinate position of woman is willed in heaven and advantageous on earth. . . It was only later, in the eighteenth century, that genuinely democratic men began to view the matter ***objectively****. Diderot, among others, strove to show that woman is, like man, a human being. Later, John Stuart Mill came fervently to her defense.*[2]

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1 Arthur Schopenhauer, "On Women" (http://www.heretical.com/miscella/onwomen.html accessed October 19th 2010.) *Emphasis added.*

2 Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (New York, London and Toronto: Everyman's Library,1993),

1.1. Introduction

In the quoted passages above, the first from Arthur Schopenhauer's infamous essay “On Women” and the second from Simone de Beauvoir's almost equally infamous book *The Second Sex,* the term 'objectivity' is employed. In Schopenhauer's work, 'objectivity' is a state of mind that, it is argued, women simply cannot achieve. In the passage from Beauvoir, objectivity is a state of mind required of men, in order to see and to treat women fairly, defend women, and see that they possess the same capabilities as men.

Objectivity, as demonstrated in these two quotes, is a powerful concept. By using the concept of objectivity, Schopenhauer simultaneously suggests that his own claims are objective, and that whatever women may say in their own defense cannot be taken seriously, as they are incapable of seeing the world objectively. Beauvoir argues that until men were able to view the matter objectively themselves, their arguments with regard to women could not be trusted. This claim serves to undermine claims like Schopenhauer's, just as his own claims serve to undermine claims like Beauvoir's. Thus both Beauvoir and Schopenhauer use the term to simultaneously affirm their own views and discredit their opponent's. The power of objectivity is both a power to affirm and to discredit. But both cannot be objective at the same time, surely, since the views of each contradict the position of the other. Yet each claims to be objective, and does so, in part, to discredit the views of the other. Since each is able to discredit the opposing view, one might wonder whether objectivity is doing any helpful work in this debate over women's roles. Is the investigation into the question over what women can and cannot do helped by the language of objectivity? If we

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Li-lii. *Emphasis added.*

could determine who was objective, this might help in this debate, but who is objective: Schopenhauer or Beauvoir?

I suspect many might wish to claim that Beauvoir was more objective, and not solely because Schopenhauer's disgust with his subject matter comes through almost audibly in the passage (suggesting a possible biased perspective) but because I suspect that many of my readers tend to agree more with Beauvoir's conclusion regarding the equality of men and women than with Schopenhauer's. But if this is so, does this mean that all one means when one claims that someone is 'objective' is that the beliefs that person espouses are in accord with one's own? (Implying that at one time Schopenhauer was more objective than Beauvoir?) Or is there some other basis from which to assert confidently that Beauvoir *really* was more objective than Schopenhauer?

One might wish to claim that Beauvoir's position is more objective than Schopenhauer's because what Beauvoir claims is closer to the truth (or is true) whereas what Schopenhauer claims is clearly false. This illustrates something about the nature of objectivity; if it is thought to be beneficial at all, it is thought to be so partially because being objective is sometimes seen as a way to gain truths. But suppose that there is no way to determine that Beauvoir was *really* more objective than Schopenhauer, or that her views were more likely to be true. Then if we insisted on using the term 'objective' under such conditions, perhaps all objectivity would mean is 'a belief or state of mind I endorse or agree with.' Yet, *psychologically*, we might still associate it with the idea that there is some truth in a belief that is objective, for some reason besides like-mindedness to trust this belief. That is, even though we

cannot prove that Beauvoir is more likely to hold a true belief that Schopenhauer, her claim that her position is the one objective individuals endorse might make us tend to psychologically, though not logically, associate her position with the truth if we agree with her, and might tend to psychologically, though not logically, make us suspect her of lying or of being mistaken if we do not agree with her. Thus, in Schopenhauer's time, the opposite might have been true. Many might have agreed with Schopenhauer, and felt that his claim to be objective meant that his view was more likely to be true. In this manner, those who hold minority opinions might effectively have been silenced by Schopenhauer's assertion that objectivity was on his side, and that women could not be objective. Though those holding minority views would have likely disputed Schopenhauer's claims to be objective, the psychological link between objectivity and truth might have led the majority to disregard their claims. Objectivity, then, in addition to being associated with the truth, and indeed because of this association, is a powerful rhetorical device in epistemic debates, and may be argued to be a powerful tool for the silencing of minority views.

There are several concerns with the ideal of objectivity at present, many of them motivated by the kind of problem just discussed: objectivity may be a powerful way to silence minority opinion. Those concerned with objectivity fall into two broad categories: those who want to do away with the ideal entirely and those who argue that the ideal needs to be revised.

Two of the main proponents of the removal of the ideal are Lorraine Code and the already-mentioned Richard Rorty. Lorraine Code has argued that objectivity as a concept is understood in White masculine terms, thus excluding women's

perspectives, as well as the views and opinions of other marginalized groups.[3] On the basis of these worries, one might wonder whether objectivity is a valuable epistemic goal to have. Instead, the ideal of objectivity may be seen to be exclusionary of minority viewpoints, and therefore a dangerous concept used to justify the power wielded by the majority and to keep the minority out. This is exactly what Richard Rorty argued with regards to objectivity. Rorty, one of the most vocal critics of objectivity, claimed that whatever good the term was doing in our discourse could more effectively be accomplished by appeals to widespread agreement and the value of a heterogeneous community.[4] He believed that objectivity was a useless and dangerous term, in part because of this pathway to truth that objectivity seems to promise. Rorty's and Code's arguments will be examined in detail in Chapter Two.

Feminist epistemologists and philosophers of science also raise concerns about the ideal of objectivity. They claim that the term needs to be rethought before it can be usefully put into practice. Among those who will be examined in this dissertation are Sandra Harding, who calls for something she labels Strong Objectivity to replace our current understanding of the term (Strong Objectivity involves including multiple standpoints, and adjudicating between them to determine which are more valid, rather than aiming for a neutral standpoint), Helen Longino, who argues for an inclusion of values and background beliefs into our understanding of the ideal of objectivity, and a recognition that objectivity is a product of communities, not individuals, and Naomi Scheman, who calls for a focus on the relationship between objectivity and trust. As things stand, many feminists call for a

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3 Lorraine Code, *What Can She Know*? *Feminist Theory and the Construction of Knowledge* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991).
4 Richard Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.1991),13.

revision of the concept of objectivity because the term is ambiguous, and dangerous or exclusionary.

1.2. What is Objectivity?

Having just stated that many feminist philosophers find the term 'objectivity' to be vague, or to mean too many things, a natural question arises: What is objectivity? How is it understood? How is it used? When is it appropriate? It turns out that there are numerous answers to these questions. Heather Douglas in her article “The Irreducible Complexity of Objectivity,” notes that the term 'objectivity' has been understood in various ways.

> Historians of science have persuasively shown that what has been taken as objective, either in terms of methods or knowledge, has not been constant during the period since the “Scientific Revolution” in the 17th century.[5]

So, historically, objectivity has been used in many different ways. However, this does not, by itself, entail that the term does not have one basic meaning. Perhaps some groups in the past have been mistaken about how to properly understand the concept 'objectivity.' Indeed, Douglas notes that this has been the position of some philosophers who argue that objectivity is reducible to one meaning. However, other philosophers disagree—Douglas included (as can be seen from the title of her article).

> Philosophers, on the other hand, have taken two different approaches to objectivity. Some have argued that objectivity is ultimately reducible to one basic meaning onto which others have aggregated. . . [like Thomas Nagel's “View from Nowhere”]. Others have suggested that objectivity is an inherently

5 Heather Douglas, “The Irreducible Complexity of Objectivity” *Synthese,* 138, no. 3 (2004): Pg. 454.

> complex concept, with no one meaning at its core, but instead several different senses packed together. . .[6]

Douglas gives three headings under which she claims that we can categorize the eight distinct meanings of objectivity depending on how the term 'objectivity' is applied. Objectivity can be applied to a process, that is, it can refer to a process used that guarantees objectivity somehow. Objectivity can be ascribed to an individual. It can be claimed that an individual is objective, or has an objective perspective. Finally objectivity can be ascribed to the produced knowledge, the product of the process, or the claims made by the individual.

Douglas argues that different meanings of objectivity “are not logically reducible to one core meaning.”[7] Under these headings she identifies eight distinct understandings of the term 'objectivity'. The first two fall under objectivity as ascribed to the process. These two meanings are forms of manipulable objectivity, “When we can use objects around us, we trust our accounts of their existence and properties as reliable. . .”[8] and convergent objectivity “we approach the results through multiple avenues, and if the same result continues to appear, we have increasing confidence in the reliability of the result.”[9] The next three meanings fall under objectivity as ascribed to the individual. They are detached objectivity, “the prohibition against using values in place of evidence”[10]; value-free objectivity, where, unlike detached objectivity, “all values . . . are banned from the reasoning process,”[11]; and value-

6 Douglas, “The Irreducible Complexity of Objectivity,” 454.
7 Douglas, “The Irreducible Complexity of Objectivity,” 455.
8Douglas, “The Irreducible Complexity of Objectivity,” 458.
9Douglas, “The Irreducible Complexity of Objectivity,” 458.
10 Douglas, “The Irreducible Complexity of Objectivity,” 459.
11 Douglas, “The Irreducible Complexity of Objectivity,” 459.

neutral objectivity, which is “free from all value-influence.” [12] The last three apply to the knowledge produced. They are forms of procedural objectivity which allow for “individual interchangeability and [excludes] individual idiosyncrasies or judgments from processes.”[13] Concordant objectivity differs from procedural objectivity in this manner: “Instead of seeking to eliminate individual judgment. . . this sense checks to see whether the individual judgments of people in fact do agree.”[14] Finally, interactive objectivity differs from the other two in that “[i]nstead of simple agreement, this sense of objectivity requires discussion among the participants. . . The hope is that by keeping scientific discourse open to scrutiny, the most idiosyncratic biases and blinders can be eliminated.”[15] These are the eight senses of objectivity that Douglas finds currently in use.

However, Douglas notes that these senses are not commonly used one at a time. Often, they are conflated. When we refer to something or someone as objective, we generally are referring to more than one sense of objectivity. While discussing some of the work on the history of objectivity that has already been done, Douglas notes that Daston and Galison, two historians of objectivity who identify multiple types of objectivity themselves, still conflate senses according to Douglas's account.

> When Daston and Galison describe the rise of “mechanical” objectivity in the nineteenth century, they are calling on several senses of objectivity that were seen as connected: procedural objectivity. . . detached objectivity. . . and convergent objectivity. . .[16]

12 Douglas, “The Irreducible Complexity of Objectivity,” 460.
13 Douglas, “The Irreducible Complexity of Objectivity,” 461.
14 Douglas, “The Irreducible Complexity of Objectivity,” 462.
15 Douglas, “The Irreducible Complexity of Objectivity,” 463-464.
16 Douglas, “The Irreducible Complexity of Objectivity,” 466.

Daston and Galison's story of mechanical objectivity will be discussed in the next section and in detail in Chapter Three. The important thing to note here is that, while Daston and Galison themselves highlight distinct uses of the term 'objectivity' throughout history, Douglas is able to point out that even one of these several uses identified by Daston and Galison is itself a conflation of several other uses of the term. It is generally not recognized that objectivity has been understood in several different ways in the past, let alone that even these different ways can be split up into even more distinct senses. In general, as Douglas herself acknowledges, we do not use the term 'objectivity' with an awareness or intention to pull apart its various conceptions. “Although there are eight distinct senses to objectivity, it is rare that we invoke just one when we use it in practice.”[17] Douglas argues that it is important to realize how complex objectivity is as a concept, and this is a complexity that we must keep in mind as well.

The complexity, according to Douglas, allows for objectivity's flexibility. She says:

> It should also be clear that the complexity allows room for change. We might decide that some meanings should be dropped (as I think value-free objectivity should be). And we might find that new meanings will be added as our practices change over time. There is no ahistorical fixedness to objectivity to date; there is little reason to think we are finished developing the term.[18]

Because objectivity is so complex, because it can be, and usually is, understood in so many different ways, it can be changed. Douglas breaks down the use of the terms in

17 Douglas, “The Irreducible Complexity of Objectivity,” 468.
18 Douglas, “The Irreducible Complexity of Objectivity,” 468.

terms of what 'objectivity' is to refer to (the procedure, the knowing subject, or the knowledge claim).

Elisabeth Lloyd, another feminist philosopher, divides the concept of objectivity along traditional distinctions between different areas of philosophy. She identifies only four different uses of the term. These four meanings are 'perspectiveless', 'publicly available,' (these first two she labels epistemic meanings), 'independent of observer,' and 'really real' (these last two she labels as ontological meanings). She argues, in agreement with Douglas on the irreducible complexity of the term, that these four different meanings of objectivity are not reducible to each other, and that philosophers confuse themselves by equivocating on the term 'objective'.[19] Lloyd also argues that feminist epistemology, and increasingly other epistemologies, are attempting to change the common understandings of objectivity.

I draw two conclusions from this quick survey of Douglas and Lloyd: One, objectivity is an exceedingly complex ideal, and may be carved up in various ways depending on the terms one chooses to carve it up in relation to—be they what the term is in reference to, standard philosophical categories, temporal, or some other terms. Two, the feminist epistemological project of rethinking the category of objectivity is not a new project. Objectivity has changed and is changing and likely will change; feminists are participating in this change, and rightly so, but the change has been happening for at least a century and a half in science now, if not longer. This has not, yet, answered the question of what objectivity is. It has, rather, shown that the question itself is exceedingly complicated. Objectivity is understood in many

19 Elisabeth Lloyd, “Objectivity and the Double Standard for Feminist Epistemologies” *Synthese* vol. 104, no. 3: (1995): 53.

different ways by different people. Even the types of objectivity identified differ from scholar to scholar. There may be no one thing that objectivity is.

But there is one thing that I will hold constant, that Douglas herself notes has been a constant: objectivity's relationship to subjectivity. She notes that objectivity's historical opposite is subjectivity.[20] Douglas argues that this historical opposition between objectivity and subjectivity is no longer appropriate, and perhaps never was. She argues that "subjectivity is not just the lack of objectivity, and objectivity is not just the overcoming of subjectivity. . . "[21] because subjectivity and objectivity may blur and overlap. In particular, Douglas suggests that a value or a feeling, both commonly labeled as subjective, might actually be supported by evidence, or by intersubjective agreement, and so might count as a type of objectivity (in the case of agreement, concordant objectivity).[22]

It is here where I differ with Douglas. I do think that objectivity and subjectivity are understood in opposition to each other. The reason I suspect that Douglas finds things that have historically been labeled as subjective, but that might now be objective is possibly that what it means to be subjective and objective change over time, just as Douglas notes. However, Douglas is dividing up the concept 'objectivity' in terms of what it is in reference to, *not* in terms of history. I will, largely, be employing Daston and Galison's strategy of looking at various historical conceptions of the term, not conceptions in terms of reference, or in terms of standard philosophical areas. While acknowledge that the complexity of objectivity may be understood differently

20Douglas, "The Irreducible Complexity of Objectivity," 468.
21Douglas, "The Irreducible Complexity of Objectivity," 470.
22This similar to the argument Sharyn Clough makes with regards to feminist values, to be discussed in the next chapter. See Sharyn Clough, *Beyond Epistemology: A Pragmatist Approach to Feminist Science Studies* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, inc., 2003), 116.

depending on the relations used to carve up the term, I will rely on the historical relation, rather than the philosophical (objectivity in terms of philosophical areas of study—epistemic, ontological, etc.—which seems to be how Lloyd breaks the term down) or reference relation. The reason I choose to do this is because I think this historical perspective allows me to explore an interesting aspect of the way in which the concept of objectivity operates on the epistemic subject. This new perspective on the historical relationship between objectivity and the epistemic subject is lost if we view objectivity in terms of reference or in terms of philosophical areas, leading to Douglas' and my disagreement over the relationship between objectivity and subjectivity. Viewed in terms of reference, both objectivity and subjectivity can refer to the same thing (in this case, values). However, viewed historically, they don't seem to be used to refer to the same thing *at the same time by the same epistemic community*. In any given period a conception of objectivity appears to always oppose a conception of subjectivity, as I will demonstrate in the coming chapters.[23]

Daston and Galison, in their history of objectivity titled *Objectivity,* find that it has been an epistemic goal in the sciences since the mid-nineteenth century. Prior to that, it appears in moral philosophy, particularly the philosophical writings of John Stuart Mill. Daston and Galison attribute the first use of the term to William of Ockham and Dun Scotus, in the fourteenth century, when they brought the term into English from the Latin. But the use of the term, then, was very different from how the concept is understood now.[24] As originally deployed, the objective referred to the way things appeared to the mind, whereas the subjective referred to the way things were 'in

23 This will become clear in Chapter Three.
24 Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity,* (New York: Zone Books, 2007), 29.

themselves.' Objectivity does not take on a conception familiar to a modern audience until the 1850's, when it becomes associated with the removal of the epistemic subject and all that is merely subjective about the concept in order to represent the world the way it really is. Daston and Galison categorize three different types of objectivity in history, mechanical objectivity (characterized by the epistemic subject's attempt to record nature like a machine) structural objectivity (characterized by the epistemic subject's obligation to follow shared structures for data gathering, manipulation and representation) and trained-judgement (characterized by the allowance of some judgement into the process of knowledge-gathering, but only if that judgement was properly cultivated so as not to distort the data).[25] Daston, in previous work, identifies one more type of objectivity present in the history of objectivity, aperspectival objectivity (characterized by the attempt to remove individual idiosyncrasies from scientific discourse).[26] Daston and Galison characterize objectivity not in terms of reference, or in terms of philosophical areas, but in terms of points in history, and, more interestingly, in terms of what is seen as problematic in the epistemic subject.[27] Different types of objectivity are set up in opposition to different features of the epistemic subject, be they a tendency to overly idealize nature,[28] or an inability to communicate effectively with others because of personal idiosyncrasies.[29] While I recognize that objectivity, as irreducibly complex and multi-layered, can be divided up into different types along many different lines, it is this historical and subjective line that I find most insightful for this dissertation. Since there seems no

25 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity.*
26 Lorraine Daston, “Objectivity and the Escape from Perspective,” *Social Studies of Science* 22, no. 597 (1992): 597-618.
27 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 37.
28 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 34.
29 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 600.

definitive reason to divide objectivity along one set of criteria versus another, I have chosen to follow Daston and Galison and consider objectivity in its complexity in terms of its historical opposite, subjectivity.

As long as we are mindful that the terms objectivity and subjectivity have a history, we can see that at any given time, those concepts labeled as subjective are seen as undesirable traits needing to be overcome by the objective. Since my focus will be on subjectivity, I will mainly focus on the concept of objectivity as ascribed to knowing subjects (rather than as ascribed to procedures, or to resulting knowledge claims), and I will use an historical framework to carve up the various conceptions of the concept of objectivity. This means that I will be focused on objectivity in its epistemic sense, as applied to knowers. Nonetheless, as Douglas notes, objectivity is a complex term, I will not be able to solely focus on the term as applied to knowing subjects, but will also, from time to time, have to look at the term as applied to knowledge itself, or truth (Douglas's third category, broadly construed) and, at the end of the dissertation, will examine briefly the relationship between objectivity and metaphysical realism, or the *really real* (Lloyd's fourth category of objectivity).

The question “what is objectivity?” is still unanswered at this point, except to say that it is a vague, complex and multi-layered term and that my decision to focus on it in terms of epistemology only can never be fully successful because of the complexity of the term. But I can point to a structure which I will rely on in my investigation into objectivity. Relying on work by Daston and Galison I will structure my discussion of objectivity in terms of an overarching concept, and various conceptions of that concept. The overarching concept of objectivity will be understood

as the ideal set up in opposition to something problematic about the epistemic subject. The ideal of objectivity, at its most basic level, is a concept intended to overcome something merely subjective. Various conceptions of objectivity arise to deal with specific problems of the epistemic subject. So, while aperspectival and mechanical objectivity are both part of the concept of objectivity (in that they both aim at overcoming an identified problem with the epistemic subject) they are two distinct conceptions of the concept of objectivity (the first overcoming our tendency to prettify or idealize what we see, the second overcoming our individual idiosyncrasies that make communication with others difficult). Both share a conceptual structure, obliging the individual to step beyond the merely subjective in some way, but the 'merely subjective' identified is distinct in each, and so the regime used for obliging the individual to step beyond the merely subjective is different in each case. Communities develop and follow regimes or methods for policing epistemic subjects and correcting their behaviour with reference to the conception of objectivity endorsed. I will call an individual under obligation to step beyond the merely subjective the 'epistemic subject'. In order to be an epistemic subject—an individual engaged in the discovery and production of knowledge—one must be an individual committed to the ideal of objectivity. (While not all epistemic subjects necessarily have a commitment to objectivity, I will restrict my use of the term in this dissertation to those that do. I do not intend to deny that there could be ways of being a knower that do not require a commitment to objectivity, but these categories of subject are not the focus of this dissertation. I stipulate my restricted use of the term 'epistemic subject' here not as a statement about any connection between objectivity and knowledge, but as a short-hand use of the term for convenience.) In sum, I will deal with objectivity as an ideal

on three levels, the concept of objectivity, various conceptions of the concept that appear in different times and places, and the regimes used by communities to police the obligations that each conception of the concept places on the epistemic subject. The philosophical importance of referring to objectivity as an *ideal* will become clearer later on. Some might object to my characterization of the concept of objectivity as an ideal. However, the characterization of the concept is one I share with Richard Rorty, one of the ideal's most vocal opponents. Rorty characterizes objectivity as a useless concept precisely because it is conceived of in an ideal fashion, as a concept that places one under obligations that cannot be fully met.[30] Paradoxically, it is because of this quality of the ideal of objectivity that I think it is valuable (rather than useless). The unmet obligations necessitate a constant striving by the subject who is under them.

This move to a discussion of obligation will allow me to look at what kind of effect obligations of objectivity tend to have on individuals who are under them. Or, to put the point a slightly different way, I will investigate what effect the ideal of objectivity has had on epistemic subjects who hold it as an ideal. Ian Hacking has suggested that ideals are a way of working upon the self.[31] He claims that ideals, categories and labels are all ways of 'making up people'. Hacking argues that categories of personhood are not static, but change in different communities at different times.

As one example, Hacking devotes a book to a psychological disorder known as

30 Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth,* 13.

31 Ian Hacking, “Making Up People,” in *Historical Ontology* (Cambridge , Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004), Pg. 116. His focus was on ethical ideals, but in this dissertation I will demonstrate that objectivity is an ethical and epistemic ideal. So, if Hacking is right, than objectivity will be a way of working on the knowing subject as well.

psychogenic fugue.[32] This disorder was suffered mainly by men, and marked by travel and amnesia. An individual would forget everything about himself, travel to a new state or country, begin a new job, obtain a new identity, and six months later he would remember his old life and head back home. Hacking claims that one possible reason why the disorder was so prevalent in the nineteenth century and has all but disappeared now is because of more sophisticated tracking systems. It is much harder to hop a train, travel across country borders, obtain a job and begin a new life without having to provide proof of identity (either in the form of a passport or social insurance number, for example).[33] Thus, the possibility of a patient traveling for six months and unintentionally creating a whole new identity for himself without anyone around him realizing what has happened is much lower (at the very least he'd have to get some sort of fake identification). The implication is clear. Circumstances create categories of personhood. But equally clear for Hacking is the insight that community labels, ideals, and norms, form part of those circumstances. Once psychogenic fugue is a category of personhood defined by strict behaviours and norms, we can identify what it is to be an individual with a case of psychogenic fugue, and what is not. My suggestion here, and one I will develop throughout, is that the ideal of objectivity also creates categories of personhood. Once we know what a given conception of objectivity entails, we know what is required of an epistemic subject. A community can judge whether an individual is an epistemic subject based on to what degree she conforms to the obligations placed on her by the conception of objectivity. So, objectivity makes up knowers.

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32 Ian Hacking, *Mad Travelers: Reflections on the Reality of Transient Mental Illness* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1998).
33 Hacking, *Mad Travelers,* 51-79.

But, because the conception of objectivity is changeable, this is not the end of the story. If the conception of objectivity is mechanical, then it prescribes to individual knowers that they must strive to be like cameras. The community that adopts this conception of objectivity monitors its members and deems whether individuals get to count as knowers under the terms of mechanical objectivity. Ultimately, this is internalized by the epistemic subjects who think of themselves as objective, or as striving to be objective, in a mechanical sense. However, as subjects strive to be objective, they may notice something wrong with the current conception of objectivity, some ways in which it is no longer meeting the demands of the current intellectual landscape. In response they may do one of the two things we see being attempted by those who dissent to objectivity now. They may suggest it is a term like psychogenic fugue: a term that has outlived its usefulness (this is Rorty's strategy). Or, they may say that objectivity is more like one of Hacking's other examples, homosexuality. Homosexuality was transformed from being a sexual deviant listed in the DSM to an accepted sexual orientation in many parts of the world.[34] Perhaps, like homosexuality, objectivity is a category in need of revision, not removal—this is the strategy employed by Harding and Longino. In the dissertation that follows, using this conceptual structure, I will support Harding and Longino's strategy against Rorty's and Code's.[35] I will do more than just support this strategy. I will suggest that Harding's and Longino's strategy is one that has been successful in the past and continues to be successful. As Douglas claimed above, objectivity's complexity and changeability is part of the term's strength.

34 Hacking, “Making Up People,” 103.

35 Code's strategy is slightly different from Rorty's. While Rorty's can be compared to psychogenic fugue, Code's cannot. She does not claim that objectivity has outlived its usefulness, but that it was never useful. See Chapter Two.

1.3. The Plan and Objective

In this dissertation, I will defend the concept of objectivity as a valuable epistemic ideal. I have three objectives: First, to examine and challenge the arguments of those who, like Lorraine Code and Richard Rorty claim that objectivity is an ideal best discarded (this will be the aim of Chapter Two); second, to examine the history of objectivity with reference to Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison and to rethink the objective/subjective distinction in terms of Ian Hacking's possibilities of personhood (this will be the aim of Chapter Three); and third, to argue, based on this different way of thinking of objectivity, that objectivity has had and continues to have ethical and epistemic benefits for epistemic subjects and communities that hold it as an ideal (this will be the aim of Chapters Four and Five).[36] It is not necessary to attain the ideal in order to find it beneficial. In sum, I will argue that the concept of objectivity has already gone through many conceptions in the past, and that the re-conceptualization of the term that many feminist philosophers of science, such as Sandra Harding, Helen Longino and Naomi Scheman are urging is another shift in the understanding of the term. These shifts have happened before, and will happen again. The term needs to be rethought from time to time, but one cannot conclude from this that the concept of objectivity is either dangerous or unhelpful, though various conceptions of the concept may become unhelpful in certain times and places, and may need to be revised.

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36 Because I will be defending objectivity on both ethical and epistemic grounds, my defense is can be called a type of virtue epistemology. For a detailed discussion of social virtue epistemology see Miranda Fricker *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

1.3.1. Chapter Summary

In Chapter Two I will go over the two different strategies of challenging objectivity already mentioned, calling for its revision or calling for its removal. I will examine major proponents of both strategies. Richard Rorty and Lorraine Code are two of the strongest voices calling for the removal of objectivity from epistemic discourse. Their reasons for calling for the removal of the term will be examined and clarified. Rorty also offers a proposed alternative to the ideal of objectivity. While this dissertation does not attempt to fully explore or explain Rorty's philosophy, I will have a few concerns to raise with regards to his proposed alternative to objectivity. Much of what I will say has been said or suggested before both by supporters and by critics of Rorty's view. I will then move to an examination of those calling for a revision of the term rather than for its removal. Sandra Harding is a prominent figure calling for the revision of the term objectivity and her reasons for demanding its revision will be explored. I will also raise a concern that Rorty, Code, and to a lesser extent, Harding, have simplified their understanding of the concept of objectivity, and neglected its complexity and its history, thus leading Rorty and Code in particular to view the concept as useless and dangerous.

In Chapter Three I will examine the history of objectivity relying on work by Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison. I will support the conceptual framework I have stipulated here with reference to Daston and Galison's work. I will show that the concept of objectivity has historically always opposed something problematic about the epistemic subject, and seems to still be doing so. I will quickly outline some conceptions of the concept of objectivity that have appeared in the past, and draw out

two influential conceptions of the concept that have had a significant historical influence and continue to be influential today: value-free objectivity and aperspectival objectivity. Turning to work done by Ian Hacking, I will argue that we have good reason to believe that objectivity does create categories of epistemic subject based on what has deemed to be problematic with the epistemic subject in the past. I will argue that objectivity is one of the methods by which communities make up knowers. Because objectivity opposes something problematic about the subject, and because it becomes internalized and requires self-policing, I argue that one of the basic characteristics of epistemic subjects created by concepts of objectivity in the past has been self-reflection. Epistemic subjects are under obligation to be self-reflective individuals since they must examine themselves in order to identify the problematic aspects of subjectivity that objectivity has been set up in opposition to.

Having thus established that objectivity does make up knowers, I will turn in Chapters Four and Five to an examination of what kinds of knowers have been created. Chapter Four will take an historical look in order to determine whether objectivity can be said to have been ethically or epistemically beneficial in the past. Using the example of the U.S. Suffrage movement, I will establish that a past conception of objectivity in terms of aperspectivalism and value-freedom, because of the commitments it places on the epistemic subject, likely did result in at least one conversion experience, that of William F. Kirby, senator for Arkansas. Because he had a personal commitment to avoid idiosyncratic beliefs and to root out background values, Kirby came to conclude that there was no intellectual reason why women should not vote. This example demonstrates that, in contrast to Lorraine Code's

arguments, objectivity is not inherently oppressive. It has contributed to ethical benefits in the past. However, this example by itself does not fully answer Rorty's criticism of objectivity since he claimed that objectivity might have been beneficial in the past but has now outlived its usefulness. I also acknowledge in the second half of Chapter Four, that this past conception of objectivity in terms of value-freedom and aperspectivalism was not itself free from problems. In particular, this conception was found to need to be reconceptualized. Helen Longino, among others, has suggested a way in which this conception might be reconceptualized. I examine Longino's claims and suggest that part of the motivation for these claims is a desire to avoid what I will call the bias-stalemate. Longino's suggested reconceptualization of objectivity by itself points to another possible stalemate, or breakdown of dialog, that might arise between epistemic communities rather than within an epistemic community. Relying on work by Alison Wylie, I examine a way in which she is suggesting reconceptualizing objectivity so as to move beyond an inter-community stalemate.

In Chapter Five, I take up the question of whether objectivity, as a concept, is useful now. I establish that one current conception of objectivity being used now is a Longino-Wylie type of conception of objectivity—one concerned with adjudication between values, and concerned with inter-community dialog, and one still being reconceptualized. One of the motivations behind this move to a Longino-Wylie conception of objectivity is the recognition that one value of objectivity is that an objective individual is a person who can be trusted. Naomi Scheman argues that, with the opacity of knowledge-producing institutions, and the lack of dialog between these institutions and other communities, trust has broken down. She thinks that lay

communities are justified in their decision not to trust communities of experts in current circumstances. This recognition, combined with the possible threat of an inter-community stalemate, leads to a current conception of objectivity concerned with inter-community dialog and trust. I argue that epistemic subjects concerned with their inability to appear as trustworthy individuals will be under obligation to enter into dialog with non-expert communities. One suggestion of how to build trust and enter into dialog with other communities comes from Heidi Grasswick, who suggests that knowledge-sharing may be a way to foster trust. Using the current example of the development of Marine-Protected Areas, I argue that Grasswick's suggestion is being adopted by scientists, at least in some scientific communities. I also argue that this scientific adoption of trust-building practices is leading to both ethical and epistemic benefits for the communities involved. From this I conclude that objectivity has not outlived its usefulness. However, I also note that objectivity is still changing. Scientists who attempt trust-building through knowledge-sharing are still struggling to build trust between their own and lay communities. Here, I shift from giving a descriptive account of how the negotiation of various conceptions of objectivity has proceeded to this point, and instead give a normative suggestion of how to overcome this current problem of the epistemic subject, the problem of trust. I suggest that scientists examine research done in rhetoric on how to present oneself as a trust-worthy individual. It may be time for scientists to consider revising the way they write and how they present their arguments and findings.

In Chapter Six, I examine one more objection that a supporter of Rorty's might give against the concept of objectivity. Rorty's main opposition to the concept of

objectivity was that it necessarily carried with it metaphysical connotations. Rorty argued that, because of this, he could not see any way to revise the term, and thus the term must be discarded. While I will have dealt with the term largely as an epistemic ideal throughout the dissertation, what I have said here in Chapter One means that I must acknowledge that my ability to separate the metaphysical from the epistemic connotations of the term will be problematic at best. In the last chapter of the dissertation I will suggest ways in which I think that the metaphysical connotations of the term may, themselves, be beneficial ethically and epistemically. I do not have space to give more than a suggestion here, and hope to pursue this possibility in future research.

Chapter 2: Objectivity in Question

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter I will use the conceptual structure for objectivity outlined in Chapter One (thinking of objectivity as an umbrella concept under which fall various conceptions of that concept) in order to understand what is motivating objections to objectivity arising mainly in pragmatism and feminist epistemology. As will be illustrated, these objections to the concept of objectivity fall into two main categories, those who argue that the concept is inherently dangerous and must be removed, and those who are calling for a reconceptualization of the concept, rather than an outright removal of the concept. I will argue that those who call for an outright removal of the concept of objectivity do so largely because of a mistaken view of the concept. Their mistake is in viewing the concept as a static ideal rather than a concept with a history: one that contains many different conceptions.

As I have demonstrated in Chapter One, several philosophers have objected to the use of the term 'objectivity. They often cite 'objectivity' as an exclusionary term used to keep women and marginalized groups out of epistemic debates. Typically these objections conceptualize objectivity as impartial, value-free or value-neutral.[1] Richard Rorty is, perhaps, the most prominent such philosopher, but there are also prominent feminist epistemologists and philosophers of science who object to the the term 'objectivity'. Lorraine Code, for example, presented a detailed account of

1 Sometimes a distinction is made between value-free and value-neutral, but sometimes no distinction is made. In the discussion that follows I will use the two terms largely interchangeably because value-free, value-neutral and impartiality, however they are conceived, seem to be aiming at overcoming the same problem, a perceived or real bias in the epistemic subject. The call for impartiality or value-neutrality rather than value-freedom seems motivated by a recognition that not all values count as biases. However, as my focus will be on values that have been classified as biases, I won't make this distinction.

androcentrism she sees built into the concept of objectivity (which she understands in terms of impartiality), in her influential 1991 book *What Can She Know?* Based on this account, Code advocates for a breakdown of the subjective/objective distinction. Sandra Harding argues that the 'traditional' account of objectivity in terms of 'value-neutrality' is unhelpful and not viable. But, in contrast to Code's proposal, Harding advocates for a reconceptualization of the concept of objectivity.

Louise Antony has summed up the two main strategies open to those who wish to question the ideal of objectivity in her article “Quine as Feminist”.

> The first strategy is to prove the *impossibility* of satisfying the ideal—this involves pointing to the *ubiquity* of bias. The second strategy is to try to demonstrate the *undesirability* of satisfying the ideal—this involves showing the *utility* of bias.[2]

Antony claims that those opposed to what she calls “objectivity as impartiality”[3] or objectivity conceptualized as free from bias, can argue that the ideal is not possible (by pointing out that it is impossible to be free from bias), and/or they can argue that it is not desirable (by pointing out the epistemic usefulness of some biases). Antony's assessment of these two broad strategies is useful for considering the work of both Rorty and Code, who can be seen to employ both strategies.

However, in order to understand Rorty's and Code's arguments I will need to point out a slight, but significant discrepancy between the arguments they present and the general outline Antony gives of the two arguments deployed by those

2 Louise Antony, “Quine as Feminist:The Radical Import of Naturalized Epistemology” (originally published in L. Antony and C. Witt (eds) *A Mind of One's Own* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1993)185-225.) Reprinted in *Epistemology; An Anthology* 2nd edition, eds. Ernest Sosa *et.al.* (Malden, M.A: Blackwell Publishing 2008), 570.

3 Antony, “Quine as Feminist,” 570.

opposed to objectivity. Antony's quotation above suggests that the typical way of revealing the undesirability of objectivity is by pointing to the desirability of subjective characteristics that are blocked by a commitment to objectivity in terms of bias-freedom. According to Antony, the argument claims that subjective biases themselves might be useful. But some who question the utility of objectivity do not do so by highlighting the usefulness of subjective biases, or some other form of subjectivity, but rather directly claim that objectivity is itself a dangerous and useless ideal. For example, it is possible for a theorist to argue not (or not merely) for the positive epistemic value of some aspect of the subjective but for the inherent danger and uselessness of the ideal of objectivity itself. In this case, the weight is not on a positive epistemic value that is being excluded by the concept of objectivity. Rather, the claim is that objectivity is, in itself, dangerous, regardless of what aspects of subjectivity are excluded from epistemic debate by the ideal. This strategy is to show that objectivity *itself* is a dangerous concept. One way this is done is by illustrating how the concept serves to keep minority views out of epistemic debate. One might argue, in line with Antony's identified strategies, that objectivity is objectionable because it excludes minority voices from epistemic debate, and having a diversity of minority opinion in debate is epistemically useful (thus objectivity is harmful because of the useful aspects of subjectivity it blocks). However, one might argue (and Rorty and Code both appear to employ this strategy) that objectivity is dangerous because the result of shutting voices out of the debate is, *in itself*, a bad thing. To elaborate further, one might argue that sorting positions into properly objective and merely subjective, and that the labeling of objectivity and subjectivity themselves, are intrinsically bad. This additional note to Antony's argument needs to be kept in mind

as we move through the arguments given by Rorty, Code and Harding.

Rorty is one of the most vocal objectors to objectivity and holds one of the strongest positions against objectivity: he demands not just its re-conceptualization, but its removal from our vocabulary. Similarly, Lorraine Code is almost as vocal an opponent as Rorty, arguing that objectivity is an inherently masculine, and therefore inherently oppressive term. This position is one that could be used to support Rorty's view. Code herself endorses a move towards relativism and away from objectivity as an epistemic ideal. Sandra Harding, and Louise Antony, in contrast to Rorty and Code, both find problems with the so-called 'traditional' or 'received' view of objectivity (a view Antony will question), but do not suggest the removal of the epistemic concept. Rather, both thinkers advocate for its reconceptualization. Similarly, some who claim to follow Rorty in his pragmatism do not support his conclusions on the question of objectivity.

In this chapter I will raise and discuss the concerns with, and objections to, objectivity raised by Rorty and by some philosophers working in feminist epistemology. This chapter will establish what some recent and influential concerns with objectivity are and why they are serious enough that anyone advocating for the ideal of objectivity must defend it. Furthermore, by looking at how some of Rorty's followers resist the removal of 'objectivity' from discourse, I will illustrate both some limitations of Rorty's own position and some reasons why objectivity might be a necessary concept in epistemology. In subsequent chapters, I will argue that even though we may find the concept of objectivity problematic as has been demonstrated by Rorty, Code and others, it seems that we need the concept. Harding's call for a

reconceptualization of the concept of objectivity is a preferable solution to Rorty's or Code's, and is one that fits with the concept of objectivity as outlined in Chapter One.

2.2. Why Not Objectivity?

In this section I will outline two arguments that have been given as to why objectivity should be removed from epistemic discourse: one by Richard Rorty and one by Lorraine Code. Both generally follow Antony's broad outline of the strategies typically employed by those who wish to question the viability of objectivity as an epistemic concept. However, they both show that there is one slight difference in how one can argue against the concept of objectivity. Both Rorty and Code aim to show that objectivity itself is an inherently oppressive concept that serves to support those in power and silence minority voices. Both object to objectivity not (or not only) because it blocks beneficial aspects of subjectivity, but because the distinction between the legitimate objective position and the merely subjective position is dangerous and so is intrinsically bad.

2.2.1. Rorty's Objections and Alternatives

In my explication of Richard Rorty's position on objectivity, I have drawn on work from four of his most influential books: *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature, Contingency, Irony and Solidarity, Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth,* and *Philosophy and Social Hope.*[4] I am mainly concerned here with Rorty's discussion of objectivity.

4I have also relied on work by Martin Kusch (Martin Kusch “Rorty on Solidarity and Objectivity in Science; A Reassessment,” *Forthcoming* (in Finnish Translation) in an anthology on solidarity), Sharyn Clough (*Beyond* Epistemology)and Jürgen Habermas (Jürgen Habermas, “Richard Rorty's Pragmatic Turn,” In *Rorty and His Critics*, Robert Brandom ed. (Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing Ltd. 2000.) 31-55.) in developing my understanding of Rorty, as well as his biography written by Neil Gross (Neil Gross, *Richard Rorty: The Making of an American Philosopher* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 2008.)). However, what appears below is an incomplete account of Rorty's larger project.

Many of his other theories will not be examined, or will be discussed in very little detail. But the focus of the dissertation is on the concept of objectivity, not on Rorty's philosophical theories.

Rorty holds the view that all analytic philosophy erroneously presupposes a gap between the knower and the world, resulting in the conclusion that truths about the world could only be gained by striving for an objective perspective. Objectivity, in Rorty's view, becomes necessary because of this gappy conception of the relationship between epistemology and metaphysics. Rorty argues that this picture of a gap is in error. The gap does not correctly represent what is really going on when we label something as 'true'. However, because of this error in reasoning, Rorty concludes that we were led to posit the concept of objectivity as an ideal that would allow us to overcome the gap. Therefore, if we remove the gap, we remove the need for the concept of objectivity. This, according to Rorty, is beneficial, since, on his view, objectivity itself is dangerous.

One early example of this argument against objectivity in Rorty's work is cashed out in terms of *essences.* The accepted story among analytic philosophers regarding essences is that philosophers once used to be very concerned with essences. However, many analytic philosophers pride themselves on having moved past all this talk of essences decades, if not centuries, ago. So, what Rorty means when he claims that neo-Kantians, Platonists and Positivists all think of the definition of a human being as being an essence seeker[5] is a bit unclear. Yet he goes on to build a theory of the role of metaphysics and epistemology on this idea of these

5 Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 357.

philosophers defining humans as essence-seekers.

> The notion that our chief task is to mirror accurately, in our own Glassy Essence, the universe around us is complement to the notion. . . that the universe is made up of very simple, clearly and distinctly knowable things, knowledge of whose essences provides the master-vocabulary which permits commensuration of all discourses.[6]

Rorty claims, in *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, that humans aim to become mirrors that accurately reflect the essence of the world around them without tarnishing it with their own essences. The idea, to put it in slightly different terminology, seems to be that we strive to see the world as it truly is, but this takes effort. Most of the time, without exerting effort, we end up only seeing some kind of imperfect image of the world, distorted by our own perspectives and 'essences'. What we are colours how we see the world, preventing us from seeing it as it really is.

Rorty argues that this idea of a gap between human knowing subjects and the world as it 'really' is is the problem. It is an error to think of the world and ourselves in this way. In fact, Rorty argues that this conception of a gap between ourselves and the world is the whole reason for the existence of epistemology in the first place. According to Rorty, if we did not posit a gap between ourselves and the world, we could do away with the discipline of epistemology entirely: “This classic picture of human beings must be set aside before epistemologically centered philosophy can be set aside.”[7] And it is the setting aside of epistemology, along with epistemic language, like 'objectivity', that Rorty is aiming for. But one might wonder why this gappy picture of the relationship between epistemology and metaphysics is problematic. Why set

6 Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature,* 357.
7 Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature,* 357.

aside the language of objectivity?

In his 1979 book, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, Richard Rorty claims there are roughly two uses of 'objectivity'. The first is the use he argues that we *think* we intend when we speak of something as being 'objective'. He claims objectivity is intended to be understood as applying to someone or some data that represents nature faithfully.[8] The second is the use he thinks we *actually* intend when we speak of something as being 'objective'. He claims we actually use the term to refer to 'widely agreed-upon belief.' "Within traditional epistemology, this latter use of the term has only rarely been seen for what it is: an admission that our only usable notion of 'objectivity' is 'agreement' rather than mirroring."[9] Thus, Rorty claims that we *think* we are speaking about things as objective, intending to speak of the world as it really is, but we *really* use the term 'objective' as a label for whatever we all happen to agree upon. One ramification of this conflation of the two senses of the term should be readily apparent. By confusing agreement for reality, the majority gain a significant amount of power, while those in marginalized positions have their views discounted as not mirroring reality. For example, if the majority views women's suffrage as demonstrably illogical, and confuses the two senses of objectivity, than they confuse their widespread agreement on this issue with the reality of the situation, which is both dangerous in itself, and instrumentally unhelpful. I will illustrate Rorty's discussion of both uses of the term 'objectivity' beginning with the first use in some detail before discussing the second.

The first understanding, and the one Rorty claims epistemologists strive to

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8 Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature,* 335-338.
9 Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature,* 336.

employ, is that objectivity is roughly understood as faithfully representing nature.[10] That is, a belief is objective just in case that belief represents nature, or a person is an objective individual just in case that individual is able to form beliefs that accurately represent nature. In *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature,* Rorty traces this view of objectivity through history, claiming that the view of an inner perspective and outer world, and the need for the inner perspective to match the outer (or to be a mirror image of it), has been the driving force behind philosophy since Descartes.

Rorty argues that the shift from epistemology to philosophy of language was just a new development in this quest to make the inner match the outer. This time the inner was no longer seen as the 'mind' or thought, which Rorty classifies as a "'private' mirror of nature" but was seen as language, which Rorty claims it was all too tempting to think of as a "'public' mirror of nature."[11] Initially, philosophy of language was meant to move us past these mirroring worries, but Rorty claims that for many philosophers the worries over mirroring remained. The worry shifted from a concern that we were all brains in vats, to a concern that our language was shaping the way we see and investigate the world and could be obscuring the truth of the outer.[12] Analytic philosophers may have thought that the move from mind to language as the focus for representation would eliminate the gap, but Rorty claims that in many cases the same situation still holds. One still has the representation (sentences and/or propositions in the language, not beliefs in the mind), and what it is a representation of (the world). Thus, the gap between the representation and the world often remains,

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10 Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature,* 335-338.

11 Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, 211. In this case, the 'inner' represented by language does not seem to be an inner relative to an individual, but rather a whole community might share a perspective on the world, influenced and represented by language.

12 Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature,* 257-311.

despite the move from mind to language.

A decade later, in his book *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity,* Rorty expanded on this view claiming that this whole 'correspondence' theory of truth—in which objectivity serves as a way to ensure that we gain the truth—is in error.

> We need to make a distinction between the claim that the world is out there and the claim that truth is out there. To say that the world is out there, that it is not our creation, is to say, with common sense, that most things in space and time are the effects of causes which do not include human mental states. To say that truth is not out there is simply to say that where there are no sentences there is no truth, that sentences are elements of human languages, and that human languages are human creations.[13]

If truth is a property of sentences, which are human creations, then objectivity is unnecessary. There is no gap between us and the truth about the world. Rather, truth could not exist were it not for humans and human language. Thus, according to Rorty, we can do away with the concept of objectivity once we recognize our mistaken gappy view of our relationship to the world, and to truth. Rorty argues that we can give up the notion of objectivity, but he does not want to give up the notion of truth. He argues that the existence of the term 'objectivity' depends on the way we think of the concept of 'truth'. If Rorty can show that the correspondence theory of truth makes no sense, then there is no need for the term 'objectivity'. Objectivity exists because correspondence exists. Without correspondence, we will have no need for objectivity and we can let it drop. This leaves Rorty with the task of explaining truth in a way that does not depend on correspondence (not a daunting task in itself, and one that has

13 Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity (*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) 5.

been undertaken by other philosophers as well).[14]

Not only can objectivity be easily lost once we recognize that there is no correspondence theory of truth but Rorty argues that it *should* be lost. Rorty thinks objectivity is shifting our focus from real-world people and real-world communities by encouraging us to think in a way that does not require reference to any human beings. In his 1991 book *Objectivity, Relativism and Truth*, Rorty argues that individuals who seek objectivity distance themselves from others in a community. Rorty claims that:

> Insofar as a person is seeking solidarity, she does not ask about the relation between the practices of the chosen community and something outside that community. Insofar as a she seeks objectivity, she distances herself from the actual persons around her not by thinking of herself as a member of some other real or imaginary group, but rather by attaching herself to something which can be described without reference to any particular human being.[15]

Objectivity, then, according to Rorty, serves to distance and separate us. It works against any fostering of community, and encourages individuals to disengage from actual persons and actual situations. Rather than listening to a minority view and considering why those in the minority hold a different opinion, Rorty's worry seems to be that those in the majority, believing that they have objective truth on their side, disengage with their interlocutors. In place of objectivity, Rorty advocates solidarity. He argues that we should be solidarity-seekers. We should look for answers within

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14 See, for example A. Tarski, “The semantic conception of truth” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 4 (1944): 13–47; Donald Davidson “A Coherence Theory of Truth and Knowledge” Originally published in *Truth and Interpretation: Perspectives on the Philosophy of Donald Davidson*, Ernest LePore ed. (New York: Blackwell, 1989) 307-319, Reprinted in *Epistemology; An Anthology* 2nd edition. eds. Ernest Sosa *et.al.* (Malden, M.A: Blackwell Publishing, 2008): 124-133.

15 Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth,* 21.

our community, and engage with actual persons.

So objectivity is useless, since there is no glassy essence which we need to polish in order to correctly mirror the world, as Rorty put it in 1979. In 1989 he rephrased the same objection, this time focusing on correspondence rather than essences. He argued that there is no gap between us and the truth of the world to bridge. Truth exists in language, and therefore requires us and our communities. In both 1979 and 1989 there is a common message. Rorty claims both with reference to the language of essences and with reference to the language of gaps and correspondence that there is no separation between the knowers and the world to overcome. Rorty also argues that objectivity is dangerous, since it allows and encourages individuals to disengage from the communities wherein Rorty thinks truth is actually created. He urges us to make this shift in thinking from the correspondence view of truth and objectivity to a community view of truth and a loss of objectivity. This will keep us grounded in our communities regarding both scientific and moral truths. This grounding is itself one more benefit Rorty sees arising out of a removal of the concept of 'objectivity'. He highlights this benefit both in his 1991 book, as was shown above, and in his earlier 1989 book where he argues that:

> The importance of this shift [away from correspondence and towards community] is that it makes it impossible to ask the question 'Is ours a moral society?' It makes it impossible to think that there is something which stands to my community as my community stands to me. . .[16]

Making this shift away from objectivity not only grounds us in our community, but discourages us from looking beyond our community. Not only are we grounded in the

16 Rorty, *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity,* 59.

physical, but looking to the metaphysical, or beyond the community in any other way, is now discouraged. To think of some larger community is to think of something beyond my community against which the truth of the moral and scientific claims my community makes can be measured. But Rorty argues that this is just the correspondence theory of truth again. We need to make the mental shift away from this theory, and make it impossible to transcend our community borders. We need to see the ideal of the objective perspective as *both* impossible and undesirable in order to promote and expand community solidarity. Some might have concerns about a theory that makes it impossible to transcend one's own community. It looks as though this theory extends not only to the failure to transcend to the metaphysical, but potentially the failure to even compare one's community to another community. Yet we seem to be able to compare our own community to others without necessarily invoking a correspondence theory of truth. It is possible that Rorty's intention is merely to block the metaphysical transcendence, not the social one. However, Rorty needs this notion of the inability to look beyond one's own community in order to explain and support his positive view of ethnocentrism, to be discussed shortly.[17] So social transcendence may also be problematic in Rorty's theory. In place of comparing our community to others, Rorty advocates a widening of community borders (as will be discussed below). Thus we are not transcending community borders, we are widening them to include others.

Rorty argues that the history of objectivity proves that objectivity, as understood in the first sense of the term, a representation of nature, is fruitless and

17 While this view may seem puzzling and counterintuitive to some readers, and while I will have questions and concerns to raise, the task right now is to gain as clear a picture of Rorty's proposed alternative to objectivity as possible. Questions and objections will be raised in section five.

undesirable.[18] This goal of striving to match one's inner representations to the outer world is unattainable, and rests on a misapprehension of what it means to be 'true'. It also isolates individuals and turns the focus away from community, which is an unhelpful and undesirable outcome. Rorty does more than just claim that objectivity is isolating, is shifting the focus away from community and is unhelpful. He also claims that 'objectivity' as understood in this first sense of the term, does not really exist anyway. We cannot really make the inner match the outer and when we examine the way we really do use the term, it turns out that we do not use it to identify propositions and beliefs that do match the outer, since we have no way of knowing when they do this. Instead, we use the term to denote any beliefs that are widely accepted.

So, Rorty's discussion of objectivity in the first sense—as an ideal needed in order to bridge the gap between epistemology and metaphysics, or knowledge-claims and the world, as Rorty alternatively states it—loosely matches Antony's assessment of the two general ways philosophers tend to question objectivity as an epistemic ideal. Rorty does argue that the ideal is unattainable, though he does not do so by pointing out that biases cannot be removed, but rather by suggesting that there is no gap between our biased perspectives and the world to overcome. The gap itself and the proposed need to overcome the gap, are mistaken detours in the history of philosophy. Rorty also argues that objectivity, in this first sense, is undesirable, though he does so by suggesting not that the opposites of objectivity are desirable in themselves, but by arguing that objectivity pulls us away from community solidarity, something he sees as desirable. So, Rorty's assessment of objectivity in the first sense broadly conforms to Antony's two categories.

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18 Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth,* 7.

The second use of objectivity which Rorty identifies is that 'objective' is understood as widespread agreement. In 1979 he suggests that objectivity is used as a rhetorical device to suggest that one group holds the true picture of the world, and others are mistaken. He attributes this to a perpetuated dogma that “only where there is correspondence to reality is there the possibility of rational agreement.”[19] Thus, if individuals who take themselves to be rational all agree, they can be confident of holding a true picture of reality. In 1989's *Objectivity, Relativism and Truth*, Rorty argues that science is a social tool, and it is not bringing us closer to objectivity, in the first sense of the term.[20] All objectivity and scientific inquiry in search of objectivity is *really* doing is shaping social opinion. To say that something is 'objectively true' is *actually* just to say that 'we all agree,' or 'we find it useful to believe'.[21] In summary, Rorty argues that the first use of objectivity is useless, unhelpful and unattainable and gives us a picture of the world that works against solidarity. This second use of objectivity, as long as it goes unrecognized and is conflated with the first, is dangerous. The best way to ensure that the second use of objectivity, which Rorty seems to have no in-principle objection to, is not conflated with the first, is to refrain from using the term 'objectivity' in these cases, and simply acknowledge that the belief is widely agreed-upon.

In *Objectivity, Relativism and Truth*, Rorty argues that objectivity is fruitless and dangerous when used in the second sense (as objectivity can only ever be used)

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19 Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature,* 335-338.
20 Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth,* 33.
21 Rorty, Richard, *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth,* 43;. Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature,* 336. This again is a problem with Rorty's account which I will discuss later. It only takes a moment to see that there are cases where 'widely agreed-upon' and 'useful' need not, and often do not, refer to the same beliefs. However, I will deal with this concern with Rorty's view after delivering a clear picture of the view in its entirety.

but conflated with the first sense (as he thinks we often do). Rorty argues that those who claim to hold the objective truth on their side are intolerant to others, and mistreat them. He likens objectivity to a weapon that allows us to have “firm, unrevisable, moral principles which were not merely 'ours' but 'universal' and 'objective.'”[22] Rorty goes on to show that this weapon works both against its wielders and the opposition. “How could we avoid having these weapons turn in our hands and bash all the genial tolerance out of our own heads?”[23] Those who rely on objectivity may, according to Rorty, become less tolerant. They claim to have found something which they label as 'objective' but which is really only 'wide-spread agreement'. By failing to recognize that objectivity is unattainable and useless and by claiming to have some deep metaphysical truth where they really only have agreement among the members of their community, those who strive after objectivity become intolerant of others who disagree. Disagreement here is not merely a matter of what is 'useful to believe,' or what is 'widely agreed-upon,' but is mistakenly seen as a matter of what is 'objectively true'. Those who dissent from prevailing opinion are seen to be in error, to fail to hold objective truth. Those with objective truth on their side can easily ignore and marginalize the dissenters. This understanding of objectivity, then, is active and dangerous. By contrast, those who rely on solidarity become more tolerant. It is the path of solidarity, not objectivity, that leads to a tolerant and liberal society and is the path Rorty advocates for. His suggestion seems to be that solidarity will lead to the inclusion of more minority voices, allow for more flexibility in beliefs, and could ultimately lead to truths that are deemed to be more useful.

This second refutation of objectivity, based on the second use of the term Rorty

22 Rorty,*Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth,* 43.
23 Rorty,*Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth,* 43.

identifies, is similar to Antony's second suggestion of how individuals typically question or refute the ideal of objectivity. However, it is not exactly the same. Rorty points to the ideal itself as causing harm not because of what it does not allow (biases, values, etc.) but because of what it does allow (a belief that one has the truth in some transcendent metaphysical sense of the term). Objectivity, according to Rorty, is dangerous because it is a tool that can be used to silence minority opinion and foster intolerance. Instead, Rorty again urges that we recognize that objectivity really has no connection to truth in a metaphysical sense, and thus see the term for what it really is.

> For pragmatists, the desire for objectivity is not the desire to escape the limitations of one's community, but simply the desire for as much intersubjective agreement as possible, the desire to extend the reference of "us" as far as we can.[24]

In his 1991 book, Rorty again advocates recognizing that objectivity did not mean what we thought it meant, and thus doing away with the term. He argues that the term should be replaced with a commitment to community solidarity and with a desire to expand our widespread beliefs as far as possible, gaining as much intersubjective agreement as possible. Thus, here in 1991, as in 1989, the focus is on community solidarity rather than transcendence, metaphysics, or the external world.

In answer to the question of why one might value solidarity over objectivity, Rorty can give no non-circular justification for this value of wide-spread agreement. Since he has insisted that one cannot look beyond one's community's borders for justification, Rorty must conclude that no non-circular justification is possible. Instead,

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24 Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth,* 23.

he appeals to ethnocentrism. He argues that the reason why these values of widening intersubjective agreement and community solidarity are good values is merely because his community values them and has a history of valuing them. In answer to the challenge of why a liberal society with a value of widespread agreement and solidarity is a good thing to aim for, Rorty appeals directly to circularity. He claims that "[w]e should say that we must, in practice, privilege our own group, even though there can be no noncircular justification for doing so."[25] The reason to privilege these values of wide-spread agreement and liberalism is that we do privilege these values, we have privileged these values, and we must privilege them because of the community we belong to. These values are a defining feature of a liberal community, and a basis on which to build solidarity.

Rorty's argument for ethnocentrism allows him to give circular justifications for the beliefs and values he holds. For Rorty, if others are sufficiently different from his own community, the value of widening community borders must be given up for another value, community preservation. In these cases, conversation breaks down and, should the encounter be sufficiently threatening, Rorty claims that the matter will come down to each side reaching for his or her gun. [26]This allows him to avoid the charge of relativism, since he can condemn another community's beliefs and values from his own community's perspective. Conversation can break down and one can legitimately value one's own community's beliefs over another community's beliefs.[27]

Having concluded that objectivity is either useless, unattainable and unhelpful,

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25 Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth,* 29.

26 Richard Rorty,"Universality and Truth" in *Rorty and His Critics* ,ed. Robert Brandom, (Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2000),13-14.

27 In avoiding relativism Rorty leaves himself open to some serious challenges as will be discusses in Section 2.5.1. However, as will be shown with Code, not all objectors to objectivity are concerned with avoiding relativism.

or rhetorically deployed in dangerous ways, Rorty advocates its loss. It either separates us from each other and the world, or it gives us a false sense of confidence and certainty when we conflate wide-spread agreement with the notion of objective truth and correspondence with reality. In place of objectivity Rorty advocates acknowledging that all we meant when we claimed to possess objective truth was that we held beliefs that were widely agreed-upon, but keep in mind that this does not mean we hold beliefs that correspond in some special way to the world. This requires not just giving up objectivity and its conceptual connection with the gap between the knowing subject and the world, or the inner and the outer, but also consciously altering how we understand the term 'truth'.

Rorty's account is both descriptive and prescriptive. He thinks that the account he gives of objectivity in terms of 'widespread agreement' is really the way the term is deployed. He also thinks 'truth' really cannot refer to any correspondence notion. This is the descriptive aspect of his account. However, his account is also prescriptive insofar as his ability to make us cognizant of the truth of his descriptive claims will alter the way we live and the values we hold. We need to discard objectivity and the correspondence theory of truth and replace these with a notion of widespread agreement and a new account of truth. Rorty seems hopeful that his descriptions of the ways we *really* use objectivity and truth will lead us to accept his prescription that we discard objectivity and re-conceptualize truth.[28] Though Rorty's account is one of the strongest criticisms against objectivity, since it actively advocates for the loss of the epistemic concept, there are also others who criticize the ideal of objectivity, some

28 In order to maintain consistence in Rorty's own account, it is important to note that this *'really'* likely refers to how Rorty sees things from his own perspective, and is an endorsement by Rorty of our also adopting this perspective. He cannot mean anything like 'the way the world really is' if he is to maintain consistency in his account.

almost as strongly as Rorty. Lorraine Code, to whom I will turn next, argues that objectivity is dangerous because it is a largely Western, androcentric term. She claims that the term itself restricts women and other marginalized groups from participating in the construction of knowledge.

2.2.2. Code's Charges Against Objectivity

The objections I will present from Lorraine Code come from her 1991 book *What Can She Know? Feminist Theory and the Construction of Knowledge*. In this book, Code begins by questioning what she sees as 'traditional epistemology' and a traditional understanding of paradigmatic knowledge. She claims that traditional epistemology often cites paradigmatic knowledge in terms of “S knows that p” where S is any knower and p is any object of knowledge. By phrasing the paradigm of knowledge in this way, traditional epistemologists deny the sex of the knower as being important. It is exactly this issue (whether the sex of the knower is important) that Code wishes to address. She finds objectivity, as an epistemic ideal, to highlight exactly why she thinks the issue of the sex of the knower is important:

> Objectivity, quite precisely construed, is commonly regarded as a defining feature of knowledge per se. So if women's knowledge is declared to be *naturally* subjective, then a clear answer emerges to my question. The answer is that if the would-be knower is female, then her sex is indeed epistemically significant, for it disqualifies her as a knower in the fullest sense of the term.[29]

Code argues that, because of the common understanding of objectivity, the connection between objectivity and knowledge, and the common understanding of the relation of women to objectivity, the sex of the knower absolutely matters. To put it

29 Code, *What Can She Know?,* 10.

simply, if the knower is female, she cannot be objective and so cannot really hold the status of being a knower. Code's understanding of objectivity, here and throughout the book, is based on a value-neutral conception of the term. That is, Code argues that those who label themselves as objective take themselves to be value-neutral.[30]

Code has several strategies for combating this understanding of the relationship between women and knowledge. First, she challenges the paradigmatic status of 'S knows that p,' and argues that there is such a thing as subjective knowledge. Second, she argues that one must pay attention to where the ideal of objectivity came from, or more properly, out of whose standpoint the idea evolved. This allows her to expose the ideal itself as androcentric and value-laden, not value-free or impartial, despite what those who call themselves objective might think. Finally, based on this, Code argues for a more relativistic view of knowledge. She claims that knowledge should be relative to standpoint and situation. Throughout the argument Code maintains that she is not advocating a complete loss of objectivity. However, the objectivity she is comfortable in keeping seems to be one that refers to the world, not to the knower. She links objectivity to facts and to realism.[31] From this, I conclude that she wishes to maintain a realist position, and has a commitment to an objective world, but she does not appear to have a commitment to objectivity on the part of the knower. It is this type of objectivity, an objective perspective or objective stance, that Code objects to. As my aim here is to defend objectivity as an epistemic ideal, Code's allowance of objectivity with regards to the world is still a dismissal of objectivity as an

30 Code, *What Can She Know?,* 31.

31 Code, *What Can She Know?,* 215. Curiously, this means that Code tacitly endorses the very gap between knowledge and reality that Rorty is striving to have us see as an error in thinking. Yet, many of Code's arguments will be seen to strengthen Rorty's position.

epistemic ideal and thus runs counter to my aims in this dissertation.

Code, like Rorty, begins her discussion of objectivity by examining what she takes the term to mean. She does not outline two distinct uses of the term, as Rorty finds. However, after my discussion of the various ways the term has been interpreted in Chapter One, it should not be surprising that Code identifies one paradigmatic use, and Rorty finds two common uses. (After all, Douglas identified eight uses whereas Lloyd only found four.) Code claims that objectivity is most commonly understood as value-neutrality.

> The assumption of value-neutrality at the heart of the received view of objectivity owes much to the pride of place accorded to scientific knowledge, with *its* alleged value-neutrality, among human intellectual achievements.[32]

Code claims that the reason that objectivity is understood as value-neutrality is because that is how objectivity is understood in science, and scientific knowledge carries a huge amount of weight. So, in approaching her critique of objectivity, Code understands the term in terms of value-neutrality. I will illustrate in the next chapter that this is a common understanding of the term. But this is not the end of her discussion of the term. Codes goes on to argue that

> [k]nowledge produced in seemingly objective ways carries an authority that mirrors, reinforces, and probably also derives from masculine authority. Its alleged derivation from detached, pure thought permits it to claim superiority over modes of thought infected by emotion or feeling. [33]

Code argues that we attach objectivity to knowledge and assume that the only

32 Code, *What Can She Know?,* 31.
33 Code, *What Can She Know?,* 35.

statements that count as real knowledge are those that are objective. This leads to an inequality when it comes to access to, and claims of, knowledge. Objectivity, characterized as unemotional, detached and impersonal, is, according to Code and Elisabeth Fee whom Code cites, also characterized as masculine.[34] It is derived from and reciprocally confers authority on men. Women, by contrast, are often characterized as emotional, attached, personal, and subjective, and as such are blocked from being knowers under this understanding of objective knowledge. To support this perceived dichotomy, Code notes that reason has been the domain of men. When early modern philosophers claimed that man was rational, they did not intend 'man' to stand for 'humans.' “It is commonplace of western philosophy and folklore, then, that women are irrational creatures, either inferior or utterly lacking in reason.”[35] Code later revises this point about the relationship of the received view of objectivity to masculinity, clarifying that it is a certain type of masculinity to which she is referring. That is, objectivity grew out of, and reinforces the authority of, Western European men.[36]

Having established her understanding of the received view of objectivity, and her understanding of where it came from and whom it represents and gives authority to, Code argues that the only way for women and other minorities to gain authoritative entry into epistemic debate is for them as knowers to challenge the paradigm of knowledge, and the assumption that knowledge is always objective. Code argues throughout her book that there is another standard of knowledge which has just as much legitimacy to be paradigmatic as “S knows that p” does. This is relational

34 Code, *What Can She Know*?, 35.
35 Code, *What Can She Know?,* 117.
36 Code, *What Can She Know?,* 70.

knowledge between subjects. Code argues that subjects know other subjects, and that this is a case of *subjective* as well as *objective* knowledge. There are objective facts about subjects, such as their sex, hair colour, height, etc. However, the knowledge is also a subjective knowledge for two reasons:1) the object of knowledge is a subject in relational knowledge; and 2) Code argues that "'knowing that' [as in S knows that p] captures but a small part of what people know."[37] In addition, in relational knowledge, subjects change. Who we are as people and what we know about each other, shifts and changes as we face different situations together. Thus the knowledge is not static and stable the way paradigmatic, objective, "S knows that p" knowledge is.[38]

With this revelation that there is at least one other candidate for the paradigm of knowledge and that this candidate is markedly subjective, Code argues that, "knowledge is, necessarily and inescapably, the product of an intermingling of subjective and objective elements."[39] Code argues that the location of the knower, the enthusiasm, desire, and values the knower might have all gone into shaping the knowledge-claim. Yet these facts, facts of location, emotion and value, are facts that are not admissible under a value-neutral, objective conception of knowledge. Therefore, knowledge is not entirely objective if what we mean by objective is value-neutral. It's hard to see why Code would think knowledge is objective at all given that it fails to meet the received view of objectivity. But remember that Code also applies the concept of objectivity to facts about the real world, even though she doesn't list this as part of the received view. So, insofar as there is some fact of the matter about

37 Code, *What Can She Know?,* 253.
38 Code, *What Can She Know?,* 36-46.
39 Code, *What Can She Know?,* 30.

the knowledge-claim, there is an objective element. But, for Code, this objectivity is not an ideal that the epistemic subject strives for, it is a fact about the world.

Because location, values and emotions matter, Code argues that the sex of the knower matters as well, thus answering her initial question. However, with this understanding of knowledge as subjective and objective, Code is able to address the troubling received view of objectivity. Women and other minorities cannot be barred from being knowers in the fullest sense once we recognize that being labeled as non-objective is no barrier to knowledge. Though this book, *What Can She Know?* is primarily a book examining whether the sex of the knower matters, one of the reasons Code thinks it must matter is because of the dichotomous relationship of sex to objectivity. One sex is thought capable of being objective, the other is not. This argument of the inherent oppressiveness of objectivity supports Rorty's view of objectivity as dangerous. Both Code and Rorty have extended Antony's common arguments against objectivity. They both strive to show not only that objectivity is unattainable, and that alternatives to objectivity are useful, but that objectivity itself is a dangerous concept to have. It silences minorities, breaks down solidarities, encourages intolerance and enables a tyranny of one group over the other. Insofar as knowledge is power, those who have access to the knowledge have power over those who don't. Finally, Code highlights one more way in which objectivity can be dangerous to minorities; the term isolates the majority from political responsibility and criticism. Code argues that

> [s]cientists can absolve themselves from moral-political responsibility by invoking the overriding value of objectivity. Presenting their findings in an

> impersonally objective manner ('the facts show'), speaking with the authority of their institutional position, masks the identity—indeed, the existence—of the cognitive agents whose values, in effect, shape and guide the inquiry.[40]

Code argues, in a move Rorty would likely agree with, that objectivity is used as a way to remove the holders of knowledge from debate and responsibility. One cannot debate with the truth. If something is true, if it is a fact, then it is unquestionable, and as such those who hold it are in the right. Those who dissent are left with no recourse. Both Rorty and Code, then, argue that the term 'objectivity' is masking what is really going on in our knowledge-making practices.

Code and Rorty represent the strongest opposition to the ideal of objectivity. Their opposition goes further than Antony lays out. They don't just claim that objectivity is leaving out important and useful tools in the production of knowledge. Rather, they argue that objectivity *itself* is dangerous and useless, regardless of whether or not values and partiality are useful for knowledge. There is something built into the category of objectivity itself that is harmful to minorities and communities according to Rorty and Code.

If objectivity is dangerous, unhelpful, masking our true epistemic practices, allowing existing inequalities to persist, and working against the fostering of communities (not to mention being an unattainable ideal in the first place), then why would anyone want to defend it? Yet some people do acknowledge all these problems, and still seek to defend objectivity, typically by suggesting a reconceptualization of the term. Sandra Harding is one of the leading philosophers advocating for a reconceptualization of the term. While she does have criticisms

40 Code, *What Can She Know?,* 35.

against the received or common view of objectivity, she represents a more moderate view than Rorty or Code, since she does not advocate for the loss of the term, and indeed suggests that losing the concept of objectivity may be extremely difficult.

2.3. Standpoint Theory and Sandra Harding

While Rorty and Code highlight dangerous and oppressive elements in the term 'objectivity' and therefore advocate its loss, Sandra Harding, though she agrees that objectivity has been oppressive, does not advocate for a loss of the term. In very general terms, Harding represents a group of feminist epistemologists who find objectivity conceptualized as value-neutral to be harmful, but do not draw the larger conclusion that objectivity as an epistemic concept is inherently dangerous or oppressive. Rather, Harding advocates keeping objectivity as an epistemic concept, but notes that "[i]t needs updating, rehabilitation, so that it is capable of functioning effectively in the science-based society. . ."[41] Harding argues that objectivity can be kept, but not in its value-neutral form.

Harding, like Rorty and Code, begins her 1995 paper, "'Strong Objectivity': A Response to the New Objectivity Question," by briefly examining the concept of objectivity itself. Like Rorty and Code, and like Douglas and Lloyd as discussed in Chapter One, Harding finds that objectivity can be understood in various ways. However, unlike these other thinkers, Harding declines to come to a definition (or two, or eight) of the term. Rather, she notes that the term has meant many different things to different people in different contexts.[42] There is one constant that she claims to

41 Sandra Harding, "'Strong Objectivity': A Response to the New Objectivity Question," *Synthese* 104, no. 3(1995) 347.
42 Harding, "Strong Objectivity," 332-333.

have identified in the concept of objectivity. Harding, relying on the work of Robert Proctor, claims that no matter how objectivity has been understood in different contexts, it has always required value-neutrality.[43] Harding traces one possible reason for this. If one thinks of political threats as imposing their values on science (Harding gives creationism as an example of this,) then a good, though far from foolproof way to deal with these imposed and unwanted values would be to demand value-neutrality from scientists. However, Harding argues that there is another type of political value that is found in science. This one goes unnoticed by the mainstream since it is a kind of politics that emerges in science from the culture in which scientists find themselves. These political values are not imposed on science from without, but arise within science because of the context in which the science is being done. “Paradoxically, this kind of politics [the second kind] functions through the depoliticizations of science—through the creation of 'normal' or authoritarian science.”[44] Harding argues that it is through science's commitment to objectivity in the form of neutrality that these second, hidden, kind of political values really become influential. In many ways, then, her account of scientific objectivity parallels Rorty's and Code's. Harding claims that

> [t]his normalizing politics frequently defines the objections of its victims and any criticisms of its institutions, practices, or conceptual world as agitation by special interests that threatens to damage the neutrality of science and its 'civilizing mission', as an earlier generation saw the matter. Thus, when sciences are already in the service of the mighty, scientific neutrality ensures that 'might makes right'.[45]

43 Harding, “Strong Objectivity,” 333. I will challenge this as the best candidate for a constant in the concept of objectivity in Chapter Three and have already indicated in Chapter One that I find subjectivity to be a more fruitful constant.
44 Harding, “Strong Objectivity,” 335.
45 Harding, “Strong Objectivity,” 337.

The threat that objectivity presents is that it serves to keep the powerful in power. It supports the values of those in power paradoxically by denying that they are values and claiming that knowledge gained by those in power is objective. Thus it serves to silence minority opinion since minority values can easily be identified by the majority and thus identifies the holders of minority opinion as failing to be objective in terms of value-neutrality. Harding uses this argument to support her claim that objectivity as commonly understood (in terms of value-neutrality) is too weak to do what we want objectivity to do, since it does not prevent this power dichotomy and hidden values from entering scientific discourse. Not only can it not prevent values from entering the discourse but because of its commitment to value-neutrality, it cannot adjudicate between values. “Weak objectivity [value-neutral objectivity] is unable to discriminate between those interests and values that enlarge our understanding and those that limit it.”[46] In order to combat the perceived weaknesses in weak objectivity, Harding proposes what she calls 'strong objectivity' and supports this concept with reference to feminist standpoint theory.[47]

According to Alison Wylie in her 2003 article and Kristen Intemann in her 2010 article, feminist standpoint theory has two basic theses:

1. *The Situated-Knowledge Thesis:* Social location systematically influences our experiences, shaping and limiting what we know, such that knowledge is achieved from a particular standpoint. . .

2. *The Thesis of Epistemic Advantage*: Some standpoints, specifically the standpoints of marginalized or oppressed groups, are

46 Harding, “Strong Objectivity,” 340.
47 Harding's decision to give her conception of objectivity the label 'Strong Objectivity' is a reflection of the affinity her position shares with the strong program in the sociology of scientific knowledge.

epistemically advantaged (at least in some contexts). . .[48]

These two requirements allow Harding and other standpoint theorists to allow values into epistemic and scientific debates, but not just any values. The second thesis of standpoint theory makes clear that not all values are created equal. Some values, in some contexts, with reference to some knowledge claims, are epistemically privileged over others.[49] One can see that Marxist influence in standpoint theory as laid out here. Feminist standpoint theory and Marxist theory both share the claim that the standpoints of marginalized groups have the ability to be epistemically superior to mainstream standpoints. The key to gaining this epistemic privileged is consciousness raising, or critical reflection on one's position. Harding uses standpoint theory to reform the ideal of objectivity, arguing for a need to move away from value-neutrality and towards feminist standpoint theory.

Harding argues that objectivity need not be given up. In fact she goes further than this, arguing that objectivity as an epistemic concept would be exceedingly difficult to give up. She argues that the ideal of objectivity, whether attainable or not (she suggests it's probably not) is “deeply embedded in the ethic and rhetoric of democracy at personal, communal and institutional levels.”[50] Harding argues that the language of objectivity is the language people use in epistemic debates and when making knowledge claims. Not only is this the vocabulary we use, but Harding claims the ideal of objectivity is embedded in our ethical practices as well and embedded at

48 Kristen Intemann, “25 Years of Feminist Empiricism and Standpoint Theory: Where Are We Now?” *Hypatia* 25, no. 4 (Fall, 2010): 783. See also Wylie, Alison. “Why Standpoint Matters,” in *Science and Other Cultures: Issues in Philosophies of Science and Technology,* eds. Robert Figueroa and Sandra Harding, (New York and London: Routledge. 2003): 28.
49 The importance of critical reflection will be discussed again in Chapter Four.
50 Harding, “Strong Objectivity,” 347.

all levels. This observation serves to question Rorty's proposal that one do away with the language of objectivity. In Harding's estimation, objectivity is such a part of Western European culture that we cannot simply make a clean break from the language and the ethical ideal and begin again. Thus, based on Harding's argument, one might wonder whether Rorty's insistence on doing away with the concept of objectivity is something that can be done easily, or even done at all. In line with her standpoint position, Harding advocates beginning from where we are. She argues that we should keep the concept of objectivity (because to do otherwise is exceedingly difficult), but update the concept and change the way it is understood. In short, she argues for a move from weak objectivity to strong objectivity.

In her 1991 book, *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?* Harding defines strong objectivity as "extending the notion of scientific research to include systematic examination of . . . powerful background beliefs."[51] She expands on this notion, arguing that science, under weak or value-free objectivity, only allows for a question to be examined from one perspective, that of the mainstream. In addition, those who occupy the standpoint of the mainstream are unable to critically reflect on their own values and beliefs. Thus these values and beliefs go unquestioned. By contrast, strong objectivity has as its mandate the questioning of these background values and beliefs. Harding argues that a good way to begin this critical examination of our own standpoint is by starting from the standpoint of the Other (in a Sartrean sense of Other), someone who is not occupying the mainstream. In an interview, Harding summed it up in the following way:

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51 Sandra Harding, "'Strong Objectivity' and Socially Situated Knowledge" in *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press. 1991) 149.

> So strong objectivity is an issue, to put it in an extremely simplistic way, of learning to see ourselves as others see us . . . marginal lives are at least one good place, one good strategy for doing this.[52]

Strong objectivity will also use the theses of feminist standpoint theory to allow values into the epistemic debate,and adjudicate between values, something weak objectivity is unable to do. “We must be able to identify the social causes of good beliefs, not just of bad ones . . .”[53] Thus strong objectivity is strong because it acknowledges the existence of values in the epistemic debate (something weak objectivity ignores) and it is able to adjudicate between values (something weak objectivity cannot do). The adjudication seems to be dependent on context and situation. Thus, in some contexts Harding claims that the values of those holding a mainstream standpoint might be better, and in other contexts marginalized standpoints will be better. Though it is not the case that the marginalized position will always be the better one from which to critically reflect on and adjudicate between knowledge claims, Harding argues that it is still necessary to include these standpoints in scientific investigation. Without them, we are generating impoverished knowledge claims, and are unable to reflect on our own beliefs.[54] In this way, Harding stresses that it is not only the subjects of knowledge that fall subject to political influence, but that the objects of knowledge are, likewise, influenced politically.

> The notion of 'strong objectivity' conceptualizes the value of putting the subject or agent of knowledge in the same critical, causal plane as the object of his or

52 Elizabeth Hirsh and Gary A. Olsen, “Starting from Marginalized Lives: A Conversation with Sandra Harding.” *JAC* 15 no. 2 (1995). http://www.jacweb.org/Archived_volumes/Volume15.htm#Issue2
53 Harding, “'Strong Objectivity' and Socially Situated Knowledge,” 149.
54 Hirsh and Olsen, “Starting from Marginalized Lives: A Conversation with Sandra Harding.”

her inquiry. [55]

Strong objectivity allows us to critically examine ourselves, our own background beliefs, and how those beliefs have influenced and tacitly supported the objects of knowledge we claim for ourselves. This develops a reciprocal relationship between the subjects of knowledge and the objects of knowledge. Because there is this reciprocal relationship, we can learn new things about ourselves and about the world by attempting to take a perspective, or standpoint, different from our own.

Harding argues that there are problems with our current conception of objectivity, but that we need to start from where we are and re-conceptualize the concept to deal with these problems. I will argue something stronger. I do not claim that we should keep the concept of objectivity merely because attempting to remove it would be difficult if not impossible. I claim that even if Harding is wrong in her assertion (though I don't think she is), there are good reasons to keep objectivity as an epistemic concept. However, Harding's theory of strong objectivity is similar to the view of the current conception of objectivity that I will develop in Chapter Five, particularly in stressing the need for critical reflection, and the need for an inclusion of marginalized views. My story differs the most from Harding's in my treatment of value-free objectivity. I do not view it as the constant in any conception of objectivity, and I claim that there is a story to be told about how value-free objectivity arose, and how it leads to a reconceptualization of objectivity that resembles Harding's strong objectivity. Rather than seeing strong objectivity as opposed to (and better than) value-free objectivity, I will claim that a reconceptualization of objectivity in terms of feminist standpoint theory has grown out of the legacy of value-free objectivity. I will

55 Harding, "'Strong Objectivity' and Socially Situated Knowledge" 161.

also suggest ways in which objectivity may be reconceptualized in the future in Chapter Six. But I think that Harding's stress on the importance of the inclusion of marginalized views, and the importance of critical reflection are correct.

In the following chapters I will demonstrate that objectivity itself has been and can be ethically and epistemically beneficial. But before laying out my positive argument, I will examine the alternatives to objectivity raised by Rorty, and potential problems with the analysis of objectivity employed by both Rorty and Code, and to a lesser extent, Harding.

2.4. Problems with Rorty's Alternative

There are some troubling issues with Rorty's view of the alternative to objectivity, not the least of which is where the distinction between persuasion and coercion lies, and how 'widespread agreement,' 'useful to believe' and 'good to believe' might work together in Rorty's account of truth. But I will not be looking at these obvious problems, or at least not directly. I will begin my critique of Rorty's view by looking at a concern raised against it by Jürgen Habermas. The concern raised by Habermas will illustrate one of the potential weaknesses in Rorty's proposed alternative to objectivity. From there, I will examine some concerns over Rorty's use of 'truth' and rely on the theories of Sharyn Clough, a pragmatist philosopher who has been influenced by Rorty's theory. Clough, though she is a pragmatist, refuses to adopt Rorty's call to do away with the language of objectivity. By looking at Clough's arguments and aims, I will suggest one way in which objectivity may be helpful to minority opinion rather than silencing it.

2.4.1. Rorty and Habermas

Rorty has a very specific, and problematic, view of subjects in communities. This can most easily be seen in the exchange between Rorty and Jürgen Habermas. In *Rorty and His Critics,* edited by Robert Brandom, Jürgen Habermas argues that Rorty's account cannot establish its main claims. Habermas says:

> With the orientation toward 'more and more,' 'larger and larger,' and 'increasingly diverse' audiences, Rorty brings a weak idealization into play that, on his premise, is far from self-evident. As soon as the concept of truth is eliminated in favor of a context-dependent epistemic validity-for-us, the normative reference point necessary to explain why a proponent should endeavor to seek agreement for 'p' *beyond the boundaries of her own group* is missing. The information that the agreement of an increasingly large audience gives us increasingly less reason to fear that we will be refuted presupposes the very interest that has to be explained; the desire for 'as much intersubjective agreement as possible.' If something is 'true' if and only if it is recognized as justified 'by us' because it is good 'for us,' there is no rational motive for expanding the circle of members.[56]

Habermas claims that Rorty has given us no reason to think that we must, or even would, attempt to expand our circle of agreement, or expand our community. We get to choose our group, and once we have agreement within that group, there seems little or no rational reason to try to expand agreement beyond the boundaries of that group. The reason Rorty gives, that we just *do* value widening community borders because we happen to, and historically we have done so (his appeal to ethnocentrism), is not a rational support. Furthermore, given that we seem to be able

56 Habermas, “Richard Rorty's Pragmatic Turn,” 51.

to consider and change our values, why not change this one? Indeed, with his appeal to ethnocentrism Rorty has divided the world into those we must justify ourselves to and those we can disregard.[57] So, once we have agreement among the group of people we must justify ourselves to, among those of our community, why should we try to justify ourselves to those outside of our community? They are strangers, and we don't need to justify ourselves to them. Why not just define them as those whose opinions don't matter, and end the debate? In general, Habermas is asking *why* we should think that a community, even Rorty's community, would value as much intersubjective agreement as possible,or should continue to do so given that it does? Why not just enough intersubjective agreement such that one's beliefs are not constantly being challenged?

In Rorty's response to Habermas, he concedes that the only reason for valuing unforced agreement is because we live in a society that values rhetoric rather than, say, violence or some other method. Rorty claims that the only reason to seek agreement beyond our own group is because we live in a society that values agreement beyond groups. As we would expect, Rorty's explanation is circular and self-referential. But, again, he claims that there is no other reason possible. Habermas, according to Rorty, is asking the wrong question. He is asking a question that seeks to look beyond the borders of Rorty's liberal community. The question asks Rorty's community to reflect on and question its own values, and the reason for those values. If there is no rational reason to be found, why hold the values at all? But there is nothing outside of the community that will answer Habermas's question, according

57 See, for example Kusch, “Rorty on Solidarity and Objectivity in Science; A Reassessment,” for a discussion of Rorty's division of the world into those whose opinions count (members of his own community) and those who can be disregarded.

to Rorty. In fact, asking questions that encourage one to look outside one's own community for answers works against the value of community solidarity. If Rorty is right, the only answer possible is the self-referential one. He is morally obligated to try to expand the borders of his community by increased intersubjective agreement, but only because this is a value of the community Rorty belongs to. If his community did not hold such a value, he would not be obliged to act in such a way.

> As someone whose sense of moral identity is tied up with the need to go beyond boundaries of my own group, I can recapture the notion of *hinaus bemühen soll*, though perhaps not in a way that Habermas would find adequate. For I can say that I could not live with myself if I did not do my best to go beyond the borders in question. In that sense, I am morally *obliged* to do so, but only in the same sense that a Nazi who could not live with himself if he spared a certain Jew is morally obliged to kill that Jew.[58]

This gives us a clearer insight into Rorty's idea of the community he has chosen for himself. Note that claiming that the Nazi, from his perspective, is morally obligated to kill the Jew does not leave Rorty unable to condemn the Nazi from his (Rorty's) own perspective. This is the virtue Rorty is trying to convince us is found in ethnocentrism. Rorty's response to Habermas is that the motive for seeking more widespread agreement is that we happen to live in a community that does, in fact, seek more widespread agreement. As such it is built into our community's identity to do so. If another individual or community were to ask “but why?” as Habermas has done, we, those of us in Rorty's community, should feel free to retreat to ethnocentrism to explain why it is that we do so.[59] This will hardly persuade those, like Habermas, who

58 Richard Rorty, “Response to Habermas,” in *Rorty and His Critics,* ed. Robert Brandom, (Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2000): 61.

59 Note that it isn't quite correct to characterize this as a 'retreat to ethnocentrism'. Rorty's community

are asking 'but why?' especially if they happen to be members of a community that does not value expanding intersubjective agreement. This is especially troubling in this exchange since it seems, on the surface, that Rorty and Habermas are part of the same community. If so, Rorty's retreat to ethnocentrism does not place him beyond the range of Habermas's questions. Rather, Rorty either has to show that Habermas is, in fact, not part of the same community as Rorty, or that Habermas is part of the same community, but fails to understand his own community's values and the ways in which these values are supported and justified. Rorty seems to take the second path, rather than the first. Rorty has given his answer, he has no other. This answer will not persuade those who do not hold his beliefs, but he doesn't need to persuade them. For those who do hold his beliefs, but question why they hold them, as Habermas seems to, Rorty's response is that this questioning is a holdover from a desire for objectivity in the first sense. It is a mistake to ask such a question.

One can see the tension between the two values Rorty claims his community possesses. The decision to expand community borders of widespread agreement as far as possible is in tension with the retreat to ethnocentrism. That is, one can always retreat to ethnocentrism in the face of an opponent one cannot persuade. The worry for Habermas is that one might too readily retreat to ethnocentrism. Why try to persuade if it's difficult, when one could simply ignore (or shoot)? Yet, paradoxically, ethnocentrism is also the very thing that supports and justifies this value of widespread agreement, while simultaneously working against it. Without the recourse

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is always proceeding from a position of ethnocentrism, whether they are trying to persuade other communities to agree with them, or whether they decide that another community is part of the group whose opinions don't matter. I call it a retreat here to mark it from the action of actively trying to persuade. Here, the ethnocentrism functions as a way to break off communication instead of functioning as a position from which to engage in communication (as it does in the case of persuasion).

to ethnocentrism, we would have no justification for wishing to widen intersubjective agreement at all.

Habermas has pointed out something troubling in Rorty's account. And though Rorty is able to answer Habermas, and answer him in a way that is consistent with Rorty's account, this answer itself is troubling. It is a retreat to ethnocentrism, and a claim that Habermas is asking an unintelligible question, rather than an attempt to persuade Habermas to agree. It comes dangerously close to claiming that Rorty and Habermas are not part of the same community and thus comes close to allowing Rorty to ignore Habermas's questions, since they come from outside his ethnocentric foundation. The possibility of disengaging with one's interlocutors is always present on Rorty's account. In fact, it is the foundation on which all other values rest for Rorty. It allows him to condemn the Nazis but it might also allow people to silence minority opinion, the very thing Rorty claimed was a danger of theories which include objectivity. Rorty's account was supposed to remove objectivity from discourse and thereby remove this danger.

For example, imagine a group of suffragists in the United States in 1918 who may wish to attempt to persuade the larger community of the legitimacy of votes for women. But the larger community might be confident of their beliefs that women should not vote. In actual U.S. history as I will discuss in Chapter Four, the larger community retreated to expert testimony to support their claim. In Rorty's scenario, the anti-suffragists might have simply retreated to ethnocentrism and claimed that they value women as non-voters simply because women are non-voters. This is the value the community has always held. In this way, the debate would come to a halt. For it is true that prior to 1921, women in the majority of the states in the USA could

not, and had never been able to, vote in federal elections. It was part of the value of the role of women that made up the community's value-system. It was part of the history that built community solidarity.

In response to this concern, Rorty can also point to a value his self-identified liberal community has which he articulates in *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*: valuing revolutionaries.[60] Rorty might argue that, as one of the values that creates solidarity in his community is the value of revolutionaries, people willing to challenge the norm will be encouraged, not silenced. But, of course, this value of revolutionaries, as with all values in a contingent community (as Rorty's must be, since he has no appeal to a foundation to ground a community's borders) is open to challenge and question, and may at times be in tension with other values, such as ethnocentrism. Furthermore, with his argument that one should not look beyond the borders of one's own community, Rorty has made it difficult for revolutionaries to find the courage to speak out against values in their community, particularly those that might create solidarity. On Rorty's account, the history of a community supports the values that a community has at present, and the values a community has at present bring solidarity among community members. The value of women in the home, as non-voting members of society had a history, and created solidarity. Challenging both of these could be perceived as challenging the very foundations of a community.

But, as Simone de Beauvoir famously argued, the question is not over what the state of affairs is at present, or was in the past. The question is, “should this state of affairs continue?”[61] Rorty has a system where the history of present states of affairs, and the present values and beliefs held by a community, are enough to support that

60 Rorty, *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity,* 61.
61 de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, Liii.

those states of affairs continue. In order to change those states of affairs, one needs to try to persuade the majority while endeavouring to ensure that one is not classified as belonging to the category of persons whose opinions do not matter, those outside the community. For if one is classified as such, it is very unclear how one will be able to move away from this classification.

The only reason Rorty's community values persuasion over force is because it has a history that led it to this value. But should this state of affairs continue? And why should it continue? And how do we ensure that it does continue? The answer to none of these questions is clear. In the meantime, minorities within Rorty's community play a delicate game with an opponent who may deem them too difficult to talk to or to be a threat to solidarity and who may retreat to ethnocentrism at any moment. This is the alternative to objectivity that Rorty has presented us with. It isn't obvious that it is less dangerous or oppressive than Rorty claimed objectivity to be.

2.4.2. Objectivity, Truth, and Minority Opinion

The next problem I identify within Rorty's theory is with his account of truth. He wants to remove all connotation of objectivity or correspondence from the theory of truth, and simply leave truth as whatever we all widely agree upon. However, apart from the concerns regarding the relationship of 'widely agreed-upon' and 'useful' and 'good to believe,' there are two general areas that warrant skepticism within this proposal. First, I am skeptical that this thin account of truth will do everything that those who employ the concept of truth wish it to do. Second, I am skeptical that truth can be re-conceptualized in this way.

On the first point, it seems that some of those most sympathetic with Rorty's

view are still resistant to giving up on the concept of 'objective truth,' though they may be willing to revise it. Sharyn Clough, in her 1998 article and again in her 2003 book, *Beyond Epistemology,* argues that she wants to remove the dichotomy between objectivism and relativism by removing the correspondence theory of truth, but she still wants to keep notions of objectivity in play.[62] Clough agrees with Rorty in rejecting the gap between the knowing subject and the world, and agrees that thinking of truth as correspondence, and objectivity as the perspective necessary in order to mirror the world correctly are both unnecessary and unhelpful. Yet she does not follow Rorty to the conclusion that objectivity should be removed from epistemic discourse. That is, Clough is more similar to Harding than to Rorty and Code. She finds what she takes to be the common understanding of objectivity to be unhelpful, but she does not conclude from this that all talk of objectivity should be given up.

Clough, like Harding, wants to include values in epistemic discourse. And, like Harding, Clough does not want to include all values, or grant them all equal weight. In order to allow values into epistemic discourse, but adjudicate between those values, Clough argues that values themselves can be supported by empirical data. Clough argues that, rather than viewing the formation of scientific knowledge as a negotiation between the raw data of the world and our value-laden perspectives on that data, we should instead see our own values as part of the set of facts we are investigating. As an example, she examines the archaeological question over whether the proper framework for investigating past archaeological sites is to seek to explain things in terms of 'man-the-hunter' or to focus more on the role of ancient women by using a framework focusing on 'woman-the-gatherer'. The first framework explains the society

62 In conversation at the IAPh, June 2010, University of Western Ontario.

under investigation by highlighting the importance of hunting to the community and "interprets stones as hunting tools".[63] The second framework of 'woman-the-gatherer' focuses on the lives and chores of women and "interprets stones as as implements for gathering and preparing edible vegetation."[64] Clough denies the gap between theories and values and also proposes to deny the gap between the world and our beliefs about it (or the gap between metaphysical realism and the epistemic knowledge-claims). Clough claims that her view is non-representationalist, in that we do not use values and beliefs to represent raw data in a certain way. According to Clough, values and beliefs are not filters through which data are passed, but are rather themselves data with empirical content and support. With regards to the archaeological debate above, Clough states that:

> I argue. . . that feminist political values are *themselves* beliefs with empirical content that can in turn provide *good evidential support* for preferring the "woman-the-gatherer" interpretation over the "man-the-hunter" interpretation.[65]

Clough bases this argument on empirical investigation conducted by feminists which demonstrates that the role of women in theories about human bodies and human behaviour has often been overlooked. Thus, the feminist political value which leads to the interpretation of woman-the-gatherer as opposed to man-the-hunter is itself a belief with empirical content, which is supported by evidence. It is not merely a filter through which evidence is interpreted.

On Clough's theory, beliefs and values are themselves empirically supported. It isn't simply a matter of persuasion and metaphor to convince someone to hold your

63 Clough, *Beyond Epistemology,* 116.
64 Clough, *Beyond Epistemology,* 116.
65 Clough, *Beyond Epistemology,* 116.

values over other values. Some values, in particular feminist values, are more supported by empirical evidence than others. We do not need to retreat to ethnocentrism because on Clough's view, ethnocentrism is not the only thing supporting our values. Clough argues that:

> A nonrepresentationalist understanding of contextual values or worldviews would conceive of them, not as filters through which the empirical data pass, but as further important strands in our web of belief. . . There is no need for us to doubt the empirical evidence for our feminist political values, as long as we conceive of the evidence as that which is provided by other beliefs in our web.[66]

The beliefs themselves, then, are not causing us to be biased, or hold value-laden theories that do not properly mirror the world. So Clough, like Rorty, rejects a picture of the knowing subject's relation to the world in terms of a mirroring of nature. Rather, these beliefs that were thought to be clouding the mirror are supported, are knowledge, and combine with the raw data to present a true picture of reality. Feminist values are actually more justified and more empirically supported than non-feminist theories, and as a result “they are true!”[67]

Clough ends both her 1998 paper and the second-last chapter of her 2003 book on this same emphatic line. She emphasizes that feminist theories are *true*. Not true in the sense of widely-agreed upon, but true in the sense of empirically supported. This is an important strategy for any feminist philosopher, or other holder

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66 Clough, *Beyond Epistemology,* 126.

67 Clough, *Beyond Epistemology,* 127; Sharyn Clough, “A Hasty Retreat From Evidence: The Recalcitrance of Relativism in Feminist Epistemology” *Hypatia* 13, no. 4 (Fall 1998): 109. I will have questions to raise with Clough's account in Chapter Six. However, for now I am less concerned with the success of Clough's account and more concerned with why she choose to speak of truth and objectivity when she is also a self-identified Rortarian Pragmatist.

of a marginalized opinion, to make. Clough is claiming that it does not matter what the majority thinks. Her beliefs and values are true, even if they are not widely agreed upon, or are not recognized as useful or good. They are true because they are empirically supported. And Clough might even be tempted to claim that this is objectively so. Though she rejects the old accounts of objectivity, she claims not to be against objectivity in general. She just wants it to be reconceptualized.[68]

Rorty might have a response to Clough's need for truth as separate from wide-spread agreement. Rorty might claim that since these feminist values are empirically supported, Clough could be seen to be saying that they are useful to believe. They are useful because they fit the data better than the values held by the majority. As such, while they are not widely agreed-upon, they are useful and it would be good if these beliefs were adopted. In this sense, on Rorty's account, they may count as true. So perhaps there is no problem with the way Clough and other holders of minority opinion might want to deploy the concept of truth and the way Rorty does. Though this does highlight a discrepancy between 'useful to believe' and 'widely agreed-upon,' under the 'useful to believe' understanding of truth, Clough and Rorty may agree that these feminist beliefs and values are true.

But here is another troubling area for Rorty. There are two understandings of 'true' in play. One is 'widely-agreed upon' and the other is 'useful'. And it isn't clear how these two work together. Certainly we might imagine that a community could hold a belief that is not as useful to believe as something else. But this account will not work on Rorty's view, since for Rorty, it is the community *themselves* that determines

68 Clough made this clear in a discussion I had with her at the 2010 meeting of the IAPh (International Association of Women Philosophers) in London Ontario, June 25-28 2010.

what is useful to believe. There is nothing beyond the community to measure community beliefs against in order to determine their usefulness. So, does Clough's assertion of truth actually count as true if it is not widely believed, and therefore is not widely seen as useful to believe, and therefore is not useful to believe? For Rorty, there can be no external measure of what counts as useful, thus the group must decide. In this case, it looks as though holders of minority opinion, on Rorty's account, do not ever hold the truth, until the majority agrees with them.

One might wonder why I quibble about this at all. After all, Rorty's theory of truth is so changeable, how can it matter whether what Clough says is true or not? She simply has to keep saying it until she is able to persuade others to adopt it as true, or they decide that she is part of that group whose opinions they don't care about. But I claim that the reason Rorty was resistant to hang on to objectivity is the same reason Clough and other holders of minority opinion want to hang on to objectivity and truth. Even after we strip both concepts of their former metaphysical glory, the metaphysical gap is still lurking there. Even after unmasking objectivity for what it is, Rorty could not bring himself to allow it back into discourse, since it was too intimately tied up with metaphysical realism in his mind and he suspected in our minds as well. I suspect that Rorty worried that we could not forget that objectivity had been seen as “the bridgeway between our sensory receptors and the causal forces of the empirical data,”[69] as Clough puts it. However, it is just this idea that there is a way the world is independent of what the majority thinks that attracts holders of minority opinion to concepts like truth and objectivity. The fact that both concepts gesture at something beyond the community, or prevailing community opinion, the fact that they

69 Clough, “A Hasty Retreat From Evidence,” 93.

have these metaphysical connotations (broadly construed), to evoking ideas about the way the world 'really' is independent of what we believe about it, is why they are attractive to those in the minority. They give support where no community-based support is possible. They allow and encourage one to look beyond one's community for support in just the way Habermas's question above does. On Clough's account, truth gestures beyond the community, which is just the move Rorty feared when he sought to separate 'true' from 'objectivity'. Rorty thought that this separation could result in truth being a safe word, but 'truth' is only useful to minority opinion if it does go beyond the borders of the community. Community solidarity is what those who hold minority views are fighting against.[70]

Though Rorty was concerned about the use of objectivity since he feared that it gestured beyond the community, he did not have the same worries about truth. Rorty allowed truth to remain in the discourse. And holders of minority opinion like Clough employ the term even when it is unclear whether on Rorty's account they have license to do so. I argue that the reason Clough and other holders of minority views deploy terms like 'truth' and 'objective' (though often a revised understanding of the term 'objective'), is because they want to ground their beliefs and epistemic claims, and they want these beliefs and claims to be grounded in more than simply ethnocentrism. Clough is trying to change majority opinion. Therefore, she cannot rely on the community (made up of the majority), to ground her claims. It is the majority's very

70 In this case it seems that a community's value of revolutionaries, which Rorty claims his liberal community has, is not enough support for those with marginalized views. Clough does not appeal to others by speaking of herself as a revolutionary. Rather, she appeals to others by appealing to something beyond her community's borders; truth not understood as wide-spread agreement, but understood as empirically supported. She does not seem to find the support she needs under the value of revolutionaries. Rather, she seeks to reconceptualize the value of objectivity in order to find support to speak to the majority.

claims she, and others in a similar situation, are trying to change.

There are many other issues with Rorty's theory, and details that need to be fully explained and supported. However, this dissertation is not focused on examining and testing Rorty's alternative to objectivity. I have done enough here to show that Rorty's proposed alternative to objectivity, an alternative which rests on wide-spread belief, usefulness, a non-correspondence account of truth, and ethnocentrism, has the potential to be at least as oppressive to minority opinion as he claims objectivity is. Thus, I conclude that Rorty's alternative works no better than an account which includes objectivity, and may well be more oppressive to holders of minority opinion since it focuses on community solidarity, and resists looking beyond one's community for support and justification.

The activity of changing opinions and beliefs is a difficult one, both mentally and physically, not to mention socially and politically. The determination necessary to claim one's theories and beliefs are true when the majority at large is denouncing them is enormous. The belief that one has 'objective truth' on one's side is a provider of strength to those fighting against the beliefs of the majority. In this case, both 'useful' and 'widely agreed upon' have failed the minority view. They cannot claim either, since it appears that what is useful is determined by the majority in the community. So they ground their beliefs elsewhere, in objective truth, variously understood. For Clough, the grounding for her objectively true beliefs is empirical data. It is the data, not the community, that demonstrates that her beliefs are true and that gives her the determination to fight against beliefs she sees as false.

This has been true of minority views in other eras as well. The previous

imagined example of the U.S. suffrage movement serves to illustrate this as well. Susan B. Anthony and Elisabeth Cady Stanton became advocates for women's rights after Stanton was denied a seat as a delegate at a British antislavery convention. The reason for her denial was her gender. Sarah Hunter Graham, in her book *Women's Suffrage and the New Democracy*, notes that Anthony and Stanton drafted the Declaration of Sentiments in which they outlined all the rights they were demanding from the U.S. Government in 1848 in response to this denial on the basis of gender.[71] At this time, the women's movement relied heavily on feelings, emotions, and sentiment. Women during the early period of the women's rights movement employed sentimental novels to lay out their situation and advocate for change. While these novels were successful to some degree in illustrating the situation women found themselves in and in generating support, there emerges a new style of argument used by those advocating for women's rights roughly around the 1890's. Graham details how this change from a focus on generating sentiment shifted to a focus that emulated more faithfully the accepted political rhetoric of the day. In discussing the changes that suffragist Carrie Chapman Catt brought about in the National American Women's Suffrage Association (NAWSA), Graham notes that:

> At the 1895 NAWSA convention. . . Catt blasted the convention delegates with a pithy summary of the movement's shortcomings. Although suffragists had been agitating for forty years, they had not turned the sentiment generated into success. Calling for sweeping tactical changes, she put before the convention a three-pronged plan: a special committee to raise money for state amendment campaigns; a new standing committee of organization to

71 Sara Hunter Graham, *Women's Suffrage and the New Democracy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 5.

> coordinate national, state, and local suffrage work; *and a cadre of specially trained organizers to direct state campaigns*."[72]

Carrie Chapman Catt observed that the old style of generating sentiment was not having the desired effect. It was time for a new strategy. About this time, some women advocating for women's rights changed their tone from one of sentimentality to a more scientific tone, gathering data and employing rational arguments. As emphasized in the quote above, suffrage groups trained their members to speak in a new language, one that I will identify with the nineteenth-century conceptualization of objectivity.[73] Many prominent women suffragists had a scientific or social-scientific education. Alice Paul[74] had an MA in sociology and a PhD in Political Science. Carrie Chapman Catt[75] had studied education, medicine and law. Alice Duer Miller[76] had a Master's in mathematics.

In addition to the number of women involved in the movement who had been exposed to scientific education and rhetoric, NAWSA set up its own schools to train and educate new members. These schools stressed statistics and facts rather than sentiment and emotion. NAWSA exposed its members to the data that had been collected in states where suffrage was already legal, as well as in other countries, such as New Zealand. No suffrage campaigner was sent out to speak to the public without this training. In these training sessions, suffragists were taught how to

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72 Graham, *Women's Suffrage and the New Democracy,* 7. *Emphasis added.*

73 This conception of objectivity, and the ways in which the suffragists conformed to it, will be examined in more detail in Chapter Four.

74a former member of NAWSA (The National American Women's Suffrage Association) who went on to found the National Women's Party (NWP, their aims were counter to NAWSA, they sought a federal amendment on women's suffrage, whereas NAWSA wanted state-by-state change).

75 The leader of NAWSA from 1900-1904 and again from 1915-1920.

76 A prominent Suffrage columnist in New York. Her column "Are Women People?' ran in the New York Tribune and was eventually published as a book.

approach politicians and the public in general. They were told to avoid biases found in specific States of the Union. When addressing politicians, they were told to disallow "'any and every state 'pull' of bias or thought.' Stressing the need for an objective outlook from every member of the committee to avoid charges of partisanship or sectional bias. . ."[77] The focus was to be on the good of the nation, and all biases or state concerns must be left out. The women themselves must present their case calmly and steer free from emotion. In this way, NAWSA actively cultivated a certain type of suffragist.[78] She was not the sentimental, lyrical suffragist of the last century. She was trained, unemotional and unbiased. She could speak in a language that politicians could understand and she knew the scientific facts of the matter. She was as objective as was possible. And she demanded a certain level of objectivity from her audience. Just as she would not become emotional or biased, she would not allow State biases to cloud committee discussions. She used the rhetoric of objectivity to criticize her opponents for being irrational, sentimental, inconsistent and subjective in their arguments. Just as with Clough, NAWSA relied on the tools of objectivity to motivate their case. They claimed to stand on the side of objective truth and had statistics to back up these claims. They used the language of their oppressors to challenge the majority's claims and they grounded their own claims beyond the community borders, not in ethnocentrism, or in a value of revolution, but in empirical data.

Objectivity and truth both fulfill a certain role, a role Rorty was concerned about. They serve to ground one's claims in something other than community

77 Graham, *Women's Suffrage and the New Democracy,* 92.
78 Graham, *Women's Suffrage and the New Democracy,* 59.

solidarity. Rorty (and Code) feared that in the hands of the majority this would be a powerful tool for oppression and marginalization. However, I find that in the hands of the minority, this is a powerful way to challenge majority opinion. I am concerned that Rorty's flat account of truth and his absent account of objectivity do not give minorities the kind of support they need in order to speak and to be heard.

There is one final problem with accounts like Rorty's, Code's and to a lesser extent Harding's which I will examine before closing this chapter. This problem was raised by Louise Antony in her article “Quine as Feminist: The Radical Import of Naturalized Epistemology”. Antony questions the correctness of the view of objectivity as value-free or value-neutral as identified by Rorty, Harding and Code. In sum, Antony argues that mainstream epistemology does not conceive of objectivity in these terms. Antony charges Code in particular and other feminist epistemologists with making a “caricature of contemporary analytic epistemology.”[79] I will argue that this caricature of analytic epistemology led to Rorty and Code failing to recognize the historical context of objectivity, and identify it as a concept that is constantly changing. This is why I claim that Harding is less at fault here. Though I find elements of this caricature in Harding's work, Harding acknowledged and relied on objectivity's changing history in her argument that objectivity needed to be changed again.

2.5. Caricature and Change

Antony's paper, “Quine as Feminist,” has two main aims. One is to “highlight the virtues, from a feminist point of view, of naturalized epistemology.”[80] The other is to “confront head-on the charges that mainstream epistemology is irremediably

79 Antony, “Quine as Feminist,” 559.
80 Antony, “Quine as Feminist,” 554.

phallocentric. . .”[81] Antony's first aim will be discussed briefly in Chapters Four and Six. What interests me most here, is her second aim which strikes directly at theories, like Code's, that claim that mainstream epistemic concepts like objectivity are inherently masculine. Antony highlights two basic ways that most feminist epistemology understands the concept of objectivity. One is in terms of impartiality, and the other is in terms of value-neutrality.[82] Code does seem to understand objectivity in terms of impartiality and value-neutrality, as highlighted above, and Harding does talk of objectivity in terms of value-neutrality. Rorty invokes both these ideals in his discussion of the potentially distorting perceptions of subject in relation to the world. His identification of objectivity as a call to clean mirrors and faithfully represent nature seems to coincide with a need for impartiality and value-neutrality since it is often values that are thought to distort our perspectives on the world. But Antony argues that this characterization of objectivity in terms of impartiality and value-neutrality is in error.

> But not only is it not the case that contemporary analytic epistemology is committed to such a conception of objectivity, it was analytic epistemology that was largely responsible for initiating the critique of the empiricist notions Code is attacking. Quine, Goodman, Hempel, Putnam, Boyd, and others within the analytic tradition have all argued that a certain received conception of objectivity is untenable as an ideal of epistemic practice.[83]

Antony argues that mainstream epistemology itself recognized the problem with an account of objectivity in terms of value-neutrality and impartiality before feminist

81 Antony, “Quine as Feminist,” 554.
82 Antony, “Quine as Feminist,” 555.
83 Antony, “Quine as Feminist,” 555.

epistemologists criticized this account of objectivity. This doesn't mean that the account should not be criticized, but it does mean that mainstream epistemology is more flexible than either Rorty or Code seems to allow. Harding, at times, appears to want to work within mainstream epistemology, and so can be seen as recognizing and trying to direct this flexibility. In sum, mainstream epistemology has altered its conceptualization of the term 'objectivity'. It is no longer solely thought of in terms of value-neutrality, or impartiality. Antony claims that mainstream epistemology recognized not only that objectivity was not attainable, but also that it was not desirable when conceived of as value-neutral. Thus, the two strategies employed by those who question objectivity outlined by Antony above are strategies already employed by those in mainstream epistemology.

> [L]et me summarize what I take to be the real lessons of the modern period—lessons that, I've argued, have been missed by many feminist critiques of 'traditional' epistemology. First, there is the essentially rationalist insight that perfect objectivity is not only impossible but undesirable, that certain kinds of 'bias' or 'partiality' are necessary to make our epistemic tasks tractable. Second, there is Hume's realization that externalism won't work, that we can never manage to offer a justification of epistemic norms without somehow presupposing the very norms we wish to justify. See this, if you will, as the beginning of the postmodern recognition that theory always proceeds from an 'embedded' location, that there is no transcendent spot from which we can inspect our own theorizing.[84]

Antony argues that mainstream epistemology has a history itself, and that this history

84 Antony, “Quine as Feminist,” 563.

has largely been simplified or ignored by critics of mainstream epistemology, specifically feminist critics. By paying attention to the history, Antony is able to show that mainstream epistemology, in many areas, is in agreement with its critics, not opposed to them.

In part, what Antony says here sounds like Rorty. The appeal to postmodernism and the argument that there is no spot beyond our own embedded location from which to judge sounds like Rorty's own theory regarding the need for community solidarity. Yet this theory comes straight out of 'mainstream' epistemology, the type of philosophy Rorty was engaged in criticizing. There is also one significant difference between Antony and Rorty. While Antony does agree that there is no 'transcendent spot' to ground one's beliefs in, she does not follow Rorty in endorsing solidarity. She, instead, argues for a need for the very gap between knowledge and the world that Rorty in particular was arguing against. While Rorty endorses ethnocentrism and Code endorses relativism, Antony claims that without the correspondence theory of truth, feminist epistemologists, and others who wish to challenge mainstream beliefs, cannot do so in any robust sense. In particular, this is why Antony is drawn to Naturalized Epistemology as a possible solution to avoiding endorsing relativism. She argues that it allows “a conceptual gap between epistemology and metaphysics, between the world as we see it and the world as it is.”[85] Antony, unlike Rorty, finds this gap to be necessary if holders of minority views are to gain any ground.

> Without appealing to at least this minimally realist notion of truth, I see no way to even state the distinction we ultimately must articulate and defend. Quine [*sic.* Quite?] simply, an adequate solution to the paradox must enable us to

85 Antony, “Quine as Feminist,” 556.

> say the following: What makes the *good* bias good is that it facilitates the search for truth, and what makes the *bad* bias bad is that it impedes it.[86]

Antony, in a position which seems to agree with my own analysis of Clough, argues that those who hold minority views cannot endorse relativism because they wish to label mainstream biases as bad, while maintaining their own biases as good. Thus, there must be some way to differentiate between, say, feminist values and non-feminist values. This need not be an ahistorical transcendent fixed position. Indeed, given the areas of mainstream epistemology Antony is appealing to, it likely cannot be. But nor can it merely be community solidarity without resulting in an endorsement of ethnocentrism which, as seen above, is unhelpful to minority views. Instead, Antony, like Harding, argues for a change to the epistemic concepts in question. We can keep objectivity and truth, but we will have to change how we understand these terms. "A radical critique of science and society, *even if* it implicates certain ideals, *does not require repudiation of those ideals*."[87] Antony argues that we can critique the ideals of objectivity and truth, but we must recognize that these ideals have a history. These ideals have been questioned and critiqued before. We must be mindful of this history, and recognize that critiquing an ideal in its current form doesn't preclude us from reconceptualizing the ideal. Both Antony and Harding call for a reconceptualization of objectivity. Though Harding does seem to fall into the trap of caricaturing objectivity somewhat in terms of value-neutrality, both Antony and Harding, by recognizing that objectivity has a history, and a changing one, are able to see that the concept could be changed again. Rorty, because he failed to see

86 Antony, "Quine as Feminist," 556. It seems that, though the text does say "Quine," this must be a misprint of "Quite".
87 Antony, "Quine as Feminist," 572.

objectivity as an ever-changing concept with a rich history, and instead saw it as a static ideal, could see no solution to the problems with the concept other than removing the concept entirely.

Code, because she not only saw objectivity as a static ideal but as a static ideal which grew out of a relatively static standpoint, could not see that mainstream epistemologists themselves have changing contexts, changing perspectives, and that what was an acceptable concept for the community at one time was not for the community at another. In general, the criticisms brought against objectivity from within mainstream epistemology are strikingly similar to those Code brings against the term. Antony argues that “labeling an entire tradition as overly masculine, or 'phallocentric' also attacks . . . the feminist credentials of those who work within the analytic tradition.”[88] She also finds this stereotyping unhelpful as it allows feminist epistemologists to too easily dismiss “fruitful philosophical work, limiting [their] collective capacity to imagine genuinely novel and transformative philosophical strategies.”[89] I claim, based on Antony's argument, that viewing one's opponent in an ahistorical, static way not only does a disservice to them but, even more striking, limits the strength of one's own argument. Rorty and Code, by viewing mainstream epistemology in a static and ahistorical fashion, were unable to avail themselves of the possibility that Harding and Antony have recognized. This possibility is the possibility of reconceptualizing epistemic concepts, like the concept of objectivity.

2.6. Conclusion

In this chapter I have outlined the problems with, and objections to, objectivity

88 Antony, “Quine as Feminist,” 578.
89 Antony, “Quine as Feminist,” 578.

as an epistemic concept. Largely, as Antony pointed out, these problems fall into two broad categories. On the one hand, objectivity as value-neutral or impartial is unattainable. On the other hand, objectivity as value-neutral or impartial is undesirable. It is thought to be undesirable for two reasons, the first identified by Antony, and the second by myself; 1) some biases and values are desirable and necessary for the construction of knowledge, and 2) objectivity itself is inherently oppressive and undesirable.

In detailing Rorty's account of the dangers of objectivity I have uncovered some troubling aspects of Rorty's proposed alternative to the concept. I have argued that, because of its dependency on community solidarity, and ethnocentrism, Rorty's account has the potential to be at least as oppressive as objectivity, if not more so. I have argued that this is part of the reason that some Rortarian Pragmatists like Clough have been unwilling to endorse Rorty's argument for the removal of objectivity as an epistemic concept.

Using work from Antony, I have argued that Rorty, Code and to a lesser extent, Harding, have presented a flawed account of the received view of objectivity in mainstream epistemology. I agree with Antony and Harding that, if one pays attention to the history of the ideal, one sees that the ideal has been reconceptualized many times in the past. Harding suggests that the argument made by Rorty and tacitly endorsed by Code for objectivity's removal is one that is difficult and may be unfeasible, given that objectivity is such a part of our epistemic discourse. However, by recognizing the history and malleability of the concept, it may be possible to reconceptualize objectivity without removing it. Harding and Antony endorse this

move. Harding suggests that the reason this needs to be done is simply because objectivity likely cannot be removed easily from epistemic discourse, so she suggests working with the language we already use. I think a stronger defense of objectivity is needed and can be provided. While I agree that objectivity needs to be reconceptualized, I will argue that there are good reasons to endorse this epistemic ideal, regardless of whether we could enact Rorty's proposed alternative, or another, less problematic alternative. Objectivity isn't just an ideal we must accept because we cannot get rid of it, or because Rorty's alternative is no better. In the chapters that follow I will demonstrate that objectivity itself is valuable.

However, before I illustrate the value of objectivity, I must be clear about how I will understand the concept. There are many ways on offer, as I noted in Chapter One. I could understand the term using Douglas's eight categories, or Lloyd's four. However, as already indicated, I will take an historical view of objectivity. This allows me to follow Harding and Antony in advocating for a reconceptualization. It will also allow me to challenge Harding's assertion that the constant in objectivity is value-neutrality. Rather, I propose that a more fruitful link has been found between objectivity and subjectivity. Examining this link will be the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Making Up Knowers

3.1. Introduction

I have two main goals in this chapter. First, I will examine the history of objectivity in order to establish subjectivity as a constant in the concept of objectivity, historically understood. I will argue that objectivity has not always been seen as value-neutral, in contrast to Sandra Harding's claim, but has always been paired with subjectivity. Using work by Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, I will demonstrate that objectivity as a concept has been understood in many different ways throughout history. I will argue that there is one way in which all conceptions of objectivity can be valuable: the extent to which they tend to create beneficial categories of personhood.

Second, using the history of objectivity I will examine the relationship between objectivity and the epistemic subject, and argue that changing conceptions of objectivity serve to make up different categories of knowers. The argument that objectivity tends to create beneficial categories of personhood will occupy the next three chapters of this dissertation. This chapter will lay the foundation for the demonstrations of the benefit of these categories of personhood to follow. In this chapter, I will demonstrate that objectivity does create categories of personhood. Using work by Ian Hacking, I will show that epistemic communities that hold objectivity as an ideal create categories of personhood for individuals belonging to those communities. To put it more simply, people who want to be knowers must strive to occupy the category of epistemic subject prescribed by the community they belong to, or must strive to change the category by reconceptualizing the concept of objectivity. Trying to occupy this category involves adopting certain ethical and

epistemic norms. By examining these norms in the next two chapters, I will demonstrate that this category of personhood has at times been an ethical and epistemic benefit for these communities. But first, I must establish that objectivity has the power to create these categories.

In order to establish this relationship between objectivity and categories of personhood, I need to demonstrate that objectivity is related to a concept of the epistemic subject. It is the objective/subjective distinction to which I turn now. I will first examine the way Rorty's supporter, Clough, viewed this distinction. Then I will turn to a quick discussion of Thomas Nagel's view of the distinction. By doing this I will demonstrate that there are philosophers concerned with, and focusing on the objective/subjective distinction. After gaining some idea of how the distinction is thought to work, I will move on to examine the history of objectivity as given by Daston and Galison. I will show that objectivity has been understood in many different ways in the past, and continues to change based on changing concerns with the epistemic subject. What remains constant through all these changes is not a commitment to value-freedom, or value-neutrality, but a distinction between the objective and the subjective. Using work by Ian Hacking, I will argue that this constant distinction between the objective and the subject in all epistemic accounts of objectivity prescribes certain behaviours and attitudes for epistemic subjects to strive to achieve if they are to overcome their own subjectivity and attempt to gain objectivity. That is, objectivity creates possibilities of personhood. I will end this chapter with a short example of this creation of epistemic subjects (an example I will expand on in Chapter Four), demonstrating that this is not merely a theory with

regards to objectivity, but that one can see this theory in practice.

3.2. The Objective/Subjective Distinction

Lorraine Daston, who will be discussed in more detail below, tells us that throughout the history of objectivity as an epistemic concept, objectivity has always opposed subjectivity. As will be shown, objectivity has not always been conceived of as value-neutral, or impartial, but it has always been seen in opposition to, and as overcoming of the (merely) subjective. For example, objective knowledge overcomes and contrasts with subjective opinion; objective decisions are made without reference to subjective personal interests; objective processes regulate and remove individual subjective biases. There is a distinction between the objective we strive for and the subjective we strive to overcome. This is a distinction that Thomas Nagel used as the foundation for much of his philosophical reasoning. It is this distinction that Clough has found to be problematic, and Rorty has found to be dangerous and unhelpful.

This distinction between the objective and the subjective, according to Clough, has required a correspondence view of truth, where the individual epistemic subject is blocking her own path from the epistemic to the metaphysical. Rorty argues even more firmly that one simply cannot have a concept of an objective/subjective distinction without a metaphysical realist picture of the world and an epistemology where the mind is conceived of as struggling to overcome its limits in an effort to come into contact with the world. Rorty's arguments with regards to objectivity have been covered in detail in the last chapter, but Clough's have not. I will take a moment to detail why Clough is opposed to the traditional account of objectivity in terms of value-neutrality and impartiality (remember that Antony has already questioned the

validity of the concept of this account, but that will be left aside in the discussion that follows).

Clough argues that this distinction between the objective and the subjective is unhelpful in its traditional form because it invites the skeptic. The invitation to the skeptic as extended by the concept of objectivity is a position that Thomas Nagel would agree with. In his book *The View From Nowhere* Nagel argues that "[o]bjectivity and skepticism are closely related: both develop from the idea that there is a real world in which we are contained, and appearances result from our interaction with the rest of it."[1] Nagel goes on to argue that in order to see this real world, we must keep trying to step beyond ourselves, or out of our own subjectivity. But of course, we are ourselves, and so cannot step beyond our subjectivity. Thus, the quest for objectivity involves acknowledging that there is a gap between the way things are and the way they appear to us, trapped in our subjective selves.[2] Clough, in a similar move, claims that epistemology, on this 'traditional' model where the epistemic subject who endorses objectivity aims to cross a bridge that surmounts the gap between the merely subjective and the real world, or step beyond her subject self, is a representationalist model, where the epistemic subject aims to represent the 'real' world correctly. This representationalism results in an invitation to the skeptic. She, like Nagel, argues that admitting that there is a way the world is independent from our beliefs about it and that we ourselves are getting in our own way, undermines our own beliefs, including feminist beliefs. We could all be in error. Clough argues that in so doing, this metaphysical stance undermines the feminist position, since the question

1 Thomas, Nagel, *The View From Nowhere* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 67.
2 Nagel, *The View From Nowhere,* 67-68.

naturally arises whether the feminist who is critiquing the 'traditional' model can herself claim to be accurately representing the world.

> I argue that the skepticism invited by the representationalist model can never be answered from within. Once engaged in epistemology, one invites a never-ending struggle with an omnipotent foe. I show that despite feminist criticism of traditional epistemology, important goals of feminist science studies are best met not by addressing (unanswerable) epistemological problems but by focusing back on local empirical research.[3]

This is where Clough's arguments diverge from Nagel's. While Nagel sees the skeptic as a necessary but unfortunate result, Clough argues that skepticism can be avoided. She claims that entering epistemic debates invites skeptical charges that ultimately undermine the feminist claims themselves. The only way to win is to refuse to play.

In particular, Clough seems to view the problem not to be, strictly speaking, with epistemology itself, but with the way what she calls traditional epistemology causes us to conceive of a divide between ourselves and the world. If there is such an epistemology, then there must be a metaphysics. This posits a gap. There is a gap between what we believe, or know, and the way the world is. The idea that there are beliefs that we may have that are not true seems uncontroversially correct. But the gap that Clough thinks the traditional account of objectivity posits is of a slightly different kind. In this gap, the problem is not merely sloppy investigation, or misinterpretation of evidence, but that our minds are inherently distorting, our subjective selves are getting in our way and our task is to step beyond ourselves and make our minds correctly represent nature as much as possible. Clough claims that

3 Clough, *Beyond Epistemology,* 5.

this account is untenable and the view of objectivity as helping us leap over the gap is wrong-headed. What we need, rather, is a way to avoid the concept of this type of gap entirely. In her positive account of epistemology, there may be false beliefs and values, but they can be discovered, since our beliefs and values are supported by empirical evidence. Those that are not so supported are false.[4] This was illustrated in Clough's example regarding 'man the hunter' and 'woman the gatherer' in the last chapter.

According to Clough, the traditional concept of a gap between the knowing subject and the world works against the strength of feminist theories by inviting the skeptic. Clough claims that “I take the strength of most feminist writings on epistemology to be the suggestion that we should dismantle the entire traditional epistemological project, including both objectivism *and* relativism.”[5] That is, we need to move away from seeing a divide between ourselves and the world, a gap between metaphysics and epistemology, that needs to be bridged. Only by moving away from this concept does Clough think that feminists can avoid the never-ending debate against the skeptic. Clough, then, opposes both Code's endorsement of relativism and Antony's endorsement of a correspondence theory of truth, as well as Nagel's resignation to the skeptic. She accepts that the type of gap Rorty identified is a problematic one.

Though Clough sees moving beyond this traditional epistemology as the strength of feminist theories, she notes that feminist scientists and philosophers of science, despite their efforts to challenge the shape of the intellectual landscape, get

4 Clough, *Beyond Epistemology,* 126.
5 Clough, “A Hasty Retreat From Evidence,” 88.

pulled back into debates over epistemology and defending their position against those who charge them with having a bias. By pointing out the biases of those she criticizes, the feminist leaves herself open to the same criticism. By challenging objectivism, she ends up endorsing a form of relativism, as Code did. Clough argues that this fails to get us free of the problem of the gap, thus leaving feminist theories open to the skeptic, who cannot be beaten. Clough argues that

> [t]he result, for feminists, and others critical of the tradition, is that unless we are fully distanced from our epistemological legacy, any moves critical of one end of the epistemology continuum (typically, objectivism) will involve an endorsement, however begrudging, of the other end (typically, relativism).[6]

Clough argues that the feminist scientist's project of challenging the supposed objective perspective of scientists leads to an endorsement of relativism for the feminist scientist herself. She points to the examples of Helen Longino, Evelyn Fox Keller and Sandra Harding to illustrate that this is so.

However, none of these philosophers seem to take themselves as endorsing a form of relativism. Instead, they take themselves to be trying to revise the concept of objectivity, the same task that Clough identifies as the strength of feminist epistemology. Clough thinks that these proposed revisions by Longino, Keller and Harding do not move far enough away from the traditional account of objectivity, and so still run the risk of relativism.[7] But it is important to note that this is not the intention of those philosophers she cites. They are not intentionally conceding to a form of relativism, though Clough thinks this is the end result. Clough sees traditional epistemology as cashed out in terms of an objective/subjective dichotomy. To endorse

6 Clough, “A Hasty Retreat From Evidence,” 89.
7 Clough, Sharyn. “A Hasty Retreat From Evidence,” 90.

a form of subjectivity is to follow Code into relativism. Instead, Clough advocates a dismantling of this dichotomy.

Both Rorty and Clough wish to claim that, traditionally, objectivity is conceived of as an epistemic bridge to the metaphysical. Rorty argues that those with a commitment to objectivity have a commitment to stepping beyond the boundaries of their own communities and seeking something fundamental, or some foundation, on which to anchor their beliefs. This is not an uncommon account of the role of objectivity, though I have illustrated in the last chapter, relying on the work of Antony, that it is far from the only account of objectivity in the history of analytic epistemology. However, this account of the objective has been held by Thomas Nagel[8], and has been thought to be held by Max Weber. [9.] Though there are differences between these two thinkers on how objectivity is to be understood and what a commitment to objectivity entails, the general idea is the same. Very generally speaking, this picture of objectivity is that by occupying the objective perspective, by holding one's subjective biases and values at bay, or better yet removing them entirely, one will be able to correctly see the world, and gain truths.

Nagel spends much of his 1986 book *The View From Nowhere* looking at this objective/subjective distinction that Clough is arguing against. Nagel argues that there are broadly two perspectives that an individual can take, the objective and the subjective. By taking one or the other perspective, an individual gains a very different sense of the world around him or her. The struggle, according to Nagel, is that we

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8 Thomas Nagel, "The Absurd," *The Journal of Philosophy* 68, no. 20. (1971): Pp. 716-727.

9 There is some dispute over whether this was really Weber's view. However, it has been ascribed to him several times. For one such ascription, see Robert Proctor, *Value-Free Science: Purity and Power in Modern Knowledge,* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1991), 86, 134-154.

cannot hold both perspectives at once. He claims that we seek objectivity, but are continually pulled into our own subjective perspectives and continually find that we are standing in our own way when it comes that achieving objective knowledge. Ultimately, Nagel argues that the goal of objectivity requires not just a perfect mirroring of the external world, but a perfect understanding of ourselves, since we are the ones getting in our own way.

> Still, the fact that objective reality is our goal does not guarantee that our pursuit of it succeeds in being anything more than an exploration and reorganization of the insides of our own minds. [10]

Nagel argues that our quest to be objective leads us to 'reorganize' ourselves. To put it plainly, seeking objectivity involves changing the kind of subjects we are. At the most basic level, this might merely be because we cannot ever be sure of bridging the gap Clough and Rorty are so worried about. So, as stated in the quotation above, all we can do is examine our own subjectivity, and attempt to work on those aspects of subjectivity found to be interfering. Or as Nagel puts it, to 'reorganize our minds'. Nagel claims that “self-understanding is at the heart of objectivity”.[11] If objectivity is a tool to bridge a gap between ourselves and the world, and if we cannot know anything about the world, then it is only by relying on knowledge of ourselves that we are able to fine-tune our tool in an attempt to bridge that gap. There is no other knowledge to be had under this conception of objectivity.

It is because of this insight about the relationship between objectivity and the subjective self that I disagree with Harding's assessment from the last chapter that

10 Nagel, *The View From Nowhere,* 77.
11 Nagel, *The View From Nowhere,* 78. I think this is true, but is incomplete. As I will demonstrate in this chapter, it is not only self-understanding, but self-creation that lies at the heart of objectivity.

the one thing that is constant in all conceptions of objectivity is value-neutrality. There is another, and I think far more likely candidate for a constant in the concept of objectivity, and that is its historical opposite, subjectivity. By looking at this quality the ideal of objectivity has to cause us to work upon ourselves, I think we will have a better sense of what it is that the ideal does for us, or to us, and whether the ideal is a beneficial one to have. I, then, resist Rorty's, Clough's and Nagel's assertion that the value in objectivity, insofar as there is any value to be found, is found in its ability to allow us to cross bridges, clean mirrors and step beyond our subjective selves in order to see the truth of the world. I resist the assessment that the only reason to find objectivity valuable is because of its tendency to lead to truth. Though Nagel does not emphasize the role of objectivity in self-creation—choosing to speak only of self-understanding—I find the concept of objectivity and its relationship to both self-understanding and self-creation to be a much more fruitful area than value-neutrality for the exploration of objectivity as a possibly beneficial ideal. If a gap is really assumed to exist between the epistemic and the metaphysical—and Nagel, Clough and Rorty each posit as the explanatory reason for the felt need for objectivity—then it is useless to ask if the ideal is allowing us to step over the gap. We will never know when we have stepped beyond the gap, or whether we are still getting in our own way. We have no perfectly objective perspective of the 'real' world to measure our own distorted perspectives against. We don't know what a successfully objective perspective will be. That is, if this is the goal of objectivity, we will never know whether objectivity is succeeding, and therefore will never know whether it is useful as an ideal or not. This hearkens back to Antony's identification of the first common way people criticize the ideal of objectivity: it is unattainable. I think that, under this conception of

the ideal, it is more than unattainable. We can not even know what successful attainment will look like. So, I propose examining the way objectivity relates to subjectivity, and to subjective selves, rather than examining the way objectivity might allow us to mirror the world.

I will now turn to a quick examination of Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison's recent book chronicling the history of objectivity as a scientific ideal. Their historical survey supports my decision to examine objectivity in relation to subjectivity as their findings suggest that objectivity is constantly paired with subjectivity as its historical opposite. In giving their history of objectivity I will also highlight how these parings work, when the concept of objectivity has, as noted in the last chapter, gone through various conceptions.

3.3. Daston and Galison and the History of Objectivity

Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison present an historical account of objectivity in their 2007 book *Objectivity*. In this book, objectivity is treated as an epistemic concept, but the focus is more narrow, mainly concerned with objectivity as a scientific concept. I, by contrast, am studying objectivity more broadly, as an epistemic concept in general. So, what Daston and Galison say about objectivity as a scientific concept will be a subset of my more general view, just a specific type of epistemic subject, aiming to gain knowledge through science rather than through other methods of investigation. Therefore, I will treat what Daston and Galison have to say about scientific subjects as broadly applying to epistemic subjects in general.

Daston and Galison claim that objectivity became an important scientific commitment in the nineteenth century. Prior to the nineteenth century, then, scientists

were not as concerned with the concept of objectivity.

> The history of scientific objectivity is surprisingly short. It first emerged in the mid-nineteenth century, and in a matter of decades became established not only as a scientific norm but also as a set of practices. . .[12]

As Daston and Galison point out, this means that objectivity need not be associated with truth or with knowledge. It is actually younger than the concepts of truth or knowledge. Plato had a commitment to truth, but did not have a commitment to objectivity as a epistemic value.

Though scientists were not very interested in objectivity prior to the nineteenth century, this doesn't mean it wasn't discussed at all. The earliest reported accounts of the use of objectivity were by the philosopher Duns Scotus and his student William of Ockham. Objectivity comes from Latin and was introduced into English by these two philosophers.

> From the very beginning, it was always paired with subjectivus/subjective, but the terms originally meant almost precisely the opposite of what they mean today. 'Objective' referred to things as they are presented to consciousness, whereas 'subjective' referred to things in themselves.[13]

Objectivity, then, used to refer to what we commonly think of as the domain of the subjective. The term used to refer to one's consciousness, the way things appeared to an individual. By contrast, the subjective used to refer to what we commonly think of as objective today, the real world, the way things really are. The term 'objective' referred to objects of thought, whereas the term subjective would refer to the object from the object's own point of view, an almost perfect switch from the common usage

12 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 27.
13 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 29.

today. What has been maintained is not what the concepts refer to, but the polarity in the concepts. One is understood in opposition to the other.

Daston and Galison credit Kant, at the start of the eighteenth century, with reintroducing objectivity and subjectivity to the epistemic and scientific discourse. But again, as in the case of Scotus and Ockham, the understandings of the terms were not what they commonly are now. In Kant's work the objective was applied to the universal, and subjective to the particular. “For Kant, the line between the objective and the subjective generally runs between universal and particular, not between world and mind.”[14] The one thing that Kant's use of the terms and our own use had in common was that the term subjective had negative connotations attached to it, but it wasn't until about 1850 that the terms took on a more modern sense.[15]

So, in medieval philosophy, there was no link between objectivity and the truth of the external world, nor was there any link between objectivity and value-neutrality or impartiality. Rather, it was the subjective that presented the truth of the external world, while the objective referred to our apprehensions of these truths in our consciousnesses. Ockham and Scotus's use of the term to imply things as they present themselves to the observer rather than things as they are in themselves suggests that the term need not refer to an attempt to be a clear reflection of nature. This supports Antony's argument that the traditional or mainstream account of objectivity is not the only account possible and has not been the only account in existence. The account of objectivity that Rorty, Clough and Code, among others, object to is only one particular conception of objectivity. Even in our more recent past, objectivity was not necessarily connected with a metaphysical realist account of the

14 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 29.
15 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 30.

external world, as the traditional account would have it. In summary, the uses of objectivity and subjectivity are malleable, and change in different eras. The one thing that doesn't appear to change about objectivity according to Daston and Galison's research is that it is always paired with its opposite, the subjective.

Daston and Galison claim that the modern sense of objectivity appeared when scientists began to worry about a new and different kind of obstacle to knowledge—the scientific subjects themselves: "Their fear was that the subjective self was prone to prettify, idealize, and, in the worst case, regularize observations as to fit theoretical expectations: to see what it hoped to see."[16] The fear is that scientists would bias their own experiments because they would alter the results to fit their own expectations about the sort of world we live in—a regular, symmetrical, harmonious and beautiful one. Their subjective desires and values would alter how they interpreted the data, or even how they collected the data. Here, in the middle of the nineteenth century, the idea of values as harmful to objective knowledge emerged. So, the constant that Harding identifies as a constant in the concept of objectivity is a relatively recent concern. Value-neutrality, or value-freedom, only came to be part of the ideal of objectivity with the rise over the concern of the knowing self. In effect, the barrier to knowledge might be the willful self. Without meaning to, scientists might be getting in their own way, because of the desires and assumptions about the world that are motivating their will.

> If objectivity was summoned into existence to negate subjectivity, then the emergence of objectivity must tally with the emergence of a certain kind of willful self, one perceived as endangering scientific knowledge. The history of

16 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 34.

objectivity becomes, *ipso facto*, part of the history of the self.[17]

So, in order to properly understand objectivity, special care must be taken to examine the scientific subject. In previous centuries, our understanding of the world may at times be imperfect, flawed and problematic. However, in the nineteenth century, the problem was not merely that our understanding was flawed, but that through our willful self, we were contributing to our flawed understanding of the world. The concept of the self in the nineteenth century was of a willful entity that was able to manipulate and interpret data to match expectation. It is in the nineteenth century that a history of objectivity is also a history of the self, or the subject. By examining where this connection with value-neutrality or value-freedom came from, and noticing the objective/subjective dichotomy, one is able to track the change in the relationship between objectivity and the knowing subject. This is one reason why I find it more enlightening to think of the constant in the concept of objectivity in terms of opposition to subjectivity rather than as value-neutrality. For one thing, value-neutrality is a relatively recent, though important, development in the concept of objectivity. It isn't obvious that Scotus or Ockham thought of objectivity in terms of value-neutrality. For another, the origins of the need for value-neutrality are found in a new conception of subjectivity. As subjectivity changes, so objectivity must change and this, in the nineteenth century, had an impact on the knowing subject.

Daston and Galison show that the concern of nineteenth-century scientists was less about the community, and more about the individual. The goal of scientists around 1850 was to eliminate the risks inherent in their own subjectivity. In order to mitigate the dangerous influence of the willful self, epistemic subjects had to place

17 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 37.

themselves at the mercy of the scientific community and its prescriptions for objectivity. Only by internalizing the ideal of objectivity and the restraints on the self that come with this ideal, was the individual epistemic subject able to ensure that he was not influencing his observations through his will.

3.3.1. Truth-To-Nature to Mechanical Objectivity

Prior to the importance of objectivity in general and what Daston and Galison label as 'mechanical' objectivity in particular, Daston and Galison claim that scientists were urged to find truth-to-nature.

Daston and Galison's object of study is the atlas. Atlas makers found that, when observing the natural world, there are an endless number of variations to be found between members of the same species. The subject, the atlas-making scientist, was encouraged to exert their judgement in altering pictures in atlases so that they correctly represented the species in general and not a particular idiosyncrasy found in a particular individual of the species. The subject was actively involved in the images created for the atlases. They were more than individuals with an eye for detail, they were also analysts. They compared each individual member of a species they saw with the members that they had seen before. Where inconsistencies existed between individual samples of the same species, the scientist determined which individual was more representative of the ideal type for the species, or whether the ideal lay somewhere in between.[18] The representation of the species that was shown in the atlas may not faithfully represent any one individual from the species, but was thought to represent the truth of the species. It was a truth-to-nature that aimed to see through all the variation to the true archetype for a given species.

18 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 58-59.

> Only the keenest and most experienced observer—who had . . . inspected thousands of different specimens—was qualified to distinguish genuine species from mere varieties, to identify the true specific characteristics imprinted in the plant, and to separate accidental from essential features.[19]

The idea was to get a true representation of the species as a whole and not a distorted representation given by a particular individual. This type of epistemic subject aimed at the ideal of truth-to-nature. In this picture of the relationship between the epistemic subject and the world there is a gap, but it is not an inherent gap that necessarily exists between them. The gap results from a sloppy empiricism and an unrefined judgement that prevents some improperly trained people from being able to acquire and reproduce the correct representation of nature. With proper training and proceeding carefully, it is possible for a mind to be properly aligned with the world, and thus represent the truth of nature. But most minds are not like this. Still, there is nothing in this picture to preclude minds from being like this. The gap is not necessary and can be overcome, and is therefore not the invitation to the skeptic that Clough is so concerned about.

The concern with truth-to-nature and the move to mechanical objectivity was motivated by the worry that scientists were altering their pictures and other data too much. In fact, the worry became that they weren't getting the truth at all, they were merely getting what they expected to find. Their own expectations were guiding their hands when they altered pictures. Daston and Galison provide a story of Arthur Worthington, a scientist illustrating water droplets for atlases. Worthington, at first, had no ideal of objectivity, and instead held an ideal of truth-to-nature. His job, as a

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19 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 59.

trained scientist, was to see and depict the truth behind the individual idiosyncratic water droplets he saw. He believed the world to be ordered, and beautiful, as did others in the scientific community. After the introduction of photography into atlas making, Worthington realized that he had been drawing, and indeed as far as he could recall *seeing*, water droplets as perfect spheres. The camera, however, showed these water droplets not to be perfect spheres at all.[20] The ideal of truth-to-nature was challenged, as were the background beliefs in a ordered, harmonious and symmetrical world that supported this ideal. This one example is illustrative of the rising fear of the biasing role the scientific subjects were playing in data collection. It signaled a move to mechanical objectivity as an epistemic ideal.

> Scientists enlisted self-registering cameras, wax molds, and a host of other devices in a near-fanatical effort to create images for atlases documenting birds, fossils, snowflakes, bacteria, human bodies, crystals and flowers—with the aim of freeing images from human interference.[21]

Scientists, in effect, employed machines to distance the epistemic subjects from the images produced. Because of this reliance on machines, this type of objectivity was labeled by Daston and Galison, 'mechanical objectivity'. Daston and Galison define mechanical objectivity in the following way:

> By *mechanical objectivity* we mean the insistent drive to repress the willful intervention of the artist-author, and to put in its stead a set of procedures that would, as it were, move nature to the page through a strict protocol, if not automatically.[22]

The goal of mechanical objectivity was, according to Daston and Galison to “[l]et

20 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 11-16.
21 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 121.
22 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 121.

nature speak for itself"[23] rather than interpret and idealize natural specimens.

Daston and Galison report that scientists knew that mechanical objectivity was a "regulative ideal." It could not be perfectly attained in practice. Photos could be retouched. The lighting in which they were taken or the angle from which they were taken could alter how the specimen appeared. The image could be enhanced. But the idea was still to get as close as possible to a representation free from human interference, while recognizing that this was likely impossible.

> . . . . the machine stood for authenticity: it was at once observer and artist, free from the inner temptation to theorize, anthropomorphize, beautify, or interpret nature. What the human observer could achieve only by iron self-discipline, the machine effortlessly accomplished—such, at least, was the hope.[24]

The scientists' commitment to aspire to mechanical objectivity were expressed in the reliance on the machine, and the goal of creating a scientific subject that was as close to a machine in his or her observations as possible. Though these goals only came into effect in the mid-nineteenth century, "[b]y the late nineteenth century, mechanical objectivity. . . [was] a guiding if not *the* guiding ideal of scientific representation across a wide range of disciplines."[25] Mechanical objectivity, as a regulative ideal, took hold in the scientific community quickly. But accepting mechanical objectivity meant making a lot of changes and sacrifices for scientists. Much of the knowledge accumulated by fellow scientists over the past centuries had to be given up or at least called into question since it had not been gained using the proper perspective, that of a machine. Knowledge gained through truth-to-nature was suspect under the new commitment to

23 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 120.
24 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 139.
25 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 125.

mechanical objectivity.[26] So, rather than contributing to knowledge, one of the first results of a commitment to objectivity was a significant loss of knowledge.

Aiming for the ideal of objectivity was a never-ending task. I have already noted that Daston and Galison claim that scientists knew that a perfect objective perspective was unattainable. To demonstrate the tireless self-examination that was the life of a scientist committed to objectivity I will reproduce a quote from Ernst Haeckel that Daston and Galison give.

> I am now among the oldest professors of medicine; I have been teaching my science for more than thirty years, and I may say that in these thirty years I have honestly worked on myself, to do away with ever more of my subjective being [*dem subjectiven Wesen*]. Nonetheless, I must openly confess that it has not been possible for me to desubjectivize myself entirely. With each year, I recognize yet again that in those places where I thought myself wholly objective I have still held onto a large element of subjective views [*subjective Vorstellungen*].[27]

The commitment to objectivity was an endless task for the scientific subject. He kept discovering things about himself that might be clouding his judgement, influencing his perspective and in general preventing him from operating as a machine. He needed to maintain constant vigilance but not of the observable world. Rather, he needed to exercise vigilance on the observer. As Thomas Nagel stated, self-knowledge was at the heart of a commitment to objectivity. The scientist observed himself, studied himself, in order to police himself.

Not only was a commitment to objectivity an endless task, and one that

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26 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 161.
27 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 189. Square brackets present in Daston and Galison.

necessitated giving up the knowledge-claims held by previous scientists, it was also often at odds with the much older goal of truth. Truth-to-nature, as outlined above, was the scientific practice committed to the ideal of truth. Mechanical objectivity, by contrast, held objectivity as an ideal. Scientists committed to the ideal of mechanical objectivity would allow photographs that were out of focus, smudged, or of extremely a-typical specimens to stand rather than retouching them or redoing them and risking the contamination of individual subjective biases.[28] So, as early as its very inception, those committed to the ideal of objectivity knew that this commitment did not necessarily yield truth. In many cases, it did not yield truth at all, metaphysically understood: "Objectivity was a different, and distinctly epistemological, goal—in contrast to the metaphysical aim of truth."[29] Objectivity, then, according to Daston and Galison, not only had little or nothing in common with the value of a metaphysical truth, it also was explicitly not a metaphysical claim. One could hold the value of objectivity without holding any belief with regards to the nature of reality. Of course, accuracy was still important. But the nature of what it meant to be accurate had changed. Accuracy was no longer understood in terms of finding a representative member of a species to be an ideal image for the species as a whole. Thus, while still striving for accuracy, individuals might allow pictures they knew to be inaccurate (because of smudges, discolourations, etc.) to be included in atlases rather than risk a distortion from the willful self seeking order and beauty.

Objectivity was more than an epistemic ideal for the scientists of the nineteenth century, it was also an ethical ideal. "Although mechanical objectivity was in the service of gaining a right depiction of nature, its primary allegiance was to a morality

28 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 195.
29 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 210.

of self-restraint. . .”[30] The ethics and epistemology of objectivity were intertwined. The goal of gaining knowledge was tied up with the morality of a form of asceticism, whereby individuals restrained themselves in order to attain their goal. Daston and Galison maintain that objectivity was an ethical commitment. Epistemology and ethics were bound together in the ideal of objectivity which promised the epistemic goal of a 'right depiction of nature,' if not a true one, metaphysically speaking, and necessitated the practice of rigorous self-examination and self-restraint.

Though this is just a small part of the history of objectivity as given in their 2007 book, this is enough to illustrate the type of history that Daston and Galison tell of objectivity. Objectivity has meant many different things in the past. It has not always been connected with a metaphysical commitment to truth (in some cases adopting an ideal of objectivity results in allowing distorted images to stand, even though they were acknowledged to not represent the species. This seems to be working against truth and knowledge, not for it). It has not always been concerned with value-freedom or value-neutrality (in its earliest inceptions, objectivity referred to our perceptions of the world, not the way the world was in itself, and thus it follows that it also referred to any value-ladenness found in those perceptions). Rather than being inherently tied to metaphysical truth or value-neutrality, Daston and Galison's story illustrates that objectivity has historically been tied to subjectivity. In the nineteenth century, through this connection to subjectivity, it came to be linked to worries over the self. In Daston and Galison's case, the worries have been over the scientific self. Even in early medieval accounts of objectivity, it was placed in opposition to subjectivity. And Daston and Galison note early on in their book that the story of objectivity in relation

30 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 185.

to the scientific self is just a subset of a larger story. “Yet even though our quarry is the species, we cannot ignore the genus: however distinctive, the scientific self was nonetheless part of a larger history of the self.”[31] It is that larger story that I will turn to in the next section, but before I do, I want to examine two more types of objectivity, both of which will be important to my own account of the benefits of objectivity. Lorraine Daston identified one conception of objectivity held as an ideal in the scientific community, a type that was imported from philosophical morality, aperspectival objectivity. Max Weber is often credited with popularizing the idea of value-free objectivity, a conception of objectivity that is often the first one people assume when one claims to be an objective individual. It is these two types of objectivity that I turn to now.

3.3.2. Aperspectival Objectivity

Daston discusses the term 'aperspectival objectivity' in her 1992 article “Objectivity and the Escape from Perspective.” She argues that aperspectival objectivity dominates current usage and understanding of the term 'objectivity'. She points to Thomas Nagel's “brilliant oxymoron 'view from nowhere'” as an excellent metaphorical understanding of the term aperspectival.[32] This type of objectivity is not mentioned in her and Galison's larger book on objectivity, but Daston claims that it is distinct from mechanical objectivity.

> Whereas. . . mechanical objectivity is about suppressing the universal human propensity to judge and to aestheticize, aperspectival objectivity is about eliminating individual (or occasionally group, as in the case of national styles

31 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 37.
32 Lorraine Daston, “Objectivity and the Escape from Perspective” *Social Studies of Science* 22, no. 597. (1992): 599.

or anthropomorphism) idiosyncrasies.[33]

So aperspectival objectivity is also about eliminating problems of the individual, but not the same problems as mechanical objectivity. They are, then, two distinct senses of the term 'objectivity,' referring to two distinct senses of what is problematic about the subject. Aperspectival objectivity aims at what we can all agree on, whereas mechanical objectivity aims as what is left over once our biases and willful subjective influences are removed. The two may be related. It may be that what we can all agree on also happens to be what is the case once the willful subject is removed. But, if we all adopt ideals in accord with truth-to-nature, it seems we may all agree and all be similarly willful (seeking a beautiful and ordered nature, for example). Thus aperspectival objectivity may not insist on value-neutrality. While there may be overlaps, the aims of these two types of objectivity are different. Aperspectival aims at overcoming individual idiosyncrasies in order to facilitate collaboration and communication. Mechanical objectivity aims at overcoming preconceived notions of what nature is like in order to allow nature to speak for itself.

There is some indication that there may be some relation between mechanical objectivity and aperspectival objectivity. Daston, in this article, claims that “the values of aperspectival objectivity left visible traces in the conduct of scientists, in their ever stronger preferences for mechanized observation and methods,”[34] thus providing an insight into the potential link between mechanical objectivity and aperspectival objectivity. The reliance on machines might be linked to the attempted removal of individual idiosyncrasies. Emulating a machine, one of the goals of an epistemic subject who subscribes to mechanical objectivity, may also be one of the goals of an

33 Daston, “Objectivity and the Escape from Perspective,” 599.
34 Daston, “Objectivity and the Escape from Perspective,” 614.

epistemic subject who subscribes to aperspectival objectivity.

But there is another difference between mechanical and aperspectival objectivity. Daston argues that "aperspectival objectivity first made its appearance, not in the natural sciences, but rather in the moral and aesthetic philosophy of the latter half of the eighteenth century."[35] At this time, the scientific community was marked by the value of truth-to-nature, and did not have an ideal of objectivity at all.

> Only in the middle decades of the nineteenth century was aperspectival objectivity imported and naturalized into the ethos of the natural sciences, as a result of a reorganization of scientific life that multiplied professional contacts at every level, from the international commission to well-staffed laboratory. Aperspectival objectivity became a scientific value when science came to consist in large part of communications that crossed boundaries of nationality, training and skill. Indeed, the essence of aperspectival objectivity is communicability, narrowing the range of genuine knowledge to coincide with that of public knowledge. In the extreme case, aperspectival objectivity may even sacrifice deeper or more accurate knowledge to the demands of communicability.[36]

As the scientific community grew, and it became more important to communicate to a larger and larger number of people, individual idiosyncrasies began to hamper effective communication. It was necessary to eliminate these idiosyncrasies.

Aperspectival objectivity, then, carried a moral commitment to the community and to facilitation of communication. "Subjectivity became synonymous with the individual and solitude; objectivity, with the collective and conviviality."[37] Subjectivity

35 Daston, "Objectivity and the Escape from Perspective," 600.
36 Daston, "Objectivity and the Escape from Perspective," 600.
37 Daston, "Objectivity and the Escape from Perspective," 609.

was still bad here, still something to be avoided, but the reason it was to be avoided was because it did not allow for communication and did not help the collective. What was problematic about the subject, and what helped fuel the adoption of aperspectival objectivity, was a concern with communicability, not, as in the case of mechanical objectivity, a concern with the subjective tendency to idealization. When comparing aperspectival objectivity to mechanical objectivity, it becomes clear that different problems with the subject are highlighted and combated by these different accounts of objectivity.

One might think that aperspectival and mechanical objectivity are related. This suggestion is unsurprising. Both accounts are accounts of objectivity, and so we would expect to find that they are somewhat related. However, Daston's account of aperspectival objectivity is distinct from Daston and Galison's account of mechanical objectivity. They each highlight different problems with the scientific subject and posit different ways to combat these problems. While both types of objectivity seem to lead to scientists' favouring the machine over their own observations, each type of objectivity has its own specific history and specific metaphors and each classifies the problematic subject in a slightly different way. One metaphorical way to think of this is to think of the camera as representative of mechanical objectivity. Aperspectival objectivity is better represented by the thermometer or the clock; basic instruments of measurement that we all can agree upon.

Finally, neither account promises to deliver a knowledge of the metaphysical truth of the external world. Neither claims to polish our mirrors to reflect clearly, or build a bridge over the gap between us and the world. Mechanical objectivity is closer to these promises than aperspectival. On first glance, mechanical objectivity does

seem to promise to polish the subjective mirror so that it can reflect the world accurately, without idealization. But upon closer reflection, one recognizes that even in mechanical objectivity, accuracy where representations of the world are concerned is far from guaranteed. Or, rather, the sort of accuracy promised with regards to mechanical objectivity is one that works against the ideals of truth-to-nature, such that flawed photographs were left as representations of the world. All that is hoped for is that the influence from the individual subject is mitigated as far as is possible. The observations may still be flawed, and may even be flawed in ways that have nothing to do with the individual subject, as in the case of an observation of a non-typical member of a species. With aperspectival objectivity, the concern is about bridging gaps between communities of individuals, not bridging gaps between the individual and the world. Thus neither account of objectivity is one that can be conceptualized in terms of crossing bridges or cleaning mirrors in order to see or arrive at the metaphysical truth. Both accounts have been influential in past conceptions of objectivity. Daston makes the case that aperspectival objectivity is one of the most common conceptions of objectivity. Yet neither account conforms to the conception of objectivity that Rorty, Clough, Code and to a lesser degree Harding offer. Neither account of objectivity can be seen as beneficial for its promise to bridge the gap between us and metaphysical truth. Rather, what both accounts have in common is a commitment to move past the merely subjective, but not necessarily in a way that guarantees truth in any metaphysical sense. So, Daston and Galison's history of objectivity supports the arguments given by Antony in the last chapter. Objectivity is not best understood as a static ideal needed in order to overcome a metaphysical gap. This is one conception of the concept of objectivity, but it is not the only

conception, and not even the most prevalent conception in all eras.

3.3.3. Max Weber and Value-Freedom

Though Daston claims that aperspectival objectivity is the dominant form of objectivity currently, there is another form that is commonly discussed. This is a form often credited to Max Weber, and it is objectivity in terms of value-freedom, or value-neutrality. In his 1991 book, *Value-Free Knowledge,* Robert Proctor traces the rise of the importance of value-freedom in scientific investigation. Proctor credits this idea of value-free knowledge as having first been expressed by Max Weber in 1918.[38]

There is some indication that value-freedom is conceptually connected to mechanical objectivity. Max Weber claimed in his essay *Science as Vocation*, that the role of the scientist in society was to have a commitment to value-freedom.[39] One might see this as an endorsement of mechanical objectivity insofar as the subject who aimed to be value-free might go about doing this by aiming to be characterized in terms of a machine. He or she must hold a commitment to examining the object of study with a detached perspective, free of values. Values might lead the individual to interpret the evidence differently, or alter the picture so as to favorably represent what the scientist expected to find. All such urges were to be resisted. The scientist must have an iron will directed at his own self, keeping his values, desires and beliefs in check, and observing the world in the manner of a machine, with no values or desires.

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38 Proctor, *Value-Free Science,* 134-154.

39 Max Weber, *Max Weber; Essays in Sociology* trans. H.H. Gerth and C.W. Mills. (New York: Oxford University Press,1946). As mentioned earlier, there is some question as to whether this value-free epistemic subject is the right way to interpret Weber. For the purposes of this dissertation, it matters less whether or not this is what Weber intended, and more that this is a familiar account of the role of scientists in particular, and epistemic subjects in general. It is commonly ascribed to Weber, whether he intended this or not.

However, one might also characterize value-freedom in terms of aperspectival objectivity insofar as the subject who aimed to be value-free went about doing this by aiming to remove all values and biases that were individual idiosyncrasies. Insofar as the values held by an individual were not shared by his or her interlocutors, they needed to be removed from discourse. The individuals must remove themselves—their values, their beliefs, their mannerisms—from their communication as much as possible and speak in a manner that was neutral and could be understood by all.

Value-freedom as espoused by Max Weber in 1918 could be likened to both mechanical and aperspectival objectivity, and yet imperfectly to both. For mechanical objectivity seems to require more than simply the removal of values, it also requires the removal of any trace of humanity, prior assumptions, prior beliefs, be they value-laden or not. The not-obviously value-laden belief that a smudge on a photograph caused by a fingerprint on the camera lens was distorting the image could not be acted upon. For aperspectival objectivity, not all values needed to be removed. Values held in common with one's interlocutors were acceptable, since they would be recognized and understood and would not function as barriers to discourse. So, for both accounts of objectivity already examined, while value-free objectivity shares features in common, it is not equivalent to either, requiring more than aperspectival objectivity does of the epistemic subject and less than mechanical objectivity does. Another important difference of the commitment to value-freedom in Weber's book, *Science as Vocation* was that the reasons for this commitment were *social*. Scientists revealed facts, many of these facts threatened or undermined dogmatically held values. Thus, a commitment to value-freedom gave a firm basis for the discovery and acceptance of these facts on the part of scientists, and gave their revelation of these

facts to the general public some credence. While the public may want to resist the claims being made by scientists, they could not do so on the basis of any distrust of the scientists' values or motives.[40] Scientists are not to be dictators, that is not part of the vocation of science. As such, they must simply deliver facts, and the public decides what is to be done with these facts.

It might be a surprising conclusion that these three accounts of objectivity, mechanical, aperspectival, and value-free, are somewhat related, and yet also distinct. But Daston and Galison remind us that not only does objectivity change, it also has a layering effect.[41] New accounts of objectivity do not displace old accounts, meaning that the longer objectivity exists, the more it changes, the more conceptions are potentially packed into that single term. Thus, one would expect to find similarities between the different conceptions of objectivity. First, each conception has a history and is somehow related to other conceptions that predate and postdate it, making up one link in a chain of conceptions. Second, the term itself retains old understandings in community discourse even as it acquires new ones.

Daston and Galison have argued that the historical opposite of the objective is the subjective. And yet, while they remain opposed, these terms can drastically change their meaning. Not only do they change the way they are understood, but these conceptions are layered in the concept, such that the concept can refer to many other different conceptions. What needs to be examined carefully now is what type of subjectivity is being opposed by each conception of objectivity. As Daston notes,

> The various kinds of objectivity might be classified by the different subjectivity they oppose. By the mid-nineteenth century . . . mechanical objectivity

40 Weber, Max, *Max Weber; Essays in Sociology.*
41 Daston and Galison, *Objectivity,* 41.

> opposed interpretation. The aperspectival objectivity attributed to late nineteenth-century science opposed the subjectivity of the individual idiosyncrasies, which substituted for the individual interests and situations analyzed by the eighteenth-century moral perspectivists.[42]

Objectivity opposes subjectivity, and changes in response to the changing conceptions of problems with epistemic subjects. Daston argues that this is all socially negotiated. Rorty would probably not disagree with this idea of objectivity as socially negotiated. This is part of what allows him to say that we can give the term up. If it is a socially negotiated practice to aim for the ideal of objectivity, then it is open to revision and change. What is curious is that Rorty seems to neglect that this change has been happening, and is happening, as he writes. He fails to see the history of the term 'objectivity'. In short, he does not recognize that the concept of objectivity has undergone many different conceptions in history.

Finally it is necessary to note the *way* that objectivity opposes subjectivity. Daston and Galison report that objectivity was an ethical as well as an epistemic commitment. A scientist had to direct his will back towards himself. This can most vividly be seen in the Ernst Haeckel quotation given above. Haeckel, who had a commitment to mechanical objectivity, spent his entire career tirelessly examining himself and rooting out perceived biases and values. The ethical commitment carries with it a commitment to self-reflection, or introspection. The scientist must be the kind of individual who came to know himself, who knew his own values and beliefs, and who sought to keep these from influencing his judgement. In Max Weber's case of value-free objectivity, individual values or biases were thought to be clouding

42 Daston, “Objectivity and the Escape from Perspective,” 607.

judgement, and as such had to be removed if the scientist was to be seen as objective and if the scientist's motives were to be trusted. Weber explicitly ties this to a role that scientists take on when they become scientists. It is how they are to conduct themselves, who they are to appear to be to others. Weber's advocation of value-freedom is, then, explicitly social. It is the kind of role a scientist is expected to take on in society.

Even in the case of aperspectival objectivity, an element of self-reflection is present, though here it presents itself differently. A scientist must, again, know his beliefs, but he must know which beliefs and values are likely to be shared, and therefore understood, by his community of interlocutors and which beliefs are idiosyncratically his own, and must be rooted out of communication in order to maintain objectivity.

In the next section I will claim that it isn't just our conceptions of epistemic subjects that is changing. It isn't just that epistemic and scientific communities identify new problems with subjects. Rather, I will argue that these problems with the subject are being *created* by the accounts of objectivity subscribed to. The possibilities of being an epistemic subject are changing with the changing accounts of objectivity. The story of objectivity becomes more complicated once we consider that in order to understand the objective we must understand the subjective, and in order to understand the subjective, we must, it seems, examine communities. Communities that value objectivity create the possibility of self-reflective people who understand their ethical and epistemic task to be to question what they believe and value and root it out depending on the concept of objectivity subscribed to.

I will rely on work by Ian Hacking to make this case. To put it in Ian Hacking's terminology, the epistemic subject is an interactive kind, and changes in conjunction with the changing accounts of objectivity. Objectivity, then, creates possibilities of personhood. I think that an investigation of these possibilities of personhood may answer the question of whether objectivity is a beneficial ideal to hold.

3.4. The Subject and Community

The relationship between individual subjects and the communities to which they belong is a complicated one. In this section I do not propose to address all the issues regarding how it is that subjects and communities are related. Rather, my goal in this section is much more modest. I will argue that the values communities hold shape the categories of persons available to individuals in those communities. As a first step, I will examine some work on scientific communities and community borders conducted by sociologist Thomas Gieryn. Not only does this work by Gieryn serve to strengthen Habermas's concerns about Rorty's view from the last chapter, but it also serves to highlight how it is that scientific communities interact with each other and other communities, a process that will be more important in chapters to come. In addition, Gieryn's arguments that communities define themselves in opposition to each other serves to give a working understanding of communities, and of how communities choose values and beliefs to hold. It seems they often do so based on their interactions with other communities.

3.4.1. What is a Community?

I begin my exploration of community borders with an example Robert Proctor gives from his 1995 book *Cancer Wars*. Proctor's book tracks the politics of science

in investigations into cancer and causes of cancer. Proctor seeks an answer to the question of why cases of cancer are still on the rise, despite the fact that the United States has been devoting huge sums of money to cancer research and to winning the war against cancer since the 1970's. In doing so, Proctor examines many clashes between interest groups, the public and communities of scientists, each identifying themselves in opposition to the other. While his main target was not to examine community interaction, portions of his book do just that. Throughout *Cancer Wars* there is a clear polarization between those who argue that the hazards of industry are a direct cause of cancer and those who argue that industry hazards have little or nothing to do with the rise in cancer rates throughout the twentieth century. Each side tends to demonize and discredit the other side. Those who see a connection between industry pollution and cancer call the other side biased since many of the most vocally denying a link are paid by the businesses they are arguing are safe. Those arguing that there is little or no connection, and that cancer is on the rise because of lifestyle choices (such as smoking or eating fatty foods) and not because of workplace hazards label the others as using their position for a “larger symbolic value.” In one example of this polarization, Proctor discusses Aaron Wildavsky, a libertarian and advocate for the freedom of capitalism. Wildavsky advocates for the safety of nuclear energy and demonizes his opposition by claiming that their motivations in raising the alarm over nuclear energy are not free from self-interest.

> Their charge that environmental pollution is ubiquitous can therefore 'be understood for what it is—a fundamental attack on libertarian culture.' Wildavsky cites the work of Bernard Cohen of Pittsburgh showing that nuclear energy is safe and suggests that this particular technology is popularly chosen

> for opprobrium not because it is especially dangerous. . . but rather because such an attack has a larger symbolic value. An attack on nuclear power is an attack on 'bigness,' 'corporate capital,' and indeed 'the entire establishment.' [43]

Certainly Wildavsky is using rhetoric here to attempt to persuade his audience that those who attack technological advances and argue that industry is filling the air with harmful environmental pollution are biased and untrustworthy. He paints his opponents as having a larger secret agenda and as trying to manipulate their audience. He paints himself as the clear-headed and simple libertarian who is telling it like it is.

In this scenario there are three groups: we have Wildavsky, his readers, and the demonized environmentalists. Wildavsky is clearly trying to persuade his readers of his beliefs. But what about the environmentalists? Is there any indication that he is trying to persuade them of anything? He better not be, as he is not likely to get very far by telling them that they are biased and have a hidden agenda. Insulting your opponents, or attempting to discredit them, is rarely a way to progress towards agreement with them. Wildavsky has indeed divided up the world into those whose opinions matter (his readers and those who support his claim) and those whose opinions do not matter (the environmentalists). Were he to be successful in convincing his readers that the environmentalists are biased and trying to manipulate the public to further a hidden agenda, it would seem that he would have completed his task. Once no one is listening to the environmentalists, there is no need to try to convince *them too*. They pose no threat to one's own beliefs anymore and can safely be ignored. Everyone whose opinion matters is ignoring the environmentalists

43 Robert Proctor, *Cancer Wars: How Politics Shapes What We Know And Don't Know About Cancer* (New York: Basic Books, A Division of Harper Collins Publishing, 1995), 92.

anyway.

The example of Wildavsky and the environmentalist shows the negotiations between different communities and the negotiation of the borders of a community. In particular it illustrates that not all communities wish to extend their borders indefinitely (not all communities hold the value Rorty claimed his liberal community did in the last chapter). This makes logical sense from one point of view. The way to identify the borders of one's own community, and identify which community one belongs to, is also to know which community one does not belong to, and whose opinions do not count. Thomas F. Gieryn, in his article “Boundary Work and the Demarcation of Science from Non-Science: Strains and Interests in Professional Ideologies of Scientists,” examines the negotiation of borders of communities, as well as how these borders change depending on what is defined as an outside community. His interest is the community of British natural philosophers as they sought to distinguish their project from those of mechanics (i.e. engineers) and from religious thinkers. So, his particular focus is on an epistemic community. He uses this example of demarcation between the scientific community and other communities to illustrate that, in practice, the boundaries of a community are fairly easily negotiated, and yet are not static and fixed. He looks at the work John Tyndall conducted demarcating science from religion and from mechanics in Victorian Britain. When Tyndall defines scientific territory in relation to religion, he identifies certain attributes of the scientific method and scientific community that are not shared by the religious community. For example:

> Science is practically useful in inspiring technological progress to improve the material conditions of the nation; religion is 'useful' if at all, for aid and comfort in emotional matters. . . Science is empirical in that its road to truth is

> experimentation with observable facts of nature; religion is metaphysical because its truths depend on spiritual, unseen forces assumed without verification. . . Science is skeptical because it respects no authority other than the facts of nature; religion is dogmatic because it continues to respect the authority of worn-out ideas and their creators. . . Science is objective knowledge free from emotions, private interests, bias or prejudice; religion is subjective and emotional.[44]

By focusing on the practicality of science, its empirical method, and its focus on experimentation and observable facts as opposed to metaphysics, Tyndall differentiates science from religion. Religion is characterized as being dogmatic, not terribly useful, and focused on metaphysical concerns. The boundary of science as opposed to religion is divided up based on the differences between the two communities. The characteristics of science brought up here are the ones that are not shared between science and religion.

However, when Tyndall differentiates science from mechanics (engineering) Gieryn notes that other and at times inconsistent attributes of science are highlighted.

> Scientists seek discovery of facts as ends in themselves; mechanicians seek inventions to further personal profit. . . Science is theoretical. Mechanicians are not scientists because they do not go beyond observed facts to discover the *causal principles* that govern underlying *unseen processes*.[45]

When differentiating science from religion, Tyndall pointed to science as useful, as dealing with observables and as practical. Yet, when differentiating science from mechanics, Tyndall points to scientific facts as ends in themselves, not necessarily

44 Thomas F. Gieryn, "Boundary Work and the Demarcation of Science from Non-Science; Strains and Interests in Professional Ideologies of Scientists" *American Sociological Review* 48, no. 6 (December 1983.): 785.

45 Gieryn, "Boundary Work and the Demarcation of Science from Non-Science," 786

useful for other ends. When differentiating science from religion, Tyndall claims that science sticks with observables whereas religion postulates metaphysical unseen forces. But, when differentiating science from mechanics he claims that science goes past mechanics, goes beyond observable facts to unseen principles.

Gieryn claims that “The boundaries of science are ambiguous, flexible, historically changing, contextually variable, internally inconsistent, and sometimes disputed.”[46] Gieryn's point is to establish that the scientific community does have boundaries, but that it is foolhardy to try to fix those boundaries by identifying what is unique to science that is not shared by any other discipline or system of thought. This is not how the boundaries of science become established. Instead, they change. The boundaries of science are established by boundary-work demarcating science from non-science. In particular, I want to emphasize that what Gieryn has shown is that the boundaries of science change depending on the community that the scientists are attempting to differentiate themselves from. It is not enough to establish a community by knowing what is shared internally by the members of the community. The community also establishes itself in the face of opposition.

The implication I draw from this is that communities tend to only seek wide-spread agreement to a point. To a point, it is useful to expand the number of people who agree with one's beliefs and who hold one's values. But only to a point. At a point, outsiders are needed in order to facilitate the formation of community borders. And, depending on who these outsiders are seen to be, the borders of the community will be different. Community borders shift and change, but they do not seem to typically indefinitely expand. This is because they need the opposition in order to

46 Gieryn, “Boundary Work and the Demarcation of Science from Non-Science,” 792.

understand their own position.

If one pays attention to what is shifting the borders of the community, it is clear that the borders do not shift arbitrarily, and are not always widening to welcome other communities in. They shift with reference to opposing communities. When religion is the threat, the borders of science are shifted in one direction, and when mechanics is the threat, the borders shift in another direction. So the borders of the community are defined in relation to other communities. Rather than wanting to expand to incorporate other communities, the scientific community seems interested in drawing boundaries that separate it from other communities. It wants to be differentiated from the communities of Christians and engineers as two examples. It does not want to expand its borders and open a dialog with these two communities. Work must be done in order to clearly establish the borders of science in relation to those other communities.

Communities are not typically constantly striving to widen their borders. Depending on the other communities, a community may actually be striving to sharpen and tighten their borders. While Rorty is correct, the borders can be shifted, Habermas's concern noted in the last chapter regarding Rorty's call to widen community borders indefinitely is valid. As Habermas pointed out, there is no good reason that Rorty can provide to wish to widen borders indefinitely. In addition, there seem to be good reasons not to widen borders indefinitely. Namely, community borders are typically defined in opposition to other communities. This is working against Rorty's thesis of indefinitely widening agreement. With this very rudimentary understanding of the formation and maintenance of communities, typically in opposition to other communities, I will move on to examine the relationship between

communities and individual members of those communities.

3.4.2. Community-Constrained Possibilities of Persons

Ian Hacking argues that communities create individual categories of personhood. His main examples of these community-created categories are homosexuality and Dissociative Identity Disorder. He argues that both categories are created, and that the individuals in the categories are shaped by the category and shape the category in turn. He calls this the "looping effect of human kinds" and defines it in these terms:

> I have from time to time spoken of the looping effect of human kinds—that is, the interactions between people, on the one hand, and ways of classifying people and their behaviour on the other. Being seen to be a certain kind of person, or to do a certain kind of act, may affect someone. A new or modified mode of classification may systematically affect the people who are so classified, or the people themselves may rebel against the knowers, the classifiers, the science that classifies them. Such interactions may lead to changes in the people who are classified, and hence what is known about them. That is what I call a feedback effect. [47]

Individuals are created through communities and power relations in those communities. But this definition itself shifts the power relations. As individuals are lumped together under a description they may form a community. They are able to challenge and change the description of themselves from the inside in opposition to the existing community that has defined them in a certain way.

In his article "Making Up People," Hacking examines the relationship between

47 Ian Hacking, *Rewriting the Soul: Multiple Personality and the Science of Memory (*Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. 1995), 239.

people who have been categorized a certain way, and the communities wherein these categories originate. He argues that not only are individuals created by communities, but possibilities of personhood are created as well. “Who we are is not only what we did, do, and will do, but also what we might have done and may do.”[48] It isn't just who you are that has been shaped by society, classified, and created, but also who you could be. There are possibilities of personhood open to us in the twenty-first century that were not present in the seventeenth century (such as being a computer nerd, for example). And there were possibilities of personhood in the seventeenth century that are not present in the twenty-first. Social and historical factors on how people are classified, and how statistical data is gathered, shape the possibilities of personhood open to individuals. Hacking's discussion of this shifting in possibilities of personhood refers to Sartre's example of the *garçon de café*.

> I think that in most parts of, let us say, Alberta (or in a McDonald's anywhere), a waiter playing at being a *garçon de café* would miss the mark as surely as if he were playing at being a diplomat while passing over the french fries. As with almost every way in which it is possible to be a person, it is possible to be a *garçon de café* only at a certain time, in a certain place, in a certain social setting.[49]

Much as I might like to, I, having grown up in Alberta in the late twentieth century, do not have the possibility of a *garçon de café* open to me. I do not live in the correct community for this. This is not a matter of my choosing to live in France in the 1940's over Alberta in the 1990's. No such choice could be made.[50]

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48 Hacking, “Making Up People,” 109.
49 Hacking, “Making Up People,” 109.
50 This discussion leaves aside the issues of sex and gender in my ability or inability become a *garçon de café*.

Hacking gives vivid examples in *Rewriting the Soul* regarding how a person may be shaped over time: the rise of the category of dissociative identity disorder, and the negotiations between people diagnosed with the disorder, doctors and psychologists, and the larger community. He gives a persuasive argument that Dissociative Identity Disorder is a socially created disease. He argues that the subject of dissociative identity disorder (DID) is shaped by the community she is in. He gives a compelling example to illustrate that this is so. When Eve, one of the first DID patients (or multiples, as they were called before multiple personality disorder was renamed) was diagnosed, she had three personalities. A movie was made about her and released in the theatres. After that, many multiples began to be diagnosed, and most of these had three personalities just like Eve.[51] Then Sybil was diagnosed, but she had sixteen personalities. A book was written about her experiences and a movie made. Suddenly, the average number of alter personalities jumped from three to sixteen.[52]

Something can be socially shaped and yet still be real. These are not mutually exclusive categories. Hacking argues that DID patients are not lying, but are genuinely ill. It is just that their illness is created by a community of psychiatrists and patients. The categories society places on the individual have real consequence.[53] Hacking offers the example of homosexuality as another intersubjectively created category. What it means to be a homosexual has changed in some communities from being a disorder to being a natural and normal way for a subject to be. He speculates

51 Hacking, *Rewriting the Soul,* 40-41.
52 Hacking, *Rewriting the Soul,* 40-45.
53 Michel Foucault gives a similar argument in regards to categories of personhood arising out of changes in the European prison system in his book *Discipline and Punish*. (Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, a Division of Random House, Inc., 1995.))

that the same thing may one day happen for the DID patient.[54] Hacking refers to a recent book entitled *The Making of the Modern Homosexual*. He says that

> [c]ontributors [to the book] by and large accept that the homosexual and the heterosexual as kinds of persons (as ways to be persons, or as conditions of personhood), came into being only toward the end of the nineteenth century. There has been plenty of same-sex activities in all ages, but not, it is argued, same-sex people and different-sex people. [55]

Hacking argues that the categories of homosexual and heterosexual are socially created categories. This doesn't mean that an individual could not be attracted to those of the same or the opposite sex prior to the creation of these categories, but rather that an individual could not be classified as a homosexual, along with the attitudes and assumptions that term can carry, prior to the creation of the category. These categories change over time: “Making up people changes the space of possibilities of personhood.”[56] He claims that there are many ways of being, or of being categorized, now that did not exist in the past. The labels that the community is placing on the subjective perspective are different from the way they were even half a century ago. And these categories of personhood need not be solely categories developed by social institutions, like the American Psychiatric Association. Though this is Hacking's main focus, he does acknowledge that even something as simple as Sartre's *garçon de café* example discussed above can be a socially constituted possibility of personhood.[57] Hacking notes that this was a possibility of personhood available to Sartre, available for his philosophical consideration as well as for his

54 Hacking, *Rewriting the Soul,* 38.
55 Hacking, “Making Up People,” 103.
56 Hacking, “Making Up People,” 107.
57 Hacking, “Making Up People,” 109.

adoption, I presume, but not available for adoption by Hacking.

Not only who we are, but who we could be, is socially and historically negotiated. We are not free to choose just anything. There are a limited number of possibilities of personhood open to us. Our pasts and our circumstances dictate the possibilities of personhood available to us, though not necessarily the one we choose to actualize. Someone who does not live in France, specifically in France in the early to mid-part of the twentieth century, does not live in a community that has the possibility of the *garçon de café* open to him. Our choices are constrained by the communities we are in.

The community, and the community values, matter a lot when it comes to individual possibilities of personhood. Communities shape and reshape individuals. In his example on homosexuality, Hacking makes this clear.

> In medicine, the authorities who know, the doctors, tend to dominate the known about, the patients. The known about come to behave in the ways that the knowers expect them to. But not always. Sometimes the known take matters into their own hands. The famous example is gay liberation. The word 'homosexual,' along with the medical and legal classification, emerged during the last half of the nineteenth century. For a time the classification was owned by medicine, by physicians and psychiatrists. The knowers determined, at least on the surface, what it was to be a homosexual. But then the known took charge.[58]

Changing the category of personhood applied to those labeled as homosexual required a community effort. The medical community created this category of personhood, and applied it to patients. But Hacking notes that the patients, or the

58 Hacking, *Rewriting the Soul*, 38.

'known about' took charge, forming a community of their own through gay liberation movements. Within this community, they reshaped the borders of what it is to be homosexual, altering the category from the previous medical understanding in terms of sexual deviance, and shaping it as a normal category of personhood. One can see elements of Gieryn's discussion of boundary-work in forming community boundaries here. The homosexual community formed and defined itself in opposition to the medical community. And, by doing so, it reshaped possibilities of personhood for its members. Communities shape possibilities of personhood, and communities typically form in opposition to other communities.

This is not only done through social institutions such as the APA. Even common social categories shared by everyone, such as the role of a *garçon de café,* are possibilities of personhood shaped by communities. The *garçon de café* is not merely a category of personhood, it is also a feature of a French European community which helps the community define itself in opposition to, say, an Albertan community, to use Hacking's example. Hacking's investigations generally focus on investigating what the social sciences do to the individuals who are the subjects of study. But the focus need not be solely on social sciences. Hacking notes that "Literary historians have long noted that a person did not conceive of himself as a poet—as *that* kind of poet—before the romantic era. One just wrote poems." [59] Being a romantic poet is a category unavailable to individuals prior to the romantic era. This doesn't mean individuals could not write romantic poetry, but there was no community uniting them, and hence no community defining them as such. It isn't just social science that is shaping who we are and how we think of ourselves. Major social

59 Hacking, "Making Up People," 82-83.

networks, such as the literary community, or the LGBT community[60], may also shape persons. Hacking notes that, according to Foucault "every way in which I can think of myself as a person and an agent is something that has been constituted within a web of historical events."[61]

I argue that if *every* way one thinks of oneself is socially and historically constituted, this applies to the epistemic subject as well. Every time objectivity undergoes a conceptual change, individual epistemic subjects are encouraged to think of themselves differently. Every time the individual epistemic subject thinks of herself differently, she finds new problems with her own subjectivity, which informs a new conception of objectivity. Just as with the romantic poet, or homosexual example, it isn't that people could not be self-reflective individuals prior to objectivity, but the commitment to a certain type of objectivity created a new understanding of individual subjects and of what was problematic about a certain bias or value, why it was problematic and why it needed to be questioned, held in check, or rooted out. One can see the ethical implications at work in this system. We call someone a homosexual in the nineteenth century in order to label them as deviant, and to punish and correct their behaviour. We call someone an epistemic subject, or a knower, in order to hold him responsible to certain epistemic and ethical norms.

Personal idiosyncrasies still existed prior to adopting the value of objectivity. Individual values (biases?) still existed. Some (perhaps many) individuals still had the desire to judge and perfect what they saw. But these traits were not seen as problematic. Once communities of knowers became concerned about these traits,

60 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans-gender community.
61 Hacking, "Making Up People," 83.

they needed a way to classify them, identify them as distinct and different from the norm, or the ideal of how a person should be. Subjectivity and objectivity were marshaled to make this distinction. The problem was a specific type of individual subject, the solution was to strive to be more objective. For the suffragist example briefly discussed in Chapter Two, the problem was sentimentality, the solution was to be more value-free. As Max Weber's call to value-freedom as a requirement of good scientific practice shows, these categories of epistemic subject created allow communities of knowers to differentiate themselves from those who don't know. A requirement of good science, according to Weber, is value-freedom. Those who do not aspire to this ideal do no belong to the community of scientists.

In the conceptualization of objectivity, a category of personhood is found (created?), and it is found to be deviant, or at least problematic. Thus, the need to strive to be objective is adopted by the community as a way to reshape the category of person and deal with or remove the problematic aspects of the existing category. If persons are found to make knowledge claims based on value-judgement, and if this is found to be problematic, then the need for objectivity in terms of value-freedom presents itself as a way to remake the epistemic subject. Just as the category of the deviant homosexual and what is considered normal came into being together, or the category of the deviant dissociative identity patient and what is considered normal came together, so the category of objectivity and subjectivity were created together. The difference when it comes to objectivity, is that unlike heterosexuality and other previously and currently considered 'normal' categories of personhood, objectivity is, and always was, thought to be unattainable. The norm postulated was an ideal.

This reinforces the idea that objectivity is an ethical ideal just as much as it is an epistemic one. Hacking discusses ethical ideals in *Historical Ontology* briefly. He claims that ethical ideals can shape the individual, and that the hallmark of an ethical ideal is its unattainability. Ethical ideals ". . . describe one way of working upon ourselves, of setting impossible ideals, or creating guilt."[62] The unattainability of an ethical ideal ensures that the work upon the self is never done, also ensuring the prevalence of guilt. Insofar as objectivity is an ethical ideal, it is a way of working upon the self by setting up an impossible, unattainable goal and creating a never-ending task, as seen in the Haeckel quotation above. Whereas it might be possible to rehabilitate or 'cure' someone suffering from DID, someone who is idiosyncratic or overly judgmental will never be perfectly objective. They will never be 'cured,' as the quotation from Haeckel above demonstrates. They will always have to re-examine themselves, work upon themselves, and seek this ideal. Guilt will ensure that they do work upon themselves and examine themselves. They are committed to self-reflection and self-improvement as a result of their commitment to this ideal. This is not to say that there are not other ideals that necessitate a commitment to self-reflection, only that objectivity is such an ideal. In the next section I will give an example of this creation of possibilities of personhood as an effect of objectivity.

3.5. Subjects and Objectivity

Objectivity, though it may be socially and historically created, nonetheless has real consequences.[63] However, I think these consequences have had a largely

62 Hacking, "Making Up People," 116.

63 Hacking concludes that social categories of disease, like DID, have real consequences. Something may be both socially created and real, and may have very real consequences. (See Hacking, *Rewriting the Soul,* 12)

beneficial effect on communities that adopt objectivity as an ideal. This type of ethical and epistemic commitment—this commitment towards becoming a self-reflective individual—creates individuals and communities willing to listen to minority discourse. Far from silencing the holder of minority opinion, as Rorty and Code feared, I argue that objectivity provides a possibility of personhood for these individuals to occupy.

In contrast to this view of objectivity as inherently oppressive, I think objectivity creates a category of personhood that gave feminists and other holders of minority views an advantage in entering epistemic discussions and challenging epistemic norms. If one has a commitment to objectivity, and one's claim to be objective is called into question, one must defend oneself. Or one must discount the charge by highlighting bias on the part of the opposition. Some feminist scientists, as Clough reports, were able to use the ideal of objectivity to challenge mainstream scientists, alleging that feminist scientists were actually more objective than their opponents. So, feminist scientists aimed to be, and claimed to be, occupying the category of epistemic subject prescribed by objectivity. At the same time, they challenged their opponents' claims to occupy this category, asserting that their opponents were not correctly policing themselves as to occupy this category of personhood. Clough reports that Antoinette Brown Blackwell asserted that, while gender does create bias, females, by virtue of their experiences as women, are better able to bridge the gap between the subjective perspective and objectivity than males are.[64] Regardless of the logical merits or flaws of Blackwell's argument, it did challenge mainstream scientists' claims to objectivity. It redefined the category of epistemic subject as being properly understood as female, and forced opponents to respond, or lose their claims to be

64 Clough, *Beyond Epistemology*, 53.

objective. The opponents responded. This brought mainstream scientists and feminist scientists into discourse with each other, bridging the boundaries that may have previously existed between these two groups, at least for a while. If scientists had not formed such a conception of the ideal of objectivity, feminists would have needed to find another way to enter the debate. They could not point out that a scientist's values and biases were clouding his judgement unless he had a commitment to avoid such things. If he had no such commitment, exposing values would not be a concern.

The same is true in the case of the suffragist. Women in the suffrage movement learned to use the ideal of objectivity to their own advantage. They learned to become different kinds of women from their predecessors. They became women under an obligation to adopt a perspective approaching value-freedom, an aperspectival objectivity removed of sentiment and individual concerns. Unlike Blackwell's argument, suffragists did not set out to reconceptualize the category of epistemic subject. Instead they set out to occupy an already existing category of personhood. They adopted the ethical and epistemic obligations prescribed by the ideal of objectivity as it was conceived of at the time, and began to police themselves. Alice Duer Miller[65] was an expert at this kind of rhetoric. She learned to speak in the language adopted by her opposition, and simultaneously cast herself as the objective individual while criticizing her opponents' claims to objectivity. The opposition was exposed as being just as sentimental and irrational as they charged suffragists with being. Their claim to the category of the objective individual was shaken. Here is one such example from *Are Women People?*:

Representation

65 See Chapter Two. Alice Duer Miller was a suffragist columnist in New York.

("My wife is against suffrage, and that settles me." Vice-President Marshall.)

My wife dislikes the income tax,

And so I cannot pay it;

She thinks that golf all interest lacks,

So now I never play it;

She is opposed to tolls repeal

(Though why I cannot say),

But woman's duty is to feel,

And man's is to obey.[66]

In this poem Miller begins by quoting Vice-President Marshall. The poem begins in another person's voice, and presumably a voice that is striving to be an objective epistemic subject who is trustworthy and upon whom the public can rely. Miller continues to reason from the perspective established by the Marshall quote to expose the inconsistencies present in his reasoning, thus challenging any claim to objectivity that Marshall may have and undermining his claims in the process.

Mary Chapman, a literary scholar, has studied Alice Duer Miller extensively. In her article “Are Women People? Alice Duer Miller's Poetry and Politics,” she notes that suffragists were able to turn the language and ideals that had been used against them, and use these ideals to their advantage.

> Paradoxically, the disenfranchised woman finds voice only through the language that is already made available to her; however, while this language can displace her, it can also offer her a syntax and vocabulary with which to

66 Miller, Alice Duer, *Are Women People? A Book of Rhymes for Suffrage Times* http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/11689 2004. (Original publication 1915).

> displace previous understandings of her role in the public sphere. If anything, she may, through reframing, challenge the authority of these previous understandings by exposing their internal contradictions.[67]

Chapman notes that the suffragists in general and Miller in particular, were able to use the language and ideology of the majority in order to challenge the majority by pointing out contradictions and inconsistencies. To put it in my framework, the suffragists displaced the majority's claim to occupy a category of personhood, the objective one. Chapman reports that “there are, in fact, very few places where Miller can be heard to speak 'in her own voice' or in the voice of an identifiable suffragist. Rather, the voice or subject position most frequently articulated is the voice of the anti-suffragist, framed so that it sabotages its own authority.”[68] Chapman's recognition that Miller rarely, if ever, spoke in her own voice points out that Miller's own unique perspective is absent from her writing. I see this as one of many attempts undertaken by suffragists at this time to step beyond their own subjective perspectives and speak with the authority of the epistemic subject who holds the ideal of objectivity. Since this category they claim to occupy, and are attempting to displace their opponents from, is a 'view from nowhere' to use Nagel's metaphor,[69] or a perspectiveless perspective as he sometimes calls it, these suffragists and their perspective are noticeably absent from their texts. They are relying on a combination of value-free objectivity and aperspectival objectivity. Their own suffrage values and perspectives are absent from suffrage literature in the twentieth century in a way they were not in the nineteenth century. In attempting to attain the objective perspective, suffragists had to police

67 Mary Chapman, “Are Women People? Alice Duer Miller's Poetry and Politics” *American Literary History,* 18, no. 1 (2006): 66.
68 Chapman, “'Are Women People?' Alice Duer Miller's Poetry and Politics,” 73.
69 Nagel, *The View From Nowhere.*

themselves, keeping their own potentially problematic subjective selves out of the debate, and speaking from the position of an epistemic subject.

The suffragist was able to use the ideal of objectivity to question her opponents' claims to objectivity. She pointed out inconsistencies in their arguments, and used their own language to challenge their commitments. In this way, she claimed the objective perspective for herself and questioned the objectivity of her opponents. Suffragists aimed to be intelligible to their interlocutors, so they held an ideal of aperspectival objectivity. They did not declare their values openly, and challenged the mainstreams' claims to being value-free themselves, by pointing out inconsistencies and value-laden rhetoric in their opponents' arguments, while supporting their own arguments with facts and statistics. They were able to use the ideal of objectivity to ground their beliefs and statements in objective language, and speak from the position of the epistemic subject, while challenging their opponent's own claims to firm foundations.

In his collection of essays, *Historical Ontology*, Hacking claims that "[c]ategories of people come into existence at the same time as kinds of people come into being to fit those categories, and there is a two-way interaction between these processes."[70] The type of person that fills the category and the category itself come into being together. The ideal of objectivity conceived of as aperspectival creates the category of epistemic subject, and at the same time people filled the category who aspired to the ideal. But not all of them are Western European males. The category of personhood itself precludes that. What it was to be objective in an era marked by

70 Hacking, "Making Up People," 48.

aperspectival objectivity (as Daston reports ours still largely is) was to be an individual committed to the removal of individual idiosyncrasies, or any other values and beliefs that made communication with the larger community difficult. Being a Western European male, and all the individual idiosyncrasies that might go along with this category of personhood, had to be overcome in order to fully attain the ideal of aperspectival objectivity. The suffragists were able to point out that the category of objectivity was one that, at the time, knew no gender or ethnicity. So, those who aspired to occupy this category must also attempt to move past their own gender and ethnic origin. This example will be developed in more detail in the next chapter to illustrate just how it was that suffragists made this move, and opened this possibility of personhood up for themselves.

It is in the category of the epistemic subject that I argue one must look to see if there is any benefit in holding the ideal of objectivity, or if it is, as Rorty and Code maintain, inherently oppressive. Objectivity, as an epistemic ideal adopted by a community, helps to shape that community's identity as a community of knowers and simultaneously shapes what it means to be a knower. As problems with the epistemic subject arise—problems in her own subjectivity—a new conceptualization of objectivity is created to deal with those problems, resulting in a new type of epistemic subject. I have already suggested one benefit of the category of epistemic subject created here, which I will develop in the next chapter. I claim that the concept of objectivity can facilitate minority entry into epistemic debate. It does not inherently block it.

3.6. Conclusion

In this chapter I had two main goals. One was to examine the history of objectivity in order to determine what, if any, constant could be found in the concept of objectivity. The other was to determine what effect objectivity is having on the knowing subject. In examining the history of objectivity I was able to address both of these goals. The history of objectivity demonstrates that objectivity creates a category of personhood. Thus, by looking at the history one comes to see that objectivity's historical constant is its definition in opposition to subjectivity, and that objectivity creates categories of epistemic subjects.

Those who held the value of objectivity did not necessarily also hold that it would lead to truth, metaphysically understood, or to the external world. Objectivity has also, historically, not always been linked to value-freedom or value-neutrality, in contrast to Harding's assertion from the previous chapter. Rather, Daston and Galison's work demonstrates that objectivity has been connected with the concepts of subjectivity, and introspection or reflection in order to self-police. It has also often been connected to the concept of community. The community determines what is troubling about the subject, and the community creates the conception of objectivity as an ideal in order to set up regimes to correct these perceived subjective problems. Objectivity has been posited as an epistemic and ethical ideal, so it is in the realm of epistemology and ethics that we should seek the advantages of objectivity. I have demonstrated here that, in our past, objectivity has given minorities a way to speak. This was certainly an ethical advantage, especially in my example of the suffrage movement. But Rorty did not deny that objectivity might have been useful in the past.

He denied that objectivity was useful now.[71] If I wish to defend the concept of objectivity, I need to do so with reference to current situations. But if I wish to defend objectivity as an historical concept, I need to do so with reference to past situations as well.

In the coming chapters I will demonstrate that communities that are committed to objectivity, contra Rorty's and Code's concerns, actually have tended to allow minorities to speak, and are under obligation to listen to—and consider what—minorities have to say. There is nothing inherently oppressive about the concept of objectivity, since it has facilitated communication of minority views at least once. To illustrate this claim, I turn to the example of the suffrage movement once again. In the next chapter, I will explore value-free and aperspectival objectivity with reference to the suffrage movement, and to feminist epistemologists and philosophers of science currently. By doing so, I will demonstrate more clearly what I mean when I claim that objectivity tends to allow minorities to speak, and I will explore what type of subject value-free aperspectival accounts of objectivity are creating. In particular, I will illustrate what is currently identified as troubling with the current conceptions of objectivity, and what we can expect future conceptions of objectivity to look like. In Chapter Five, relying on the example of marine-protected areas, I will demonstrate that, in some branches of science, the problems with the epistemic subject that feminists and others are identifying are already being noted and dealt with. Objectivity is being reconceptualized again.

71Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism and Truth*, 12.

Chapter 4: Objectivity, Ethics, and Minority Opinion

4.1. Introduction

Objectivity is not inherently oppressive. For the past three chapters, the charge that the term, 'objectivity' is an inherently oppressive term that excludes minority voices from epistemic debate has served as one of the strongest charges against the value of this ideal. Here I lay my cards down and argue that I see no reason to conclude that the term is inherently a term that bars minority voices from epistemic discourse, nor that it is inherently a term that privileges white, western, heterosexual, middle-class, able-bodied masculine views. I will argue for this, in the following chapter, by outlining one case in which a conception of the ideal of objectivity served as an aid to allow the entrance of minority opinion into epistemic debate. If the ideal of objectivity can be shown to have facilitated the expression of marginalized views at least once, than it it cannot be the case that the term is inherently oppressive. That is, the silencing of minority views is not built into the term 'objectivity' in the way Rorty implies and Code claims. The case I will use to illustrate that objectivity is not inherently oppressive is the case of the suffrage movement briefly introduced in both Chapters Two and Three. I will also argue that this case is likely not an isolated occurrence, as can be seen if we consider the categories of epistemic subject prescribed by a community that adopts objectivity as an ideal.

I have suggested in Chapter Three, and will expand on that suggestion here, that a community that adopts objectivity as an ideal creates categories of epistemic subjects the occupants of which are under obligation to be self-reflective. I will argue that, by creating categories of knowers committed to self-reflection and self-

evaluation, those who hold the ideal of objectivity are required to consider their own biases whereas those without this ideal may not be under a specific obligation to do so.

I do not suggest that there are no other values that necessitate self-reflective persons. Rather, I will argue that objectivity is one ideal that *does* create this possibility of personhood. As Ian Hacking pointed out, (as noted in the last chapter) any ethical ideal creates possibilities of persons and results in a policing of the subject. As Daston and Galison have pointed out, (again, from Chapter Three) objectivity is an ideal that comes with ethical obligations. I will argue that at least one past conception of objectivity created a category of personhood that was ethically valuable to holders of minority opinion.

In addition, the concept of objectivity itself may be found to be beneficial to marginalized views. By adopting the ideal of objectivity, holders of minority opinion acquire a way to ground their claims in something beyond the community (be it a metaphysical or—as in Clough's case from Chapter Two—empirical grounding), making their statements more than subjective opinion and giving them the confidence necessary to speak even when prevailing opinion does not agree. By speaking to others who have an ideal of objectivity, holders of minority opinion are likely to encounter epistemic subjects who are under an obligation to consider their views and arguments carefully and critically, and to examine previously held beliefs in light of these new arguments. Thus, I will demonstrate that holders of minority opinion who also hold objectivity as an ideal are given two advantages in entering the debate with others who also adopt the ideal of objectivity. They have a way to ground their claims in something other than 'wide-spread agreement,' and they are given an audience

under obligation to listen. In general, the ideal of objectivity gives interlocutors a shared conception of what the point of the discussion and investigation is. Both sides have a shared desire and obligation to move beyond 'mere' opinion and aim for objective knowledge. What it is to move beyond mere opinion will depend on what is problematic with the epistemic subject[1] under different conceptions of objectivity.

After establishing, with reference to the suffrage movement, that objectivity is not inherently oppressive, I will further conclude that this example may well illustrate an ethical benefit of objectivity. Given Rorty's own liberal values, the extension of suffrage to women is something Rorty should see as an ethical good. Indeed, I think many of Rorty's readers, supporters, and those who identify themselves as 'liberal', if not most of them, will see this as an ethical good. Yet, as I will demonstrate, the attainment of this ethical achievement was facilitated in part by an ideal of objectivity, exactly the thing Rorty argues is ethically detrimental to minority views.

At the end of the examination of the suffrage movement in this chapter I will have demonstrated that objectivity was beneficial in the past. But this alone is not enough to show that it is beneficial now. At the end of this chapter I will also demonstrate that objectivity is still changing, and suggest the ways in which it may be creating beneficial categories of personhood even now, and may continue to do so in the future. In order to demonstrate this, I will discuss the bias-stalemate, a current risk to a current conception of objectivity. I will further demonstrate that this this bias-stalemate is not a reason to doubt objectivity's value, but is rather a mechanism

1 As noted in the first chapter, in this dissertation, 'epistemic subject' is not being used in its general and broad sense commonly employed in philosophy. Instead, the term 'epistemic subject' is used as a short-hand for the epistemic subject who is seeking a specific kind of knowledge, objective knowledge. Thus, the category of epistemic subject is, for this dissertation, referring to the category of personhood prescribed by the concept of objectivity in its various conceptions.

driving changing conceptions of objectivity forward. This can be seen by an examination of the suggestions made by Longino and Wylie that help move us past one conception of objectivity that results in a bias-stalemate.

This chapter, then, has two broad aims. One is to establish that objectivity has been ethically valuable in the past at least once, by allowing minorities to enter the epistemic debate. They are given a valid position from which to question the status quo, that is mutually recognized as valid by both those in the minority position and those who hold the majority view. They are given an audience under obligation to listen. Therefore, objectivity is not inherently oppressive. Second, it will be established that these possible ethical benefits of objectivity are not outweighed by the possible risks of a bias-stalemate present in the current conception of objectivity. Rather, a bias-stalemate is a current stress-point driving new conceptions of objectivity.

4.2. Objectivity and The Suffrage Movement

The category of person created by the community that holds the concept of objectivity as an ideal is a person who is not only capable of (for they were, likely, capable of self-examination prior to adopting the ideal,) but *obliged* to be committed to self-examination and reflection. Thomas Nagel noted this connection between self-knowledge and objectivity. Chapter Three demonstrated that past accounts of objectivity demanded that a person be devoted to removing those aspects of their subjectivity deemed unhelpful by the community for the production of knowledge. In order to do this, the person must be able to identify these problematic aspects of their subjectivity, which entails rigorous self-examination and self-policing. One must be prepared to change oneself if the problematic aspects are found. In the past an

individual who was part of a community which holds objectivity as an ideal was an individual committed to examining and remaking him or herself in an attempt to come closer to an unattainable ideal. Objectivity was an individual commitment. I argue that, from a liberal point of view, this has been a beneficial category of person for a community to have, and for an individual to occupy. In order to demonstrate that objectivity has been and can be beneficial, I will examine the role of objectivity in the suffrage movement.

I focus my investigations on women's suffrage in the United States from the nineteenth-century movement for equal rights for women to the more narrowly-focused twentieth-century movement for national suffrage. I have already outlined in Chapter Two how a new style of argument for suffrage emerged in the twentieth century relying on facts and figures cleared of any sentiment or emotion to highlight the biases of their opponents' own perspectives. I do not intend to claim by this that there were no suffragists employing sentimental arguments in the twentieth century. There still were. But, unlike the nineteenth century, there were also many suffragists employing arguments with a scientific basis, statistical support, and a lack of sentimental rhetoric.

My claim is that many suffragists (such as Alice Duer Miller, as discussed in Chapter Three), in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, adopted an ideal of objectivity in terms of aperspectivalism and value-freedom. A new style of suffrage argument emerged in this era as well. Prevailing opinions, or feelings, or perspectives on women no longer served for all suffragists as a basis for argument. Only facts that could, it may be hoped, be agreed upon by both sides, could be employed.

Suffragists who adopted this new style of argument did so, I claim, because they had adopted a new possibility of personhood. They attempted to attain aperspectival objectivity and so claimed to be the kind of epistemic subject prescribed by a late nineteenth and early twentieth-century conception of objectivity. They also aimed to ground their claims in something other than subjective opinion. I argue that this move was, in part, made because of a mutually-recognized ideal of objectivity held by some suffragists and anti-suffragists. There was a mutually-recognized need to move from mere opinion to objective knowledge. Therefore, claims could not be based in subjective opinion, but were instead based in empirical fact.

These new twentieth-century women were armed with facts, statistics, and unsentimental rhetoric. They did not tend to rely on emotions or display their values openly, other than displaying their commitment to objectivity. They spoke from a neutral place, and attempted to, as much as possible, occupy the category of the objective person, a category obliging the epistemic subject to aim to be without perspective and without values.[2] It is doubtful that one can engage in political discourse without some display of values, but early twentieth-century suffragists did not rely on these values alone, or display them openly. They tried to police themselves, hold their own opinions in check, and rely on empirical data to make their points.

NAWSA[3] distributed an information book known as *The Blue Book,* listing the facts with regards to women's suffrage. In one section, *The Blue Book* details many

2 An obviously impossible task, since objectivity itself is a value. I will discuss the problems associated with the recognition of the inability to be value-free or free from bias in section three of this chapter.
3 The National Association of Women's Suffrage of America, see Chapter Two.

common objections to women's suffrage, and gives statistical data to undermine the objections. For example, in response to the common anti-suffrage argument that granting suffrage to women would increase the number of illiterate and uneducated voters, NAWSA responded:

> Do You Know that extending the franchise to women actually increases the proportion of intelligent voters; that there is now and has been for years, according to the report of the Commissioner of Education, one-third more girls in the high schools of the country than boys; and that, according to the last census, the illiterate men of the country greatly outnumber the illiterate women[4]

Using statistics to support their case, and remaining as neutral as possible while delivering these statistics, allowed suffragists to occupy the category of the epistemic subject prescribed by an early twentieth-century account of objectivity. They were attempting to be the knowers, disseminating knowledge as opposed to the bias or mere opinion they credited their opponents with holding. The suffragists relied on reports and numbers. They remained neutral with regards to recommendations. They discredited their opponents' claims as invalid reasons as to why women should not deserve the vote. As much as possible, these suffragists aimed to be value-free and aperspectival. These suffragists showed that the facts of the world did not match the claims of their opponents. Their opponents were, somehow, distorting the picture, allowing their own perspectives or values to influence their claims, and were not objective persons. The layered conceptions that objectivity has stood for, value-freedom, aperspectival, and mechanical, can all be found to varying degrees in

4 Frances M. Björkman and Annie G. Porritt, eds., *The Blue Book: Women's Suffrage, History, Arguments, and Results (*New York: National Women's Suffrage Publishing Company Inc., 1917), 141.

the new suffragist of the early twentieth century, though the predominant conception appears to be value-freedom.

How had this change been brought about? Given what I've said about communities and possibilities of personhood, it makes sense to look to the community for an explanation. Many women at this time no longer strictly identified themselves with the home or the family as had been traditional prior to the turn of the twentieth century. Rather, they identified themselves with members of the intellectual community. Susan E. Marshall, in her book, *Splintered Sisterhood,* studies the differences that existed between women who tended to be pro-suffrage and those who tended to be anti-suffrage. She notes that the college-educated women were "overwhelmingly pro-suffrage."[5] They identified themselves as writers, lawyers, and political activists, among other professionals. Anti-suffrage women, by contrast, tended to come from the upper class, and often did not identify themselves as professionals. While they were active in their community, they were "wealthy volunteers—self described 'amateurs'—not professionals."[6] I have already mentioned that many of the suffragist women had university educations, often in the sciences or social sciences (see Chapter Three). We know from Daston and Galison and Weber that both the social sciences and the sciences were stressing a commitment to objectivity in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and that this commitment was cashed out in terms of value-freedom, aperspectivalism and mechanical objectivity. In addition, Daston tells us that aperspectival objectivity itself had been incorporated into the sciences from the humanities. It was a borrowed term from ethics. So, even

5 Susan E. Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood: Gender and Class in the Campaign against Women's Suffrage* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1997), 220.
6 Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood,* 220.

women who had received a humanities degree were likely familiar with at least one variation of the concept of objectivity common in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. So, these women were members of communities that held objectivity as a value and ideal. As such, they were encouraged to occupy a certain category of personhood, the objective one. In university it is likely that they had learned the language of objectivity and been taught to police themselves in accordance with this ideal. Objectivity, being one way to bring about self-reflection and self-examination, had likely led the suffragists of the twentieth century to view the matter of women's rights in a different way and to approach the debate with a reliance on facts and statistics and a strong attempt at policing their own values and perspectives.

But the shift in values and perspectives in this movement did not stop there. NAWSA was begun by Susan B. Anthony and Elisabeth Cady Stanton in the 1890's and headed by Carrie Chapman Catt after Anthony resigned. NAWSA, as previously stated (see Chapter Three), itself held the value of objectivity and taught its members how to engage with the public from an objective perspective. For these women, NAWSA continued what their university education had begun. It cemented a new category of suffragist, a new possibility of personhood. It continued to instill the regimes of self-policing and reliance on facts. The organization itself prescribed a category of subject for suffragists to occupy, just as the literary community created the category of romantic poet, or the psychiatrists created the category of homosexuality, as discussed in Chapter Three. To be a suffragist in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was to be held to certain ethical and epistemic norms. Many of these were the same norms prescribed by the ideal of objectivity.

Just as with Clough's insistence on the need for objectivity grounded in empiricism in the twenty-first century, as discussed in Chapter Two, suffragists at the turn of the last century required a mutually-recognized position from which to voice their minority views. I argue that they found this position in adopting the conception of the objective perspective of the time, and relying on empirical facts.

Facts and figures may provide a foundation that is hard to question.[7] But there was something underlying anti-suffrage rhetoric, something that didn't always seem consistent with the facts and figures, and it was this that suffragists needed to combat. As Sarah Hunter Graham notes in her book, *Women's Suffrage and the New Democracy*, “Doubtless many agreed with one anti-suffragist's diagnosis of the problem her opponents faced. 'What [the suffrage movement] has to overcome,' she explained, 'is not an argument but a *feeling*.'”[8] The feeling was that women simply should not have the right to vote. But the female anti-suffragist in Graham's quote admits that this wasn't a specific argument. Arguments may have been given to support the feeling, but overcoming the arguments was not enough. The feeling itself had to be overcome.

Specifically, I claim that the suffrage movement attempted to challenge the objectivity of their opponents by calling this feeling into question. Was this feeling clouding their opponent's judgement? Was there any objective basis for this feeling? They had been unsuccessful in combating feeling with feeling, as nineteenth-century suffragists had tried to do with their appeals to emotion. So, another reason for turning to objectivity may have been to call the effectiveness of their opponents' self-

7 Of course this is not to say that it is impossible to question. Facts can be interpreted in certain ways, that data can be gathered, analyzed and presented in ways that are value-laden.
8 Graham, *Women's Suffrage and the New Democracy*, 36. *Emphasis added.*

policing into question. Were anti-suffragists successfully policing all the questionable elements of their own subjectivity, or had they allowed a feeling to affect their reasoning? If suffragists could get their opponents to acknowledge the presence of this feeling, the ethical commitments of objectivity in this time period would require its removal. The feeling could not be used as a basis for decisions on its own, unless it were found to be supported in a way that did not rest on values or personal idiosyncrasies. The feeling alone was not enough to meet the late nineteenth-century conception of objectivity.

In addition, the suffragists' adoption of the value-free (and, at times, aperspectival) objective perspective illustrated that women could indeed be objective, something that was a hotly debated issue at the turn of the century, and continues to be debated even up to the present by some.[9] Objectivity, like rationality in general, is often seen as a concept that is specifically gendered for a stereotypical Western European male perspective, as mentioned in Chapters Two and Three. By adopting the possibility of personhood prescribed by a nineteenth and early twentieth century understanding of objectivity, American suffragists may have been able to gain some of the power and recognition which comes from being an epistemic subject, as well as demonstrating that objectivity was not only the domain of Western European men. They also challenged the assumption that the Western European male perspective was one that *was* objective. In contrast to Code's assertion that objectivity is understood in Western European masculine terms, suffragists at the turn of the century often linked *sentimentality* to males, implying that men, because of their chivalry, were more likely to be sentimental, and thus *less* likely than women to be

9 See Code, *What Can She Know?*

objective. Mary Chapman notes that Miller, in particular, "exposes the form of the sonnet itself as a product of male chivalry, which idealizes women while ignoring the reality of their lived experience."[10] Miller uses the sonnet, a romantic type of poetry historically linked to male chivalry and challenges the male understanding of females at her time. In effect, she suggests that a man who claims to be objective about women is likely being affected by his own romantic sentiments when it comes to women. The suffragists turned the tables on their opponents, arguing that men were the sentimental sex. So, by adopting the category of epistemic subject and relying on facts and statistics rather than on personal sentiment or individual values, suffragists were able to find a position from which to speak,and were able to question their opponents' claims to a monopoly on objectivity, effectively questioning whether their opponents were being objective about women at all. This demonstrates that suffragists did not think objectivity dictated a category of personhood they were unable to occupy. They did claim to occupy the category of epistemic subject prescribed by a nineteenth-century conception of objectivity. Furthermore, they did not see objectivity as necessarily cashed out in Western European masculine terms. Rather, they actively challenged men's claims to be objective, pointing out that men may well be biased when it comes to women. From this I conclude that there is nothing in the concept of objectivity that is inherently oppressive, or necessarily understood in masculine terminology. If objectivity is deemed to be an unhelpful concept, it cannot be done by relying on the idea that objectivity reinforces a Western European male perspective, and blocks other positions from being positions of knowledge.

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10 Chapman, "'Are Women People?' Alice Duer Miller's Poetry and Politics," 22.

At this point I have demonstrated that objectivity is not an inherently oppressive claim. But I also stated at the start of this chapter that part of the benefit of objectivity may be found in the category of knower that communities with a commitment to objectivity create. In particular, a knower who is committed and under obligation to self-examine is, I argue, a knower more likely to be receptive to challenges from others. Epistemic subjects under the obligation of objectivity may well know that they are not perfectly attaining the ideal of objectivity, as can be seen in the quotation from Ernst Haeckel given in Chapter Three. Constant reassessment must be made to try to restrain the subjective self. So, if an individual were charged as being biased, as suffragists like Miller did charge male anti-suffragists with being, these charges could not be dismissed out-of-hand. The epistemic subject who is committed to objectivity knows that s/he may have hidden biases. Upon being charged in such a fashion, the subject must self-examine.

Since this is what I claim, I need to examine the response to the suffrage movement. After all, it took over fifty years of campaigning before suffrage was granted to women. So, is the commitment to the ideal of objectivity really a commitment to occupy a category of self-reflective person? If so, did the anti-suffragists self-reflect when challenged by the suffrage movement? To answer these questions, I look briefly at a self-reported conversion experience from a member of the US senate in 1918.

4.2.1. The Response

There are few conversion stories in the story of suffrage. Often we do not know what caused a person to change his or her mind regarding the suffrage debate, and

so we often are not able to discern what role the ideal of objectivity may have played in an individual coming to change his mind. But we do know what to look for. In an era of value-free and aperspectival objectivity, as the turn of the twentieth century largely was, one would look for an individual who talked of finding biases, values, or individual quirks that had led him or her to hold the view that he or she did. Those values, biases or quirks would have likely been overlooked, and not recognized as such, until the challenge came from the suffrage movement. Then, under obligation to self-examine in the face of opposition, an individual might identify these values, biases or individual quirks and try to remove them in an effort, once again, to strive for objectivity and to legitimately claim to be the type of epistemic subject prescribed by a commitment to objectivity.

As I've said, there are very few historical examples of people coming to a decision regarding suffrage. Prominent political figures seem to represent themselves as having always held a certain view. I will look at one conversion story. Based on this story I think I can claim that objectivity can and did play a role in converting *some* individuals to the support of woman suffrage. This does not claim that there were no other ways that men might have changed their minds. All I will show here is the more modest claim that objectivity can facilitate the adoption of minority views because of the type of epistemic subject a community with a commitment to objectivity creates.

William F. Kirby was a Democrat and a member of the U.S. Senate who represented Arkansas in 1918. Kirby was educated as a lawyer in 1885, and ran a law firm with his father in Arkansas. In 1910 he was elected to the Arkansas supreme court and in 1916 he gained a seat on the U.S. Senate. As a senator, Kirby was a

strong supporter of agricultural values, and made a name for himself by being one of only five senators who voted against Woodrow Wilson's decision to enter WW1.[11] In September 1918 the senate was debating the proposed amendment to the US constitution to grant suffrage to women for the second time. This debate would continue until June 1919 when it would finally pass.[12] However, in this record of the proceedings of the senate on September 30th 1918, Kirby gave a speech in support of women's suffrage where he illuminated some of the reasons why he, personally, supported the resolution. Kirby compares the issue of suffrage for women to other places where women were breaking with tradition and custom. In particular, he spoke of the growing trend of women in Arkansas riding astride a horse instead of the more customary side-saddle style of riding. He claimed that when he first saw women riding astride he was startled and it seemed wrong to him that women should ride astride instead of side-saddle.

> But afterwards I went out a little farther into the country, a little farther out west, where the same sort of *custom* did not obtain[the custom of riding side-saddle]; where it was different and the women rode astride. . . and it did seem to me, after I got to thinking about it, that it was the right practice and the natural thing to do; but I have never yet been able to get entirely over the sort of *prejudice* which was engendered in my mind in my early training.[13]

11 Richard Leverne Niswonger, “William F. Kirby, Arkansas's Maverick Senator” *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 37. No. 3. (1978): 252-263.

12 U.S. Congress, *Congressional Record*, 56:11, 58:1 (September 30th 1918, May 21st 1919, June 4th 1919).

13 U.S. Congress. *Congressional Record* 56. no 11 (September 1918): 10931-10932. *Emphasis added.* Though the suggested parallel between Kirby's reasoning on women's suffrage and his reasoning on women riding astride does suggest a conversion experience, there is no evidence that Kirby did once believe women should not vote in the same way he professes to have believed that women should not ride astride. However, even if Kirby did not have a conversion experience, he still deploys an early-twentieth century conception of objectivity to motivate his case.

Notice that here, in this quotation, Kirby drew a distinction between the way he *felt* about the practice of riding astride, and whether or not the practice was *right* or natural. He acknowledged that he had a pre-existing prejudice in favour of women riding side-saddle and claimed that this pre-existing prejudice was still with him, but he was able to step beyond the prejudice and recognize that riding astride made sense, even though his jurisdiction had a different custom from the west and even though he had a certain feeling about side-saddle riding. Kirby concluded that his prejudices and feelings and even previous custom did not license him in claiming that riding side-saddle is right. To put this in the language of objectivity, Kirby recognized that his community of Arkansas had an idiosyncrasy when it came to women riding horses and that he had been raised with this idiosyncratic way of looking at the situation. However, he was able to step beyond this perspective and attempt to occupy the category of epistemic subject necessitated by aperspectival objectivity. He recognized that riding astride worked well for other communities and that he had no non-idiosyncratic objection to it. Kirby compared the way he felt about horse-back riding to the way he felt about women voting. He claimed that the way one feels, or the traditions one holds dear, are not bases from which to marshal an objection to suffrage for women. While the suffrage question may be uneasy for men based on their training or prejudice, *intellectually*, Kirby thought that it was just as straightforward as the riding question. He argued that

> [i]t may be that some of us, just because of our *training along particular lines* are becoming fearful [of woman suffrage]. . . It is not so with me. There has never been, in my opinion, any reason from an *intellectual standpoint* why

women should not be allowed to vote.[14]

Here Kirby argued that, while some of his colleagues might feel uneasy or fearful, this was an emotional reaction which he attributed to a particular type of training (perhaps, given the horse analogy, he intended to imply cultural training here, or custom). However, objectivity necessitates that this type of emotional reaction—idiosyncratic since it depends on a particular type of training and situation—be set aside in favour of a more general intellectual position. From this general intellectual position, Kirby argued that there is no good reason why women should not be allowed to vote. In essence, Kirby admitted that he was uneasy with the growing changes to the traditional category of womanhood. However, he was able to identify this uneasiness as a personal idiosyncrasy, and step past it in order to consider what the suffragists were saying. If Kirby's account on September 30th 1918 was at all truthful, then one can conclude that an ideal of objectivity helped motivate his conversion to a supporter of the suffrage movement. Given this one example, one can conclude that there is nothing inherently oppressive about objectivity. Men with a commitment to objectivity could be brought, facilitated by that commitment, to view minority opinion favourably instead of silencing it outright. It wasn't just that the arguments employed by suffragists challenged men's claims to objectivity. Such a challenge brought with it an obligation to self-examination and self-policing on the part of those who recognized the challenge and these self-examinations could lead to a discovery of bias, value or idiosyncrasy. So, not only can objectivity give minorities a way to enter into epistemic debates, but it can also oblige that those who hold it as an ideal to listen to the minority.

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14 U.S. Congress. *Congressional Record* 56. no 11 (September 1918): 10932. *Emphasis added.*

This is not to suggest that all who fall under such an obligation will undertake the task obliged of them. But if they do, and it seems clear that there is at least one case in which someone did, then objectivity can work in favour of minority opinion, not against it. The reasons that it can work in favour of minority opinion derive from the types of knowers a community with a commitment to the ideal of objectivity creates. These knowers are under obligation to self-reflect and self-police. They are obliged to be self-aware and to strive to identify and remove their own values and personal idiosyncrasies. When these values and idiosyncrasies are challenged by holders of minority views, those persons who aim to be epistemic subjects find themselves under an obligation to self-examine and remove the values in question if they are identified. This is just what Kirby reports that he did when faced with the issues of women riding astride instead of side-saddle and of women's suffrage. Thus I conclude that this past conception of objectivity has had ethical benefits for communities that adopted it as an ideal. These ethical benefits derive from the categories of knowers communities with an ideal of objectivity create.

4.2.2. Ethical Benefits of Objectivity in the Suffrage Movement

The language of objectivity, if employed, opens the debate to minorities within one's own community, as well as those from other communities. But it does not open this debate indefinitely. The ideal of objectivity demands that one not hold a belief merely because it is traditional, or everyone else does, or one was unaware of holding the belief. One cannot retreat to ethnocentrism in the face of opposition (as one can, say, in Rorty's proposed alternative to the ideal). The ethical commitment to objectivity means that one is under an obligation to take one's opposition seriously

and evaluate oneself in light of their opinions. Of course, if one finds that one's opponents are not value-free, under the conditions of value-free objectivity, then their claims might be dismissed. However, if one's opponents can claim to challenge one's own ability to occupy the category of epistemic subject necessitated by a commitment to value-free objectivity, then it seems that they must be taken seriously, or one risks failing to hold the category of epistemic subject oneself. This is just what Kirby faced, when he faced the issue of women's suffrage.

Objectivity not only allowed minorities a way to speak and obliges those in the majority to listen and consider, I have argued that it was one contributing factor in the growth of women's rights, certainly an ethical good upon which Rorty, Code and I can all agree. The ideal of objectivity also strengthened and sustained the suffragists in their long argument. Fifty years may seem like an intolerable amount of time, but changing categories of personhood happen slowly. But, in the case of the ideal of objectivity, there is a mutually recognized understanding of what the point of the conversation is. This gives minority dissenters an opportunity to engage in dialog and an audience under obligation to listen.

The advantage of objectivity doesn't just stop at the category of personhood one's opposition occupies, a category that requires that every argument be taken seriously, at least initially. There is another advantage to objectivity. It gives holders of minority opinion a bit of support. They can claim that the facts are on their side. Suffragists, in the last twenty-to-thirty years of the debate, as they adopted the ideal of objectivity, could claim that it did not matter what the prevailing opinion was, or how well known and prestigious the speakers were who supported the anti-suffrage movement, nonetheless this movement was wrong and those who held it were

demonstrably not objective. Though the majority may not have initially agreed, this support from the facts and from interpreting these facts from the category of personhood prescribed by objectivity may have been enough to allow the suffragists to keep insisting that they be heard. It may give them the courage to sustain the argument for longer, giving them a better shot at changing categories of personhood. I am unconvinced that Rorty has provided any such support for those who hold minority opinion in his proposed alternative. This is why, as I suggested in Chapter Two, I speculate that supporters of Rorty's view, like Sharyn Clough, are unwilling to give up the ideal of objectivity. Wide-spread agreement fails the minority view. Objectivity does not.

Thus, I have illustrated that there is at least one case in which the commitment to objectivity resulted in something that Rorty, Code, and I view as an ethical good. Indeed, with his liberal commitments to freedom and equality, Rorty must view this outcome as good. And yet, as I argue, this outcome was partially influenced by the ideal of objectivity. Thus, Rorty and Code cannot maintain that objectivity always serves to keep holders of minority opinion out of the epistemic debate. It does not. Rather, it can facilitate entry into the epistemic debate. This has been ethically beneficial in the past at least once.

Rorty claimed that our use of the term 'objectivity' conflated what the term actually meant (wide-spread agreement) with what we thought we meant by the term (faithfully representing nature). This led to a silencing of minority opinion by the majority, in Rorty's view. For why should the majority be concerned with what the minority thinks when they already know the way nature really is? In the suffrage case, this would lead to the claim that women should not vote to be viewed as natural rather

than merely as a widely-held belief. Code claimed that objectivity was cashed out in western European masculine terminology and therefore excluded minority views as a matter of definition. In the suffrage case, this would amount to the majority view having license to disregard the minority because they were incapable of being objective knowers. The example above shows that neither of these views represents what actually happened. Both views focus on the way objectivity can be used by the majority to exclude minority opinion. Neither view looks at the way objectivity can be used by the minority in order to facilitate discourse, nor on how the ideal of objectivity can operate on individual epistemic subjects even within the majority. I do not mean to imply that the concerns that Rorty and Code have raised are not real. That objectivity might be used in the ways they suggest to silence the minority seems possible. However, it is not the only use of objectivity possible. I have argued that objectivity, as conceived of in the past as aperspectival and value-free, also places individuals under an obligation to self-examine when challenged and that objectivity gives holders of minority opinion a place to speak from and a way to challenge the majority's claims to knowledge by challenging the majority's claims to be objective themselves.

I have suggested, and will continue to argue in the pages to come, that all past conceptions of objectivity, because of their focus on correcting a problematic aspect of subjectivity, carry with them a commitment to self-awareness and self-policing. Because of this, it is not the case that those who claim to be objective can, as a group, ignore challenges from minority perspectives. To do so is to ignore the obligation the community placed itself under when the community adopted the ideal of objectivity. It is to ignore the call to self-reflection and self-policing and the realization that one might have hidden biases and hidden values. This is not to suggest that we

may not choose to ignore this obligation, or leave it unfulfilled. This is true of any obligation. What I suggest here is that objectivity can be and has been, beneficial to minority opinions because of this obligation. Rorty's and Code's concerns fail to acknowledge this facet of the ideal. Furthermore, as I have argued in Chapter Two, Rorty's alternative to objectivity as an ideal seems to run the same risks of silencing the minority as the ideal itself runs, while offering none of the benefits to the minority position that I have illustrated here the ideal offers. Thus, even though Rorty's and Code's concerns are real, I find the benefits of the ideal of objectivity in terms of facilitating the entry of minority opinion into epistemic debate to outweigh these risks (which do not disappear were the ideal to be lost in any case).

4.3. The Bias-Stalemate

Since I have claimed that the concept of objectivity is an ideal, not perfectly attained even when aimed for, the result is that virtually no one has ever had a perspective that was free from the challenge of some hidden problems of subjectivity. So, some form of a stalemate may always be possible in various conceptions of objectivity, though what the stalemate is and where it is found will depend on the conception in question. In a value-free aperspectival conception of objectivity, the stalemate results from an identification of a perceived or real bias. The stalemate that is possible under a value-free aperspectival conception of objectivity is one I am calling the bias-stalemate. As will be shown at the end of this section, it is not the only stalemate possible, but it is the first stalemate I will address.

The suffragists were successfully able to challenge their opponents' claims to objectivity, but not all such challenges work so effectively. In particular, it is possible,

and has indeed occurred that groups with different perspectives and opinions charge each other with bias. If both sides are found to have hidden values and agendas, then what is to be done? It looks as though, in these cases, dialog would break down, and a stalemate would be reached. Neither side would be able to effectively challenge the other, since both have lost the position of authority, the objective one. This occurrence in which each side charges the other with having a hidden bias, or a hidden agenda, and hence questions the other's claim to be objective, is what I am calling the bias-stalemate. I have just argued that objectivity is beneficial for minorities, but it seems quite likely that the opposite could have occurred in our history. The suffragists and the anti-suffragists might have reached a bias-stalemate from which neither side was able to progress.

In the example I presented from Proctor's *Cancer Wars* in Chapter Three, Wildavsky claimed that environmentalists had a hidden agenda.[15] It is quite likely that the environmentalists could counter-claim that Wildavsky also had a hidden agenda. That is, under an ideal of value-free objectivity, neither Wildavsky nor the environmentalists were free from values, or to put it in more negative terminology, free from *bias*. Thus, neither side could claim to be objective in a value-free sense. This lets both sides off the hook, so to speak. Environmentalists do not have to take Wildavsky seriously, since he has failed to be objective, and Wildavsky need not take the environmentalists seriously, since they are also not objective. So, while the ideal of objectivity initially supported dialog between Wildavsky and the environmentalists, this dialog stalemated once each side was able to dismiss the other. Certainly a similar situation could have resulted in the suffrage case. Suffragists had an agenda,

15 Proctor, *Cancer Wars,* 92.

to gain votes for women. There were many different reasons this agenda was valued, one being the hope that women would support prohibition.[16] Anti-suffragists also had an agenda, to prevent women from voting. One reason why this anti-suffrage agenda was valued was because anti-suffrage women feared a loss of power and influence they enjoyed as upper-class women married and related to influential men.[17] Thus, both sides could charge the other with bias. Since each side would have, in this fictional scenario, identified a hidden bias in the other, each side would have determined that the other was not value-free.[18] Thus, each side could conclude that the other was not occupying the category of epistemic subject prescribed by a community holding an ideal of value-free objectivity, and so each side could ignore the other's claims. This is what I am calling a bias-stalemate. A bias-stalemate happens when each side in a debate discounts the position of the other on the basis that it is failing to live up to the ideals of the value-free aperspectival conception of objectivity, and dialog therefore breaks down.[19] If the value-free conception of objectivity has the power to make dialog break down, then why do I claim it was

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16 Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood,* 160. Graham, *Women's Suffrage and the New Democracy,* 70-71.

17 Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood,* 220.

18 I call the scenario fictional because, as we know, ultimately the suffragists were successful in their dialogs with their opponents. There surely were bias-stalemates between different groups of interlocutors during the suffrage movement, but they did not bring the discussion to a halt in the way a wide-spread bias-stalemate might.

19 Louise M. Anthony in her paper “Quine as Feminist” has identified a similar phenomenon she refers to as the bias paradox. Roughly, Antony claims that the bias paradox is a particular worry for feminist epistemologists, since they claim that biases are not all negative, but still want to object to male biases. The problem, then, becomes adjudicating between biases, which are good and which are to be discounted. (See Antony, “Quine as Feminist,” 554-555). This is distinct from a bias-stalemate as Antony points out that “the problem about bias that I want to discuss will only be recognized as a problem by individuals who are critical, for one reason or another, of one standard conception of objectivity.” (Antony, “Quine as Feminist,” 554). However, in the case of the bias-stalemate, neither party need be critical of the current conception of objectivity. In the case of the suffrage movement, both sides are aiming to be seen as aperspectival and value-free, neither is questioning the way objectivity is understood, and yet both sides may charge the other with bias. Thus, while the bias-stalemate resembles the bias paradox Antony identifies, they are not the same phenomenon.

ethically beneficial to hold this ideal?

Though it may look detrimental to minority opinion on the surface, I propose to show that the bias-stalemate is actually one of the mechanisms driving the concept of objectivity forwards into new and different conceptions. In reacting to the bias-stalemate some communities are raising a new understanding of the subjective self, and hence developing a new conception of the concept of objectivity. Focusing on the work by Helen Longino, I will argue that her suggested re-conceptualization of objective knowledge in terms of the community can be seen to be motivated from just these kind of bias-stalemate concerns.

The bias-stalemate possibility I noted above occurs *within* a community. In the suffrage case, both those advocating for suffrage for women and those opposed were in the political arena debating the constitution of the USA. It was an American matter, being debated internally by the United States community. Clough also notes that feminist scientists and mainstream scientists may have been headed towards a bias-stalemate. As discussed in Chapter Three, Clough claims that feminist philosophers of science are engaged in the business of challenging the traditional account of objectivity. Thus, they are calling their opponents' values into question. Feminist scientists often engage in pointing out hidden values in mainstream scientific theories that bias scientific knowledge and ignore the perspectives and lives of women. However, Clough notes that, from the initial position of challenging the norm, feminist scientists are quickly drawn into epistemic debates about whether they themselves are objective.[20] That is, by challenging the mainstream and charging mainstream

20 Clough, Beyond Epistemology, 18-22.

scientists with a bias against women, feminist scientists leave themselves open to the challenge of having a bias in favour of women. I agree with Clough that feminist scientists who make this move under a value-free account of objectivity do leave themselves open to the charge of bias. Because of this concern and other areas where bias-stalemates may and have occurred, the value-free conception of objectivity is itself being re-thought. One can see evidence of this in the work of Helen Longino.

4.3.1. Moving Past Biases and the Problem of Community

One of Helen Longino's goals is to make space in the scientific discourse for minority voices, including feminists. Her focus is on the scientific community, and one of her aims is to ensure that minority opinion within the scientific community is heard. In my analysis, this space for minority opinion is being threatened by the bias-stalemate. While some discourse was obligated under old accounts of objectivity, it was not necessarily sustained. Discourse could break down if the bias-stalemate occurred. To combat this and for other reasons to be discussed shortly, Longino argues that dissent is required for the creation of knowledge. Longino thinks, much as Mill did, that dissent is good for knowledge because dissent allows for criticism and critical dialog. If we have dissent, it is possible to have criticism, and thus to challenge and strengthen or discard our beliefs in light of these criticisms. Without dissent, criticism is not possible. Her claim, as reported by Alan Richardson and Miriam Solomon in their review of her work, is that “good critical dialog can transform opinion into knowledge.”[21] Since knowledge is social, on Longino's account individuals can

21 Miriam Solomon and Alan Richardson, “A Critical Context for Longino's Critical Contextual Empiricism” Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science 36, no.1 (2005): 212.

maintain values and still contribute to knowledge production through dissent and criticism. The important issue for Longino is to establish that opposing views are a necessary component of the production of knowledge. If a community of scientists achieves objective knowledge, Longino argues that it is because of (not in spite of) the differing values of individual community members.

For Helen Longino, knowledge itself is impermanent. What we know right now may be very different from what was known in the past, or what will be known in the future. To say something is known does not mean that it will never turn out to be a false belief. Societies negotiate what counts as knowledge. As Longino states:

> A consequence of embracing the social character of knowledge is the abandonment of the ideals of certainty and permanence of knowledge. Since no epistemological theory has been able to guarantee the attainment of those ideals, this seems a minor loss.[22]

One of the defining features of Longino's theory, then, seems to be impermanence. What counts as good science or bad science is negotiated by a community, and so it changes as the community negotiations progress. So, Longino, in agreement with the history presented in the last chapter from Daston and Galison, does not seem to be searching for permanent truth or certainty. The account of objectivity Longino develops in her two books, *Science as Social Knowledge*, and *The Fate of Knowledge*, is not one given to clean mirrors or span gaps. Rather, it is an account that she finds necessary in order to safeguard a place in scientific discourse for minority voices and to correctly conduct scientific investigation. This should not lead

22 Helen Longino, *Science as Social Knowledge; Values and Objectivity in Scientific Inquiry,* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990), 232.

one to conclude that Longino thinks her account of knowledge is all social and has nothing to do with the natural world. Longino, in her later work *The Fate of Knowledge*, expressly rejects a social/rational dichotomy. For Longino, allowing values and social norms into the debate does not mean that a community's knowledge-production practices have ceased to be rational.[23] In particular, she argues that acknowledging the social role in the production of knowledge does not result in an endorsement of relativism. Longino holds that there is ambiguity about which scientific theories to choose in order to explain a particular phenomenon, but this does not amount to arbitrariness. It amounts to underdetermination. If a theory is unsuitable, reality will “bite back” and it will become clear that the theory does not work.[24] So, on Longino's account reality cannot be ignored. The interests of the community need to combine with reality in order to determine whether a theory is successful.

In order to understand how Longino's theory is a response to the bias-stalemate as it arises within a community, one needs to understand the procedure by which Longino thinks objective knowledge is generated. Longino lays out four norms that she urges a community must adopt for the social generation of objective knowledge. 1) There need to be recognized avenues for criticisms, such as peer-reviewed journals. 2) There need to be shared standards among the members of the scientific community. Criticisms that are offered must be relevant in some way. The standards determine this relevance, but are open to community interpretation, such that no two communities may have exactly the same take on these standards. 3) The

23 Helen Longino, *The Fate of Knowledge,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 90-91.
24 Longino, *The Fate of knowledge,*119.

community must respond to the criticisms offered. This doesn't necessarily mean recanting a theory that is criticized, but it does mean defending against the criticism. 4) There needs to be equality of intellectual authority. Everyone within a scientific community, regardless of their ethnicity, social status, or gender, must be able to enter the epistemic discourse, no one can be kept out based on political or religious reasons alone.[25] In her later book, *The Fate of Knowledge*, Longino revised this last requirement. She recognized that not all individuals' or subgroups' criticisms counted equally, and it is not necessary to respond in all cases. In particular, it seems that scientists at the cutting edge of their field would be slowed down if they had to respond equally to first-year science students as to their peers. This seems both unhelpful and unnecessary. So, Longino revised the requirement that scientific communities be democratic and equal with a concept of 'tempered equality' which recognizes that there are times when absolute equality is neither possible nor desirable.[26] Longino recognizes that the concept of tempered equality needs to be more clearly articulated. In particular, the question of who counts as belonging to a community needs to be clarified. She acknowledges this as an area that still needs work in her theory, but that was beyond the focus of *The Fate of Knowledge*.[27]

Longino explains why she argues for the inclusion of a variety of individual values and perspectives in *The Fate of Knowledge*.

> The critical dimension of cognition is a social dimension, requiring the participation of multiple points of view to insure that the hypotheses accepted by a community do not represent someone's *idiosyncratic* interpretation of

25 Longino, *Science as Social Knowledge,* 76-79.
26 Longino, *The Fate of Knowledge,* 131.
27 Longino, *The Fate of Knowledge,* 133.

> observational or experimental data.[28]

The reason we need multiple points of view, according to Longino, is in order to ensure that no one idiosyncratic point of view is accepted as knowledge. In other words, Longino's account is endorsing a form of aperspectival objectivity, though she does not use this language. However, on Longino's account this is non-individual. It is social. An individual does not come to approach the category of epistemic knower prescribed by a community of scientists who hold aperspectival objectivity as an ideal by working on herself *by herself*. Self-reflection and self-policing are not the only obligations prescribed by the ideal. Rather, what is necessary is critical dialog. Instead of policing ourselves, we police each other. This is where the social aspect of Longino's account comes into play, and it is why values are so important. Values lead to different perspectives, which leads to a challenging of each other's perspectives, which could serve to highlight idiosyncratic views that the community as a whole is unwilling to endorse. Longino claims that

> Effective critical interactions transform the subjective into the objective, not by canonizing one subjectivity over others, but by assuming that what is ratified as knowledge has survived criticism from multiple points of view.[29]

For Longino, multiple points of view serve as a sort of trial to ensure that the claims that survive are not so idiosyncratic or otherwise divergent as to not be acceptable to the community. The removal of idiosyncratic perspectives is done by the community, not by the individuals that hold those perspectives. Individuals are not under an obligation to self-police in isolation. Rather, they are under an obligation to express

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28 Longino, *The Fate of Knowledge,* 107. *Emphasis added.*
29 Longino, *The Fate of Knowledge,* 122.

their views, defend their views, and respond to criticism. Under the old account of objectivity an individual's values risked inviting the skeptic, undermining her position, and possibly resulting in a bias-stalemate with her opponent. Under Longino's account of objectivity in terms of the community, individuals do not invite the skeptic by expressing values. These values allow for dissent, which is key to the production of knowledge.

Longino, with her stress on the importance of individual values, suggests a way to move beyond the threat of the bias-stalemate. The original aim of aperspectival objectivity, as Daston reports, was to allow communication among different individuals. During the suffrage movement and even until quite recently, it seemed that most epistemic communities were operating with a hybrid notion of objectivity, something combining the requirements of aperspectival and value-free objectivity. Longino's suggestion is still, by-and-large, an aperspectival objectivity. But it is no longer necessary for an *individual* to achieve a perspectiveless perspective alone. Call it 'Community-directed aperspectival objectivity'. The community will approach non-idiosyncratic, objective knowledge without the individuals *necessarily* losing their idiosyncratic perspectives. That can be accomplished by a community of individuals engaged in critical dialog to expose each others' values and idiosyncrasies and negotiate a form of knowledge that is itself more perspectiveless, or at least more open to various perspectives.

Longino's suggestion also addresses the Weberian prescription of value-freedom. She claims that values should *not* be removed from all epistemic discourse. Values are necessary not only for directing epistemic inquiry, but also as a way of

challenging each other. No one is value-free and no one should strive to be, according to Longino.[30] However Longino argues that values held by an entire group may go unnoticed. We forget that the values even exist and we tend to assume that we are not biased. Values are usually exposed and reflected upon when the group that holds them is challenged. [31] While it may be possible for a group to identify its own widespread values, a challenge from a perspective holding different values is, Longino seems to suggest, the usual way that values get exposed. Thus, though there is no call to be value-free, Longino does seem to stress the importance of value-awareness and stress that this awareness is facilitated by critical dialog. In *Science as Social Knowledge* she gives the example of man-the-hunter and woman-the-gatherer.[32] Longino argues that, prior to the hypothesis of woman-the-gatherer as a theory of tool-use in archaeology, man-the-hunter was the normal and accepted theory. It was a framework that constrained and informed the knowledge produced by and within the community. However, with the introduction of woman-the-gatherer, background assumptions operating in the generation of both frameworks suddenly came to the foreground. When two theories are competing, as these two are now, it becomes evident how much each is informed by background androcentric or gynocentric assumptions respectively. Longino finds a value in this challenge and negotiation.

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30 In this way, Longino's suggested revision of the concept of objectivity fits with Antony's identified second common strategy of challenging objectivity.

31 Longino, *Science as Social Knowledge,* 80. This is reminiscent of Thomas Gieryn's study of boundary work discussed in Chapter Two. One might well imagine that the reason sociologists and philosophers have been unable to recognize this middle path is because they have been engage in defining themselves in opposition to each other in order to establish the boundaries of each community and exclude each other.

32 This example has already been raised in conjunction with the discussion of Sharyn Clough's work in Chapter Three of this dissertation.

> The availability of (at least) two different frameworks both keeps the gap open as far as nonpartisan observers are concerned and reminds us of the need for background assumptions to secure the relevance of data to specific hypothesis.[33]

Longino argues that the data does not clearly support either the man-the-hunter or woman-the-gatherer framework better.[34] Both are equally well supported by the data. Thus, the operation of background assumptions, values, and beliefs are highlighted in these disagreements and it is recognized not only that everyone has background assumptions, but that these assumptions are necessary in order for a choice to be made in this case, and several like it. Because of underdetermination, the data alone are rarely enough to fix a decision between competing frameworks or theories.

> The distance between evidence and hypothesis is not closed by more fossil data, by better anatomical and physiological knowledge, by principles from the theory of evolution, nor by common-sensical assumptions. It remains an invitation to further theorizing.[35]

From this, I conclude that Longino's primary aim in her 1990 book, *Science as Social Knowledge* is to point out the necessity and value of biases, values and background assumptions. Thus, a bias-stalemate cannot occur. However, it seems evident that, at some point, some sort of decision regarding man-the-hunter and woman-the-gatherer should be able to be made. The quotation above indicates to me that, if and when this

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33 Longino, *Science as Social Knowledge,* 111.

34 Notice that the way Longino deals with the example of the man-the-hunter versus woman-the-gatherer in archaeology is different from Clough's discussion of the example. Longino uses it as an example of the underdetermination of evidence. In contrast Clough argues that, because of the systematic exclusion of the role of women in the history of archaeology, the woman-the-gatherer scenario is better supported than the man-the-hunter one.

35 Longino, *Science as Social Knowledge,* 111.

decision is made, our recognition of the gap between evidence and hypothesis should render this decision as provisional. Were man-the-hunter to win over woman-the-gatherer in the negotiated discourse within the community (or were a more gender-neutral theory to overcome both of these gendered theories, as Longino expresses a hope for[36]) then this win would not be the end of the debate. It could only ever be a provisional win, since the gap, and therefore the invitation to theorize would remain.

There are troubling aspects with Longino's theory. It is far from clear how consensus is reached, or exactly when it is deemed that a community has produced knowledge. Nor is it clear what happens to those individuals who dissent once the community has produced knowledge. Since knowledge is only provisional, presumably dissent is still possible. But equally presumably, in virtue of norm number three above (that responses must be given to criticism) the dissent offered cannot be a static dissent. It must change and respond to claims of knowledge from the community (and once it has, the community must also respond). One wonders whether this amounts to tyranny of the majority. These, and other concerns have been raised against Longino's account. While I acknowledge these concerns, and share many of them, what I want to draw out from Longino's account is the focus on values and biases as legitimate and necessary parts of scientific discourse. Thus, while Longino's account is far from complete, it does successfully challenge the bias-stalemate by pointing to the need for biases, and claiming that dissent is necessary in order to invite reflection on these biases.

Though individuals are not under obligation to remove biases, Longino's

36 Longino, *Science as Social Knowledge,* 111.

account of objectivity still carries ethical commitments with it. Individuals who adopt this value of objectivity will need to reflect on themselves in order to identify and consider their values in light of criticism. The role of self-examination and the need for challenges from others in order to invite this examination are all still functioning. What has changed is the ultimate goal and mechanism of the reflection. For Longino, the individual does not need to attempt to remove all values. Rather, she attempts to be aware of them and respond to criticisms. One can imagine that this might, at times, require a re-evaluation of specifically held values, but not necessarily a removal of them. Furthermore, she is brought to this awareness not merely through self-directed policing, but through critical dialog with others. The regimes by which a community determines that objectivity be aimed at have changed in Longino's account. They are no longer individual regimes of self-policing. Individuals now police each other.

Longino's account also carries ethical and epistemic commitments for the community that adopts it in a more overt fashion than previous accounts of objectivity have given. While previous accounts of objectivity have, according to Daston and Galison, always been a matter of a community's commitment to an ideal, Longino make this explicit. Objectivity is not only a community ideal, but it is a community ideal that applies at the level of the community, not, or not only, at the level of the individuals. Individuals may choose to alter their values or discard them once the values are exposed and the individuals can reflect on them, but they are not under any specific obligation to do so.

Individuals who have adopted Longino's account of objectivity become epistemic subjects that strive to acknowledge their values, acknowledge their

opposition's values, and engage in a debate with their opposition while adhering to the four norms adopted by their community. In doing so, these epistemic subjects contribute to the community's generation of knowledge. But the struggle is not only an act of self-policing. In Longino's account, we not only police ourselves, but we also police each other.[37] In fact, we are brought to police ourselves through policing each other. We need each other in order to make epistemic progress. As such, we are not so ready to discredit each other. The initial bias-stalemate noted at the start of this section is averted because of this need of opposition built into Longino's account, and adopted by epistemic subjects who subscribe to Longino's account.[38] Because individuals or groups within the scientific community could have hidden biases and assumptions, dissent is necessary in order to trigger reflection.

Indeed, her 2002 book, *The Fate of Knowledge* does more than suggest that a group within a community could have unrecognized values, but that entire communities could. She tries to bring together sociological and philosophical accounts of knowledge production and argues that sociologists and philosophers have been so busy defining themselves in opposition to each other that they have failed to recognize a middle path that incorporates both social and rational accounts of knowledge in a non-relativistic way.[39] So, while there may be no need to remove one's values, Longino seems to suggest that being aware of one's own values allows

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37 To some degree this policing of each other has always been there. However, Longino makes this policing explicit, and gives it a new purpose. It not only holds individuals accountable, it helps encourage discourse which aids in generating knowledge.

38 One puzzle for Longino's account is over when, exactly, one should give up one's values. When, on Longino's account, would an anti-suffragist's values regarding traditional gender roles need to be given up, or is it always productive to have dissent and criticism? Since Longino's view has moved to objective knowledge in terms of the community, the category of personhood occupied by the individual, and the specific obligations undertaken by the individual become a bit unclear.

39 Longino, Helen, *The Fate of Knowledge* 77-96.

one to consider fruitful alternatives that may go unrecognized as long as values are mistaken for facts. By moving to a discussion of community-wide hidden biases, Longino also anticipates the next stalemate that I see as a likely result of a Longino-type attempt at reconceptualizing of objectivity.

4.4. The Next Stalemate?

While one type of bias-stalemate may be averted by Longino's account, this is not the end of our troubles. Individuals are value-aware, but the problems raised by feminist philosophers and the imagined history where the suffrage movement ended in a bias-stalemate highlight that the problems found in previous accounts of objectivity may go further than merely bias-stalemates *within* a community. *Whole communities* could question and undermine each others' beliefs. Take the case of Wildavsky and the environmentalists. In Chapter Three I argued that calling one's opponent biased is probably not a fruitful way to win them over. However, it may still be a fruitful way to end the debate. In Longino's account, individuals within a community cannot be kept out of discourse because of holding values or having a unique perspective. However, this is all within the scientific community and is guaranteed by the community's adherence to the four norms. Insofar as Wildavsky conceives himself as belonging to a different community from the environmentalists (as well he might), the option of a stalemate is still open. Wildavsky could claim that the environmentalists, as a group, have interpreted the four norms in an entirely different way (or perhaps he may question whether they indeed hold all four norms) and in general have an entirely different agenda from his own, such that engaging in dialog with them would be a waste of time and is fruitless and unnecessary. The environmentalists might well say

the same thing of Wildavsky. Here, again, another stalemate has occurred, though in this case it is not so much a bias-stalemate as a methods, or agenda stalemate. It is a stalemate occurring at the level of the community, not at the level of individuals. Whole communities are simply so different that they see no need in conversing with each other. This is exactly the kind of thing Rorty claimed we should do, divide the world into those whose opinions matter and those whose opinions do not matter. It results in a stalemate.[40] Longino's account does not focus on dialog between communities, but is restricted to the scientific community. However, even though this is her focus, in discussing the dichotomy between sociological accounts of scientific knowledge and philosophical accounts of scientific knowledge, Longino tacitly recognizes that there are problems that need to be addressed in *inter*-community dialog. In fact, her discussion of the sociologists and philosophers in terms of a dichotomy may even leave itself open to a Gieryn-type analysis. Sociologists, according to Longino, characterize knowledge as non-individual (i.e. social), non-monist (i.e. there are multiple, or plural accounts of knowledge that fit the data) and relativist (no account is better than any other). Philosophers, according to Longino, tend to characterize knowledge as individual, monist (there is only one correct theory) and nonrelativist (one account is better than all the others). By contrast, as can be seen from the discussion above, and as Longino reports, she wants to endorse a claim that is nonindividual, nonmonist and nonrelativist.[41] One might think that a reason sociologists and philosophers define their understanding of knowledge in these terms

40 Elisabeth Lloyd, in her article “Objectivity and the Double Standard for Feminist Epistemologies,” seems especially concerned with this possibility. One aim of the article is to convince mainstream epistemologists that feminist epistemologists have the same agenda as mainstream epistemologists, and so cannot be ignored.

41 Longino, *The Fate of Knowledge,* 91.

is precisely in order to differentiate themselves from each other. They are different communities, engaged in different studies, employing different methods with different frameworks, and so can ignore each other. So, while the individual bias-stalemate is averted in Longino's account, the possibility of a methods or agenda stalemate occurring at the level of the community is still a live option.

Alison Wylie has seen this problem as it arises in her own field, philosophy of anthropology. She argues that whole communities need to engage in discourse with other communities. In her discussion of the hidden assumptions archaeologists have when conducting scientific investigations, Wylie argues that these community-wide hidden assumptions are best brought to light by interactions with another community, much as Longino argues that individual background beliefs and values are best brought to light and tested by engaging in discourse with other individuals. Wylie says that communities need to be aware of not only their differences, but also of their *shared* assumptions.[42] These also need to be questioned. In sum, Wylie's argument claims that it is not only individuals that need to be self-reflective and self-aware, but that whole communities must strive to be aware of their background beliefs and assumptions.

In Wylie's assessment, it is not only individual values that may be a threat to inching closer to the ideal of objectivity. Communities may have a community-wide perspective complete with community-wide idiosyncrasies and community-wide values. These might contribute to community-wide weaknesses. Because most of the individuals engaged in discourse in a given community will likely share this

42 Alison Wylie,"Questions of Evidence, Legitimacy, and the (Dis)Unity of Science" *American Antiquity* 65. no. 2 (2000): 233.

community perspective, they may not be as able to reflect on it. Wylie advocates that communities seek out and engage in discourse with other communities in order to identify and examine these community-wide perspectives. In effect, she advocates that communities themselves become value-aware by engaging in discourse with opposing communities. What Longino advocates with reference to the individual (the need for dissent and reflection) Wylie advocates with reference to the community. She stresses inter-community dialog between archaeologists and historians, and between anthropologists and the (usually Aboriginal) populations under study. Dialog needs to take place between communities if community-wide values are to be examined and questioned. With regards to the dialog between archaeologists and Aboriginal people, Wylie states that:

> In particular, Native Americans object that archaeology continues a long tradition of cultural and scientific imperialism; they see archaeologists as nothing more than glorified looters. Much archaeological research is undeniably destructive, and this destruction serves what Native Americans regard as the parochial concerns of a narrowly defined interest group, most of whose members have little connection to the cultural heritage they study and who do, in fact, derive financial and other economic and social benefits from the exploitation of the archaeological record. In effect, archaeologists are foxes who have set themselves up to guard the chicken coop: they are primary users of the archaeological record who establish their priority of access to it by claiming that they are properly its guardians. From the point of view of Native American critics, the distinction between archaeological and commercial interests in the record is unsustainable precisely because they reject the second presupposition identified above: they do not regard archaeological

> investigation as the source of an understanding of the cultural past that has intrinsic value for all people.[43]

In this passage, Wylie points out that not all communities may share the same values, or agree on what values are basic and intrinsic. In particular, Aboriginal communities have, by and large, a particular view on archaeology, and part of what informs this view is a divergence of opinion on what is accepted as an intrinsic value between Aboriginal communities and archaeological communities. Archaeologists defined themselves in terms of the intrinsic value of gathering knowledge and preserving the past. So, for archaeologists, preserving artifacts in museums is serving their primary value, preserving knowledge and understanding for future generations of humanity. By contrast, for some Aboriginal groups, valuing and preserving the past in this way is not viewed as an intrinsic value. Wylie reports that in some cases what is classified by archaeologists as archaeological material, belonging to a dead culture, is viewed as very much a part of a cultural practice that is still alive for an Aboriginal culture. So, even in the case of background assumptions about what counts as the past, archaeologists and Aboriginal communities may differ. On Longino's account, there is still a possibility of a stalemate between these two communities, just as there was between Wildavsky's community and environmentalists, because both communities have different agendas and methods. The archaeologists want to preserve the past, and the method they use for this is to store artifacts in a museum. An Aboriginal group may not view the artifacts in the museum as belonging to the past, or they may not view the act of placing an artifact in a museum as a way to

43 Alison Wylie, “Ethical Dilemmas in Archaeological Practice; The (Trans)Formation of Disciplinary Identity” *Thinking From Things: Essays in the Philosophy of Archaeology* (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 242.

preserve the past. The agendas and methods of these two groups differ, leaving the door open for another stalemate.

Wylie's point about the disparity over values between archaeologists and aboriginals raises the point that these community-wide practices need to be questioned, and highlights the concern over how they are to be questioned. Wylie's work challenges Longino's reconceptualization of objectivity, and points out where stalemates can still occur. But Wylie does not put forth a competing conception of objectivity. This is not her aim in writing philosophy of archaeology. However, in pointing out the challenges communities face and the risk of what, in my terminology, is another stalemate, Wylie points to the current problems being faced with a Longino-type conception of objectivity that focuses on discourse *within* a community.

There is another concern about community-wide dialog that Wylie highlights: this is the issue of trust. Wylie notes that many Aboriginal groups view archaeologists with mistrust. Given the history of archaeology, and the resistance archaeologists have shown in the past to discussing Aboriginal concerns, aboriginals do not trust the archaeological community, and with good reason. They do not share the same values, and yet they are both concerned with the same things, same cultural sites, and same artifacts. Little dialog has been broached in the past, and archaeologists have historically been associated with colonialism and imperialism, both of which have used exploitative practices on Aboriginal communities. Trust has broken down.

One reason for the difficulty of inter-community dialog is that often communities do not trust or respect each other. Gieryn has shown us, as discussed in Chapter Three, that communities will draw their borders so as to exclude others. Borders exclude those who are not interested in the same things or who are perceived to be

unqualified to discuss the interests of those, the members of the community, drawing the border. Often this is a marker of a lack of respect for those outside the community borders, insofar as it has been determined that their opinions do not matter. This was certainly the case in Gieryn's noted example of the demarcation of science from religion. This also seems to be Wildavsky's intention in discrediting the environmentalists. So, trust may break down in two ways. Either communities with already existing borders fail to show respect for each other, and thus trust is lost (this seems to be the case in the archaeologists and Aboriginal communities case, archaeologists failed to show respect to Aboriginal groups), or communities draw borders purposely in order to exclude those they do not respect (as in the case of Wildavsky and the environmentalists).

In her article "The Promise and Perils of an Ethics of Stewardship," Wylie argues that these questions of trust and inter-community dialog have often been viewed as secondary concerns. They were viewed as issues of a lesser importance than research and method, which were thought to be the primary activities of archaeologists. Research funds put towards issues of trust and dialog were viewed as funds wasted.[44] However, as archaeology came under fire from Aboriginal groups, and the government, as well as the public in general, this stance had to be rethought. Wylie argues that archaeology used to conceive of itself as caring for artifacts and preserving them for study by future generations. They saw themselves as searching for Truth, with a capital T, and as preserving artifacts for the human race and the public good. Of course, this story could not neglect the fact that many members of the public, such as Aboriginal groups, did not feel that the archaeologists were acting in

44 Alison Wylie, "The Promise and Perils of an Ethic of Stewardship," E*mbedding Ethics* eds. Lynn Meskell and Peter Pels, (New York: Berg 2005), 52.

their interests or for their good. Wylie reports that the standard response to these views was the following:

> Appeals to a public interest made within the framework of this fiction [the fiction that archaeology is preserving artifacts for the public good] are appeals to the interests that all citizens would have, counterfactually, if they were to transcend the dogmatic conventions of lesser cultural forms. [45]

Essentially archaeologists claimed that their community's values, knowledge claims and norms trumped those of indigenous groups because indigenous groups were dogmatic, i.e. not objective. They imply that they themselves are objective by claiming that their position is the one others would adopt if they could transcend troubling aspects of their own subjectivity. This is the exact use of the concept of objectivity that Rorty and Code were both concerned with. Objectivity is being used, in this scenario, to silence minority opinion. Wylie responds to this position in the following way:

> Virtually every element of this argument is open to question, if not patently unsustainable, from the assumption about cultural evolution to the claims about the transcendent status of scientific knowledge.[46]

Wylie illustrates here that communities can serve to highlight values or assumptions that other communities might make or hold without question. By questioning these values or assumptions, Wylie argues that new fruitful avenues for research and for theory development can be found. Wylie argues that a “research tradition can be enriched by sustained interchange with values and interests that lie outside its insular boundaries.”[47] This statement accords with what I think Longino intended to show by attempting to break down the dichotomy between sociologists and philosophers. By

45 Wylie, “The Promise and Perils of an Ethic of Stewardship,” 62.
46 Wylie,“The Promise and Perils of an Ethic of Stewardship,” 63.
47 Wylie,“The Promise and Perils of an Ethic of Stewardship,” 63.

engaging in dialog not only with the holders of minority view in one's own community, but with other communities, a scientific community has an opportunity to explore new areas of research, and new research methods. In short, inter-community dialog may not only be a good ethical move. It may be smart epistemically as well.

Longino's theory moves us beyond the individual bias-stalemate. Under Longino's system, individuals in a shared community cannot discredit and disregard each other based on identifiable values or background beliefs alone. But new problems of personhood arise with this new category of the epistemic subject. In particular two new problems arise, the problem of trust and respect, and the problem of inter-community dialog and the risk of community-wide methods and agendas stalemates. I have demonstrated, relying on work from Alison Wylie, that these two problems are closely related. A loss of, or a refusal to, trust hurts the possibility of dialog between communities. It is this discussion to which I will turn in the next chapter.

So, while Longino's account motivates a new conception of objectivity, and drives a new category of personhood, thus blocking intra-community bias-stalemates, the risk of inter-community stalemates becomes more salient as a result. These are problems which aren't new from the standpoint of the difficulty of engaging in inter-community dialog, but they are new from the perspective of what is required in order to be a responsible epistemic subject. Wylie's critique of archaeology and Aboriginal communities, and her theory of the need for inter-community dialog between these communities suggests a new ethical and epistemic commitment for the epistemic subject, a commitment not only to engage in dialog with those with differing values

within one's community, but also to actively seek to engage in discourse with those beyond one's community's borders.

By examining the ideal of objectivity and problems that are identified with the category of epistemic subject prescribed by a given conception of that ideal, I have offered one explanation of why it is that Longino advocated for a community-directed account of objectivity. She may have done so in response to the problem of the bias-stalemate, made salient by the category of personhood created by the value-free aperspectival conceptions of objectivity that pre-date her own reconceptualization. Longino's reconceptualization of objectivity raises a new possibility of personhood, and new concerns, some of which Wylie is addressing. In particular, Longino's account depends on the community policing itself and on the community generating objective knowledge. However, Wylie's work should lead us to question the results of an account like this. Stalemates can still occur. Longino has moved us past the bias-stalemate, but inter-community stalemates are still possible, since the community is the entity charged with generating objective knowledge. This possibility of personhood still seems problematic, since the relationship between the individual obligations and the community obligations are unclear and since stalemates are still possible, even in cases where they seem less than desirable. So, theoretical moves in epistemology like Longino's, can be explained if one keeps the historical nature of objectivity in mind. Thus I suggest that not only is the concept of objectivity ethically valuable, but it also has explanatory value for anyone conducting an historical investigation into epistemology.

4.4.1. Empiricism and Standpoint Theory[48]

The suggestion I am making here, and will be developing in the next section, of the use that Wylie's observations can be put to in addressing concerns in Longino's account is a suggestion that has been made on a larger scale already. In particular, my suggestion is similar to the claim that feminist standpoint theory, of which Wylie is a type of adherent, and feminist empiricism, of which Longino is an adherent, could benefit from joining forces.[49] This suggestion has been made by Kristen Intemann in her paper "25 Years of Feminist Empiricism and Standpoint Theory: Where Are We Now?" Intemann argues that standpoint theory can give feminist empiricism a way to adjudicate between different view-points that is more specific than Longino's assertion that the community adjudicates. She also claims that feminist empiricism can help standpoint theory ground their claims in empirical evidence.[50] Her conclusion essentially claims that what Wylie adopts with reference to archaeologists and Aboriginal groups, and what Longino advocates with regards to philosophers and sociologists is also true with regards to feminist standpoint theorists and feminist empiricists. They can benefit epistemically from dialog and collaboration with each other.

Intemann credits Sandra Harding with first distinguishing between feminist

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48 The story told here about the evolution of and relationship between feminist empiricism and feminist standpoint theory is only one of several stories that could be told. In telling this story I am relying on recent work by Kristen Intemann and Alison Wylie. This story does not stress the Marxist origins of feminist standpoint theory. One might argue that its Marxist origins and its focus on power relations is one of the defining features of standpoint theory, and one of the things that distinguishes it from feminist empiricism. That may be true. What I am establishing here is that there has been, in recent decades, a convergence of feminist empiricism and feminist standpoint theory. They are now much closer than they may have been in the past. One way to explain this convergence is with reference to problems of personhood created by value-free and aperspectival conceptions of objectivity.

49 Though Wylie is already suggesting the benefits to be found in feminist empiricism. Harding, from Chapter Two, is a better example of a feminist standpoint theorist.

50 Intemann, "25 Years of feminist Empiricism and Standpoint Theory: Where Are We Now?," 778-796.

empiricism and feminist standpoint theory. Thus it should now not be surprising why, in Chapter Two, I claimed that the current conception of objectivity I will develop in Chapter Five shares features in common with Harding's strong objectivity. I am relying on work done by philosophers who have, in part, been influenced by Harding's theories.

Feminist empiricism, as understood by Harding was not contextual and was "the view that instances of male bias are merely cases of 'bad science' that could be eliminated if scientists more rigorously adhered to empiricist methods and norms".[51] Clearly this is not the type of feminist empiricism that Longino endorses. Intemann notes that "feminist philosophy of science has come a long way over the past twenty-five years. So much so, in fact, that using the old theoretical terrain has caused feminist empiricists and standpoint feminists to talk past each other."[52] Intemann's claim is that the old categories of empiricism and standpoint theory do not really represent the new claims and theories being developed by empiricists and standpoint theorists today. The distinguishing factor of standpoint theory, as discussed in Chapter Two, is its reliance on the preferring of some standpoints over others. Intemann notes that this is not merely because oppressed views are epistemically advantaged full stop. Something more is needed. Intemann notes that, for contemporary standpoint theorists, this something more is reflection.

> Contemporary standpoint theorists, however, have denied that standpoints are merely socially located perspectives. Rather, standpoints are said to be *achieved* through a critical, conscious reflection on the ways in which power structures and resulting social locations influence knowledge production . . .

51 Intemann,"25 Years of feminist Empiricism and Standpoint Theory: Where Are We Now?," 778.
52 Intemann,"25 Years of feminist Empiricism and Standpoint Theory: Where Are We Now?," 794.

> standpoints do not automatically arise from occupying a particular social location. They are achieved only when there is sufficient scrutiny and critical awareness of how power structures shape or limit knowledge in a particular context.[53]

Intemann, then, observes that current standpoint theory grants specific standpoints epistemic salience if these have been critically reflected on. Though Longino is classified as a feminist empiricist, it is easy to see that she also highlights reflection as important. But though Longino is a contextualist, and though she challenges value-free accounts of objectivity, and though she highlights the importance of reflection (all things which Longino's empiricism shares in common with standpoint theory), Intemann claims that there are still some ways in which Longino's style of feminist empiricism differs from standpoint theory. There is a fundamental difference in why feminist empiricism and feminist standpoint theory stress the need for diversity and what kind of diversity is advocated for. Intemann notes that

> Feminist empiricists maintain that it is easier to identify when values or interests are influencing scientific reasoning when those values or interests are different from one's own. Thus, feminist empiricists have advocated for scientific communities comprised of individuals with *diverse values and interests*.[54]

This observation by Intemann seems to accord with Longino's agenda. A diversity of values, on Longino's account, will allow us to note easily which values and interests we hold and when and how they are influencing our judgment, bringing us to a value-awareness.

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53 Intemann, “25 Years of feminist Empiricism and Standpoint Theory: Where Are We Now?,” 785.
54 Intemann, “25 Years of feminist Empiricism and Standpoint Theory: Where Are We Now?,” 790.

> Standpoint feminists, on the other hand, maintain that it is *diversity of social position* (as opposed to diversity of values and interests) that is epistemically beneficial.[55]

Intemann points out that, because standpoint theorists hold that knowledge is embodied, what matters is the social position of the knower, not their values. The result of this diversity of social position will be that marginalized groups will be "more likely to identify limitations or problems with background assumptions that have gone systematically unnoticed."[56] The claim is that those who are not the ones in power will be better able to highlight and question assumptions that have been made and are invisible or unacknowledged by the majority. Wylie shows that Aboriginal groups questioned the 'fiction' of the archaeologists that they were preserving Truth, and that their perspective is the perspective all others would have if they weren't biased and dogmatic. Intemann argues that all cognitively aware marginalized groups who have a stake in a certain epistemic investigation could function in a similar way to the role Aboriginal groups play in challenging archaeologists aims, assumptions and methods.

From this brief discussion of feminist empiricism and standpoint theory I conclude that empiricism seems well positioned to move us past the bias-stalemate, since it is focused on the inclusion of values. However, standpoint theory, as Wylie and Intemann demonstrated, is well positioned to move us past the paradox that remains in Longino's account. That is, standpoint theory, because of its inter-community focus, and its insistence in bringing in individuals from divergent social positions (not only scientists) allows for dialog with regards to aims, assumptions and methods, thus blocking the move that Wylie reports archaeologists attempted to make

55 Intemann, "25 Years of feminist Empiricism and Standpoint Theory: Where Are We Now?," 790.
56 Intemann, "25 Years of feminist Empiricism and Standpoint Theory: Where Are We Now?," 791.

in order to ignore Aboriginal groups. My claim is that both feminist empiricism and feminist standpoint theory are addressing current concerns with epistemic subjects and epistemic communities, are reconceptualizing the concept of objectivity in order to meet those concerns, and are reshaping the category of the epistemic subject in the process. In a sense, this is a bit too simplified. For, as Intemann claims, standpoint theory and feminist empiricism have, at present, so much in common, that she suggests they join forces under the new label 'feminist standpoint empiricism.'[57] One reason as to why they have so much more in common now than they did twenty-five years ago may be that they both identified similar problems with current conceptions of the epistemic subject which led their theories to converge as they tried to address these problems. But what kind of epistemic subject are they creating now?

This question will be the subject of the next chapter, but I can say a few things here as an introduction. Wylie, with her focus on inter-community dialog, and especially with her example of archaeologists and Aboriginal groups, has pointed to one big issue which new epistemic subjects will have to combat if they are to be successful knowers in an era of inter-community dialog. The issue is trust. How are archaeologists to rebuild the lost trust between themselves and Aboriginal groups? And how are Aboriginal groups, archaeologists, and any community really, to decide who is trustworthy and who is not? Within a scientific community these issues are solved through the community's negotiation of the four norms, or at least that is Longino's suggestion. But if these four norms are not shared between communities, the issue becomes much less clear. In the next chapter I will move from a description of the various conceptions of objectivity to a suggestion of how to foster trust and

57 Intemann,“25 Years of feminist Empiricism and Standpoint Theory: Where Are We Now?,” 794.

inter-community dialog between communities. I will focus on knowledge-sharing practices, relying on work by Heidi Grasswick, rhetoric and humour as possible tools for trust-building and engaging in inter-community dialog.

4.5. Stalemates and Objectivity

I have identified two different stalemates that are a risk as a result of two different conceptions of the concept of objectivity. Both stalemates are motivated by the identification of problems within the epistemic subject or the community of knowers. Before closing this chapter, I want to stress that the emergence of new problems with the epistemic subject should not suggest that we move beyond the ideal of objectivity. I have demonstrated that objectivity has been beneficial in allowing minorities to speak in the past, and encouraging the majority to listen. Past accounts of objectivity in terms of value-freedom have not been entirely dangerous or exclusionary. But that does not mean that problems did not arise. In particular, the bias-stalemate arose within communities. Longino has given us a way to move beyond this particular bias-stalemate. But in solving one problem of the epistemic subject, a new category of personhood is created, and new problems are highlighted. The worry over community-wide stalemates becomes salient for the epistemic subject.

As we would expect if we take an historical view of objectivity, adopting Longino's theory of objectivity has the potential to create new problems with the subject that need to be addressed. Longino's account, because of its focus on the subject in communities, has highlighted the problem of inter-community dialog, a problem Longino recognized but did not have the space to address. In particular, the issue of trust has re-emerged. An epistemic subject may have imperfect information,

may need to trust the judgment of others in other communities, but we do not know how to mix value-aware epistemic subjects with trust, since trust used to require value-freedom. How is an individual to adjudicate between values and trust an expert in spite of, or perhaps because of, the values held by the expert, especially when the individual is not a member of the expert's community and may not hold the same methods or agenda as the expert's community?[58] One cannot distrust solely based on the existence of values; Longino's account removes this possibility. However, certainly some values are viewed as untrustworthy. It is unclear how one is to adjudicate between values. It is unclear how trust will work in an era of value-aware objectivity. It is even less clear whether it is still acceptable to distrust whole communities based on values.

Objectivity has a history, and is always changing. We can already see on the horizon the problems which this new value-aware community-directed account of objectivity will bring. The problem of trust will re-emerge, and the problem of dialog between epistemic communities will become salient. However, I suggest that these changes have been beneficial. Objectivity, under the conception of value-free aperspectivalism, created persons and communities willing to allow minorities entry into epistemic debate. Different concepts of objectivity create different categories of person, and I have shown a change from Weber's value-free objectivity to Longino's value-aware, community-directed, aperspectival objectivity. As Hacking claims, "[objectivity] is part of what makes the practice of communal rather than authoritarian

58 For a discussion of the interaction between expert and lay communities, see Brian Wynne, "May the Sheep Safely Graze? A Reflexive View of the Expert-Lay Knowledge Divide." *Risk, Environment and Modernity: Towards a New Ecology* eds. Scott Lash, Bronislaw Szerszynski and Brian Wynne (London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 1996).

decision possible. Tyrants don't need objectivity."[59] Once we gain the value of objectivity, we undermine the possibility of tyranny. It is within this framework that I think the solution to the trust and inter-community problems should be sought. Otherwise, we risk the re-emergence of the tyrant, and the loss of a mutually recognized position from which minorities can speak with confidence against a majority that believes otherwise. As the idea that value-aware epistemic subjects are an acceptable category of personhood slowly takes hold, we can already see the new problems emerging. Rather than seeing this as indicative of a flaw in the objective/subjective distinction, I suggest we view it as calling for another conception of the concept of objectivity, and hence a revision to the existing category of epistemic subject.

The commitment to objectivity, then, not only creates self-examining individuals, but seems to be well on its way to creating self-examining communities in the twenty-first century. However, there is a potential problem with Wylie's suggestion. She argues that, just as one community may have a community-wide perspective, two communities in communication with each other may also have values in common. Wylie advocates that these must also be examined and reflected on.[60] So far, the assumption seems to have been that this type of examination most easily occurs in opposition. But if the two opposed communities agree on one or more values, there is a risk that these will go unnoticed. How are communities to effectively reflect on where they agree?

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59 Ian Hacking, "Historical Meta-Epistemology" in *Wahreit und Geschichte; Ein Kolloquium zu Ehren des 60. Geburstages von Lorenz Krüger* eds. Carl Wolfgang and Lorraine Daston (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Reprecht,1999), Pg. 92.

60 Wylie, Alison. 2000. Pg. 233.

Worse still, how are communities to engage in dialog if they are sufficiently different, or if one cannot be understood by the other, or if their values are distinct enough that neither can understand the other? These are some of the concerns and issues raised by Wylie's suggestion of dialog between communities. The suggestion itself works well to combat previous problems of communities arising from Longino's new conception of objectivity and new category of epistemic subject. Insofar as, for Longino, it is the community that strives for objectivity, and the community that becomes the knower, it is worth pointing out that, just as the bias-stalemate can be run against individuals, stalemates can also be run against whole communities, each community discounting the other's ethical and epistemic commitments. Not only individuals, but communities need to be aware of, and prepared to evaluate, their values.

4.6. Conclusion

In this chapter I have demonstrated that there is at least one example of a commitment to objectivity serving as an ethical benefit and allowing holders of minority opinion entry into epistemic debate. This example is found in the American Suffrage movement. I have argued that, through a commitment to objectivity, suffragists were able to make their case, and find a position from which to speak. Because of a commitment to objectivity on the part of their opposition, suffragists faced opponents who were committed to self-examination, self-policing and value-freedom. Thus, when suffragists raised questions about their opponents biased and sentimental perspective, the opponents' position as occupying the category of the epistemic subject was threatened and they were placed under obligation to self-

reflect. I have argued that the success of the suffrage movement in the United States in the early twentieth century can partially be explained by a commitment to objectivity and the type of epistemic subject created by this commitment.

However, this commitment to value-free, aperspectival objectivity was not perfect. In particular, the threat of the bias-stalemate within a community is present in this account. I argued that work by Helen Longino is creating a new conception of objectivity and, if her account of objectivity were adopted, we would be able to move past the bias-stalemate. I claim that stalemates are part of the mechanism driving the concept of objectivity forward, into new conceptions to meet new demands. Though the intra-community bias-stalemate may be overcome by the type of epistemic subject who adopts a Longino-style ideal of objectivity (since individual values are no longer mere biases to be removed, but are a necessary part of the production of knowledge) the concern over intra-community stalemates will become salient.

So, while Longino's account solves one problem with regards to the epistemic subject, it serves to highlight another, and moves the stalemate to the level of the community rather than the level of the individual. I argued that this result is by no means a reason to discredit the ideal of objectivity. Rather, this result should serve to remind us of the changeable nature of the concept of objectivity. By relying on work by Alison Wylie, I suggested that the way to reconceptualize this new ideal of objectivity will be in terms of intra-community dialog, respect, and trust. One would expect, then, that these values will become a part of the ethical commitments objectivity demands of the epistemic subject. In the next chapter, I will illustrate that these commitments to inter-community dialog, respect, and trust are indeed being adopted by scientific

communities in an effort to more effectively generate knowledge. This new conception of objectivity builds upon Longino's insistence on dialog, but also demands, with Wylie, that dialog be engaged in with other communities. This is a new conception of objectivity, still being clarified in the epistemic community. But even so, epistemic benefits of this account of objectivity can already be seen. In the next chapter, using the example of Marine Protected Areas, I will argue that objectivity, even today, is still a valuable ideal to hold.

Chapter 5: Trust, Downwind of the Expert

5.1. Introduction

In previous chapters I have established that objectivity has proven to be valuable in the past. But I have yet to establish that objectivity is still a valuable ideal. Richard Rorty allows that objectivity might have been useful in the past.[1] What he objects to is that the ideal of objectivity still has any value. So Rorty, at least, may agree with my arguments illustrating that objectivity was valuable in the past, while still maintaining that it has now outlived its usefulness. Thus, my defense of objectivity so far has only successfully defended against those who argue that it is always dangerous (like Lorraine Code). I have yet to defend objectivity against a position, like Rorty's, which claims that objectivity has *become* dangerous. In order to fully defend objectivity, I need to establish that the ideal can still be of value.

In the last chapter I identified two problems that come out of Longino's account of objectivity as a community's goal rather than as an individual's. The first is the problem of inter-community dialog, a problem identified and discussed by Alison Wylie, among others, where a community-based stalemate is still possible. Just as individuals must become aware of their own values on Longino's account, Wylie gives us reason to think that communities should also be aware of community-wide values and reflect on these values. On the individual account, identifying and becoming aware of one's own values was carried out through challenges by different individuals in the community. On the community account, it seems challenges are again needed if a community, or individuals in that community, are to be able to reflect on and

1 See Rorty *Objectivity, Relativism and Truth,*12-13.

become aware of community-wide values.

The second problem, closely related to the first, is trust. How are communities to trust each other when they may value different things? Dialog and challenges to a position requires some level of trust and/or respect. Communities must respect each other if they are to be persuaded to listen to each other. In some cases, where knowledge and expertise are not shared by all parties, trust will be of paramount importance. But in a Weberian conception of objectivity as value-freedom, trust was earned by experts due to their ability to claim to be value-free persons. These claims can no longer be plausibly supported given the way we now think of values and of value-freedom. How is one to trust if individuals and even communities are not required, nor conceived to be able, to be value-free? Compounding this issue is the question of trust when it is not only values that conflict, but even methods and aims differ, as they often do between communities.

I will deal with each of these issues in this chapter. Many philosophers in epistemology and philosophy of science are currently working on these areas. Using work by Donna Haraway, Naomi Scheman, Alison Wylie, and Heidi Grasswick, I will build a picture of what the emerging conception of objectivity looks like, and what sort of epistemic subject it will encourage. Using the example of marine-protected areas, I will argue that this new conception of objectivity and of the epistemic subject has both epistemic and ethical value, and is beginning to be used in some areas of science. By the end of the chapter I will have examined a conception of objectivity that requires three things: Trust, Humility, Inter-Community dialog and knowledge-sharing. So, in offering a title for this conception of objectivity, I tentatively offer THICK objectivity, with

some reservations to be spelled out in section 5.5.2. I will demonstrate that this conception of objectivity, which I take to be a currently emerging conception, especially among anthropologists and ecologists, is epistemically beneficial. Rorty was in error when he claimed that objectivity had outlived its usefulness. At the end of this chapter I will shift from describing what is happening with the current conception of objectivity to suggesting possible fruitful avenues of investigation for solving the problems that still need to be addressed in this reconceptualization. Given that the issue of trust has moved into the foreground in the current conception of objectivity I suggest that those under obligation to appear as trustworthy individuals consider looking at the study of rhetoric to gain some valuable insights into how one might present oneself as a trustworthy individual. Part Four of this chapter is meant as a suggestion only of ways in which scientists and others under the obligation of the current conception of objectivity might rethink how to present themselves as trustworthy epistemic subjects. Finally, I will give a summary of what this new conception of the objective ideal looks like.

5.2. The Reconceptualization of Objectivity

I began outlining a current conception of objectivity at the end of the last chapter relying on work done by Helen Longino and Alison Wylie. I argued that Longino's theory can move us past the bias-stalemate. The bias-stalemate is a risk to the conception of value-free and aperspectival objectivity in virtue of their insistence on the removal of individual idiosyncrasies and background values. On Longino's account, unique perspectives and individual values are admissible under the category of epistemic subject. They are not only admissible but are necessary for the

production of knowledge. So I argued that Longino's account helps address something problematic about the epistemic subject necessitated by the previous conception of objectivity, namely that no individual can achieve a value-free or aperspectival perspective.

But Longino's account is not without its problems. Internal to the account is the question of how values are to be adjudicated in this community discussion. Longino is unclear as to whose values will be adopted, or how it is that criticism is to proceed. This has been a concern raised against her account by Karyn L. Freedman who argues that Longino's account of objectivity appears to lead to a tyranny of the majority.[2] I note this as a problem for Longino's account, but it is not the problem I will follow in this dissertation. Rather, I will focus on the problem raised by Alison Wylie, the problem of inter-community dialog and what I identified as the risk of another stalemate at the level of communities. While Longino might have a story to answer Freedman's questions in terms of her four norms, and community negotiation of those four norms, it is not clear to me that she has any way of addressing stalemates that could arise between communities. This is because her account, while social, focuses on dialog within a community, where the four norms are agreed-upon and everyone agrees on the methods of investigation and the agenda in place. However, as Wylie points out, it is much less clear how to facilitate discussion between communities where many of these things may not be shared. The less we share, the harder it seems to facilitate dialog and avoid a stalemate. So, though I do think Longino's work is part of the work of reconceptualizing the current conception of objectivity, this work

2 See Karyn L. Freedman, “Diversity and the Fate of Objectivity” *Social Epistemology: A Journal of Knowledge, Culture and Policy* 23. no. 1 (2009): 45-56.

is not done yet. There are still identified problems that need to be addressed. In this section, using work by Alison Wylie, Naomi Scheman, and Heidi Grasswick, I will give a fuller account of what this conception of objectivity might look like.

5.2.1. Longino, Wylie and Inter-community Dialog

As examined in the last chapter, Longino suggests that an effective way to learn to reflect on one's own beliefs is for them to be challenged by others. This is not a new, or surprising, revelation. But how does this work at the level of community? Longino's account can be read as stating that individuals must respond to each other's work, and that through this process the scientific community generates knowledge. This would leave little or no room for the questioning of community-wide values, beliefs, or biases. I argue that when Longino's conception of objectivity is adopted the issues that her account was meant to address recur again at the level of the community. The intra-community bias-stalemate is blocked, but the possibility of stalemates between communities becomes salient.

Longino's theory may leave open the possibility that community-wide values, assumptions, methods and beliefs may go unnoticed. The community itself, in Longino's account, aims at objectivity in terms of aperspectivalism.[3] Wylie's comments suggest that there is good reason to want community-wide values and beliefs to be reflected upon, even if the aim may not be absolute elimination of these values. In the new conception of objectivity, the idea of value-freedom as a realistic goal which can be approximated has been challenged and undermined. However, there is still a

3 Recall from Chapter Four that the community aims to remove individual idiosyncratic perspectives to ensure that what is ultimately adopted as knowledge is not idiosyncratic but is something that has survived multiple criticisms.

strong ethical commitment to understanding and reflecting on values. This is not only an ethical commitment, but, as Wylie suggests and as I will demonstrate, is also an epistemic commitment. It allows for the possibility of more fruitful avenues of research and of knowledge application. I suggest that this reflection be extended to community-wide values, beliefs and assumptions. In fact, I see this as one of the principal benefits of inter-community dialog.

In the last chapter, Longino demonstrated that individual background beliefs and values were best brought to light through a challenge. It plausibly follows that community-wide beliefs can best be challenged by another community. Alison Wylie is one philosopher advocating for the need for communities to talk to each other.

If we examine Wylie's discussion of historical archaeology in conjunction with both history and archaeology we can see how various communities can challenge each other's beliefs and values in various ways. Historical archaeology has been criticized by both historians and archaeologists. Both disciplines draw boundaries around their own method of study. Historians label historical archaeology as a “hopelessly thin source of insight,” while archaeologists view it as “shallow”.[4] Wylie's argument is that historians and archaeologists have some underlying assumptions and methods in common with historical archaeology, thus implying some unity despite the boundaries being negotiated, and yet they also have stark differences. Wylie argues that both the underlying agreements and the disparities work to highlight and expose potential weaknesses in each field. These weaknesses may not be exposed if

4 Alison Wylie, “Rethinking Unity as a 'Working Hypothesis' for Philosophy of Science; How Archaeologists Exploit the Disunities of Science” *Thinking From Things: Essays in the Philosophy of Archaeology* (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press. 2002), 204.

these different communities are not encouraged to collaborate with each other.[5] Hybrid disciplines like historical archeology might bridge these gaps between disciplinary fields, allowing for the exposure of weaknesses and the questioning of methods.

Historians draw a boundary around history to exclude historical archaeology, and archaeologists, likewise, draw a boundary around archaeology to exclude historical archaeology. This is what Wylie reports. But the reasons that historical archaeology is not archaeology are not the same reasons for why it is not history. To put this point another way, history has some features in common with historical archaeology, and archaeology has different features in common. Historical archaeology is challenged by history in one way, and by archaeology in another. This isn't to say, though, that history and archaeology have nothing in common. The very fact that both feel threatened by historical archaeology as a discipline, and both are at pains to determine why it is that historical archaeology is not part of their own discipline, shows that history and archaeology do have something in common. Indeed, Wylie argues that these two disciplines are closely related.

> . . . however resolute archaeologists and historians have been in maintaining the boundaries between their disciplines, they are almost certainly subject to many common influences and often rely on similar interpretive resources . ..[6]

The fact that historians and archaeologists are at pains to define themselves in opposition to historical archaeology and from each other may cause reflection.[7] Wylie's

5 Wylie, Alison. 2002. Pg. 206.
6 Wylie, “Rethinking Unity as a 'Working Hypothesis' for Philosophy of Science,” 209.
7 Wylie's project is to explore and challenge the stated differences between history and archaeology, as well as the stated differences between history, archaeology and historical archaeology. She concludes that the disunity claimed to exist between history, archaeology and historical archaeology

claim in this paper is to challenge current discussion over whether there is a fundamental underlying unity of science under which all the different branches of science converge, or whether science has a fundamental disuntiy, such that the different branches of science do not converge. Wylie argues that these arguments over whether different branches of science converge into a unity, or whether there is a disunity in science, is an unrealistic one. It is too polarized, and it turns out that neither option is tenable. This will have a significant impact on how science is conceived and possibly how it is conducted, which is Wylie's aim.[8] However, it appears to me that it also has an impact on how scientific communities are conceived of and how community borders are negotiated. In particular, if Wylie is correct, then it is not the case that communities are either fully differentiated from each other, nor that they are fully integrated. This is not surprising given that communities are made up of individuals, and any one individual may be part of many different communities.

So communities often do have some beliefs in common, since there is a natural overlapping. But the wish to remain distinct may, in itself, lead to reflection in these overlapping areas of values or beliefs. Communities often will want to maintain borders and resist acknowledging where they agree or placing much emphasis on these areas of agreement as being hallmark values of the community. In Wylie's example above, historians and historical archaeologists may find that they do have certain methodological practices or background assumptions in common. But they may still insist that they are distinct communities, perhaps placing more weight on

may not be a tenable or useful distinction. Instead she claims that unity and disunity are both a part of the structure and separation of scientific disciplines. Wylie, “Rethinking Unity as a 'Working Hypothesis' for Philosophy of Science,” 209. I do not focus on Wylie's project here, but find some of the examples she uses and suggestions she makes helpful in my own project.

8 Wylie, “Rethinking Unity as a 'Working Hypothesis' for Philosophy of Science,” 209.

areas of belief, value, or practice where they differ. But this resistance itself is a valuable thing to reflect upon. Historians and historical archaeologists can be led to reflect on their beliefs precisely because they are shared beliefs, though the communities wish to remain distinct. In addition, while one community may agree with a number of others, it may not agree on the same points or practices with all of these others.

However, there is another situation in which the issue of inter-community dialog is problematic not merely because communities wish to remain distinct, but because communities fundamentally do not trust each other (or one does not trust the other). This situation is one Wylie discusses in her example of archaeologists and Aboriginal groups as discussed in the last chapter. Aboriginal groups do not trust archaeologists to be self-appointed stewards of historical artifacts, and with good reason. The history of relationships between Aboriginal groups and archaeologists is a history of a lack of communication, and perceived (and real) betrayal. Wylie notes, as discussed in Chapter Four, that a number of archaeologists in the 1970's still viewed archaeology as a pure science, where they, as scientists, would not be required to engage in dialog with Aboriginal populations the way anthropologists might be asked to. This was seen as an advantage to studying archaeology by some of those engaged in this study, but it also inevitably led to a breakdown in trust. Eventually, through demonstrations and legal battles, Aboriginal groups were able to require archaeologists to enter into dialog with them. Now the issue of trust, and of trust-building and appearing as a trustworthy individual are very much present for archaeologists.[9]

9 Wylie, Alison. “The Promises and Perils of an Ethics of Stewardship,” 47-68.

From Wylie's investigations, presented in the last chapter and in this chapter, it appears that there are two things that must be combated in order to make inter-community dialog a possibility. One is to cultivate communities with open borders. The other is the issue of trust. In what follows I will focus my investigation on trust, since, as will be demonstrated, the ability to trust contributes to creating open borders. In addition, the obligation of this new THICK conception of objectivity itself, an obligation to engage in critical dialog not only with those within one's own community, but also with other communities, will contribute to an opening of community borders. If communities of historians and archaeologists were to accept THICK objectivity and fall under obligation to engage in dialog with each other, then their borders would not necessarily disappear, but they might be able to recognize areas of mutual interest, and reflect on their own values and beliefs through engaging in dialog with each other. Thus, I think the issue of drawing borders to exclude other communities can be and will likely be addressed by examining the issue of trust and trust-building, and the requirements of a new conception of objectivity built on inter-community dialog and trust. However, I will have one suggestion to make in section four regarding a possible way to open borders and build trust in scenarios like that faced by history, archaeology and historical archaeology.

5.2.2. Objectivity and Trust-building

Whereas past accounts of objectivity required certain things of the epistemic subject, such as that they aim to occupy the perspectiveless perspective, there was no overt requirement that the subject aim to be trustworthy. Occupying the perspectiveless perspective would signal that one's statements were not clouded with

personal perspectival concerns, and hence would automatically bring with it the quality of trustworthiness. This is no longer the case, with the most recent account of objectivity. The most recent account does not demand that individuals strive to be value free or perspectiveless, and so the problem of trust has re-emerged. The new problem of the epistemic subject, and the new ideal of THICK objectivity, must prescribe that one strive to be trustworthy. But how is this done if not through value-freedom or perspectivelessness?

Naomi Scheman, in her article "Epistemology Resuscitated," argues that trust is an essential part of objectivity. Her claim does not seem to be that it is an essential part of one conception of objectivity but rather of the concept of objectivity. Scheman claims that she will not give a detailed account of how objectivity is best understood, but will instead look at how the term is used. Heidi Grasswick notes that Scheman examines objectivity with reference to its function. When we claim that something is objective, we recommend it to others and give it a degree of authority. This authority is gained by *"rationally grounding trust."*[10] Grasswick adds emphasis on this point. For Scheman, the concept of objectivity and trust are linked. The function of objectivity, in its various conceptions, is to ground trust rationally. It is to gain someone's trust, but not through trickery or manipulation. Just as with the previous accounts of objectivity given by Daston and Galison, Scheman's analysis has an ethical dimension. Objectivity functions as an ethically acceptable way of grounding trust.

This does seem to be the case in past conceptions of objectivity. One reason Max Weber called for value-freedom was because scientists might have controversial

10 Heidi Grasswick, "Scientific and Lay Communities: Earning Epistemic Trust Through Knowledge-Sharing" *Synthese* 177, no. 1 (November 2010): 387.

findings, or say things that contrasted with popular belief. In order to ensure that scientists could be trusted while making these knowledge-claims, they had to speak from a value-free position. It does seem plausible that one reason the concept of objectivity is understood in terms of what is problematic about subjectivity is because these problematic aspects of subjectivity lead us to distrust knowledge-claims. Thus, while I spoke of objectivity as a concept, as best understood in terms of subjectivity, trust seems to be one of the functions of objectivity as a concept. The epistemic subject, by overcoming whatever is conceived to be problematic about subjectivity, strives for objectivity and thus is perceived as more trustworthy than an individual whose perspective is merely subjective. Thus, any new conception of objectivity will be aiming for, among other things, the creation of trustworthy epistemic subjects. This point has become salient with Longino's and Wylie's suggestions in regards to a new conception of objectivity. While trust seems to have been always in the background in the concept of objectivity, in its current conception of THICK objectivity, trust is explicitly foregrounded.

This does not mean that a key part of the concept of objectivity is *blind* trust. Objective claims are not the same as claims from the tyrant. Being a trusted expert does not give one absolute authority. Scheman notes that objective claims can be disputed by those to whom they are recommended.

> Central to what we do when we call an argument, conclusion or decision 'objective' is to recommend it to others, and, importantly, to suggest that they *ought* to accept it, that they would be doxastically irresponsible to reject it without giving reasons that made similar claims to universal acceptability. Objective claims, that is, are always disputable, but they are not, without

> dispute, rejectable. . .[11]

Scheman's claims fit well with the analysis I have given of the suffrage movement. One reason why objectivity was useful for the suffrage movement was not because it gave suffragists tyrannical power, but because it placed those opposed to women's suffrage under obligation to respond to the suffragists. Of course, those opposed could respond by challenging the suffragists' claims to be objective, or could argue that certain suffrage arguments were flawed. They were not required to accept the claims made by suffragists, but they were under obligation to respond.

I have argued that objectivity need not be seen as an exclusionary, Western European Male term, and Scheman's account concurs. Scheman claims that the subordinated and marginalized have good reason to believe in and support the kind of ideal neutral science that was characterized by value-free or value-neutral conception of objectivity.

> For one, being less powerful, we have a need for the sort of neutral referee science promises to be, and, for another, we are (presumably) confident that the objective truth will, if it has political implications at all, support our judgements (that, for example, those who are White men are not intrinsically superior to those who are not.)[12]

As pointed out in the last chapter, objectivity can be a liberating and helpful concept for marginalized views, at the same time as it demands an ethical obligation from all those who ascribe to it. Scheman notes that objectivity has a history which is bound with the “wresting of epistemic authority away from those with entrenched

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11 Naomi Scheman, “Epistemology Resuscitated: Objectivity as Trustworthiness” *Engendering Rationalities*, ed. Nancy Tuana and Sandra Morgan (New York: SUNY Press. 2001), 24.
12 Scheman, “Epistemology Resuscitated: Objectivity as Trustworthiness,” 29.

religious, political, or economic power."[13] But it requires that science, or any institution claiming to be objective, actually live up to those claims. This is where the issue of trust comes in for Scheman. She claims that modern science, complete with modern accounts of personhood and a modern sense of rationality guaranteed that one could trust scientists.[14] In modern science, unlike science in the seventeenth century, scientific practice is so complicated and so varied—not to mention that any such practice is so reliant upon technical expertise—that the vast majority of people are not experts in any given scientific field, but rely on, and trust, others.

> We are all downwind of the activities of the sciences and other culturally authoritative sites of knowledge production, dependent on them both for much that we need and desire and for much that we cannot avoid.[15]

We are all dependent on scientific expertise, and scientific practice. Even scientists do not possess enough knowledge to be experts in all scientific fields. Much of what we know, or claim as knowledge in our wider social community, is gained through trust. And trust is gained through claims to objectivity and a responsibility to be objective in order to gain trust in a rational rather than manipulative or forceful way. Part of the goals and commitments an epistemic subject takes on on Scheman's account are commitments to responsibly and rationally gain trust when needed. Scheman even alludes to personhood. She claims that:

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13 Scheman, "Epistemology Resuscitated: Objectivity as Trustworthiness," 27.

14 Scheman,"Epistemology Resuscitated: Objectivity as Trustworthiness," 31. At times Scheman suggests that her own view is that objectivity never functioned as a way of rationally grounding trust, even though it was intended to do so. She suggests that it gave the illusion of rationally grounding trust, but never actually did so, as many members of marginalized groups were still distrusting of those who claimed to be objective. For the purposes of this paper, what is important is the recognition that objectivity, understood as aperspectival or value-free, is not rationally grounding trust (regardless of whether or not it once did so). Thus, it is not serving the function we wish the concept of objectivity to serve.

15 Scheman, "Epistemology Resuscitated: Objectivity as Trustworthiness," 25-26.

> The crises of trust out of which modern science arose—the need to find firm foundations for knowledge that would survive challenges to authority—were resolved by finding firm ground in which such individual generic knowers could stand and by articulating a notion of rational *personhood* that guaranteed that each such knower would come up with the same answers as any other, if only each followed a proper method.[16]

Here again Scheman's theory seems to concur with my own. She stresses that even in cases of trust, the matter is still about personhood. One must be able to trust not merely what another individual says, or does in a given context, but must be able to trust that *person* themselves. Actions and knowledge claims are *not* trustworthy or untrustworthy. People and institutions issuing these claims and directing these actions *are*.[17]

I argue that Scheman's account, in conjunction with Longino's, and Wylie's, begins the task of creating a new possibility of personhood, by re-conceptualizing what we mean when we claim someone is objective. From this starting point, Scheman asks whether it is rational for those outside of scientific and academic institutions (traditionally seen as disseminators of knowledge) to trust the knowledge claims made by these institutions and individuals.

> If objectivity is an instrumental good, then, it has actually to function so as to produce the good it promises; what we label 'objective' has actually to be

16 Scheman, “Epistemology Resuscitated: Objectivity as Trustworthiness,” 31. *Emphasis added.*

17 This analysis of how to build trust goes against nineteenth and twentieth-century wisdom in which trust depended not on the individual but on the process used and the data collected. The knowledge-claims could be trusted because they did not depend on any specific individual carrying out the experiments or research. For a discussion of this previous account of trust-building, see Theodore M. Porter, *Trust in Numbers; The Pursuit of Objectivity in Science and Public Life* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995.)

> worthy of our trust and the trust of a diverse range of others.[18]

Scheman acknowledges that objectivity has been a good in the past. She highlights the benefits it has provided with its history of moving away from entrenched authority and towards neutral mediators that allow minorities to speak and be heard. However, she denies that all that is labeled as objective is worthy of our trust anymore. That is, she asks whether lay people have any sufficient reason to trust the scientific and academic institutions, any reason to believe that these institutions are genuinely objective in the sense of being worthy of trust, and she answers in the negative. So, Scheman senses that the previous conception of objectivity (in terms of value-freedom and aperspectivalism, though this may also be a problem with Longino's account, since she does not focus on a need for inter-community dialog) is not fulfilling one of the key features of the concept of objectivity. It is not creating categories of trustworthy people.

> The credibility of science suffers, and, importantly, *ought* to suffer. . . when its claims to trustworthiness are grounded in the workings of institutions that are demonstrably unjust—even when those injustices cannot be shown to be responsible for particular lapses in evidence gathering or reasoning.[19]

Scheman claims, then, that even in cases where scientific credibility is damaged in a way that does not obviously impact the claims to objectivity being made, trust is lost and should be lost. As Heidi Grasswick points out, this allows Scheman to affirm that science is producing truths, while simultaneously denying that science, or by extension these scientific truths, has any credibility for lay people.[20]

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18 Scheman, “Epistemology Resuscitated: Objectivity as Trustworthiness,” 26.
19 Scheman,“Epistemology Resuscitated: Objectivity as Trustworthiness,” 36.
20 Grasswick, “Scientific and Lay Communities: Earning Epistemic Trust Through Knowledge-Sharing,”

Grasswick points out that this distrust lay people have of scientists is not merely a distrust of the scientists' intentions, but an epistemic distrust of the knowledge-claims themselves.[21] Someone who loses his claim to be objective loses his ability to disseminate information to the groups that no longer trust him (or his objectivity).

> So, for example, the long history of racism and sexism that has played out in scientific institutions, both with respect to the underrepresentation and in many cases abuses of people of color and women, give such particular groups good reason to be suspicious of the results of science.[22]

Grasswick claims that it isn't just that women and other minorities might distrust the uses that scientific knowledge will be put to in the hands of individuals or communities that have had a hand in the abuse and exploitation of their own communities; they will actually doubt the knowledge-claims themselves. Whether or not the inherent racism or sexism has had an epistemically damaging influence on the scientific practices, women and minorities have a good reason to be uncertain and therefore to mistrust.

Certainly one might object that there are some cases where scientists and other disseminators of knowledge cannot worry over whether or not every lay community trusts them. Communities should trust them, and those that don't are irrational and can be safely ignored. This seems to have been the attitude in the past. But Scheman's point is that this mistrust is entirely rational. I cashed her argument out in terms of personhood. Scientists claimed to be one type of person, the category of

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21 Grasswick, “Scientific and Lay Communities: Earning Epistemic Trust Through Knowledge-Sharing,” 391.

22 Grasswick, “Scientific and Lay Communities: Earning Epistemic Trust Through Knowledge-Sharing,” 390.

subject that subscribes to objectivity as an ideal. A key factor of the concept of objectivity, and the way it functions as an ideal, is to rationally ground trust. Lay communities observed that many in scientific communities did not adhere to the epistemic and ethical commitments demanded by a person who subscribes to the concept of objectivity, perhaps because there is a flaw in the conception. Longino's conception, for example, does not prescribe value-freedom or aperspectivalism from individuals, and yet has not dealt with inter-community dialog. Thus, trust broke down. Grasswick expands upon this as follows:

> What I think Scheman has accomplished here is a sufficient shift in the burden of proof such that, if we want scientific practices to be epistemically praiseworthy, scientific communities will need the rationally grounded trust of lay communities, unless it can be shown that such rationally grounded trust of a particular community is unnecessary.[23]

Grasswick notes that Scheman has suggested that it is up to the scientific community to earn back this lost trust. The burden of proof is not on the lay community to explain why they distrust. Scheman has illustrated that this distrust, in cases where scientific communities in one respect or another have not lived up to their own claims to be objective, is fully rational. I think that what is needed is an argument from scientific communities that explains one of two things; 1) why they are now trustworthy, 2) why they do not need to concern themselves with earning a specific community's trust.

In her article “Epistemology Resuscitated,” Scheman alternates between talking about individuals and talking about institutions. While Scheman does make

23 Grasswick, “Scientific and Lay Communities: Earning Epistemic Trust Through Knowledge-Sharing,” 392.

many of her claims in terms of institutions she often gives examples that focus on individuals. (She argues that a friend may be trusted to divide up the candy among the children fairly, for example.[24]) Both individuals and institutions can gain or fail to gain trust, and often the methods for this gain or failure are the same. However, there is an important relationship between individuals and institutions that I want to point out.

The relationship between individuals and institutions, like the one between individuals and communities, is not a transparent one. But there is one salient thing to note. Institutions can damage and bolster the individual's claims to trustworthiness without the individual having done anything.[25] That is, an institution can make it such that no matter how trustworthy an individual is, he or she cannot occupy the category of a trustworthy person and still be affiliated with the institution. Simply being affiliated with the institution damages the individual's claim to trust. Thus, institutions, like communities, restrict and determine the possibilities of personhood open to persons affiliated with them. In order to be a trustworthy person, one must ensure that the institution one is affiliated with is also trustworthy. One must monitor one's own community. This lays an obligation directly on an individual who wishes to be part of a community holding an ideal of objectivity. In this fashion, Scheman helps to answer one of the questions we were left with after discussing Longino, specifically what the obligations for individuals are under Longino's new community-directed account of

24 Scheman, “Epistemology Resuscitated: Objectivity as Trustworthiness,” 31.

25 This is one of Scheman's main points in her work on trust and trust-building. She suggests that institutions need to be trustworthy. One way of building epistemic trustworthiness is to engage in ethical practices, such as treating one's employees fairly. Since I wish to defend objectivity on ethical *and* epistemic grounds, I will focus on Grasswick's suggestion for trust-building here. But Scheman's works serves to illustrate that the ethical benefits of objectivity likely do not end at merely encouraging marginalized voices to speak and be heard.

objectivity. The individuals must monitor the community in order to strive to be trustworthy persons.[26] Thus, individuals must be able to critically reflect on community values, norms and methods. Since dissent seems one of the most effective ways of triggering reflection, and since Wylie worries that background beliefs might go unnoticed if held by an entire community, it seems that this individual obligation to reflect on community-wide values, norms and methods can most effectively be fulfilled by inter-community dialog.

This work by Scheman and Grasswick goes a long way towards fleshing objectivity out in terms of trust. An objective community is a trust-worthy one, one that will strive to hear the voices of minority opinion, and reflect on its own beliefs. But Grasswick and Scheman point out that in many parts of the world, between scientific expert communities and many other communities, this need for trust has already broken down. So, it isn't just that objectivity incorporates trust; given the epistemic environment we find ourselves in presently, a commitment to THICK objectivity on the part of a community requires earning trust. In many cases, as in the case discussed by Alison Wylie in the last chapter (archaeologists and Aboriginal groups) trust has already broken down. I hypothesize that this is a more difficult situation to be in than merely earning trust in the first place. Trust, like testimony, is in many cases easily given initially. Indeed we seem to trust each other ubiquitously, from trusting the bus driver to take me to the destination prescribed on the route to trusting the chef not to

26 A central issue arises when an individual held responsible for the trustworthiness of the institution to which she belongs: how much power does she have to effect change in the institution. If the institution is unjust but the individual has little influence over the institution, it seems that she may be less responsible for the lack of trust the public places in the institution than an individual who holds more power. This is an area of research I am interested in pursuing in the future. For examples of this discussion see Scheman, “Epistemology Resuscitated,” and Scheman's work in progress entitled “If You Believe in Truth, Fight for Justice” http://www.tc.umn.edu/~nschema/index.html.

poison me at the restaurant, to trusting the person on the street to give me the correct time, we seem to trust each other easily and largely without thought or question. But when trust has been lost, it may not be gained so easily a second time. This is the problem of personhood created by accounts of objectivity that do not require inter-community dialog. Inter-community trust is lost. Grasswick notes that theories like Longino's which do not maintain that scientific communities be accountable to those outside will not only lose trust, but "lose one of the main reasons for claiming the objectivity of their results and practices—that their claims will carry (or should carry) legitimacy with others who are uninvolved in the process."[27] According to Scheman's theory, it is not only the community that loses this claim to trust, but individuals associated with the community lose it as well. So, in an environment where trust has broken down, what categories of personhood are necessary for objectivity?

5.2.3. Trust-building Through Knowledge-Sharing

Heidi Grasswick looks at the interaction between scientific communities of experts and non-scientific communities. Specifically, she examines the "challenges that stem from the need for trust across the scientific/lay divide. . . "[28] Using work by Robert Crease, Grasswick analyses what it means to trust. She notes that Robert Crease claims that we, as actors and epistemic agents, only pay attention to issues of trust where trust has been lost.[29] I think we can extrapolate from Crease's statement, and the recent academic activity examining issues of trust and trustworthiness

27 Grasswick, "Scientific and Lay Communities: Earning Epistemic Trust Through Knowledge-Sharing," 391.

28 Grasswick, "Scientific and Lay Communities: Earning Epistemic Trust Through Knowledge-Sharing," 389. See also Brian Wynne, "May the Sheep Safely Graze? A Reflexive View of the Expert-Lay Knowledge Divide." *Risk, Environment and Modernity: Towards a New Ecology* eds. Scott Lash, Bronislaw Szerszynski and Brian Wynne, (London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 1996).

29 Grasswick, "Scientific and Lay Communities: Earning Epistemic Trust Through Knowledge-Sharing," 396.

between knowledge experts and lay communities that trust has indeed broken down between at least some scientific and lay communities. This seems to me to be an epistemic loss, since it decreases the access people have to knowledge. Even in the case of expert communities, there will be knowledge gaps in the areas in which they are not experts. They may not be able to trust other experts to fill in these gaps.

While agreeing with Scheman that trust is a major part of the role of the scientific community, Grasswick asks how this trust is to be earned. She claims that there are likely many different expectations a lay community can have of a scientific community it trusts. She only takes up one of these expectations in her paper.

> I take up in detail one subset of those expectations: expectations to communicate or share significant knowledge. If scientific communities are to earn and maintain their status as being engaged in a privileged way of knowing, a sound communication of significant knowledge to those outside the scientific community is necessary.[30]

In short, Grasswick claims that one way to maintain and/or earn trust is to share significant knowledge with the community one needs the trust from.

Grasswick does not stop her analysis of earning and maintaining trust through knowledge-sharing there. She unpacks a little more of what she means by 'salient' knowledge and what some of the challenges to knowledge-sharing might be. She claims that making knowledge 'sharable in principle' is not enough. It is not a sufficient practice of knowledge-sharing if expert communities simply make their knowledge available to the public at large. Instead “knowledge must be shared with those at risk

30 Grasswick, “Scientific and Lay Communities: Earning Epistemic Trust Through Knowledge-Sharing,” 394.

of significant harm."[31] Knowledge must not just be sharable but must actually be shared with the individuals and communities at most risk, or I would add, whom the knowledge affects most greatly. Grasswick notes that this is a more stringent claim than that the public must have access to knowledge. This claim requires that scientists, or other expert communities, actually determine who most needs to know, and seek them out to ensure that they do know. Grasswick also notes that trust is not merely trust in the knowledge being disseminated. "Yet because trust in a person or an institution expresses an attitude towards *their character*, trust is rarely limited to just a single action."[32] I think Grasswick is exactly right to claim that trust is not trust in the knowledge claims only, but trust in those people or institutions making those knowledge claims. This means that trust is focused on the people, not only the content of their message. This also is in accord with what Scheman noted regarding personhood as discussed in the last section.

To trust someone, or a community, the trusters must believe, and have good reason to believe, that the those trusted are trustworthy. In many cases it seems that the absence of a reason to disbelieve counts as a good reason to believe, trust being so ubiquitous. However, once trust has broken down, this 'good reason to believe' becomes more difficult. Distrusting individuals are likely to pay careful attention to those they are being asked to trust. There must be good reason to think that those asking for trust occupy a category of person worthy of trust, which in knowledge-based relations, is a category of person who adheres to the emerging conception of

31 Grasswick, "Scientific and Lay Communities: Earning Epistemic Trust Through Knowledge-Sharing," 399

32 Grasswick, "Scientific and Lay Communities: Earning Epistemic Trust Through Knowledge-Sharing," 400. *Emphasis added.*

objectivity.

There is one more layer to the ethical and epistemic obligations Grasswick expects trust-worthy individuals to have. They must be able to determine both who needs to know, and also *what* they need to know.

> But additionally, being given 'all' the knowledge would be overwhelming for lay persons, and not at all helpful. The point of epistemically trusting someone else. . . is precisely so that each of us won't have to be always sorting though masses of knowledge for detailed results to details that allow one to properly interpret those results . . there is clearly some knowledge we do not want scientific communities to share, since that would make our job as lay knowers impossible. . . It is not just any and all knowledge we expect scientific communities to share with us as lay persons then, but rather significant knowledge.[33]

Grasswick argues that scientists are to act as filters, determining which knowledge is salient, and to whom, and sharing that knowledge accordingly. The answers to these questions of who needs to know and what they need to know will vary by scientific investigation and community.

Grasswick notes one final challenge when it comes to these epistemic obligations scientific communities have with regards to lay communities. She claims that if the scientific communities are to judge what is salient knowledge, and who needs to know, this may be increasingly difficult the more marginalized the communities in question are:

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33 Grasswick, “Scientific and Lay Communities: Earning Epistemic Trust Through Knowledge-Sharing,” 401.

> [T]here is a reason to think that a scientific community will be less capable of performing these functions well for marginalized communities, particularly once we understand that judgments of significance might differ according to social location.[34]

Grasswick claims that scientists will have difficulty in assessing what is salient for marginalized communities specifically because these communities are marginalized. Scientists "need to have an understanding of what those lives are like, and what their interests and needs are."[35] Grasswick suggests that having an increased representation of marginalized groups in the scientific communities might help foster greater trust, and greater trustworthiness, since it might aid with the attempt to filter and disseminate knowledge to those who most need to know. If the scientific community has greater representation, there is a greater likelihood that members of communities who need to know are also members of the scientific community and can, thus, aid in the dissemination of knowledge. She also suggests that scientists engage with questions that are already known to be of direct concern to members of marginalized communities. Finally, she advocates that scientific communities increase their efforts to explain how science works, making the process more transparent and aiding in understanding.[36]

So, Grasswick claims that there may be many ways of rebuilding this trust. She looks at one in detail: knowledge-sharing. So, the conception of objectivity being conceived of right now (THICK objectivity, as I have provisionally called it) is one that

34 Grasswick, "Scientific and Lay Communities: Earning Epistemic Trust Through Knowledge-Sharing," 402.
35 Grasswick, "Scientific and Lay Communities: Earning Epistemic Trust Through Knowledge-Sharing," 402.
36 Grasswick, "Scientific and Lay Communities: Earning Epistemic Trust Through Knowledge-Sharing," 407.

admits values, beliefs and unique perspectives into the debate and maintains that individuals and communities need to be self-reflective and critically examine their own background beliefs, values and perspectives. Longino's suggested way of allowing for this self-reflection and value-awareness at the level of the individual was to encourage critical dialog. Wylie, Scheman and Grasswick are calling for the same thing at the level of the community. This conception of objectivity, then, will be one that obligates epistemic subjects to engage in dialog not only within their own community, but across communities. Because of this obligation, the issue of trust becomes salient. With the loss of a commitment to value-freedom (a commitment that was becoming suspect anyway) it is no longer clear how objectivity secures trust. Grasswick's suggestion is that trust can be secured through inter-community dialog and knowledge-sharing.

This is not just a conception of objectivity being discussed by epistemologists and philosophers of science. Though Daston's claim that aperspectival objectivity is still the dominant form of objectivity found still seems to be correct, this new conceptualization of THICK objectivity is being adopted in some areas. With reference to Marine-Protected Areas I will establish that the emerging conception of objectivity discussed in this section is being applied in at least one field of scientific research.

5.3. The Appearance of Trust-building in MPA's

Marine-protected areas (MPA's) are areas of the ocean set aside as protected. Fishing and harvesting is either restricted or eliminated in these MPA's, known as low-take or no-take (typically no take) respectively. Scientists conduct research to see whether or not MPA's are an effective way of preserving marine species diversity.

What is interesting about these conservation areas for my purpose is the increased realization by scientists who study and set up these areas of the need to communicate and collaborate with local communities when creating and maintaining MPA's.

MPA's began as a fisheries management tool, used strictly to protect endangered areas and species in the oceans. Establishing such areas was originally seen as a scientific environmental conservation project, with little or no social consideration given with regards to the locations and management of these areas.[37] The aim was to set up areas, and test whether and where MPA's can be successful conservation tools.

There were many factors to consider in setting up a marine-protected area even without considering socioeconomic factors. For example, Game, *et al* consider the question of likelihood of cyclones affecting the area. Cyclone and hurricane tendencies have to be considered, since one of these storms could effectively destroy all the conservation work achieved by an MPA. Game, *et al* suggest a way to incorporate the risk of cyclones into the equation of determining where to set up an MPA. Areas at high risk of cyclones may be otherwise healthy and vibrant areas, and may be worth protecting over areas at low risk to cyclones which are otherwise less viable.[38] Cyclones, their findings suggest, are just one factor when determining where to place an MPA, and may not be, indeed should not be, the deciding factor. A high-cyclone-risk area that is otherwise a good candidate may well be worth protecting.

MPA's, even more than other conservation areas, are difficult to assess for

37 Carolyn J. Lundquist and Elise F. Granek, “Strategies for Successful Marine Conservation: Integrating Socioeconomic, Political and Scientific Factors” *Conservation Biology* 19, no. 6 (2005):1772.

38 Edward T. Game, *et al* “Should We Protect the Strong or the Weak? Risk, Resilience, and the Selection of Marine Protected Areas.” *Conservation Biology* 22, no. 6 (2008):1620-1621.

likelihood of success, and difficult to manage. Jameson, Tupper and Ridley outline the problem of managing and studying an MPA as being one of lack of control over the environmental stressors entering the area from three sources: atmospheric, terrestrial, and oceanic. Without having control over these three areas, managing an MPA is like managing “the proverbial 'submarine with three screen doors.'”[39] In addition to the three stressors, the size of an MPA also affects its effectiveness. Small MPA's are usually less effective, since animals spend less time in the area.[40] The bigger the MPA is, all other things being equal, the more effective it is. But measuring this effectiveness, and determining to what degree MPA's are effective is still a continuing process. Because of the many different factors involved in MPA implementation and management, as well as the number of uncontrolled variables, scientists are still studying what makes an effective MPA.

MPA's therefore have both an epistemic and an ethical goal. Their ethical goal is the conservation of marine biodiversity. MPA's have been set up as a system of conservation. However, the epistemic goal at the root of MPA's is to determine how to best design an MPA in order to encourage biodiversity. MPA's are created in order to study the success rate of MPA's.

5.3.1. MPA's and the Stakeholder

One of the biggest factors in setting up an MPA was one that was not discovered until recently. Carolyn Lundquist (President of the Marine section of the Society for the Conservation of Biology) and Elise Granek (a zoologist at Oregon

39 S.C. Jameson, M.H. Tupper and J.M. Ridley “The Three Screen Doors: *Can* Marine 'Protected” Areas be Effective?” *Marine Pollution Bulletin* 44, no. 11 (2002): 1177.
40 Jameson, Tupper and Ridley.“The Three Screen Doors,” 1180.

State University) in their 2005 article call this factor the 'stakeholder'. Essentially, the stakeholder refers to those individuals and communities that have a stake in the MPA's success and welfare. They may be the country on whose oceanic borders (or within the borders) the MPA is located, or the village on the coast residing close to the MPA. Lundquist and Granek report that

> [a]s the process for developing marine protected areas has evolved, scientists and managers have become more aware of the socioeconomic considerations relevant to marine conservation planning. . . and, particularly, the need to include stakeholders at an early stage.[41]

Lundquist and Granek claim that stakeholders need to not only be included, but be included in such a way that they are able to understand the scientific data as much as possible, and help in the implementation and management of the MPA. This is especially true in areas where the communities in question are being asked to assist with the management and overseeing of MPA's. I have some concerns with Lundquist and Granek's discussion of stakeholder inclusion, but I will report their case first, and then raise some questions and issues with their policy.

They note:

> Stakeholder involvement from the initial planning stages helps instill a sense of ownership and commitment in the parties involved. . . [t]his involvement can foster longer-term interest in protected areas, and local support expands the pool of individuals formally and informally overseeing activities in the conservation areas.[42]

41 Lundquist and Granek, “Strategies for Successful Marine Conservation,” 1772.
42 Lundquist and Granek, “Strategies for Successful Marine Conservation,” 1772.

Lundquist and Granek make the case that the earlier and more effectively stakeholder communities are involved in the planning of MPA's the more these communities will view MPA's as a project that they are a part of, that belongs to them, rather than something that scientific experts are imposing on them. Thus, these communities will be more interested in helping to protect, oversee and police these areas over the long term. They will feel a sense of both ownership and pride in these areas. This is an example of communities collaborating with each other, the community of scientists and the community of stakeholders.

However, so far the dialog seems to only go one way, the scientists analyzing the risk of cyclones, and other threats, the optimal size and location of the area, and telling communities where the area should be, and then asking them to police and monitor these areas. Lundquist and Granek insist that this model of scientific expertise is not the correct way to achieve stakeholder involvement. They claim that stakeholders must be involved in the decisions of where and how to implement the MPA from the very start. Thus, stakeholders must be knowledgeable about MPA planning and design, as well as salient scientific factors when considering where to place an MPA: “Stakeholder education is a prerequisite to their involvement in marine planning processes, but it is often overlooked.”[43] Stakeholders need to understand how these decisions are made in order to become involved in making them. Thus, rather than dictating to the stakeholders, scientific experts must teach the stakeholders how ecological study with regards to potential MPA's is conducted. In particular, the time-frame of the MPA's recovery, and the kind of results that are expected during the recovery need to be carefully explained to stakeholders. This will

43 Lundquist and Granek, “Strategies for Successful Marine Conservation,” 1773.

avoid unrealistic expectation on the part of stakeholders which could lead to a dissatisfaction with the MPA. These results need to be explained and “explicitly agreed upon” according to Lundquist and Granek.[44] These are not results that scientists simply give stakeholders; stakeholders must understand and agree in order for the MPA to be successful. This requires scientists to work with stakeholders, not simply dictate the stakeholders' actions and expectations.

This may, in some areas, prove to be quite a challenge. Some lay communities may have a lack of current scientific knowledge, and it may be challenging to explain and educate the communities as Lundquist and Granek note:

> Transferring knowledge to local community members has also presented challenges in areas where in situ training, local capacity, and existing infrastructure are sparse. Lack of available current science often limits conservation projects, in both developed and developing regions.[45]

Knowledge-sharing between some communities of scientists and stakeholders will be difficult. In some cases, all that will be held in common will be the interest in the area proposed for an MPA itself. Sharing knowledge may require finding or creating more common ground by improving the level of current science in the local areas. But this is not the end of the requirements of education. Lundquist and Granek urge that there is another kind of education that needs to be taken into account in dialog between scientists and stakeholders.

> Education should not be limited to stakeholders, however, because scientists and managers can also be educated on issues that will increase their

44 Lundquist and Granek, “Strategies for Successful Marine Conservation,” 1773.
45 Lundquist and Granek, “Strategies for Successful Marine Conservation,” 1775.

> understanding of socioeconomic processes that will invariably affect implementation.[46]

Lundquist and Granek argue that education in these dialogs is a two-way street. Scientists can learn things from the stakeholders who live near the MPA's. There may be practices or customs that affect the success rates of the MPA's that need to be taken into consideration. Stakeholders may also have valuable information to contribute to the scientific study of where best to place MPA's.

> Anecdotal information provided by local stakeholders can be valuable in many cases where scientifically designed surveys are lacking and may help overcome potential uncertainties in locating marine protected areas. [47]

Locals, who have lived near these proposed MPA's may be able to fill in gaps in scientific data at much less expense, and in a more timely manner, than would be the case if scientists conducted studies and surveys. In order for this dialog to be successful, scientists must realize that they do not have a monopoly on knowledge. They must be open to sharing information across communities, and accepting knowledge claims from the stakeholders. Expertise goes both ways. The stakeholders must accept the scientists' expertise in certain matters, and the scientists must accept the stakeholders' expertise in others.[48] This will require trust on the part of both the scientists and the stakeholders.

When one examines Lundquist and Granek's claims, one can see that the matter of trust is not simply on the part of the stakeholders. The scientists must trust

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46 Lundquist and Granek, “Strategies for Successful Marine Conservation,” 1773.
47 Lundquist and Granek, “Strategies for Successful Marine Conservation,” 1775.
48 The terminology used above, particularly the use of the word 'anecdotal' when referring to knowledge may be troubling and will be addressed in the next section.

the stakeholders to oversee the areas and must trust the stakeholders' anecdotal information. The stakeholders must trust the scientists' claims with regards to the expected outcomes of these areas, and the time-frame this result can be expected to be seen in. They must also trust that the scientists have chosen the best areas possible to set up the MPA. Because both communities become involved in the set-up of the MPA, each community brings its own background beliefs and values to bear on a shared area of commitment and concern, namely the designation of the MPA itself. Each community then acts as a challenge to the other, questioning and relying on the other to expose weaknesses and fill in the gaps in knowledge. Thus, inter-community dialog is epistemologically valuable, as Wylie suggested, since it tends to increase the knowledge both communities have in the case of MPA's, and strengthens the knowledge claims both make, since both have been challenged. Locals learn valuable information on how to study and monitor an MPA, on what kind of expectations to have, and the community may even become more scientifically advanced as a result of collaboration with the scientists. Scientists gain valuable anecdotal knowledge, according to Lundquist and Granek, that they would not have had access to otherwise.

In addition to trust, inter-community dialog of the type Lundquist and Granek are urging also seems to require a level of humility. Scientists must admit that they are not the most knowledgeable about the socioeconomic situation of the stakeholders, and must accept anecdotal knowledge where there isn't time or resources to conduct surveys. Stakeholders must admit that they are not the most knowledgeable about all the environmental considerations that must go into creating

a viable MPA. Each must acknowledge where they lack knowledge and expertise and each must rely on the other. This is a humbling position to be in, particularly for the scientists who were previously accustomed to not working with the locals and not accepting knowledge or help from other, non-scientific, communities.[49]

5.3.2. Lessons From Knowledge-Sharing in MPA's

The example of Marine-Protected Areas largely supports the theoretical moves being observed by Alison Wylie in her study of archaeology and Aboriginal groups, conforms to Naomi Scheman's call for a focus on trust-building in scientific institutions concerned with objectivity, and adopts something very like Heidi Grasswick's suggestion of knowledge-sharing as a method for building trust. Scientists involved in MPA's are being asked to target who needs to know, and to determine what these stakeholders need to know, exactly what Grasswick called upon scientists to do. In the case of MPA's the communities that need to know are the stakeholders, those who have an interest in the MPA, or proposed MPA, or area where the MPA has been proposed to be placed. What they most need to know is what the outcome is projected to be and how long it is projected to take. Without this knowledge, there is a risk of the development of unrealistic expectations and the breakdown of trust if these expectations are not met.

However, Lundquist and Granek go about calling for knowledge-sharing in a slightly different way from Grasswick's proposition. They insist that knowledge-sharing must go both ways, from scientists to lay communities, and from lay communities to

49 For a discussion of the role of humility in policy-making and in the relationship between science and society, see Sheila Jasanoff, “Technologies of Humility: Citizen Participation in Governing Science,” *Minerva* 41, no. 3 (2003): 223-244.

scientists. I think Grasswick's analysis and suggestions are all correct, but I find that when it comes to knowledge-sharing practices she has missed something important in the work of trust-building that I see evident in my example of MPA's. While Grasswick seems correct to claim that knowledge-sharing is necessary in order to gain trust of lay communities, she has neglected to recognize that knowledge-sharing practices often need to go both ways. In the case of MPA's, scientists needed to accept the knowledge from lay communities. This still results in lay communities being more at risk, and requires more trust from the lay communities, but scientists themselves are brought into a trusting relationship with lay communities by needing to trust lay experts as well.

This highlights another manner in which trust might be earned. A community of scientists may become more trustworthy by being willing to listen and to trust the lay community. Extending trust and consideration may be a way of fostering trust of oneself. In any case, if one expects a lay community to listen to and trust one's claims as an expert, one must be willing to listen to the lay community in cases where that community has a claim to expertise. This requires scientists to know themselves well enough to know where their claims to expertise fail and they need to appreciate where locals' or 'stakeholders' claims might succeed. They need to self-examine to determine what field(s) they are experts in and where they are not. Again, the obligations placed on the epistemic subject through this current conception of objectivity are obligations to self-reflect and self-police.

Of course, there may be cases, as with the suffrage case from the last chapter, where a community claims expertise in exactly the area that another community is

challenging. Some anti-suffrage men claimed to be experts on women. Alice Duer Miller, among others, challenged these claims. This could happen between a scientific and local community, for example. In these cases, the claims to expertise would have to be initially considered. This is part of what it means to belong to a community that adheres to an ideal of objectivity that requires questioning community-wide values. However, should these claims to expertise fail somehow, should the knowledge claims prove to be unreliable, unrealistic or otherwise flawed, and should the community in question be unable to respond as to why this is so, trust will break down, and rightly so. In the case of the suffrage movement, suffragists did not trust anti-suffragists' claim to know what was the correct role for women to occupy.

As with other accounts of objectivity that Daston and Galison report, the claim to be objective in terms of THICK objectivity that scientists make requires them to also be knowledgeable about themselves and about their limitations—where they should legitimately be trusted and listened to, and where their claims to trust fail due to a lack of knowledge and expertise. Are they willing to defer to others in these cases where their claims to trust fail? If not, then lay communities have every reason to suspect that scientists do not know the boundaries of their own expertise. This, also, damages trust relations.

Of course this also raises the question over what it means to fail. Who judges when a claim to trust has failed? This is going to be, likely, an ad hoc decision based on whose trust is needed, and why. In cases of MPA's, where locals are working with ecologists to set up, maintain, and monitor an MPA, both those communities need to be able to trust each other. Depending on the country, the municipal, or federal

government may also be actively involved in the MPA, and may also need to be trusted. In current cases of climate science, scientists need the trust and support of the majority of voters, and the government in order to enact change. These are the people the scientists must listen to.

In terms of knowledge-sharing, since both Grasswick and Scheman claim that some groups of scientists at least need the support both financially and otherwise from lay communities in order to put their knowledge to use or to gain any knowledge in the first place, they need to listen to the lay communities regarding what use the knowledge-claims should be put to. Even if a scientist has no interest in benefiting humanity, or in putting theories into practice, she or he will, as a member of the scientific community, likely have an interest in being seen as objective. In order to be objective, the scientist might, very soon, be asked to reflect on community-wide beliefs. The best way to do this, as briefly discussed above, is to engage in dialog with another community. In order to engage in a serious dialog, some level of trust might be required.

As I pointed out in discussing both Scheman and Grasswick, it seems that trust has broken down between many lay communities and communities of experts. Grasswick hypothesizes that there are likely many ways of rebuilding this trust. She looks at one, knowledge-sharing. I have added to Grasswick's account that in addition to sharing salient information, experts must also be willing to acknowledge where they should not be trusted, and where they need to trust others. A willingness to trust others, to listen, and the knowledge of the limits of one's own expertise all might contribute to the fostering of trust. They all demonstrate a level of objectivity, in terms

of a commitment towards self-examination. They may also require a level of healthy humility, an admission that one is not, in fact, an expert in everything, or even most things. What this conception of objectivity is calling for, in effect, is a level of skepticism about one's own beliefs and values, and humility as a result. Admitting that some of your background beliefs and knowledge claims may be open to doubt, or that local communities may have valuable knowledge that scientists do not have access to, is admitting a level of skepticism about one's own beliefs and values. It is also humbling, making one open to considering, at least initially, the claims of others.

5.3.3. Ethical and Epistemic Benefits

Having now detailed what the reconceptualization of the concept of objectivity in terms of THICK objectivity currently looks like, and having demonstrated that this conception of objectivity is being adopted as an ideal by at least one scientific community, I need to investigate whether there are any ethical or epistemic benefits to be found in THICK objectivity. Rorty may well be willing to admit that objectivity was beneficial in the past, but he argues that the ideal is no longer useful. With reference to Marine-Protected Areas, I will demonstrate that the ideal is still a valuable one for epistemic communities to hold.

Throughout the discussion of MPA's I have established that inter-community dialog can be an epistemic good. It encourages the spreading of knowledge between communities which results, in the MPA case, in increased knowledge for both communities involved. Lay communities are introduced to scientific knowledge that they may not have had access to otherwise. In addition, once it is recognized that knowledge-dissemination must go both ways, scientific communities gain knowledge

from lay communities which may have a longer experience with the area proposed for an MPA and so may be better able to judge the success of an MPA against a longer background of data than scientists. Biogeographer and ecologists Yasue, Kaufman and Vincent argue that locals have been in the area longer, and so are more aware of the history of the area than scientists, and they observe the area more regularly and more often. Scientists are often only able to conduct a yearly survey of the fish life in an MPA.[50] Because of this potential wealth of local knowledge, Yasue *et. al.* argue for the value of communication with local communities, and in particular for the value of conducting surveys with locals to gauge the success that locals believe the MPA is having. In response to the concern over bias or false recollection among locals, Yasue *et al*. reply that

> [i]t would be a mistake to assume that biological monitoring is any more objective and relevant than community perceptions. Scientific research can be itself value laden and influenced by researcher perceptions. . .[51]

This recent article by Yasue *et. al.* demonstrates that scientists in the areas of ecology and biology are questioning their own claims to objectivity in terms of value-freedom as individuals, and seeking collaboration with other communities as ways of gaining knowledge. Scientists are, at least here, becoming more cautious and humble about their own practices and methods, and the knowledge claims they make, and are recognizing that the old conception of objectivity is not able to deal with the new

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50 M. Yasue, L. Kaufmann, and A. C. J. Vincent, "Assessing Ecological Changes in and Around Marine Reserves Using Community Perceptions and Biological Surveys" in *Aquatic Conservation: Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems*. Wylie InterScience (2010). Online.

51 Yasue, *et. al.* "Assessing Ecological Changes in and Around Marine Reserves Using Community Perceptions and Biological Surveys." Note, in this quotation, the conception of objectivity in question seems to be the historic one of value-freedom or value-neutrality. While Longino has given us a way to move beyond this conception of objectivity, this way has not (yet?) been widely adopted among scientists.

challenges of personhood faced by the epistemic subject. This illustrates that the call by Lundquist and Granek for scientists to engage in dialog with local communities is indeed being heeded. It also demonstrates that, by heeding the call, scientists are able to access a wealth of local knowledge about proposed and current MPA's that they did not have access to before. This knowledge may well affect decisions on whether or not MPA's are a successful way of conserving biodiversity. Because of the wider access to knowledge gained by both scientists and locals, and because of the opportunities for analysis and investigation opened up to both groups by this sharing of knowledge, I claim that the new conception of THICK objectivity, with its obligation of inter-community dialog, is epistemically beneficial to communities that adopt it as an ideal.

Inter-community dialog is also epistemically beneficial because it allows various communities to use the knowledge acquired from other communities without a full understanding of knowledge-gathering practices, or of the methods of justification. That is, without understanding why a piece of knowledge counts as knowledge, a community can nevertheless use the knowledge to implement desired results. This is because objectivity carries with it a connotation of trust. Individuals and communities that strive for objectivity can be trusted in their knowledge-producing practices. They have overcome the problems that plagued epistemic subjects of the past.

I also think a case can be made that THICK objectivity in terms of inter-community dialog is beneficial ethically as well. Beyond any ethical benefits found in environmental conservation in this specific case, THICK objectivity in terms of inter-community dialog gives marginalized communities a way to speak and be heard by

communities in a position of authority. It lessens the authority wielded by communities in a position of authority. Yasue *et. al.*'s claim that scientists would be mistaken to privilege their own methods of observation and data-gathering over those of locals illustrates a move away from the scientist conceiving of himself or herself as a privileged knower. Code, as stated in Chapter Two, feared that objectivity could be used to lessen a scientist's responsibility, since the scientist could claim to be just reporting the objective facts, and would not be held responsible for what the facts claimed. Under this reconceptualization of objectivity, that is certainly not the case. Scientists are directly responsible to the lay communities who trust them. They must explain their research and findings as clearly and accurately as possible, and must ensure that all decisions are mutually agreed-upon. Rather than letting scientists off the social-responsibility hook, THICK objectivity demands a high level of responsibility from scientists engaged in dialog with other communities. Grasswick argues that scientists must endeavour to discover who needs to know, and what they need to know. Lundquist and Granek insist that all decisions that affect the stakeholder must be mutual decisions, agreed-upon with the stakeholder. Thus I conclude that this reconceptualization of objectivity is ethically beneficial, since it holds scientists responsible to the communities they are working with. THICK objectivity carries with it the ethical obligations of trust, humility, and responsibility.

In addition, because this conception of objectivity is one in which those in power must seek out and communicate with those most affected, it is a conception of objectivity that obligates not only that marginalized voices be heard (as previous conceptions of objectivity have obligated) but that those in power actively seek out

marginalized views. THICK objectivity may well make it easier for those in a marginalized position to speak and be heard. Since Rorty, as reported in Chapter Two, largely objected to objectivity because he thought it had a tendency to silence marginalized views he would likely agree that something that facilitates the entry of marginalized views into the epistemic debate is ethically beneficial. So I conclude that this reconceptualization of objectivity—a combination of Longino's, Wylie's, Scheman's and Grasswick's arguments, and currently being adopted by MPA scientists—is one that circumvents both Rorty's and Code's charges of objectivity as oppressive and unethical.

I have demonstrated that inter-community dialog can carry epistemic benefits for both communities involved. However, I have suggested such dialog requires trust and humility. The examples of MPA's has demonstrated that the need for trust is paramount once inter-community dialog is considered. Humility seems to be one way to attempt to earn another's trust, and recognize that one might need to trust, as well. Scientists and stakeholders must both recognize and admit where they are less knowledgeable and rely on the knowledge-claims of each other. As I noted, this is a humbling position to be in, particularly for the scientists who were previously accustomed to not working with the locals and not accepting knowledge or help from other, non-scientific, communities. It is a position that, it appears, many MPA scientists are having difficulty with. Though I have presented MPA's as conforming to THICK objectivity, and though I maintain that they are attempting to become the type of epistemic subjects necessitated by this ideal, there are still problems that I will now highlight.

5.3.4. Concerns with the Current MPA Collaboration

Even in their own article, Lundquist and Granek are not able to completely achieve the level of humility that their own discussion of the requirements of successful dialog illustrate. They claim that 'anecdotal' evidence must sometimes be trusted, but scientists would be better off conducting surveys and studies where possible. Local knowledge with regards to MPA's is only to be relied on when other economic factors preclude the epistemically superior practice of scientific investigation. This is not a humble stance, and does not acknowledge the potential expertise of local knowledge. Even their terminology in characterizing local knowledge as 'anecdotal' seems to carry with it negative connotation, as though they were denying that this knowledge is really knowledge at all. It could also be perceived as an unwilling and begrudging extension of trust to the local communities. The message seems to be 'trust only when there is no other option.'

Other ecologists and biologists who have relied on Lundquist and Granek's work have been able to achieve a level of humility that these two authors did not in their 2010 article on the need for collaboration between locals and scientists. Yasue, Kaufman and Vincent argue that

> Scientists tend to consider biological monitoring data as the only evidence required to demonstrate to communities that there has been a change in fish abundance or catch per unit effort over time in and around an MPA. . .[52]

In their article, as mentioned above, they challenge this assumption that scientific data is the only or the best evidence of success in an MPA, and instead advocate

52 Yasue, *et. al.* “Assessing Ecological Changes in and Around Marine Reserves Using Community Perceptions and Biological Surveys.”

community surveys in order to gain insights into local knowledge.

However, even in this article, though the scientists do suggest that scientific knowledge is by no means more trustworthy than local knowledge, there are still implicit signs that scientific knowledge is to be preferred. After having advocated for the use of community perceptions in evaluating the effectiveness of MPA's, Yasue *et. al.* note that in the area under their investigation in the Philippines, the community perceptions were more positive than the biological data indicated.

> Results indicated a gap between community perceptions and biological surveys. While villagers perceived significant improvements in fish stocks, biological data did not demonstrate substantial or consistent temporal changes in fish abundance, size and diversity within or immediately outside of the MPA.[53]

Yasue *et. al.* claim that they face a challenge here in explaining the discrepancy between the locals' observations and the scientific data. Certainly this challenge is an epistemic opportunity that would not be present under old conceptions of objectivity, merely because the knowledge claims of the local community members would not have been included in the data or analysis. But it is the language in which they phrase this challenge that interests me. They claim that the challenge is this: “How do we explain the relative *optimism* of stakeholder perceptions?”[54] By phrasing it in terms of optimism, I think that Yasue *et. al*. implicitly suggest that the stakeholders' perceptions are in error, thus privileging their own, scientific, views. However, the extent to which they do privilege the scientific view is uncertain. Yasue *et. al.* do claim that one of the

53 Yasue, *et. al.* “Assessing Ecological Changes in and Around Marine Reserves Using Community Perceptions and Biological Surveys.”

54 Yasue, *et. al.* “Assessing Ecological Changes in and Around Marine Reserves Using Community Perceptions and Biological Surveys.” *Emphasis added.*

explanations for the discrepancy may be that stakeholders have a longer history with the area, and are thus able to judge the current MPA against a much longer and more sustained body of observational information (thus suggesting that, by relying on stakeholder information, scientists may gain epistemic insights into how successful MPA's are when compared against a longer historical period). However, other reasons given for the discrepancy are that the stakeholders are invested and thus determined to see the project succeed to the point of clouding their judgement, or that stakeholders are trying to please the scientists and thus are distorting the truth.[55] So, while Yasue *et. al*. do admit the possibility of gaining an epistemic benefit from the inclusion of stakeholder views, they also admit that their own epistemic position may be privileged when compared to the seemingly optimistic reports of stakeholders. In sum, scientists seem to be having trouble judging when a local should be trusted in his or her claims to knowledge. The tendency is still not to trust, and to privilege one's own view over that of the locals. Yasue *et. al.* demonstrate that this tendency is starting to be questioned, but it hasn't disappeared yet.

Finally there is something troubling about the use of the term 'stakeholder' to identify those individuals or communities that have an interest in the proposed or existing MPA, or whose lives are affected by the MPA, particularly in the way Lundquist and Granek cash out the term, as can be seen from the quotation above (See pg. 222). Lundquist and Granek readily reduce the term to socioeconomic interests alone, neglecting any connections with nature, or other non-social and non-economic values that a community might derive from being involved in an MPA. In

55 Yasue, *et. al.* “Assessing Ecological Changes in and Around Marine Reserves Using Community Perceptions and Biological Surveys.”

other MPA literature even the social aspect of the stakeholder factor is removed, and economic interests are stressed to the neglect of other possible interests. For example, ecologists Alan White and Helge Vogt claim that economic interests need to be stressed because "[m]onetary returns from good investments in resource management make good sense to the poorest fisher and the loftiest policy maker.'[56] They claim that by focusing on economic and monetary interests, one can address both the local fishers and the governments and policy makers running the municipality and even the country affected by the MPA. One set of interests will motivate all these different groups of people.

However, this is questioned by McClanahan *et. al.* In their investigations into MPA's in Kenya, they found that different groups may have different values, even when the issue was restricted to monetary incentives. They claim that:

> The major industry in this area is beach tourism, and this leads to the loss of local ownership of beach property and employment of people from outside the region who are trained in tourism services. This creates tension with the indigenous people over land and work opportunities. It is likely that this interacts with low levels of education and poverty, and results in a *cynical* attitude towards the potential benefits of national areas management programs.[57]

This suggests to me that establishing economic benefit is not enough to get locals motivated and involved in an MPA in all cases. At issue is who will likely receive the

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56 Alan T. White and Helge P. Vogt, "Philippine Coral Reefs Under Threat: Lessons Learned After 25 Years of Community-Based Reef Conservation" *Marine Pollution Bulletin* 40, no. 6 (2000) 549.

57 Timothy McClanahan, Jamie Davies, and Joseph Maina, "Factors influencing Resource Users and Managers' Perceptions Towards Marine Protected Area Management in Kenya" *Environmental Conservation* 32, no. 1. (2005): 47. *Emphasis added.*

economic benefit, and whether there is any non-economic benefit to be found from land ownership. The issue of trust appears here as well. The locals need to be given a reason to trust, and in some cases they may have many reasons to distrust, not only the scientists, but the other communities involved. Scientists need to consider these reasons. I worry that, by calling the locals 'stakeholders' (and emphasizing economic stakes) and by characterizing their mistrust as 'cynical,' scientists fail to appreciate the locals' perspectives and legitimate concerns. By doing so, scientists likely will not appear trustworthy to locals, thus failing to live up to the category of epistemic subject necessitated by this THICK conception of objectivity.

The reconceptualization of objectivity offered at the start of this chapter includes the ideal of trust and knowledge-sharing, inter-community dialog and humility. In order to claim to be objective under this reconceptualization, the scientific community must be willing to critique their own community-wide assumptions. They must be willing to talk to other communities in order to do this. I see the start of such a move among the scientists investigating and implementing MPA's. It is still imperfect, and assumptions are still left unquestioned, but the ideal is emerging. Scientists are acknowledging the need for inter-community dialog and exploring strategies for building trust.

Whether or not scientists are able to become more humble, and trust local knowledge less begrudgingly, it is still evident that locals are being asked to trust more than scientists are, particularly in the cases where the gap in scientific knowledge between local communities and scientists is sufficient enough to make it difficult for scientists to share their findings with the local community. In some cases,

the community may be able to understand what the expectations for the MPA are, and what the projected timeline is, without being able to understand what justifies these claims with regard to expectation and timeline. In these cases, they are trusting the scientists.

5.4. Possible Solutions to the Problem of Trust

The biggest issue I find evident in this reconceptualization of objectivity is the issue of trust. It is the place where scientists involved in MPA's seem to struggle the most in their attempt both to deem whether or not local's claims to knowledge are trust-worthy, and, more importantly, in their efforts to appear trustworthy to locals. In this section I will address the issue of trust. Here I move from a descriptive account of what is going on with regards to the concept of objectivity to a more normative account. I suggest a way in which trust-building could be aided with regards to MPA's, and one further way in which trust-building may be aided in other areas. The first way to be discussed is the use of rhetoric to signal that one is trustworthy. The second way to build trust is a way that has implicitly already appeared in this dissertation in the discussion of the suffrage movement: humour.

5.4.1. Rhetoric and Trust

As I discussed above, trust is hard to regain once it has broken down. I think that in many areas and between many groups it has broken down and we are left with the task of attempting to signal to each other that we are trustworthy. This means that part of the task of an epistemic subject will be to convey to others that she can be trusted, typically through written or oral communication, since this is typically how communities of knowers engage with each other. The question, then, is how to

convey to others using language that one is a trustworthy epistemic subject. Since the question is about language and word choice, the question may be best examined using theories of rhetoric. In this sub-section I will suggest a few rhetorical ways of bridging the gaps which exist where trust has broken down. Rhetoricians have been concerned with trust-building, or with ethos (developing a trustworthy character, or character-building) for 2500 years.[58] Ethos, according to rhetorician Judy Segal and philosopher Alan Richardson refers "both to the individual's character, and to the social mores of her society."[59] The aim of the individual is to develop a trustworthy character. The way to do this is to conform to a society's norms regarding what a trustworthy individual is. Since scientists are beginning to recognize the importance of trust as one of the key features of an epistemic subject under obligation to objectivity, I suggest that they examine some of the work that has been done in rhetoric on this issue of ethos.

Judy Segal claims in her article "Strategies of Influence in Medical Authorship," that the role of rhetoric in science is not new, but it is a new concept for scientists themselves. While philosophers, sociologists and rhetoricians accept that scientific writing involves rhetoric and persuasion, scientists seem to want to claim that this is opposed to the idea that the writing is objective. In short, Segal reports that scientists are of the opinion that there is no persuasive element in scientific writing since this would rob it of its objectivity.[60] She examines medical literature on headaches. Segal

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58 Judy Segal and Alan Richardson, "Introduction Scientific Ethos: Authority, Authorship, and Trust in the Sciences" *Configurations* 11 no. 2 (Spring 2003): 137-144. Segal and Richardson note that the term originally comes from Aristotle's discussion of how to build character. See also Robert K. Merton, *The Sociology of Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973).

59 Segal and Richardson, "Introduction Scientific Ethos," 141.

60 Judy Segal, "Strategies of Influence in Medical Authorship," *Social Science and Medicine* 37, no. 4. (1993): 521.

argues that ". . . a close reading of headache articles reveals that they are no less rhetorical for being scientific, and, arguably, no less scientific for being rhetorical." [61] Segal draws the distinction between rhetorical writing and objective presentation. She argues that being scientific and being rhetorical are not mutually exclusive categories, but does not make the same argument with regards to being objective and being rhetorical, leaving open the possibility that employing rhetorical devices renders one's argument still scientific but no longer objective. I think the distinction between the emerging conception of objectivity and the use of rhetoric can be challenged in the same way she challenges the distinction assumed between rhetorical and scientific articles. An author of a rhetorical article may still claim to hold objectivity as an ideal, and be aiming to be an objective epistemic subject.[62] It is just that she has recognized that those who aim to be objective do so in order to claim to be trustworthy, and that this requires openness to communicate with others and with other communities, and that she needs to signal to others that this is the category of personhood she aims to fill, however imperfectly. She needs to claim this identity for herself. Rhetoric is one way to do this.

Indeed, Ken Hyland, a linguistics scholar, notes in his article about language and community that

> *Who we are* and *who we might be* are built up through participation and linked to situations, to relationships, and to the rhetorical strategies and positions we adopt in engaging with others on a routine basis. This means that it is through

61 Segal, "Strategies of Influence in Medical Authorship," 522.

62 Notice that this is with regards to the emerging conception of objectivity. This emerging conception requires inter-community dialog and overt obligations in terms of trustworthiness and humility. Older conceptions of objectivity, in terms of value-freedom for example, may well have been incompatible with rhetoric and persuasion, which were seen as value-laden and thus hindered trust-building.

> our use of community discourses that we claim or resist membership of social groups to define who we are in relation to others. Identity therefore helps characterize both what makes us similar to and different from each other and, for academics, it is how they achieve credibility as insiders and reputations as individuals[63]

Rhetorical devices do more than merely persuade others to agree with us, they persuade others of who we are, or who we claim to be. They build ethos. Since trust is more about the individual than about the individual's claims, as Grasswick and Scheman note, trust and claims of identity are linked. As such, I argue that the rhetorical role of developing an individual identity as a certain type of epistemic subject is a part of this reconceptualization of objectivity. Through what we say, and how we say it, we make claims to be certain types of persons. Rhetoric may help scientists make claims of being trustworthy individuals.

Scientific articles have a certain style at present, one that robs them of any kind of individuality. One does not meet the individual scientist through his or her writings. Experiments are recorded as having happened as though without any human influence at all.[64] All of this appears to have been a requirement of aperspectival and value-free objectivity. It is also a method of gaining trust, or developing ethos. As Judy Segal and Alan Richardson note in their introduction to ethos in science "[o]ne means of both securing and exhibiting one's place as a scientist is to appear as a scientific author."[65] They go on to explain that this makes writing an authorship an interesting

63 Ken Hyland, "Community and Individuality: Performing Identity in Applied Linguistics" *Written Communication,* 27. no. 159, (2010): 160.

64 See, for example Steven Shapin, "Pump and Circumstance: Robert Boyle's Literary Technology," *Social Studies of Science* 14, (November 1984): 481-520.

65 Segal and Richardson, "Introduction Scientific Ethos," 140.

place to examine credibility, and trust.

> Authorship, because it materializes questions of credibility, is an especially interesting site of the study of scientific ethos. The author's ethos is carefully, if not always consciously, constructed, and acts as a warrant of belief (more or less successfully) infusing other warrants of belief.[66]

Segal and Richardson point out that the method of writing used, and more importantly, the way the author presents herself in the writing aids in the construction of the author's ethos, and of whether or not the author is deemed to be a trust-worthy character. The author's ethos is intended to signal that others are warranted in believing the knowledge claims. But Segal and Richardson note that this is not always successful. The type of character presented is intended to be trustworthy, but may not always be perceived as such, particularly if the type of character presented does not accord with the social norm of a trustworthy scientist.

Take the case of presenting oneself as essentially absent from the text, as is done under a value-free and aperspectival conception of objectivity. If we are not to be free from perspectives and values any more, if it is argued that we *cannot* be free from perspectives and values, and indeed that values and individual perspectives are necessary for critical dialog, self-reflection and bring with them ethical and epistemic benefits, then an article that appears to have been written by a value-free individual without perspective is an article that raises suspicion. This attempt at cultivating an ethos fails. Such an epistemic subject cannot exist. With the change in the conception of objectivity, we also change the category of epistemic subject. So, an article written by a subject that cannot exist looks suspicious, it does not develop ethos. It may well

66 Segal and Richardson, “Introduction Scientific Ethos,” 140.

be time for scientists, and anyone under obligation to occupy the category of epistemic subject to consider that the way they represent themselves in their writing is a way of fostering or breaking trust.

One strategy that helps to foster trust that Hyland notes is the use of conditional arguments.

> By making one circumstance dependent on another, these [conditional arguments] raise the uncertainty of outcomes and are therefore often considered to be hedging devices, but they also bring the writer and reader closer to agreement.. . . So once again, she acknowledges the multivocal context of her argument, but addresses voices assumed to be shared by both the writer and the addressee.[67]

The idea behind this suggestion of how to foster trust seems to be that one can suggest a premise, or a statement, to be taken by one's reader as true. However, one hedges this suggestion with the use of a conditional, such that it is clear that this is only being assumed, and not definitively asserted, as true. This simultaneously establishes a potential foundation of agreement between the author and the reader, thus allowing for further communication between them, and allows the author to acknowledge that these proposed points of agreement are not, themselves, free from potential doubt. Thus the author is able to maintain a position of humility. This is a suggestion somewhat employed by Yasue *et. al.* in their discussion of the 'optimism' of the stakeholder position. While I objected to the phrasing of the question in terms of optimism, Yasue *et. al.* do discuss a number of possible reasons for the discrepancy they find between their results and the stakeholders claims, and do not

67 Hyland, “Community and Individuality,” 173.

assume that one is correct, but rather offer three conditional explanations. For example, one of their explanations can be phrased as follows: if we accept that the stakeholder's reports are correct, then we must explain the discrepancy by appealing to the longer time-period the stakeholders have had to observe the MPA as opposed to the scientists.

Another linguistic style that Hyland notes as being an effective way of shaping a trustworthy person is to employ the word 'I' frequently. Hyland claims that with frequent use of the word 'I' “the reader finds a thoughtful and well-informed colleague in these texts: an impression of a real person thinking through issues. . .”[68] Hyland notes that “This kind of writing conveys an openness and honesty. . .”[69] Frequent use of the word 'I' acknowledges that the author of the text is a particular person with a particular perspective in a particular community with certain background assumptions, beliefs and norms. It does not place the author in a position of assumed omniscience. By representing oneself as a person too, frequent use of the word 'I' situates the author as an individual, a key factor in feminist standpoint empiricism as discussed in the last chapter. In short, writing that conveys the writer as a person too, working through the reasoning on the page, that asks the reader to join the writer on this intellectual endeavour, and that leaves room open for potential questions and dissent gives the impression of a writer who is open-minded and trustworthy. This is, typically, the kind of writing that does not appear in scientific articles. But if scientists wish to appear as trustworthy, it might be a style of writing worth considering. The social norms of what a trustworthy scientist looks like seem to be changing. As such, ethos-

68 Hyland, “Community and Individuality,” 175.
69 Hyland, “Community and Individuality,” 173.

building practices of the past can no longer be employed. These are some other ways that one can signal to others that one is trustworthy, and hopefully rebuild trusting relationships.

There is a contrast here between the suggestions Hyland makes regarding writing and the writing style employed by Alice Duer Miller and other suffragists at the turn of the twentieth century. Whereas Miller removed herself from the the text, never using the word 'I' and never presenting herself as an individual to relate to, Hyland argues that in order to build a trustworthy identity, this is exactly what one must do. I think that this apparent disparity can be removed once we remember the connection between trust and the concept of objectivity that Scheman illustrated. To be an epistemic subject committed to the ideal of objectivity is to be an epistemic subject worthy of trust. When Alice Duer Miller wrote her column, the current conception of the ideal of objectivity was largely cashed out in terms of value-freedom and aperspectivalism. Thus, the epistemic subject needed to strive to be able to legitimately claim to be value-free or without perspective. One was trusted because one was value-free, and thus others knew that no values were altering one's perspective and hence one's judgement. Value-freedom itself has been questioned now. Longino, among others, questioned whether this ideal was attainable and whether, even if it was attainable, it should be aimed for at all. In the absence of a claim to value-freedom, one must cultivate a different type of epistemic subject in order to be able to claim to be objective under this emerging conception, and hence trustworthy. Thus we see that trustworthiness is cashed out in different terms at different times, and this can be explained by its connection to the concept of

objectivity, and the various conceptions of that concept that exist in different times. As noted above, the practice of cultivating ethos changes because ethos is both individual and *social*.

My suggestion in this section is that rhetoric and word-choice may be important avenues of trust-building that scientists in communities adopting THICK objectivity—scientists under obligation to engage in inter-community dialog, be humble about their claims to expertise, and foster trust—should consider taking advantage of. The way MPA scientists choose to represent their interactions with locals—identifying them as economic stakeholders, and classifying their reactions as 'optimistic' or 'cynical' rather than 'realistic' or 'understandable'—may well affect the trust-building that is vital in this area both for epistemic and ethical reasons. In short, I suggest that scientists examine the literature on ethos in rhetoric.

5.4.2. Humour and Trust-building

While it may not be appropriate in the specific case of MPA's, humour is another trust-building strategy that has already implicitly been mentioned in this text. Here, I want to suggest humour as one rhetorical way of bridging the gaps that open between communities that do not trust each other. I suggest humour as a way to facilitate inter-community dialog in cases where either the dialog once existed by has now broken down, or in cases where communities defined their boundaries in order to keep other communities out (such as the borders between philosophers and sociologists, or historians, archaeologists, and historical archaeologists discussed in Chapter Four).

Though it has not been overtly discussed, even in this text, humour has already

made its appearance. Alice Duer Miller used humour successfully in her column *Are Women People* to enter into the dialog on the status of women, women's rights, and votes for women. By using humour to gently ridicule her opponents, Miller was able to undermine their claims to objective authority without thereby alienating them as Wildavsky might have alienated his opponents in Proctor's example discussed in Chapter Two. While Wildavsky charges his opponents with having a hidden agenda, thus alienating them and putting them on the defensive, Miller withdraws her own voice from the debate, using the voices of her opponents themselves to make them appear ridiculous on their own terms. She never charges them with anything, leaving the path open for them to laugh along with her at their own mistakes.

Another example of the use of humour to cross boundaries is found in the work of Donna Haraway. Haraway, in her book *When Species Meet,* relies on a humourous cartoon in almost every chapter, sometimes using more that one cartoon in a single chapter. Her aim, in this book, is to bridge the perceived gap that has existed in Western intellectual tradition between humans and other animals. In short, she wants the philosopher to respond to animals.[70] She asks what it means to respond, how one does respond to other living things, and in short strives to get a unique kind of inter-community dialog going between humans and other species. Dialog is likely not the correct word, given that dialog carries with it the connotations of language. Haraway tries to get humans and animals to interact, and to realize that there has been interaction, and the possibility for interaction, all along. She tries to reach across borders, defined in terms of species, that have rarely been bridged in Western philosophy. And part of her tool kit for doing this is the humourous cartoon. Haraway's

70 Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 19.

book demonstrates that humour may be a way of opening borders and engaging in dialog. Thus, while humour may not address the areas where trust has broken down, such as between aboriginals and archaeologists (tempers and feelings may be too raw for humour to be used effectively here) it may be useful in the other challenge of trust noted at the start of this chapter, where community borders have been drawn to purposely exclude others.

Humour is a difficult path to follow, and one can see already that the humour useful for inter-community dialog is of a certain type. It cannot be too derisive, or mean-spirited. This tactic does no better than Wildavsky's, and will tend to close community borders rather than open them. The humour can be very insightful and intelligent, or a little more silly and low brow—as in the case of some of Haraway's comics, some of which are little more than puns—but it cannot be cruel. The invitation must be left open for everyone to laugh together, and this might require that some communities, and by extension some community members, laugh at themselves.

Henri Bergson has examined two categories closely related to humour, if not at times indistinguishable from it, laughter and comedy. James K. Mish'Alani notes that for Bergson “the lack of adaptability, the rigidity, [is] so characteristic of what is comic.”[71] In other words, we find the rigidity of others laughable. Mish'Alani notes that Bergson argues that laughter has a socially corrective function. Society curbs individuals into rigid categories, but this rigidity, while it is socially fostered, is undesirable. “Ironically, society cannot tolerate such self-deluded inelasticity, even though it is precisely social life that fosters the conditions for it.”[72] Mish'Alani points

71 James K. Mish'Alani, “Threats, Laughter and Society,” *Man and World* 17, no. 143 (1984): 145-146
72 Mish'Alani “Threats, Laughter and Society,” 146.

out that society is engaged in a tug-of-war with the individual, with laughter as one of the social mechanisms pushing people into rigid categories and then jarring them back out. People are at pains to avoid being the subject of another's laughter, yet, according to Mish'Alani we are always at risk of public laughter, with no way of avoiding it.

> I am ensnared by my socialization to think of myself and my possibilities in terms of such ready made paths, as standard roles, functions, positions and undertakings. Thus, the stage is set for me to become comical by too great an absorption in any of them. Fostering self-typification on the one hand and abhorring rigidity on the other, society exposes each of us to the threat of laughter.[73]

On Mish'Alani's account, laughter looks like it is a part of changing any socially designated 'ready-made paths'. To use Ian Hacking's terminology from Chapter Three, laughter would play a part in any interactive category of personhood. Laughter serves to remind us that these categories are not as rigid as we thought. Even objectivity and the epistemic subject, the categories under investigation in this text, are open to change. Likewise, boundaries around communities are not rigid. They can also change. Thomas Gieryn has demonstrated that they do, in fact, change in response to the opposition. Laughter is not the only social mechanism serving to challenge rigid categories, but it is one effective way of doing so. By challenging rigidity, humour might be effectively used in cases like Wylie's story of archaeology, history and historical archaeology. It may allow for a breaking down of community borders at least far enough to encourage dialog across those borders.

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73 Mish'Alani “Threats, Laughter and Society,” 146.

What if the opposition were to find humour in these borders in such a way that reminds us that these community boundaries are fluid, not rigid? Freydberg, in his survey article on “Recent Continental Philosophy and Comedy,” notes that laughter has a certain power of redemption. It reveals a situation to be contingent, and may in some cases suggest how the situation can be changed.[74] Both Haraway and Miller are using humour in this way. They remind us that the categories of human/animal or man/woman can change, and suggest ways that this change may happen. Laughter shakes us out of rigid categories.

There is one more disparity that needs to be addressed here, and it is with regards to the issue of power, discussed in Chapter Three. For it seems that the role humour takes in facilitating inter-community dialog and trust will vary depending on the role of power. I suggest that communities in power will find self-deprecating humour to be the most effective engaging in dialog with other communities, whereas minority communities will find humour that undermines the majority's position to be more effective. The reason for this is simple. The categories and borders take on an appearance of rigidity. These categories and borders, and this rigidity, are largely perceived to be maintained by those in power. Thus, those with no power need to show that this rigidity is a perception only. By undermining the claims of the majority, as Miller did, this is accomplished.[75] Those in power need to demonstrate that they recognize that these categories and borders can be changed, and are not rigid. If they

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74 Bernard Freydberg, “Recent Continental Philosophy and Comedy” *Philosophy Compass* 5, no. 7 (2010): 518.

75 Ted Cohen discusses the relationship between jokes and power-structures in his book *Jokes: Philosophical Thoughts on Joking Matters* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1999.) He argues that making a joke at those who have power over you is a way of striking back, or of being in charge, even if momentarily. So, in addition to challenging those in authority, humour may also give those who hold a minority view a way to feel in control, even if it is only momentarily. (See Cohen, *Jokes*, 44.)

fail to demonstrate that they recognize this, minority communities may be reluctant to enter into dialog with them, believing that there is no room in a rigid system for minority views. Therefore, self-deprecating humour will demonstrate an acknowledgment of the contingency of the current social system.

If included in a conception of objectivity, this will mean acknowledging that what it is to be the correct epistemic subject is not a timeless ideal, but one that changes over time. A way to signal to others that an individual or a community recognizes this about their own ideals is through the use of humour, either to change the ideals, or to acknowledge that the ideals in place could be changeable.

Humour opens community borders, challenges possibilities of personhood, and provides opportunities for reflection. But it is not easy. Mish'Alani notes that:

> The fear of laughter . . . as a corrective social gesture, is unlike any other fear. What it fears it cannot evade by vacating its immediate field of operation, as it might flee a raging beast, for instance. For its object the mocking jeer, the cackle of ridicule, does not lose force at a distance, but persists in the imagination of its victim, pursuing him wherever he flees, haunting him, insinuating itself into him, undermining his self-compliance.[76]

Laughter follows us, and undermines us. Mish'Alani notes that society encourages us to see life paths chosen as rigid. Society also encourages us to see categories of personhood occupied, and community borders, as closed, static and rigid. These things are perceived as stable. So is objectivity, since it creates a category of personhood. Yet at the same time society wants us to be able to change. Things like ambition and progress are valued, and would be impossible in a static society. Yet to

76 Mish'Alani, “Threats, Laughter and Society,”153.

acknowledge instability is unsettling. The ghosts of relativism lurk around the corner the minute the suggestion is uttered. It's best just not to laugh, not to invite relativism in.

But I am not suggesting relativism. The changing conception of objectivity is simultaneously stable and changing. It always opposes the subjective. That is stable. The problem is that the subjective is continually changing. So the problem is not with the category of objectivity. The problem is in the individual, and between individuals. We change possibilities of personhood and borders of a community. So the types of persons we must be in order to successfully become knowers changes simply because we as individuals and in communities change. This is historical; there is a narrative, but it is not relative. We cannot create any categories we want. We cannot simply drop objectivity from our vocabulary and begin again. History, too, has a hand in shaping the possibilities of personhood and community. Daston reminded us that old accounts of objectivity stay even as new ones are formed. Possibilities of personhood do not immediately displace each other. The categories are not relative, they are historical. However, this may be small comfort to those who wanted the absolute, since the looping effect of objectivity is not that either.[77]

Humour is just one of many rhetorical strategies that could be used to signal to others that one is humble, trustworthy, and ready to engage in inter-community dialog. I have suggested that certain types of humour are able to do this because they challenge and undermine norms, thus suggesting that one is aware that one's

77 Here we find the problem of absurdity. Thomas Nagel claims that we are simply the type of creatures who search for absolute certainty, and are not content until we have it. Curiously, he also thought we pretended to have it even when we did not. (Nagel, "The Absurd,"). Perhaps there is a connection between absurdity, laughter, and the rigidity of borders and categories of personhood society encourages us to see.

assumptions, beliefs, and even community-wide values might be questioned or even found lacking. But this is not the only way. Rhetoricians are exploring the rhetoric of science, looking for other ways to engage in dialog across communities and to persuade.

5.5. The New Objective Ideal

Objectivity is not static, so it cannot be absolute if by absolute one means a constant, unchanging ideal. Epistemic subjects, likewise are not static. There is no one way of being an epistemic subject that has remained constant throughout history, but that does not mean anything goes. We police ourselves and decide what the problems with the epistemic subject are, and how best to fix them with a new conception of objectivity. So far we seem to have done well, including more minority voices in the debate, and gaining and disseminating more knowledge. I have suggested that, if we follow what seems to be the current trend in social epistemology towards inter-community dialog and trust, we will disseminate knowledge between communities, allowing us to know more, and do more with the knowledge we have. In the case of MPA's, inter-community dialog has improved the effectiveness of the areas, and helped both scientists and lay people determine what needs to be done, and how best to accomplish it. This is an epistemic benefit. It is also part of the story of objectivity. Longino's account of objectivity in terms of social knowledge raised problems with both the epistemic subject and the community to which she belonged. THICK objectivity is being developed to deal with these problems. But one might wonder what problems with subjectivity are being overcome?

5.5.1 The Epistemic Subject to be Overcome

This reconceptualization of objectivity has moved beyond the old picture of a lonely mind trying to engage with the world. Under a value-free conception of objectivity, the image Rorty sketches of a subjective self trying to see past his or her own subjectivity in an attempt to see the world clearly gives a good picture of how the problems with the epistemic subject were conceived (in terms of subjective values) and how one was to aim to overcome these problems (self-policing to root out these values). This is a story of an individual attempting to overcome something problematic about him or herself. But if the conception of objectivity becomes more communal (as it does in Longino's reconceptualization) and even inter-communal (as it does if one follows Wylie's suggestions) then the story is no longer one of an individual self-policing in order to see the world clearly. Is this still a case of objectivity understood in opposition to subjectivity? What, if so, is problematic about the epistemic subject?

I do think this is still a story of objectivity understood in opposition to subjectivity. The problem is that scientific subjects, and other experts, view themselves as trustworthy in a world in which they are not viewed this way by others. Thus there is a conflict between the experts' view of themselves and the status others afford them. When it is pointed out to these experts that they are not, in fact, trusted, they lay the blame for this lack of trust on others, and continue to insist that they are trustworthy. This compounds the problem with the epistemic subject. Experts not only do not see the social landscape clearly, they also refuse to change anything about themselves, insisting that the blame for the discontinuity between the experts' perspectives and the social reality rests entirely with the non-experts. If Scheman's claims above are correct, and others are justified in their lack of trust of experts, then

there is a problem with the subjective view of the situation that the experts are taking, and the reality of the situation. Even if experts are correct, and the problem lies with the lay public, and not with their own trustworthiness, Scheman is certainly right in pointing out that calling members of the lay community irrational is hardly a way to earn their trust and overcome this problem.

The problem with the epistemic subject that needs to be overcome is that the epistemic subject of the past—the one who needed to police him or herself in order to appear value-free—is not an epistemic subject that is trustworthy (or at least is not trusted) anymore. Furthermore, he or she does not seem to recognize this as a problem that has anything to do with him or herself. This is a problem with the epistemic subject's own perspective on the situation. A way to rectify the problem is to require that the epistemic subject engage in knowledge-sharing with lay communities, and take on a position of humility regarding his or her own knowledge-claims.

5.5.2 The Regime for Overcoming

Since the problems of subjectivity that need to be overcome are that the epistemic subject is not perceived as trustworthy by members of the lay community, and does not view this lay perception as a valid one, the regimes currently being set up to combat this problem are regimes necessitating a focus on trust and trustworthiness, humility on the part of the epistemic subject to encourage them to not automatically privilege their own perspective, inter-community, and reciprocal knowledge-sharing with these members.

I stated that I was hesitant to offer a name for this conception of objectivity. This is because my investigations have led me to conclude that this conception is still

being conceived. The past conceptions of objectivity I examined all had names clearly marking the problem of subjectivity to be overcome, and suggesting the regime in place for overcoming it. Mechanical objectivity suggests that the problem with the epistemic subject is a tendency not to reproduce data automatically like a machine, but rather to alter and idealize. The regime is to aim to hold the willful aspects of the self at bay, and emulate a machine. Aperspectival objectivity suggests that the problem with the epistemic subject is his or her own idiosyncratic perspective. The regime is to police oneself in order to root out idiosyncrasies and aim to occupy a perspectiveless perspective. Value-free objectivity suggests that the problem with the epistemic subject is his or her values. The regime is to strive to observe the world and make knowledge-claims that are free from values. But all these names were names given to conceptions of objectivity after they had existed for a while, became fully developed, and could easily be studied in retrospect. The current conception of objectivity being developed identifies untrusted communities of expert epistemic subjects who refuse to acknowledge that the lack of trust afforded to them might be their own fault. The regimes being developed for overcoming this subjective problem are the following: a focus on Trust, Humility, Inter-Community dialog and reciprocal Knowledge-sharing. As such, I have tentatively suggested the name THICK objectivity. A name might help one to keep a clear image of the conception in mind. However, I am not committed to this name. This conception of objectivity is still being developed. We might find another name more suitable in the future. Still, there are a few things to recommend THICK objectivity as a name. It captures the problems with the epistemic subject to be overcome, and the regimes being developed to overcome them. It also serves to remind us how layered and complicated the concept of

objectivity is, and that it does have a history. And the very name, THICK, suggests at the opposite of the isolation that a Rortarian picture of objectivity as value-free gives (the knower struggling alone with his or her own subjectivity). The name evokes a sort of getting into the thick of things, which pairs nicely with the regimes requiring inter-community dialog and knowledge-sharing.[78]

The reconceptualization of the ideal of objectivity that is taking place now will need to deal with the problems of the epistemic subject that the last account has raised. Using work from Naomi Scheman and Heidi Grasswick, I have argued that the new epistemic subject will need to be trustworthy in all areas in which she claims expertise. A lack of trustworthiness in any area of claimed expertise will damage expertise claims in other areas. The first step is to overcome the subjective perspective (currently held by many epistemic subjects) that the subject is already trustworthy and should be trusted. I have suggested that epistemic subjects may need to re-consider how they represent themselves in writing, and may want to examine rhetorical strategies for developing ethos. Epistemic subjects will also need to be willing to listen, and be able to consider and possibly accept knowledge-claims that may clash with their own. They will also need to be willing to teach and explain. Thus, the borders of their communities must be relatively open. Communities that produce knowledge must be communities that have relatively open borders, such that

78 I have said that the conception of objectivity developed here resembles Harding's strong objectivity, particularly in its call for the inclusion of minority voices and for its stress on the need for reflection on beliefs and practices held by an entire culture. However, I do not adopt the name 'strong objectivity'. One reason for not doing so is that strong objectivity as a name does not connect objectivity directly to the type of subjectivity to be overcome, nor does it point to the regimes for overcoming. Thus, strong objectivity as a name does not stress the overarching concept that this conception of objectivity, as developed by feminist epistemologists and standpoint theorists, shares with past conceptions of objectivity. 'Strong objectivity' as a name, does connect Harding's methodology to work being done in the sociology of science. THICK objectivity, by contrast, is more about the epistemic commitments of these new communities of inquiry. It is not about my own methodological commitments as a philosopher.

they can enter into dialog with other communities, thus being able to disseminate knowledge and learn from other experts in different fields. I have suggested humour as a way to open community borders and shift possibilities of personhood. This will result in an instability in categories of individuals and community borders that may be difficult to ignore, since it is the very fact that one is trying to ignore it that is perceived to be humourous.

The current reconceptualization of THICK objectivity, then, will require communities with permeable borders, under obligation to engage in dialog with other communities. Individuals within these communities will be under obligation to strive to be trustworthy, and to consider what is necessary in order to be trustworthy, but this will not be cashed out in terms of value-freedom or aperspectivalism. Being willing to trust others, and engaging in knowledge-sharing practices may be one way to signal trustworthiness. Another may be found in rhetoric. Objective individuals will be required to examine themselves to ensure that they are able and willing to listen to others, that they are able and willing to cross the borders of their communities, that they have a good sense of humour about themselves and about what they take seriously (to ensure that they don't take it too seriously) and that they are humble in their knowledge claims and claims to expertise.

5.6. Conclusion

In this chapter I have established that objectivity does still have epistemic and ethical benefits for communities adopting the current reconceptualization of THICK objectivity as an ideal. In the last chapter I demonstrated that Longino's account of objectivity creates new problems with personhood. Through reflection on this new

category of personhood a new conception of objectivity is being given. Finally, should this new account of THICK objectivity take hold, as it already seems to be doing in the area of MPA's, we will see epistemic benefits in the form of knowledge dissemination, and the ability to use the knowledge in ways that benefit communities and the environment. We will see ethical benefits in a commitment to inter-community dialog and engaging with marginalized views. Far from objectivity being a detriment, it is epistemically and ethically an important category encouraging self-reflection and community-wide-reflection. Possible biases or community-wide problems can be highlighted as communities attempt to engage in dialog with others. I have argued that this is the emerging conception in the concept of objectivity—understood in terms of inter-community dialog and trust, humility and possibly the need for self-deprecating humour, and possibly holding the name of THICK objectivity—may well become identifying features of this new category of the epistemic subject.

In the final chapter, I will review the ways in which objectivity is and has been ethically and epistemically beneficial as an ideal and I will take up the problem of metaphysics raised in Chapters One and Two. While many philosophers firmly hold that one can have an ideal of objectivity without any metaphysical commitments, Rorty is not one of them. I have dealt with objectivity, by and large, in the absence of any metaphysical questions in this text. But in order to fully address Rorty's concerns, metaphysics must be looked at. The project of examining objectivity in terms of metaphysics is one that I have explicitly not taken on in this dissertation, restricting my examination to the epistemic uses of the term. It is also a project that would, likely, require a book of its own in order to deal with properly. But this does not give me

license to say nothing about it in this dissertation. I will address it, if only briefly, and if only to suggest paths my research may take in the future.

Chapter 6: Mind the Gap

6.1. Introduction

I began this dissertation with the goal of defending objectivity against various charges that it is a useless and dangerous concept and an inherently oppressive concept. I have explored the concept, and shown that different conceptions of it have been useful and helpful, both epistemically and ethically, and that holders of minority opinion have been able to use the concept in order to enter epistemic debates and be heard. In a way, then, my project has been a pragmatic defense of objectivity, illustrating that it is useful, and therefore worthwhile to hang on to. Pragmatists who may be tempted to follow in Rorty's footsteps need to consider the pragmatic use that a concept of objectivity might fulfill. I have illustrated that the unattainability of objectivity is no hindrance to its being useful. So, on pragmatic grounds alone, those who share Rorty's theory have reason to consider objectivity as a worthwhile ideal.

However, I have not yet addressed the crux of Rorty's objection to objectivity. It was the metaphysical connotations that he saw as a part of objectivity as a concept that so worried Rorty and that led Clough to characterize objectivity as an epistemic bridge to the metaphysical. They found the metaphysical realist conception of the term to be the problem. Indeed, Rorty may well accept everything I have said in this dissertation and yet still object to objectivity on the grounds that it carries with it connotations of metaphysical realism. He would then have to explain how objectivity is beholden to its metaphysical connotations while truth is not; but that is a project for his followers, not for me.[1]

1 Recall that, as discussed in Chapter Two, Rorty was happy to keep the concept of truth once it was divorced from the concept of objectivity. He gives a flat account of truth, where it merely is used to

In this chapter I will review the defense of objectivity already given, and take up the question of metaphysics in conjunction with objectivity. I raised this question in Chapters One and Two but set it aside, choosing to defend objectivity via ethical and epistemic values alone. However, I suspect that a metaphysical defense of the ideal of objectivity could also be given and I will sketch in this chapter how I suspect such a defense would proceed. I do not have space, this late in the dissertation, to give a full defense of objectivity on metaphysical grounds alone. What I will do, instead, is suggest a possible defense that I hope to be able to explore in the future. But first I will recap the arguments already given in support of objectivity.

6.2. Questioning Objectivity

In Chapter Two I outlined the two strongest positions against the concept of objectivity at present, Richard Rorty's and Lorraine Code's. I noted that Rorty and Code both went beyond the standard challenges to objectivity as presented by Louise Antony (that it is impossible to be entirely unbiased or free from values and that biases and values are useful). Rorty and Code, while deploying these two strategies that Antony identified, also take their arguments one step further, asserting that objectivity itself is dangerous, useless, and inherently oppressive. Rorty argues that objectivity works against solidarity, and Code argues that objectivity absolves scientists of social responsibility and is characterized in masculine Western European terms, thus preventing women and other minorities from entering the epistemic debate. I also examined attempts to revise the concept coming from feminist

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describe whatever is widely believed or useful to believe. Here I question why it is that Rorty treats truth and objectivity, both of which have had metaphysical connotations, differently. Why is it that objectivity cannot be stripped of its metaphysical underpinnings while truth can, thus resulting in Rorty's endorsement of the use of 'truth' but refusal to allow 'objectivity' to remain in discourse? This needs an explanation.

epistemologists. While Sandra Harding, among others, agrees with much that Rorty and Code identify as troubling in what she sees as the current, value-neutral, conception of the concept of objectivity, Harding does not advocate a move towards solidarity and ethnocentrism, or relativism. Rather, Harding advocates for a revision of the understanding of the term. One reason for this decision not to remove the concept of objectivity was Harding's recognition that this concept is embedded in our epistemic vocabulary. In effect, Harding's work serves to question whether Rorty or Code's proposed alternatives to objectivity could or would be adopted by epistemic communities who have come to understand knowledge in terms of objectivity. Harding suggests that the concept of objectivity would be difficult, if not impossible to remove. In this survey I illustrated that there are many different thinkers who, for one reason or another, find the concept of objectivity troubling. It is either in need of revision, or should be removed from epistemic discourse outright.

I took up the question of the received view of objectivity in Chapter Two. Using work by Louise Antony, I challenged Code's, Harding's and Rorty's account of the received view of objectivity. The idea that objectivity is value-neutral, or value-free, and that it is a masculine Western-European concept is only one of the various conceptions of objectivity that have existed in the past. Antony's work serves to highlight that the general feminist epistemologists' (and Rorty's) characterization of the received view of objectivity is not received at all in current epistemology. That is, the conception of objectivity being challenged is one that has already been challenged from many other sources prior to the feminist and Rortarian pragmatist challenge.

In Chapter Two I also argued that Richard Rorty's proposed replacement of objectivity in terms of wide-spread agreement and persuasion was problematic. Using an objection to Rorty raised by Jürgen Habermas, I argued that Rorty has not given any reason why a community should value wide-spread agreement beyond a point. Furthermore, given that Rorty grounds his values in terms of ethnocentrism, he has also created a tension within his own account. Valuing wide-spread agreement risks that, at any moment, one will run into dissent in such a form that one cannot persuade without great difficulty. In these cases, ethnocentrism is always there to retreat to. One wonders how we are to choose between persuading another group and deciding to retreat to ethnocentrism. This is a problematic tension in Rorty's own account. It also seems to do a disservice to holders of minority opinion who must play a careful game with an opponent who might retreat to ethnocentrism rather than engage in discourse with them.

Furthermore, I argued that, given Rorty's understanding of truth, his theory would do a disservice to holders of minority views. Though Rorty's account does argue that truth is changeable, and should not carry the kind of heavy weight it is often seen to do, the fact remains that holders of minority opinion, those without wide-spread agreement, cannot claim either truth or objectivity for themselves. This leaves them with the disheartening task of persuading others, and clinging to convictions not because they are right, or their opposition lacks objectivity, but because they are the convictions that the minorities happen to have. That is, they hold them because they happen to hold them. I argued that this level of contingency leaves marginalized groups in a place where an incredible level of courage and stubbornness is required. I

speculated that, in this kind of scenario, there may be little incentive for marginalized groups to find the strength to continue to speak and to attempt to persuade.[2] I concluded that Rorty's account is in tension with itself, is not helpful to those holding minority views, and for these reasons is not preferable to an account that relies on the ideal of objectivity.[3] Rorty's proposed alternative to objectivity runs just as great a risk of being dangerous and unhelpful as Rorty claimed the term objectivity did, if not greater.

The error I see being made in these challenges to the concept of objectivity, and even in some of the suggested revisions of the concept coming from feminist empiricists and feminist standpoint theorists is a failure to recognize that the concept itself has a history. Objectivity has had multiple conceptions in the past. I suggested that, by understanding these conceptions, and by examining how and why they change and what purpose they serve in different times and places, it becomes possible to evaluate whether the concept of objectivity is valuable, or whether it is harmful to minorities and inherently oppressive. Furthermore, those who wish to revise the term may find it easier to do so with the understanding that revision is part of the concept of objectivity already. However, I did not leave my defense of objectivity there. Rather than simply conclude that objectivity is better than the alternative on offer, I wanted to establish that objectivity is a beneficial ideal on its own terms.

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2 This does not necessarily indicate, as some may speculate, that Rorty identified himself with majority opinions. What it does indicate is that he wants to identify with majority opinion, or rather, he wants majority opinion to identify with him. Thus he takes a position designed to persuade the majority that they already *do* agree with him, hopefully rendering his theory true.

3 In addition to be unhelpful for minority opinions, one might conclude that Rorty's theory is simply not helpful at all. It does not allow us to say, as we seem to want to say, that Susan B. Anthony was right to advocate for women's rights, not just from our point of view but right in the situation in which she found herself.

6.3. Objectivity as an Ideal

In Chapter Three, using work from Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, I characterized objectivity in terms of an ever-changing never-achieved ideal set up in opposition to the community's perception of what is wrong or lacking in the current category of the epistemic subject. Relying on work by Ian Hacking, I argued that the ideal of objectivity itself creates and frames the category of the epistemic subject for a community. Objectivity, as an ideal, serves as a corrective. It is never perfectly achieved, partially because it is so idealized, and partially because it is always changing. But, for those who subscribe to it, objectivity mandates that they must constantly examine themselves and possibly work on themselves, attempting to approximate a correct category of personhood. So, objectivity mandates both ethical and epistemic commitments that individuals are under obligation to strive for.

6.3.1. Creates Ethical Commitments

The ideal of objectivity creates an ethical obligation in those who subscribe to it as an ideal. As Daston and Galison point out, objectivity carries ethical commitments with it. I have argued that one of the prime commitments is a commitment towards reflection, or self-knowledge. Those who hold an ideal of objectivity are committed to reflecting on themselves, and committed to attempting to change themselves in order to attempt to attain the ideal. Daston and Galison tell us that, in scientific communities at least, objectivity was recognized as an ideal. It was acknowledged that objectivity was unattainable, something to be aimed at but not achieved. I do not mean to imply (nor do I think Daston and Galison mean to imply) that all scientists recognize objectivity as an ideal to be sought, not a reality to be attained. However, Daston and

Galison, as discussed in Chapter Three, do report that the ideal was, by and large, adopted with the acknowledgment that it would be impossible to attain. This, of course, does not mean that all scientists in all eras have viewed the ideal as unattainable. However, it does mean that, prior to Rorty's arguments that objectivity is unattainable, others had recognized it as such, and yet still adopted it as an ideal.

Using the example of the suffrage movement I have suggested that there is at least one ethical good that comes out of this need for self-reflection. Individuals who must reflect in the face of opposition are individuals who are under obligation to take that opposition seriously, as William F. Kirby did when challenged by suffragists. Though Kirby had preconceived beliefs regarding the traditional role women should play in a society, upon self-reflection he found that there was no good reason to hold those beliefs, and so he supported suffrage. By using the language of objectivity, and challenging the mainstream's claims to be objective, suffragists were able to enter the epistemic debate and succeed. This success can, partially, be explained by appealing to the concept of objectivity. Thus, there is at least one case in which the ethical commitments necessitated by a previous conception of objectivity have been beneficial.

I have reviewed how reflection is attained. In most cases, it requires opposition, as Helen Longino suggests. This is why Longino requires dissent in a community that aims at generating objective knowledge. This argument of the need for opposition has been used by many thinkers, from Hegel to Freud to Beauvoir to Mill, to mention a few. I have argued that a community that holds objectivity as an ideal, and thus prescribes the ethical attitude of reflection for its individual members,

is one that also values opposition. A value of opposition allows many different voices to speak and, even more importantly, to be heard. Objectivity, then, encourages communities to be open to dissent and doubt. But this is not the end of the story.

Longino's encouragement of doubt and dissent is also a call to change the conception of objectivity in response to something perceived as problematic about the epistemic subject, namely the risk of a bias-stalemate. By pointing to the value of biases and background assumptions, and the necessary role they play in the community's production of knowledge, Longino has demonstrated that one cannot merely discount one's opponent for having a value-laden perspective. Thus, Longino's account of objectivity addresses a risk found to exist in the epistemic subject prescribed by value-free conceptions of objectivity. While Longino's reconceptualization of objectivity is not perfect itself, I argued that it can be seen as part of a new conception of the concept of objectivity aimed at addressing the bias-stalemate problem that was a risk with older conceptions of objectivity.

I have suggested that the current emerging conception of THICK objectivity will place more and different ethical obligations on the communities as well as individuals. Not only will a community that holds objectivity as an ideal allow and encourage dialog, dissent and doubt within the community, and encourage self-reflective individuals, I think that communities that adopt THICK objectivity will obligate a need to examine dissent and doubt between communities and thus foster inter-community dialog. The ethical obligations will not just be borne by the epistemic subject as an individual, but also by all the epistemic subjects in a community. I have noted that there is some discrepancy and unclarity regarding the relationships

between individuals and the community. Particularly in Longino's case, it seems that individuals may have little or no ethical or epistemic obligations as individuals beyond the roles they may choose to occupy in a community. Though Longino's account has overcome the individual bias-stalemate, it has highlighted concerns over intercommunity dialog and a possible stalemate at the level of methods or agendas between communities. However, I have addressed this potential for a new stalemate using material from Naomi Scheman and Heidi Grasswick. I have argued that, under the emerging conception of THICK objectivity, individuals may be under obligation to strive to be trustworthy. This may require that they monitor their community to ensure that others in the community, or the entity of the community itself, are not damaging their ability to occupy the category of a trustworthy person. Thus, I think THICK objectivity will require individuals to take on the ethical commitments of community reflection and maintenance of trust between communities (in addition to those they have within the community).

6.3.2. Allows for Dissemination of Knowledge

In Chapter Five I argued that THICK objectivity fosters inter-community dialog and trust. I examined Marine-Protected Areas, where I found that this conception of objectivity can already be seen to be emerging. Scientists setting up MPA's found that inter-community dialog was essential and it was important to have stakeholder communities involved in the project. In order to ensure that the stakeholder communities would not become discouraged and give up on the project, it was important for scientists to explain the expected results and the time-lines involved. Thus, inter-community dialog fosters a dissemination of knowledge and information.

In order to enter into the dialog successfully, both the scientists involved in MPA's and Heidi Grasswick in her own research on inter-community dialog have found that fostering trust is important. One way to foster trust is to share one's own knowledge and expertise with the community. This dissemination does not only go in one direction. I argued that another way of fostering trust is to be open to receiving the knowledge the community has to share. In the case of MPA's this local knowledge saved money and time, and gave scientists information they needed but didn't have an easy way to obtain. So, a community that holds an ideal of THICK objectivity carrying with it connotations of inter-community dialog and trust disseminates knowledge not only from scientific experts to stakeholders, but also in the other direction.

I argued that inter-community dialog allows for the spreading of knowledge, as well as the gathering of new knowledge as one community shares what they know with another. This in itself is an epistemic value insofar as knowledge is intrinsically valuable. Furthermore, it allows for a more successful use of MPA's since there is more collaboration, more knowledge to draw from, and more people involved in and interested in seeing the MPA's succeed.

From these arguments I established that the changing ideal of objectivity is both ethically and epistemically valuable. It encourages dissemination of knowledge and allows that knowledge to be used more successfully, and it allows marginalized groups to speak and obliges the majority to listen. Objectivity, as Naomi Scheman points out, is a matter of trust. If one is objective, one can be trusted. Challenging the mainstream's claims to objectivity, as the suffragists did, is a way to undermine trust.

Demonstrating one's willingness to consider other opinions and beliefs, to listen to other communities, and to share one's own knowledge, is a way to foster trust.

Finally, I argued that THICK objectivity may also require individual epistemic subjects to be humble, or self-deprecating. They must signal to other communities that they are willing to listen and take ideas seriously; that they can be trusted and are ready to trust others. Thus, this emerging conception of objectivity might require rhetoric. One way of indicating that one is trustworthy would be to signal that one is aware of the contingency of one's own community's borders, and of one's claims to be the right kind of epistemic subject, who adheres to the ideal of objectivity. I suggested that this can be done through the use of humour. Either undermining the other, or undermining oneself can be done through humour in such a way that neither group is placed on the defensive and the invitation to laugh along with the other is extended. Alice Duer Miller and Donna Haraway have both used humour to challenge the believed rigidity of categories assumed by their communities regarding women and animals respectively. Humour not only fosters inter-community dialog, but also reminds us that objectivity is an interactive category. It changes, and is never perfectly attained. It can be changed through the epistemic subject's interaction with the category. Those who recognize this are people who signal to others that they understand that objectivity is a changing ideal and are humble enough not to claim to have achieved the unachievable. This makes them easier to trust, as they are not likely to be dogmatic, dogmatism being a symptom of one who sees rigid and natural categories where there aren't any.

I also examined other rhetorical devices that may help to signal open-

mindedness, such as the use of conditional arguments, and the frequent use of 'I'. The use of conditional arguments signals to the audience that the author is aware that even the premises she is employing are open to challenge and change. She, therefore, avoids any claims of infallibility. The frequent use of 'I' allows the reader to see the author as a person too, someone just like the reader, who is trying to understand this material and present it in the best way she can. Both these strategies also allow the author to characterize herself as an open-minded individual in search of the ideal of objectivity, but not dogmatic enough to claim to have attained it. She speaks from her perspective, not from some perspectiveless place. While I noted that this was not always an appropriate rhetorical style to employ when aiming for the ideal of objectivity, given the new conception of objectivity emerging, this may currently be an appropriate rhetorical strategy.

However, while I have traced several different conceptions of objectivity, I have not, yet, examined the layering effect that Daston and Galison tell us is a part of this complex term. For, though we are moving towards inter-community accounts of objectivity we might still employ mechanical objectivity and value-free objectivity. Old accounts are not perfectly displaced by new accounts. And the term 'objectivity' often carries connotations of several different accounts at once. While I have established that objectivity can be defended in epistemic and ethical terms alone—as a changing ideal acting on the epistemic subject, that is not inherently oppressive to marginalized views—Rorty's real concern was the metaphysical realist connotations within the term. One might well claim that I have been talking past Rorty in this dissertation, as I have not discussed his main reason for rejecting the term 'objectivity'.

6.4. The Metaphysical Gap

In Chapter Two, I noted that one of Richard Rorty's main concerns was the metaphysical connotations of the term 'objectivity'. One reason Rorty was unwilling to allow objectivity to remain in our discourse, even after unmasking it as a term that only meant widely agreed-upon belief, was because he seems to have feared that allowing objectivity in would be opening the door to the erroneous metaphysical understanding of the term. We might continue to think of objectivity as a call to cross the gap between the knowing subject and the world and as fitting with a correspondence notion of truth. He was concerned about the idea that objectivity was necessary to get a true picture of reality, that in some way our own subjective selves were distorting our picture of the world. In short, Rorty thought objectivity was connected to metaphysical realism. Sharyn Clough, in agreement with Rorty on this point, claims that this kind of reasoning invites the skeptic and undermines one's own account, since one cannot claim to be objective. She, unlike Rorty, allowed for the possibility that objectivity could be reconceptualized, and I have argued that this is the case. I have demonstrated that we can move beyond skepticism and the bias-stalemate by relying on the views of feminist epistemologists and philosophers of science, such as Helen Longino and Alison Wylie. I have claimed that objectivity can be, and has been, reconceptualized. Problems with old conceptions of objectivity are best dealt with, not by doing away with the concept, but by reconceptualizing it again. So my answer to Rorty's concern regarding the metaphysical connotations of objectivity is that, if these are problematic, perhaps objectivity needs to be reconceptualized.

One might legitimately argue that there are ways of talking about objectivity

that presuppose no metaphysics, gappy or otherwise. Douglas and Lloyd, both discussed in Chapter One, argue that there are several different uses of the term 'objectivity' and that, were we to be careful and diligent in our usage, we would find that no one of these terms are equivalent, and that none of them necessarily implies others. Thus, there might be philosophers willing to argue that one can freely use the term 'objectivity' as I have done in this thesis in a strictly epistemic way, making no reference to metaphysical issues. So not only can objectivity be reconceptualized in ways that avoid metaphysical issues, but it has been.

But objectivity as a concept doesn't just exhibit a looping effect, it also exhibits a layering effect. Daston and Galison remind us that old accounts of objectivity are not displaced by new ones. Rather, these old accounts of objectivity stick around. I illustrated in Chapter One that Elisabeth Lloyd and Heather Douglas demonstrate that objectivity can be understood in many different ways and though I have centered in on the epistemic concept of objectivity, Lloyd and Douglas's work illustrates that there may be many different accounts of objectivity that are not pulled apart in public discourse. While Lloyd and Douglas insist that these accounts should be pulled apart, the layering effect that Daston and Galison claim is a part of objectivity, and the complexity that Douglas notes as a part of objectivity, may lead one to wonder whether pulling these accounts apart is a realistic aim. One may be concerned that no amount of clarity will overcome the layering effect exhibited by the term 'objectivity'. When making stipulations, we may be able to identify a number of different conceptions of objectivity, and privilege some over others (say the purely epistemic over the metaphysical) but in everyday discourse, we are likely to use the term in a

more layered way. Allowing the term to be present at all might be claimed to allow all previous uses of the term, including metaphysical uses, to slide into our vocabulary, exactly what Rorty feared. The worry is that, no matter how carefully we reconceptualize objectivity, the dangerous metaphysical conception is still a possible understanding of the term, no matter how many other conceptions may also be available.

One might suggest that, while I have defended an epistemic sense of the term objectivity, I have not dealt with Rorty's main concern regarding objectivity. If Rorty had been more careful with his terminology, or more precise, we might have discovered that we are, in fact, talking past each other. However, I doubt it. I suspect that Rorty would be dubious of my attempt to pull epistemology and metaphysics apart. Rorty claims that he cannot see how to have a concept of objectivity that does not imply metaphysical issues, nor can he understand how to have an epistemology without a metaphysics. Here he appears to be in agreement with Albert Camus, who claims that “even the most rigorous epistemologies imply metaphysics.”[4] I suspect that a sentiment much like this explains why Rorty is resistant to epistemology in general and epistemic concepts like objectivity in particular. It is for this reason that I doubt that Rorty would accept that we are talking past each other. For Rorty, any talk of objectivity at all is necessarily metaphysical and, hence, objectionable.[5] In his 1979 book, Rorty states that

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4 Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus* trans. Justin O'Brien (London, England: Penguin Books, 2005) Pg. 42

5 In an email to Sharyn Clough, which she kindly forwarded to me, Rorty claimed that he did not know how to have an account of objectivity that did not invoke the idea of the correspondence theory of truth. I gather that Rorty feared that any account of objectivity given would leave the door open for individuals to use the term 'objective truth' and hence resurrect the correspondence theory of truth.

> I have argued. . . that the desire for a theory of knowledge is a desire for constraint—a desire to find 'foundations' to which one might cling, frameworks beyond which one must not stray, objects which impose themselves, representations which cannot be gainsaid. [6]

Rorty, here, implicitly ties epistemology to metaphysics. Epistemic desires are for metaphysical foundations. Insofar as this is the way Rorty conceived of epistemology, as far as he is concerned, epistemology does involve metaphysics. While I do not think that all epistemic research is characterized by a desire to find firm foundations, I nonetheless do agree that at times and for some thinkers, this has been the aim of epistemology. Insofar as objectivity has been a part of this aim, there is a good reason to think metaphysical connotations persist in various epistemic conceptions of the concept of objectivity. Daston and Galison's assertion that different concepts of objectivity layer upon one another and Douglas's and Lloyd's claims that people often conflate distinct meanings of the term 'objectivity' might be seen to lend credence to Rorty's case. In short, Rorty may have a legitimate concern with regards to my decision to speak of objectivity only in terms of epistemology. In which case, a sense of metaphysical realism may still be embedded in the concept, no matter how much I might want to insist that objectivity has epistemic and ethical benefits. Perhaps, in short, the risks of the metaphysical gap outweigh the benefits I have identified in the concept of objectivity.

Sharyn Clough supports this concern of Rorty's by claiming that epistemology, on this 'traditional' model[7] (where the epistemic subject who endorses objectivity aims

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6 Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature,* 315.

7 Using work by Louise Antony I have already challenged this view of the 'traditional' view of objectivity in Chapter Two, but this is the language Clough employs, so I will use it in explaining Clough's own theory.

to be a mirror that faithfully represents reality, or to cross a bridge that surmounts the gap between the merely subjective and the real world) is a representationalist model, where the epistemic subject aims to correctly represent the 'real' world. This representationalism results, as noted in Chapters Three, in an invitation to the skeptic. Clough argues that this invitation undermines the feminist position, since the question arises whether the feminist who is critiquing the traditional model can herself claim to be accurately representing the world.[8] This is a metaphysical issue for both Rorty and Clough. The problem is caused by the conceptual gap between our epistemology (or knowledge-claims) and metaphysics (or the way things *really* are). Only by moving away from this concept does Clough think that feminists can avoid the never-ending debate against the skeptic. However, if what I have said above is true, there may be no way to develop a new conception of objectivity that is guaranteed to be free from metaphysical connotations, and thus free from this gappyness. The layering effect makes this task problematic, to say the least. So, one might be concerned that, by preserving objectivity, even in a changed format, I am preserving these metaphysical connotations that are so troubling to Rorty and that Clough identifies as damaging to feminist theories.

Let me be clear. I do not think that the theory I have laid out here depends on metaphysical realism, nor do I think that Longino, Wylie, Scheman, or Grasswick depend on metaphysical realism in order to make their conceptions of objectivity make sense. However, though I think we can make good sense of certain conceptions of objectivity without metaphysical realism, Rorty's and Clough's conception of objectivity in terms of realism and representationalism is another

8 Clough, *Beyond Epistemology,* 5.

conception of objectivity, and one that has been employed in the past.[9] Because this conception of objectivity exists, and because of the complexity and layering effect of the term, it is possible that these metaphysical connotations of objectivity may sneak into any new conception on offer. This concern might be seen to motivate Rorty's position against the use of objectivity as an ideal. This is the concern I need to address.

6.4.1. Objectivity and Metaphysical Realism

The question of the metaphysical overtones of the concept of objectivity cannot be dealt with fully at this stage. In dealing with the epistemic and ethical benefits of the concept of objectivity, I have had to leave many other things out of the story, metaphysical realism being one.[10] So, what I can say here will be merely a suggestion and gesture. But I do want to say something about it, if only to suggest the areas in which I plan to expand my research.

First, I do think it is correct that objectivity might have some metaphysical realist connotation. However, I need to qualify this by explaining what I mean by 'metaphysical realist connotation'. What Rorty and Clough both object to when it comes to traditional accounts of objectivity is the idea of objectivity as a tool to help subjects see the world clearly. Thomas Nagel also speaks of objectivity in this manner. Though not all accounts of objectivity use this language, it is possible to see at least mechanical objectivity in this way (and potentially value-free accounts of objectivity as well). The problem with the epistemic subject that necessitated

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9 See, for example, Nagel, *The View From Nowhere*.

10 Technology is another area that I have not been able to touch on in this dissertation. Yet clearly technology plays a role in shaping the epistemic subject and determining our understanding of the concept of objectivity.

mechanical objectivity was that the individuals were perfecting nature to meet an idealized image. Mechanical objectivity was a tool to use in order to remove the subjective self from the observation as much as possible. However, as Nagel notes, some aspect of the self remains 'behind the lens.'[11] This type of objectivity, as with all types, is only imperfectly attained. What this means, in terms of a metaphysical account of objectivity, is that we can never observe the world as it *really* is. Our subjective selves are always getting in the way. Objectivity serves, then, as an epistemic tool in order to help access the *really real* in a metaphysical sense. But even with this tool, access is imperfect. This imperfection opens the door to skepticism.

For aperspectival objectivity, this kind of worry does not seem to arise. Insofar as aperspectival objectivity was combating the problem of individual idiosyncrasies and communicability, aperspectival objectivity has little or nothing to say about the way the world really is, and a lot to say about clear communication between individuals and across communities. But one might be able to tell a story about value-free or value-neutral objectivity that is a story about attempting to see the world the way it really is, as well as a story about trustworthiness and communication. Thus a correspondence story about an attempt to represent metaphysical realism could be a story that is layered in a conception of objectivity in terms of value-freedom (though not necessarily so).

In general, then, there are certain uses of the term 'objectivity' that challenge

11 Nagel, *The View From Nowhere,* 68. There are times when Nagel's account seems to be more of an account of mechanical objectivity rather than aperspectival, even though his 'view from nowhere' metaphor was identified as the perfect metaphor for aperspectival objectivity. It seems that Nagel, like others, layers different understandings of the term together.

the idea that we can ever *truly* observe and know reality. This is what I mean by the metaphysical realist connotations of the term. There are certain accounts of objectivity that speak about the attempt to *truly* observe the world as it really is. By conflating the epistemic and metaphysical uses of the term, one may draw the conclusion that these accounts of how to properly observe the world are unattainable. Hence, we must be skeptical about what we really know about reality. We might have to entertain the idea that we don't really know the way things are. Perhaps we don't really know anything. If taken to extremes, this gap undermines the possibility of knowledge at all. That's a serious consequence of the gap that Rorty was concerned about, and might be enough to outweigh the benefits I have argued that the concept of objectivity has provided.

Many pragmatists, Rorty, William James and Clough included, argue that this kind of gap—and the skepticism that results from it—is not useful. Clough in particular has claimed that it is not useful for feminist scientists and philosophers of science to entertain this kind of skepticism. I think that this pragmatist view is a mistaken one. Skepticism and metaphysical gaps are not by themselves problematic. The problem comes from dwelling on these gaps. So, I think Rorty, James and Clough are right to be concerned about these skeptical issues. Their error was in trying to avoid them altogether. I suspect and propose that, even if we find that we cannot completely rid ourselves of these metaphysical conceptions of the concept of objectivity, these conceptions themselves might be useful. The conception of the gap itself is not dangerous. However, we need to pay attention to our responses to the gap.

6.4.2. Metaphysics Against Feminist Epistemology?

Clough argues that the conceptual gap between our theories and metaphysical reality, and the skepticism invited by this gap, can be and has been harmful to feminist epistemologists, philosophers of science, and scientists.[12] Feminist theorists who employ this type of rhetoric, charging their opponents with bias, are open to the charge of bias themselves. This results in an impossible battle against the skeptic. The feminist theorists fall into the position of trying to illustrate why it is that their biases are the good biases, whereas those they oppose are the bad biases. This is just the position that Longino and feminist standpoint theorists, as Intemann reports,[13] are trying to overcome. However, Clough argues that even Longino ends up inviting the skeptic and undermining her own beliefs.[14] I will not here examine the issue as to whether Clough is right in this assertion. Whether or not her own arguments are successful is immaterial if objectivity has a layering effect. Even if Clough's own reasoning did fail, it might still be said on her behalf that Longino—because she endorses a conception of objectivity, and because objectivity exhibits a layering effect—leaves herself open to charges motivated from this metaphysical gappy conception of objectivity.

Clough claims that a preoccupation with this gap distracts feminist scientists and philosophers of science from what they should be trying to do, challenge mainstream scientific conclusions. She claims that “I have argued that feminist science criticism is the most successful when it is kept internal to specific science projects” rather than big abstract issues like knowledge and reality.[15] However, instead of

12 Clough, *Beyond Epistemology,* 31.
13 See Chapter Four.
14 Clough, “A Hasty Retreat from Evidence,” 97.
15 Clough, *Beyond Epistemology,* 120.

focusing on the practical business of examining scientific conclusions for inherent biases against women or minorities, feminist scientists have often ended up engaged in debates about the nature of knowledge and reality. Clough argues that the

> feminist move from scientist to epistemologist is typically accompanied by a shift in focus toward over-general accounts of 'science' and/or 'method' and away from the specific agents responsible for harming people.[16]

Clough claims that these debates about science, method and skepticism are unsolvable, and that focusing on them is unhelpful for the practical matter at hand.

Clough, in her attempt to block this kind of metaphysical gap—and the unsolvable battle with the skeptic that accompanies it—builds on work from Donald Davidson. Davidson relies on a concept he calls 'triangulation' to claim that in order to know whether one does know what the proposition means, or does have the truth-conditions correct (meanings and truth-conditions being one and the same for Davidson) one triangulates the utterance with others in a shared world. This guarantees that most of our basic beliefs and most of the basic propositions we utter will be true. One can check whether one knows the meaning, and hence the truth-conditions, of a proposition by uttering it in a setting where one believes the truth-conditions to be met, in the presence of others, and noting their reactions. Thus, were one to utter the proposition “this table is rectangular” in the presence of a rectangular table and at least one other individual, one could check that one was understood. This is what it is to triangulate, to check one's belief against at least one other interlocutor in the presence of the object of belief in question.[17] Davidson

16 Clough, *Beyond Epistemology,* 121.

17 Of course, this becomes more complicated if the two individuals in question do not share the same language. But even here, Davidson thinks the establishment of meaning, truth conditions, and hence the ability to communicate can be carried out through triangulation. One utters a proposition in an unfamiliar language, in the presence of a speaker of the language, in a setting where one

elaborates on the issue of triangulation and metaphysical gaps in the following way;

> It should now be clear what insures that our view of the world is, in its plainest features, largely correct. The reason is that the stimuli that cause our most basic verbal responses also determine what those verbal responses mean, and the content of the beliefs that accompany them. The nature of interpretation guarantees both that a large number of our simplest perceptual beliefs are true, and that the nature of those beliefs is known to others. Of course, many beliefs are given content by their relations to further beliefs, or are caused by misleading sensations; any particular belief or set of beliefs about the world around us may be false. What cannot be the case is that our general picture of the world and our place in it is mistaken, for it is this picture which informs the rest of our beliefs and makes them intelligible.[18]

Here there is no gap between our basic beliefs and the world. There is no space between epistemology and metaphysics where the skeptic can lurk. Just by knowing the meaning of our beliefs, we know the truth-conditions. And we can triangulate with others in a shared world to check whether or not our beliefs are true. In fact, communication itself is only possible *because* we share a world with our interlocutors. So, it cannot be the case that our most basic beliefs are false. We are getting it right. Global skepticism is thwarted before it even gets started. Davidson argues that this by no means defeats the skeptic. It merely side-steps the skeptic, giving the skeptic no place from which to launch his claims. And Davidson only claims that this holds with reference to our *most basic* beliefs.

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believes the truth-conditions of the proposition to be met, and checks the response from the other individual. One might have to do this several times, but over time triangulation will ensure that we share meaning and truth-conditions.

18 Donald Davidson, "Three Varieties of Knowledge," *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001) 214.

Clough argues that Davidson has given us a way to side-step partial representation even in our most complicated, least basic, beliefs. So, even if the feminist/non-feminist debate is not basic, it might still be able to be resolved by using triangulation. Clough claims that from basic beliefs, it is possible to build up to more complex beliefs and, if done carefully, this would result in our being correct about all our beliefs.

> Taking a holistic approach to build from the simpler cases of beliefs, to beliefs expressed in more complex theories, any idiosyncrasies. . . are, *in principle*, available for her correction through a purely extensional examination of how she has applied her references. Somewhere along the line, any discrepancies can, in principle, be revealed. [19]

Rather than worrying about whether feminists themselves are correctly representing the world, using Clough's theory feminists can be confident. They can make their claims with the certainty that, as Clough asserts ". . . they are justified by the evidence, and they are *true.*"[20] Not partially true, but true. The metaphysical gap is missing in Clough's theory.

But there is a problem with Clough's use of Davidson. While Davidson does say we can be sure that our *most basic* beliefs are true, it isn't clear that triangulation will work in the case of more complicated beliefs or theories. In particular, when feminists triangulate their theories with other scientists, unless the other scientists are also feminists, they are likely to meet with a mixed response. Not everyone in the community seems likely to assent. In fact, it seems that the dissent is one of the motivating factors behind feminist epistemology in the first place. The same is true of

19 Clough, "A Hasty Retreat From Evidence," 105.
20 Clough, "A Hasty Retreat From Evidence," 109.

my suffragist example from Chapter Four. Everyone may agree on the most basic beliefs, but more contextual and value-laden beliefs regarding who a person is, and who possess the right to vote, and why rights are allocated as they are, may not be shared by everyone. When disagreements of this nature arise, Rorty advocates two values that are in tension with each other, persuasion and ethnocentrism. One should attempt to persuade the other, while retreating to ethnocentrism oneself when one's own views are challenged. Suffragists, then, on Rorty's account should attempt to persuade anti-suffragists, while retreating to the solidarity of the suffrage community when faced with opposing arguments from the anti-suffragists. This is part of the story Rorty tells that allows him to avoid metaphysical questions. But it is not a part of the story that Clough endorses. While identifying herself as a pragmatist, Clough is not willing to follow Rorty to this conclusion. She is still looking for support for her theory that does not come from within the community. I doubt that triangulation can provide the support Clough needs, at least not as strongly as she claims it does. I am skeptical that this move allows Clough to bypass the skeptic. But her searching for support, and her rejection of metaphysics, should serve to illustrate why it is that she views metaphysical realism and its invitation to the skeptic as problematic for feminist and other minority views. [21]

6.4.3. Metaphysics in Support of Feminism

By contrast, I think that entertaining metaphysical questions regarding the true nature of a right, or what makes a person a person are important and useful. Simply

21 There may be an additional problem with Clough's account if the layering effect of objectivity is as dangerous as has been posited here. Clough, as noted in Chapter Two, does not want to give up on the concept of objectivity, she just wants it reconceptualized in non-metaphysical terms. If objectivity exhibits this layering effect, it may not be possible to have such a reconceptualization that guarantees that no metaphysical realist connotations are ever attached to the term.

admitting that there are things about the world that we may not know is scary and carries the risk of full on Cartesian skepticism, but is also useful. If we don't claim to know everything, we may be more willing to listen to each other. Admitting that there may be a gap between our knowledge and reality prevents the retreat to ethnocentrism that Rorty advocates and Clough cannot accept. Thus, a commitment to objectivity that carries metaphysical connotations will not endorse an individual's decision to retreat to an ethnocentric position and block or disregard communication from others. Insofar as a gap is conceived of to exist between our belief claims and reality, even our belief in community solidarity might be undermined by the invitation to the skeptic. Louise Antony asserted a similar claim to mine in her article "Quine as Feminist" as discussed in Chapter Two. Antony advocates for a conceptual gap between epistemological claims and metaphysical reality. She claims that she sees an advantage in endorsing a distinction between what people believe and the way things really are. Not only might it incline people to listen, since they do not claim to know the way the world really is, but Antony thinks it provides support for those in a minority position.

> I do believe in truth, and I have *never* understood why people concerned with justice have given it such a bad rap. Surely one of the goals of feminism is to *tell the truth* about women's lives and women's experience. Is institutionally supported discrimination not a *fact?* Is misogynist violence not a *fact*? And isn't the existence of ideological denial of the first two *facts* itself a fact? What in the world else could we be doing when we talk about these things, *other* than asserting that the world actually *is* a certain way?[22]

Antony argues that admitting that there may be a gap between common belief and the

22 Antony, "Quine as Feminist," 556.

way the world actually *is* is an important tool for feminist epistemologists to rely on. That there is a way the world is independent of what others believe of it, and that there is a gap between the world and our own belief, at least in the non-basic cases, supports and gives aid to feminist epistemologists. So while Clough seems to have a point in that charging one's opponent with bias leaves the door open to the skeptic, Antony is surely right that the possibility of criticizing one's opponent at all seems to depend on this conceptual gap between belief and the way the world really is.[23]

Admitting that there may be a gap between what we know and the way the world is, then, may be an important conceptual step in the move towards overcoming gaps between our community and other communities. Donna Haraway discusses this in terms of 'wounds to self-certainty'. When discussing the gap between humans and other animals, and the animosity that Haraway claims exists on the part of many humans towards other animals, she claims that “wounds to self-certainty are necessary, if not yet sufficient, to no longer easily uttering the sentence in any domain, “ladies and gentlemen, behold the enemy!'”[24] According to Haraway, the undermining of our beliefs is a catalyst for the coming together of different groups who may previously have been inclined to view each other as enemies. She extends this not only to human groups, but, as briefly mentioned in Chapter Five, to human-animal groups. She is against both the possibilities of ethnocentrism and anthropocentrism. She relies on humility and the loss of self-certainty as tools to move beyond the gaps

23 Antony develops a version of standpoint theory influenced by naturalized epistemology that allows her to, much as Clough did, assert that some values and beliefs and biases are just false, while others are true. By-and-large, this is the strategy of standpoint theory. However, I do not take advantage of Antony's move here for much the same reasons as my criticism of Clough's claims that her own beliefs are true. I am skeptical that empirical observation can license such a statement, particularly when one steps beyond one's own community borders and engages in discussion with communities that may have differing beliefs on methods and agendas. I will not go into my reasons here, but rather note them and hope to be able to expand on them in a future paper.

24 Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 12.

created by ethnocentrism and anthropocentrism.

What this suggests to me is that it may be possible to use the metaphysical/epistemic gap to reduce or eliminate other gaps, such as the us/them gap, or the human/animal gap. In short, I think an acknowledgment of the gap between metaphysical realism and epistemology is important. It may cultivate humility, a key element of the current emerging conception of objectivity. Focusing on metaphysical realism—and the gap created by metaphysical realism—invites the skeptic and illustrates what is so ideal about the ideal of objectivity. Objectivity is an ethical ideal set up in order to facilitate working upon the epistemic subject. If it necessarily has layered conceptions of metaphysical realism that cannot be untangled from the social-epistemic ways we may wish to reconceptualize the term, I do not immediately see this as a danger. I suggest that this metaphysical gap serves to illustrate the power that this ideal can have in relation to the knowing subject. When we conceive of making up knowers, and when we invite the skeptic, it seem that all our beliefs, including (perhaps) even our most long-standing or 'basic' beliefs, (like an us/them belief) could be re-examined. The danger isn't found in the gap itself. This conceptual gap might be an idealistic opportunity to work upon the self.

This is not to say that Rorty does not have some legitimate reasons for concern when it comes to the concept of objectivity, and the metaphysical/epistemic divide. Pragmatists in general have argued against our becoming too preoccupied by this gap. And for good reason. Clough's assertion that a pre-occupation with the gap pulls feminist scientists away from their most important task (illustrating the ways in which an androcentric bias may affect data and harm women and minorities) seems right, and is something to be concerned about.

I agree that these debates against the skeptic are unsolvable, and that it is not always appropriate to focus on them. However, I hypothesize that some awareness of this possible gap between metaphysics and epistemology might be a useful step in entering into dialog with other communities. This gap might serve to undermine self-certainty, foster humility, and helps us move past other gaps. Thus, I think a balance needs to be struck where metaphysical issues are raised. It might be useful for us to be aware of them, acknowledge them, but not dwell on them. Acknowledging the shortcomings in our own perceptions of the world is important, and metaphysical realism is an excellent tool for doing this. We might want to be aware of the gap without falling into it. All of this is speculative right now. But in future research I intend to examine the metaphysical conceptions of objectivity in order to see if objectivity can be defended on these grounds as well. My hypothesis, in short, is that the metaphysical gap that invites the skeptic could be a tool for fostering humility, and thus might help us overcome other gaps (such as the us versus them or the human versus animal).

6.4.4. A Possible Example

In the previous section I used Donna Haraway's work to suggest that awareness of our own shortcomings and acknowledgment that there may be ways the world is that we are not aware of can move us past other gaps, such as the us versus them gap that Rorty has (mistakenly in my view) endorsed with his account of ethnocentrism. This is an idea that I have only suggested and laid out in the broadest outline, but I suggest that this area may prove to be a good example for illustrating possible benefits of a metaphysical realist conception of objectivity. I hope that this

conception might see us expanding to inter-species responses and communication. This is a final way I see objectivity as useful in resisting Rorty's proposed alternative and creating epistemic and ethical benefits in doing so. What follows will, again, only be a suggestion and will need a lot of research in order to explore fully. I suggest that if the metaphysical gap Rorty saw as a part of objectivity has the power to undermine even our most basic beliefs, perhaps it can challenge the assumed divide between humans and other animals. Perhaps some future conception of objectivity, incorporating a metaphysical realist connotation, may be able to rely on the layering nature of the term, and its previous metaphysical realist conception, in order to bridge this gap.

Rorty's view is not only admittedly ethnocentric, but it is also heavily anthropocentric. This is unsurprising when one remembers that Rorty was heavily influenced by William James, who famously stated that “The trail of the human serpent is thus over everything.”[25] James held that there was no such thing as a pure objective truth. By this he meant that there was no such thing as a truth without human subjectivity. All truths are mediated by human experience.[26] This kind of privileging of human experience and human subjectivity is common in philosophical literature, as Haraway points out. Rorty appears to have inherited this view, as, indeed, have many of us in academic philosophy.

It is my hope that objectivity, with its unattainability, its undermining of the epistemic subject, its requirement of humility and responsiveness to criticism, and even its metaphysical connotations challenging our claims to knowledge, might in a

25 William James, *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking; A Series of Lectures by William James* (Rockville, Maryland: Arc Manor, 2008.) 34.
26 James, *Pragmatism*, 34.

future conception serve to help us bridge the gap between the human species and other species. I hope that this possible future conception of objectivity causes us to reflect on humanity as a species, and our limitations and possible biases as human beings. Many previous conceptions of objectivity have forced our reflection outwards, from reflecting on ourselves as individuals in isolation, to reflecting on ourselves as members of a community, to reflecting on our community as one of many possible communities. I am hopeful that the next subject for reflection will be the human species in relation to other species. Perhaps the next problem with the epistemic subject to be determined will be our very humanity. I am hopeful that the changeable concept of objectivity may help "the philosophers respond,"[27] as Haraway urges that we do.

But how do we communicate with others when those others we are seeking to engage are of a different species? Certainly we seem to be able to communicate with other humans, and even across divergent communities. But many might support the division Haraway is fighting against because it is unclear how any communication is possible across species lines. Of course we cannot communicate with many animal species the way we do with other humans. Many animals do not seem to have anything like the kind of language that humans do. Some can learn basic sign language, and some animal species seem to have a language, but the challenges in communication between species is much greater than between different communities of humans.

Here Haraway suggests that we change how we think of interaction between

27 Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 20.

species. Rather than thinking in terms of 'communication' we should think of these interactions in terms of 'responsiveness'. She relies on the work of Jacques Derrida who documented an interaction between himself and his cat in the morning. He notes that the cat is watching him and he sees himself reflected, in a Sartrean sense, in the cat's gaze. The cat becomes an Other to Derrida.

> He identified the key question as being not whether the cat could 'speak' but whether it is possible to know what *respond* means and how to distinguish a response from a reaction, for human beings as well as for anyone else. [28]

Haraway applauds Derrida for making this distinction between speaking, or communication, and response. By looking at the interaction in terms of responsiveness, the question of interactions between different species shifts focus from straight communication to interaction and response. Can we respond to each other? Could Derrida recognize his cat's gaze that morning as a look in need of a response from him (if indeed, that is what it was) and respond accordingly? The need for a shared language disappears when we change the question from communication, or spoken word, to responsiveness.

I think this distinction makes good sense. If we can respond to a baby's cries, then clearly we can interact with others, consider their needs and try to meet those needs when they are deemed appropriate. Communication strictly in terms of language is not necessary. However, one might legitimately object that in the case of responding to a baby, the species in question is identical. Therefore, it is likely that we will be successful in determining the baby's needs and responding appropriately (though it may take some trial and error!). The less like us the species in question is,

28 Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 20.

the less we may be able to examine the situation and determine what sort of response is warranted. Their desires and needs may be of a kind we, as humans, are not familiar with. The temptation to resort to a human perspective may be too hard to avoid. Indeed, Haraway notes that Derrida himself failed to sustain this question of responsiveness between species. When contemplating the early-morning gaze of his cat, Derrida fell back on the human-centered concern with his own nudity before the Other. Regardless of whether the cat was bothered by his naked form, Derrida himself was bothered. This is what he focused on in his writing, the gaze of the cat having been forgotten almost as quickly as it was brought up.

> Derrida failed a simple obligation of companion species; he did not become curious about what the cat might actually be doing, feeling, thinking, or perhaps making available to him in looking back at him that morning. [29]

One of the messages I take Haraway to be giving with this example of Derrida's failure to take up his own good suggestion of responsiveness is that, before we judge that interaction between species is impossible, or that humans cannot take animal interests and perspectives into account, *we need to see whether it is possible*. We should become curious about what animals are feeling and thinking, and what kind of messages animals might make available for us. How could we respond? In what ways might they be responding to us? I wonder if the skeptic, by undermining our most basic beliefs, might facilitate this curiosity.

A common and relatively old practice of determining animal needs, which Haraway credits to Jeremy Bentham, is to determine whether a given species of

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29 Haraway, *When Species Meet,* 20.

animal can suffer. If they can, then their suffering must be mitigated.[30] This is the path that Derrida endorses towards including animal interests in our decisions. It is also a method endorsed by Peter Singer in his work on animal liberation[31]. Haraway, however, insists that this is not the correct way to go about including animal perspectives in our decisions. The question of whether animals can suffer is important, but it is not the most important or the only question to be asked. Haraway argues that focusing on suffering invites pity, not responsiveness.

> But how much more promising is in the questions, Can animals play? Or work? And, can I learn to play with *this* cat? Can I, the philosopher, respond to an invitation or recognize one when it is offered? What if work and play, and not just pity, opened up when the possibility of mutual response . . . is taken seriously as an everyday practice available to philosophy and science?[32]

The challenge Haraway sets before philosophers is one of attempting to respond to these animals, or of recognizing their responses to us. Once again, I think one might question whether any genuine responsiveness is occurring. When my cat sits beside his bowl, or beside the back door of our house, and meows, I conclude that he wants food, or he wants out, and I respond accordingly. But am I just anthropomorphizing him by concluding that his meows become more belligerent and insistent when I respond by failing to give him what he wants (either because he is getting too fat, or because there was a bear sighted in the back yard and therefore it is unsafe to let this fat, tasty morsel-of-a-cat out)? How do I navigate the differences between what appears to be the legitimate recognition of what my cat wants when he

30 Haraway, *When Species Meet,* 21.
31 See Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation* (New York: Harper Collins Publishing, 2002).
32 Haraway, *When Species Meet,* 21.

sits at the door and meows and the perhaps less legitimate assumption that his meows become more insistent, and that his face scrunches up in anger when I fail to respond in the way he desires? The worry at the heart of inter-species interactions is a worry of anthropomorphism, or the worry of the human perspective colouring our judgement. It is, to put it another way, a worry about the epistemic subject. Are we too human to achieve this? If this is identified as the problem of the subject, then objectivity could be reconceputalized to combat this problem. I am interested in seeing whether the metaphysical realist notion of objectivity might be of help here precisely because it challenges all beliefs, including the belief that there is a divide between humans and animals. I have used U.S. Suffrage and Marine-Protected Areas as examples in my investigation into objectivity in its epistemic conceptions. Were I to investigate the metaphysical realist conception of objectivity, I would like to investigate the human-animal divide as a possible example there.

6.5. Conclusion

I began this dissertation with a question; is the epistemic ideal of objectivity a valuable ideal to hold? Why attempt to attain the ideal of objectivity when it appears to be unattainable, when there are many layered and confused meanings of the term in use, most of which are rarely distinguished from each other, and when there are philosophers such as Rorty and Code advocating that the term is both useless and dangerous, and perhaps inherently so? I had three objectives: first, to demonstrate that Rorty's proposed alternative to objectivity is flawed and unworkable; second, to rely on Daston and Galison's work on historicizing objectivity and rethink the objective/subjective distinction in terms of Hacking's possibilities of personhood (thus

demonstrating that the concept of objectivity has had many different conceptions in the past and that these conceptions react to perceived problematic aspects of subjectivity and create new categories of epistemic subjects); and third, to argue, based on this different way of thinking of objectivity, that objectivity can have ethical and epistemic benefits for epistemic subjects and communities that adopt it as an ideal specifically because of the types of epistemic subject created by various conceptions of objectivity (thus demonstrating that Code's charge of objectivity as necessarily oppressive is untrue). It is not necessary to attain the ideal in order to find it beneficial. The ideal itself is neither necessarily oppressive nor necessarily useless or dangerous. It can be a useful and beneficial ideal to hold and this is demonstrated when one examines the type of knowers that are created by a community that holds a conception of the concept of objectivity as an ideal.

I have argued that objectivity has allowed marginalized voices to speak, and thus is, at times, ethically beneficial. I have also argued that, through this opening up of communities to minority opinions, and through the categories of epistemic subjects as trustworthy and interested in inter-community dialog, objectivity is currently fostering the dissemination and production of knowledge and thus is epistemically beneficial. Finally, I have suggested future research examining ways in which even the metaphysical connotations of objectivity may be beneficial. Ultimately, I argue that we should continue to hold the ideal of objectivity because it is a malleable ideal, one capable of being understood in various ways depending on what the situation warrants. The ideal of objectivity allows us to combat problems that may be identified within our category of epistemic subject as we encounter new situations. We should

hold the ideal of objectivity not only because Rorty's alternative is unworkable, but because this ambiguous concept gives us the tools necessary to conceptually transcend problematic aspects of the epistemic subject and make up new categories of knowers. It is through this ideal that we shape the knowing subject.

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