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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

"Bad philosophy" and "derivative philosophy": Labels that keep women out of the canon

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Abstract

Efforts to include women in the canon have long been beset by reactionary gatekeeping, typified by the charge "That's not philosophy." That charge doesn't apply to early and mid-analytic female philosophers—Welby, Ladd-Franklin, Bryant, Jones, de Laguna, Stebbing, Ambrose, MacDonald—with job titles like lecturer in logic and professor of philosophy and publications in *Mind*, the *Journal of Philosophy,* and *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*. It's hopeless to dismiss their work as "not philosophy." But comparable reactionary gatekeeping affects them, this paper argues, typified by the labels "bad philosophy" and "derivative philosophy." Virtue and vice epistemology help explain why these women have been neglected and why their own approaches are epistemically virtuous. Their contemporaries and historians are deficient in scholarly virtues in labelling these women's work "bad" or derived from male mentors with no or specious justification. Their disparaged qualities—intellectual humility, modesty, critical self-reflection, disclosing biases—are often epistemic virtues.

KEYWORDS

Ambrose, Barcan, Bryant, de Laguna, E. E. C. Jones, MacDonald, Stebbing, Welby, women in philosophy

Our paper concerns the ways in which women philosophers in the past century and a half have often been dismissed and obscured from recent histories of analytic philosophy. Efforts to expand the philosophical canon, both recent and historical, often run up against a well-known gatekeeping exercise whereby women are excluded because they are, for one reason or another, not to be

counted as philosophers, the typical response to their work being: "That's not philosophy."[1] For example, in the early modern period, women are often dismissed as not philosophers but rather theologians or novelists. In the nineteenth century, some philosophically minded women are labelled as sociologists, psychologists, or otherwise social scientists, and others could only give "sermons" or speeches, mainly to other women. The latter effect seems to have been particularly pronounced for ethnic minority women, such as Maria W. Stewart (Hill Collins 1990), Sojourner Truth (Hill Collins 1990), and Emma Goldman (Waithe 1995, 323–24). Being labelled "not a philosopher" happened frequently to women who conducted their work outside the academy—whether by choice or, more usually, by necessity due to institutional sexism or racism. But even women with academic appointments in philosophy departments were not immune to this charge. Grace de Laguna is often characterised as a sociologist although she taught in a philosophy department (Dzuback 1993; see Connell forthcoming). Christine Ladd-Franklin, who published prolifically in mathematics, philosophy, and psychology, is almost completely forgotten as a philosopher and logician even though she held a Ph.D. in logic (published as Ladd 1883; see also Janssen-Lauret forthcoming and Boyd 2022).

The "That's not philosophy" charge cannot credibly be applied to the work of female philosophers and logicians in the early to mid-analytic period, that is, largely the late 1890s to the 1950s, with some earlier forerunners, the "grandmothers of analytic philosophy" (Janssen-Lauret 2022d, 2–8; Janssen-Lauret forthcoming). These women held Ph.D.s in philosophy or mathematical logic and job titles like lecturer in logic and professor of philosophy. They published in *Mind*, *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, *Erkenntnis*, and the *Journal of Philosophy*. Although their work is patently philosophy (and, in some cases, mathematical logic), they are still generally excluded from the canon of analytic philosophy, or at best given a very subsidiary role. Why? Because of a new type of reactionary gatekeeping, typified by the charge that their work is, compared to that of their male colleagues, bad, less good, or derivative philosophy.

While much recent work has applied itself to retrieving women and other minorities discounted as not proper philosophers, less work has been done on minorities being dismissed on the grounds that their philosophy is not good philosophy or is purely derivative and unoriginal. Dotson, for example, thinks that just so long as the philosophy of minorities is thought of as philosophy, the assessment of it as bad philosophy isn't important: "Philosophy can be deemed poor philosophy without it ceasing to be philosophy" (2012, 18). Here we argue that having one's work labelled "bad philosophy" or "derivative philosophy" has not only been demonstrably damaging to female philosophers of the early analytic period; these labels are also grievously misapplied: key features of these women's works labelled "bad" or "derivative"—epistemic humility, cautious wording, giving credit to others, disclosing biases—are outright epistemic virtues. What's more, twenty-first-century scholars and these women's contemporaries who failed to give them credit or attempted to write them out of history are epistemically vicious: they are, with respect to these women, deficient in scholarly virtues.

1 | WOMEN'S PLACE IN THE HISTORY AND HISTORIOGRAPHY OF ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY: MALE MENTORS AND PARTNERS, FEMININE STYLE, AND THE DERIVATIVE-PHILOSOPHY LABEL

The usual narrative of the history of early analytic philosophy involves only male figures, such as Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein, and Moore.[2] The turn from idealism to analysis and logic also

[1]O'Neill 1998; Hutton 2015; Nye 1998. Dotson thinks that academic philosophy perpetuates a pernicious "culture of justification" (2012, 4–5). The challenge of something's not being philosophy has also been used to exclude non-Western traditions (see Solomon 2009).

[2]For example, Coffa 1991 and Skorupski 1993 mention no women at all. Ahmed 2010 mentions only two recent female Wittgenstein scholars and none of Wittgenstein's historical female collaborators, such as Anscombe, Ambrose, and MacDonald. Soames 2003, xiii, explicitly defines "analytic philosophy" as the tradition whose agenda was set by the early works of Moore, Russell, and Wittgenstein, effectively rendering "female founder of analytic philosophy" a contradiction in terms.

involved various female authors. In the early period, there was Constance Jones, who wrote books on logic in the late nineteenth century while Mistress of Girton College, Cambridge. Meanwhile, we also find the independent scholar Victoria Welby.

Welby, a philosopher of language, and Christine Ladd-Franklin, who was the first woman to obtain a Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins, were well-published philosophers who also corresponded with more well-known male philosophers, such as William James, C. S. Peirce, and Bertrand Russell. In London, Sophie Bryant would excel in the Moral Sciences Tripos and be UCL's first female D.Sc., in 1884, explicitly writing her dissertation on "philosophy" (Burstall 1922, 15). All these women published books, and many produced papers in what would become our most established philosophy journals, such as *Mind*. We also discuss here a slightly later period, in which women studied alongside men; some were able to gain teaching positions as philosophy lecturers, mainly at women's institutions—these include a group of women who had studied at Cambridge, Oxford, and London: Susan Stebbing, Dorothy Wrinch, Margaret MacDonald, Margaret Masterman, Alice Ambrose, Martha Kneale, Elizabeth Anscombe, Philippa Foot, and Iris Murdoch. On the European continent, we find several women among the members of the Vienna Circle—Olga Hahn-Neurath, Rose Rand, and Olga Taussky—and the Lviv-Warsaw school, such as Janina Hosiasson, Maria Kokoszynska, Eugenia Ginsberg, Janina Kotarbinska, and Izydora Dambska (Janssen-Lauret 2022b). The United States was also home to several important philosophers and logicians, such as Grace de Laguna, Mary Calkins, Christine Ladd-Franklin, Susanne Langer, Marjorie Lee Browne, and Ruth Barcan Marcus.

While it is less easy to leave their endeavours out of the history of this period because what they were doing was not considered to be mainstream philosophy, it is quite common, both for historians and for these women's contemporaries, to justify their exclusion on the grounds that their philosophical insights were poor or their ideas derivative, with no originality or insight. We begin with a few indicative examples and supply more below.

Constance Jones defended the sense-reference distinction before Frege (Jones 1890, 46–51). Russell, despite being aware of Jones, reassigned credit for the sense-reference distinction to Frege, and when urged by his student Jourdain to acknowledge Jones, Russell minimised her accomplishments: "[Y]ou say in your letter, that Miss Jones's distinction of signification and denotation must be much the same as Frege's Sinn and Bedeutung. But of course *some* such distinction is a commonplace of logic" (Grattan-Guinness 1977, 119). Jones's work fell into neglect, quite possibly as a result of Russell's attempts to write her out of history and replace her with Frege (Janssen-Lauret forthcoming). Recent commentators, even feminist ones, often accidentally compound historically entrenched sexism by amplifying a misogynistic and mean-spirited remark by Russell—in a letter to his lover, Ottoline Morell—calling Jones "prissy, motherly, and utterly stupid" (qtd. in Ostertag 2020, n. 4, and in Senechal 2013, 51). They do not note the obvious absurdity of calling "stupid" the first woman to achieve a First in Moral Sciences who subsequently published four logic books and two dozen scholarly papers, nor Russell's explicit sexism, nor the gendered double standard apparent from the fact that historians rarely bother to engage with Russell's mean-spirited remarks about, say, John Dewey, whom he called "not a very clever one" (qtd. in Misak 2018, 104). What's more, it is worth stressing that neither prissiness nor motherliness has any relevance to a person's scholarly qualities. Jones certainly was well mannered and fond of children; other contemporaries described these qualities in strongly positive terms. One account, itself not devoid of sexism, comes from the preface to her posthumously published memoirs: "Unlike some intellectual women, she was never formidable, but charming in every kind of company. Her love of children was a touching feature in an unmarried lady" (Inge 1922, v). Jones herself described with delight how, as Mistress of Girton, she held summer garden parties for children and their parents (Jones 1922, 79). To date, only the present authors have called out Russell's insinuation that being ladylike and maternal are qualities incompatible with philosophical intelligence or a scholarly persona (Janssen-Lauret forthcoming; Connell and Janssen-Lauret 2022). The truth is the reverse: it is Russell and more

recent defenders of his decision to assign credit to Frege over Jones who show a deficit in the scholarly virtues of objectivity and of assigning due credit to originators of ideas based on date of first publication.

The self-taught philosopher of language Victoria Welby had no access to higher education but nevertheless produced four scholarly books setting out a tripartite, scientifically informed account of meaning, comprising mere denotation at the first level, compositionality and inferential relations at the second, and context, implicature, and social information at the third. Yet she was described by Peirce in terms both sexist and ill-justified, as well as seemingly contradictory. He characterised her *What Is Meaning?* simultaneously as a "really important work on logic," on a par with Russell's *Principles*, and "feminine" and "painfully weak." "Feminine," in this context, is certainly used pejoratively. Peirce recommended that "the male reader" needed to read only part of Welby's book (qtd. in Connell and Janssen-Lauret 2022, 200). But we argue below that Welby's writing style (not unlike Jones's) really was feminine, in a way that actually exhibits some epistemic virtues not shared by her male contemporaries.

Ruth Barcan, a twenty-four-year-old graduate student, was demonstrably the first person to publish a symbolic quantified modal logic (Barcan 1946 and 1947). But credit was soon reassigned either to Carnap (1947) or to Kripke (1963). Although the usual scholarly standards generally expect credit to be assigned based on date of publication, as with Jones above, this standard was not applied to Barcan. The justification given is generally that Carnap began to draft his work on modal logic earlier. Roberta Ballarin, in a section entitled "Carnap," first describes Carnap's system and then adds, "The idea of quantified modal systems occurred to Ruth Barcan too" (2021, § 3.1). Ballarin's account of Carnap's system is immediately followed by § 3.2, "Kripke's Possible Worlds Semantics." Herbert Hochberg, in view of Carnap's earlier drafts, characterises the view that Barcan's was the first quantified modal logic as "more myth than fact" (2002, 288). Barcan regretfully noted in a retrospective, "Some misreadings and omissions were corrected, some escalated into controversies, and some results were ignored. My keen disappointment was that my romantic notions about the self correcting feature of research within a scholarly community were not a given" (Barcan Marcus 2010, 83).

Even feminist commentators, in books and papers on female authors that are intended to improve female representation, often casually dismiss some of these women's works along the way. For example, Sophie Bryant's "Are Psychical States Extended?" is described, without any argument, as "an unconvincing, and brief symposium paper" (Waithe 1995, 302). Arianna Betti dismisses Eugenia Ginsberg's paper on Husserl by saying, "Unfortunately in this article she doesn't take account of the Husserlian distinction between *foundation* and relative *dependence*" (2001, 106; our translation). There is probably more than one reason why this has become a popular way to dismiss the work of so many women authors. First of all, philosophy in this period (the 1890s to the 1950s) valorised confidence and a strong voice that does not pause to acknowledge influences, a straightforward "gentlemanly" style.[3] This has, no doubt, a long history in the "philosophical imaginary" (Le Doeuff 1989, chap. 6). There is also the fact that once there is a canon in place, reinforced by what is assigned in philosophy classes as core readings, anything that deviates can be seen as wrongheaded (Hutton 2015, 10; Rée 2002). Thus, the very fact that these women's philosophical ideas and insights are unfamiliar to modern readers can make them seem like the wrong sort of philosophy, like bad philosophy.

Next, in many cases, the lack of discussion of women philosophers' work in this period is due to the fact that they are deemed to be followers of more well-known male philosophers and thus are labelled as having produced only derivative philosophy. For example, Alice Ambrose and Margaret MacDonald's works are usually noted only as being "Wittgensteinian" (see Connell 2022; Vlastis 2022). Despite their own distinctive philosophical positions, some of

[3]See also Paul 2011, 14, on the historical connection between scholarly virtues and "gentlemanly" identity.

their male contemporaries chose to see them as representatives of their male teachers' views. For example, in a paper that attempts to engage with the views of his former student, Russell takes Ambrose to be parroting Wittgenstein (Monk 2001, 204). In his dismissal of her position, however, he is less respectful than he would have been of her teacher, constantly referring to her as "Miss Ambrose" despite her Ph.D. (Russell 1935–36; Loner forthcoming). Susan Stebbing, too, has been neglected because she has been given insufficient credit for originality. Her friend and near-contemporary A. J. Ayer is typical in describing her as "very much a disciple of Moore" (1977, 71). Several recent commentators also describe Stebbing several times as a "Moorean" (Milkov 2003, 355, 358; Beaney 2016, 242, 245–46, 248–50, 253–54; Beaney and Chapman 2018, §§ 3, 4). They even apply Moore's name to positions that Stebbing claimed as her own original views, as when Milkov gives the name "Moore's directional analysis" (Milkov 2003, 358) to what Stebbing herself describes (in a paper about Moore) as "an analysis I once called 'directional analysis'" (1942, 527). Stebbing certainly viewed Moore as a mentor figure, and at times credited him with specific views she endorsed or with inspiring her to develop her own views on a given topic. Yet this effect has been rather exaggerated, because her discussions with Moore largely pertain to her very interesting views on logical constructions and philosophical analysis.[4] To date little attention has been paid to Stebbing's extensive work on philosophy of physics, a topic of which Moore, trained in classics and philosophy, never made any serious study. She similarly gave credit to Russell and to Whitehead, on whose philosophy she wrote more papers than on Moore's (Stebbing 1924; 1924 –25; 1926). Giving due credit to others was an intellectual virtue that Stebbing prized.

Similarly, MacDonald's philosophy is thought to be essentially that of Moore (see Vlastis 2022) and Ladd-Franklin's that of Pierce (see Boyd 2022). Martha Kneale wrote several chapters of the *Development of Logic*, but the work is usually credited only to her husband, William Kneale (see Heal 2022). When Russell's onetime student Dorothy Wrinch wrote a defence of the multiple-relation theory of judgement against Wittgenstein's nonsense challenge, commentators were quick to find Russell's voice behind it, even in the absence of any evidence. "Though circumstantial, this historical consideration suggests that her work on this topic might bear some relation to Russell's own deliberations" (Lebens 2017, 192). The tendency to assimilate women's views to those of more well-known male philosophers has been heavily critiqued by Hutton in the early modern period (see 2015, 10). A similar critique is in order for the early analytic times. What may add to the tendency to assimilate women philosophers' views to more famous men is the fact that many women philosophers of this period did not put themselves forward as significant or original but preferred a much more self-deprecatory style, with a heavy emphasis on what they had learned and gained from other philosophers.[5] It is this intellectual humility that we concentrate on in the next section.

2 | THE EPISTEMIC VIRTUE OF INTELLECTUAL HUMILITY AND ITS OPPOSITE, THE VICE OF INTELLECTUAL PRIDE

Intellectual humility is described as an important scholarly virtue by, amongst others, Herman Paul (2011, 6–7, 14) and Michèle Lamont (2009, 195). Paul also contends that the scholarly virtue often described as "taking care" or "being careful" is an amalgam of methodological rigour and intellectual humility (2011, 6). We focus in particular on the following kinds of intellectual humility, which, we argue, are connected to feminine socialisation: a self-effacing, polite, and generally feminine or ladylike self-presentation or writing style; modesty; giving due credit to

[4]Janssen-Lauret 2022c argues that Stebbing was too modest here, and actually made a major advance on Moore. See also Janssen-Lauret 2022d, 45–49.

[5]This is also common in other periods of history, including the early modern (Rée 2002, 643).

others for ideas, discussion, and mentorship; and explicit attempts to overcome personal biases. Although these four can bleed into one another where more than one of them is present, they need not co-exist. A feminine writing style, quite different from that of their male colleagues, is particularly apparent in the works of the nineteenth-century upper-class British women like Jones and Welby, and it leads to clear misunderstandings of them by their contemporaries and by historians. While early twentieth-century women like Stebbing and Anscombe were more plain-speaking in their publications and public-speaking style, they were still prone to be unduly self-effacing and modest about their abilities and achievements.

What we describe as a feminine writing and speaking style in certain female philosophers of the early analytic period has some commonalities with, but does not completely coincide with, the kind of feminine style Karlyn Khors Campbell (1986) identifies in the speeches of figures like Sojourner Truth and Ida B. Wells. Campbell views their styles as characterised by indirectness, liberal use of metaphor, analogy, and rhetorical questions, and illustrations from personal experience. Illustrations drawn from feminine personal experience are one fascinating aspect of early women's works that are less common in our contemporaries, perhaps as a result of not wanting to be pigeonholed as female by blind reviewers. Christine Ladd-Franklin peppers her papers with examples of logical inferences provided to her by her daughter, Margaret Ladd-Franklin, for example: "When I said to my little girl, 'I will take you down town this afternoon if you are good,' she said 'And only?'—meaning: That is no doubt a sufficient condition, but is it also indispensable?" (Ladd-Franklin 1912, 646). Grace de Laguna also uses the behaviour of her own daughter, noting how when her grandfather pointed to a clock and called it "tick-tick," she subsequently used a similar expression for all objects: "She had learned a new response to objects, and she practiced it with the same sort of pleasure she had earlier taken in throwing objects on the floor or in untying shoes" (1927, 70); this description brings to mind the challenges and tediousness of the care of young children, a familiar experience for many women at this time. She also uses her observation that in her hometown there are four sets of little twin girls but only one set of twin boys (1917, 622). Anscombe (1981) would later, in her first Moral Sciences Club paper, discuss games she played to teach her children colour words (MacCumhaill and Wiseman 2022, 191). Jones explains the conditional by means of the example "If Kate marries Peter, she will be wretched," on the grounds that "Peter is a miser," and she demonstrates how to refute a hypothetical conditional, "If Ferdinand marries Henrietta [who is in debt], he will be ruined," by considering the possibility that "Henrietta were herself a millionaire" (1911, 46). Stebbing illustrates logical reasoning from empirical generalisations by starting with the observation "Don't wear that dress at the seaside, for it will fade" (1930, 8) and walking the reader through a series of logical inferences about shades of blue, sea air, and chemical instability of dyes. Ambrose uses the example of dollars in her "purse" to refute the sceptic (1942, 402).

Victoria Welby's nineteenth-century feminine writing style is often misinterpreted by commentators. Especially in correspondence, Welby was scrupulously polite and frequently took a rather self-effacing tone. Historians now regularly interpret that tone not as an expression of Victorian politeness but as an honest self-assessment, which they assume is accurate. For example, Welby can be seen being politely modest about her own views and hinting at her regret that she never learnt much mathematics in a letter to Peirce where she mentions Russell's "presentation in non-technical form of these points in advanced modern mathematics which affect philosophical thinking and supply a translation into logical language (as much of your writing seems to do) of some of my own vague ideas" (Welby to Peirce, December 22, 1903).[6] Ahti-Veikko Pietarinen glosses this as Welby "confessing" to having vague ideas (2009, 475); Charles S. Hardwick judges her as not having "fully understood the implications of [Peirce's] work" (1977, xxxii). Present-day readers often prove bad at reading Welby's indirect communication in the Victorian

[6]In Charles S. Peirce, "Manuscripts," MS L 463, Houghton Library, Harvard University, quoted in Pietarinen 2009, 475.

style—ironically, something Welby had warned against: "Unless the language of our author is obviously archaic . . . we take his words, we take his phrases, we fill them out with the same content as our own, we make him mean precisely what we ourselves mean. And be it noted that it is always what we mean now" (1893, 513). It is possible that both Welby and Jones used an ultra-polite writing style and ladylike manners strategically. While they are harder for late twentieth and early twenty-first-century commentators to interpret, their conventionally feminine self-presentation may have given them a better chance of being heard, or at least tolerated, by the conservative Victorian establishment men of their generation—and the two mentioned above.[7]

In the prefaces to their books, women philosophers of the early analytic period were often profuse in their thanks to and praise for other philosophers and explicit about their debt to them. They are also modest about their own abilities. For example:

> [T]he general statement of psychological principles to which I owe most, for the clearing up of my conceptions on the subject, is comprised in two articles on 'Psychological Principles,' by Mr. James Ward, which appeared in *Mind*. . . . To other thinkers my debt is also large; I have built, whether worthily or not, on foundations already deeply laid. (Bryant 1887, vii–viii)

> In writing this book I am conscious of having learned most from Professor A. N. Whitehead, Mr. Bertrand Russell, Professor G. E. Moore, and Dr. C. D. Broad. The numerous footnote references to their writings do not sufficiently indicate the extent of *my obligation to them*. (Stebbing 1930, xiii; our emphasis)

> Over the years in which these essays were written I have kept constantly before me the model of procedure in philosophy which Professor G. E. Moore gave me in the three years I was his pupil in Cambridge University. Moore devoted himself steadfastly to the clarification of problems, employing his great powers of analysis. . . . I have tried *to the best of my abilities* to follow the example set by his standards. (Ambrose 1966, 9; our emphasis)

In another example, de Laguna has trouble taking credit for her ground-breaking analysis of language in the 1927 book *Speech: Its Function and Development*. After thanking her husband and a colleague, she writes of another man, Edgar A. Singer: "[T]he general behaviouristic position adopted. . . [is] substantially the same as that which he was the first to formulate" (1927, xii).

One can contrast the self-presentation of Bertrand Russell. In his autobiography, he sets himself up as innovator, without a debt even to Frege. Of the *Begriffsschrift*, he writes: "I possessed the book for years before I could make out what it meant. Indeed, I did not understand it until I had myself independently discovered most of its content" (1967, 68). Similarly, Wittgenstein writes in his preface to the *Tractatus*, "I do not wish to judge how far my efforts coincide with those of other philosophers . . . the reason why I give no sources is that it is a matter of indifference to me whether the thoughts that I have had have been anticipated by someone else" (1922, 3). Here is a certain "intellectual pride," marked out by Zagzebski (1996, 152) as an intellectual vice, not so evident in women writers at the time. What's more, professing a lack of interest in whether others have anticipated one's ideas betrays a lack of scholarly rigour and objectivity, of the kind we noted above in discussing historians who failed to assign credit to Jones and Barcan.

[7]We thank Lucija Duda for this suggestion. Connell forthcoming discusses Bryant's conscious self-presentation as an inoffensive Victorian widow.

Barcan wrote about Kripke that she really appreciated his contributions to the discussion of her paper (Barcan Marcus 1993, 3–4) and also wrote that she didn't like to publish a result until she was really sure of it (Barcan Marcus 2010, 82). She credits her hugely important direct reference theory of direct reference of proper names to her reading of Russell (Barcan Marcus 2010, 82) even though it is clear that Russell's view, on which direct reference exists but proper names are disguised descriptions, is significantly different from hers and hers is highly original (Janssen-Lauret 2022a, 366–67).

Modesty is often attributed to early analytic female philosophers, including by their defenders, both contemporary and recent; it generally seems to be considered a virtue. For example, Mary Ellen Waithe and Samantha Cicero describe Jones as "modest" multiple times (1995, 26, 27), and the author of the preface to Jones's memoirs writes, "The treatise on Logic, of which she speaks so *modestly*, is considered by experts an important contribution to a science on which the outsider might suppose that there was not much new to be said" (Inge 1922, v; our emphasis). Of Margaret MacDonald it was said that she was "loved and esteemed [for her philosophical work] far more widely than, *in her modesty*, she would allow herself to recognise" (Wooton 1956, 11; our emphasis).

It is striking that some thought the trait of humility and modesty in these women a sign of weakness or lack of real intelligence. Wittgenstein once wrote of Ambrose in a scathing tone that she was "indefatigable in trying to understand the extremely different problems we have been discussing" (qtd. in Connell 2022, 328). But the caution and care that these women exercised can be seen as an important intellectual virtue. Here Stebbing might again be contrasted with Russell. In writing a tribute to Moore, Stebbing is particularly self-abnegatory: "It is unpleasant to find myself in the awkward predicament of one who feels bound to apologize for doing badly what he (or, in this case, she) should never have attempted at all. . . . In this essay there will be personal impressions which I can only hope will not strike the reader as impertinent, in either sense of that word. The hope is not very robust" (1942, 517).[8] One cannot imagine Russell would ever have thought it at all "impertinent" to express his own personal impressions; instead, he had the habit of instructing others on his views, particularly in his more popular writings. In the preface to *The Conquest of Happiness*, he writes: "All that I claim for the recipes offered to the reader is that they are such as are confirmed by my own experience and observation, and that they have increased my own happiness whenever I have acted in accordance with them. On this ground I venture to hope that some among those multitudes of men and women who suffer unhappiness without enjoying it, may find their situation diagnosed and a method of escape suggested" (1930, 5). While Russell's tone here is somewhat apologetic, the gist is that the general public needs to listen to his great insights, which unlike the insights of an ordinary person, are worth more. Furthermore, they come from him without any debt to anyone else.

Stebbing also wrote public philosophy, but for her the goal was to empower the general population of non-philosophers to think for themselves. In her *Thinking to Some Purpose*, Stebbing recommends that her readers "scrutinize their reasoning with sufficient care" (1939, 38). Careful reasoning, for Stebbing, has elements of patience and rigour—"careful consideration of possible views" (1939, 71); "care is taken to make the sample properly representative" (1939, 121)—as well as humility and striving for objectivity. Stebbing urges her reader to examine others' words for misleading or propagandistic language, "potted thinking," which distils other people's thought into simplistic slogans, and biases or prejudices. The point is not to tell the public about her own views but to promote "the urgent need for a democratic people to think clearly without the distortions due to unconscious bias and unrecognized ignorance" (1939, 5). Thus individuals can arm themselves against speakers who lack "intellectual honesty" (1939, 82) and try to tell them

[8]It is worth noting that Stebbing, at the time of writing, had long been very unwell from a combination of cancer and life-long disabilities. It is possible that her self-abnegatory tone flows in part from frustration about being unable to do her best work in the face of ill health.

what's best for them by exploiting the audience members' "intellectual incompetence" (1939, 81). Stebbing points out that all humans have biases and pre-conceived opinions. She strives to lay her own before the reader when she is worried that they may affect the argument: "I have myself strong opinions on some of the topics that I cite as examples; I do not hope to succeed in escaping bias either in my selection or in my exposition of these examples. I should like to be able to do so, but I am aware that on many questions of practical importance I hold views that seem to me so definitely correct that I am unable to believe that those who differ from me thereon have seen clearly what I see (and 'see clearly' is the addition I am tempted to add, except that I have so often been mistaken)" (1939, 54).

At times, some women writers from this period display severe cases of imposter syndrome, where they deny their own expertise. For example, Philippa Foot, who said of herself, "I'm not clever at all. I'm a dreadfully slow thinker, really" (Voorhoeve 2003, 32), while Iris Murdoch considered her friend Philippa "much better at philosophy than I am" (Iris Murdoch to David Hicks, 6 November 1945, in Lipscomb 2021, 111).[9] Susan Stebbing, in a paper in a book dedicated to Moore, recalls an early encounter with him in which she makes a lot of her own confused ideas at the time: "In 1917 I read a paper to the Aristotelian society, perhaps one of the most muddled papers that has ever been presented to that assembly. . . . [Moore] hates a muddle; to clear up a muddle he will (as I know from my own experience) take the trouble to write to an insignificant person what is in effect a first-rate essay" (1942, 530–31). One explanation for this tone is that Stebbing is paying respect to Moore; another is that she is being honest about the way that she listened to and took on board criticism. To characterise herself as "an insignificant person" is also noteworthy and may be part of her democratic and pedagogic views, that anyone can learn about logic and philosophical argumentation; she would not wish to see herself as being above others in this regard, above her students or other thinkers. Again, there are certain positive outcomes from this attitude, such as the ability to revise one's view in the light of new evidence or arguments and the ability to inspire others to join the search for knowledge.

One might characterise this sort of intellectual humility as an open-mindedness, as being ready to admit that one might be wrong. That trait is conducive to progress in philosophical argumentation, as opposed to "rigidity" (Zagzebski 1996, 152). The caution of philosophical women can be seen in a very positive light and the boldness of their male counterparts as somewhat negative. As Michèle Le Doeuff once put it: "I open a work by Hegel or Leibniz, and I catch myself thinking: 'What a cheek, all the same! You must have an incredible nerve to claim intellectual mastery of all that is in heaven and earth. . . . A woman would never dare"' (1989, 126–27). Certain aspects of intellectual humility can be seen as an intellectual virtue, one that "tends to aid our inquiries" (Cassam 2015a, 2). A few positive aspects of this virtue can be found in these women writers. In many cases, they show a concern for understanding the points of view of others and take these into account.[10] They wish to credit others where they feel credit is due, especially teachers and friends. And finally, they tread gently in order to make some progress but not to step beyond their own knowledge or understanding. These traits are "thinking styles"

[9]Christina Easton points out in correspondence that in 1950s Oxford "cleverness" was defined rather narrowly, largely in terms of being quick-witted. By contrast, figures like Anscombe and Foot were more concerned with taking philosophical problems with appropriate seriousness (see also Lipscombe 2021). In a paper of her own, Easton (2021, 156) proposes that a "broader type of reflectivity . . . is of more value" and potentially more inclusive than valuing only the "quick-thinking" variety. This was seldom recognised; Isaiah Berlin, for example, denigrated Murdoch as "a lady not known for the clarity of her views" (Lipscombe 2021, 133).

[10]There is a striking example of this in a paper by Sophie Bryant in which she argues that an attitude of "self-surrender" is the only way to charitably understand the point of view of others. She writes: "The mind of the reader must be given to him to follow his lead, opened as wide as it will open to receive his thought, cleared for the time from obstructive preconceptions, however vital, while all in our own minds that helps us to grasp the thinker's meaning is brought into prominence. . . . A critical habit of mind is invaluable, but in early stages of knowledge it is at least as important to be able to put it, in a negative sense, aside. If is, of course, a much cleverer thing to read the difficult author, even as a beginner, in a carping, critical spirit. . . . Nevertheless, the first step is to see what he means, and to see it in the most favorable light. This is what I imagine some 'smart' people with unnaturally sharp critical intellect so often fail to do" (1893, 318–19).

that can be seen as the opposite of the intellectual vices of "insensitivity to detail," "intellectual pride," and "wishful thinking" (Zagzebski 1996, 152).

3 | THE ROLE OF GENDERED SOCIALISATION; THE CULTIVATION OF INTELLECTUAL CAUTION

It could be that certain positive intellectual traits of certain female philosophers of this period were cultivated in part in response to gendered socialisation. By being careful to respond to social expectations of the subordinate class, thinkers in this position seek a way into knowledge systems without being dismissed as unacceptably forthcoming. They would expect vitriol or misogyny in response to too masculine a display. Such responses can be seen, for example, in J. R. Searle's descriptions of Anscombe. Searle praises Austin's teaching style while denigrating Anscombe's: "Austin is 'the ultimate English schoolmaster' . . . 'even in casual conversation Austin did not tolerate loose talk.' He was a teacher to whom one felt 'like a total idiot' when not knowing an answer" (2014, 177). On what he considers a fierce style in Anscombe's teaching, Searle is unforgiving: "Elizabeth turned on him [a student] savagely and said, 'You obviously haven't understood anything I said.' She said this with such cruelty and ferocity that the victim simply shrivelled. He was humiliated" (182).[11]

When Hochberg recounts Ruth Barcan Marcus asking Hochberg's teacher Bergmann not to call her "Miss Barcan"—"sharply," Hochberg says—he quotes approvingly Bergmann's "smiling, sarcastic" reply, "I refer to you by the name you have made immortal" (Hochberg 2014, 175).

It is understandable why, in the context of ubiquitous institutional and social sexism during the period we are looking at, certain women philosophers would have opted for modest self-presentation. It's not as if they weren't made painfully aware of the usual dismissal of women's views, especially in public. One example is Martha Kneale's paper about philosophy and psychical research given in 1933. As Jane Heal relates, Kneale took part in a psychical experiment organised by her then teacher, H. H. Price, at Oxford and "developed an interest in psychical research." Her "open-minded" paper reaches a very modest conclusion concerning the meaning of "mental" and "physical." However, "the two co-symposiasts, Richard Robinson and C W K Mundle, both commented on her paper in a critical and hostile spirit, with a marked lack of any attempt to find common ground" (Heal 2022, 351). This procedure seems to have been regularly practised on women philosophers in this period. Iris Murdoch was involved in a panel discussion with Gilbert Ryle and Tony Lloyd at the Joint Session in Edinburgh in 1950. She presented the idea that some communication is fragile and personal and that cultural objects, such as poems, help to preserve it. Both respondents failed to capture her point and ridiculed her account of metaphors (Lloyd 1951; MacCumhaill and Wiseman 2022, 260–61).[12]

Anscombe's first paper to the Moral Sciences Club—in October 1947, "The Reality of the Past"—began with an apology: "Everywhere in this paper I have imitated Dr Wittgenstein's ideas and methods of discussion. The best that I have written is a weak copy of some features of the original, and its value depends only on my capacity to understand and use Dr Wittgenstein's work" (Anscombe 1981, 144 n. 3). But her talk moved far beyond Wittgenstein's suggestive remarks. "She was presenting not fragments but sustained philosophical argument" (MacCumhaill and Wiseman 2022, 188–89). One must be cautious about self-presentation in such instances. Anscombe would have to be careful about how she showed her intelligence, and she knew this. Similarly, thinkers such as Alice Ambrose kept their reputation in a fiercely misogynistic professional environment by emphasising their subordinate position with respect to male philosophers. In that context, it is wise to seem only "a naive witness" to "greatness," which is

[11]This example is taken in part from Eleanor Robson's draft Ph.D. thesis (2022).

[12]For a similar treatment of Murdoch when in debate with Hampshire and Berlin in 1955 see Robson's Ph.D. thesis (2022).

how Ambrose was later to describe her encounters with Wittgenstein (Ambrose 1972, 15). In an earlier exchange, with Russell, Ambrose takes pains to cushion his mistakes. She writes that Russell's criticism of her view that some mathematical exercises are not completable "expresses roughly the criterion which was either ambiguously or incorrectly set out in my papers" (1937, 379). She then proceeds to painstakingly repeat her position in new ways. "Mr Russell took my claim as stated in the papers (that we should be certain of being able to verify or disprove a verbal form before holding it to be either true or false) to apply generally to both mathematical and empirical expressions." This blatant misinterpretation and mistake on Russell's part allowed him to play fast and loose with supposed counterexamples, such as the problem of whether "Bismarck" ate beef "on January 17, 1861" (Russell 1935–36, 143). Although publicly humiliated by him, Ambrose takes care to explain Russell's mistake in a respectful manner: "I wanted to make the claim as amended above, and in connection with mathematical verbal forms only" (1937, 381). This intellectual humility would seem to be an attempt on her part to engage the interlocuter to re-join the debate without any shame, a concession that proved pointless. Russell snubbed Ambrose's paper by failing to provide a formal response in the journal *Mind* (Loner forthcoming).

In yet another example, the innovative philosopher of science Hélène Metzger prefaced her talk on rival theorist Émile Meyerson with profuse praise. Even when endeavouring to distance herself from his views, Metzger does this in a cautious and respectful manner: "I cannot say he was my teacher. . . . Nor can I describe myself entirely as his disciple (for the problems that interest me most are not quite those that his epistemological work has tried to clarify). But I wish to thank him publicly for his valuable advice and encouragement, and to assure him of my gratitude" (1987, 95).[13] A calm acknowledgement of authority can be seen as an intellectual virtue. Taking the trouble to understand and engage the views of others with whom one does not necessarily agree allows for an enrichment of our knowledge systems through constructive engagement with interlocuters.

An intellectual virtue such as humility brought on by social oppression in the first instance might be cultivated later on. Being aware of the obstacles they faced, some of the women we are discussing also had a keen eye on the importance of intellectual virtues. The *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* entry "Virtue Epistemology" mentions no female philosophers as historical precursors (Turri, Alfano, and Greco 2021), but what about Sophie Bryant? Her 1887 book *On Educational Ends*, reviewed positively in *Mind* the following year, gives a detailed account of the importance of nurturing intellectual virtues in children. In the early part of the book, Bryant emphasises that intellectual virtues are character traits. She makes clear how interconnected intellectual traits are with moral ones:

> The production of moral character may be called the Ethical End of Education, and the production of intellectual character the Logical End. Consideration of the former involves Ethics, as the doctrine of the exercise of the will in the search for good, or the performance of duty. Its central question is—how should I do what there is for me to do? Consideration of the Logical End involves Logic as the doctrine of the exercise of intellect in the search for truth. Its central question is—how should I know what there is for me to know? The production of the Ethical End is not, however, a mere question of Ethics, nor is the production of the Logical End a mere question of Logic. Character, whether logical or ethical, is more than the exercise of intellect or will respectively; there is will in the exercise of intellect and intellect in that of will. (1887, 11)

[13]For a fascinating account of Metzger's later rebellion against Meyerson see Chissimo and Freudenthal 2003.

Byrant concentrates on intellectual virtues in chapter 7, "The Sound Intellect Set on Truth," where she sets out three main types of intellectual virtue that are required for all: (1) intellectual activity; (2) intellectual passivity or "openness of mind"; and (3) attention to the distinction between truth and falsity (258–59). In her account of education, the main issue was to make children curious and then to encourage them to be critical. But the critical habit of searching out error requires an initial stage of intellectual humility (267); learning is more laborious than energetic, and acknowledging this is what will make your life go well; it is the perfection of the human (289). The connection between learning the truth and being virtuous is, of course, very ancient. But the idea of philosophy as a study that requires self-reflection about our own practices of philosophical inquiry is relatively new and pre-figured in the writings of several women of this period.[14] For example, in a paper about Moore and Wittgenstein as teachers, Ambrose credits them not only with her intellectual achievements but also with the "personal values" she brought to research and teaching (Ambrose 1989, 107).

When women took the time to listen carefully to the philosophical views of their contemporaries, it led them to set these out clearly and build upon them. This does not signal lack of originality or the status of mere follower or mindless disciple. Indeed, it can lead to an open-mindedness and intellectual courage, acknowledging what cannot yet be understood and what still needs further development. That Ambrose and MacDonald built on Wittgenstein's inchoate ideas long before these were published in *Philosophical Investigations* is to their credit.[15] In their own ways, both made original contributions to ordinary language philosophy (see Chapman forthcoming).

The intellectual style of early analytic women philosophers emerges in response to what Kate Manne terms "misogyny"—a system in which women are required to give certain social goods and refrain from taking those socially coded as male. When they attempt the latter, they are punished and shamed. Among these male-coded goods Manne includes "leadership, authority, influence" and also "pride, reputation, or standing" (2017, 113, 130). Men are to have a "freedom from shame and lack of public humiliation"; we see these women philosophers constantly being subjected to this while having to avoid imposing it on a male contemporary. A woman "may be effectively prohibited from competing with him for, or otherwise robbing him of, certain masculine-coded prizes; and he may also be deemed entitled to prevent her from so doing. . . . [T]o the extent to which she tries to or successfully beats the boys 'at their own game,' she may be held to have cheated, or to have stolen something from him" (117). The respect, prestige, privilege, and power that came from being considered a philosopher at this time are male-coded goods that these women were trying to claim for themselves. This claim brought with it a challenge—to adapt or be punished and shamed. Unfortunately, the effect of adaptation to more ladylike behaviour in philosophical prose was often to obscure their work. We can and must, however, now recognise that their philosophical ideas combined with a conciliatory and modest style often resulted in very good philosophy indeed.

4 | CONCLUSION: VIRTUE AND VICE EPISTEMOLOGY AND THE RECOVERY OF WOMEN'S WORKS IN EARLY ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY

Women are either conspicuously missing or confined to footnotes or solitary mentions in most mainstream histories of early to mid-analytic philosophy. Historians generally justify their exclusion—if they comment on women's exclusion at all—on the grounds that the works of women from this period are not worth reading, not as good as those of their male contemporaries,

[14]On the importance of critical self-reflection, see Paul 2014; Cassam 2015b.

[15]See also MacCumhaill and Wiseman's description of Anscombe's advances on the Wittgensteinian ideas she paid tribute to (2022, 188–93).

or derived from male mentors and collaborators. We have already seen historians claim that Carnap's or Kripke's modal logics deserve more attention than Barcan's, although she published hers first, that although Constance Jones came up with the sense-reference distinction first, "it must be mentioned" that she was not as good a logician, as Frege and Russell had "misgivings about her abilities" (Ostertag 2020, n. 4), that Stebbing was just a follower of Moore, that Welby's ideas were vague. Here the historians echo those women's male contemporaries: Quine, who conflated Barcan's logic with Carnap's (Janssen-Lauret 2022a, 371–72); Russell, who called Jones "prissy, motherly and utterly stupid" (Connell and Janssen-Lauret 2022, 201); Ayer, who thought Stebbing a "disciple" (1977, 71); Peirce, who described Welby's book as "feminine" and "painfully weak" (qtd. in Connell and Janssen-Lauret 2022, 200). In this paper we have argued that the use of virtue and vice epistemology is helpful and instructive when we explain why women's exclusion from the canon, and these kinds of justifications for it, are objectionable.

First, there is a certain lack of adherence to scholarly objectivity and established conventions of citation when academics and historians fail to credit female originators of ideas. Similarly, to attempt to imply that someone who is feminine, ladylike, or motherly cannot be a philosopher or logician of equal stature to a male counterpart shows a deficit of scholarly virtues of rigour and objectivity. Masculinity versus femininity, having ladylike manners versus gentlemanly manners or brusque manners, being motherly versus being fatherly or not being parental have no relevance at all to a person's academic ability or achievement. Examples drawn from feminine experience—teaching your children to name objects, your dress fading in the sea air, having cash in your purse, worrying about who brings money into a marriage and who has access to it—illustrate philosophical reasoning just as well as examples drawn from masculine experience, like Moore's seeing the colour of a soldier's coat and Frege's example about the man wounded in battle. The former examples are simply connected to feminine socialisation or to experiences more typically had by women in the relevant societies; with respect to philosophical quality or originality, they are neutral.

Second, we have argued that several qualities for which women and their works are disparaged are not just neutral but are outright epistemic virtues: politeness, acknowledging others' help and influence, inviting the reader to come to her own conclusions, disclosing one's own opinions and biases, modesty, critical self-reflection, keeping an open mind, and intellectual humility. While of course not all women have all these qualities, or indeed any of them, and many men do have them, they are qualities linked to female socialisation in the societies in which early analytic women grew up. By contrast, they are notably lacking, at times, in prominent male early and mid-analytic philosophers. We mentioned Wittgenstein expressing that he did not care who might have anticipated the *Tractatus*, Russell recommending that the general public ought to share his views, Austin nit-picking the wording even of friends in casual conversations, Bergmann being sarcastic about Barcan's achievements, and Ryle persistently, and rudely, refusing to find common ground with Murdoch. On these occasions they displayed a kind of intellectual pride, lack of charity, and closed-mindedness that is usefully regarded as epistemically vicious. In this way virtue and vice epistemology serve as a useful tool to help us see, and make an argumentative case for, what is wrong with excluding women from the canon of early analytic philosophy.

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