

# ORIGIN, IMPACT, AND REACTION TO MISOGYNISTIC BEHAVIORS:

An Interview with  
Kate A. Manne, PhD



## ABOUT KATE A. MANNE, PHD



Kate A. Manne is an associate professor at the Sage School of Philosophy at Cornell University, where she has been teaching since 2013. Before that, she was a junior fellow at the Harvard Society of Fellows (2011–2013), did her graduate work at MIT (2006–2011), and was an undergraduate at the University of Melbourne (2001–2005), where she studied philosophy, logic, and computer science. Her current research is primarily in moral, feminist, and social philosophy. She is the author of two books, including her first book *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny* and her latest book *Entitled: How Male Privilege Hurts Women*. Manne has also published a number of scholarly papers about the foundations of morality, and she regularly writes opinion pieces, essays, and reviews in venues—including *The New York Times*, *The Boston Review*, the *Huffington Post*, and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.



STANCE: We wanted to reiterate our thanks to you for being here. We're all super excited and grateful that you could interview with us. For our first question, we were wondering what your undergraduate years as a philosophy student were like, and how are they related to how you do philosophy now?

MANNE: I was primarily interested in logic as an undergraduate. I studied with Greg Restall and Graham Priest at the University of Melbourne. In some ways, that's very different from what I do now. I would say, though, those years doing logic in the philosophy department and also the computer science department gave me a certain amount of confidence that stood me in good stead for graduate school and made me able to change course when I became interested in ethics and feminist philosophy.

STANCE: We've noticed some of the major themes in your work are misogyny and entitlement. Could you give us a gloss of these concepts and talk about how they're connected?

I DEFINE MISOGYNY AS A SYSTEM THAT FUNCTIONS TO POLICE AND ENFORCE A PATRIARCHAL ORDER BY VISITING WOMEN AND GIRLS WITH HOSTILITY AND HATRED . . . BECAUSE THEY VIOLATE PATRIARCHAL NORMS AND EXPECTATIONS.

MANNE: Absolutely. My definition of misogyny is opposed to what I call the naive definition of misogyny. The naive definition of misogyny says that misogyny is the hatred of any and every woman and girl or, at least, women and girls very generally. I oppose that definition and propose something more structural and social rather than psychological. I define misogyny as a system that functions to police and enforce a patriarchal order by visiting women and girls with hostility and hatred, paradigmatically because they violate patriarchal norms and expectations. That immediately led me to this question: what are patriarchal norms and expectations, especially in a superficially egalitarian milieu like America today?

My answer to that is contained in my second book, which discusses the concept of entitlement. I think there are still norms and expectations that say that privileged men, at least, are entitled to certain goods from women, things like sex, most obviously, but still more insidiously, things like care, love, attention, admiration, as well as power and claims to knowledge. So, I don't offer a definition of the concept of entitlement. I think

it's difficult to define. I think there are various semi-synonyms for the concept of entitlement, like what someone has a right to, what someone is owed, or what they deserve. These are all ways of getting a similar idea of what someone is due.

STANCE: Diving more into your work, we have a question about "Chapter One" of *Down Girl*. You say misogynist hostilities will often target women quite selectively rather than targeting women across the board. You give examples of Rush Limbaugh, Donald Trump, and even Elliot Rodger, the *Isla Vista* killer. Do you think men with hostile attitudes purposely look for women who are acting against the patriarchy, or are their hateful displays reactive?

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MANNE: That's a great question. I think their hateful displays are almost always reactive and not any kind of deliberate attempt to enforce the patriarchal order. They're typically—and I think I can say this in all of those three cases—reactions to women who thwart, cross, or challenge these men in some way, or perhaps a bit more broadly, who violate their sense of what women owe men. In the case of Elliot Rodger, there was the sense that he was owed sex, love, affection, and admiration from "hot blonde girls." His subsequent reaction was very volatile and violent when he felt he wasn't being given what he believed he was due. That went hand in hand with a lot of moralistic rhetoric.

He said, for example, that it was very unfair, that he'd been done a great injustice, that it was a crime. So, it's not so much that he was looking for people to punish. It's rather that he felt like he'd been done a grave injustice or harm and that his reaction—revenge or retribution—was deserved. It was striking. He called the final YouTube video that he uploaded before committing his murders "The Day of Retribution." Again, you find this highly moralistic attitude purveyed by misogynists. I think that's also true of Rush Limbaugh. He ironically thought that Sandra Fluke was acting overly entitled to contraception, in holding it should be covered under health insurance at the religious institution of Georgetown, where she was in law school. He advertised the view that these women were doing him and his listeners, *qua* American taxpayers, an injustice by acting overly entitled to birth control.

Donald Trump is usually someone who lashes out very reactively when women thwart, cross, or challenge him. A classic example of that would be when Megyn Kelly challenged him during a debate saying, “How will you represent women, given that your record on women is not very good?” She challenged him on the likelihood of his being able to do justice to women when it came to health care. He said, “She had blood coming out of her eyes and her wherever,” thereby coining a new euphemism for the vagina. He was painting Megyn Kelly as the aggressor in doing that. He was acting like he was the one who was the victim or the one who’d been done an injustice or wrong, and his hostility took the form of portraying her as the perpetrator.

*STANCE: Let’s move to “Chapter Three” of Down Girl. You argue abortion wasn’t a significant religious issue until the Nixon campaign made it one. How much of a role does religion play in enforcing misogynist ideals, or is religion really just another part of the sexist framework within patriarchy?*

MANNE: That is a tricky question to answer because religion is so diverse. I’d be very hesitant to make any broad brush strokes or sweeping claims about the role of religion. For one thing, many world religions don’t have a particularly oppressive attitude toward women or particularly sexist attitudes. I think contemporary Buddhism is perfectly friendly to, and compatible with, feminist ideals, for example. But even if we’re looking more narrowly within Christianity, we shouldn’t lose sight of a very progressive and, to my mind, salutary Christian left, who try to make things better for girls and women. I think of it more as there being certain political movements, such as the anti-abortion movement, that are very regressive and look to fairly small and local elements of institutions, including religious institutions, to essentially exploit people into thinking their vote should go to Republicans because of what are essentially trumped-up issues like abortion. But this wasn’t a major issue for anyone but strict Catholics during most of the 20th century, up until the early 70s, and prior to *Roe v. Wade*. My point is mostly that it was a drummed-up issue, that it wasn’t a grassroots campaign against abortion that led to it becoming a big political issue in this country. It wasn’t actually *Roe v. Wade*. It was a deliberately engineered attempt to manipulate people into voting Republican by making this more of an issue than it actually was to most religious people prior to the early 70s.

*STANCE: In Down Girl “Chapter Six,” you discuss how women are rewarded by society when they engage in behaviors that don’t threaten the patriarchal*

*system. However, when they become a victim of misogyny and speak out against it, their credibility is questioned, or their perpetrator is shown sympathy, especially if the perpetrator is of a higher status or position than the victim. You call the show of sympathy for perpetrators “himpathy.” Some of us have experienced the harms of what you call “himpathy.” Could you talk about what some good responses are when one is harmed this way?*

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MANNE: First of all, I’m very sorry for anyone who has had that experience of not being given the sympathy one is owed as a victim of injustice, misogynist hostility, sexual harassment, or assault. In terms of responses, my hope is that the coining the concept of “himpathy” can help both victims themselves and also their allies or accomplices to push back against “himpathetic” reactions. When someone says, “Oh poor him,” because he is being held accountable for doing something that was misogynistic, such as sexual assault, and isn’t thinking about his current or future victims, I hope that with the concept of “himpathy,” we can draw attention to that dynamic and how harmful it is, and redirect sympathetic attention to where it primarily belongs, namely to the victim of a sexual assault.

I hope that can be one good response, that people who are trying to be moral can be woken up to realize they are directing their sympathetic attention where it doesn’t primarily belong; that, actually, they should be focusing more on the victim than the perpetrator. Sympathy is a good thing. It’s just that it can be misdirected in various, important ways. Sometimes what you have is a case of someone well-meaning, well-intentioned, and who has good moral instincts, who has, nonetheless, been redirected in their emotions by patriarchal forces and who could perhaps be woken up to realize they are sympathizing essentially with the wrong person, at least in the first instance.

*STANCE: As you discussed, women that are victims of sexual assault and then are met with “himpathy” can experience it as gaslighting. In particular, it can cause a person to believe they are not justified in blaming the perpetrator. Do you think a better understanding of “himpathy” can reduce the injustice that results from victims doubting their understanding of their experiences? More*

generally, how might an understanding of “himpathy” help people make sense of their experiences and combat injustices?

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MANNE: That’s another excellent question. I definitely think the phenomenon of gaslighting intersects in interesting ways with “himpathy.” One of the ways it does that, as you point out, is by making people feel guilty or ashamed for hanging onto the truth about what happened to them, or about what some bad actor did, or about what some institution is really like. In the most classic cases, gaslighting preys on someone’s sense of what is rational to believe. It can make someone “crazy,” or allege that someone is “crazy,” for not buying into the gaslighter’s version of reality. But, just as importantly, it can make someone feel guilty, as if they are a bad person. Gaslighting dismisses victims as either irrational or immoral for maintaining their own correct version of reality. It can make it extremely difficult to hang onto the truth in the face of both social power and rational and moral pressure to bend to another person’s version of reality, when they strongly insinuate you’d be crazy or bad for not agreeing with what they say. So, it’s a way that people in dominant social positions—perhaps typically, but by no means exclusively, men—can effectively control the narrative and make people stick to a particular version of reality without it being true or at all compelling in terms of the evidence for it.

Sometimes gaslighters even succeed in having people assert what they know to be false, which is a quite striking social achievement in the face of the actual evidence or the epistemic facts. Again, my hope is that authors that have drawn attention to the phenomenon of gaslighting—and in the philosophy world these are people like Kate Abramson, Veronica Ivy, and many other authors—can help provide tools for victims to resist being gaslit.

I think it’s very powerful to think this is a more general dynamic; you are not actually crazy or bad for maintaining your side of the story. You can understand you are being subject to undue pressure to cave, and maybe resist a particular mechanism that would try to make you abandon an important truth about what’s happened to you, or about the world.

STANCE: In several of your works, you describe how women are expected, by society, to be psychological and moral nurturers or caretakers for the men and children in their lives. If moral nurturing helps children develop healthy psycho-social habits, how can we support this moral nurturing without stereotyping women and making women do an unjust amount of caregiving?

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MANNE: That’s really important, because I would hate for my work to be misunderstood as devaluing typically feminine-coded traits, activities, and virtues. It seems to me that caregiving is tremendously important. It will always need doing. It’s humanly valuable, meaningful work. I think my argument here is really simple. I think men should do just as much caregiving, and should be socialized to view it as just as much their work, as women and girls. Everyone, be they man, woman, boy, girl, non-binary adult or child, should view themselves as responsible for caring for those around them in ways that are sustainable, warm, and loving, and also, when appropriate, reciprocal. When adults care for each other, that can be done in a reciprocal way, and there can be something very affirming about the possibility that both partners, including in a straight or heterosexual relationship, might be able to get what they need from each other, and also give each other what they need. So, I think of these ideals as really egalitarian, and not as questioning the value of care.

STANCE: Do you believe that there are certain neurobiological predispositions in men and women to approach nurturing in different ways? Or, do you believe those are entirely due to social norms? And if they’re biological, should they be accounted for and respected? Or, is it the responsibility of an individual to overcome it and share the nurturing role equally?

MANNE: I think the most striking thing is that it would be very difficult to know at this point in human history whether anything we observe by way of these gender differences is biological or innate. I think that we do have a lot of evidence that there are many social processes that make men and women responsive to different social norms, and that can shape our behavior. It's possible that there's a residual biological difference of some kind, but I suspect we won't know for a long time, because we don't have a control group of men and women raised in a non-patriarchal, gender-neutral society that we could analyze to see if there are any remaining gender differences. I tend to proceed as if these are all learned and socialized differences because I don't think we lose a lot by acting as if that's the case, and that's compatible with the possibility that we might eventually learn that it's not the case. If it were the case, I think, as you rightly point out, we'll have an interesting question on our hands having to do with the is-ought gap. Even if it is the case that things will be slightly easier for men or slightly easier for women, if they are good to do, does that mean we should have any gendered division of labor, or should women do more or men do less? It's not clear that that's the case. It might just be that we might need certain people to try harder to fulfill their basic moral responsibilities, e.g., to care for others around them properly.

*STANCE: This notion of women as nurturing, communal caregivers seems incompatible with the idea of them being untrustworthy. Yet, much of your work revolves around people not trusting women to lead, to be aware of their own bodies, or to tell the truth about sexual assault. Where do you think the idea of women being untrustworthy came from?*

MANNE: That's a really sharp observation. I think women are regarded as very trustworthy in certain areas, including caregiving. There's a tendency, occasionally, in the epistemic injustice literature, to make statements that are perhaps a bit too sweeping, like, "Women are not regarded as knowers." The anecdote I often like to give to cast some doubt on that sweeping claim is that I'm regarded as a knower in most of the domains that are traditionally feminine. If I'm at the supermarket, people often ask me, "What do you do with a rutabaga?" or "How do you make a mango curd?" Whereas my husband, who shops with the same grocery list, is subject to fewer of those queries. I'm not saying it's wrong to ask people how to cook with ingredients. I'm happy to answer those questions. I just think it is interesting that men in a completely comparable position within the same grocery basket doesn't get as many of those inquiries.

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I think white women are often regarded as highly trustworthy when it comes to caring for their own children. And non-white women who are positioned as caregivers for other people's children—those subject to the "mammy" stereotype discussed by Patricia Hill Collins—are often regarded as supremely trustworthy with regard to other people's children, like the white children that black women were often tasked with caring for. It's when women challenge the status quo, or the patriarchal order, that their trustworthiness tends to be doubted. It's less the idea that women are untrustworthy than that we wheel out this ad hoc idea that women are untrustworthy when they challenge male dominance or threaten a powerful man's position. We see this a lot with the #MeToo movement when some women had been silent about certain truths in their lives for years and years and years, because they knew they wouldn't be believed about that particular matter because it was threatening to powerful and privileged men. But, that's perfectly compatible with being overly reliant on women's knowledge when it comes to caregiving and other feminine coded duties.

*STANCE: Let's transition to your book Entitled. In "Chapter Seven," you discuss the inequality of housework and caregiving in straight relationships and the double bind that this puts women in. The first part of this bind is that if you ask your husband for help, you break the social code by expressing unacceptable, resentful emotions. Since this is a societal code, is it possible for a straight couple to break this double bind and find a healthy balance of who does what? Do you think such relationships exist?*

MANNE: Yeah, I am optimistic about that. I think such relationships do exist. I think I'm in one. But a lot of hard work is required to undo powerful and prevalent social norms that say women should do more of the material and domestic and child-giving labor, while also doing it in a completely seamless, loving, and willing spirit—so that they shouldn't even ask for "help" around the house and that they should absorb all the shock of extra work that piles up, say, during a pandemic, without having

any demands placed on their male partners. It's both a matter of evening the amount of work people do, but also having good communication that allows both partners to be in constant dialogue about whether things are equal. Is the amount of paid and unpaid work appropriately balanced? I think that's a difficult thing to pull off, but it's perfectly possible.

*STANCE: That's reassuring. In much of your work, you discuss the concept of humanism. Given your argument that humanism doesn't well explain misogyny, what conceptual framework would you use to cover the shortcomings of humanism?*

MANNE: I have a very unpithy name for it: a socially situated approach to understanding bigotry and hatred. The idea is to understand some people as positioned by dint of features like their race, their gender, their class, or their intersection, as well as other things like being trans, being disabled, being a certain age—such marginalized people can be positioned, unfortunately, as somehow threatening or even as an enemy or as deviant or as in need of being taught a lesson. All sorts of characteristically human faults and flaws can be attributed to individuals or groups of people on the basis of things like the aforementioned group memberships, and that can, thereby, attract very hostile and hateful treatment, even though these people are seen as fully human.

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In fact, seeing them as fully human is a prerequisite for holding them to be bad, deviant, punishable, or in need of policing or being taught a lesson. Because we don't generally hold these attitudes towards non-human animals, we generally don't regard non-human animals as enemies. If we do, it's some kind of a conceptual mistake, crystallized by Moby Dick. The idea that a non-human animal can't really be an enemy, because they have no conceptualization of you, as such, is a powerful and compelling idea enshrined by such literature.

*STANCE: Several of your articles talk about the dehumanizing principle, which you have long argued does not apply to cases of violence against less privileged peoples. How can you see the conversation around these types of violent crimes changing based on your ideas? In what ways will recognizing that humanness is necessary for the kind of hate directed at these peoples influence the way we prosecute perpetrators either morally or judicially?*

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MANNE: I think one of the things I hope the most is that we let go of a myth about perpetrators of brutal violence as having made a more or less innocent mistake, of just not seeing other people as human, that if we're subject to certain forms of oppression, we just need to make our humanity visible and legible to the perpetrators. I think that's a really pernicious and damaging lie that casts the perpetrators as not fully responsible for what they do, because they're just missing something, something that could be made plain to them, and then, they would see the light morally and do better. Also, it tends to place a certain amount of responsibility on victims to humanize themselves rather than thinking of perpetrators as bad actors who fully understand the humanity of their victims and want to do them a cruelty in spite of that, or sometimes precisely because of that.

*STANCE: Given the traps of humanism that you elucidate very well in your work, do you think it still has a valuable place in the contemporary world?*

MANNE: That's a really good question that I've honestly struggled with back and forth. The thing I've explicitly argued for at the most length in my work is that humanism can't explain all kinds of horrible cruelty and brutal treatment. It often can't explain misogynistic violence that's premised on recognizing the humanity of the victim. But, as I argue in the last part of that chapter in *Down Girl*, if we don't need to resort to the idea of dehumanization to explain some brutal violence, there's this question: do we ever need to invoke this idea? Is it useful? Is it consistent with principles of parsimony, or is it always surplus to explanatory requirements? That's a question I want to leave open, but I've yet to be fully convinced we ever need to invoke this mysterious idea that people genuinely see others as non-human, subhuman, or non-human animals in order to explain brutal violence. I think it also has this problematic tendency to exoticize violence and make us think that something really radical needs to happen in people's minds to explain violence, as opposed to it being a very ordinary thing. As we see with domestic violence, it doesn't take very much to have a situation where societies have prevalent, widespread,

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horrible violence that a significant percentage of women will face, even if that's only perpetrated by a small percentage of typically, although not always, men. I think the dehumanization paradigm looks on society as peaceful and then wonders what goes wrong when it comes to big, mass movements that are violent. Whereas I tend to look at society as quite violent, unfortunately. Sometimes the forces that may explain domestic violence could be unleashed on a much broader swath of people in ways that require political momentum to set loose. That's at least why I'm a bit skeptical that dehumanization has a valuable explanatory role to play, but I do want to leave that possibility officially open.

*STANCE: We did want to ask, if dehumanization is not really what's going on in the underlying causes of those sorts of violence, then what sort of things do you think are happening when people use dehumanizing language, like when Trump compared Mexicans to cockroaches and bugs?*

MANNE: To me, it's a very general derogating mechanism. We have, for better or more likely worse, a hierarchy that places God at the top, human beings next, and then, a hierarchy of non-human animals pretty much bottoming out in vermin like a cockroach. One very powerful way of derogating people is to liken them to non-human animals, especially ones that we find disgusting or think are disease-carriers like cockroaches. I think a lot of other similar, derogating moves rely on other hierarchies. It's of a piece of the fact that Trump will call black women "low IQ individuals." He will help himself to whatever hierarchies are salient to him and then derogate people who he doesn't like or who he's prejudiced against by reaching out to a hierarchy and downranking people according to it. Although this is obviously controversial, I tend to think the great chain of being type of hierarchy is just one hierarchy among many where he'll downrank people by invoking it. It's not that he literally thinks of Mexican people as cockroaches. In reality, he regards people from derogated ethnic and racial groups as a threat, and I don't think he would regard people as a threat unless he realized that we're people.

*STANCE: Moving on to some of your stand-alone articles, in "Non-Machiavellian Manipulation and the Opacity of Motive," you argue that sometimes people are not consciously aware of much of the manipulative behavior they display. Can you relate this concept to the concept of microaggressions? What kind of unintentional behaviors of this type should be tolerated by oppressed peoples, and how should they be responded to?*

MANNE: That's a really nice question. I hadn't previously made that connection, so I really appreciate the thought. This theme you've brought out really nicely is in a lot of my work. A lot of bad behavior is unintentional. I counsel focusing on the impact, not the intention. Manipulation usually isn't intentional as such. People usually don't set out to manipulate others. They usually don't think, "I'm going to get agent A to do Phi." They don't tend to think in terms of manipulation. They tend to think, "That's what ought to happen."

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Similarly, there are a lot of behaviors that can be aptly described as microaggressions that have this feature of being unintentional. They might be questions leveled out of genuine curiosity, like "Where are you from?" or someone touching someone's hair because they're unfamiliar with that hair texture. These are racist behaviors that we need to recognize as racist. But that doesn't require attributing to someone, necessarily, a bad motive. I tend to think the motive doesn't particularly matter. It's all about the impact.

*STANCE: In discussions of oppression, what do you think your obligations are as a white woman writing about the struggles of women and of other oppressed groups?*

MANNE: That's something I've thought about and worried about a lot, especially since I think of myself as someone privileged along really every dimension bar gender. I think of myself as someone who is white, albeit Jewish, as middle class, as having institutional privilege. I'm straight and I'm cis. All of those things add up to a pretty weighty responsibility to listen to the voices of people who are in more marginalized communities relative to me and to really be attentive to things being said by black women and trans women as well as men who are poor or illegalized, about their unique experiences of misogyny, misogynoir, or transmisogyny, or classism, or xenophobia—things that I won't personally experience. So, part

of the obligation is to listen. Part of the obligation is also to try to synthesize some of those observations and try to include those perspectives in my work, as well as having the humility to recognize that I'll get it wrong a lot of the time and be unable to fully do justice to those vital perspectives. Part of what I want to do is to advert to the work of women of color, as well as trans women, and women in other demographics, and say that you really need to listen to people in these groups: "Here is a resource for understanding misogynoir," or "Here is a resource for understanding transmisogyny." I can gesture towards some of the things I've learned from scholars in these groups, but I won't always be able to do justice to the experience. It's a balance between trying to incorporate other voices and trying to signal boost to other scholars who are vital to read and to listen to on these subjects.

STANCE: That is something that we appreciated when reading your work. We noticed that you pointed to a lot of resources that we could look at if we wanted to hear from a more diverse perspective.

MANNE: Excellent. That's great to hear.

STANCE: "Don't Trust Your Gut on Hillary: Why the Visceral Suspicion of Her Is Predictable—and Untrustworthy" elaborates on the idea of disgust driven morals. Disgust can, in some ways, be considered a socially applied connotation but also a bodily imperative. For example, an infant that sits in their soiled diaper too long and starts to cry does so with their bodily imperative of discomfort and disgust; they wish to be clean. How can one distinguish this learned bodily imperative, which is deemed to be universal and non-negotiable, from truth and fiction?

MANNE: That's a very interesting question. As you're picking up on there, I do think of certain bodily imperatives as the heart of moral truth. I do think that a baby's desire to be fed, the piercing cry of an infant in the night who needs to be fed, changed, or just soothed, represents that bodily imperative on their part and represents a moral imperative on the part of the parent to meet those needs. As you point out, some bodily imperatives have a disgust basis. Feeling dirty and wanting to be clean is a powerful bodily imperative, and it's really tricky. Unfortunately, sometimes those bodily imperatives, as they apply to more subtle and complicated matters, can become misleading. An example would be the sadness of an incel whose bodily imperative is to have soothing ministrations from a woman. I think that isn't a moral imperative that anyone should be rushing out to satisfy. Similarly, someone's sense of disgust at a woman in power isn't a bodily imperative that deserves to be satisfied.

One of the things that differentiates those bodily imperatives from ones that ought to be satisfied is the fact that they can be changed and learned and unlearned. It's not universal or non-negotiable to have a sense of disgust at a woman's power. Similarly, an incel's sense of sadness and yearning for a woman to meet his perceived needs—that's by no means a universal human condition. It's a product of a sense of entitlement, primarily, and is something that could be unlearned and lead to not having that visceral response. So, the bodily imperatives that have the most claim to be moral imperatives are the ones that are non-negotiable and universal, and really couldn't be otherwise in that particular individual at that time.

STANCE: About universality, in "On Being Social in Metaethics," you argue that much of ethics is influenced by social norms. Under this framework, how do you believe social change arises? Are all societies turning towards establishing similar social norms or will there always be a large distinction?

MANNE: I think there will often be residual differences in social norms between societies. That's a little beyond my pay grade as a philosopher, because that's really a sociological speculation on my part. One of the reasons why social norms differ widely is that there are often different norms that essentially have a similar function. In different cultures there can be different norms of politeness. A friendly wave in one culture might be a gesture of disdain in another.

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Even so, I suspect there will be differences. I think social norms have more of a claim on us, normatively speaking, when they help us meet our mutual needs as individuals and as a society. One of the ways this jibes with the idea of bodily imperatives is that if a set of social norms helps everyone's bodily imperatives or most basic imperatives to be met—to help us be fed, healthy, happy, and content—then there's more of a claim that those norms have genuine normative purchase. So, that's one of the litmus tests I propose for social norms that should be regarded as moral norms, that they are actually conducive to everyone's bodily imperative of a moral kind being satisfied.

STANCE: In "Internalism about Reason: Sad But True," you convey the idea that in order to change someone's behavior, an agent must connect to them with



*mutual respect and persuade them to change through ideal reasoning. In a patriarchal society that often times deems women not equal to men, in moral agency nor respect, is it possible for women to change misogynist behavior? Or, must men do it?*

OFTEN SOMEONE WHO'S BEST POSITIONED TO TALK ABOUT A LACK OF SOCIAL POWER OR INJUSTICE WILL . . . BECAUSE OF THAT VERY INJUSTICE, HAVE A DIFFICULT TIME GETTING THROUGH TO A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE

MANNE: That's a very good question. The sad thing—another sad truth—is that often someone who's best positioned to talk about a lack of social power or injustice will, because of that lack of social power and because of that very injustice, have a difficult time getting through to a large number of people. I do think there's an important role for male allies or accomplices to talk to people in a clear or even sharp way about misogynistic behaviors or problems in society. I think there's a role for everyone, whatever their degree of privilege, in playing a part in helping convince other people of what needs to be done in order to achieve gender justice, among other kinds of justice.

*STANCE: In that same article, you state that when we are incapable of reasoning with someone through an interpersonal connection, we are left with the less effective ability to blame and criticize. Do you think that shaming could be a useful middle ground or form of compromise between interpersonal reasoning and objective criticism?*

MANNE: I'm interested in this possibility because I do think that we lose something when we can't blame someone in the intimate sense that presumes that they might do better and that they have, themselves, an interest or desire to do better and could be persuaded to do better through good reasoning. As you point out, I think, along with Williams, that even if we can't play the blame game, we can do other things. We can label them sexist, selfish, nasty, brutal, and "other disadvantageous things," as he put it. It's interesting to think about the idea of shaming as a bridging practice. The idea would be that by shaming people, perhaps we could bring them back into a community of people who we could reason with interpersonally to get them to do better. I like the idea. I'm not completely sure that it would work because one thing that's very striking about shame is how aversive it is. People do a great deal to avoid being shamed. We see this when we have shaming labels, like misogynist and racist, that entail that there's

something shameful about fitting that description. People will do an enormous amount to avoid being saddled with that label.

PEOPLE TEND TO FLEE . . . AND BEHAVE IN IRRATIONAL AND OFTEN IMMORAL WAYS, RATHER THAN FACING UP TO THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE LABEL REALLY FITS

Because I take seriously this property that they have, when it comes to the idea of being a misogynist, we should apply it very sparingly, because people will go to such great lengths to avoid it. They won't so much avoid the behavior, but they will avoid by various defensive moves having the label applied to them, even if it would be deserved. So, I think we need shaming labels to be warning labels that we apply very sparingly to help people avoid misogynists and racists. I'm not saying we shouldn't use them. But I don't see them as having a big role in persuasion, because I think people tend to flee from their very possibility and behave in irrational and often immoral ways, rather than facing up to the possibility that the label really fits.

*STANCE: Do you think the notion of disgust, as you talk about it, has any relation to the visceral reaction against those shameful labels that you mentioned?*

MANNE: Yes. I think it is the first-person analog of third and second personal disgust. I think blame and guilt are pairs in that way. The first-person internalized analog of blame is guilt. The first-person internalized analog of disgust is shame. And, that helps explain the fact that it's so aversive, because it's a form of self-disgust, or it at least shares a lot in common with disgust directed at the self. Because of that, people will do an awful lot to avoid it, even if they should feel self-disgust, even if they should feel shame, for racist or misogynistic behavior. It usually does more to alienate than to convince, which doesn't mean we shouldn't use the labels, but I think we should use them to warn others about a misogynist or a racist, not to help people come back into the fold, because people who are self-disgusted or who are filled with shame are pretty volatile.

*STANCE: Sometimes the desire to shame another is primarily about satisfying the desire of the shamer. It is very different than giving a gift of moral alarm to a person by saying, "I am experiencing something you are doing as harmful or problematic." This is described as a gift, because this also says, "I'm not*



*dehumanizing you or turning you into something I am attempting to control with moral force.” Rather, this says, “I want to be in a relationship with you, and you are doing something that is making that relationship difficult.” Yet, in formal relationships, as opposed to informal ones, there might be a role for shame if the potential harm is significant. The point here is that shaming is bad most of the time.*

MANNE: I really like that observation. It reminds me of the way Erik Erikson says, “Shame wants to destroy the eyes of the world.” I think that quote is an exaggeration, because there is plenty of shame that, rather than wanting to hide from the world, wants to divorce your own eyes from the world’s eyes by hiding yourself away rather than destroying anything. Nonetheless, there is something about shame that severs the sightlines between self and other.

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Lashing out behavior, hiding behavior, wanting to be invisible, and wanting to disappear are all the characteristic bodily imperatives that attend shame. Because of that, there’s not a whole lot we can do with it to restore interpersonal connections. Again, I’m not saying it has no role. In some circumstances, it is good to say certain people are beyond the pale. Using a shaming label about Trump, to me, helped identify ways in which he was harming people who are marginalized by his rhetoric and his policies. It could be helpful to say he is beyond the pale and beyond the reach of reasoning. It is not something that helps bring him back into the fold. This is something we do when we are beyond the training, conversations, and reasoning processes that we engage with with each other to try to lift all of our moral game. It is something we do when we realize we need to get away from a person and sever a connection. It takes a lot to get to that point.

*STANCE: We could decide which term we want to apply to which concept, but blaming is frequently good. Blaming is a reaching out to reestablish or reorient a relationship in a positive way. But, shaming is a breaking.*

MANNE: I totally agree. Blaming is often important in the context of an intimate interpersonal relationship. It implies a degree of trust and a degree of hope. It holds someone accountable, but for a particular behavior that you think they can do better on, and that you rightly expected more from them with respect to this. Remonstrating with someone by blaming them is very different from shaming them for a behavior, attitude, or practice. Blame is something that both relies on, and aims to improve and restore, interpersonal connections.

*STANCE: We’ve been thinking about the roles misogyny and entitlement play in undergraduate philosophy education. Do you have any suggestions for how we can reduce the roles of misogyny and entitlement in our academic programs while we’re still students?*

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MANNE: I am a big believer in the kind of thing you are doing, which is doing philosophy together with diverse practitioners. This can be really helpful. Instructors have a big role to play in getting together syllabi that are representative of a diverse group of people and a diverse set of interests, ideas, and philosophical problems, including political ones. When I teach contemporary moral problems, I include a unit on racism and/or misogyny, which is a way of helping make the discussion a little broader and more politically in-tune with people’s current concerns, rather than what you might find in a textbook.

Instructors also have a big role to play in doing simple things to improve equality within the academy, like calling on everyone equally as much as that’s possible. If you are a man, a woman, or someone who’s non-binary, and you raise your hand, there must be an equal chance of being called upon. That’s often not true, sadly, as things stand, because even well-meaning people with egalitarian beliefs often exhibit unconscious gender biases that have them orient towards white men in the classroom. So, there are simple measures we can do to reduce that. Things like alternating who you call upon, assuming it is a reasonably balanced group of people, or you can modify that if the numbers are very skewed. Also, things like anonymous grading are a good measure that I’ve implemented in my classes both to reduce



the chance of implicit bias, and also to say very deliberately to students that I am not above this.

GENDER BIASES ARE COMMON, AS ARE RACIAL BIASES, AND IT IS SOMETHING WE SHOULD ALL TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MINIMIZING HOWEVER WE CAN.

Gender biases are common, as are racial biases, and it is something we should all take responsibility for minimizing however we can. If you can grade anonymously, there is a good argument for doing so. I think most of the responsibility falls on instructors. My hope is that people are increasingly open-minded about how to make the classroom, and philosophy in particular, more welcoming to everyone.

*STANCE: Is there anything that you wished we had asked? Do you have any questions that you would like us to answer?*

MANNE: I thought your questions were brilliant. I really enjoyed them. I would love to hear from you. What is the best thing an instructor has done, or could do, to make your undergraduate education philosophically or socially richer?

*STANCE: Philosophy professors are really willing to approach you first and work with you. I tend to be a quieter student, but I've still had lots of professors reach out to me and ask if I was interested in doing different things. It's useful that they won't ignore you just because you're quiet.*

MANNE: I think that's so important. I try to make it clear that participation needn't be in one form; it doesn't just have to be speaking up in class. It could be having discussion questions that are written that are really good, coming to office hours and having one-on-one discussions, or talking after class.

*STANCE: Philosophy classes are very different from my other classes. I love seeing how the professors think through the material with you. They're not just lecturing. They are, in a sense, but they are also thinking through the material and considering their own thoughts and questions. When you make a point, you can see them react and come up with their own new ideas. I have found that type of engagement really unique to my philosophy classes, and that's what I really love.*

MANNE: Oh, I love that. One of my favorite things is thinking through things together, seeing someone think on their feet, and watching students think. Getting to do that thinking-through process together is totally what it's all about.

*STANCE: Especially this year, my professors being cognizant of what we're going through has been really nice.*

MANNE: Well, that's so good to hear. I've been really heartened to see, not just students, but professors too, rising to this profound challenge we have in front of us. I'd love to have an email from any of you and follow up on anything. Thank you all so much for a great conversation.

*STANCE: Thank you.*

