ON THE JUSTIFICATION OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND OF FREE SPEECH ON THE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

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I. AN INFORMAL OVERVIEW

Questions of academic freedom, and of free speech on university campuses, have arisen in a variety of specific contexts, all of which this Essay ignores. Instead, this Essay offers a partial explanation of the current status of both academic freedom and of free speech on university campuses in general. We do not herein affirm or deny that academic freedom, on the one hand, and free speech on campus, on the other, may be very different and partly conflicting phenomena. For present purposes, though, all such concerns may be referred to herein, merely for simplicity, as matters of academic freedom.

One sensible approach to questions of academic freedom assumes that the answers to such questions should, ultimately, depend on what are taken to be the most fundamental purposes of the university. This approach seeks to encompass public as well as private universities, including distinctly religious universities. As well, this approach seeks to encompass academic freedom at the level of the university as an institution and at the level of any individual or group speaker within the university. Finally, this approach aims to encompass university purposes as judged by the university, by relevant government actors, and by the broader public.

As it turns out, our universities invariably pursue, whether expressly or not, a range of typically shifting and often conflicting purposes. Rarely do universities articulate any genuinely meaningful, as opposed to a largely rhetorical, sense of the tradeoffs among such institutional purposes.

Among the most commonly cited, such basic university purposes have been the pursuit, testing, inculcation, or dissemination of significant knowledge and meaningful truth at one level of the university community or another. Merely for convenience, this purpose will be referred to herein as the pursuit of knowledge and truth. For present purposes, we need take no position on whether the university goal of pursuing knowledge and truth, in any context, is ultimately well-advised or not.

Crucial for our purposes, though, is the general academic and cultural shift in attitudes toward the very meaning and value of the ideas of knowledge and truth themselves. Broadly put, over the last century especially, a number of partly conflicting academic and cultural schools of thought have had a jointly significant effect on how universities, and some elements of the public, think of the very ideas of knowledge and truth.

To oversimplify, the long-standing prominence of various sorts of objectivity-oriented and metaphysically realist understandings of moral and other forms of knowledge and truth has, over time, been eroded. The specific metaphor of erosion itself is dispensable. Alternative metaphors, such as

disenchantment, dilution, hollowing and evacuation, deflation, flattening, disillusion, and debunking, if not abandonment, might also serve.

As a result of this erosion of the status of the pursuit of objective or metaphysically realist understandings of knowledge and truth, the status of academic freedom has correspondingly changed. Classically metaethically realist justifications of academic freedom, broadly understood, have gradually lost some of their credibility among academics in particular.

Universities are thus increasingly left with metaethically less ambitious understandings of academic freedom, and indeed of the freedom of the person more broadly, in various senses. To the degree that the moral status of academic freedom has thus been eroded, academic freedom has predictably been deprioritized, whether consciously or not, relative to competing university values that do not depend so substantially on any ambitious metaphysical status and grounding. Almost inevitably, competing university values with less ambitious, and thus less vulnerable, metaphysical commitments will tend to fare relatively better than formerly.

Some other competing campus and broader social values, such as the equality of persons in particular, have often partly relied as well on now controversial metaphysical commitments. But there is no guarantee that a non-metaphysically based understanding of academic freedom, and a non-metaphysically based understanding of the equality of persons on the university campus, will leave the relative statuses of academic freedom and of the equality of persons unchanged. There may well be stronger, metaethically unambitious, merely pragmatic, grounds distinctively underlying the value of equality. Equality may well thus fare better, relatively, in a metaphysically arid environment.

How an eroded underlying justification of academic freedom, given a shallower sense of knowledge and truth themselves, will play out in the future is, of course, difficult to say. The difficulty of any such prediction remains even if we implausibly assume that university-level education will continue to resemble its current institutional and technological form over even the near-term future.

Whether desirable or not, any sort of revival of metaphysically deeper justifications for the pursuit of knowledge and truth can hardly be counted on. Either way, university communities would be well advised to emphasize values, including basic virtues, that are relatively uncontroversial, broadly cross-cultural, and that, whatever their metaphysical status, tend to promote the survival of the cultures that embody them most fully.

Precise formulations and understandings of such basic virtues and their survival value may vary. But basic, largely culture-neutral virtues, including practical wisdom and prudential judgment; fortitude in the face of adversity; temperance as reasonable self-restraint; and justice in the sense of affording everyone what is fitting, can be cultivated over time. Such cultivated virtues would help university communities arrive, in particular, at academic speech

policies that tend to stand the test of time.

II. THE ARGUMENT DOCUMENTED

Historically, American universities have typically conceived of their mission at least partly in terms of the pursuit, if not the exposition, of truth and knowledge. Famously, the official motto of Harvard University has long been "Veritas."[1] The Yale University motto is similarly focused. Yale President Peter Salovey recently declared to entering students that "Yale's motto is Light and Truth—*Lux et Veritas . . .* and you will see it etched ubiquitously on crests around campus."[2] Referring to his incipient University of Virginia, Thomas Jefferson asserted that "here we are not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead, nor to tolerate any error so long as reason is left free to combat it."[3] Even more fundamentally, John Henry Newman held that "the philosophy of Education is founded on truths in the natural order."[4]

The importance of knowledge and truth to the functioning of the university has been argued for much more recently as well. Consider, merely for example, the declaration by Michigan State University President Lou Anna K. Simon that "[t]he basic purposes of the University are the advancement, dissemination, and application of knowledge."[5] The classic 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) similarly apotheosized the search for, and the advancement of, truth.[6] The AAUP 1940 Statement echoed the sentiments of figures such as

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1. As of 1843, as indicated by *Harvard shields*, HARVARD UNIV., https://www.harvard.edu/about/history/shields/ [https://perma.cc/5CQQ-U7MV] (last visited Jan. 1, 2025).

2. Peter Salovey, President, Yale University, Opening Assembly Address, Yale College Class of 2026: Pursuing Truth at Yale (Aug. 22, 2022). *See also* ROBERT PAUL WOLFF, THE IDEAL OF THE UNIVERSITY 128 ("The university is a community devoted to the preservation and advancement of knowledge, to the pursuit of truth.").

3. Letter from Thomas Jefferson to William Roscoe (Dec. 27, 1820) (available at https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/03-16-02-0404 [https://perma.cc/KX69-NAN9]). *See also* DONALD ALEXANDER DOWNS, FREE SPEECH AND LIBERAL EDUCATION 29 (2020) ("the modern university's distinctive purpose [among other purposes] is the pursuit and teaching of truth and knowledge.").

4. JOHN HENRY NEWMAN, THE IDEA OF A UNIVERSITY Part I, Introductory, sec. 2 (2001 ed.) (1852).

5. Lou Anna K. Simon, President's Statement on Free Speech Rights and Responsibilities 1, available at http://president.msu.edu/communications/statements/free-speech.html (last visited Jan. 1, 2025).

6. *1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* 2, AAUP https://www.aaup.org/file/1940%20Statement.pdf. Consider, though, more recent conflicts over the legitimacy of academic boycotts for political reasons, as discussed in, *e.g.*, Ronald Krebs & Cary Nelson, *Boycotts: The Threat to Academic Freedom*, SAPIR J. Vol. 15 (Nov. 18, 2024); Greg Lukianoff, *The Fall of the AAUP* (Nov. 20, 2024) https://eternallyradicalidea.com/p/the-fall-of-the-aaup [https://perma.cc/TF5Z-Q9UM]. For background critique of broad academic freedom defenses, see MICHAEL BÉRUBÉ & JENNIFER ROTH, RACE, DEMOCRACY, AND THE FUTURE OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM (2022). *See also* Joan W. Scott, *What Is Behind FIRE's Attack on AAUP?*

University of Chicago President Robert Maynard Hutchins in emphasizing "the pursuit of truth for its own sake"[7] as an "aim of the university."[8] And more recently, Professor Stanley Fish has forthrightly declared that "[t]he values of advancing knowledge and discovering truth are not extrinsic to academic activity; they constitute it."[9]
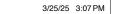
However metaphysically freighted, or else evacuated, we take the ideas of knowledge and truth to be, serious conflicts between knowledge and truth on the one hand, and an evolving mix of other possible university purposes are inevitable. President Hutchins himself thus recognized "a conflict between one aim of the university, the pursuit of truth for its own sake, and another which it professes too, the preparation of men and women for their life work."[10]

Much more broadly, consider not only the compatibilities, but the conflicts between the values of knowledge and truth on the one hand and any number of other candidates for the status of an important university purpose. Such values might include, for example, prioritizing a range of religious commitments; combatting discrimination, inequality, exclusion, and injustice; expanding educational opportunities and socio-economic mobility; promoting community; promoting economic and technological growth; providing social criticism; encouraging the moral cultivation and development of the students; training students to fit into a variety of professional roles; and perhaps even variously reinforcing established societal hierarchies.[11]

Crucially, though, the ideas of knowledge and truth have evolved in their nature, meaning, and significance, particularly on university campuses, and particularly over the past century or so. This evolution has consisted, in large measure, in what we have called a tendency toward conceptional erosion, disenchantment, dilution, hollowing and evacuation, deflation, and debunking.

This process of erosion has been from a position of the historical prominence of what we may call metaphysical realism and, in the realm of morality, of metaethical realism. Metaethical realism has taken a wide range of forms across the centuries. But we may simply say that according to metaethical

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(Nov. 18, 2024), https://www.insidehighered.com/opinion/views/2024/11/18/what-behind-fires-attacks-aaup-opinion [https://perma.cc/8GNL-6G8P].

7. ROBERT MAYNARD HUTCHINS, THE HIGHER LEARNING IN AMERICA 33 (2009 ed.) (1936).

8. *Id.*

9. STANLEY FISH, VERSIONS OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM: FROM PROFESSIONALISM TO REVOLUTION 132 (2014).

10. HUTCHINS, *supra* note 7, at 33. Consider, merely for example, the role of the university in preparing a student for a practically successful career in contemporary politics.

11. For elaboration, see R. George Wright, *Campus Speech and the Functions of the University*, 43 J. COLL. & UNIV. L. 1 (2017). Each of these values may, in turn, conflict internally, or with one another, as well as, in at least some instances, with either knowledge or truth in some significant respect. We here set aside the possibility that prioritizing either academic freedom, or freedom of speech on campus, however variously understood, actually might not optimally contribute toward a university's values of knowledge and truth. *Contrast* JOHN STUART MILL, ON LIBERTY (Gertrude Himmelfarb ed. 1975) (1859) with JAMES FITZJAMES STEPHEN, LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY (reprint ed. 1992) (1873).

realism in general, some moral propositions and moral beliefs can be better than others in some robust sense, and thus deeply truer, and can at least in principle often be knowable, as that latter term is most familiarly used.[12]

Moral realism may be partly contrasted with at least some forms of moral non-cognitivism. A number of such forms are popular with contemporary academics, with the basic idea being that moral, or politically normative, judgments do not express beliefs. One observer begins a brief census of such as follows:

> A.J. Ayer's emotivism . . . according to which moral judgements express emotions, or sentiments of approval or disapproval;[13] Simon Blackburn's quasi-realism . . . according to which moral judgements express our dispositions to form sentiments of approval or disapproval;[14] and Allan Gibbard's[15] norm-expressivism . . . according to which our moral judgements express our acceptance of norms.[16]

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12. For examples of secular moral realist approaches of substantial repute in contemporary academia, see, for example, JOHN BENGSON, TERENCE CUNEO & RUSS SHAFER-LANDAU, THE MORAL UNIVERSE (2024); DAVID O. BRINK, MORAL REALISM AND THE FOUNDATIONS OF ETHICS (1989); TERENCE CUNEO, THE NORMATIVE WEB: AN ARGUMENT FOR MORAL REALISM (2010); DAVID ENOCH, TAKING MORALITY SERIOUSLY: A DEFENSE OF ROBUST REALISM (2013); RUSS SHAFTER-LANDAU, MORAL REALISM: A DEFENSE (2005). For a useful collection of some influential articles, see ESSAYS ON MORAL REALISM (Geoffrey Sayre-McCord ed., 1988). For a defense of moral realism whose provenance may or may not ultimately be entirely secular, see JOHN FINNIS, NATURAL LAW AND NATURAL RIGHTS (2d ed. 2011). It has been said that realism is "a way of things that is independent of human opinion" and binding on appropriate parties. PAUL BOGHOSSIAN, FEAR OF KNOWLEDGE: AGAINST RELATIVISM AND CONSTRUCTIVISM 130 (2006).

13. *See*, classically, A.J. AYER, LANGUAGE, TRUTH AND LOGIC (1936). *See also* CHARLES L. STEVENSON, ETHICS AND LANGUAGE (1944).

14. *See, e.g.*, SIMON BLACKBURN, ESSAYS IN QUASI-REALISM (1993); SIMON BLACKBURN, RULING PASSIONS: A THEORY OF PRACTICAL REASONING (2001). For criticism*, see*, for example, TERENCE CUNEO, *Quasi-Realism*, *in* THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF METAETHICS 626, 628 (Tristram Colin McPherson & David Plunkett eds., 2018) ("no irreducible or essential appeal to the existence of moral 'properties' or 'facts'"). A contemporary critic of the immensely influential David Hume declared that according to Hume's metaethics, "Moral Approbation and Disapprobation are not [j]udgments, which must be true or false, but barely agreeable and uneasy [f]eelings or [s]ensations." THOMAS REID, INQUIRY AND ESSAYS 361 (Ronald E. Beanblossom & Keith Lehrer eds., 1983) (1788). The contemporary evolutionary psychologist Steven Pinker argues that "[p]eople have got feelings that give them empathetic moral convictions, and they struggle to rationalize the convictions after the fact." STEVEN PINKER, THE BLANK SLATE 271 (2002).

15. *See* ALLAN GIBBARD, THINKING HOW TO LIVE (2003); ALLAN GIBBARD, WISE CHOICES, APT FEELINGS: A THEORY OF NORMATIVE JUDGMENT (1990). For whatever difference it might make, Professor Gibbard is often thought of as, like Professor Blackburn, an ethical quasi-realist or subjectivist. *See* CUNEO, *Quasi-Realism*, *supra* note 14, at 625. In general, non-realists have incentives both to highlight and, in other contexts, to minimize their differences with moral realists. This phenomenon is exemplified in Bart Streumer, *Superspreading the Word*, 58 NOÛS 927 (2024).

16. ALEXANDER MILLER, CONTEMPORARY METAETHICS 6 (2d ed. 2013). For a further very brief characterization of non-cognitivism, see MATTHEW S. BEDKE, COGNITIVISM AND NON-COGNITIVISM, *in* THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF METAETHICS, *supra* note 14, at 292, 293.

There are, however, moral cognitivists who also think that our moral beliefs are systematically false. Moral error theorists argue that "moral thought and discourse involve systematically false beliefs and that, as a consequence, all moral judgments, or some significant subset thereof, are false."[17] On such views, our moral and political claims do aspire to more than just expressions of sentiments, of intentions, or of generalized approval. But our claims that some set of moral or political principles is meaningfully better than another, in some higher sense, are inevitably mistaken. Moral and political truth may be contrived or invented, but not discovered or found.[18]

Taking the idea of moral and normative political principles as the result of sheer invention naturally suggests what is called moral constructivism.[19] On such constructivist views, there are assumed to be no preexisting truths, or any facts of the matter, about moral and political policies.[20] We then proceed, actually or hypothetically, to select and then apply some procedure, perhaps involving debate followed by a possible agreement,[21] with the resulting substantive moral and political policies then being deemed legitimately adopted.[22]

One way of carrying out such a constructivist procedure, with an element of commitment entering at some point, we may call pragmatism. Pragmatism involves disdain not only for pre-existing moral truths,[23] but for any elaborate

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17. JONAS OLSON, *Error Theory in Metaethics*, *in* THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF METAETHICS, *supra* note 14, at 58. The classic error theory exposition is that of J.L. MACKIE, ETHICS: INVENTING RIGHT AND WRONG (1977). *See also* A WORLD WITHOUT VALUES: ESSAYS ON JOHN MACKIE'S MORAL ERROR THEORY (Richard Joyce & Simon Kirchin eds., 2010). For a critique, see Russ Shafer-Landau, *Error Theory and the Possibility of Normative Ethics*, 15 PHIL. ISSUES 107 (2009). For more recent versions of moral error theory, see RICHARD GARNER, BEYOND MORALITY (2014); THE END OF MORALITY: TAKING MORAL ABOLITIONISM SERIOUSLY (Richard Joyce & Richard Garner eds., 2019).

18. *See generally*, MACKIE, *supra* note 17.

19. *See, e.g.*, Sharon Street, *What is Constructivism in Ethics and Metaethics?*, 5 PHIL. COMPASS 363 (2010); MELISSA BARRY, *Constructivism*, *in* THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF METAETHICS, *supra* note 14, at 385; T.M. SCANLON, WHAT WE OWE TO EACH OTHER (1998); John Rawls, *Kantian Constructivism in Ethics*, 71 J. PHIL. 515 (1980); Onora O'Neill, *Constructivisms in Ethics*, 89 PROC. OF THE ARISTOTELIAN SOC. 1 (1989). For perspective, see Christina M. Korsgaard, *Realism and Constructivism in Twentieth-Century Moral Philosophy*, 28 J. MORAL PHIL. 99 (2003). For a hybrid of constructivism and anti-realist emotivism, expressivism, subjectivism, and relativism, see JESSE PRINZ, THE EMOTIONAL CONSTRUCTIVISM OF MORALS (2007). For several reasons, hybrid or compound metaethical theories have proliferated.

20. *See* the authorities cited, *supra* note 19.

21. *See* the authorities cited, *supra* note 19.

22. *See* the authorities cited, *supra* note 19.

23. *See* ANDRE SEPIELLI, *Pragmatism and Metaethics*, *in* THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF METAETHICS, *supra* note 14, at 582. The leading such pragmatist is Richard Rorty. For a very brief exposition, from among his many works, see Richard Rorty, *Main Statement*, *in* RICHARD RORTY & PASCAL ENGEL, WHAT'S THE USE OF TRUTH? 36–37 (2007). In the legal jurisprudential realm specifically, see RICHARD POSNER, LAW, PRAGMATISM, AND DEMOCRACY (2005). For brief commentary on Rorty-style pragmatism, see SIMON BLACKBURN, TRUTH: A GUIDE 156 (2007); CHRISTOPHER NORRIS, TRUTH MATTERS: REALISM, ANTI-REALISM AND RESPONSE-DEPENDENCE 115 (2002); R. George Wright, *Pragmatism and Freedom of Speech*, 80 NEB. L. REV. 103 (2004).

metaethical inquiry. While pragmatists differ among themselves, the idea, roughly, is to somehow bypass metaethics in favor of a concern for degrees of consensus on policies that are somehow deemed to be practically useful, helpful, or promotive of social utility and well-being, any and all metaethical foundations aside.

A further group of scholars has developed diverse, and partly conflicting, forms of what is known as moral fictionalism.[24] Collectively, moral fictionalist theories partake variously of general non-cognitivism, moral error theory, and pragmatism.[25] More specifically, some moral fictionalists embrace moral error theory, but recommend, in some presumably metaethically legitimate fashion, that we continue our moral discourse, but without any pretense to any dubious metaethical claim.[26] Other moral fictionalists do not subscribe to moral error theory, or any other moral realist theory, and suggest that despite appearances, we are, collectively, actually not committed to any metaethically ambitious form of moral discourse.[27]

Beyond these schools, there is a legion of moral skeptics[28] of various stripes, including some postmodernist philosophers.[29] Some moral skeptics suggest, in particular, that as a matter of evolutionary survival and reproductive fitness, our moral beliefs tend to track our environmental adaptation and survival as distinct from any independent moral truths.[30]

Then there are moral nihilists who may "believe neither in a meaning of life imposed by God nor in one supposedly made by humans."[31] It is then said that "[m]oral nihilism denies the sense of moral obligation, the objectivity of moral

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24. For a brief but authoritative overview, see RICHARD JOYCE, *Fictionalism in Metaethics*, *in* THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF METAETHICS, *supra* note 14, at 72.

25. *See id*. at 73.

26. *See id*.

27. *See id*. The leading contemporary moral fictionalists of these two schools are, respectively, Richard Joyce and Mark Eli Kalderon. *See* RICHARD JOYCE, THE MYTH OF MORALITY 206–31 (2001); MARK ELI KALDERON, MORAL FICTIONALISM (2005); Richard Joyce, *Review of Kalderon, M.E., Moral Fictionalism*, 85 PHIL. & PHENOMENOLOGICAL RES. 61 (2012).

28. *See, e.g.*, WALTER SINNOTT-ARMSTRONG, MORAL SKEPTICISMS (2006); MATT LUTZ & JACOB ROSS, *Moral Skepticism*, *in* THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF METAETHICS, *supra* note 14, at 484.

29. *See, e.g.*, the postmodernist distrust of metanarratives embodied in the view that "[w]here reality itself has become a manufactured image, it will be said, it can no longer make sense to measure our beliefs against how matters really stand." FRANK B. FARRELL, SUBJECTIVITY, REALISM AND POSTMODERNISM: THE RECOVERY OF THE WORLD IN RECENT PHILOSOPHY 245 (1996).

30. *See, e.g.*, SINNOTT-ARMSTRONG, *supra* note 28, at ch. 6. The leading work in this area of recent vintage is by the constructivist Sharon Street, *A Darwinian Dilemma for Realist Theories of Value*, 127 PHIL. STUD. 109 (2006). For critical assessments from among a now vast literature, see, for example, Guy Kahane, *Evolutionary Debunking Arguments*, 45 NOÛS 103 (2010); Erik J. Wielenberg, *On the Evolutionary Debunking of Morality*, 120 ETHICS 441 (2010). More broadly, *see* RICHARD JOYCE, THE EVOLUTION OF MORALITY (2006).

31. JAMES TARTAGLIA & TRACY LLANERA, A DEFENCE OF NIHILISM 10 (2021).

principles, or the moral viewpoint."[32] Professor Alex Rosenberg has thus asked: "What is the difference between right and wrong, good and bad? There is no moral difference between them."[33] Even the most unambitious forms of moral constructivism would thus seem logically inappropriate.

Finally, consider the position that morality, whether tolerant of outsiders or not, is essentially group-based.[34] Campus moral relativism may well be conspicuous without being adhered to with any rigorous consistency. Moral relativists as to knowledge and truth may actually vary in interesting ways as to their metaethics. Some might believe that moral relativism is indeed inscribed into the very nature of the universe. Others might wind up with some form of normative-level moral relativism as a result of their disenchantment with, or skepticism of, all ambitious metaethical claims.[35]

Of course, like most others, few campus moral relativists have anything like a fully developed approach to metaethics. For some, moral relativism may be thought, rightly or wrongly, to gesture at some occasions for tolerance, or at a desire simply to avoid some moral controversies.

More broadly, few persons on campus, whether relativistically inclined or not, will hold anything akin to any developed metaethical view. Our argument herein need not contend otherwise. All that is needed for our purposes is something like a broad, perhaps diversely constituted current of thought, however rudimentary and inchoate, with a meaningful presence on university campuses.

Consider, in this context, the observation of John Maynard Keynes that whether recognized or not, the thinking of a few "academic scribblers" may, whether indirectly, deludedly, and oversimplifiedly or not, meaningfully influence university policies over time.[36]

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32. NOLEN GERTZ, NIHILISM 74 (2019). *See also* DAVID BENTLEY HART, ALL THINGS ARE FULL OF GODS 471 (2024) ("[w]hatever else modernity is, good or bad, alike, it's most definitely also the project of a fully recognized nihilism, in the most neutral philosophical sense of that terms.").

33. ALEX ROSENBERG, THE ATHEIST'S GUIDE TO REALITY 3 (2011). For a recent response to various such approaches, see SHELLY KAGAN, ANSWERING MORAL SKEPTICISM (2023).

34. *See* ISIDORA STOJANOVIC, *Metaethical Relativism, in* THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF METAETHICS, *supra* note 14, at 119. For some leading contemporary discussions of moral relativism, see GILBERT HARMAN & JUDITH JARVIS THOMSON, MORAL RELATIVISM AND MORAL OBJECTIVITY (1996); GILBERT HARMAN, THE NATURE OF MORALITY (1977); STEVEN LUKES, MORAL RELATIVISM (2008); MORAL RELATIVISM: A READER (Paul K. Moser & Thomas L. Carson eds., 2000); RELATIVISM: COGNITIVE AND MORAL (Michael Krausz & Jack W. Meiland eds., 1982); DAVID B. WONG NATURAL MORALITIES: A DEFENSE OF PLURALISTIC RELATIVISM (2006); Torbjörn Tännsjö, *Moral Relativism*, 135 PHIL. STUD. 123 (2007).

35. *See, e.g.*, STOJANOVIC, *supra* note 34.

36. *See* JOHN MAYNARD KEYNES, THE GENERAL THEORY OF EMPLOYMENT, INTEREST AND MONEY 383 (1936), where Keynes famously wrote that: "Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist [or "political philosopher"]. Madmen in authority, who hear voices in the air, are distilling their frenzy from some academic scribbler of a few years back." *Id.* And in turn,

As well, we need not claim that the schools of thought that have eroded the stature of classic, John Stuart Mill-type quests for objectively valid moral knowledge and truth have actually eclipsed, and now dominate, such classically ambitious metaethical aspirations.

Instead, we need claim only that the combined effects of the rise of the less metaethically ambitious approaches to moral knowledge and truth have significantly reduced the dominance of the metaethically more ambitious such approaches. Likely, metaethically realist approaches to moral knowledge and truth are still preeminent, at least among philosophers.[37] Our claim is instead that the rise of the various non-realist and broadly post-modernist schools have legitimized, if not facilitated, less metaethically ambitious and now more influential approaches to moral knowledge and truth on campus.[38]

This phenomenon is obscured by the fact that many persons on university campuses might choose to tick the box of moral realism, but whose version of moral realism deflates classic understandings of knowledge and truth.

Consider specifically those on campus who would tick the moral realist box, but who also believe that moral knowledge and truth cannot escape, or rise higher than, one's group memberships. As a member of some specific group, some moral proposition may be claimed to be true. But members of other, perhaps hostile, groups doubtless believe the converse of such proposition to be

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academics across the departments tend to imbibe the spirit of the age emanating from the broader cultural world, as well as from other academic departments. *See generally* ONORA O'NEILL, *The Eclipse of Virtue in the University and Wider Society*, *in* CULTIVATING VIRTUE IN THE UNIVERSITY (Jonathan Brand et al. ed., 2021)

37. For some survey numbers, whatever their limitations, see David Bourget & David J. Chalmers, *Philosophers on Philosophy: The 2020 PhilPapers Survey*, 23 PHILOSOPHERS' IMPRINT 1, 7 (2023). A clear majority of the philosophers surveyed in 2020 endorsed some form of moral realism, which may well include, though, a substantial number of moral relativists and error theorists.

38. *See*, merely anecdotally, ALLAN BLOOM, THE CLOSING OF THE AMERICAN MIND (1987); Chris Meyers, *A Disturbing Trend of Relativism Among College Students*, MEDIUM (Apr. 14, 2022), https://medium.com/illumination/a-disturbing-trend-of-relativism-among-college-students-ff4ec293c6f1 [https://perma.cc/XB89-5US8]; Richard Cocks, *Students Are Moral Relativists: Problem and Solution*, THE JAMES G. MARTIN CENTER FOR ACADEMIC RENEWAL (Aug. 12. 2016), https://www.jamesgmartin.center/2016/08/students-moral-relativists-problem-solution/ [https://perma.cc/LD6Z-X8HA]; Molly Olshatz, *College Without Truth*, FIRST THINGS (May 2016), www.firstthings.com/article/2016/05/college-without-truth [https://perma.cc/ TMQ7-PHD6]; Brooke Conrad, *Dominic Legge Speaks on Moral Relativism*, THE COLLEGIAN (Apr. 12, 2018), www.hillsdalecollegian.com/2018/04/dominic-legge-speaks-moral-relativism [https://perma.cc/DC4N-JRTD]; Philip Carl Salzman, *How cultural relativism on campus has chilled freedom of expression,* MACDONALD-LAURIER INST. (Nov. 14, 2016) Paul Boghossian, *The Maze of Moral Relativism*, N.Y. TIMES (July 24, 2011), https://archive.nytimes.com/ opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/07/24/the-maze-of-moral-relativism/ [https://perma.cc/SC 6F-EWYU]. Note that there need not be any association between moral relativism, or any other metaethically unambitious approaches, and any empathy or tolerance toward one's perceived political antagonists. One's own group's relative morality may call for the destruction of other groups, who may adhere to their own antagonistic group-based moral views. *See, e.g.*, John J. Tilley, *Cultural Relativism and Tolerance*, 6 LYCEUM 1 (1994).

knowably true. In a logical, but unimportant sense, there is no contradiction between the beliefs of these two groups. The obvious pragmatic conflict between the two relativist groups, however, remains.

The more important point for our purposes is that these two 'realist' campus relativist groups are not engaged in any joint, common pursuit of morally realist knowledge and truth, as we classically imagine the university community to be engaged in.[39] One group has their perhaps morally 'realist' ways of knowing, and another group has some other ways of knowing, with no likelihood of the twain ever meeting. One group has their own lived experience as their guide to 'realist' moral truth. Another group has some other set of lived experiences as their corresponding guide. Neither group need assign any weight, let alone any potentially decisive weight, to the unshared experiences of others.[40]

Outside groups may then seek to bring their own normative beliefs, and their own perhaps realist metaethics, to the two mutually insulated relativist groups in question. But neither of the latter two relativist groups need have their slightest reason to revise their own normative beliefs in light of any third-party critique.

Here, and much more broadly, then, the classic idea of a genuine academic community,[41] composed of sub-communities, but jointly seeking knowledge and truth in community, tends to evaporate.

Consider the dramatic conclusion reached by Professor Paul Boghossian:

> Especially within the academy, but also and inevitably to some extent outside of it, the idea that there are 'many equally valid ways of knowing the world' . . . has taken deep root. In vast stretches of the humanities and social sciences, this sort of postmodern relativism about knowledge has achieved the status of orthodoxy.[42]

We need not make any argument this narrowly focused, or this ambitiously strong. Our less dramatic claims above will instead suffice for our purposes.

But even our less dramatic claims have important implications. It is

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39. *See supra* notes 1–9 and accompanying text.

40. For background, see sources cited *supra* note 34.

41. For the idea of the university as an overarching community, see, merely for example*,* JACQUES BARZUN, THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY: HOW IT RUNS, WHERE IT IS GOING 244 (2d ed. 1993) (1968); JOHN DEWEY, DEMOCRACY AND EDUCATION 4 (Dover ed. 2004) (1916); CHARLES HOMER HASKINS, THE RISE OF THE UNIVERSITIES 24 (1965 ed.) (1923); CLARK KERR, THE USES OF THE UNIVERSITY 1 (1963); JAROSLAV PELIKAN, THE IDEA OF THE UNIVERSITY: A RE-EXAMINATION 65 (1992); R.S. PETERS, ETHICS AND EDUCATION 58 (1966). Consider, at an etymological level, that 'college' may refer not merely to an association of persons, but to a genuine community. *See* ROBERT S. RAIT, LIFE IN THE MEDIEVAL UNIVERSITY 5 (Forgotten Books ed., 2015) (Cambridge Univ. reprint ed. 1918). *See also* WOLFF, *supra* note 2, at 127 ("a university ought to be a community of persons united by collective understandings, by common and communal goals") (emphasis in the original).

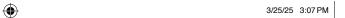42. PAUL BOGHOSSIAN, FEAR OF KNOWLEDGE: AGAINST RELATIVISM AND CONSTRUCTIVISM 2 (2006).

reasonable to believe that when universities are "dedicated to truth-seeking and the advancement and dissemination of human knowledge, then robust protections for academic freedom . . . are essential to effectuating that mission."[43] What, then, if the traditional understandings of knowledge and truth are, to some degree, eroded, attenuated, debunked, set aside, or evacuated on one theory or another?

Understandably, "[a]cademic freedom is much less useful, or even counterproductive, if universities prioritize[ ] some other mission over [meaningful] truth-seeking."[44] Truth that is, say, thought to be written into the very fabric of the universe may well seem worth pursuing at some substantial cost. But what if 'truth' is today increasingly, if not primarily, thought of on campus as variously less intrinsically worth of sacrificial pursuit? What if, in John Stuart Mill's phrase, the very existence of genuinely "all-important truth"[45] in the moral and political realm has gradually diminished?

Prioritizing academic freedom, or free speech on campus,[46] may seem worthwhile if we, like Mill, aspire to "knowing the whole of a subject."[47] But any substantial cost of such prioritization may seem not worth paying if knowing and truth have themselves been diluted.

Consider the question of academic freedom, or of freedom of speech, when upheld at the expense, in particular, of the equality of persons.[48] Values such as personal equality and non-discrimination may, initially, seem no less dependent upon some ultimate metaphysical grounding than freedom of speech. Certainly, equality and non-discrimination have often been defended, historically, in ambitious metaphysical terms.[49] As with the value of free speech, though, attempts to justify non-discrimination and the equality of persons on ambitious metaphysical grounds have come to seem increasingly dubious.[50]

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43. Keith E. Whittington, *Academic Freedom and the Mission of the University*, 59 Hous. L. Rev. 821, 821 (2022).

44. *Id.*

45. John Stuart Mill, On Liberty 99 (Gertrude Himmelfarb ed., 1974) (1859).

46. We need take no position on current debates over the relation between academic freedom, narrowly conceived, and the general freedom of speech of all campus actors. *See* Mary-Rose Papandrea, *Law Schools, Professionalism, and the First Amendment*, 76 Stan. L. Rev. 1609 (2024); Robert Post, *Discipline and Freedom in the Academy*, 65 Ark. L. Rev. 203, 211 (2012); Frederick Schauer, *The Permutations of Academic Freedom*, 65 Ark. L. Rev. 193, 200–01 (2012).

47. Mill, *supra* note 45, at 80.

48. As pursued in R. George Wright, *Dignity and Conflicts of Constitutional Values: The Case of Free Speech and Equal Protection*, 43 San Diego L. Rev. 527 (2006).

49. *See, e.g.*, John E. Coons & Patrick M. Brennan, By Nature Equal (1999); Jeremy Waldron, God, Locke, and Equality: Christian Foundations in Locke's Political Thought (2002); Nicholas Wolterstorff, Justice: Rights and Wrongs (2010); Michael J. Perry, *Moral Equality?*, 23 J. Contemp. Legal Issues 383 (2022).

50. For recent discussions, see, for example, Jeremy Waldron, One Another's Equals: The Basis of Human Equality (2017); Ian Carter, *Respect and the Basis of Equality*, 121 Ethics 538, 539 & 539 n.4 (2011) (collecting, at this historic late date, earnest contemporary attempts to meaningfully ground the universal equality of persons). More bluntly, there is Peter Singer's

But equality of persons, as opposed to any broad principles of free speech, seems much better adapted to a metaethically arid or unambitious campus climate. In an arid metaethical climate, free speech seems worthy only up to the bounds of its perceived usefulness in generating somehow valued outcomes. Free speech must pay off in terms of sheer utility in a culture that has downgraded the status of the pursuit of knowledge and truth. And this brute utility calculus may well call for substantial restrictions on speech for the sake of better pursuing other university goals.[51]

A de facto, pragmatic, or modus vivendi-type of equality and non-discrimination among persons is hardier and more self-sustaining if we take unambitious metaethical assumptions for granted. Apart from unchallenged institutional hierarchies, equality among persons on campus and elsewhere is the only realistic presumption. There is clearly no stable alternative baseline for genuinely meaningful discussions, arguments, and negotiations on campus. Consider the elemental, self-sustaining, unambitiousness of this observation of Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.:

> You cannot argue with your neighbor, except on the admission for the moment that he is as wise as you . . . you cannot deal with him . . . except on the footing of equal treatment, and the same rules for both.[52]

In this context, Holmes echoes the classic insights of Thomas Hobbes on the realistic conditions for stable social interaction. Hobbes observes that despite obviously real inequalities among persons, "[n]ature hath made men so equall in the faculties of body and mind, . . . [that] the difference between man, and man, is not so considerable, as that one man can thereupon claim to himselfe

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declaration that "[t]he plain fact is that humans differ, and the differences apply to so many characteristics that the search for a factual basis on which to erect the principle of equality seems hopeless." PETER SINGER, PRACTICAL ETHICS 295 (1979). *See also* Anne Phillips, UNCONDITIONAL EQUALS 15–16, 44–45 (2021) (equality as a commitment one might make, rather than involving an assertion with any ground or foundations); Geoffrey Cupit, *The Basis of Equality*, 75 PHIL.105, 108 (2000) (the claim that persons are relevantly equal "is very far from being self-evident. Indeed, on the face of it, the claim seems highly implausible"); Giacomo Floris, *On the Basis of Moral Equality: A Rejection of the Relation-First Approach*, 22 ETHICAL THEORY & MORAL PRAC. 237 (2019); *Suzy Killmister, Constructing Moral Equality*, 8 J. AM. PHIL. ASS'N 1 (2022) (moral constructivism); Kasper Lippert-Rasmussen, *What Is It For Us To Be Moral Equals? And Does It Much Matter If We're Not?*, 23 J. CONTEMP. LEGAL ISSUES 307 (2022). There seems to be an unstable, whistling past the graveyard quality to all such attenuated and would-be deflationist views that nevertheless retain a determined normative commitment to universal equality.

51. As when the value of freedom of campus speech bumps up against any other purpose or precondition of university campus life, including equality, non-discrimination, students' psychological health, career-preparedness, redistribution of career opportunities, training in civility, promotion of particular religious tenets, and other conflicting such university purposes.

52. OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, JR., THE COMMON LAW 41–42 (Harv. Univ. Press ed., 2009) (1881).

any benefit, to which another may not pretend, as well as he."[53] By comparison, a robust regime of broad but unambitiously grounded campus freedom of speech, unlike equality, amounts to a delicate, distinctly vulnerable hothouse plant, continually subject to understandable objections reflecting less metaphysically dependent countervailing interests.

Overall, then our account above has sought to describe some elements of the current state of play on contemporary university campuses, including the status of the quest for moral and other truths. Whether there is any realistic path forward to a sufficiently well-grounded justification for prioritizing the pursuit of knowledge and truth by the campus community is doubtful. Too many mutually reinforcing academic and broader cultural trends,[54] accruing over a century, seem to militate against any such development. Even if our collective political antagonisms were to subside, there would remain the diminished collective sense that free speech distinctly contributes to the meaningful pursuit of any objective, robust, broadly valid truths.

In the absence of any revitalization of the values of truth and knowledge, though, some relevant forms of progress may still be possible. Consider the nature and status of what many cultures across history have thought of as important virtues and vices. Importantly, such virtues and vices can have important effects on whether anyone 'believes' in them or not and whether those who 'believe' in such virtues accord them any metaphysical status or not.

Fortitude and resilience, for example, can have meaningful effects even if they lack any metaphysical depth, and whether anyone thinks of them as virtues or not.[55] Similarly for the virtue of prudence, or for practical wisdom, and for the virtue of reasonable, as distinct from either excessive or insufficient, self-restraint.[56] In general, such virtues tend, over time, to pay off, for many, in elemental, realistically undeniable ways, such as sheer group survival.

Doubtless, classic vices such as chronic self-indulgence, rashness, unreflective impulsivity, or sheer cravenness may, for a time, under limited cultural circumstances, have a net payoff for some persons who exhibit such traits. But such classic vices do not seem likely to generally pay off for their

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53. THOMAS HOBBES, LEVIATHAN CH. XIII (1651), (available at www.gutenberg.org/files/ 3207/3207-h/3207-h).

54. Among such trends would be the confluence of institutional self-indulgence, dogmatism, complacent and irrevocable commitments to largely empirical claims, postmodern insouciance regarding truth, and a half-century of intense political polarization. *See, e.g.*, EZRA KLEIN, WHY WE'RE POLARIZED (2021). Given today's remarkably intense and pervasive polarization, especially in its emotional dimensions, we should be reluctant to predict a general favoring of rigorous campus speech protections for one's designated, and perhaps delegitimized, political opponents in particular.

55. For useful overviews, see MICHAEL PAKALUK, ARISTOTLE'S NICOMACHEAN ETHICS: AN INTRODUCTION (2005); SARAH BROADIE, ETHICS WITH ARISTOTLE (1991); NANCY SHERMAN, THE FABRIC OF CHARACTER: ARISTOTLE'S THEORY OF VIRTUE (1991).

56. *See* the sources cited, *supra* note 55. All persons and groups can, of course, seek to redefine widely recognized virtues and vices in an attempt to bring credit to themselves or their allies. The actual payoffs from such moves may, however, often be limited.

exhibitor or for the exhibitor's group, over the long haul, or when circumstances have become distinctly challenging.[57]

In contrast, practical wisdom and fortitude, especially, tend to pay off over time and across circumstances, particularly for their exhibitors and their affiliated groups. This is true, at least to a significant extent, even on contemporary university campuses. Being caught blind-sided by developments on our office campus, and then reacting out of impulse, irrationally or not, tends not to promote group success, even on campus. There arise, eventually, cultural selection pressures against persons and groups regularly exhibiting such reactions.

And this is again true whether one thinks that there are such things as classic virtues and vices or not,[58] and whether one sees such virtues and vices as reflective of human nature, the world, or an objective moral order or not. Persons on university campuses today thus have some affirmative practical interest in cultivating, and appropriately displaying, some largely uncontroversial set of elemental, cross-culturally recognized basic virtues.

Thus, the philosopher Linda Zagzebski argues that "[m]any virtues ought to be common ground for persons of all political viewpoints."[59] Some basic moral and epistemic virtues seem to be vital for a healthy functioning society over time.[60] Here, Professor Zagzebski lists "[c]ompassion, generosity, tolerance, trustworthiness, honesty, [and] sympathy."[61] Within limits, such lists can be adjusted and reformulated.

Persons on campus can indeed choose to reject, deconstruct, redefine, or seek to commandeer and monopolize any of the virtues on Professor Zagzebski's list. Perhaps anyone on campus can, as an individual or a small group, free ride on the trustworthiness and honesty of others, at least within

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57. Especially, one would imagine, in the face of any relevant budgetary resource shortages, let alone any funding emergencies.

58. For the classic Aristotelian cardinal, or fundamental, virtues, see the authorities cited, *supra* note 55. For broader discussion of both moral and epistemic virtues and beyond, see ROBERT M. ADAMS, A THEORY OF VIRTUE (2006); JASON BAEHR, THE INQUIRING MIND: ON INTELLECTUAL VIRTUES AND VIRTUE EPISTEMOLOGY (2012); CHRISTOPHER M. BELLITTO, HUMILITY: THE SECRET HISTORY OF A LOST VIRTUE (2023); THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO VIRTUE ETHICS (Daniel C. Russell ed., 2013); ANDRE COMTE-SPONVILLE, A SMALL TREATISE ON THE GREAT VIRTUES (2002); DALE DORSEY, A THEORY OF PRUDENCE (2021); JOSEPH PIEPER, THE FOUR CARDINAL VIRTUES (Richard & Clara Winston trans., 1966); ROBERT C. ROBERTS & W. JAY WOOD, INTELLECTUAL VIRTUES: AN ESSAY IN REGULATIVE EPISTEMOLOGY (2007); VIRTUE AND VICE: MORAL AND EPISTEMIC (Heather Battaly ed., 2010); VIRTUES AND THEIR VICES (Kevin Timpe & Craig A. Boyd eds., 2015); LINDA TRINKAUS ZAGZEBSKI, VIRTUES OF THE MIND: AN INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE OF VIRTUE AND THE ETHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF KNOWLEDGE (1996); PRACTICAL WISDOM: PHILOSOPHICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES (Mario de Caro & Maria Silvia Vacarreza eds., 2021); Paul Bloomfield, *Epistemic Temperance*, 56 AM. PHIL. Q. 109 (2019).

59. Linda Zagzebski, *Virtue Ethics*, 22 THINK 15, 20 (2022).

60. *See id*.

61. *Id.*

limits.[62] But there are inevitable limits to the payoffs of repeated such behavior.

Let us then briefly take a narrower focus. Especially in the university campus context, there is a distinct place for the virtue of epistemic or intellectual humility in particular.[63] The virtue of epistemic humility is herein not a matter of modesty or self-depreciation. Instead, it is a matter of sheer cold-eyed realism concerning one's abilities, and the limits thereof. Humility, in this sense, lies in a mean between intellectual self-effacement and sheer intellectual pretense.[64] On that standard, a reality-based intellectual humility on campus may be in shorter supply, within or beyond one's favored grouping, than is widely recognized.[65]

As well, lack of practical wisdom may, for a time, be rational for those committed to any given campus cause. But the disinclination to pursue practical wisdom is, in the long run, likely to undermine one's efforts to obtain one's political aims. If, by analogy, one is playing chess against someone with greater practical wisdom as to chess strategy, one is, all else equal, likely to lose over the long term.

An under-appreciated point, though, is that one campus group's practical wisdom may benefit not merely the campus in general, but that campus group's political opponents in particular. On the global scale, one group's practical wisdom may, in the context of a nuclear missile crisis, prevent the destruction not only of their own civilization, but of their opponent's civilization as well.[66]

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62. For background, see Russel Hardin & Garrett Cullity, *The Free Rider Problem*, STAN. ENCYC. PHIL. (rev. ed. Oct. 13, 2020, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/free-rider [https://perma. cc/22H3-DNTE].

63. For background, see BELLITTO, *supra* note 58; THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF PHILOSOPHY OF HUMILITY (Mark Alfaro, Michael P. Lynch & Alessandra Tanesini eds., 2021); Elizabeth J. Krumrei-Mancuso, et al., *Toward an Understanding of Collective Intellectual Humility* (Oct. 2, 2024), https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1364661324002286; Nancy Nyquist Porter, The Virtue of Epistemic Humility, 29 PHIL., PSYCHIATRY, & PSYCH.121 (2022); Duncan Pritchard, *Intellectual Humility and the Epistemology of Disagreement*, 198 Synthese S1711 (2021 Peter Salovey, President, Yale University, Baccalaureate Address, Yale College Class of 2022: On Intellectual Humilty (May 22, 2022); G. Scott Waterman, *Epistemic Humility: Accruing Wisdom or Forsaking Standards?*, 29 PHIL., PSYCHIATRY, & PSYCH. 101 (2022); Dennis Whitcomb, et al., *Intellectual Humility: Owning Our Limitations*, 94 PHIL. & PHENOMENOLOGICAL RES. 509 (2017).

64. *See* the sources cited, *supra* note 63.

65. *See* John P.A. Ioannidis, *Why Most Published Research Findings Are False*, PLOS MED 2(8): E124 (Aug. 30, 2005)); RICHARD ARUM & JOSIPA ROKSA, ACADEMICALLY ADRIFT: LIMITED LEARNING ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES (2011); Rose Horowitch, *The Elite College Students Who Can't Read Books,* THE ATLANTIC (Oct. 1, 2024), https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/ 2024/11/the-elite-college-students-who-cant-read-books/679945/   [https://perma.cc/2RZA-HN 75]; Jean M. Twenge, *The Homework Bubble Has Popped*, (Dec. 12, 2024) https://www. generationtechblog.com/p/the-homework-bubble-has-popped   [https://perma.cc/QL63-J47M] (homework and grades as trending in opposite directions). More broadly, *see* ILYA SOMIN, DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL IGNORANCE 17 (2d ed. 2016) ("[t]he sheer depth of most individual voters' ignorance may be shocking to [those] not familiar with the research"); NICHOLAS CARR, THE SHALLOWS: WHAT THE INTERNET IS DOING TO OUR BRAINS (2020).

66. For background, see THOMAS C. SCHELLING, THE STRATEGY OF CONFLICT (1981).

More broadly, a recognition by one's practically wiser opponents that both parties are indeed locked in a prisoner's dilemma[67] may benefit both parties equally. Otherwise put, one campus group's cultivating their own practical wisdom, grace under pressure, fortitude under stress, and other virtues may have important positive externalities for even their campus opponents.[68] Cultivating widely recognized elemental moral and epistemic virtues may have recognizable value for many contending campus groups, and for the university campus more generally.

III. CONCLUSION

We may well be unable to fully regenerate any consensus that freedom of speech on campus, or academic freedom, promotes the search for knowledge and truth understood in terms of classic, robust moral objectivity. But some useful compensatory work can nevertheless be done. In particular, campus citizenry can be led to better appreciate that cultivating and allowing others to cultivate, at least within limits, widely acknowledged basic virtues can promote the health of the campus community and the flourishing of many contending campus groups.

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67. See, for background, Steven Kuhn, *Prisoner's Dilemma*, STAN. ENCYC. PHIL., (rev. ed. April 2, 2019), https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/prisoner-dilemma/ [https://perma.cc/5GNF-XY8X].

68. Contending campus groups might also come to realize that practical wisdom in their opponents may allow the latter to first recognize, and then to devise optimal strategies to combat, serious external threats to the broader university community. Such threats may be a matter of rapidly evolving and inexpensive educational technologies that are at home well beyond the brick-and-mortar university. Or the looming possibility of reductions, by state or national government actors, of their contributions to university budgets.