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We can derive some sense of the way intellectual life is experienced in an era from the recurrence of certain metaphors used to describe its conduct—for example, the frequency with which, in our own time, intellectual projects and achievements are described in terms of navigational finesse: the charting of passages between extremes, the steering of middle courses, the avoidance of the twin perils of Scylla and Charybdis. Thus an advertisement for philosopher Susan Haack's book, *Evidence and Inquiry*, features a statement by Hilary Putnam praising the author for "elaborating and persuasively defending a position . . . which adroitly steers between the Scylla of apriorism and the Charybdis of scientism."[1] Or again, *Image and Logic*, by historian of science Peter Galison, is commended by its reviewer, professor of physics Michael Riordan, for "adroitly side-step[ping] one of the most contentious issues at the heart of current science wars[:] . . . whether scientific measurements stand on their own as arbiters of reality, as the positivists insist [o]r, . . . as the relativists counter, . . . predominantly reflect the biases of the culture that constructs them." Riordan

concludes the review by applauding Galison for "tak[ing] a mighty stand in the middle of these debates, a richly philosophical voice of moderation with which both extremes must now reckon."[2]

There is some question, of course, as to whether Riordan's statement of the issue in the so-called science wars is altogether evenhanded and, relatedly, whether his report of the views of whomever he means by "the relativists" (he alludes in passing to Thomas Kuhn) is accurate. One might also raise the question of how such possible bias on Riordan's part might be measured and, in the case of disagreements on such matters, what would stand as *their* arbiters. Indeed, each of these questions reflects more general issues—for example, the limits of observational objectivity and the commensurability of varying conceptions of epistemic value and judgment—that are also currently contentious but, with significant rhetorical effect, not acknowledged here as such. In other words, the very terms in which "moderation" is praised promote one side of a conflict (or of several conflicts) over the other(s) and perpetuate dubious conceptions of the issues involved as well as the nature of the alternative positions. In these respects, however, the review is typical of the class of moves and strategies I shall be discussing here.

An especially self-conscious description of navigational finesse occurs on the opening pages of a recently published book, *On the Origin of Objects*, by philosopher/computational theorist Brian Cantwell Smith, who writes as follows:

> This book introduces a new metaphysics—a philosophy of presence— that aims to steer a path between the Scylla of naive realism and the Charybdis of pure constructivism. The goal is to develop an integral account that retains the essential humility underlying each tradition: a form of epistemic deference to the world that underlies realism, and a respect for the constitutive human involvement in the world that underwrites constructivism. . . . the project requires finding . . . a way to feed our undiminished yearning for foundations and grounding, while at the same time avoiding the reductionism and ideological fundamentalism that have so bedeviled prior foundationalist approaches. . . . the proposal shows . . . how an irrevocable commitment to pluralism is compatible with the recognition that not all stories are equally good.[3]

As this suggests, however, Cantwell Smith's navigational feat risks becoming not so much a steering-between as a steering-in-two-directions-

at-the-same-time, with the alternate perils—of stasis or shipwreck—that such a project evokes. Like Riordan's moderation-praising review of Galison, Cantwell Smith's launching of his extremity-avoiding voyage involves a number of question-begging turns. How general, for example, is the set of people who "yearn"—with or without diminishment—for "foundations and grounding"? And is it "reductionism" and "ideological fundamentalism" that trouble critics of various foundationalisms, or something more consequential for Cantwell Smith's own project, such as fundamental conceptual incoherence? More significant here than the question-begging, however, is the affirmation of what appear to be contradictory positions. For if one endorses a constructivist understanding of "human involvement in the world" as *constitutive*, then one cannot consistently retain the "epistemic deference" to a presumptively *autonomous* reality that generally defines realism. It is this sort of elaborated affirmation of mutually incompatible doctrines or, in the name of middle-road moderation, the simultaneous or rapidly oscillating avowal and disavowal of both traditional and more or less radically revisionist positions that I shall discuss here as "equivocation." In regard to a number of currently volatile intellectual issues, it appears to be a major—perhaps predominant—mode of theoretical discourse in our time.

Some signal features of the mode are illustrated by Cantwell Smith's book, which, in response to evidently intractable conceptual problems in contemporary computational theory, questions the viability of a number of key assumptions and formulations taken over by computer scientists from classical metaphysics and philosophy of mind. In the course of his pursuit of a "successor metaphysics," Cantwell Smith outlines a highly original and, in some respects, unmistakably constructivist epistemology and Latourian or Heraclitean ontology.[4] Anxieties about the dangers or absurdities lurking in such positions, however ("I'm-OK-you're-OK-pluralism," solipsistic idealism, and so forth), along with axiomatic commitments to some dubiously privileged intuitions (the conviction of most computer scientists, for example, that human cognition and the operations of artifactual computers reflect the same underlying mechanisms) lead him recurrently back to only superficially reformed versions of the ideas and assumptions he otherwise questions and seeks to escape. Thus while he stresses that objects and their properties are neither fixed nor prior but emerge from dynamic, context-dependent interactions between actively "registering" subjects and fluid "object-regions," he also insists that the relationship between subject and object is "fundamentally asymmetrical":

"When subject and object part company, *the object wins*. . . . Subject really is *less*; world, *more*—as much in terms of potency and worth as in terms of content or substance."[5] Or again, he observes that "although there is something right about speaking of individual subjects as the entities or agents that register, this is not to deny that in all likelihood it will be whole cultures, language communities, communities of practice, or collectivities of people-and-instruments-and-organizations-and-documents-and-tools-and-other-essential-but-expensive-entities that are the full sustaining locus of this intentional achievement"[6]—which balances a residual Cartesianism against a sophisticated but hedged constructivism, on the toes, so to speak, of a paradoxically individualistic but collectivist intentionalism.

Cantwell Smith cites, as elucidating his own project, a passage from Donna Haraway's influential essay "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspectives" that reads as follows: "So, I think my problem and 'our' problem is how to have *simultaneously* an account of radical historical contingency for all knowledge claims and knowing subjects, a critical practice for recognizing our own 'semiotic technologies' for making meanings, *and* a no-nonsense commitment to faithful accounts of a 'real' world, one that can be partially shared and friendly to earth-wide projects of finite freedom, adequate material abundance, modest meaning in suffering, and limited happiness."[7] The Haraway passage will concern us a bit later when it is cited by feminist philosopher Sandra Harding in response to a different set of intellectual pressures. For the moment, however, we might note that it evidently figures for a number of its readers both as a compelling formulation of a key problem of contemporary thought and as a model for its solution.

At the least, these recurrent figures of navigational maneuvering—avoiding extremes, finding a middle course between twin perils, holding on to both sides, keeping everything onboard—suggest that, for many scholars, contemporary intellectual life is a stressful venture, fraught with danger and haunted by anxieties about the seductiveness, naïveté, or fatality of certain moves, choices, or rejections. Part of my interest here is what has made that the case in contemporary epistemology (or anti-epistemology) and how various responses to that situation illuminate the dynamics of intellectual life, both currently and more generally.
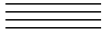
A word should be said first about the perilous seas within which all this anxious steering is occurring. Clearly there are significant contemporary challenges to classical epistemology and mainstream philosophy of science: new ways of answering classic questions concerning the formation and validation (or is it contingent stabilization?) of belief, new questions about the nature and operations of scientific knowledge, and new assessments of the role of academic philosophy both in posing such questions and in grounding or adjudicating their answers. These challenges are by no means recent in origin. Some have been part of the philosophical tradition since Protagoras; others can be traced without difficulty to the ideas of Friedrich Nietzsche, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Martin Heidegger, William James, and John Dewey; yet others have emerged during the course of the twentieth century from research and analysis in the scientific disciplines themselves, for example, in quantum theory and, more recently, in developmental biology and cognitive science. Work in all these fields has indicated the need to review and, to some degree, revise traditional ideas and conventional wisdom—formal and informal—about knowledge, science, and cognitive processes. At the same time theorists and scholars in various relatively new fields, including feminist epistemology and constructivist history and sociology of science, have pressed these challenges with especially aggressive energy and in quarters quite close to home—that is, in academic philosophy itself.[8]

Responses to these developments among philosophers, scientists, and scholars or theorists in related fields vary, as might be expected, in relation to individual intellectual history, professional identity and status, cognitive taste and temperament, and other commitments and agendas (for example, religious or political) and range from eager embrace and declarations of close alliance to excoriation and frenzies of refutation.[9] It is in this context that we must understand the general sense of peril and anxiety I have indicated. I turn now to a closer look at some specific expressions of it.
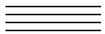
The types of equivocating moves and strategies to be discussed here sometimes announce themselves as a middle way between what are described as "extremes." It is not uncommon, of course, for diverging intellectual positions to become polarized and certainly not impossible for a proposed via

media to offer, and operate as, a genuinely valuable alternative to two manifestly strained sides. In the cases that concern me here, however, the alleged extremes are typically somewhat gerrymandered, one of them being, in fact, the currently orthodox doctrine itself, but in an especially hoary version that, as such, has few if any contemporary advocates (for example, "pure apriorism," "naive realism," or "dogmatic positivism") while the other alleged extreme is the currently most powerful challenger but characterized in terms that make it appear dismissable out of hand (for example, "trendy scientism," "corrosive hyperrelativism," and so forth). This leaves, to occupy the space of the purportedly moderate middle way, either the orthodox doctrine once more, though described this time in duly reasonable-sounding or updated terms ("moderate realism," "historically informed positivism," and so forth), along with, perhaps, an appliqué of selected but denatured elements of the contemporary alternative or, as in several of the examples considered below, a conceptually unstable amalgamation of crucial but also mutually contradictory elements of each.[10]

Conceptual instability is often a key problem here. Innovative theoretical proposals, including radically innovative ones, inevitably preserve some elements of traditional thought, typically reworking or redefining them in conjunction with significantly novel elements or extending them, thus conjoined, into significantly new domains of application. Indeed, though not usually motivated by anxious extremity avoidance, such fertile combinations of old and new are probably the most common forms of conceptual innovation and creative transformation in any field. A major problem with the fundamentally equivocating hybrids described above, however, composed as they are of attenuated and/or patched-together, *mutually canceling* concepts, is that they can do little theoretical work and, indeed, commonly cannot be extended beyond the pages on which they are framed, even by their admirers. (It is not clear, for example, that Haraway's elaboration in "Situated Knowledges" of the idea and project framed in the much cited passage quoted above—that is, that her and our problem is how to have, *simultaneously*, a large number of evidently desirable or necessary-seeming but possibly incompatible things—amounts to much more than a series of reiterated affirmations of that idea and project themselves.) Conversely, what gives many of the "extreme" proposals their conceptual power is, among other things, precisely their *extremity*—that is, the unhedged explicitness of their questioning or rejection of various traditional ideas and the consis-

tency of the alternative ideas they develop. Contrary to what the term *extreme* may suggest, these intellectual virtues are the product not of uncontrolled excess or exhibitionist derring-do but, rather, of an effort at clear and precise formulation and a rigorous working-through of theoretical and practical implications—at least where such characteristics are in fact displayed. The intellectual virtues of some challenges to orthodoxy, "extreme" and otherwise, may, of course, be quite meager.

Some specific examples will be useful here. Within the past few years a number of works have appeared offering either to mediate between or to synthesize traditional philosophy of mind and such relatively new fields as artificial intelligence, cognitive science, constructivist epistemology, and/or dynamical systems theory. Such projects confront a number of rhetorical difficulties: not only the familiar problems involved in making novel, technically complex ideas comprehensible to nonspecialists but also, more significantly here, the difficulties that the authors of such works may encounter in articulating their own positions with regard to ideas currently orthodox or heretical in their own fields and, relatedly, the task, often cognitively stressful as well as professionally delicate, of negotiating their own intellectual allegiances or even identities with regard to their home disciplines. One sign of these difficulties is the emphasis in such works, often in tandem with the announcement of radical transformations, fundamentally new paradigms, and significant alternatives to traditional thought,[11] on the need to *retain* certain egregiously traditional ideas, an emphasis that becomes quite problematic when it is the viability or necessity of *just those ideas* that is disputed most strenuously by the most controversial but arguably fertile developments in the relevant new fields.

When we focus on the stated reasons for preserving this or that allegedly indispensable element of traditional thought, we begin to see the sorts of pressures that lead to these cognitive stresses and rhetorical evasions. One such reason is that the idea or method in question is, as it may be said, so intuitively compelling or well established in the field that it cannot and should not be abandoned. Thus, in his recent mediating-synthesizing work, *Being There: Putting Brain, Body, and World Together Again,* philosopher/cognitive theorist Andy Clark, explaining the need to retain traditional ideas of internal representation, computation, and "stored programs" in the brain despite the ("radical") effort by other theorists to model the dynamics of cognition without appeal to such ideas, argues that "it would be folly to

simply jettison the hard-won bedrock of cognitive scientific understanding that involves [such] ideas."[12] This seems to say, however, only that those ideas are very orthodox indeed. Clark's rather amusingly (and multiply) mixed metaphor, that is, the supposed folly of jettisoning (hard-won) bedrock, invites a pertinent query: Would it be better, navigationally speaking, to keep bedrock onboard or, of course, even to *begin* a voyage with such cargo?[13]

Significantly, Clark argues in a more recent essay for a policy of "accommodation not elimination" in negotiating the differences between the currently prevailing computational/representational model of cognition and the alternative dynamical/ecological model proposed by other theorists.[14] Metaphors of negotiation or accommodation generally sound more reasonable in responses to intellectual rivals than those of outright warfare or total elimination and, where otherwise appropriate, are certainly preferable to denunciation, demonization, and other rhetorical strong-arm tactics. As in macropolitics, however, so also in the micropolitics of intellectual struggle: a refusal to acknowledge the strength of a challenger or the extent and possibly radical nature of the difference between an opponent's views and one's own is likely to be ultimately debilitating. The question in regard to Clark's efforts here (and comparable attempts at theoretical synthesis elsewhere) is whether the two now hopefully reconciled theories are, in fact, ultimately compatible and, specifically here, whether just piggybacking elements of the dynamical/ecological model of cognition onto the otherwise unmodified representationalist/computational model solves the crucial conceptual problems in the latter that led to its rejection—and to the related development of various alternative accounts—in the first place.[15]

Another—perhaps the major—reason commonly offered for retaining a traditional idea is that its rejection would amount to an embrace of what is seen as the *only* and a clearly foolish (for example, solipsistic or self-refuting) or dangerous (for example, leading to Auschwitz or endorsing clitoridectomy) alternative. Thus explaining why, versus "pure constructivism," a realist conception of "a world out there" must be retained in any adequate metaphysics, Cantwell Smith observes, "There is more to the world than us . . . : more than our imaginations, more than our experience, more than our thoughts and dreams."[16] Contrary, however, to the implications of Cantwell Smith's argument for the retention, the idea that the world is *nothing* more than our imaginations, thoughts, dreams, or in any idiomatic sense, experi-

ence is by no means the only alternative to realism, as one discovers if one examines various nonrealist epistemologies in their actual, as distinct from distorted or sloganized, articulations—for example, in Ludwik Fleck's classic (and arguably "pure [proto-]constructivist") work, *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact.*[17]

The configuration of mutually sustaining but individually dubious assumptions, anxieties, and charges just indicated is a recurrent feature of contemporary theoretical controversy and, as such, interesting along a number of lines. The point I would stress here is that, as in the example just examined, the scandalizing alternatives to orthodox thought commonly said to require the reaffirmation of traditional ideas are themselves often empty positions, maintained *as* positions by nobody but functioning crucially within the intellectual tradition as self-haunting, self-policing, self-perpetuating others, continuously regenerating, by sheer contradistinction, the substance of the tradition's self-defining orthodoxies. Thus cognitive psychology is kept in line by a straw-man behaviorism, theoretical biology polices itself in opposition to a shadowy Lamarckism,[18] and orthodox epistemology is haunted (and kept orthodox) by the phantom heresy of "relativism."

Ghostly or empty though these alternatives may be, their invocation is nonetheless powerful. To say that some set of views is orthodox is to say, among other things, that it is institutionally well established and thus part of the conventional training and ongoing discursive and conceptual operations of some field or discipline. For many people rigorously trained in the field in question and especially for those currently operating in it professionally, it may be very difficult to think otherwise and, in a way, unnecessary to do so, at least as long as they remain within the institutional orbits of that orthodoxy. For others in that field, perhaps no less rigorously trained but operating at its margins (interacting, perhaps, with scholars, scientists, or theorists in other disciplines or working in relatively peripheral areas), some elements of the constitutive heresy may appear, especially in contemporary articulations, intellectually compelling and appropriable, but the possibility of affirming or incorporating them explicitly may be inhibited by considerable anxiety, including a well-enough instructed fear of social and professional punishment—for example, scorn or ostracism—at the hands of academic associates or disciplinary colleagues. We shall see some vivid examples of such dynamics below.
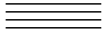
In addition to equivocation in a variety of technical and looser senses, several other moves and strategies are of related interest here, including what I call ritual exorcism or blackening the devil—that is, the vigorous dissociation of one's own manifestly (explicitly acknowledged or indeed stressed) non- or antiorthodox ideas from an officially heretical position, accompanied by the voluble bad-mouthing of the position thus named. Thus the pragmatist (and arguably relativistic) philosopher Richard Rorty strenuously rejects what he calls relativism; the constructivist (and arguably postmodernist) theorist of science Bruno Latour derides what he calls postmodernism; and the explicitly post-Cartesian (and in many respects behaviorist) neuroscientist Antonio Damasio pauses to malign behaviorism.[19] Such otherwise gratuitous disavowals reflect many of the same institutional dynamics as does equivocation, with comparable short-run rhetorical advantages but long-run intellectual costs. For insofar as it reinforces the idea that the position thus disparaged (for example, behaviorism) is, in fact, monolithic and either plainly foolish or plainly sinister as commonly believed or that the label thus strenuously rejected (for example, "relativism" or "postmodernism") names a position that is actually maintained with the foolish claims and dangerous entailments commonly attributed to it, ritual exorcism strengthens a major line of justification for the continued dominance of the intellectual orthodoxy that is otherwise being explicitly challenged. Such devil-blackenings are also more generally intellectually damaging insofar as they endorse the prejudices and foster the anxieties of less knowledgeable colleagues, students, or members of the public and thus—this being the way canonical distortions perpetuate themselves—effectively deprive new generations of scholars and theorists of potentially useful intellectual resources. These and other points touched on here can be illustrated with another set of examples, drawn this time from feminist epistemology or, possibly, anti-epistemology.

In a recent essay explaining the idea of "standpoint epistemology" and promoting her own related position of "strong objectivism," feminist philosopher of science Sandra Harding argues that one may maintain that "all knowledge is socially situated versus the conventional idea that beliefs count as knowledge only when they break free [of] . . . local, historical interests, values, and agendas" but still not "slide" into "relativism." For, she continues, citing the passage by Haraway quoted above, "it turns out to be possible to have '*simultaneously* an account of radical historical contingency for

all knowledge claims and knowing subjects . . . and a no-nonsense commitment to faithful accounts of a "real" world.'"[20]

It is not insignificant that the word *real* appears in this passage in quotation marks. Feminist epistemologists, caught between the particular political commitments that motivate and define their project *as* feminist and the largely universalist assumptions and aspirations that prevail in academic philosophy, are driven repeatedly to equivocating moves and gestures. Specifically, arguments and formulations that explicitly challenge the defining claims, terms, and missions of objectivist/rationalist/realist epistemology and normative/universalist philosophy of science also pointedly affirm various crucial elements of each. Thus in the Harding-Haraway passage just quoted, while the idea of the "situated" nature of knowledge is framed as "versus" the conventional idea of genuine knowledge as transcendent, the assurance of a "no-nonsense commitment to faithful accounts of a 'real' world" affirms an epistemologically orthodox realism *versus* a threatening slide into heterodox relativism *and*, in the same breath, signals a skepticism toward that same orthodoxy via quotation marks on the crucial term *real*.

If feminist (anti-)epistemologists such as Harding and Haraway feel called on repeatedly to affirm the reality of Reality and the possibility of faithful accounts of it, it is largely because of the common conviction and frequent charge by academic philosophers (and those whom they have instructed) that to maintain the historical, social, or other contingency of all knowledge claims is ipso facto to deny the possibility of—in their idiomatic/informal as well as technical/formal senses—true, accurate, or objective reports. Not all the pressure for such affirmations of intellectual orthodoxy comes, however, from the philosophical side of the feminist/epistemologist double bind. Related political pressures originate in familiar Marxist-feminist distinctions, such as that between genuine understanding and mere ideology or "false consciousness," and also in such specifically feminist projects as the "legitimation" (as it is termed) of women's disputed accounts of their own experiences—for example, of rape. It is widely believed that the political success of such projects depends on the rhetorical/justificatory force of such distinctions, and that the latter depend in turn on the possibility of invoking a world of *transcendently* objective facts or *universally* valid truth claims—facts and claims, that is, that are emphatically not ("merely") socially (or otherwise) "situated." Such convictions double (and are, of course, historically derivable from) those of a more tradi-

tional realist/rationalist epistemology and, accordingly, double the anxieties that attend the more general project of feminist epistemology.

The gestures elicited by such anxieties are sometimes instructively self-reflexive, as in the essay by feminist philosopher Lorraine Code titled "Taking Subjectivity into Account." In the body of her essay Code argues that the paradigmatic form of knowledge in epistemology and related discourses, such as judicial theory, should not be our presumptively but dubiously objective knowledge of *objects* but, rather, our manifestly subjective knowledge of *other people*, specifically the people with whom we have personal relationships. It is not an easy argument to make, and Code's success in making it is limited. My primary concern here, however, is the question she raises toward the end of her essay, where she asks whether her argument stressing the significance of a subjectivist epistemology for feminism means that "feminist epistemologists must, after all, 'come out' as relativists."[21] Her answer to that question is "a qualified yes," but it is followed by a significant *yet*: "Yet the relativism that my argument generates is sufficiently nuanced and sophisticated to escape the scorn—and the anxiety—that 'relativism, after all' usually occasions." Indeed, the relativism that Code generates in the succeeding pages of her essay is so thoroughly nuanced and sophisticated—or, one could say, haunted, hedged, and attenuated ("refus[ing] to occupy the negative side of the traditional absolutism/relativism dichotomy[,] . . . at once realist, rational and sufficiently objective," and so forth)—that one could very well mistake that qualified *yes* for an unqualified *no*.

The terms of Code's self-characterization raise some immediate questions. First, one may wonder if she believes that the relativism commonly scorned by her disciplinary colleagues and others—the ideas, presumably, of heterodox theorists and philosophers such as Nietzsche, Kuhn, Paul Feyerabend, Nelson Goodman, and Rorty—is *not* nuanced or sophisticated. And, if it is not from the work of figures such as these, then one may ask from what crude, rude, or naive relativism Code is here distancing herself. Such questions arise not only because Code names no names but also because, as pointed out above, there is reason to think that the foolish or dangerous ideas commonly scorned *as* "relativism"—the idea, for example, that all beliefs or accounts are equally valid (under all conditions, from all perspectives)[22] or that the world can be constructed just as we choose—constitute a phantom heresy without visible, palpable, or citable adherents. The phantom appears to be continuously generated by the seesaw logic of orthodox

epistemology itself: if not classic *realism*, then classic *idealism*; if not absolute *objectivism*, then absolute *subjectivism*; if not *one uniquely valid* interpretation/judgment/theory, then *all equally valid* interpretations/judgments/theories; and so forth. It may be given added apparent substance, however, by such heavy rhetorical scaffolding as glib conflation, crude decontextualization, dubious imputation, tendentious paraphrase, and slapdash intellectual history.[23]

To the extent that this is the case—that is, that the menace-heresy of relativism is substantively empty—it appears that, rather than spending so much time and energy anticipating and attempting to deflect such charges, Code and other feminist (anti-)epistemologists might do better exposing their hollowness, criticizing in earnest the entire conceptual systems that continuously generate and sustain them, and exploring the possible value, for feminism and social theory more generally, of the specific, elaborated ideas of the thinkers whose views are commonly so charged and dismissed. Indeed, in view of the quantities of intellectual labor that, in the absence of such direct challenges to demonology, must now go into protecting their own efforts from such out-of-hand dismissals, it would seem to be the more intellectually efficient as well as responsible way to go.

As it stands, the anxiety to avert charges of relativism is not only a considerable distraction from other potentially more productive intellectual activities but leads, often enough, to strained and tangled formulations. Code acknowledges as much in her own case in the final paragraph of her essay. "There are," she writes, "many tensions within the strands my skeptical-relativist recommendations try to weave together," tensions to be expected, she observes, "at this critical juncture in the articulation of emancipatory epistemological projects."[24] The question, however, here and more generally, is whether both the emancipatory and the epistemological commitments of such projects, to the extent that either of them is conceived along conventional political or conventional philosophical lines, might not be holding their more radical critical and creative energies hostage.

I return to that question below but wish, first, to pursue further the terms of Code's description of the scorn that motivates feminist anxiety about relativism. She writes:

> The opponents of relativism have been so hostile, so thoroughly scornful in their dismissals, that it is no wonder that feminists, well aware of the folk-historical identification of women with the forces of unrea-

son, should resist the very thought that the logic of feminist emancipatory analyses points in that direction. . . . The intransigence of material circumstances constantly reminds them that their world-making possibilities are neither unconstrained nor infinite. . . . In fact, many feminists are vehement in their resistance to relativism precisely because they suspect—not without reason—that only the supremely powerful and privileged . . . could believe that they can make up the world as they will and practice that supreme tolerance in whose terms all possible constructions of reality are equally worthy.[25]

Code goes on to question the accuracy of the latter suspicion but only to suggest—equally tenuously, I think—that "only the supremely powerful and privileged" could believe there was but *one* truth.

Many questions could be raised about this argument (e.g., are feminists, as Code implies, more familiar with "the intransigence of material circumstances" than other people who question traditional objectivist thought, and do the latter really need reminding "that their world-making possibilities are neither unconstrained nor infinite"?), but two points require emphasis here. First, I say *equally* tenuously because both views of the beliefs of "the supremely powerful and privileged," those Code attributes to many feminists and her own, reflect the logically and empirically dubious assumption that people's epistemologies line up squarely with their social and/or economic situations, which reflects in turn the comparably dubious assumption that the inherent political value of a theoretical position can be determined by the political positions of the particular people who happen, at a given time, to maintain it. The converse view, I would stress, is not that there is *no* relation between people's theoretical preferences and their social or economic situations, or between the political value of a theoretical position and the politics of those who propose and/or promote it, but rather, that both relations are highly mediated by other variable conditions. These would include other intellectual and/or political commitments and other aspects of the social situations of the people in question as well as significant features of the particular intellectual and institutional contexts in which the theoretical preferences in question are maintained or played out. Certainly no generalized ideology-critique or accurate all-time prediction of political uptake could have been produced in the past for such theoretical preferences as polytheism versus monotheism, logical positivism versus Hegelian idealism, or Darwinism versus biblical creationism. Nor, I think, can any

be usefully produced for such current theoretical preferences as epistemic pluralism versus epistemic monism or constructivist science studies versus realist/rationalist philosophy of science.

The second point concerns the idea, which Code endorses ("many feminists . . . suspect—not without reason"), that there exists a set of people who do, in fact, "believe that they can make up the world as they will and practice that supreme tolerance in whose terms all possible constructions of reality are equally worthy." The idea is worth pausing over since it has, as we shall see, considerable circulation among feminist epistemologists and other contemporary philosophers but appears quite questionably derived. The likely derivation here as elsewhere is a misunderstanding of the frequently mentioned but evidently rarely read "symmetry postulate" of Edinburgh-based ("Strong Programme") sociology of science. The postulate, which has nothing to do with tolerance in any of the usual senses of the term, maintains not that all constructions of reality are equally *worthy* but, rather, that the *credibility* of all constructions of reality, including those now commonly accepted as true or reasonable, should be regarded as equally *needful of explanation* and as explicable, in principle, by *the same general types of causes*.[26] A key methodological point of departure—not epistemic judgment—in contemporary science studies, the symmetry postulate is routinely transformed into a fatuous egalitarianism (everything is equally true, good, worthy, valid, and so forth) by those who encounter it primarily through hearsay or interpret its implications via the seesaw logic described above. The anxiety-eliciting configuration to which Code and other feminists are responding, however, is not merely a common and especially obdurate set of intellectual misunderstandings but a common though dubious set of political assumptions and assessments as well.

The symmetry postulate, correctly stated and appropriately interpreted, implies, among other things, that no belief or knowledge claim can be presumed *intrinsically* credible (or "valid"). This is an idea, one might think, that would appear highly serviceable to feminists as well as to members of other groups whose political or social subordination is underwritten by what are claimed to be, by those in dominant positions, self-evident facts. As it happens, a number of politically concerned scholars working in science studies *have* found the idea serviceable and put it to use accordingly in their research and analyses.[27] But there's a catch. For by the same token, the symmetry postulate creates difficulties for feminists (and others) who

want to maintain that certain beliefs or knowledge claims *are* intrinsically credible: for example, the truth claims made by women about what they experience as rape or, as in some versions of standpoint epistemology, the knowledge claims made from the perspective of members of one or another marginalized group.[28] What Code and others refer to as supreme *tolerance*, then, might be better described as supremely *evenhanded intolerance*—that is, a principled rejection of all claims to generic epistemic privilege, not only the conventionally privileged knowledge claims of scientists *as such* but also claims made for the intrinsically privileged knowledge of women *as such*. For some feminists, that's all they need to know about the symmetry postulate to know that it's bad news politically. There are, however, good reasons for them to look more closely at the political implications of the postulate and also at those of constructivist accounts of knowledge more generally. For although such ideas and accounts may unsettle certain standard rhetorical practices of the political left (as well as the political and intellectual right), they also suggest a broad range of alternative rhetorical practices and forms of political activity—including activity aimed at radical social and economic change—that are, at the same time, intellectually self-consistent, ethically responsible, and pragmatically effective.[29]

Though beset by institutional vulnerabilities and conceptually haunted and hobbled along the lines suggested here, the project of feminist epistemology is not, I think, inherently doomed. A number of recent efforts are especially encouraging, among them an essay by Linda Martin Alcoff titled "Is the Feminist Critique of Reason Rational?" Arguing against the idea that the missions and practices of philosophy and those of feminism are incompatible, but also against shaky efforts by other feminists to stake their political claims on standard philosophical grounds, Alcoff calls for an alternative, explicitly critical, relation between feminism and philosophy, including epistemology: "If we [feminists] . . . acknowledge that forms of rationality . . . are embedded within history, we must also acknowledge that reasoned argument is only a part of what is contained in our or any other philosophical writings. . . . the better alternative is to reconfigure the relationship between . . . reason and its others, to acknowledge the instability of these categories and the permeability of their borders, and to develop a reconstructed notion of reason . . . as including multiple forms and operating on many levels."[30]

Such a project, Alcoff observes, would be "incorrectly interpreted as a re-

duction of reason to unreason. . . . Rationality does not need the Manichean epistemic ontology of an absolute truth-mastery over an abject unreason. It needs distinctions, between true and false, and more and less rational, but these can be formulated differently through developing an account of the situatedness of truth and reason."[31] These (despite some arguably gratuitous retentions) are, I would agree, among the more promising lines to be pursued: distinctions acknowledged but formulated differently; accounts developed, but by appropriating and extending, not blunting, the intellectually radical force of other contemporary critiques and alternatives, including the idea—crucial to but crucially hedged by Harding and Haraway—of the "situatedness" (that is, historical and contextual contingency and specificity) of what are, at any time, called truth, reason, facts, or knowledge.

Where radically new ideas and strong critiques that are seen as intellectually compelling are also seen as conflicting with accepted political theory and practice, the proper response, I think, is not to renounce those ideas, muffle those critiques, or strive, in order to safeguard politics-as-usual, to drastically confine their reach. On the contrary, the most intellectually responsible response and the one most likely to be, in the long run, politically desirable is, I think, to pursue the implications of those ideas and critiques as rigorously and extensively as possible, including into the domains of politics—both theory and practice—themselves. The risk, of course, is that the resulting political theory and practice may look quite different from their as-usual versions. They may, for example, evoke or involve new sets of considerations, different configurations of interests, and different forms of practice for achieving whatever goals are seen as significant. (It is also likely that articulations and understandings of those otherwise compelling new ideas and critiques will themselves be transformed, perhaps radically so, in the process.) Such risks for habitual ways of thinking and practicing politics, including radical politics, could also be seen, however, as offering the possibility of substantial—perhaps revolutionary—benefits.

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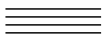
As mentioned above, Code's understandings of the political implications of constructivist and/or symmetricalizing sociology of science are by no means unique. Virtually the same set of claims, charges, and rhetorical gestures can be found not only in the writing of other feminist epistemologists but also in that of other contemporary philosophers of science, where, however,

they commonly serve other or additional agendas. Thus in a recent book provocatively titled *The Disorder of Things: Metaphysical Foundations of the Disunity of Science*, philosopher of science John Dupré, declaring intellectual kinship with Wittgenstein and Feyerabend and deriving authority from their counterestablishment epistemologies, nevertheless assails "the sociology of knowledge movement" as follows:

> By asserting that all scientific belief should be explained in terms of the goals, interests, and prejudices of the scientist, and denying any role whatsoever for the recalcitrance of nature, it leaves no space for the criticism of specific scientific beliefs on the ground that they do reflect such prejudices rather than being plausibly grounded in fact. The uncongeniality of the sociology of science program to thinkers genuinely concerned with political influences on scientific belief is nicely stated by the feminist philosopher of science Alison Wylie . . . : "Only the most powerful, the most successful in achieving control over the world, could imagine that the world can be constructed as they choose."[32]

This passage is of interest not only because it recalls the similarly worded one by Code examined above (and repeats comparable misrepresentations of the claims of contemporary sociology of science, which does *not* characteristically "[assert] that all scientific belief should be explained in terms of the goals, interests, and prejudices of the scientist") but also because it exemplifies a more general strategy that has become fairly common in current academic controversy: the validation of intellectual traditionalism by appeals to or gestures of solidarity with political radicalism.[33] Notable in that connection is Dupré's curious allusion to "the uncongeniality of the sociology of science program to thinkers genuinely concerned with political influences on scientific belief"—curious because the work of that program's most eminent practitioners, for example, David Bloor, Barry Barnes, Andrew Pickering, or Steven Woolgar, would certainly seem to be *extensively* concerned with "political influences on scientific belief." (Indeed, in the outraged view of various recent detractors, it is quite menacingly concerned with nothing else.)[34] Has Dupré failed to notice that concern? Or is he suggesting that the sociologists are just faking it (not "*genuinely* concerned")? Or is it not, rather, that the particular ways they trace and articulate the complex, dynamic relationships among individual, social, and political interests, institutional configurations, technical practices, and scientific statements

are hard to square with the claim of established philosophy of science to distinguish, on strictly rational or logical grounds, between the truly epistemic and the merely social or political? If so, then the issue here is not the political authenticity of the sociology of science but, rather, the ability of traditional philosophy of science to engage the intellectual challenges and achievements of an alternative, rival project.[35]

A word more may be added on the quoted passage—which should go without saying but evidently does not. Contrary to the charge that Dupré lodges here and finds "nicely stated" by feminist Wylie, sociologists of knowledge do not characteristically imagine that the world can be constructed as they or anyone else wishes. For, of course, what they characteristically do *as* sociologists of science is investigate how beliefs about the world are socially shaped, constrained, and stabilized. Nor do they claim or proceed as if they believed that all things are infinitely malleable by the human mind. The idea that the "constructed" in constructivism means made-up-in-your-individual-head-however-you-want-it-to-be is a rather vulgar error, to be expected, perhaps, from journalists or academics in remote disciplines but not, generally, in the work of presumably knowledgeable philosophers of science. As for the idea—floated by Wylie, endorsed by Dupré, and echoed in Code—that sociologists of knowledge can think the way they do only because they (versus women? versus feminists? versus realist philosophers?) are "supremely powerful and privileged," "the most powerful, the most successful in achieving control over the world": well, when one recalls the perennially underfunded, administratively threatened, and institutionally precarious situations of various associate or even full professors of sociology of science at places such as Urbana, Illinois, or Loughborough, England, it appears pretty ludicrous. Of course as Western, male (where they are) academics, such sociologists may be *relatively* powerful and privileged. But "*supremely* powerful and privileged," "the most successful in achieving *control over the world*," and so forth? What is the point of such language?

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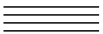
I turn now to some final observations. Equivocation, rightward-veering middle-way steering, and ritual exorcism are conceptual/rhetorical practices that evade cognitive stress and professional peril but entail their own risks and costs. My main interest in examining such practices here has been to delineate the microdynamics of certain features of contemporary intellec-

tual life. I have also been concerned, however, with the broader implications of those practices, that is, with their communal and institutional as well as individual risks and costs. I shall, in the remarks that follow, be further concerned with both levels of accounting.

Under conditions of acute and widespread conceptual clash within some more or less established institutional-intellectual domain, there will always be those—scholars, scientists, theorists, and so forth—whose conviction of the adequacy of traditional views remains unshaken and who, accordingly, will continue to reaffirm the traditional positions as such, staunchly rehearsing the classic justifications and refutations, unruffled by what colleagues experience as the logical bite of current challenges, unimpressed by what others see as the revolutionary implications of those challenges for ongoing practices in the field. I discuss the psychological dynamics of such reaffirmations elsewhere under the term *cognitive self-stabilization* and point out there the forms of logical and conceptual strain that often attend them: in brief, a tendency toward continuous—though often artful and rhetorically as well as cognitively effective—circularity.[36] This is not to suggest, however, that a resistance to novelty and adherence to traditional but now questioned ideas reflect an intellectual pathology. On the contrary, they may, under some conditions, reflect due confidence and intellectual perspicacity of a high order. For of course, one could hardly maintain *generally*—in regard to ideas any more than to other human products or practices—that the new will always emerge as better; the questioned, as vulnerable; the traditional, as properly superseded.

In any case, no less interesting for a general account of intellectual dynamics are the responses of scholars, scientists, and theorists less firmly wedded to the orthodoxy under siege but perplexed in other ways: those, for example, who are unsettled by the current challenges or at least notice that the traditional justifications and refutations are no longer adequate or conclusive for significant portions of the relevant communities, but who, for often complex reasons, are nevertheless not prepared to pursue explicitly—much less endorse wholeheartedly—the controversial new alternatives. Among this latter group are scholars who, by reason of personal history or current commitments, are especially anxious about the unhappy ethical or political consequences said to be entailed by those alternatives (quietism, complicity, anything-goes-ism, and so forth) or who, as members of a perennially intellectually suspect group (for example, blacks or women),

are especially anxious about their own intellectual standing among professional associates. The result in such cases may be, and often is, a compulsive generation of equivocal positions—positions that signal simultaneously or in swift oscillation both an appreciation of and a distancing from currently heterodox ideas. Equivocation under such circumstances may be required for minimal cognitive well-being and immediate professional self-preservation. Since, however, the hybrid positions so generated tend to be conceptually unstable, requiring continuous shoring up and other repair, they are also intellectually costly. Moreover, because prevailing views in a field are always ultimately responsive to broader intellectual developments, the continuous reaffirmation of conventionally accepted ideas, even if only in equivocal terms, risks not only intellectual confinement but professional immobility as well. In other words, ostensibly prudent equivocation may be, in the long run, professionally as well as intellectually self-disabling.

When radical alternatives to orthodox views are being proposed, it can be strategically useful, though in different ways, for proponents of *either* side—that is, traditionalists *and* revisionists—to cast their own positions as a middle way between extremes. For the traditionalist it permits a display of genial sophistication and avoids the stigma of sheer stuffiness. For revisionists the claim of middle-way moderation may dampen automatic alarm signals and retain the attention of audiences who might otherwise just balk or bolt. Thus a novel and ultimately radical set of ideas may sweeten its debut statement and disarm criticism along certain predictable lines by declaring itself a middle way between the orthodoxy that it does indeed reject (for example, classical realism or normative epistemology) and the heresy, real or phantom, with which it can expect to be identified (for example, classical idealism or everything-is-equally-good relativism).[37]

Not all audiences, however, will find the middle-way steering either appealing or admirable. The risk for the equivocating traditionalist is that his or her genial sophistication will be seen by more stalwart colleagues as contamination by—or outright capitulation to—mere intellectual fashion. Conversely, the moderating maneuvers of the prudent revisionist are likely to be regarded by more explicitly radical colleagues as granting too much to established views or as simply regressive. There are, moreover, other—perhaps less visible or audible—members of the intellectual community who will also be impatient with these cautiously equivocated articulations. Especially significant are younger practitioners in the fields in question, for whom the

most eagerly sought reports of new methods or models will be those that stress, isolate, and elaborate their most innovative elements and, thereby, make them most readily accessible for exploration in connection with those practitioners' own, perhaps comparably innovative, projects. To put this in broader terms: the versions of new intellectual developments that indicate most clearly and powerfully their most heterodox elements and challenging implications are also, for that very reason, most likely to energize investigation, extension, and refinement—and, by the same token, to reveal most readily their conceptual and practical limits or inadequacies.

In relation to such broader perspectives, a number of the moves and strategies discussed above, including devil-blackening, political flag-waving, and tendentious mischaracterization, could be seen as not merely individually but communally—socially and institutionally—costly as well. Rhetorical strategies are not, in my view, contemptible as such, or necessarily otherwise objectionable. On the contrary, I cannot imagine what a nonstrategic argument or nonrhetorical exposition would be. Nor do I think conceptual moves can or should be "free," as it is said, of institutional, professional, or even social pressures. Indeed, I would say that a susceptibility to being shaped by such pressures is inseparable from the virtue of intellectual responsiveness or, perhaps, just another way of stating that virtue. I do not, then, set conceptual moves and rhetorical strategies in opposition to right thinking and straight talking. Nevertheless, I do think the intellectual life of a community can become limited, maimed, and stultified when easy points are scored by appeals to ignorance; when concepts, positions, individual figures, and entire disciplines are—without having been intellectually engaged—casually maligned or swaggeringly derided; and when political or moral pieties are used in cloak-and-dagger operations against intellectual or institutional rivals.

Finally, as I hope is clear, I am not calling here for an across-the-board show of intellectual heroism. Different situations require different assessments of personal, professional, and social risk, and of course, some vulnerabilities are more visible than others. My broader purpose here has not been to indict individual scholars or theorists for trimming or timidity but, rather, to highlight some of the conceptual and rhetorical practices that both reveal and perpetuate the risks of intellectual radicalism in our own time and to suggest some of the costs we all pay as a result.

Notes

An earlier version of this essay was presented at the State University of New York, Buffalo, Department of Comparative Literature, October 24, 1997, and the University of California, San Diego, Science Studies Program, February 10, 1998. It was revised for presentation to the New York University Department of Philosophy, November 6, 1998. The present version was prepared for publication here.

1   Hilary Putnam, quoted in an advertisement for Susan Haack, *Evidence and Inquiry: Towards Reconstruction in Epistemology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), in *The Times Literary Supplement*, January 26, 1996, 11.

2   Michael Riordan, "Trading Information," review of Peter Galison, *Image and Logic: A Material Culture of Microphysics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), in the *New York Times Book Review*, September 14, 1997, 38.

3   Brian Cantwell Smith, *On the Origin of Objects* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996), 3–4.

4   Cantwell Smith cites Bruno Latour's "Irreductions" (see Latour, *The Pasteurization of France* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988], 153–236).

5   Cantwell Smith, *On the Origin of Objects*, 111–12; emphasis in original.

6   Ibid., 195.

7   Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 187. Cited and quoted in Cantwell Smith, *On the Origin of Objects*, 4 n. 2.

8   For examples of such developments, see Mario Biagioli, ed., *The Science Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 1999). For other examples and a discussion, see Barbara Herrnstein Smith and Arkady Plotnitsky, eds., *Mathematics, Science, and Postclassical Theory* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997).

9   For a discussion of these and related responses, see Barbara Herrnstein Smith, *Belief and Resistance: Dynamics of Contemporary Intellectual Controversy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998).

10   See also ibid., 125–52.

11   Thus Cantwell Smith's *On the Origin of Objects* is described on the book's jacket as "a sustained critique of the formal tradition underlying reigning views" of cognition. Similarly, Andy Clark's *Being There: Putting Brain, Body, and World Together Again* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997), discussed below, is said by its publishers to introduce a "paradigm shift" in our understanding of the mind.

12   Clark, *Being There*, 220–21.

13   Clark speaks in the same passage of the need to "anchor," in knowledge of the brain, a "canny combination" of ecological approaches and traditional cognitive science (ibid., 221). It is not, I should stress, the stylistic lapses as such that concern me here but the conceptual problems that they seem to signal.

14   Andy Clark, "Time and Mind," *Journal of Philosophy* 95 (1998): 354–76. As in *Being There*, he cites Esther Thelen and Linda B. Smith, *A Dynamic Systems Approach to the Development of Cognition and Action* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994); Edwin Hutchins, *Cognition in the Wild* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996); and, especially significant here, Tim van Gelder and Robert F. Port, "It's about Time: An Overview of the Dynamical Approach

to Cognition," in *Mind As Motion: Explorations in the Dynamics of Cognition*, ed. van Gelder and Port (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995).

15   For an instructive comparison of major alternative contemporary cognitive theories by a proponent of dynamical/ecological models, see Horst Hendriks-Jansen, *Catching Ourselves in the Act: Situated Activity, Interactive Emergence, Evolution, and Human Thought* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996).

16   Cantwell Smith, *On the Origin of Objects*, 97.

17   Ludwik Fleck, *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact*, ed. Thaddeus J. Trenn and Robert K. Merton, trans. Fred Bradley and Thaddeus J. Trenn (1935; reprint, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979). For a related discussion of Fleck, see Barbara Herrnstein Smith, "Netting Truth," *PMLA* 115.5 (2000): 1089–96.

18   For an illuminating discussion, see Susan Oyama, *The Ontogeny of Information: Developmental Systems and Evolution*, 2d ed. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999), 5, 33–34.

19   Richard Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 21–34; Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 61–62; Antonio R. Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (New York: Avon, 1994), 280.

20   Sandra Harding, "Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: What Is 'Strong Objectivity'?" in *Feminist Epistemologies*, ed. Linda Alcoff and Elizabeth Potter (New York: Routledge, 1993), 50. Harding argues that what would be more "strongly" objective than knowledge claiming to be objective in the conventional "weak" sense (i.e., unbiased by personal or political interests) was knowledge produced (or ratified) by democratic procedures that secured the input of women and, in principle, members of all other politically marginalized populations. Significantly here, her articulations of the argument (strained, in my view, from the outset) tend to be severely hedged and, on crucial points, vague. Indeed, as Harding explicates and qualifies her views and proposals in successive versions, they appear increasingly indistinguishable from conventional objectivist/realist philosophy of science, except for their association with an explicit progressive (or at least *bien-pensant*) political perspective and agenda, but no less dubious or elusive than before in practical terms. For recent versions, see Harding, *Is Science Multicultural? Postcolonialisms, Feminisms, and Epistemologies* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998).

21   Lorraine Code, "Taking Subjectivity into Account," in Alcoff and Potter, *Feminist Epistemologies*, 39.

22   It is only when validity itself is understood along classical lines as an objective, noncontingent attribute that the idea of the equal validity of all beliefs appears absurd—that is, as implying that *all beliefs are always equally objectively true*. Otherwise it could be seen as a tautology or truism—that is, as saying, in effect, that all beliefs are really believed by those who believe them or that everything that has been believed by some people under some conditions has had some kind of cogency, legitimacy, effectiveness, etc., for those people under those conditions. I am unaware, however, of anyone not strictly sophomoric who maintains the equal validity of all beliefs while also conceiving of or defining validity along classical absolutist, objectivist lines. These observations apply as well to the other

(absurd as inferred) egalitarian claims ("all equally good, true, beautiful," etc.) supposedly implied by critiques of classical objectivist views. I discuss this strictly non sequitur reasoning (i.e., the derivation of a claim of *objective equality* from a critique and rejection of *objectivism*) elsewhere as the Egalitarian Fallacy. See Barbara Herrnstein Smith, *Contingencies of Value: Alternative Perspectives for Critical Theory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 98, 152, 157, and *Belief and Resistance*, 77–78.

23   For recent examples of such practices in connection with the so-called science wars, see Paul R. Gross and Norman Levitt, *Higher Superstition: The Academic Left and Its Quarrels with Science (*Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); Alan Sokal and Claude Bricmont, *Fashionable Nonsense: Postmodern Intellectuals' Abuse of Science* (New York: St. Martin's, 1998); and Noretta Koertge, "Scrutinizing Science Studies," in *A House Built on Sand: Exposing Postmodernist Myths about Science*, ed. Koertge (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 3–6.

24   Code, "Taking Subjectivity into Account," 42.

25   Ibid., 40.

26   David Bloor, *Knowledge and Social Imagery*, 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 7.

27   See, e.g., Charis M. Cussins, "Ontological Choreography: Agency for Women Patients in an Infertility Clinic," in *Differences in Medicine: Unraveling Practices, Techniques, and Bodies*, ed. Marc Berg and Annemarie Mol (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 166–201.

28   See the discussion of Sandra Harding above, and n. 20.

29   See Smith, *Belief and Resistance*, 10–15, 26–35.

30   Linda Martin Alcoff, "Is the Feminist Critique of Reason Rational?" *Philosophical Exchange* 26 (1995–96): 75.

31   Ibid.

32   John Dupré, *The Disorder of Things: Metaphysical Foundations of the Disunity of Science* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 12–13. He cites Alison Wylie, "The Interplay of Evidential Constraints and Political Interests: Recent Archaeological Research on Gender," *American Antiquity* 57 (1992): 15–35.

33   Dupré's effort throughout his book is to establish his own middle-way position of "moderate realism" as anti-logical-positivist but still realist, rationalist, and committed to the normative projects of traditional philosophy of science. He appears especially concerned with current threats to his field so defined (i.e., as realist, rationalist, and normative), both from "trendy" scientistic, as he sees them, projects within philosophy (e.g., the effort to naturalize epistemology) and also from apparently encroaching moves in other disciplines, e.g., cognitive science, neurophysiology, sociobiology, and, as here, sociology of science (see *Disorder of Things*, 13, 268 n. 12).

34   See, e.g., Gross and Levitt, *Higher Superstition*, 42–70.

35   Dupré's vague wave of the hand, immediately after, toward an "interaction" between "the role of social, political and personal factors" and "some account of justifiable belief," simply reasserts the standard normative/positivist definition of knowledge at issue (i.e., as justified/able belief), as does also his suggestion that "the only way to put the genu-

ine insights of the sociology of knowledge program . . . into a proper perspective is to see the kinds of forces they describe as interacting with a real and sometimes recalcitrant world" (*Disunity of Science*, 13). Though evidently intended to suggest a moderate some-of-each stance, these gestures, in assuming precisely the dichotomy that sociologists of knowledge reject—that is, between (mere) "social forces" or "factors" and a presumably autonomously corrective ("sometimes recalcitrant") "real world"—are effectively empty.

36 See Smith, *Belief and Resistance*, 88–124.

37 See, e.g., Humberto R. Maturana and Francisco J. Varela, *The Tree of Knowledge: The Biological Roots of Human Understanding* (Boston: Shambala, 1988), 133–35, and, as discussed above but considered as more determinedly strategic, Cantwell Smith, *On the Origin of Objects*, 3–4.