

THE RHETORIC OF ECONOMIC INQUIRY IN SMITH, WHATELY, AND MILL

A Dissertation

by

DAVID CHARLES GORE

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 2005

Major Subject: Speech Communication

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ABSTRACT

The Rhetoric of Economic Inquiry in Smith, Whately, and Mill.

(May 2005)

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Constitutive rhetoric is the idea that spoken language is a powerful force in the world that creates audiences and social worlds while simultaneously making and remaking language users. I employ the notion of constitutive rhetoric to investigate the character constitutions and communities invented by the rhetoric of economic inquiry in the work of Adam Smith, Richard Whately, John Stuart Mill, and Deirdre McCloskey.

Though the character constituted by Smith, Whately, and Mill is that of the bourgeois character, as McCloskey has pointed out, the differences between Smith, Whately, and Mill are highlighted to show the way constitutive rhetoric operates as a process in three distinct cases. Additionally, I examine the different ways the work of Smith, Whately, and Mill continue to constitute character communities through the rhetoric of contemporary scholars, including, Deirdre McCloskey, Michael Ignatieff, Martha Nussbaum, Amartya Sen, Richard Rorty, James Buchanan, and Michael Novak.

In Chapter II, I provide a short history of rhetoric and economics from the point of view of a history of rhetoric beginning with a re-reading of the Sophists. In Chapters

III-V I examine the rhetoric of economic inquiry in Smith, Whately, and Mill, including the rhetorical presence of their ideas in contemporary times. In Chapter VI, I conclude by comparing the contemporary bourgeois character advocated so eloquently by McCloskey to the Homeric and Christian virtues. I also compare the present bourgeois society based on the work of Adam Smith with another liberal view of society as advocated by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The comparisons reveal that the present constitution of bourgeois society and its social world is unlike a Christian society, and that a view of citizenship akin to Rousseau's would help us to constitute persons holistically, rather than as separate selves.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to good teachers and good friends.

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The Torah says that every person should seek two things in life, a teacher and a friend. It has been my good fortune to find both in Jim Aune. It was his voice in St. Louis six years ago that cemented in my mind and heart a desire to pursue a graduate degree in communication. I am grateful for his exemplary support: intellectual, spiritual, and rhetorical.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	iii
DEDICATION.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	viii
CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION.....	1
II A SHORT HISTORY OF RHETORIC AND ECONOMICS.....	7
Plato, the Sophists, and Exchanging Words for Money.....	7
Aristotle, Isocrates, and Citizenship.....	18
<i>Cui bono?</i> Or may I ask what you have to gain by your Testimony?.....	27
Jewish and Christian Rhetoric and Economics.....	29
Rhetoric of Economics in Full.....	38
Remembering Market Origins.....	54
Law, Economics, and Irrational Choice.....	58
Plan for What Follows.....	63
II SMITHIAN SYMPATHY IN THE WORLD.....	67
Scottish Moralists and Smith's Milieu.....	72
Smith on Sophistry.....	79
Smithian Sympathy.....	89
A Digression on Reading Adam Smith.....	101
Self Interest and Market Morality.....	106
Smith for the Twenty First Century.....	124
Sympathy in the Law.....	125
Sympathy as an Antidote for Unfreedom.....	131
Sympathy in Human Rights.....	138
Conclusion.....	142

CHAPTER	Page	
III	AN ARCHBISHOP'S POLITICAL ECONOMY.....	145
	Architectonic Rhetoric and Logic.....	154
	Political Economy.....	168
	Archbishopric Case Studies.....	181
	Christ's Example on Dispensing Charity, 1835.....	185
	Easy Lessons on Money Matters, 1836.....	190
	Reflections on a Grant to a Roman Catholic Seminary, 1845.....	195
	Michael Novak and <i>The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism</i>	202
	Conclusion.....	209
IV	MILL AND THE ART AND BUSINESS OF LIFE.....	213
	Logic, Liberty, and the Ends of Rhetoric.....	223
	Utility, Rhetoric, and the Art of Life.....	231
	Defining Political Economy as Science.....	241
	On Capitalist Growth and Distribution.....	250
	Mill's Business of Life.....	256
	A Business of Life for the Twenty First Century.....	268
	Mill's Influence on American Pragmatism.....	270
	Mill and Rational Choice Theory.....	277
	Conclusion.....	284
V	CONCLUSION.....	288
	Character as Constituted in my Protagonists.....	292
	McCloskey's Account of the Virtues.....	303
	Homeric Virtues.....	308
	Christian Virtues.....	308
	McCloskey's Talk on the Bourgeois Virtues.....	310
	McCloskey on Theology and Economics.....	312
	Can Prudence, and Competition Founded on it, be a Christian Virtue?	315
	Rousseau, or a Hypothetical Alternate Liberalism.....	326
	Rhetoric and Economics Reconceived.....	336
	Concluding Remark.....	339
	NOTES.....	342
	REFERENCES.....	370

	Page
VITA.....	384

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.

– Isaiah XXIX: 14.

There is gold and a multitude of rubies: but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.

– Proverbs XX: 15

“We live as market men, we wish we lived as citizens” is Michael Ignatieff’s way of lamenting the demise of Rousseau’s virtuous city-state republic and the near total triumph of Adam Smith’s market dominated society.¹ How did this triumph come about? What is the end of a society controlled by markets? Moreover, what is the effect of such a society on our individual character? What can be done, if anything, to protect character in an age when everything is for sale, when everything is negotiable? How and under what conditions might we protect the virtues of citizenship and the obligations to community when the preemptive command to seek our own interest dominates public discussion, including those concerned with improving community living? What, in short, are we when we live by and of the market? What kind of a man does the market require us to be? What kind of character do we become when we think of the market as the grounds for life? What are we when we live and talk as merchants instead of living and talking as citizens?

Answers to these questions may be found in a more complete understanding of rhetoric and economics. Rhetoric is said to have arisen in the ancient world by Corax

This dissertation follows the style and format of *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*.

and Tisias on the island of Sicily as a tool for resolving disputes about property ownership.² Rhetoric and economics, then, it could be said, are coeval. Though our capacity to talk may have come before our capacity to trade, the two have long been a part of day to day living. As such, they constitute much of human existence as it is known through experience, and together they constitute virtually all of human social experience. Nevertheless, it often happens that our talk and trade create as many problems as they resolve, promoting or obscuring inequalities, diminishing brother and sisterhood, and crumbling moral foundations for liberty and justice. Hence, for all our talking to trade and trading of talk history suggests that rhetoric and economics are constituted and reconstituted for particular cultures and circumstances.

Constitutive rhetoric, the idea that our talk constitutes our social world, arises from the idea that language is an extremely powerful tool for changing the world in which we live, and that when we speak we act upon the world, transforming the world and ourselves in the process.³ The reception of constitutive rhetoric in communication studies turned toward the postmodern claim that we are prisoners of discourse and that constitutive rhetoric is merely a means for elites to entrap, enslave, or otherwise abuse weaker parties.⁴ I do not follow this turn in my conception of constitutive rhetoric because I believe my inquiry would be less able historically to describe the intersection of rhetoric and economics with the constitution of character. I also avoid the postmodern turn because I think it might weaken this investigation's capacity to bridge the disciplinary boundaries of political science, sociology, economics, and communication studies.

Instead, I follow James Boyd White's argument that constitutive rhetoric is "the study of ways in which character and community – and motive, value, reason, social structure, everything, in short, that makes a culture – are defined and made real in performances of language. Whenever you speak, you define a character for yourself and for at least one other – your audience – and make a community at least between the two of you."⁵ This view gives tremendous power to speakers, enabling them to share in the construction of their social world. The object of such rhetoric, for White, is "justice: the constitution of a social world."⁶ By that definition, agreement cannot be reached through logical or empirical demonstration, nor can it be compelled by the force of logic or by the demonstration of facts. Instead, discussion and argument make a social world, and it is discussion and argument that provide hope for the realization of justice.⁷

Social worlds are made through talk, but they are also made through trade. Rhetoric and economics are both terms coined by the ancient Greeks, rhetoric from the verb "to speak," meaning persuasive talk, and economics from two Greek words, *oikos* and *nomos*, meaning "household" and "rule" or "law," respectively, meaning the prudent management of a house or state. The resemblance between rhetoric and economics is more than skin deep. Both are subjects of inquiry and modes of life, meaning that they can be talked about in theory but they are also realized in practice. Almost everyday of life we persuade and trade, but we also wonder about how to do both more justly, pleasantly, and effectively. Rhetoric and economics often have bad reputations in the academy and in society, depending on circumstance and fashion, because, in theory, they often over-prescribe, and, in practice, most people do not wish to be corrected in their

manner of talk and trade. We take both subjects very personally in our individual lives. However, rhetoric and economics are at the nexus of political life. Political life is made out of our public speech acts and our need to acquire goods.

Constitutive rhetoric arises out of moments of historical crisis. White contends that from time to time “words lose their meaning,” Thucydidean moments arise in which social worlds dissolve and then reconstitute in a new image. As words lose their meaning, or have their meaning transformed, communities of language are also transformed, including their notions of value. One of these world-changing moments brought forth the rhetoric and economics of Adam Smith, Richard Whately, and John Stuart Mill as a response to a crisis on the cusp of modernity. In order to understand and illustrate the processes of constitutive rhetoric I focus attention on the way language was used by Smith, Whately, and Mill to re-constitute the social world of bourgeois capitalism out of the dissolution of what were traditional notions of character and society, namely the eighteenth century aristocracy. Political revolutions and the practice of free markets brought about the changes, but the work of my protagonists, Smith, Whately, and Mill, solidified the constitution of a new character as they sought to describe and advocate the changes. These three, Smith, Whately, and Mill, were instrumental in advocating free market principles and in constituting a new idea of character. Each grounded and connected market principles to rhetoric while paying close attention to the relation of rhetoric and economics to virtue and character. I aim to historicize the relationship between rhetoric and economics, through the lens of

constitutive rhetoric, in order to understand the way talk and trade are related to character and vice versa.

Chapter II is a short history of rhetoric and economics from the perspective of a history of rhetoric. I begin with a reading of the controversy between Plato and the Sophists, and their attempt to reason about the trading of words for money. I trace that controversy through iterations in Roman rhetorical theory as well as Judeo-Christian rhetorical theory to show that rhetoric and economics share a long kinship. I end this short history with a discussion of the rhetoric of economics movement started by the work of Deirdre McCloskey, A.O. Hirschman and others, which I take to be a response to another social crisis: the globalization of capital.⁸ That is, the rhetoric of economics movement is, in its own way, an attempt to constitute a new social world as I will show in greater detail in the conclusion. But first, Chapters III-V look respectively at Smith, Whately, and Mill more closely to see how they re-define rhetoric and economics, in thought and practice, to make an argument and forward a discussion about who we are and of what our purpose in life consists. In each chapter, I examine their rhetoric and economics in their time as well as iterations of the same in our time.

Throughout this study I employ White's *topoi* for constitutive rhetoric as a framework to guide my inquiry:

1. How is the world of nature defined and presented in this language?
2. What social universe is constituted in this discourse, and how can it be understood?

3. What are the central terms of meaning and value in this discourse, and how do they function with one another to create patterns of motive and significance?
4. What forms and methods of reasoning are held out here as valid?

These *topoi* are themselves part of White's "reconstructive and participatory" way of reading that tries to bring to life the social world constituted by a text.⁹ In reconstructing the social world of a text the rhetorical dimensions are highlighted, and the relation between that social world and justice is revealed.

In Chapter VI I recapitulate the character traits of the contemporary bourgeois fellow as constituted in the work of Smith, Whately, and Mill, and compare his character to that held out by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In the context of John Rawls' ideas about liberal personhood, the character promoted by my protagonists can, I think, be made compatible.¹⁰ Yet, I argue that the vision of character held out by Rousseau is not only compatible with personhood and political liberalism as conceived by Rawls, but it has the added benefit of avoiding the "chopping up of political man."¹¹ Only a view of citizenship that unifies our disparate identities, bringing together our rational and irrational selves including all of our hopes, dreams, faiths, and material and social needs, will allow us to realize and preserve liberty and justice for all.

I turn now to my short history of rhetoric and economics.

CHAPTER II

A SHORT HISTORY OF RHETORIC AND ECONOMICS

PLATO, THE SOPHISTS, AND EXCHANGING WORDS FOR MONEY

For the past two and a half thousand years the debate between the Sophists and Plato has framed every discussion of the history of rhetoric. Commenting on the debate has even become something of a rite of passage for would-be historians of rhetoric. In recent years re-reading and re-commenting on the debate has been updated by current understanding of, for example, how democracy and economics impact our talk, concluding that most of our talk is, after all, more sophistic than platonic.¹² W.K.C. Guthrie has pointed out that the debate between Plato and the Sophists has an ever-relevant quality. I think it may be increasingly relevant to note the role money played in that discussion and the fact that much of their debate centers on the relationship between wisdom, morality, and money-matters. At stake in the debate is the moral quality of words when they are sold for money. Selling words for money has long been a practice of human life, and it may impact the legitimacy and honesty of words, as well as the quality of information obtained from purchased testimony.

For the most part it is fair to say that Plato's definition of the Sophists has won the day in the general minds of the public. His version of events impacts modern conceptions of rhetoric and sophistry, especially as that word is used in the popular press. However, in more recent years, especially within the discipline of communication in the United States, there has been somewhat of a renaissance for sophistry. That re-birth argues for a fresh look at how Plato characterized the sophists, as well as critiquing

Plato's own thoughts and practices on related issues to ensure our reading is fair and appropriately qualified. Since Plato's arguments have often served as the frame from which to view the Sophists it has clouded popular understandings. Still, Plato is also a much closer witness historically than those who would re-read the sophists in the contemporary academy so his opinions and arguments cannot be cast aside lightly. In fact, on the contrary, Plato must be read as a witness in the case, albeit a witness with an interest in the outcome. What remain in our discussions from that controversy is how to communicate and speak truly, how to instruct without charging too much, and how to persuade without pandering.

With changing political and economic realities came changes in philosophical discourse and education, and it was during a time of rapid transition in ancient Greece when the Sophists rose to influence and were openly criticized. Cosmologies that sought to explain the totality of human existence gave way to a new kind of reason that functioned more by way of independence from the gods and emphasized probability over unchanging ultimate principles. This more practical philosophy sought to infuse interest into the quest for truth. As the notion or pretense (depending on how you look at it) of disinterest declined a new class of teachers arose that sold wisdom and promised success through the management of the creature. Lawsuits became a legitimate source of income, weaker claims were granted a hearing, man became a legitimate barometer of social truth, and education was made out to be the most important thing in life. Practical psychology and the art of suggestion became popular topics of study as the sophists sought to influence their age while simultaneously opening the door for profit-making

via educational services. Additionally, the Sophists invented intellectual property, or value-making through intellectual work.

Though not all of these changes can be looked upon as negative, Plato seems convinced that they were not all positive either, even though Plato seems to have shared in some of the changes. For example, though it is claimed that Socrates never charged tuition for a discussion, Plato did charge his students tuition. Nevertheless, we do well to heed Eva Brann's warning to avoid focusing too closely on Plato's own situation. Brann writes,

The fact that the privileged Plato, a slaveowner to boot, conceives through Socrates a communitarian society so radical as to leave modern communisms, scientific or utopian, looking quite pale should warn the reader to use the author's local situation most cautiously in interpreting his work. For where real thinking is going on, external facts determine at most the point of departure of the inquiry. Mere circumstance is what thought penetrates and goes beyond.¹³

Indeed, the effects of all these changes are still being debated today, but we infer from Plato's criticisms and that of others that the changes brought with them a new moral vision that was looser in its consequences than the totalizing cosmologies of the day, like the one Plato himself advocated. Plato's main characterization of the Sophists centers on their eager willingness to promise success in public speaking, to teach wisdom and virtue, and to charge a high price for their offerings. Plato dubbed the Sophists "shopkeepers with spiritual wares," in the *Sophist*. By contrast, he depicts Socrates as one who did not advocate profiteering via discussion. Plato argues that the Sophists preyed on the anxiety of influence inherent in all young men, to borrow and slightly twist Harold Bloom's wonderful phrase. By exploiting their fears for future

influence and purpose, the Sophists were able to charge a high price for their spiritual wares.

Some of Plato's dialogues are named after famous sophists, while others are preoccupied with the activity and art of sophistry.¹⁴ Plato is critical of the sophists open willingness to sell their learning and show off their skill in verbal combat. "When they appear in dialogue, they are treated with real respect personally, though their activity, the selling of expertise – particularly of rhetorical techniques and of philosophical opinions – undergoes a politely devastating critique, usually unbeknownst to themselves."¹⁵ A sophist, according to Plato, is one who argues "that which is not in some way is," but the important element is that they do so for monetary gain. Specifically, Plato argues in the *Sophist* that sophistry begins "from expertise in acquisition."¹⁶ He goes on to assert that expertise in acquisition makes one expert in "appropriation, taking possession, hunting, animal-hunting, hunting on land, human hunting, hunting by persuasion, hunting privately and money-earning."¹⁷ The expertise of a Sophist is "the hunting of rich, prominent young men."¹⁸

The sophist, according to Plato, is a "soul-wholesaler."¹⁹ The proposition that what they sell is knowledge is accounted by Plato to be as ridiculous as the idea that they can *sell* the soul. Their particular skill, Plato maintains, is less a function of their diligence in study than their expertness in imitation. Sophists are insincere and unknowing; they juggle words successfully but cannot produce knowledge of the divine. Plato's contention in the *Sophist* is that it is possible to hold a false belief and to make false statements, though one gathers he would not be so insistent and dramatic in

defending these points if they were not in question by the sophists of his day. Still the whole dialogue is framed within economic arguments about the meaning of the sophists' claims relative to their purposes. That is, once sophistry is seen as an aspect of acquisition, as Plato argues at the outset, it can be attacked on new ground with the challenge that the sophist is not a scholar but a retailer, "a hired hunter of rich young men," "a wholesaler of learning about the soul," and "a seller of his own learning."²⁰

Plato acquiesces by suggesting that sophistry may improve one's debating skill and cleanse the soul of beliefs that interfere with learning, but I argue that his main contention in this dialogue is that sophistry can be denigrated by nature of the fact that it takes knowledge and its expression and transforms them into a commodity. For "sophistry falls under acquisition, exchange, and selling, either by retailing things that others make or by selling things that he makes for himself. It's the retail sale of any learning that has to do with the sorts of things we mentioned."²¹ Selling ideas and knowledge, for Plato, is like selling a piece of divinity, its trafficking is unholy and must be shunned because it fundamentally alters the moral quality of the words sold. Plato's argument is that if knowledge is treated as a commodity, if words are to be bought and sold, the moral quality of those words and of that knowledge is always suspect.

Eva Brann argues that the *Sophist* functions on a much deeper level philosophically than rhetorically. Namely, it is not a particular sophist which is under attack in the dialogue; rather the dialogue is addressing what conditions in nature make such a being as a sophist possible anywhere at any time. Brann writes,

In order to function profitably as a 'trader of learnables' without quite knowing what he is doing, this persuasive expert in everything and nothing relies on the

fact that nature is riddled with Nonbeing. Moreover, the Stranger allows it to appear that along certain lines the philosopher and sophist engage in like activities, though they diverge along others, as an aspiring lover of wisdom must diverge from a confident possessor of wisdom. The sophist will appear as the universal expert, and the philosopher the perpetual amateur of sorts. The sophist is the philosopher's lasting preoccupation, because he is, to a certain extent, a mirror image of the philosopher.²²

By this reading, the division, then, of particular importance for understanding this dialogue is that between being and non-being rather than that between taking money or refusing it, or learning to live without it. However, I suspect it is the teaching of nonbeing, moreover the belief that nonbeing rests at the center of the cosmos, which renders the willingness to sell words so powerful a force in the human condition and in human history. The sophist is not just an artist for Brann, but a “con artist” for “he gives ‘phantastic’ accounts and induces, for profit, deceptions and false opinions in the soul.”²³

The sophist can be grasped only, Brann asserts, if falsity is possible. The sophist is the author of pseudo-things and pseudo-science (*pseudos* being the Greek word for “falsehood”), and works to makeover the cosmos in his own image by asserting that nothing is that is not made first by man. Thus, the notion of nonbeing is tied closely to the presentation of the sophist as a maker of reality, the one entitled to remuneration for the effort of reaffirming being after so cleverly holding nonbeing.

Socrates, and more especially Plato, arguably did a disservice to the cause of wisdom because of their own haughtiness, namely what appears to our eyes as an undemocratic emphasis on rule by the best. Any person just smarter than an idiot can spend an hour making a dollar – Plato got that right. But what he missed is that the same person can spend an hour in the library and be better for it, too. I know because I have

urged many students to give it a try. Some even went, and they always came back better for it. In other words, we elevate the sophists in our mind because they represent democratic principles that Plato did not. Still, even if we agree with sophistic democratic propensities, it still does not address their impact on the disparity of wealth, or their lack of compunction connected to exchanging words for money. We may wonder why we cannot have both wisdom and riches, why wisdom has traditionally carried with it a life on the brink of poverty, or why the road to wisdom is littered with its Monticellos and eighteen thousand volume libraries bought in bankruptcy? Why does it seem that the brightest (and humblest, they are related you see) are not always, not even usually, the highest paid? What is it about the folly tied to riches and the wisdom inherent in not caring so much about riches that western thought cannot escape? These were the questions the sophists knew well. The trouble is the record they left the world alternates between a hesitation to offer firm answers to these questions or a determination to pursue riches, to ridicule those without money, and to justify a high price for promised success in life.

Plato's Socrates, as the guard of the transcendent worldview, assumes a position superior to money whereas the sophist is depicted as being subservient to money, or at least easily swayed to choose it instead of alternatives. Indeed, Plato's writings, and the writings of others, depict the sophists as the first conspicuous consumers. For example, the following dialogue between Socrates and the sophist Antiphon recorded by Xenophon shows a disparity between Socrates and Antiphon that is economic, not

merely idealistic. Antiphon is depicted as a conspicuous consumer and is eager to employ money as the mark of success in life and education:

On one occasion, this man [Antiphon], wishing to seduce Socrates' associates over to himself, accosted him in their presence and said: 'Socrates, I always thought that those who practiced philosophy ought to become happier by reason of that, but it seems to me that you have derived the opposite result from it. At any rate, you lead the sort of life that no slave would tolerate, if imposed on him by his master. The food and drink you consume is of the worst possible kind, and the cloak you wear is not only of wretched quality, but is the same summer and winter; and you are always without shoes or tunic. Then, you never take money, which is cheering to those who possess it, and which allows people to live with more freedom and pleasure. So if you are going to influence your associates in the same way as teachers of other skills, who seek to produce pupils after their own model, you should consider yourself a teacher of misery.'

To this Socrates replied: 'You seem to have persuaded yourself, Antiphon, that I live such a miserable life that I am persuaded that you would rather die than live like me. Come on, then: let us consider what you see as so harsh about my way of life. Is the problem that those who accept money are stuck with performing the service for which they've been paid, whereas I, since I don't take money, am not constrained to discourse with anyone that I don't wish to? Or do you turn up your nose at my diet on the ground that I eat food less wholesome than you do, and less productive of vigour? Is it that my means of subsistence are more difficult to get hold of than yours, as being rarer and more expensive? Is it that you enjoy your provisions more than I do mine? Don't you know that that man eats most pleasantly who least desires sauces to spice up his food, and that he most enjoys drinking who craves the least for a drink that he hasn't got? You seem to me, Antiphon, to consider happiness to reside in luxury and extravagance; but I have always thought that to need nothing is divine, and to need as little as possible is the nearest thing to the divine; and that the divine is best, and what is nearest to the divine is nearest to the best.'

And another time again, when Antiphon was conversing with Socrates, he said: 'Socrates, I certainly consider you a righteous man, but not at all a wise one. And you actually seem to me to recognize this yourself; at least, you don't charge anyone money for consorting with you. And yet if you thought that your cloak or your house or any other bit of your property was worth money, rather than giving it away free, you wouldn't even take a price for it less than its value. So it's plain that if you thought that your company was worth anything, you would demand for that nothing less than its value. You may therefore be honest, since you don't try to make a profit by false pretences; but wise you surely are not, seeing as your knowledge is worth nothing.'

To this Socrates replied: 'Amongst us, Antiphon, the same standards in respect of what is honorable and what is shameful are thought to apply equally to

the disposal of physical beauty and of wisdom. Someone who sells his youthful beauty to anyone who wants it is called a prostitute' but if one contracts a friendship with someone whom he knows to be of excellent character, we consider him to be acting with prudence. And similarly in the case of wisdom, those who sell it to anyone who wants it are called sophists; but if anyone makes a friend of one whom he knows to be naturally gifted by sharing any worthwhile knowledge that he happens to have, we consider that he is doing what an upright citizen should. And as for myself, Antiphon, I must say that, even as other people take pleasure in a good horse or dog or bird, I take as much pleasure or even more, in good friends, and if I have anything good to impart, I let them know of it, and I put them in touch with any others from whom I think they will get any assistance towards the acquisition of excellence. And together with my friends, I unroll and read through the books in which the wise men of past times have written down and left to us their treasures; and anything we see that is good, we pick out for ourselves; and we regard it as a great benefit that we have become friends with one another.'

To me, as I heard him say this, it certainly seemed that he was himself a man blessed with good fortune, and that he was leading his hearers on towards true nobility.

And then again, when Antiphon asked him how he expected to make others into successful politicians when he himself, in spite of this presumed expertise of his, did not take part in public affairs, Socrates replied: 'Which way, Antiphon, would I more effectively practise politics – by doing so on my own, or by seeing to it that as many people as possible are made capable of practicing it?'²⁴

Antiphon is adopting a functionalist idea of knowledge, that is, knowledge is judged only by its usefulness, in this sense its market value. Furthermore, he makes fun of Socrates' clothes and his way of life suggesting that only a slave would live so simply, taking this as evidence that Socrates is not happy, implying that only money brings happiness. The value of knowledge is determined by the price it can bring on the market; Socrates may be honest, but he cannot be accounted wise because he isn't making money.

Socrates is depicted in this passage as maintaining that wisdom and virtue are inextricably linked. He claims that introducing the element of money between friends

might down play the importance of the link between wisdom, virtue, and friendship. Wisdom is only wisdom, for Socrates, if it is shared liberally without regard to financial remuneration. To act otherwise is to undermine friendship and wisdom, rendering the quest for knowledge contemptible and opening the door for those who would not only use conversation and teaching to support themselves but would go further charging exorbitant prices and promising a bright future. The willingness to share thoughts liberally in social company is itself a democratic tendency. Though it is almost impossible to read Socrates and Plato as democrats, it is fashionable to wonder if democracy can withstand the assault of wealth with its associated fineries, pride, and class distinction.

Socrates is depicted by Xenophon as wanting to avoid wealth, for a life detached from things and obligations to perform services in exchange for money frees up his time making him independent in a way totally different from the so-called independence offered by wealth. Antiphon, on the other hand, belittles Socrates' clothes and food, and especially the fact that he does not charge money for discussion. The fact that he does not charge money is taken as evidence by the sophist that what he offers is of very little or no worth. The sophists are the great inventors of the market test, what McCloskey would later call the American Question.²⁵ Socrates' characteristic reply is that there is more virtue in freely imparting wisdom than in selling it. Only through the former does one do what any "upright citizen should;" only by liberally giving knowledge to all who ask for it can one achieve freedom, excellence, and true pleasure.

It should not go unstated either that Antiphon attempts to equate Socrates' economic choices with misery. Who among us has not experienced the misery of having to do something promised for money because we later regretted the time and annoyance required to deliver the goods? Antiphon obviously took pleasure in delivering speeches; Socrates took the same pleasure in speechmaking as evidenced by how much he appears to enjoy hearing himself talk in the dialogues, but one difference is that Socrates did it on his own time. Socrates maintains that "to need nothing is divine," and having a worn out coat and a simple diet are aspects, thus, of divinity. The sophist is depicted as derisive, proud, and as having "the habit of making inequality hurt," in Judith Shklar's wonderful phrase.

These are, no matter what we might find to the contrary, the undemocratic qualities of the sophists, and if the debate between Plato and the sophists is to continue in relevance then it is time to acknowledge this point. Socrates is never once alleged to partake in the economic snobbery that is at the heart of sophistic claims about life, money, and learning. He maintains, albeit super-heroically, the possibility that learning and life can be lived with a value system that disrespects money or at least shows very little reverence towards those who have lots of it. This point in and of itself is a critical idea for republics and democracies to remember and laud and honor in singing and dance. Without it they risk, just as Jefferson warned in his day, the possibility that freedom will be lost amidst a vast sea of material prosperity. The Enlightenment of course teaches us that one critical aspect of living in a contemporary nation state is access to humane employment, but we need not read Socrates as undermining this or

other newfound economic truths relative to democracy and human rights. Instead, we can understand that he is making known the equally important truth that how one acts towards money and how one treats those with money will ever have political consequences, consequences that the free men of a state must not ignore. In essence, then, the sophists represent one side of a debate about the role of money in politics whereas Socrates represents a compelling counter-argument toward the question of selling words for money.

ARISTOTLE, ISOCRATES, AND CITIZENSHIP

Along with Plato, Aristotle himself continued the discussion on sophistry, and in a roundabout way on the economics of information sharing. Though sometimes credited with resolving the tensions between platonic philosophy and sophistry through his *Rhetoric*, Edward Copleston notes, I think correctly, that Aristotle is more sensibly read as extending platonic thought. For example, in *On Sophistical Refutations* Aristotle defines the sophist as “one who depends on the faculty to render an answer, while a true lover of wisdom depends on the faculty of securing an answer.” What Aristotle is saying is that a sophist knows how to give answers to difficult questions – seeming to appear wise – whereas a “true lover of wisdom” knows when not to speak; knows convincing another of an answer is not the same as securing an answer that satisfies the soul. Moreover, the main criticism Aristotle harbors for the sophists is that their instrumental ethics cannot account for a source of human happiness as excellence. Being, as he is,

preoccupied with excellence, Aristotle is acutely aware that the instrumentalist ethics of the sophists is insufficient to realize excellence.

Aristotle, however, was capable of seeing money as an instrument and this is particularly clear in his important distinction between economics and chrematistics in *The Politics*. Economics, for Aristotle, is the art of governing a house, necessary for individuals and for states, while chrematistics is the art of acquiring goods or money. To govern a house well requires a flow of goods and money, necessitating chrematistics, but the flow always has a purpose beyond itself. The acquisition of property should always be governed by the economic or household purpose for which it was needed. The end of acquisition is excellence in life, which in any particular household, by Aristotle's definition, always meant something more than infinite money. The acquisition of property is just only insofar as it serves a purpose outside of itself. If goods are acquired directly from the environment, as in hunting or fishing, or through trade involving money it is considered a natural and just acquisition. However, if money is pursued only for itself, in the sense of 'money-making,' Aristotle considers it an unnatural and unjust acquisition (chrematistics without household law). The distinction later plays an important role for Karl Marx in the formulation of his critique of money-making as an end.²⁶ Aristotle's chief point is that the acquisition of goods or money can only be accounted just if the purpose of the acquisition is as a "means" for excellence in "living," never as an end to itself. Economics ensures that chrematistics does not get the better of us.²⁷

Aristotle also recognized in his *Rhetoric* the centrality of economic issues as a subject of rhetorical discourse. Indeed, an excellent rhetor, Aristotle suggests, ought to know the extent of public revenue and expense, as well as know economics through experience, “but it is necessary also to be willing to do research about what has been discovered elsewhere in regard to deliberation about these things.”²⁸ Aristotle does not confine a potentially good rhetor’s knowledge to income and expense, but goes on to include in the top five subject matters of rhetoric, knowledge of imports and exports. Additionally and more directly related to Plato’s contention that rhetoric degenerates into sophistry through the involvement of money, Aristotle asserts that wealth corrupts social character. Aristotle writes,

The kinds of character that follow from wealth are plain for all to see; for [the wealthy] are insolent and arrogant, being affected somehow by the possession of wealth; for their state of mind is that of those who have all good things; for wealth is a kind of standard of value of other things, so that all things seem purchasable by it. 2. And they are ostentatious and pretentious: ostentatious because of luxury and the display of their prosperity, pretentious and vulgar because all are used to spending their time doing whatever they like and admire and because they think everybody else has the same values they do. At the same time, this feeling is reasonable; for there are many who need what they have. This is the reason for what Simonides said about the wise and the rich to the wife of Hieron when she asked whether it was better to be rich or wise: [he replied] “To be rich”; for he said one sees the wise waiting at the doors of the rich. 3. [Another result of wealth is that the rich] think they deserve to rule; for they think they have that which makes one worthy to rule [i.e., money]. And in sum, the character that comes from wealth is that of a lucky fool. 4. The characters of the newly rich and those with old wealth differ in that the newly rich have all the vices to a greater degree and in a worse form; for to be newly rich is, as it were, to lack education in the use of wealth. And the wrongs that they commit are not malicious but sometimes acts of insolence, sometimes the result of lack of self-control, for example, personal injury and adultery.²⁹

Insolence, arrogance, ostentation, and pretension characterize the rich, according to Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, for wealth affects one’s state of mind “so that all things seem

purchasable by it.” Since rhetoric is a subset of politics in Aristotle’s system, the implications for this passage in the *Rhetoric* are no doubt directed at citizenry. The rich mistakenly assert that “everybody else has the same values they do,” and this assertion becomes particularly dangerous to a polity given that the rich “think they deserve to rule,” and “they think they have that which makes one worthy to rule,” when, in sum, they have only “the character that comes from wealth” that “of a lucky fool.” Thus, regardless of the fact that the rich have what even the wise sometimes need, the rich are still, because of their riches, not in spite of them, drastically burdened in Aristotle’s eyes. They will have difficulty participating in civic affairs given the propensity of their riches to impact their attitudes and state of mind. Furthermore, they lack the capacity to appreciate fully communal notions of happiness and excellence.

Aristotle, too, it must be noted, acknowledges a difference between the old rich and the new rich intimating that the new rich have the vices of riches to a greater degree. Yet the wrongs of the new rich are “not malicious,” more often “the result of lack of self-control.” Aristotle seems aware of differences among the rich; indeed he seems aware of the line of argument advocated by McCloskey and countless others since Adam Smith that a new market brings a new morality, and even a new kind of riches. This discussion shows that Aristotle dissociated riches and wisdom, considering wisdom in the form of economics to be a controlling or mitigating factor on riches. He thought riches could negatively impact the health of a state or even a household, even as he acknowledged that the rich cannot be condemned across the board simply for being rich.

He discussed economic matters in his writings on politics, ethics, and rhetoric, indicating that he considered it suitable matter for such inquiries.

Isocrates, at this same time, is also recording that the rich are quite capable of participating in civic affairs if they are willing to make sacrifices for the state. Isocrates occupies a unique and often neglected position in ancient Athens as having been both a student of Socrates and Gorgias, a student of a philosopher and a sophist.³⁰ In *On the Peace* Isocrates encourages the Athenians to study those arguments that they are naturally disposed to reject, to find out what is advantageous to the state. This method, incidentally, is still the same one practiced in the public speaking and argumentation and debate classes of the contemporary university. Isocrates is in complete communion with the benefits of seeing the other's side and of working through public policy with a mind for hearing arguments from opponents and leaving the door open for new truths, and the possibilities of compromise. Indeed, his conception of public affairs is largely that of a sophistic field filled with competing interests and ideas, much like our "market of ideas" ideology today.

Nevertheless, Isocrates, like his teacher Socrates, is not willing to assent to the notion that interest should be our sole guide. He neither advocates complete disinterest nor surrender to pure self-interest. Instead, he makes some very bourgeois comments like:

- No one should seek political office for flattery or gain
- One should not elect men who gratify for the moment but take no heed of the future

- Men should not choose others for public office that they would not trust with their private affairs.³¹

His reasoning on these counts culminates in the selection of Pericles as the Isocratean model of statesmanship. Isocrates lauds Pericles as a great example because he served the state selflessly. The chief evidence proffered is that Pericles left a smaller estate than he inherited, while enlarging the treasury during his tenure.³² The ideal citizen of the polis, for Isocrates, is concerned about service not profit, and along with that ideal Isocrates thinks it wise for the state to recognize and appreciate such sacrifices.

Isocrates continues this line of reasoning in *Against the Sophist*, criticizing those who teach for money but affect contempt for it. Incidentally, his dual heritage as Socratean and Sophist helps Isocrates to cut a middle ground between the ancient division between Plato and the sophists. Perhaps unlike Socrates, but like Plato (let us not forget), Isocrates knew well that money could be used to create an organizational structure wherein instruction could thrive. As director of the most important school of public affairs in his time, Isocrates prospered by offering education to students for money. However, he likewise saw something disingenuous about collecting tuition while affecting contempt for money – a charge that he directed at the sophists, but perhaps applicable to Plato and even the neo-Marxists of our own day. Furthermore, Isocrates does not pull punches when it comes time to talk about the sophistic willingness to sell a science that they promise will bring happiness and success in all circumstances. He holds that education can only teach the principles of sound judgment but must never promise anything about the future, as the future is a thing unseen – and a complicated

thing at that. In other words, Isocrates is not against the sophists charging for their offerings. He is against their over-promising and false advertising as well as their feigned contempt for money. It is as much their attitude toward money that bothers Isocrates as it is their use or possession of it.

The sophists of course cannot be condemned as a general class given that there is tremendous differentiation among them, as the case of Isocrates shows. Though the above is a quick overview of what Plato and the sophists thought about money matters, it illustrates well the difficulties involved in exchanging words for money. The impact of this act is tremendous, both in the academy, the courtroom, the legislature, and indeed anywhere else rhetoric is a potent force. For many thousands of years the process of exchanging speech for money has constituted a tremendous portion of every economic system, and the relevance of the debate over sophistry in ancient Athens relates to just this very fact for it shows us that the act of taking money for words said or promised is a contested space in terms of its moral and political consequences.³³ Indeed, much of the disagreement between Plato and the sophists centered on the morality of exchanging money for words and words for money. Some of the sophists themselves, most notably Isocrates, seem to agree with the Platonic assessment that exchanging words for money can in fact have disastrous consequences on the health of a nation or people, and that keeping a close eye on the exchange of money for words and words for money was at the heart of being a good rhetorical critic and, thus, a good citizen. There can be no mistaking that one central contention of sophistry in the ancient world was the notion that money has no impact on what is said, by whom, when, and that we should do better

to worry about our own wallets and dress for success rather than concern ourselves with what people are saying and why they are saying it.

To make this point more forcefully, I turn to a fragment that Stobaeus preserved and attributed to the sophist Critias of Athens. It is illustrative of the general problem surrounding the Sophists on the question of words, money, and social influence, especially their hesitancy. Critias wrote,

Wise poverty or rich ineptitude –
which is the better companion in one's house?³⁴

These words, preserved by Stobaeus and attributed to the sophist Critias of Athens, suggest a sophistic halt between two opinions. They may have been spoken by Critias' character Sisyphus who is now remembered as the first atheist because of his declaration that legislators invented God as a check on the secret acts of citizens.³⁵ Still, they could have been uttered by any sophist of the third century B.C.E. or by anyone since who wondered about whom he should invite into his home.

For our purposes, of course, the hesitation evident in the remaining fragment is especially important and representative. The fragment indicates the ubiquitous tension in sophistic writings between wisdom and riches. Today, as in ancient Athens, wisdom and riches, to be acquired, demand the same price: time. The Sophists, taken as a body, are fully aware of this reality, yet they spend much of their time trapped between which to choose, or, importantly, pursuing riches. They try frequently to have both wisdom and riches, but this seems to do nothing but diminish the treasure.

To think of this problem in contemporary terms we need look no further than our universities, which are still plagued by this hesitation. The price of professors in the

academic “marketplace” is reaching heights never before seen. The term scholar used to carry in its etymology a sense of poverty, no, more a sense of forsaking riches. Now the chance for rising income and advancement seems built-in to the nature of scholarship. Moving universities is par for advancement. Professors now are nearly as itinerant as the sophists once were because a change in venues carries with it now, as then, a change in revenues, an increase in the value of “spiritual wares.” Most argue that the benefits, that is, the higher salaries, increased competition, grant-writing and grant-getting are worth the costs of upsetting atmosphere. Jacques Barzun, on the other hand (and we ought to be able to consider him an authority since he studied and taught at Columbia University for well over fifty years without moving once), has pointed out repeatedly and frequently that moving around carries its own built-in cost: intellect.³⁶

We lose intellect, Barzun argues, because culture diminishes in favor of the competitive dollar. Intellect cannot be bought, but instead develops most fully inside of a stable community. The time spent job shopping and comparing salaries could have been spent building relationships among like-minded faculty at the present college, or reading heavy tomes. Time spent interviewing and conferencing and negotiating should not be considered *intellectual work* because its motives are not intellectual. It may be work, for sure, but it is illiberal and significantly draining on our universities, especially the resource of time.

Troubling ourselves too much with the parallels between the sophists and our selves might bring an indictment – and that would require courage to face. The point of all of this is that the sophists hesitated quite often in their work between putting in the

effort and time for wisdom and using that time “wisely” to make a buck. Socrates, and more especially Plato, did a disservice by holding only that any darn fool can make a dollar. Plato got that right without showing the simultaneous and important truth that any darn fool can spend an hour in the library – and be better for it, too. The trouble is the record the sophists leave the world alternates between a hesitation to offer a firm answer to the question of wisdom or riches, or a determination to pursue riches, to ridicule those without money, and to justify high prices for promised success. That is what they leave us in economic terms. That is what they leave us on wisdom. Without something more, I conclude that the sophists in fact realized that Plato’s claim that trading words for money alters significantly the moral power of those words had merit and was the source of their hesitations. Even though they never could convince themselves that in the long run it would be worth it to seek wisdom instead of riches, the Sophists provide an insightful view of character as constituted through the use of words.

CUI BONO?, OR MAY I ASK WHAT YOU HAVE TO GAIN BY YOUR TESTIMONY?

During Cicero’s life the Roman republic was undergoing tremendous changes, not the least of which centered on such economic issues as tax rates for citizens, grain prices within Rome, and the payment, bribery, or extortion of public officials. Although the institutional structure of the republic was not sufficient to deal with all of these matters sufficiently, Cicero seemed convinced that knowledge of economic matters was critical to effective rhetorical practice. In one passage, dealing primarily with the question of interest, Cicero praises one of the *Cassii*, a judge amongst the Romans, for

his custom of asking in trials, *Cui bono*? Or who stands to gain by this fact? Cicero was glad that this judge paid close attention to this question.

Cicero's report is picked up by Thomas Hobbes who adds, "For amongst presumptions, there is none that so evidently declareth the Author, as doth the Benefit of the action."³⁷ He then slightly tweaks Cicero's application of the question by applying it specifically to the rhetoric of the Christian presbytery and their claim that the Kingdom of Christ is already come. Hobbes writes,

But *cui bono*? What profit did they expect from it? The same which Popes expected: to have sovereign power over the people. For what is it for men to excommunicate their lawful King, but to keep him from all places of God's public service in his own kingdom? And with force to resist him, when he with force endeavoreth to correct them? Or what is it, without authority from the civil sovereign, to excommunicate any person, but to take from him his lawful liberty, that is, to usurp an unlawful power over their brethren? The authors therefore of this darkness in religion, are the Roman, and the Presbyterian clergy.³⁸

In other words Hobbes thinks the question is best applied to rhetoric, especially those authors who would usurp unlawful power over their brethren by pursuing their own interest by advancing particular arguments. Of course, interest has always played a part in argument, too, and this is one reason why the question *Cui bono*? is particularly suited for slicing through words to get to motives. The insight gleaned from Cicero in this regard indicates that the rhetorical tradition is consistent with and critical of motivation by personal interest. In other words, rhetoricians realize that interest plays a part in making arguments, and Hobbes following Cicero shows that it can play a role in the criticism of arguments as well.

The record on Cicero, however, indicates strongly that Cicero thought the matter was pretty well settled: orators, the best of them, will seek the public good, the good of

the people over their own interests. In particular, Cicero is critical of virtually everyone in the republic, including Julius Caesar and later Marcus Antonius, for placing their personal interests above the interests of the republic. Thus, in rhetorical criticism a central question has long centered around the motives a speaker has for their words, and Cicero and the Latin rhetorical tradition recognized a connection between money and words spoken, in particular the relation of those words to truth. Of course, had Cicero had greater control over his own finances perhaps he would not have been as beholden to Caesar's claims, as republicans might wish, even though attention to such matters may have diminished his contribution to scholarship.

JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN RHETORIC AND ECONOMICS

It is necessary to briefly discuss Jewish and Christian sources of economic rhetoric to show that the Platonic moralizing of rhetoric and economics was not the only source in the ancient world of some of these claims. Writing a short history of rhetoric and economics in the tradition of writing a history of rhetoric requires an introduction to an important strain of economic thought in the western world. Jewish economic ideas springing primarily from the book of Deuteronomy, what Chaim Potok has called the "Jewish Constitution," suggest that an economic system in which community solidarity and widespread ownership of property are given greater weight than the expansion of wealth or the needs of the rich because the former is more likely to promote the preservation of values. This is exactly what we have come to expect from the rhetoric of an agrarian and tightly knit religious community. The book of Deuteronomy contains the

introduction of the Ten Commandments into community law, including a practical exposition of them. However, the book is also especially characterized by its focus on economic issues relating to justice in the community. The focus of the text includes a code of laws, but also warnings against idolatry and false worship. The author of Deuteronomy argues, specifically, for the forgiveness of debts every seven years, as well as the releasing of bondservants, for the farmer or harvester to leave some fruit behind in the field for the birds and strangers, and enjoins care for the poor. Additionally, the author, or authors, show how priests are to be supported by the people, how Israel as a nation should care for the interests of others, and discourses on usury, making merchandise of men, oppressing servants, and so forth. The book closes by placing blessing and cursing next to each other and promises that one of the two alternatives will befall those who have entered a covenant relationship with God, blessing and cursing will be dependent on adherence to the laws outlined, many of which deal specifically with economic issues and the acquiring and use of property.

The dominant persuasive element of the text of Deuteronomy is that economic prosperity, regardless of its form, should always be treated as manna from heaven. It cannot be too closely controlled or handled by man because he is, as ever, the one benefited by the grace of the earth, her mild and friendly climate as well as her ability to provide food to eat and materials from which to provide warmth, shelter, and clothing. Regardless of changing attitudes toward materiality it was declared that for the nation of Israel to obtain the blessing and avoid the cursing they must treat all their gains as they treat manna from heaven. They must work for it everyday, they must prevent the

stockpiling of wealth lest it sit and rot instead of provide for others, and they must acknowledge the miraculous nature of providence, acknowledging, too, that material prosperity has only one source, which, regardless of a theology, is always outside of the capacity of man. The economic and rhetorical vision that results is one in which, regardless of man's ability to work improvements to any given system, the earth is appreciated as the cosmic beginning place of the economy, the cosmic provider for all of mankind. This focus results, it is hoped, in humility on man's part in dealing with economic issues and in approaching economic behavior. Treating material prosperity as manna from heaven finds its inspiration in the book of Deuteronomy, and it suggests that we hold our possessions in the tradition of rhetoric: with an open hand.³⁹

Christian arguments relative to the economy are necessarily more diffuse and wide-ranging than the book of Deuteronomy might lead us to believe, and yet they are also related to this earlier tradition. Early Christian texts, for example, have a tendency to emphasize economic matters more than contemporary readings of the Bible. An extremely cursory reading of early Christian texts that were not canonized in the Christian Bible yields the following statements on the relationship between religious conviction and money, and, in some cases, that between money and the spoken word:

From "An Ancient Christian Sermon": "But do not let it trouble your mind that we see the unrighteous possessing wealth while the servants of God experience hardships. . . . None of the righteous ever received his reward quickly, but waits for it. For if God paid the wages of the righteous immediately, we would soon be engaged in business, not godliness; though we would appear righteous, we would in fact be pursuing not piety but profit."⁴⁰

From the "Letters of Ignatius": "The Work is not a matter of persuasive rhetoric; rather, Christianity is greatest when it is hated by the world."⁴¹

From “The Didache”: “Let every apostle who comes to you be welcomed as if he were the Lord. But he is not to stay for more than one day, unless there is need, in which case he may stay another. But if he stays three days, he is a false prophet. And when the apostle leaves, he is to take nothing except bread until he finds his next night’s lodging. But if he asks for money, he is a false prophet.”⁴²

“But if anyone should say in the spirit, “Give me money,” or anything else, do not listen to him. But if he tells you to give on behalf of others who are in need, let no one judge him . . . However, if he wishes to settle among you and is a craftsman, let him work for his living. But if he is not a craftsman, decide according to your own judgment how he shall live among you as a Christian, yet without being idle. But if he does not wish to cooperate in this way, then he is trading in Christ. Beware of such people.”⁴³

From “The Epistle of Barnabas”: “You shall share everything with your neighbor, and not claim anything is your own. For if you are sharers in what is incorruptible, how much more so in corruptible things! Do not be quick to speak, for the mouth is a deadly snare. Insofar as you are able, you shall be pure for the sake of your soul. Do not be someone who stretches out his hands to receive, but withdraws them when it comes to giving. You shall love as the apple of your eye everyone who speaks the word of the Lord to you.”⁴⁴

From “The Shepherd of Hermas”: “Blessed are the rich who also understand that they have been made rich by the Lord, for the one who comprehends this will be able to do some good work.”⁴⁵

“But avoid excessive involvement in business, and you will commit no sin. For those who are involved in business a great deal also sin a great deal, since they are distracted by their business and do not serve their own Lord in anything.”⁴⁶

The tenor of these selections illustrates a couple of important points about early Christianity. First, there appears a clear delineation between worldly goods and the goods promised by Christianity. Second, business and other worldly concerns are denigrated on account of their tendency to distract and for their ability to lead people to conclude that their wealth was attained by virtue of their courage and industry instead of by the benison of God. Third, there is in some of these passages a direct link between the taking of money as a barometer for knowing if someone is a true prophet. A false

prophet will ask for money, whereas a true prophet will never ask for money, and will take care to only stay a single night so that he is never an undue economic burden on those with whom he interacts. Thus, a connection between economic matters and religion is present in early Christian writings, even a connection between money and speech as a means of determining truthful prophecy.

The discovery of several early Christian texts in December of 1945 by Muhammad Ali, now referred to as the Gnostic gospels, lends further weight to the claim that the division between economic affairs and religion was sharper for many early Christians. Elaine Pagels argues further by claiming that these texts were deliberately expunged from the record of early Christianity for political and economic reasons. The Gnostic texts, emphasizing knowledge and spiritual matters over physical and earthly matters, praise “sexual abstinence and economic renunciation as the marks of a true Christian.”⁴⁷ Preferring a true church consisting of an invisible body rather than a visible one, the Gnostics were the ultimate case of Christian separation from both worldly and physical things, and Gnostics were harshly critical of those “outsiders” who indulged in drinking wine, sexual activity, and ordinary business like pagans. To attain *gnosis* required complete renunciation of the world, which included not only giving up drinking and sexual activity but also business affairs. Obviously a deeper analysis of the Gnostic gospels is beyond the scope of this study. However, their hyperbolic example in early Christianity does show, as Pagels argues, that the history of Christianity could have been very different had other sects, like the Gnostics, had greater influence. Additionally these

texts illustrate some early Christian thoughts about rhetoric and economics and can serve to illuminate readings of Jesus sayings on these topics in the New Testament.⁴⁸

Other Christian writers like St. Augustine, himself a very influential rhetorician, dissociates in *The City of God* between the city of God and the city of man, following in part the philosophy of the Gnostics. The city of man, Rome, is going to fall, Augustine predicts, and in fact, is falling, and when it falls completely the only alternative will be to recognize a reliance on the city of God. The City of God, for Augustine, is less a corporeal structure or place than an invisible and other-worldly power, one that enables man to overcome the world as it were and live free of material dependence. Through a complex theory of history and philosophy Augustine posits that all this-worldly systems of politics, economics, and rhetoric are mere appearances and will eventually fall. The introduction of Platonism to Christianity in Augustine means Christian economics carries the burden of Platonic ideology since Augustine, including a desire to counter the world's system of economic appearances. The introduction of Platonic forms and ideas into Augustine's Christianity posited a new history, and tends to exemplify the changing nature of the Jewish influence on human affairs as the book of Deuteronomy and other texts are re-read as Christian texts. More specifically, however, it continues the notion that while many nations of the earth may think otherwise, for those who worship the Messiah or Jesus, eyes should be placed on another world, whether it be a material nation of priests now present or an other-worldly spiritual power, it ends up a rejection of dominant economic practice. It will stand as a refutation of many claims about the place of materiality in public and private life.

In “*Victoriosa Loquacitas: The Rise of Rhetoric and the Decline of Everything Else*,” Hugh Nibley argues, along the same lines of my reading of the sophists above, that within early Christianity was a strain of would-be preachers who rejected both the rhetorical tradition and the title of rhetor for fear that association with either would mean a decrease in the moral strength of their arguments. Implicit in the rhetorical tradition, Nibley claims, was a willingness to exchange words for money, something no self-respecting early Christian would ever do. Nibley contrasts the *Sophos* with the sophist, arguing that both are unattached, but the *Sophos* is incorruptible while the sophist is irresponsible.⁴⁹

And the Sophist, unlike the *Sophos*, took the cash. The classic test of the early Christians by which one distinguished between a true and a false prophet was, whether the man took money or not. The same test marked the Sophist from the *Sophos*, according to Plato. The teaching of rhetoric, says Dio Chrysostom, should raise up a generation of orators to be “saviors of their cities,” only unfortunately he must report that the prospective demigods are wholly absorbed in the quest for fame and money.⁵⁰

Nibley proceeds to cite many, many sources in antiquity showing how Cicero, Augustine, Chrysostom and many others protest too much in defending rhetoric, exposing thereby not merely uneasiness about exchanging words for money, but also “the awareness that there is something basically wrong about the thing.”⁵¹ Though this kind of rhetoric is successful in making those who practice it rich, it is nevertheless faulty in its overemphasis of the probable, its contention that rhetoric is merely a tool that can be misused by bad people, and that unscrupulous and unqualified men had misrepresented rhetoric from inside the profession for it sought to suggest that wealth was goodness and goodness wealth. Nibley rejects these claims one by one, arguing

instead that the “orator lives in a world of high-sounding intangibles – *res, humanitas, honores, suavitas, officia, gratiae, laus, commendationes, admiratio*, etc. – which on every page of Cicero’s letters turns out to be but a verbal screen for a hard and sordid game of exploitation and survival played out without scruples and without loyalties.”⁵²

Nibley criticizes sophistry because it makes for thoughtless discourse and thoughtless people preoccupied with fame, wealth, and power instead of truth. He emphasizes that many early Christians, as well as Augustine himself, lived by a dichotomy between rhetoric and truth. It was Augustine, after all, who upon leaving his chair as a teacher of rhetoric declared gratitude that he could finally flee this chair of lies. The lies, presumably, included the selling of words that make the world go round obscuring the truth Augustine had come to accept. “‘We must allow the rhetor to make false, daring, somewhat misleading and captious statements,’ Gellius smugly observes, ‘providing he keeps within the bounds of probability,’ and he disarmingly explains that the rhetor must be permitted that latitude since it is his business to stir people up, his gravest offense being not the championing of falsehood but any refusal to defend it in a client’s interest.”⁵³ The quest for truth, when rhetoricized, becomes a farce as truth is synonymous with success measured by popularity, wealth, and power in the hands of a sophist.

Idealists, Plato, the Jewish scripture, early Christians, the Puritans, and later the republican strain of thought in men like Jefferson reject such measures of success and thereby reject the means to such success.⁵⁴ The worldviews of many of these idealists are remarkably similar in that they distrust words when they are spoken for or in the hope of

monetary gain, and they fail to see the monetary gain as evidence that the words spoken are in fact morally sound. There is a reactionary strain in Judeo-Christian western religions against word-for-money exchanges, and recognition that such exchanges are more often than not morally suspect. Instead, prosperity and money should be treated as gifts from the heavens and words should be reserved and spoken only to please the Gods and never to awaken their displeasure or to soothe the consciences of bad men or to flatter those in power. The rhetorical stance of early Judaism and early Christianity is an original one that is only tangentially related, however, to Platonic ideals and forms and to Platonic arguments about the corruptible power of money over words, though at many times after Augustine the Platonic strain and the Christian strain become indistinguishable. Indeed, the many positions summarized here partake in a common antithesis to word-for-money exchanges, an antithesis that finds its roots in Platonic, Jewish, and Christian sources.

It, of course, eventually becomes the past-time of all rhetoricians to discuss the definition of rhetoric. Indeed, we seem almost obsessed with the problem of rhetoric's meaning. A simple arrangement might say that sophistry is the exchange of words for money while rhetoric is the honorable art of persuasion from heart to heart. However, the drawback is that all too often this heart to heart persuasion is accompanied by the exchange of funds. It seems an enduring aspect of the definition of rhetoric which is regularly ignored, and that is the question of what role money plays in defining the nature and scope of rhetoric in both the ancient world and contemporary debates – especially now that the Supreme Court has decided that money is speech.⁵⁵ Christian and

Jewish sources and later many republican sources illustrate that there is a lively stream of thought that opposes the exchange of money for words. Jumping one and a half thousand years in a couple of lines we find that the history of rhetoric's relation to economic matters has progressed very little. Keep in mind, however, that the ensuing Chapters, III, IV, and V, will fill in some of what is missing between St. Augustine and Deirdre McCloskey.

RHETORIC OF ECONOMICS IN FULL

In the early 1980s a Harvard trained economist named Donald N. McCloskey moved from the University of Chicago to the University of Iowa. Already he was an accomplished economic historian and economist, but with his move to the University of Iowa he was introduced to the Project on the Rhetoric of Inquiry (POROI), an interdisciplinary project at Iowa that “explores how scholarship and professional discourse is conducted through argument, how paradigms of knowledge are sensitive to social-political contexts, and how the presentation of scholarly and professional findings is an audience-sensitive process.”⁵⁶ Out of that contact and his knowledge of economics he published an article, “The Rhetoric of Economics,” in the *Journal of Economic Literature* in 1983. In 1985, he published a book by the same title. McCloskey continued to publish many more articles on books relating to economic discourse in ensuing years. In the mid-1990s Donald McCloskey changed his gender and assumed the name of Deirdre McCloskey.⁵⁷

McCloskey's early works in the 1980s, in retrospect, are now part of a much larger movement aimed at counteracting economists' growing infatuation for mathematical proof and rationality by exposing the rhetoric, stories, metaphors, and language at the root of their inquiry.⁵⁸ *The Rhetoric of Economics*' most significant contribution to economics and social science generally is a stern request that economics look to history and rhetoric as a means for understanding the source of current professional disagreements and shortsightedness. Specifically, McCloskey argues that underlying all of the mathematical proofs and regression equations are ethical, political, and moral issues that cannot be silenced or linearly regressed. Ignoring these higher questions has consequences not only for society at large, but perhaps more importantly for the study of economics at large. By divorcing ethical, rhetorical, and political questions from economic research, economists have created a straw version of human nature and action, including a shortsighted view of the power of markets and money to solve problems.

McCloskey's work on rhetoric of economics focuses narrowly on how economists use rhetoric. Additionally, unlike her strictly economic research, her work in rhetoric of economics is not historical.⁵⁹ My focus here is not to critique economists only, or to speak primarily of what they do. McCloskey is quick to point out that rhetoricians and humanities professors can learn something from economists.⁶⁰ And, indeed, they have learned something as well as sought to teach something.⁶¹ Some economists are striking back at the scientism of contemporary economics through the Post-Autistic Economics movement that started in Europe and quickly spread around the

globe.⁶² Bluntly, the Post-Autistic Economics movement is an attempt to re-inject a sense of history and uncertainty in economics scholarship while calling into question the force of mathematic proofs. Attacking the autistic mathematics of present day economists is better left to those who want to understand the language of mathematics and the force behind its proofs. Rather, I want to look at rhetoric and economics through a lens that incorporates both the talking and trading elements of our character.

Additionally, I aim to show a historical relationship between rhetoric and economics extending very far back in human history. By further illuminating the relationship that exists between rhetoric and power, economics and gain, I argue that many of the classical charges against rhetoric can be leveled now at economists, partly because economics is so thoroughly rhetorical, but also because the aims of the economic art as presently constituted is so intensely driven to emphasize a world of scarcity and competition that they overemphasize realities of uncertainty and risk. In other words, rhetoricians are not immune to market forces invented by the economists, just as economists are not immune to linguistic forces invented by rhetoricians. What becomes apparent when rhetoric and economics are juxtaposed is that they both claim transcendent influence on human nature, yet neither is sufficient to deliver such transcendence of its own accord. Additionally, they both emphasize uncertainty as central to their claims of transcendence.

In her work of the late twentieth century, McCloskey does not overlook the relation between argument and money: instead of “sophistry” she formulates it as the “American Question”: “If you’re so smart why ain’t you rich?” In other words, asking

the American question is one way of discovering the strength, or rightness, of economist's predictions and stockbroker advice. In McCloskey's opinion, stockbrokers make their money by preying on widows and children. This is no *ad hominem* attack given McCloskey's story of her own widowed mother. The forecasting of stock prices and economic activity is at best questionable, assertions of certainty to the contrary. Essentially, the question is one of reading the future and in economics there is no tool for reading the future or making accurate predictions given the nature of humankind's limited mind. We have, McCloskey argues, a better chance of reading the past. These readings will improve our ability to not misread the future because they make us sure that we cannot know the future through our current methods of prediction.

Indeed, looking at the history of advice giving and prediction we find strong support for the notion that social construction has played a tremendous part in the creation of the advice-giving industry. James Burk, a sociology professor and former stockbroker "found that the advice giving industry sprang from legal decisions early in the century."⁶³ The courts began to hold pension fund trustees liable for bad investing if they did not seek advice. "The effect would have been the same had the courts decided that prudent men should consult Ouija boards or the flights of birds," writes McCloskey.⁶⁴ In Burk's words, since the market is filled with uncertainty belief in prediction is "indispensable to the market." Burk writes,

Absent any interpretive framework, the fluctuation of stock prices appears to be entirely capricious, an unordered event. Human beings generally are loath to act in the face of uncertainty, and they avoid doing so unless they possess some collectively defined response that lends a deterministic character to their proceeding, even if the response is mythic. For those in the stock market, the 'unreliable' and 'mercurial' nature of stock prices 'stimulates hard-headed search

for firmer ground' which beliefs about why stock market prices change evidently provide.⁶⁵

Though Burk's concern is less with the "psychological security these beliefs bestow than with their effect on market structure," the psychological effect is notably worth mentioning in my context.⁶⁶ In other words, the comfort that comes from talking to "experts" is itself a kind of talking cure for the average Joe; it is itself tacit social support for the would-be investor and advice-giver, as well as, of course, a source of tremendous income for the consultant. The connection between a socially constructed realm of expertise and the money gained by expert advice that originates in that realm is centrally an ethical question that straddles both economic theory and rhetorical theory. Are experts absolved from morality if their expertise, in certain situations, fails them and others? What are the reasonable grounds under which we can and should trust so-called expert counsel?

Instead of seeking money through reading crystal balls, McCloskey argues economists should concentrate their effort and attention on becoming scholars, *bona fides*. Such scholars of good faith are not made in policy institutes or through the myriad tools of statistical significance. Instead they are made, with books in hand, through long hours reading, reading as widely and deeply as possible, through attentive, active, and deliberate instruction in the classroom, and through honing rhetorical skills, both speaking and writing. The conclusion is that instead of being consultants, economists should spend their time being scholars. It's not that McCloskey thinks that the impractical pursuit of the *artes liberales* is preferable to being actively engaged in contemporary problems. Instead she recognizes that to be actively engaged in

contemporary problems at all requires, in order to participate in good faith, a well-read and active mind that helps diminish a love for sloppy statistics and hasty reasoning devoid of historical perspective.

McCloskey pooh-poohs “the naïve theory of scientific reading” that asserts that a reader never reads scientific works with an eye to pleasure. Quite the contrary, McCloskey ranks some non-fiction right up there with the best fiction. Nevertheless, she is able, too, to see the benefits in efferent reading. “In efferent reading (from Latin *effero*, I carry off) the reader focuses on what she will carry off from the reading. Efferent reading is supposed to characterize model building and science. Model building and science is supposed to be useful for something outside itself. In aesthetic reading, by contrast, the reader focuses on her experience at the time of reading. The aesthetic is supposed to characterize storytelling and art.”⁶⁷ McCloskey exhorts us to be as aware of the scientific benefits of reading as of the aesthetic benefits because the best works partake of both kinds in great abundance. Economic and scientific writing does not have to be, must not be, devoid of metaphor and storytelling any more than we should reasonably assume that the *belles lettres* has nothing to offer to practical life. This is big-time science, folks, and hard work, too.

The McCloskey family business is professing (McCloskey’s father was a political science professor, her sister is a psychologist). McCloskey says of her father:

I watched him goof off a lot between deadlines. He would read two mystery novels a night, for example, and read many other books not on his professional list . . . I say ‘goofing off,’ but that’s not right, because he showed me that wide reading makes a flexible scholar. From him I learned to make time for reading outside British iron and steel, 1870-1914, my dissertation subject, or British economic history, my specialty, or even my wide passion of the 1980s, rhetoric.

The result was, for example, that in early middle life I had a way of learning something about the humanities, in order to see the rhetoric of economics; and in late middle life I could see the relevance to economics of ethical reflection.

But the ‘pleasure’ reading kept becoming work reading. I would read about astronomy for pleasure but then find 10 years later that I was using what I had absorbed about the scholarly attitude of astrophysicists to compare real sciences with Samuelsonian economics and its math department values.⁶⁸

The embedded enthymeme here is that scholarship is supposed to be fun, especially reading books, and that when it is seen as intellectual high-adventure it brings greater flexibility, honesty, and humility. McCloskey advocates the value of wide reading, even fiction, for the field of economics. She thinks that economists do not read enough; especially books.⁶⁹ Once rhetoric is the foundation of knowledge, reading becomes epideictic and, importantly, central to honest science.

Read, write well, and be humble is McCloskey’s argument for good scholarship, and her representative anecdote is Alexander Gerschenkron. McCloskey first introduced us to Gerschenkron as a representative of her two kinds of storytelling in *If You’re So Smart*. Here Gerschenkron is the hero of McCloskey’s story, the one economist who is his own man. A bona fide scholar, Gerschenkron “wrote on the mathematical theory of index numbers and on the literary theory of translation; with equal passion he read Greek poetry and listened to the Boston Celtics.”⁷⁰ Gerschenkron is thus framed as an independent thinker, one who stands up for what’s right, at Harvard and Leningrad; Gerschenkron stood up against ruthless politics without pretending he had no political arguments to make; Gerschenkron saw prediction and control were narrow and impractical; he advocated, indeed exemplified the “practical philosophy of the scholar.”⁷¹ Gerschenkron lived a program of research that was “at ease with

mathematics, history, statistics, and a dozen languages,” and “was to yield not sharp or mechanical ‘tests of theory,’ in modernist style, suitable to prediction and control, but mature judgments. The judgments would satisfy, as he frequently put it, ‘a sense of reasoned adequacy.’”⁷²

McCloskey evaluates Gerschenkron on the basis of both folk philosophy of science and the scholarly ethos, but maintains that the real judge is rhetoric. McCloskey writes,

A successful scholar and scientist above all engages in argument, and Gerschenkron lived a life of argument.

Gerschenkron’s style of writing was the most obviously ‘rhetorical’ support for his arguments. He delighted in obscure but fine words, such as ‘flummox,’ a special favorite. He spoke mainly in the idiom of cultivated Europe, which made some sentences in his earlier writings pure Latin. Most of the prose in his most famous and earliest article on the subject, ‘Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective,’ though lucid, is undistinguished. He appeared to be playing the sober scientist and waxed eloquent only when the subject turned to ideology (‘Ricardo is not known to have inspired anyone to change ‘God Save the King’ into ‘God Save Industry.’)⁷³

“Living a life of argument” is the highest praise McCloskey can offer to a scholar of good faith, and while that may not be much, for McCloskey it’s everything because it brings humility and flexibility. It includes understanding mathematical proof, linguistic and etymological proof, and, of course, reading, but it does not stop there. Instead it invites scholars to practice inquiry and judgment, in life and scholarship.

The most telling anecdote about Gerschenkron comes when McCloskey is sitting in his office one day waiting for him to return. Gerschenkron’s stack of books is perused, and it is notably significant in that it contains in addition to numerous tomes about statistics, non-Euclidean geometry, a book on chess problems, and journals of literature

and science, also a well-worn copy of *Mad* magazine. It's not just the latter that is significant, but the whole reading stack that makes a true scholar. It is openness and flexibility, an appreciation of the various ways of knowing, in short, the "rhetorical" that McCloskey praises most in Gerschenkron and in the best scholars.

McCloskey republished her work on Gerschenkron in *How to Be Human Though an Economist*, and proved once again that she is a consummate rhetorician by publicly exhibiting improvement in writing over time. McCloskey writes of Gerschenkron the second time,

He was the best scholar, I would say, because he was the best rhetorician. I mean *rhetoric* not in some cheap definition favored in the newspapers but in its oldest and most honorable definition, what Werner Jaeger called "the first humanism." Words, Gerschenkron recognized, are what we have in common, not things.⁷⁴

Rhetoric is tantamount to scholarship, but it includes, by McCloskey's reckoning, an appropriate sense of shame at scholarship that is poorly done, a strong sense of honor, a workshop in the attic to perform scholarship as one might work in a motorcycle repair shop, an appropriate lack of directional cues for graduate students, an ethos of scholarly care, in short, Emerson's "whole person exercising all human powers."⁷⁵

In her paper, "Keynes Was a Sophist, and a Good Thing, Too," McCloskey urges a view of Keynes similar to her analysis of Gerschenkron's "rhetorical" scholarship, but it differs because her praise is obviously framed as a case for sophistry. Keynes was a sophist because he "recommends honest talk rather than dogmatic truth." Keynes, McCloskey argues, was "a sensationally good economist" "because he was more."⁷⁶ "The Sophist," McCloskey writes, "substitutes... a social and conversational metaphor for how we know," instead of having a rigid, if even pseudo-scientific view of

epistemology.⁷⁷ In other words, the conflation of rhetoric and sophistry in contemporary rhetorical theory is echoed in McCloskey's analysis of Keynes for she sees the "best rhetorician" skills and practices in Gerschenkron as identical to the "good thing" "sophist" skills of Keynes. Keynes had a commitment to adversarial reasoning, was an enthusiastic party politician, he believed in democracy, and he had the ability to change his mind. These, McCloskey reasons, are tantamount to scholarship worth writing and reading whether in economics or elsewhere.

In fact, McCloskey goes on to suggest that Adam Smith was a sophist, in this new, or in her words, "rehabilitated" sense. McCloskey writes,

Though as I have said it is a minority view, the sophistic tradition in economics is old. Adam Smith is an example. The very duality of his two books (yes, he wrote another one) drives the Platonists to distraction. Platonists have a terrible time with Smith if they read both books, *The Wealth of Nations* and *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, as unified Truth with a capital T. "All right, Professor Smith, what is it? Love or Money? You can't have it both ways." To which Smith replies, Why not? Situations vary, one alters the other, both are in constant dialogue, the Sacred and the Profane. If situations differ, I come to differing conclusions. What do you do?⁷⁸

Though few economists appreciate the reality and richness of the sophistic tradition in economics, McCloskey urges its reevaluation in history and advocates its practice today. The notion of taking both sides, of keeping options open, of favoring democratic processes wherever they lead, this is the road of sophistry – or sound rhetoric depending on your term of choice – for McCloskey, and this is the road to good economic scholarship, to good scholarship in general for that matter.

The irony in McCloskey's work is revealed in this representative anecdote for it shows that she replaces the narrowness and simple-mindedness of churning out scientific

paper after scientific paper of questionable quality with the transcendent universal “rhetoric.” Good rhetoric, mind you, but rhetoric, still, as the absolute good. Thus, by figuring out that economics will never offer the transcendence humanity seeks, McCloskey turns to good scholarship, good argument, honorable ethos, and human power to “screw down the sphere above more tightly,” in Josef Pieper’s phrase. “Living a life of argument” is McCloskey’s telos, if she has one, and it is central to both her definition of human nature and to the argument that economics and rhetoric can vacillate off each other to solidify a sense that man is the measure of all things. McCloskey’s point seems to be that man is the measure of all things if he is defined as woman *rhetoricus*, not man *economicus*.⁷⁹

Implicit in her claim for rhetoric is an economic argument. She repeats many times throughout her works that good scholarship, good rhetoric, has its own reward: virtue. The need for anything more, especially of a financial nature, will do nothing but interfere with the pursuit of truth and its clear expression. In other words, we may rightly read her not as preferring wisdom over prudence, but in preferring both over monetary reward. McCloskey does not advocate the dichotomy between wisdom and prudence with which I opened this chapter, only because she advocates wisdom as prudence thus sophisticatedly getting out of the problem altogether. She nowhere advocates that one should seek to improve their rhetoric or economics by striving to throw fortune in the teeth of her American Question. Her interest is not in money, it is self-interest of a different kind: self-interested pursuit of wisdom and prudence.

With the expansion of scholarship to include rhetoric, the notion of economics takes on new meaning. Specifically, McCloskey is attempting to expand the horizons of the typical economist. Her aim is not, like the back cover of her *Knowledge and Persuasion in Economics* says, to show that economics is now an art not a science. McCloskey is not terribly interested in that question because she wants to weaken the binary distinction between art and science as competing ways of knowing.⁸⁰ She aims to formulate a notion of scholarship that is inclusive and that recognizes art and science as ways of knowing, but that is not willing to argue about which way is better.

However, many fail to grasp this point and think instead that McCloskey and others consider economics an art. I attended an outreach program for graduate students at George Mason University's Center for the Study of Public Choice at which several prominent economists attacked McCloskey explicitly for claiming that economics is an art not a science and by making repeated jokes about her change of gender. It is clear to me that McCloskey is not claiming that economics is an art, nor is she particularly enamored of calling it a science; however, a question I think we could ask is what kind of art or science, or, more specifically, what kind of pursuit is economics? And, what kind of moral thing is economics? These ought to be more important to economists than they are, especially when they repeatedly try to expand the scope of economics. Certainly that is one of McCloskey's important points, though most of her writing is directed for an audience of economists.

Rhetorical theory itself is especially prepared to address this question because they are classic questions of rhetorical theory: a question of definition. Rhetorical studies

itself is a question of definition – and definition for ages past was a master tool for controlling the flow and direction of an argument – definition has prodded rhetoricians to two and a half centuries of rhetorical analysis. Many are familiar with rhetoric’s storied past, and that past has been kept incessantly alive by every rhetorician’s hasty willingness to add a new definition or to highlight some aspect of a tested and tried definition. To speak of essence, species, and genus, most scholars agree that rhetoric’s essence is persuasion, its species the *trivium*, and its genus the liberal arts. As Sister Miriam Joseph has pointed out, “rhetoric is the master art of the Trivium, for it presupposes and makes use of grammar and logic; it is the art of communicating through symbols ideas about reality.”⁸¹

Joseph goes on to specify differences between the liberal arts and the utilitarian and fine arts. The Utilitarian arts and the fine arts are transitive activities, “whereas the essential characteristic of the liberal arts is that they are immanent or intransitive activities.”⁸² The main difference is that the liberal arts begin and end in the agent whereas the other arts begin in the agent and end in the object. ‘The painter paints the painting,’ exhibits this notion. The transitive verb, “paints,” begins in the painter and ends in the painting. ‘The man thinks,’ exhibits an intransitive verb that begins and ends in the agent.

Who cares? Well, we ought to ask historically and contemporarily, where might the pursuit of economic knowledge end? Besides that, insofar as economics is rhetorical (and it is), then the question of definition will itself become its own stem of discussion as economics moves into the future. Traditionally, it would likely qualify as an illiberal art,

those branches of knowledge pursued for monetary gain. However, given the continual expansion or retraction of economics to include the notion of political economy – that is, the “wealth of nations” – the simple assignment of economics to the illiberal arts seems perhaps overly reductive because it can be pursued in a liberal, freedom-loving way without concern for individual gain. How we define economics, of course, will determine the scope and direction of our arguments about economics. McCloskey seems eager to define economics – the best of it – as a subset of rhetoric broadly speaking. Her move is meant to challenge economics to be more intellectually honest and stimulating. That directional cue, however, could be manipulated long after McCloskey is gone to suggest that economics is intransitive – perhaps even liberal in its essence. Such may very well be McCloskey’s intent given that she thinks only a rhetorically reflexive, and in this sense, intransitive economics is worth pursuing in the first place. Still, such reflection so far as I know is not explicit in her writings.

Could this notion lead scholarship full-circle to a sophistic of abundant outcomes as a guide to good scholarship? Does it necessarily lead to this point? Are rhetorician-economists in Francis Bacon’s wonderful phrase, “twice paid”? The professor responds, “I’m not doing this for my health. I have to earn a living.” To which those of true rhetoric fame, including McCloskey and all scholars *bona fides*, respond, “then you’re not doing it rightly, if that’s your sole motivation” because the best will always want to *know* regardless of the cost. One of the great benefits of our sophistic system is its preference for democracy, its access-granting ability to those from lower and middle class families to pursue a life of learning. Still, and this is the point, the current structure

of the academic world in this country and arguably in all ages does not require bona fide scholars, nor does it, arguably, produce them. It is certainly not the pay scale that motivates great scholars, even if the academic free-market has created a very lucrative career even for professors at state schools. Looking at what we do as scholars, indeed, doing what we do for only economic reasons would never bring about scholars of good faith. Instead, only an appreciation of the vast conversation of man, with its transcribers and cataloguers, and its rare heroic characters, can instill a desire to participate fully.

The conversation metaphor gets so much ground because it is all encompassing and all embracing. Economics, and all honest sciences, including rhetoric, are simply participating in conversations. I say simply, but it is anything but simple to participate with something meaningful to say or to have any hope of directing the conversation down appropriate avenues or over fruitful terrain. Paying attention to both liberal and illiberal motivations is, however, one good way, a brilliant way, in fact, of recognizing how and why others chirp up, and whether they ought to be given the time of day.

McCloskey writes,

Most people want earnestly to change the world or to make a scientific contribution. To achieve such noble goals the first thing to do is to break through the phony rhetoric of modern economics and bring economics, that glorious conversation since Adam Smith, back into the conversation of humankind.⁸³

It is “the conversation of humankind” that serves as the baseline for bona fide scholars.

And while McCloskey may be criticized for trying too hard to persuade the economists – even while she admits they’re still playing heedlessly in their sandbox – the point is one for every scholar in every age.

Conversations are not self-correcting, she warns. They don't always end up where we hope they might, and they always depend upon a large degree of give and take that can never be predicted. The uncertainty of conversations is just like the uncertainty of markets, and, no, it isn't true that simply because money is at stake people care more about it and have more invested. In fact, perhaps nothing could be further from the truth – the whole history of *true* scholarship is proof that it doesn't take money to make a significant and lasting contribution to the discussion. Still, negotiating any kind of uncertainty depends more on trust than on expertise. McCloskey again,

The trust means that science is a matter of human persuasion. But the persuasion in science, like the persuasion in the economy, is not self-correcting, if the notion is that we can rely entirely on greed without attention to love. Many economists miss the point, and have missed it since Hobbes. As Adam Smith understood, an economy that gets 90 percent of its fuel from Prudence nonetheless requires the other 10 percent to warm the market, the 10 percent that Smith called in his other book “moral sentiments.” So too in science.⁸⁴

Just as in economics economists cannot depend on self-interest to correct the market *all* of the time, so in rhetoric rhetoricians cannot depend on talking to correct the conversation *all* of the time. As in science and economics, so in rhetoric; prudence cannot cure *all*. Persuasion is not self-correcting, either, if you are talking only to yourself.

Indeed, while McCloskey preaches that we read widely, write well, and be humble, her answers to the American question include a hopeful appeal for the wisdom of the gods. She writes,

The American Question requires intellectual modesty in the economic expert, if he does not want people to laugh on meeting him. Hubris will need divine protection. Xenophon reported Socrates saying: ‘Those who intend to manage [*oikesein*] houses or cities well are in need of divination. For the craft of

carpenter or economics [*okonomikon*]...may be learned...; but the greatest of these matters the gods reserve to themselves....If anyone supposes that these [divinations] are not beyond reason, and nothing in them beyond our judgment, he is himself beyond reason.' (Xenophon, I.1.7). Socrates could turn to the oracles for divine supplementation of a craft. We have lost today the favor of the gods, and books on economic technique will not assuage our woe.⁸⁵

Technique is not redemptive. What redeems? What is necessary to regain the favor of the gods? Certainly a return to the favor of the gods will include a realistic and humble sense of what we can accomplish, including even our feeble attempts to communicate with one another. The American question, "so why ain't you rich?," is as much a statement about scholarly audiences as it is about scholars, and the attempt to fashion answers of value is the challenge of our time. McCloskey finds an answer by exhorting us to pay attention to our scholarly character. Scholars should no longer consider it a privilege to pursue knowledge without paying attention to the larger conversations in history about our place in the universe and our role in the university. The character of a bona fide scholar is one that reads, thinks, writes, and speaks openly and with articulate precision. Nothing less will do if we wish to be humans pursuing knowledge.

Remembering Market Origins

A.O. Hirschman argues that conversations about the place of the market in life were far richer and more fruitful in the eighteenth century when scholars did not have to worry so much about disciplinary boundaries. Hirschman writes about the transformation of self-interest as the sin of avarice into a virtue that took place in the seventeenth and eighteenth century largely as a result of redefining human nature, but also from the recognition that the passions, though responsible for much that is wrong in

society, can also be harnessed for productive uses, especially as a counter for violence and destruction. Hirschman writes,

The principle of the countervailing passion had arisen in the seventeenth century on the basis of its somber view of human nature and of a general belief that the passions are dangerous and destructive. In the course of the succeeding century both human nature and the passions came to be widely rehabilitated It is particularly significant that the word “interest” was here used as a generic term for those passions that are assigned the countervailing function.⁸⁶

It became apparent to many eighteenth century social thinkers that passion could be set in opposition to passion, renamed interest, and placed in opposition on purpose for the better functioning of society and the smoother operation of policy. The Federalists, Hirschman notes, followed this line of thinking with their balance of powers view of government, not to mention that “the whole of the social contract doctrine” is also “an offshoot of the countervailing strategy.”⁸⁷ Thus, in order to understand any institution that has its roots in the eighteenth century, Hirschman argues, we must first understand the eighteenth century view of human nature with its associated passions and interests.

The evolution of the word “interest” is particularly important as it relates to economics because the variations of its meaning often obscure its origins in social thought as well as its potential impact. Hirschman writes,

“Interests” of persons and groups eventually came to be centered on economic advantage as its core meaning, not only in ordinary language but also in such social-science terms as “class interests” and “interest groups.” But the economic meaning became dominant rather late in the history of the term. When the term “interest” in the sense of concerns, aspirations, and advantage gained currency in Western Europe during the late sixteenth century, its meaning was by no means limited to the material aspects of a person’s welfare; rather, it comprised the totality of human aspirations, but denoted an element of reflection and calculation with respect to the manner in which these aspirations were pursued. In fact, serious thought involving the notion of interest first arose in a context entirely removed from individuals and their material welfare.⁸⁸

Originally “interest” was the term that answered both what are you interested in, and in what manner do you pursue your interests? In this sense it had less to do, Hirschman notes, with economic or material matters than our current use of the same term.

Still, in classical thought interest was often pitted against disinterest, disinterest being the notion that one can only pursue certain valuables with an indifference to profit or private advantage, to use a phrase from Johnson’s dictionary. It was thought that the pursuit of some matters in life, like truth, required a disinterested stance, a stance characterized as much by indifference to profit as by a leisurely tone. Traditionally, disinterest was a term, too, that encapsulated objectivity – not in our modern scientific sense, but rather in the sense that one could pursue a goal for the goal’s sake, in the intransitive sense of which Sister Joseph suggests we pursue the liberal arts, so that the benefits are possessed fully because they are not employed merely for exchange value. Following on the heels of Machiavelli, Hobbes, and La Rochefoucauld, interest became a new paradigm for reducing the world. Hirschman writes, “The idea of men being invariably guided by their interests could command much wider acceptance, and whatever slight distaste the idea left behind was then dispelled by the comforting thought that in this manner the world became a more predictable place.”⁸⁹ Behavior motivated solely by interest is re-interpreted by many during the eighteenth century so that Johnson can praise money making for its innocence, and the result, of course, shook the foundation of aristocracy and privilege on which the world had been built.

The result, Hirschman argues, is that making money is viewed as a calming activity, one that may obscure the similarities between commerce and war, but that still

privileges peace and trade over the hostilities and death of war. It was the French, Hirschman notes, who speak of the *doucer* of commerce, a word notoriously difficult to translate but that suggests commerce is “sweetness, softness, clam, and gentleness and is the antonym of violence.”⁹⁰ All of this contributes to a reinterpretation of commercial affairs as a positive good for society and bringing about the now universal notion that free trade brings in its wake free government and free institutions.

Hirschman points out, in conclusion, that commerce does promote what others have called “bourgeois virtues” like honesty, thrift, and punctuality, but that paradoxically this has not led, despite many economists’ protestations to the contrary, to increases and improvements to collective virtue. Thus Hirschman:

According to Ferguson and Tocqueville, then, economic expansion and the preoccupation with individual economic improvement that goes with it both cause the advance of political arts and can also be responsible for their deterioration . . . as long as *not everyone* is playing the “innocent” game of making money, the total absorption in it of *most* citizens leaves the few who play for the higher stakes of power freer than before to pursue their ambition. In this way social arrangements that substitute the interests for the passions as the guiding principle of human action for the many can have the side effect of killing the civic spirit and of thereby opening the door to tyranny.⁹¹

It is an often promoted fallacy that the private (or are they public?) virtues of economic behavior, originally called private vices, add up to public (or private?) virtues in the aggregate, and that we are always better off if we cultivate bourgeois virtues in spite of evidence that they tend to weaken disinterested political action and undermine the desires for self-government by deliberately dismissing the virtues of republicanism. In other words, the bourgeois virtues only seem to work if everyone is pursuing them with sweetness and innocence.

Hirschman offers no definitive answers about the origin or meaning of capitalism in his conclusion, but he does offer his work “to raise the level of debate,” a clear indication that he sees economic thought, especially economic history, as a factor of rhetoric. The character he wishes to constitute is one that thinks understanding the history of ideas, in particular, is a step toward appreciating the rhetoric of economics. He does not want economists to forget their history or to re-write it on the desk of twenty-first century free-market libertarianism.⁹² Such a reworking of the economic story is dangerous because it opens the door to misunderstandings about the origins of the market, including the free market and capitalism, and perpetuates a cultural amnesia that bids us to repeat past mistakes by granting a tremendous amount of allegiance to current theories without recognizing their similarities to past failures. It may not be dangerous, Hirschman implies, as long as there are counter-arguments going on, as long as the level of debate continues to rise. Hence, Hirschman sees rhetoric and argumentation as a central component of the character he constitutes through *The Passions and the Interests*.

Law, Economics, and Irrational Choice

As noted above, much of the work by economists on the rhetoric of economics has focused primarily on how economists use language, argument, and style to disguise their material and ideological preferences. Recently more work has been appearing by rhetoric scholars dealing with the opposite question of how political leaders deal with economic issues. James Aune argues that indeed one of the missing aspects of the rhetoric of economics movement was the fact that no one was looking at how ordinary

people discuss and understand economic issues, and furthermore how popular understandings about the market arise and take root in the popular imagination. Aune's book, *Selling the Free Market: The Rhetoric of Economic Correctness* is geared toward answering those questions. The character it constitutes, it will be shown, is one that leans more toward democratic socialism than McCloskey or Hirschman, but that understands a chief component of political identity is rhetorical ability.

Primarily Aune attacks the realist rhetoric of free market scholars and authors, especially that of Judge Richard Posner, an outspoken proponent of applying economic laws to legal questions, a prolific scholar, and judge for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, and the work of Ayn Rand, proponent of the philosophy of Objectivism. Both Rand and Posner have had a tremendous impact on popular understandings of economics, especially as it relates to questions of liberty. The idea of a realist style finds its best articulation in the work of Robert Hariman, who defines the realist style as "a characteristically modern political style that crafts an aesthetically unified world of sheer power and constant calculation."⁹³ Aune similarly argues that the realist rhetoric "is configured within the master trope of *metonymy*: the reduction of political life to a calculus of power."⁹⁴ Styled in a "realistic way," the law and economics rhetoric "is pleased with itself for 'seeing through' the pretensions of poets, dreamers, and romantics." The realist style and the realist ideology convinced they can do without rhetoric, converge to promote a "widespread cynicism that is fundamentally destructive of democratic politics."⁹⁵

Aune contends that realists reduce politics to a calculus of power, reduce rhetoric to the transparent exchange of information, and the realist style prevails despite its denial of its own rhetoricity and its disparagement of political discourse and the denigration of the possibility of deliberation occurring solely on the basis of the common good.⁹⁶ The law-and-economics movement is also pernicious, Aune points out, because it is an audacious and heavily funded attempt to “colonize an entire academic discipline and social institution.” As part of this larger movement Aune critiques the rhetoric of Richard Posner, one of the self-styled leaders of the law-and-economics movement. Aune argues that Posner’s strategy is to strictly divide rhetoric and science, rigidly separate rhetoric from ethics, define communication as merely information exchange, and completely ignore the epideictic tradition. Posner succeeds, especially in his writings on rhetoric, to sever the rhetorical tradition from its decided preference for a certain view of human nature, thus weakening forever its claim as an academic discipline or its ability to assert itself as an alternative to the realist, rational choice option. Indeed, in his chapter “Rhetoric, Legal Advocacy, and Legal Reasoning” in his book *Overcoming Law*, Posner gives a very detailed and accurate summary of the rhetorical tradition, but manages, ironically, to entirely miss the tremendously high costs of rhetoric gone bad. Posner seems unable to consider the possibilities of a rhetorical theory that is in some way connected with ethics, leading Donald McCloskey to refer to his rhetoric as “the Roto Rooter theory of communication.”⁹⁷

Rhetoric is thus reduced, and, in its weakened state, unable to contend for public space in the present because it has absolutely nothing to do with value, being divorced,

as it were, from the idea of the epideictic. Rhetoric is rendered forever backward, misguided, in short, wrong about human nature and about man's need to actively participate in public affairs through speech, rendering public space more technical and forever forcing rhetoric to run back and check her premises. The Roto Rooter theory ignores language as the source of rhetoric: This to the delight of free market libertarians who were never terribly serious about paying the costs of democracy. To forego the costs of free speech, costly dialogue, and the limits and realities of language is to miss completely rhetoric's contribution to humanity's conversation.

Aune is critical, too, of Ayn Rand, especially her advocacy of the virtue of selfishness and the totalitarian form of her writing that manages to avoid irony, whimsy, or the slightest ambiguity. What is distinctive about Rand's defense of capitalism, Aune observes, is that it rests strictly on moral grounds. Ironically, her preferred means of defending capitalism is to ignore McCloskey's notions of the "bourgeois virtues," and instead advocate the virtue of selfishness. The underlying thesis of Rand's Objectivism is to go for whatever you want and, if you're strong enough, you will succeed in getting it. Importantly, selfishness includes being willing to sacrifice the family, especially childhood, on the altar of material and sexual fulfillment. Rand's preferred artistic proof is to capitalize on the adolescent *pathos* that urges us to carve out individual identities, gloat over enemies, and to become self-reliant. Such hostility at the social world may be fine if confined to the high school gymnasium, Aune writes, "but to turn such anger into a politics and a religion is not a fit preoccupation for adults. To be an adult is to recognize a sense of obligation: to a partner, a child, a community."⁹⁸

Posner, Rand, and a host of other market defenders allow the economy a larger place than communication, than astronomy, than logic, and music. Their materialist ontology overtakes reality and is dangerous for children and adults alike. The liberal arts were called “liberal” to distinguish them from illiberal arts that are practiced solely for economic gain. The liberal arts were practiced, too, to maintain a decent self-respect as well as an understanding of how the whole of life can cohere in a single vision. If we assent to a pessimistic material ontology that circumscribes the rest of life, even in the face of better evidence, we may lose the life of freedom so dear to us.

This, ultimately, is the central point of Aune’s critique of free-market radicalism. Namely, Aune is critical of McCloskey’s emphasis, as noted above, on making improvements to the scholarly conversation of economics because it “ignores the agonistic nature of rhetoric and the political implications of scholarly economic argument.”⁹⁹ In other words, “our view of politics and the economy would be very different if we saw the relationship between mother and child as the fundamental form of social interaction rather than the market.”¹⁰⁰ Instead of giving up on the prospects of a democratic left alternative to the forces of globalization, Aune thinks that the welfare state, strong unions, and regulation of financial markets are still plausible ways to renew the political sphere and to limit the intransigence of free-market libertarians. More to the point he would have us appreciate those aspects of life that are completely inefficient and unnecessary by economic and rhetorical standards, exhorting us not to fall for the sophistic contention that money or education are the most important things in life. Instead, Aune argues on behalf of gardening or cooking or any other way of producing

human happiness that may also, on the face of it, be otherwise a tremendous “waste.” Such an approach to life is “*for the preservation of traditional communities*” that will otherwise be left by the wayside of the global march of capitalism’s world dominance.¹⁰¹

The preservation of traditional communities is so urgently critical because they are the source of the study and practice of oratory and of economic cooperation in the first instance, and their demise signals the demise of far deeper significance in human affairs. Thus Aune:

The classical theorists of rhetoric and their twentieth century successors knew that human beings are a composite of appetite, spiritedness (*thymos*), and reason. Free-market economists are at a loss to explain the development of social norms. Only epideictic discourse, or the kind of craft knowledge – practical wisdom – that transcends the calculation of costs and benefits, can explain their development. The triumph of a one-dimensional *Homo economicus* occurs at the expense of family, work, neighborhood, freedom, and faith – the *topoi* of conservatism at its best.¹⁰²

Thank God, Aune says, character is not constituted only in the marketplace. We still have the family, the neighborhood, freedom, and faith, and these contribute to the constitution of our character just as much as the market. Furthermore, they check the global march of capitalism and if they are removed the character that results is not a desirable picture for anyone. In this way, Aune puts the marketplace in its place, taking care to ensure that no one is deluded into thinking it constitutes the whole of social life.

PLAN FOR WHAT FOLLOWS

This short history of rhetoric and economics shows that the two disciplines have had a long and varied history of relating to each other and of attempting to define the character of man and his social world. Language and money, the tools of rhetoric and

economics, have likewise played a role in such constitutions. Emphasis in the story was placed on the selling of words for money and the ethical impact of such sales, as well as the historical relationship between rhetoric and economics from the standpoint of a history of rhetoric.

For Plato, it was considered wrong to sell words for money. For the sophists it was a mark of wisdom and the high quality of the words that others would pay for them. For Isocrates and Aristotle, what mattered most was the attitude one had toward word for money exchanges, including a security of deposit constituted through the identity of citizenship. For early Christians, taking money was a sign of false prophecy, while for Cicero paying attention to interests and motives for speech was justly accounted the natural concern of inquirers of the truth. In more recent times, McCloskey has said that exchanging words for money cannot be justified when those words concern the future, but that sophistry is still useful if it is seen as a healthy respect for the limitations of human knowledge. Still others, including Hirschman, have argued for more attention to conversational metaphors and the way real conversations can help us see the manner in which the passions and interests balance out in our natural propensities. Aune has questioned the value of focusing only on scholarly debate and has prescribed a view of economics that starts with, for example, the relationship between a mother and her child, instead of with the market. In this way a more accurate vision of human nature can underwrite our economic talk.

The moral of the history presented above is that our understanding of rhetoric and economics is a particular result of talking in a particular way. Awareness of such

talk is the first step toward improving our understanding of social realities. In what follows, I examine the works of Adam Smith, Richard Whately, and John Stuart Mill to uncover how they talked about rhetoric and economics and to show the consequences for such talk for the character of man – both as it was constituted, in part, through the lives of the writers, but more so as it was constituted in the minds of the audiences influenced by their writings. As such, each chapter is divided between the respective thinker’s talk about rhetoric and economics and its impact on character, as well as the way their rhetoric continues to hold sway over contemporary minds.

In this way I aim to reveal a kind of human organization advocated by these thinkers – the market – that then developed over time as others took their arguments and tried to apply them to real situations. These applications laid the foundation for the growth of bourgeois society in the west and the ascendancy of the bourgeois virtues. I acknowledge at the outset that I am following McCloskey’s nod in this regard. She has written, “Adam Smith was a professor of moral philosophy. John Stuart Mill was a moral and political philosopher. Since then the stories of the worldly philosophers have seemed to drift away from ethics. But the subject of economics is ethical, which makes a claim to sidestep ethics worrisome.”¹⁰³ The work of Smith and Mill represent a rhetorically sensitive approach to economics. I have undertaken to historicize their rhetorical sensitivity, and have added to the equation the work of Richard Whately.

My purpose is to show the relationship between rhetoric and economics and the impact of that relationship for questions of character, including, especially, the notion of the bourgeois character. In other words, I agree with McCloskey that it was a bourgeois

character with a particular and important ethic that resulted from the work of these early writers on economics, but I disagree as to the moral strength of that character as will be shown in the conclusion. Instead I advocate a vision of citizenship derived from the writings of Rousseau that exhibit a stronger community and a greater love than that found in the bourgeois-citizen. Moreover, the notion of citizenship offered by Rousseau more accurately approximates the idea of the political as an overarching or totalizing view of our character, and as such enables us to see the relations between our different selves more completely to thereby judge the relative moral weight of those selves. In other words, Rousseau's vision of character gives us a stronger capacity for self-reflection and self-awareness than the bourgeois character. The bourgeois character has enabled us to see our lives as separate functions, encouraging, in turn, our failure to understand the proper relationship between rhetoric and economics as well as the proper balance needed to maintain the blessings of the bourgeois markets without some of their attendant curses. Only a holistic view like that offered by Rousseau can provide a rhetoric and economics worthy of our complete life. But first I turn to Adam Smith.

CHAPTER III

SMITHIAN SYMPATHY IN THE WORLD

Adam Smith, a professor of moral philosophy and author of two extremely erudite books, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments (TMS)* and *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations (WN)*, presented the world of nature as primarily materialist, but believed in the power of mankind to effect changes through his agency. Indeed, Smith conceives of mankind as primarily active – ever looking for ways to improve his circumstances and to better his self and reputation. Smith is, in this light, a proponent of positive liberty because the world of nature is occupied by man, and man has an intense need to find outlet and expression for his passions and interests.¹⁰⁴

The social universe is a place too often dictated by respect for the wealthy and the powerful, and Smith refuses to take share in such obeisance. Instead, Smith sees the difference between the ordinary door porter and the philosopher as one determined solely by their opportunities for nurturance – never by their nature. If the same opportunity was given to the porter – he too could be a philosopher if he wanted to. Hence, Smith conceives of a “system of liberty” for all in the social universe because that is the avenue for the most growth, spiritual and material.

Indeed, the social universe in Smith’s writings rests upon man’s capacity for speech and his need to acquire and live by bread. The first, speech, gives us a desire to carry each other’s burdens and to live a life that is respectable to others. Sympathy, as developed in *TMS*, underwrites Smith’s moral and economic philosophy. In other words, his economic philosophy is a moral philosophy and it was written to protect liberty,

promote wealth, and provide man with the opportunity to flex his active mind and muscle. Smith's moral philosophy is the grounds for his attack on the wealthy and powerful, his attack on the status quo, and his advocacy of markets to open the door for every person to be able to reap the fruits of his own activity. After all, to Smith's bourgeois mind, a day laborer in England with his brick house, leather shoes, and wool trousers is better off than the king of a tribe that dwells in mud huts. Markets exist to realize liberty, Smith says, and so he works diligently to constitute a new kind of social world that respects market power, not as an end but because it so wonderfully achieves liberty and realizes prosperity for all.

By introducing markets as a regulatory force Smith necessarily had to diminish the power of the church and the state to make his rhetorical point. Hence, most since his time have misread his purpose concluding that he wanted as little as possible to do with either. He certainly wanted as little as possible to do with the sophistry produced by both institutions. After all, it was the church that nearly got Smith expelled from Oxford for reading Hume's *Treatise on Human Understanding*, and it was the mercantile state that was quarreling with its colonies at treacherously high expense for terribly foolish reasons. In short, it was the church and the state that were hindering free markets for information and commerce – so they had to be attacked on those grounds. For that reason Smith sought to diminish the hold of priestcraft and statecraft on the minds of his readers and on the social universe of his time. As such, he dismissed religion as superstition, and wanted to limit the power of the state to the protection of property, individually and nationally.

Only in rare circumstances did Smith ever trust any institution to do for others what they could do for themselves. Never did he think that any institution could do better for individuals what they were capable of doing themselves. Again, in the nurture-nature debate, all of Smith's eggs were in the nurture basket, and he sought to open doors for the realization of such in human institutions. Though he never married or had children, in fact he lived with his mother until her death in his middle age, Smith thought the family association should shoulder the major weight of preparing their children for adulthood and for participation in the market. The family should be protected, left alone, as a kind of mini-market for encouraging morality and the development of virtue through exercising agency.

The central terms of Smith's discourse are "liberty," "sympathy," and "self-interest." Hirschman has called the latter two the passions and the interests, and has shown ably in a book by the same title the way Smith worked to balance these two natural propensities in man through the realization of liberty. That is, our passions and interests can only reach their fullest expression, their moral height, when the door is open for their expression in public life. Smith is deliberate to show that sympathy develops from our innate capacity to imagine which in turn develops from our communication with other people. More will be said of this in detail below, but it is this sympathetic imagination that is the real source of Smith's discourse on self-interest. Self-interest is pursued by finding ways to meet the needs of others we perceived through sympathy. By pursuing opportunities – by making candles to fulfill your

neighbors needs for such – the division of labor is born, prosperity is achieved for all who likewise share in sympathy, and the market is made to rest on moral ground.

The methods of reasoning held out as valid by Smith are primarily common sense or practical reasoning as well as observation. Smith is a social scientist in his approach to the facts of social reality. That is, the facts he emphasizes are almost always supported by data, in the form of examples, culled from or imagined about ordinary, day-to-day life. That's precisely why he is known as the first economist. Whether it is pin factories, a feudal house, or a man heaving a stone over his garden wall, Smith's discourse continuously returns in the mundane affairs of life to bolster his case. In this manner he fends off a great deal of criticism by making his values and arguments play the part of a back seat driver. He assumes, like contemporary economists, that what will pass unquestioned are his values, namely the primacy of liberty, the easiness of communication, and the simplicity with which markets solve problems.

The metaphoric flourishes of the impartial spectator and the invisible hand are usually given too much credit for making Smith's discourse work. What really makes his rhetoric work is examples, and counter-examples will never quite do to refute it because his system is so fundamentally secure as an a priori or assumed truth. What counter-examples can prove that liberty is not the greatest of all? What counter-example, really, could change that? Ultimately, it isn't Smith's clever metaphors that are his strongest proofs but his ability to fashion creative examples that cannot in any way be made to detract from the strength of his guiding philosophical principles.

In this way it is easy to miss the fact that Smith intends to make a social character that is at once a strong self and a loving self; both prudent and other-directed, capable of seeking his own interests because of and through his interests in others. The moral of sympathy is to love your neighbor as your neighbor is capable of loving you. The self rests upon an accurate understanding of what other's think of you, and so it is not a strong self in say Harold Bloom's depiction of Shakespeare's Hamlet or Falstaff, Jesus in the book of Mark, or King David, all embodiments of freedom, wit, and life.¹⁰⁵ Rather, Smith's self is strong because it will get what it needs and wants. And it will aim to get it in ways that are good for others, too. That's the essence of the bourgeois character, and it is that fellow who Smith embodies himself and in his rhetoric. His purpose is to constitute the bourgeois character such that his strengths are magnified and his weaknesses diminished relative to the character constitution of the aristocracy. Smith takes insight from the business place, the marketplace, or the character constitution required by free trade. This merchant middle class character is accounted prudent, and Smith reasons that he is superior in every way to the character of the old aristocracy. To show this, I turn to a short history of the Scottish Enlightenment and a discussion of Smith's idea of sophistry before developing more fully the character characterized through Smithian sympathy – that person who wants to talk and trade, talk to trade. I then examine Smith's rhetorical reception in contemporary times before I conclude the chapter.

SCOTTISH MORALISTS AND SMITH'S MILIEU

It is often forgotten today that in the eighteenth century David Hume was much better known as a historian than as a philosopher. The “Scottish moralists,” as they are often called, those eight men under and including the especial influence of the originating teacher, Francis Hutcheson, viz., Adam Ferguson, Dugald Stewart, Thomas Reid, Adam Smith, David Hume, Lord Kames, and Lord Monboddo, represent to us a height to which scholarly life can reach in terms of synthesizing disparate areas of human life in a single community; and though our vision of what a scholarly community is and how it should pursue its goals differs greatly from theirs, they are an essential part of our scholarly heritage. Indeed, while the title of “moralists” is certainly instructive, it tends to undermine their impact on such diverse areas as ethics, psychology, social psychology, law, social organization, history, economics, aesthetics, literary and rhetorical criticism, as well as moral philosophy. The whole of their work is best characterized as sociological from our perspective, and thus fits best in the contours of our intellectual heritage as touching directly on conceptions of human nature, the individual, and society, and sits at the nexus of our study of politics, history, and communication. As Louis Schneider has pointed out, the moralists, individually and collectively, “were prolific writers and their works, all told, went through numerous editions” in their lifetimes, rendering a complete reading virtually impossible for any single student.¹⁰⁶

Unlike Aristotle who saw social life from the perspective of the human soul and the excellence to which it was capable – emphasizing the influence of reason, the Scots

saw human nature from the perspective of the passions – and thought that harnessing the passions was one of the chief beneficences conferred through social living. Incidentally, it is not surprising in this light that Aristotle thought the most convincing of the artistic proofs of rhetoric was ethos, whereas in Smith’s *Lectures on Rhetoric and the Belles Lettres (LRBL)* the dominant proof is pathos. Hume and Reid opposed the idea of causation, reasoning that the human capacity to understand how causation actually worked was necessarily and severely limited – so much so that it was virtually impossible to prove that reason was the factor shaping social life. Hence, to avoid the failures of causation, Hume and Reid focus on the limitations of reason. They were not, however, entirely radical in their approach to social thought, they simply chose to see the “nonrational” elements in social life, such as tradition and custom, and emphasize the crucial role these non-rational aspects play in social life.¹⁰⁷

Smith and Hume share a view of human nature that promotes universality over plurality: in other words, at heart, Hume and Smith believe that the great mass of humankind share more similarities in their motives and needs, than dissimilarities. The suppression of locality and particularity, a common theme of much British thought of the period, allowed Hume to claim that humanity is guided by “a certain regular mechanism which is susceptible of as accurate a disquisition as the laws of motion, optics, hydrostatics, or any part of natural philosophy.”¹⁰⁸ Schneider rightly notes that while Hume’s account is “vulnerably mechanistic,” it also prepares for the possibility that the passions are subject to laws.

Yet the law that was sought to govern the passions, for Hume and for Smith, was the law of society, the impact of social living on the individual. The individual with social tendencies was central to the Scottish moralists definition of human nature. It is for this reason that the ethic of the Scottish moralists especially as contained in Smith's *TMS*, is not an ideal ethic but one meant to suggest alterations and improvements to the social world. Smith's idea of the impartial spectator, that character in our imagination that enables us to know the thoughts of our fellows in conversation, the character that enables us to share in their feelings, the portion of the imagination that endeavors to put us into the mind and sentiment of a witness to our social actions for purposes of judging those same actions, was never meant to supply the last word on morality. Instead the impartial spectator represents for Smith – and for the scholarly conversation – a foray into the realm of social psychology; moreover, in many ways it is a secularization, elevation, and reinterpretation of the first sophistic position of western philosophy, namely, that man is the measure of success, happiness, and rightness, not some external and idealistic standard. A twist is that the impartial spectator is a mediated moral standard. Hence Schneider writes,

Yet Stewart and Ferguson were justified in their view that the judgments of the man within, as nearly as one could understand what Smith meant in referring to him, were not necessarily ethically ideal ones. Smith, however, was far too acute to be misled in such a matter. Undoubtedly, he knew very well that his contribution was not in the strict sense an ethical one: it was rather in the line of social psychology, and for this purpose the peculiar vocabulary he employed was appropriately suggestive. The gain for social psychology represented by his work is not destroyed because he did not resolve certain associated ethical problems.¹⁰⁹

It is unjust to dismiss Smith's accomplishment in ethics solely because they fail to reach the height of platonic idealism, in sanctity, piety, or universality. Still, the

wholly immanent nature of his scholarship is elusive and is sometimes praised for transcendent qualities, as when Smith is considered to have once and for all mastered the chief aims and desires of mankind by providing him with market morality and market assurances. What Smith does, like the sophists before him, is place man in a social state, and this situation necessarily limits man's transcendent capacities and renders him from, of, and forever tied to this earth in terms of his speculative imagination. Rather than contemplating man in the cosmos, the earth is rendered as the cosmos, and there is no order other than human order.

Though Smith's propensity is to promote a worldly philosophy his language cannot escape the reference to the transcendent, teleological, or theological. Infused especially in his most operative metaphors is the notion that through our humanity, "nature," the "author," or the "director," has provided for our necessities. It is thus through seeking fulfillment of our necessities that our necessities are met – and this necessarily implies a design in nature, yet Smith deliberately seeks to reduce the implications of his theological and teleological language by embodying his dominant operative metaphors, literally, and by weakening the religious imagination and by promoting secular means to knowledge. He effectively erases the traces of his theological and teleological thoughts, in part, by focusing primarily on visual metaphors.¹¹⁰

It is in this way that both the "invisible hand" and the "impartial spectator" function as supernatural nature, as embodied notions endowed with characteristics attainable only by body-less forces. Indeed, nothing is so natural as a hand or an eye –

but invisible hands and impartial eyes are difficult to come by – they can also perform incredible tasks when developing economic and social theory, even though they constitute a tiny fraction of Smith’s published writings. They function in the imagination. Though they do not exist in the real world they serve the function of bridging the gap between the real world of Smith’s scholarship and that eternal world that is yet the burden of the eighteenth century mind – that world which Smith himself cannot shake even though it is no very small part of his project to attempt to shake free from it. In fact, many have argued that his project includes precisely the doing away with sectarian influence on social thought, the secularizing once and for all of economic thought.¹¹¹

Schneider has pointed out that one of the major contributions of the Scottish moralists is their development of the idea of unintended social consequences, even as they may result from deliberate, if ignorant, personal action. Many sections of *TMS* could be put forward as evidence that Smith saw the unintended effects on a societal level of personal action as especial insight. Though Smith acknowledges that unintended consequences often have a negative or piece-meal effect on society and its institutions, he prefers to focus primarily on their positive effects in economic matters. Hence, the metaphoric “invisible hand” is the one aspect of Smithian thought that virtually everyone has heard of, though the actual workings of the hand, the proofs and evidence Smith employs to defend it, and the warrants for accepting it are far less understood even by Smithian scholars. Smith, it seems, modeled the invisible hand off of a much older conception of Roman deity.¹¹²

Ironically, as far as Smith would have been concerned, the fact that so many remember the invisible hand metaphor is proof of our savagery than of our astute scholarship. Indeed, Emma Rothschild has observed that the invisible hand is “best interpreted as a mildly ironic joke.”¹¹³ Smith’s essay, “The Principles Which Lead and Direct Philosophical Enquiries: Illustrated by the History of Astronomy,” criticizes the fact that man, when he reaches the limits of his knowledge about the natural world, introduces “vulgar superstition which ascribes all the irregular events of nature to the favour or displeasure of intelligent, though invisible beings, to gods, daemons, witches, genii, fairies. For it may be observed, that in all Polytheistic religions, among savages, as well as in the early ages of Heathen antiquity, it is the irregular events of nature only that are ascribed to the agency and power of their gods.”¹¹⁴ Thus it is, despite Smith’s extremely careful control of his own writings and their entrance into the public realm, that he is best remembered for a passage that by his own words ought to be condemned because it substitutes explanation for divination. Smith writes,

Fire burns, and water refreshes; heavy bodies descend, and lighter substances fly upwards by the necessity of their own nature; nor was the invisible hand of Jupiter ever apprehended to be employed in these matters. But thunder and lightning, storms and sunshine, those more irregular events, were ascribed to his favour or his anger. Man, the only designing power with which they were acquainted, never acts but either to stop, or to alter the course, which natural events would take, if left to themselves.¹¹⁵

The irony thickens, for Smith ascribes the neglect of human agency as a superstitious and savage mistake. Smith’s judgment on appealing to invisibility in social and natural explanations is harsh. Because it is the one aspect of Smith’s work that is best known, it indicates that despite Smith’s efforts to the contrary, the Enlightenment has not yet

succeeded in removing our superstitious tendencies, for good or ill. In other words, ironically, the rhetorical remnant of Smithian scholarship that is most pronounced is what Smith considered himself to be wishful thinking.

Alec Macfie argues that the passage quoted above is totally different from those referring to the invisible hand in *TMS* and *WN* because in the latter passages the invisible hand is that of “the Christian Deity,” who “acts to preserve and develop the purposes of ‘Nature’” rather than to thwart it, as seen above.¹¹⁶ However, I would hold that the passage in the “History of Astronomy” is actually about ascribing vulgar superstition to irregular works of nature – condemning the practice regardless of whether the ascription is positive or negative. Though it may be attractive to see the latter passages by the light of a gospel flame, I think it is unwarranted given a shortage of evidence that Smith intended to defend Christian principles or ideas. Yet, Macfie also points out that the latter passages if read in the context of the “system of natural liberty,” can be construed to suggest that free activities are prescribed as part of the divine plan, that the achievements of man as well as his errors and evils are intended by the “Conductor.”¹¹⁷ It is an interesting proposition to consider whether Smith’s use of the invisible hand metaphor makes any kind of theological statement about God and his position on economic matters. Moreover, it is an interesting footnote on the story of Smith’s economic faith. But Rothschild gets it right, I think, when she says Smith’s use of the metaphor is sardonic, not much esteemed by Smith, and used primarily to illustrate the idea of unintended consequences.¹¹⁸

If we give less credit to the invisible hand as the community building force of Smith's rhetoric, we might ask whether his proposals are sufficient to offer communal happiness. Certainly his views on sophistry shed some light on his opposition to the rich and powerful and their attempts to control the social world by weakening the agency and lessening the liberty of the average member of society. The following discussion of sophistry sets up a discussion of Smith's idea of sympathy and its relation to economic thought. His view of sophistry frames my discussion of Smith's idea of social character as constituted in his writings, in particular the impact of life in state and church alluded to above in my discussion of the invisible hand.

SMITH ON SOPHISTRY

Smith employs the term sophistry a number of different ways but mostly to criticize a small segment of society for using linguistic power to gain an unfair advantage over the whole. Sophistry, for Smith, is an attempt to bend knowledge to one's benefit, and, in particular, to cultivate the power of "faction." Sophistry supports "a certain spirit of system" that "animates" and "often inflames" public spirit "to the madness of fanaticism."¹⁹ Smith uses the term "sophistry," or its variations "sophism" or "sophistical," no less than four times in *TMS* and no less than sixteen times in *WN*. More than once he lays the charge at the feet of Dr. Mandeville, claiming that he employed sophistry to promote the notion that private vices are public benefits, which is pernicious because it promotes a breakdown of moral sentiment. Mandeville weakens

the public spirit when “he treats every thing as vanity which has any reference, either to what are, or to what ought to be the sentiments of others.”¹²⁰

Smith thinks of sophistry as broken sentiment. Though Smith’s use of the term always contains this notion at its root, he also employs the idea of sophistry to criticize merchants and manufacturers in going after monopoly and to criticize universities for monopolizing knowledge, especially for coercing others in the search for knowledge with dated theologies. Smith grants, for example, that sophistry is not likely to be employed in particular business ventures, particular deals, given that they are most often characterized by extreme doubt or conservatism by participants because money is at stake. However, in the theoretical matters of business Smith warns that sophistry can become an abundant element behind social and economic control (i.e., gaining or maintaining the ascendancy of a particular economic doctrine) because sophistry is effective in speculative and theoretic matters. Smith writes,

Speculative reasons have in all ages of the world been adopted for reasons too frivolous to have determined the judgment of any man of common sense in a matter of the smallest pecuniary interest. Gross sophistry has scarce ever had any influence upon the opinions of mankind, except in matters of philosophy and speculation; and in these it has frequently had the greatest. The patrons of each system of natural and moral philosophy naturally endeavoured to expose the weakness of the arguments adduced to support the systems which were opposite to their own. . . between a fallacious and a conclusive one; and Logic, or the science of the general principles of good and bad reasoning, necessarily arose out of the observations which a scrutiny of this kind gave occasion to. . . . The student, it seems to have been thought, ought to understand well the difference between good and bad reasoning, before he was led to reason upon subjects of so great importance.¹²¹

Smith is concerned to show that sophistry is at its most powerful in speculative and theoretical matters, thus one concerned with the discipline of economics should be

concerned both with finding sophistries among its theories and with ensuring that students are taught the “how to” of reason and rhetoric, so that they can recognize and oppose specious reasoning when they see it. Only by learning the way arguments are made can there be any hope of detecting these sophistic claims which are calculated to profit select factions while placing unjust burdens on the much larger segment not directly benefited. The focus on the “how to” element, however, is crucial for my point because it shows Smith’s desire to look to the world of business, of the marketplace, in order to develop his idea of society.

Sophistry, especially that characterized as “interested” is employed by those who would influence the outcomes of economic issues in their own favor. Smith argues, instead, that the great mass of mankind should be permitted the benefits of the economic system because only that way protects the liberty of those at the lowest end of the economic scale, preventing the sophists from usurping the right of choice. Smith writes,

In every country it always is and must be the interest of the great body of the people to buy whatever they want of those who sell it cheapest. The proposition is so very manifest that it seems ridiculous to take any pains to prove it; nor could it ever have been called in question had not the interested sophistry of merchants and manufacturers confounded the common sense of mankind. Their interest is, in this respect, directly opposite to that of the great body of the people. As it is the interest of the freemen of a corporation to hinder the rest of the inhabitants from employing any workmen but themselves, so it is the interest of the merchants and the manufacturers of every country to secure to themselves the monopoly of the home market. Hence in Great Britain, and in most other European countries, the extraordinary duties upon almost all goods imported by alien merchants. Hence the high duties and prohibitions upon all those foreign manufacturers which can come into competition with our own. Hence, too, the extraordinary restraints upon the importation of almost all sorts of goods from these countries with which the balance of trade is supposed to be disadvantageous; that is, from those against whom national animosity happens to be most violently inflamed.¹²²

Smith here points out that the spirit of monopoly was both invented and propagated for the self-interest and benefit of a few, “and that they who first taught it were by no means such fools as they who believed it,” suggesting that Smith thinks it our duty to resist sophistries with our own common sense and for the betterment of society as a whole.¹²³ Furthermore, he introduces the notion of “interested sophistry” to suggest, again in line with my argument, that a pernicious form of sophistry is to argue in favor of benefits to only one class of society to the exclusion of “the great body of the people.” That is, sophistic arguments lead to pecuniary gain for a small subset of society while neglecting or even cheating a larger segment out of their duly earned bread, and laying the foundation to undermine the possibility of fair opportunity through competition.

This, finally, brings us to the last manner in which Smith speaks ill of sophistries, and that is their effect on education. Smith is critical of the fact that sophistries were maintained in order to secure the supremacy of theology in the universities of Europe.

The alterations [Smith writes] which the universities of Europe thus introduced into the ancient course of philosophy were meant for the education of ecclesiastics, and to render it a more proper introduction to the study of theology. But the additional quantity of subtlety and sophistry; the casuistry and the ascetic morality which those alterations introduced into it, certainly did not render it more proper for the education of gentlemen or men of the world, or more likely either to improve the understanding, or to mend the heart.¹²⁴

Altering the course of philosophy to direct its study toward theology and ascetic morality is a sophistic move that was also an aberration of objectivity, partly because it was done to restrict liberty, but also because of its negative consequences for scholarship, and it weakened the university claims to provide pragmatic education for “men of the world.” Additionally, it made the course less likely to “improve the understanding” or “to mend

the heart.” Here Smith reiterates my earlier point that sophistries are broken sentiment, for it is implied that a sound education, one without sophistry, casuistry, and ascetic morality would, as part of its natural function, do something to “mend the heart,” or improve the capacity among people to express their feelings and to sympathize with the feelings of others in public life. Of course, it must also be pointed out that Smith’s preference is for an education that prepares “men of the world,” people with pragmatic and practical knowledge. In fact, in these same pages of the *Wealth of Nations* Smith is also found praising the education of women in his day because it is devoid of the influence of these pernicious sophistries, because it is found in the home, not in “public institutions,” thus “every part of their education tends evidently to some useful purpose,” as opposed to wasted philosophical effort on matters that do not matter.¹²⁵

Smith writes,

Were there no publick institutions for education, no system, no science would be taught for which there was not some demand; or which the circumstances of the times did not render it, either necessary, or convenient, or at least fashionable to learn. A private teacher could never find his account in teaching, either an exploded and antiquated system of a science acknowledged to be useful, or a science universally believed to be a mere useless and pedantic heap of sophistry and nonsense. Such systems, such sciences, can subsist no where, but in those incorporated societies for education whose prosperity and revenue are in a great measure independent of their reputation, and altogether independent of their industry. Were there no public institutions for education, a gentleman, after going through, with application and abilities, the most complete course of education, which the circumstances of the times were supposed to afford, could not come into the world completely ignorant of every thing which is the common subject of conversation among gentlemen and men of the world.¹²⁶

Outdated and outmoded subjects and sciences can only thrive among educational systems that provide no accounting toward the practical elements in life. Only when

education is divorced from usefulness and given over completely to pedantry does the public educational system fail in its mission.

In essence, then, Smith wants an educational system that is accountable, not necessarily public or private by our terms, but capable of preparing a person for life. He believed that “public” higher education of his day failed to provide any system that prevented bad teachers from continuing to deliver bad lectures. He conceived of education as an antidote to two disappointing elements of modernity: the mental degradation caused by the division of labor and the “delusions of enthusiasm and superstition” caused by the prevailing religious sophistries. “Smith did not suggest compulsory schooling. Instead, he offered a plan to make schooling more accessible and more useful, and to provide incentives for parents to have their children educated.”¹²⁷ Smith also advocated a system that would encourage students to promote the education of their parents, a point that no one of the nineteenth century understood and developed to more effect, as I will show, than Richard Whately. Indeed, as part of Smith’s system, education would be supported by public expense and “partly by the payment of low very fees.”¹²⁸ Smith recommended further that, “government set educational goals but that it rely on the superior knowledge of individuals motivated by self-interest to pursue those goals as efficiently as possible.”¹²⁹ As part of his plan students would be personally responsible for a portion of a professors salary as an incentive for them to teach well. He also wanted judges and other public servants to be paid for services rendered rather than as unaccountable workers. Smith was, therefore, in favor of allowing certain aspects of the market to influence education, but only for the purpose of increasing access to

education and improving the services rendered. And the same applied to the law and other public services.

As a consequence of his preference for education that is accountable, accessible, and effective, Smith contended that the whole machine of policy be viewed so that improvements in one area will not create problems in another area inadvertently. Smith bid us to appreciate the complexity inherent in social life. Seeing complexity through the eyes of rhetoric simplifies without over-simplifying by its demand that the conversation about policy, about the best life, remain open. Smith knew that one important way of keeping the conversation open was to protect public education from market forces. In other words, in a great many instances Smith knew that prudence had to be linked and tempered by other values lest the businessman's zeal for enterprise become standard in all walks of life. Likewise he was committed to pedagogy. Smith took seriously his teaching and believed that the best method of promoting knowledge of a subject was to pour over it year after year, correcting mistakes and improving lecture material. This method, Smith wrote, was the best in existence for becoming "acquainted with every part of it," and had the effect of "rendering him completely master of it himself."¹³⁰

Most of Smith's students found his lectures inviting and stimulating. James Boswell, his student in 1760, wrote, "My greatest inducement for coming hither, was to hear Mr. Smith's lectures which are truly excellent. His sentiments are striking, profound, and beautiful."¹³¹ Smith's success as a teacher, then, is evidence not only of his grasp and mastery of his subject after having pursued it for many years, but also of a commanding rhetorical ability. Smith's strength in the classroom and his

acknowledgement of its contribution to his scholarship is of particular interest because it indicates that his rhetorical theory and praxis extend beyond writing. Smith had skill as a speaker and arguer. For example, he once presented his review of David Hume's "Essays on Commerce" to the Glasgow Literary Society. "The level of discussion and debate was usually high and legend has it that on one occasion Smith engaged in a strenuous discussion on some subject for a whole evening against the entire assembly, and having lost his point by an overwhelming majority, was overheard muttering to himself, 'convicted but not convinced.'"¹³²

Smith's strength and stubbornness as a didactic orator exhibits his enthusiasm for his subject and his desire that others share in his enthusiasm. Treating students with "ease and affability" signifies a rhetorical sensitivity, sympathy with the place of the student, and is very much a part of what McCloskey argues is more needed in today's economics classes. Treating students well is proof that Smith understood that some things are more important than money; both Smith's scholarship and his teaching career show that he was committed to this basic idea.

Upon accepting the position as the tutor for the Duke of Buccleugh, Smith had to resign his position at the University of Glasgow in mid-term. Smith agreed with the university that he would refund the student's tuition, though he was not personally obligated to do so, and if the student's refused he would refund their tuition to the school. Additionally he agreed to pay a lecturer to complete the term at his own expense. On the occasion of his final lecture at Glasgow is a humorous story that illustrates what

Smith thought about money in an educational, rhetorical setting. Alexander Tytler tells us in his *Life of Lord Kames*:

After concluding his last lecture, and publically announcing from the chair that he was now taking a final leave of his auditors, acquainting them at the same time with the arrangements he had made, to the best of his power, to their benefit, he drew from his pocket the several fees of the students, wrapped up in separate paper parcels, and beginning to call up each man by his name, he delivered to the first who was called the money into his hands. The young man peremptorily refused to accept it, declaring that the instruction and pleasure he had already received was much more than he either had repayed or ever could compensate, and a general cry was heard from every one in the room to the same effect. But Mr. Smith was not bent from his purpose. After warmly expressing his feelings of gratitude and the strongest sense he had of the regard shown to him by his young friends, he told them this was a matter betwixt him and his own mind, and that he could not rest satisfied unless he performed what he deemed right and proper. “You must not refuse me this satisfaction; nay, by heavens, gentlemen, you shall not”; and seizing by the coat the young man who stood next him, he thrust the money into his pocket and then pushed him from him. The rest saw it was vain to contest the matter, and were obliged to let him have his own way.¹³³

This passage illustrates that Smith considered the *payment* for his lectures with an almost sacred regard. Though the students protested by considering it a pleasure to have attended even a shortened term, Smith considered their repayment “a matter betwixt him and his own mind,” and that he “could not rest satisfied,” “by heavens,” if he did not return the money. The payment of tuition was not only considered, then, with a sacred regard, but Smith also modeled that even the marketplace of ideas should maintain a high level of honor and virtue in its stance toward money-matters.

Smith’s stance toward sophistry is straightforward and enlightening for our purposes, and extended even to the level of university tuition. Perhaps not exclusively, but still overwhelmingly, Smith employs the word sophistry to critique the exchange of words for money in the end. In other words, he certainly understood this was an

important aspect of sophistry by definition. Sophistry is misguided or misapplied sentiment, and an attempt to secure monopoly in economic matters, or educational circles. In fact, sophistry in education was a high-minded approach to instruction that robbed students of choices and guaranteed theological arguments a preeminent place in the educational structure. Sophistry is thus seen as an attempt to bend an argument to one's selfish benefit, and often includes alterations at the social system level to perpetuate these benefits for select factions. Smith rejects these sophistries in favor of a system that has the capacity of being held accountable by every participant. So, for example, in an educational system modeled after Smith's preference both taxpayers and students, principals and teachers, parents and governments, would have some say in the overall goals of the system as well as some incentive to participate with all their faculties. "The madness of fanaticism" would be checked in educational systems as much as in the legal system and the economic system to ensure that sophistry would never again have the power over minds and hearts that it had wielded through virtually all of history.

The anecdote above regarding Smith's repayment of students suggests that the good of society rests upon the actions of individuals. In other words, Smith's grabbing of students, stuffing of pockets, and pushing may be seen as fanatical but it is the fury of an individual – the true antidote to "the spirit of faction" that predominates in most societies is the action of free individuals. Individual stubbornness and originality, even if carried to extreme, is never likely, in Smith's system to undermine the good of society because it stems from intellect rather than "systems" of thought, and respects the danger of

faction by opposing it. Smith combated the systems of sophistry prevalent in his day by standing up to them with original arguments and original thoughts that made their own way in the world and that promoted the liberty of all to do likewise. Such is the highpoint of rhetoric; such is the highpoint of economics.

SMITHIAN SYMPATHY

Smith's system is coherent on the question of moral theory. Unlike the utilitarian calculus of Mill or the rational choice theory of contemporary economists, Smith's theory of sympathy is essentially moral, that is, our actions are best when they correspond with what is proper, meritorious, or with what is our duty, custom, or considered virtuous by society. Strict Utilitarians hold that only what is meritorious can be judged to be good or moral, and in this sense Smith's ethical theory is more subtly nuanced than most in the humanities at first recognize. Smith's ethical theory is underwritten by communication theory because it has to involve speech, it has to involve interaction in order to work properly.¹³⁴ In this way, Smith's ethical theory arises from his thoughts on rhetoric and is closely connected with a rhetorical view of public affairs.

Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* attempts to re-work Hume's concept of sympathy to show that moral judgment and action are not based solely on reason but must include 'sentiment' or feeling.¹³⁵ Smith uses the phrase, 'theory of moral sentiments' as a parallel to 'the theory of general principles of law,' suggesting that the title of his book is not meant to describe his own individual contribution to ethics, but

rather his name for the scope of the subject in general.¹³⁶ D.D. Raphael writes, “In Smith’s eyes Hume had demonstrated conclusively that moral judgment and action are not based on reason but on ‘sentiment’ or feeling.”¹³⁷ Hume believed that moral sentiment led to moral action, and Smith found this idea attractive, but saw sympathy as part of a complex system that could only be elaborated by distinguishing between several different forms of moral sentiment, like the sense of propriety, virtue, merit, and duty.¹³⁸ Sympathy represents the ability to experience vicariously the feelings of another, feelings that could be either positive or negative, but that can be accessed only through observation and imagination. Smith writes:

By the imagination we place ourselves in his situation, we conceive ourselves enduring all the same torment, we enter as it were into his body, and become in some measure the same person with him, and thence form some idea of his sensations, and even feel something which, though weaker in degree, is not altogether unlike them.¹³⁹

We share in experiences of others through a natural sympathetic imagination. The spark on which sympathy is based is interaction with others so that we can become acquainted with their social situation and consider how we would feel if similarly situated.

Sympathy engenders feelings which are weaker in degree to the sentiment actually felt by the observed, yet, fortunately for us, as John Durham Peters has pointed out, this is all that is wanted or desired. We often feel embarrassed at “the impudence and rudeness of another, though he himself seems to have no sense of the impropriety of his own behavior,” according to Smith.¹⁴⁰ Sympathy is not an exact duplicate of emotion, but rather manifests itself through interaction and imagination and is thus more rhetorical or communicative by nature than empathy because of its dependence on a

mediated understanding. Peters writes, “Sympathy...is not a matching of emotions, a heart-to-heart transfer from one person to another, but a judgment made by an observer, an act of interpretation. There is, for Smith, no transcendence of subjective experience. We are naturally limited, he says, in our ability to sympathize; nature has given us ‘a dull sensibility to the afflictions of others.’”¹⁴¹ We insert ourselves into their place through an act of interpretation. “Smith has no angst,” Peters continues, “about the unbridgeable distance between individual minds: the human ability to match feelings is ‘sufficient for the harmony of society. Though they will never be unisons, they may be concords, and this is all that is wanted or required.’”¹⁴² For Peters, communication theory is based on tremendous skepticism about the possibility of reading another’s mind, and Smith, too, views communication from the perspective of the problem of Babel: miscommunication is an inherent aspect of human life. Sympathy does not ensure that the feelings felt by the observer will be exact, nor does it require exact feelings, instead it asks us to change “places in fancy with the sufferer.”¹⁴³

If meaning is negotiated on a continuum between intention and perception, Smith suggests that our intentions as speakers are generated by our perceptions. The notion of the impartial spectator in Smith’s thought serves the purpose of moving sympathy further into the public realm because it provides a framework for how to interpret sympathetic thoughts and feelings; it offers a societal safeguard ensuring that sympathetic imaginings do not serve to justify lawlessness or injustice. It is an attempt to balance Smith’s emphasis on perception. Smith writes of the impartial spectator,

We can never survey our own sentiments and motives, we can never form any judgment concerning them; unless we remove ourselves, as it were, from our own natural station, and endeavour to view them as at a certain distance from us. But we can do this in no other way than by endeavouring to view them with the eyes of other people, or as other people are likely to view them. Whatever judgment we can form concerning them, accordingly, must always bear some secret reference, either to what are, or to what, upon a certain condition, would be, or to what, we imagine, ought to be the judgment of others. We endeavour to examine our own conduct as we imagine any other fair and impartial spectator would examine it. If, upon placing ourselves in his situation, we thoroughly enter into all the passions and motives which influenced it, we approve of it, by sympathy with the approbation of this supposed equitable judge. If otherwise, we enter into his disapprobation, and condemn it.¹⁴⁴

The impartial spectator enables us to determine the morality of our own actions by imagining how those actions would fair if put on trial before the world. We compare by sympathy our actions with the actions of other like-minded men as a check on our impulses and natural tendencies. In this way it cannot be said, as Vivienne Brown has, that the moral sentiment of the *TMS* is entirely personal, not public or political. The psychology and morality of *TMS* are tied directly to public matters as soon as the impartial spectator is understood in large part as the voice of the people, as understood in the imagination that grants approbation or disapprobation to personal action. In other words, the morality established on moral sentiment consists of a kind of publicly generated feeling – it is *pathos* to the core in a rhetorical sense.

If the impartial spectator we imagine sees our actions with favor we can infer that they were morally good and worthy of the approbation of society. If, on the other hand, the impartial spectator judges our actions unfavorably, or with horror, we must understand that our actions were not good, and are therefore worthy of disapprobation or

punishment. The desire for approbation may be the strongest factor in Smith's definition of human nature; it is certainly central to how sympathy works. Smith writes,

The all-wise Author of Nature has, in this manner, taught man to respect the sentiments and judgments of his brethren; to be more or less pleased when they approve of his conduct, and to be more or less hurt when they disapprove of it. He has made man, if I may say so, the immediate judge of mankind; and has, in this respect, as in many others, created him after his own image, and appointed him his vicegerent upon earth, to superintend the behaviour of his brethren. They are taught by nature, to acknowledge that power and jurisdiction which has thus been conferred upon him, to be more or less humbled and mortified when they have incurred his censure, and to be more or less elated when they have obtained his applause.¹⁴⁵

We become the immediate judges of our own (and each other's) behavior through observing, sympathizing, and imagining the judgments of society on our actions. The reactions of our shared community as understood through the effects of the impartial spectator are essential for sympathy to function as a moral sentiment. Sympathy can only exist in a community that desires approbation, is willing to express feelings with one another, and that has a common reference for moral sentiments that deserve approbation. The common reference exists in the minds and language of the members of a society or group. Smith's reliance on majority will places sympathy in an interesting position *vis-à-vis* democracy because his ethical theory suggests that what is right is determined by what those around us expect of us, what they do, and how they might judge our actions if they were in our shoes.

Elsewhere Peters has written of Smith that, like Immanuel Kant, "universality is a disciplinary regime," meaning that for these thinkers "proof of right action comes in one's ability to generalize a given action, to say that it would be right for everyone to do it."¹⁴⁶ Following Søren Kierkegaard's reading of Abraham sacrificing his son Isaac

under command from the voice of God, Peters concludes that a universalizable ethical system, like the one advocated by Smith, has the limitation of supposing that communication is easy. Unlike Smith or Kant, Kierkegaard focuses on singularity rather than generality as the ruling principle of our relations with others. “There are, then, situations in which misunderstanding is inevitable,” Peters writes. “To try to communicate with Abraham is to make him less than Abraham. In a world of paradox, easy communication is necessarily false. Circumlocution and irony may be what save us. The way to salvation must be thorny. The notion of easy communication is, for Kierkegaard, a clearance sale in the realm of spirit, a lowering of the price of understanding Nothing but the regime of falsity and chatter results when people try to fix communication breakdown, for such breakdown, Kierkegaard teaches, can be a well of revelation.”¹⁴⁷ More succinctly, Peters is saying that Kierkegaard’s notion of communication emphasizes intention, the individual’s self-assurance in their message and purpose. Whereas, Smith oversimplifies certain realities about human life by insisting that ethical behavior can depend solely on our relationships with others – that perception is a more critical aspect of understanding than intention. To insist upon such a public morality is to ask too much of communication, for Peters, even though there seems to be no other way to bridge the distance of minds. In other words, someone like Abraham was not interested in bridging the distance of minds; Adam Smith seeks to build such a bridge.

Moreover, Peters insists that John Locke, Adam Smith, Kant, Jeremy Bentham, James Mill, John Stuart Mill, and others of the liberal tradition agree on the fact that “the

liberal citizen must possess the art of self-abstraction.”¹⁴⁸ Without the ability to “change places in fancy with the sufferer,” as Smith puts it, the liberal tradition loses its capacity to generalize, loses its capacity for public morality to subsume private morality. Peters goes on to reason that the liberal public in this view “fosters rather than transcends domination,” because it requires that each individual set their moral compass by society’s map rather than from their own wanderings. That notion is, of course, comforting to those already “nestled in the networks of power, while traumatizing and abusing historically oppressed others.”¹⁴⁹ Thus, although Smith’s ethical system is rightly, so far as the public is concerned, underwritten by a theory of communication, it likewise constrains those who would prefer a different system or who cannot see eye to eye with society’s requirements, especially the requirements of the impartial spectator and the division of labor.

The crux, then, of Smith’s ethical and communication theory as I read it is the following passage that reworks the golden rule of Christianity:

And hence it is, that to feel much for others and little for ourselves, that to restrain our selfish, and to indulge our benevolent affections, constitutes the perfection of human nature; and can alone produce among mankind that harmony of sentiments and passions in which consists their whole grace and propriety. As to love our neighbour as we love ourselves is the great law of Christianity, so it is the great precept of nature to love ourselves only as we love our neighbour, or what comes to the same thing, as our neighbour is capable of loving us.¹⁵⁰

Surely Smith was sophisticated enough to recognize that “to love our neighbor as we love ourself” is not the same thing as loving ourselves “as our neighbor is capable of loving us.” He puts the onus on being “lovable,” rather than on actually loving others.

The identification he must make between these two disparate notions is central to the ethical theory he propounds because it requires morality be adjudicated on the premise of public opinion as it is received through the imagination and the feelings. What happens, I wonder, in Smith's system if and when the public moral sentiment reinforces an inhuman view of morality, asks us to do that which social life has condemned through all ages of recorded human history? I suspect Smith's answer is a confidence in the nature of mankind, a trust that they will not sink to these levels if given their liberty. The liberal tradition is one of change that looks forward and not backward, and thrives on self-abstraction and a perception of the needs of others over the claims of traditional morality.

Alasdair MacIntyre, in *After Virtue*, concludes that both Hume and Smith fall short when they try to bridge the chasm "between any set of reasons which could support unconditional adherence to general and unconditional rules and any set of reasons for action or judgment which could derive from our particular fluctuating, circumstance-governed desires, emotions and interests," and is, hence, "the name of a philosophical fiction."¹⁵¹ MacIntyre then concludes that this bridge put up primarily by Hume and Smith is responsible for ending "any public, shared rationale or justification" for moral behavior.¹⁵² Smith's morality does away with fixed rules, although not entirely because it maintains the stoic preference for self-command in all that is good, and it entails the linking of morality to publicity, or publication, of the community's shared sense of what is right – even though it may change over time. In other words, MacIntyre asks, is it enough to rely on a liberal, Smithian conception of human nature that depends on fellow

feeling? What protects one from the ravages of a society gone mad if morality is tied only to social mores and understanding? Striking a balance between public morality and private morality is never an easy question, and certainly Smith's two major works seem primed to reveal precisely the benefits of understanding morality as privacy and publicity, in *TMS* and *WN* respectively. Indeed, Smith's third major work was undoubtedly leaning toward resolving how the scales of justice should swing between privacy and publicity before it was cast into the flames.

What remains, however, is a moral system that depends upon communication that works easily, relies upon an active imagination in virtually all participants, and is tied directly to public sentiments. It is easy to see how economists oversimplified the processes of social life even if they have read both of Smith's books because the books encourage a view of society that is both very optimistic about our capacity to communicate and thoroughly convinced that the public will choose wisely. Additionally, the preponderance of economic prose fails to produce the principles of Smith's moral protocol, fails to provide practical sustenance for powerful fancy and fantasy. Hence, I address below the recent arguments built on Smithian sympathy for a stronger public imagination based in literature that will both augment and improve the quality of economic and human rights movements in this century. But first, it is necessary to address the question of how Smith's ethical and rhetorical system informs his economic system.

Sympathy and self-interest balance the scales of the human heart and mind. In this respect, the philosophy of Smith may be much more profound and consistent than it

is often given credit for. Though often the spiel about Smith is that he is introducing emotion, like Hume, into reason, I suspect he is doing something much deeper. Smith conceives of the human soul as heart and mind, urging us to accept that part of human nature is the prudent need to provide for oneself, but that another crucial part is the sympathetic need to connect with others in public on a deeper level. Sympathy is neither private nor selfish. Smith writes,

When I sympathize with your sorrow or indignation, it may be pretended, indeed, that my emotion is founded on self-love, because it arises from bringing your case home to myself, from putting myself in your situation, and thence conceiving what I should feel in the like circumstances. But though sympathy is very properly said to arise from an imaginary change of situations with the person principally concerned, yet this imaginary change is not supposed to happen to me in my own person and character, but in that of the person with whom I sympathize. When I condole with you for the loss of your only son, in order to enter into your grief I do not consider what I, a person of such a character and profession, should suffer, if I had a son, and if that son was unfortunately to die: but I consider what I should suffer if I was really you, and I not only change circumstances with you, but I change persons and characters. My grief, therefore, is entirely upon your account, and not in the least upon my own. It is not, therefore, in the least selfish.¹⁵³

On no account can sympathy be considered selfish, and on no account can it be considered to be about only private matters. Despite the style of the text, Smith is speaking to the public nature of propriety, duty, merit and other virtues. From the very first sentence of *TMS*, Smith tells us that “How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it.” Seeing the happiness of others is necessary to each and every person, according to Smith, and seeing occurs through the publicity of feelings, a publicity that can only take place in interaction.

Great pleasure is derived from a correspondence of feelings, and such correspondence is a critical aspect of how Smith envisions the public sphere. Smith writes,

The great pleasure of conversation and society, besides, arises from a certain correspondence of sentiments and opinions, from a certain harmony of minds, which like so many musical instruments coincide and keep time with one another. But this most delightful harmony cannot be obtained unless there is a free communication of sentiments and opinions. We all desire, upon this account, to feel how each other is affected, to penetrate into each other's bosoms, and to observe the sentiments and affections which really subsist there. The man who indulges us in this natural passion, who invites us into his heart, who, as it were, sets open the gates of his breast to us, seems to exercise a species of hospitality more delightful than any other.¹⁵⁴

Though it is popular now to deny the possibility of harmony of sentiment in public life, for Smith, and those in the eighteenth century generally, it was completely the opposite for harmony of sentiment was the point of social life. In fact, their understanding of society did not exist without acknowledging that it was founded upon hospitality and open-heartedness.

Of course, no one more than Smith realized that the drive for sympathy also had a dark side, as it were, a side that at times made us pathetic in our attempts to feel what others feel. Such *pathos* could only be corrected, for Smith, by a healthy dose of prudence.

This passion to discover the real sentiments of others is naturally so strong, that it often degenerates into a troublesome and impertinent curiosity to pry into those secrets of our neighbours which they have very justifiable reasons for concealing; and, upon many occasions, it requires prudence and a strong sense of propriety to govern this, as well as all the other passions of human nature, and to reduce it to that pitch which any impartial spectator can approve of. To disappoint this curiosity, however, when it is kept within proper bounds, and aims at nothing which there can

be any just reason for concealing, is equally disagreeable in its turn. The man who eludes our most innocent questions, who gives no satisfaction to our most inoffensive inquiries, who plainly wraps himself up in impenetrable obscurity, seems, as it were, to build a wall about his breast. We run forward to get within it, with all the eagerness of harmless curiosity; and feel ourselves all at once pushed back with the rudest and most offensive violence.¹⁵⁵

Prudence off-sets the balance in our public desire for connection with other people by suggesting that at times propriety takes precedence over sympathy, for sympathetic communication seems to depend on respecting privacy and justice when dealing with the feelings of others. Prudence is required on many occasions to motivate us to communicate and to get us to stop prying into other's lives. It is a virtue of communication and economics.

To have a too sensitive or too large sphere of privacy is regrettable because it walls up those things that it is natural for others to be curious about and forbids them to participate freely in communication by satisfying their curiosities. To be nosy and invasive is also off-putting and diminishes the quality of social intercourse. Thus, the standard of sympathy is to have an open-heart, and to express openness by sharing your feelings at appropriate times and in ways that allow others to understand your will and to appreciate its harmony with their own. It is not only that feelings contribute to what is reasonable, but it is also, for Smith, that feelings underwrite the possibility that we can even reason with each other. Without first establishing a realm in which we can engage free from threats, taunts, or trouble, our capacity to reason together disappears. Once we establish a conviction that hearts are open and that our sentiments can be expressed freely then we can move further, through sympathy, to shared sentiment, or at least the

approximation of shared sentiment that is so crucial for the public realm and for the human propensity to feel and share pain. Smith does not want us to feel justified in walling up our hearts in public because for one it is unnatural, for another it decreases the pleasure of living in society, and finally, and most importantly, it aids our judgment in deciding questions of importance between citizens by increasing our capacity to feel their needs and to respond to those feelings in humane ways. The two criticisms of Smith's approach to morality include Peters critique that Smith may be overconfident about the possibilities of communication and unaware of the virtues of miscommunication. Secondly, MacIntyre reasons that Smith has put too much faith in an adaptable morality, too much confidence that the public is capable of serving as a guide to right action. Loving ourselves as our neighbor is capable of loving us suggests that cultivating love-ability may be more important than cultivating a genuine love for others, but this aspect is central to Smith's claims about how self-love is generated and maintained through interactions with society. Additionally, Smith's hope seems to be that if love-ability is cultivated than love will increase. We trust those who trust us; we love those who love us; this is justice, and this is how we are naturally made to live.

A Digression on Reading Adam Smith

Reading is as often at the whim of fashion as clothing or interior decorating. When the collected works of Adam Smith were first edited for the bi-centenary celebration of the publication of the *Wealth of Nations*, fashion dictated that the works be collected in a way that represented the unity of the works and their author. Today,

however, it is more fashionable to see selves as fragments and to read texts as fragments, too. Thus, despite the attempts of the Glasgow editors to unify Smith's works, a leading critic, Vivienne Brown contends that Smith's works are best read as separate texts that do not necessarily support a unified reading.

“Adam Smith has turned into a publishing phenomenon, and the history of this phenomenon can provide us with new insights – not into the intentions of Smith, but into changing perceptions of these intentions and their significance,” so writes Keith Tribe, General Editor of the recently published *Critical Bibliography of Adam Smith* which provides an excellent place to understand the reception of Smith's work in English and in many other languages, including the development in Germany of “Das Adam Smith problem,” namely that there is an inconsistent moral theory in Smith's oeuvre.¹⁵⁶ The notion of a primary inconsistency between advocacy of sympathy and later advocacy of self-interest as a means to organize social life arises from the fact that for most of the time since Smith's death scholars have depended on only his two major works, without access to the *LRBL*, *LOJ*, or the philosophical essays to inform their readings. Additionally, very little is known about Smith's life, and given this paucity of information relative to the size of the *TMS* and *WN* many perceive in Smith a flat out contradiction. Certainly paying attention to the books in their original context can improve our understanding of Smith's reception, and yet this is difficult to do given that Smith's works have had such a tremendous impact on so many different fields of inquiry.

It is very well known that Smith was extremely particular about his published works and did much during his lifetime to limit access to his personal papers, notes from his lectures, and other materials. The Glasgow Edition of Smith's works seems deliberately tilted by its editors to suggest greater unity in the works than the works themselves might justify. Certainly the claim that the works were edited purely for ideological reasons is baseless given the scholarly nature of the work, but the likelihood that they also promote a view of Smith's works, and that they form a unified whole is not out of reach.¹⁵⁷ Regardless of where one sits on the ideological spectrum of how to read, the question of reading Smith's works is an interesting one. A number of scholars have suggested that the best guide for reading Smith is Smith himself, especially the theory of rhetoric and language in Smith's *LRBL*.¹⁵⁸ Vivienne Brown rejects this idea because she prefers a method that reads each work "in its own terms and not cross-read through the others. This involves specifying the discursive frames that are appropriate for each text as part of the process of reading each text separately, and this will then enable the issue of consistency or otherwise across texts to be treated more discriminately."¹⁵⁹

Jerry Z. Muller believes that "to recover Smith's thought we must attend to the rhetorical elements of his writing and to his intended audience. For Smith wanted not merely to inform and enlighten his readers but to *influence* them."¹⁶⁰ Smith's aim was, he claimed, to design a decent society, a society that enjoyed economic prosperity as well as moral strength. Smith's concept of sympathy is the basis for his moral, read psychological, and ethical philosophy, and serves as the foundation of the "decent

society' he was arguing for through his scholarship. When read in this discriminate manner, this rhetorical manner, Brown argues that there are important inconsistencies that arise not only between Smith's moral theory and his economic theory, but also between the inherent rhetoric of each particular work. Brown reads the LRBL, for example, as a poor guide for understanding Smith's other works, arguing instead that it fails to develop and adhere to a consistent theory of communication. Furthermore, Brown thinks *TMS* adopts one ethical theory while *WN* adopts a different ethical theory, and it is the different rhetorical forms that reveal the fault lines between the two works. Brown writes,

. . . The form, style and moral import of *TMS* and *WN* carry the reader along different tracks: the former is a 'dialogic', multivocal exploration of moral judgment; the second is a 'monologic', didactic treatise on the system of natural liberty. These differences have contributed to the divergent reading experience sensed by many scholars in attempting to understand these two books as complementary parts of a larger *oeuvre*; they also epitomize the moral disjuncture between the two works.¹⁶¹

In *TMS*, Brown continues, "the moral discourse of conscience operates on a different register from that of the lower-order but public virtues of justice and prudence."¹⁶² Thus, in Brown, we face the perplexing issue of perpetuating the Adam Smith problem by transforming it into a problem of style rather than substance.¹⁶³

In terms of public policy, the *TMS* reasons not that policy is made by juxtaposing moral claims against utility claims, Brown argues, but rather that public policy is based on counterposing two different accounts of the source of utility. The dialogic sense of *TMS*, Brown says, stems from the dialogue in the imagination between the conscience and the impartial spectator. The imagined feelings of approbation and disapprobation of

society are communicated to the conscience and used by the conscience to determine moral action. Still, Brown points out, Smith is not asking that we give ourselves over, surrendering complete moral autonomy to the impartial spectator. Instead, the truly moral outcome can never be pre-determined; truly moral outcomes are always arrived at after dialogue, in particular circumstances, and with some imperfections. Unlike the ideal perfect Stoic sage, “who ultimately identifies himself with the controlling reason in the universe, and where his own reason is in full accordance with nature,” the sage of *TMS* “is not the unified, integral moral agent such as we see in the case of the ideal Stoic man, the ‘fully finished and completed being’ of the monologic hero, but in some respects is a more fractured and struggling moral being.”¹⁶⁴

This more complicated moral being, Brown argues, does not cross over as one of the moral beings that populate the *WN*, and thus the *WN* is amoral discourse because it develops a separate ethical character, the monologic, prudent, and just public practitioner of ethical behavior, in contradistinction to the more private, more intense, and higher ethical character of *TMS*. This is not to suggest that Smith’s *TMS* character cannot provide the basis for a very powerful moral theory, only that it is not the moral theory that occupies the pages of the *WN*. In this regard, however, Brown is in the severe minority. Her suggestion seems to reason that *WN* is in the liberal tradition whereas *TMS* is outside the liberal tradition, the latter more apropos for philosophy than jurisprudence or public life given that its concerns deal more centrally with private morality.

The point I want to emphasize is that different ways of reading Smith lead to different judgments about his theories. I read Smith as constituting a unified authorship,

but also recognize the importance of situating his arguments historically, then and now, to appreciate their vitality. I think that the reality is that Smith's works are unified in some respects and fragmented in other respects. Namely, I hold that sympathy is the unifying constant in Smith's works despite its very small role in the text of *WN*. I think sympathy is crucial to Smith's project, underwrites his ethical theory as sentiment is the judge of rightness and wrongness in *WN*, but I also think that Smith was sophisticated enough to recognize that sympathy was counterbalanced in our nature with prudence, or the propensity to provide for ourselves and those around us. It seems that Brown's claim to read the texts as separate texts emphasizes differences between texts for effect. The best reason for reading the *TMS* and *WN* as a whole is that they were written by the same author, and even though Smith certainly changed during the composition of the books, the books also changed during his lifetime and by his own hand.

SELF INTEREST AND MARKET MORALITY

No one ever tires of pointing out that the word "capitalism" never appears in *An Inquiry Into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. Obviously "capital" does play a major part in the book from its first mention in the sixth paragraph of the "Introduction and Plan of the Work" to its repeated uses in the final chapter on Public Debts in Book V. What is critical about the absence of "capitalism" is that Smith is in fact advocating "the system of natural liberty," which takes precedence over market morality and is, in fact, at times completely at odds with the market. Smith recognizes that market freedom contributes significantly to other types of freedoms, yet he never

suggests that market morality can determine or replace the role of the state or society in public life.

Minowitz argues that all of Smith's accounts of the virtues are decidedly anti-heroic and eschew philosophical analysis, which is to say nothing more than that Smith is trying to come up with practical ways to improve policy, though Minowitz rightly reminds us that *glasnost*, *demokratizatsiia*, and *perestroika* "give fresh life to the old argument that democracy and capitalism are mutually supporting."¹⁶⁵ Neo-conservatives in the United States continue to pressure the country and the world to support the notion that capitalism will inevitably bring freedom, and that without capitalism there can be no freedom. Much of the confusion arising on this point centers on the meaning of capitalism and its relation, if there be one, to the Smithian concept of free-markets.

According to Smith moral philosophy and political economy "both incorporate conflict along with cooperation, vice along with virtue, and reform along with conservation. The system of natural liberty supposes, like *The Federalist*, that people are neither angels nor devils."¹⁶⁶ Connected to this is Smith's idea of human nature, namely that man is active, naturally sympathizes with others through the imagination, possesses a natural desire to "improve his condition," and has imperfect knowledge about the past, present, and future. Underwritten by a sense of uncertainty, Smith's notion of liberty provides for the fact that people are best left to make decisions on their own given that those in government, church, or university are likewise uncertain and possess incomplete knowledge. Smithian scholars often argue that his notion of liberty is negative, but I

argue below that Smith advocates positive liberty because of his conception of human nature and his notion of how the market operates.¹⁶⁷

Golden argued that Smith was the first Scottish rhetorician “to treat persuasion as an integral part of man’s nature,” and that the concept of sympathy is tied directly to communication, and more importantly persuasion.¹⁶⁸ Indeed, persuasion is the foundation of human nature in this respect because we persuade ourselves that the judgment of others matters and that one way of securing that judgment is to likewise persuade them that our judgment matters. Behind even trade, that willingness to truck and barter is the idea of rhetoric as an aspect of human nature. Smith said,

Thus we have shown that different genius is not the foundation of this disposition to barter which is the cause of the division of labour. The real foundation of it is that principle to persuade which so much prevails in human nature. When any arguments are offered to persuade, it is always expected that they should have their proper effect. If a person asserts anything about the moon, though it should not be true, he will feel a kind of uneasiness in being contradicted, and would be very glad that the person he is endeavouring to persuade would be of the same way of thinking with himself. We ought then mainly to cultivate the power of persuasion, and indeed we do so without intending it. Since a whole life is spent in the exercise of it, a ready method of bargaining with each other must undoubtedly be attained. . . No animal can do this but by gaining the favour of those whom they would persuade.¹⁶⁹

Smith elevates the humans above the animals through the fact that we can persuade, and links persuasion with gaining favor. Rhetoric is the source of human elevation and transcendence in this respect, and opens also the door to economic thought and behavior. Without persuasion, we can infer, we also would not care so much about the judgment of others. Smith elevates the judgment of man through persuasion and persuades us that it

is really after all only the judgment of man that matters in moral and economics questions.

In *Eighteenth-Century British Logic and Rhetoric*, Wilbur Samuel Howell writes about Smith and his colleagues: “when eighteenth-century logicians referred to ancient logic, they thought only of Aristotle, whereas their rhetorical colleagues in conceiving of ancient rhetoric were completely unable to think of anyone but Cicero.”¹⁷⁰ Howell gives three reasons for this reliance on Cicero: first, Cicero treated rhetorical theory much more voluminously than Aristotle had done; second, his rhetorical writings had entered so completely into the European culture that they provided the only terms that successive generations could use to understand rhetoric; third, Cicero was counted as the greatest writer on rhetoric ever to have achieved first rank as an orator and a man of letters.¹⁷¹ Smith turns directly to Cicero for guidance when formulating his rhetorical theory in *LRBL*, and indeed Smith cites Cicero repeatedly in that work, and uses Cicero’s speeches as examples of successful oratory, and ultimately uses his system of philosophy and rhetoric as the basis for his own in terms of using rhetoric to underwrite philosophic doctrine.

Smith’s reliance on Cicero, however, does not necessarily make him out to be a republican, a proponent of the state. True enough Smith’s scholarship is interested in making nations wealthy, but there has long been disagreement about just how much Smith wanted to promote the state. Some label Smith a statist, like the economist Murray N. Rothbard, while still others more conservatively suggest that he was simply not opposed to states promoting their interests, or that Smith was indifferent or positively

against the power of the state to influence (read influenza) on economic matters.¹⁷² In *Profits, Priests, and Princes*, Minowitz argues that Smith was, in fact, emancipating economics from both politics and religion, and thus his view of the state should always be colored by his preference for positive economic outcomes. Smith's posture towards politics is certainly complex, but it is also predominantly anti-political in his published writings. Minowitz writes,

The first consists of Smith's efforts to elevate wealth, security, and bodily comfort as social ends, to encourage "bourgeois" virtues in opposition to more heroic ideals, to dismiss the fulfillment available through political participation, to promote the free market by constricting the activities of government, and to demote national identity and self-sufficiency for the sake of international trade. The second, a more theoretical type of disparagement, comes to light when one takes a broad view of the questions Smith poses and the techniques he uses to answer them. Whereas the categorization, analysis, and evaluation of the different forms of government were the central tasks of ancient political philosophy and substantial components of modern political philosophy prior to Smith, these activities almost disappear from the political economy of *The Wealth of Nations* and the moral philosophy of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. On a more general level, Smith tends to replace normative political philosophy with social science . . . ; he tends to replace the quest for timeless, natural standards with a quasi-materialistic philosophy of history.¹⁷³

Though it can be argued that Smith is not alone in participating in the transformation of concern over material matters and national prosperity in preference to "the quest for the timeless," nor is he alone in promoting social science as a means to truth over "heroic ideals," he is at least representative of the trends of the eighteenth century, and at most he is responsible for a wholesale adoption of economics as a superior way of life to the classical polis, or as a measurement of success over and above the virtues of citizenship and religion.

By preferring positive economic outcomes Smith effectively reworks or discards what had been the predominant modes of knowing and acting prior to his time, and though this revelation is not exactly earth-shattering in its originality, it does point to the fact that the heritage of economics has intentions and perceptions impacting both church and state. It certainly is possible to be misled into thinking that there was such an idea as the classical polis, or the realization of an ideal state prior to Smith's time.¹⁷⁴ It is common to romanticize the period before free markets. That is certainly not my intention. However, the way in which Smith constitutes social character as originating primarily in the marketplace brought about a transformation in the way market behavior was considered, and the way its character requirements related to other aspects of social life. That transformation, the constitution of the bourgeois character and the elevation of the merchant middle class in the eyes of the world, ushered in changes to the way we think of our relation to church and state, changes both good and ill.

Regardless of totalizing views of Smith's impact, Minowitz is saying nothing more than that Smith's entire corpus of writings is viewed better from the eyes of rhetoric than from the eyes of philosophy – strictly speaking – because it is in no way interested in questions of ultimate truth or timeless realities. Instead, Minowitz notes, Smith seeks after “natural standards” that are verifiable, or at least reach a level of verisimilitude in their ability to analyze and predict, and that he advocates a “quasi-materialistic philosophy of history” that works out to encourage what is at best a system of thought clearly and admittedly of this world. Hence, the frequently restated notion that Smith is a “worldly philosopher” is saying nothing other than that he is a

rhetorician, that he is interested in making improvements to the smooth operating of the public policy and that he is not particularly interested in matters pertaining to other worlds, if there be such. Minowitz, in fact, compares Smith directly to Karl Marx and argues that at bottom they both share a great many assumptions about the purpose of life and the means to happiness: at bottom they are both materialists. Though Marx, on the one hand, dismisses both the possibility and need for revelation, Smith laments the imperfection of human knowledge and points for the need for philosophy or revelation though he is certainly unsure about its possibilities, thus the two differ, certainly, in their assumptions about materiality, but both are still committed to a this-worldly paradigm for happiness and prosperity.¹⁷⁵ Though it is more popular to impute the values of Christianity to Marx than to Smith, the work of Michael Novak is an attempt to flip-flop the case, though Minowitz argues that such imputation is by no means universally vindicated by Smith's own writings.

In effect, Smith is rejecting traditional republican arguments and favoring instead an economic organization in society that extends the division of labor even to politics. In essence this has the effect of dampening enthusiasm among the citizenry when it comes to participating directly in civic affairs, and minimizes the habits and mores of a people insofar as they were maintained to preserve traditional codes of honor, conduct, and civic virtue. These codes are replaced with a new economic code of conduct that judges primarily on the basis of price as the predictor for value, and undercuts traditional obligations to family and state, which many critics have noted. Minowitz notes that Smith sets out to address the questions of the legislator, to address "policy, revenue, and

arms,” and yet in the 1790 preface to *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* he apologizes for having failed in his quest to address those issues more directly. Thus, what we have in Smith is an incomplete work and arguing about inconsistencies is a bit like debating the holistic qualities of a half-finished building given that both Smith’s work and the half-built structure are lacking completion. Still, the fact that Smith acknowledges his shortcoming the year before his death does tell us that he knew his work was unfinished, and it also tells us what he thought was most important to cover first in his selection of the facts.

Unlike Minowitz, Joseph Cropsey thinks that the question of ‘who should rule?’ is not completely displaced by Smith’s question, ‘what is the most productive economy?’ In other words, Cropsey does not think that Smith intended for the political order to unambiguously be of secondary importance to the economic order. The other important question that preoccupies Smith, according to Cropsey, is the question, ‘what is the end of society?’ Cropsey suggests that the answer to this question informs the other two:

Society is an instrument of nature which, like all instruments, seeks the end of its principal, in this case the preservation of life. The best society, or the one that should be cultivated into being, is that which best provides the means of life, which of course include abundance of things needful both to be consumed and to be employed in warding off attack from without. It is by this principle that we may at least in part understand Smith’s advocacy of a form of society which is justified as being most productive of wealth and most conducive to armed power of defense.¹⁷⁶

Preservation of life is elevated as the end of society, and hence those should rule who are best capable of preserving life and providing an abundance of things to be consumed,

and they should rule also by this principle. “The viewpoint of moral judgment for Smith is that of “man” or universal mankind, the homogeneous class of species-fellows. The moral law is natural in such a sense as to overleap the intermediate, artificial frontiers of political society and regard primarily the natural individual and the natural species.”¹⁷⁷

Unlike Rousseau, Smith believed that men were by nature active. Smith writes, “Man was made for action, and to promote by the exertion of his faculties such changes in the external circumstances both of himself and others, as may seem most favorable to the happiness of all.”¹⁷⁸ Thus “the most sublime speculation of the contemplative philosopher can scarce compensate the neglect of the smallest active duty.”¹⁷⁹ As an active being, activity is the source of moral judgment and material prosperity, and must underwrite the political system. Instead of abstracting morality from the demands of political life, Smith makes morality dependent on the demands of mortal life. Cropsey writes,

The abstraction of morality from the demands of political life proper is in a way impossible: political life has to be lived, and support for it must be provided in the form of economic organization, the use of force for suppressing crime and rebellion, the legitimation of conventional inequalities in the interest of order, and so on.¹⁸⁰

Because life has to be lived in an active sense for Smith, the social order founded on sympathy must provide the sustenance to carry on the active life through a strong economy, a common defense, the suppression of crime and rebellion, and, unfortunately, the legitimation of inequality.

Smith recognized that his system would result in social inequality, but because of his conception of human nature as primarily active he was willing to pay the price of

inequality to secure “natural liberty” and to ensure a system where one can come at goods most easily. That is, Smith thinks that access to the necessities and conveniences of life is the central issue at stake in polity, society, and economy. Smith writes,

That state is opulent where the necessities and conveniences of life are easily come at, whatever otherwise be its condition, and nothing else can deserve the name of opulence but this comeattibleness. That is, a state is opulent when by no great pains and a proper application of industry these things may be easily obtained; and this whether money or other things of that sort abound or not.¹⁸¹

Opulence is defined as “comeattibleness,” a lovely term, suggesting free access, positive liberty, and a certainty that that life is best lived that can have things if it wants them.

Furthermore, Smith is convinced that if “comeattibleness” is granted, opulence gives to all of society a better life than could be otherwise got without a division of labor and free access to markets. Smith’s famous argument by analogy on this point deserves to be reiterated:

Observe the accommodation of the most common artificer or day-labourer in a civilized and thriving country, and you will perceive that the number of people of whose industry a part, though but a small part, has been employed in procuring him this accommodation, exceeds all computation. The woollen coat, for example, which covers the day-labourer, as coarse and rough as it may appear, is the produce of the joint labour of a great multitude of workmen. The shepherd, the sorter of the wool, the wool-comber or carder, the dyer, the scribbler, the spinner, the weaver, the fuller, the dresser, with many others, must all join their different arts in order to complete even this homely production. How many merchants and carriers, besides, must have been employed in transporting the materials from some of those workmen to others who often live in a very distant part of the country! how much commerce and navigation in particular, how many ship-builders, sailors, sail-makers, rope-makers, must have been employed in order to bring together the different drugs made use of by the dyer, which often

come from the remotest corners of the world! What a variety of labour too is necessary in order to produce the tools of the meanest of those workmen! To say nothing of such complicated machines as the ship of the sailor, the mill of the fuller, or even the loom of the weaver, let us consider only what a variety of labour is requisite in order to form that very simple machine, the shears with which the shepherd clips the wool. The miner, the builder of the furnace for smelting the ore, the feller of the timber, the burner of the charcoal to be made use of in the smelting-house, the brick-maker, the brick-layer, the workmen who attend the furnace, the mill-wright, the forger, the smith, must all of them join their different arts in order to produce them. Were we to examine, in the same manner, all the different parts of his dress and household furniture, the coarse linen shirt which he wears next his skin, the shoes which cover his feet, the bed which he lies on, and all the different parts which compose it, the kitchen-grate at which he prepares his victuals, the coals which he makes use of for that purpose, dug from the bowels of the earth, and brought to him perhaps by a long sea and a long land carriage, all the other utensils of his kitchen, all the furniture of his table, the knives and forks, the earthen or pewter plates upon which he serves up and divides his victuals, the different hands employed in preparing his bread and his beer, the glass window which lets in the heat and the light, and keeps out the wind and the rain, with all the knowledge and art requisite for preparing that beautiful and happy invention, without which these northern parts of the world could scarce have afforded a very comfortable habitation, together with the tools of all the different workmen employed in producing those different conveniencies; if we examine, I say, all these things, and consider what a variety of labour is employed about each of them, we shall be sensible that without the assistance and co-operation of many thousands, the very meanest person in a civilized country could not be provided, even according to what we very falsely imagine, the easy and simple manner in which he is commonly accommodated. Compared, indeed, with the more extravagant luxury of the great, his accommodation must no doubt appear extremely simple and easy; and yet it may be true, perhaps, that the accommodation of an European prince does not always so much exceed that of an industrious and frugal peasant, as the accommodation of the latter exceeds that of many an African King, the absolute master of the lives and liberties of ten thousand naked savages.¹⁸²

A society so organized as to promote “comeattibleness” as its main criteria succeeds both in supplying day laborers with necessary and convenient things, surpasses societies modeled off of traditional values in terms of production, and manages to keep everyone very busy with odd jobs. Smith is, in this respect, the first economist in a long line directly concerned with the position of the most disadvantaged in society, a point that

has been used to suggest the central ethical claims of his economics. Though it may be faulted, as Smith argued, for failing to provide everyone with interesting jobs, it cannot be faulted for failing to promote comeattibleness, and is thus elevated to the prime place in Smith's practical theory.

Cropsey writes,

Smith did not refer to the complex of free enterprise as “capitalism” but as “the system of natural liberty,” or the condition in which “things were left to follow their natural course, where there was perfect liberty.” Nature meant for Smith the humanly unhindered or unobstructed, and this more amply means what is not confounded by the misplaced interventions of human reason: letting nature take its course, letting men do as they are instinctively prompted to do, as far as that is compatible with “the security of the whole society.”¹⁸³

Smith believed that if human nature was allowed its free course than human effort would always bend toward bettering the human condition, individually and collectively. Brown argues that confusion over what the system of liberty stands for in Smith's oeuvre accounts for most of the misreadings. Brown writes,

The title of WN avoids any generic self-reference referring to itself simply as ‘An Inquiry into . . . the Wealth of Nations’; the significant point being that nation's wealth was now being conceptualized independently of the state and the old policy implications attaching to that, and so LJ's designation of ‘police’ was no longer appropriate. For the same reason, WN could not be named as an inquiry in ‘political oeconomy’ . . . designating the subject-matter of WN as ‘political oeconomy’ disregards the textual evidence that the term is reserved for the theoretical systems that WN is opposing. The Introduction to Book IV of WN refers to political oeconomy ‘as a branch of the science of a statesman or legislator’ which ‘proposes two distinct objects; first, to provide a plentiful revenue or subsistence for the people, or more properly to enable them to provide such a revenue or subsistence for themselves; and secondly, to supply the state or commonwealth with a revenue sufficient for the publick services’. This statement cannot be taken as a description of the objectives of WN, as WN was arguing *against* all systems that ‘propose’ or ‘enable’ forms of enrichment. WN was formulating an alternative system, the system of natural liberty, that was not premised on the directing hand of a legislator/statesman to oversee economic development.¹⁸⁴

By misconstruing means and ends, most readers of Smith fail to grasp that liberty for Smith does mean removing the hand of the legislator and replacing it with the hand of the laborer who seeks to provide for himself. Brown concludes that this indicates that Smith advocates negative liberty, that is, freedom from government intervention.

However, because of Smith's conception of man as active, I argue that Smith in fact argued for the freedom to pursue your own ends. He is an advocate of positive liberty precisely because he sees human nature on all accounts as desirous of improvement.

Advocating negative liberty would not comport with this view.

As the George Washington of economics, Smith's theory of natural liberty is important in many respects but mainly because it swings open the liberal door of choice. Smith, Minowitz rightly argues, stands against the legislators, scholars, and clergy of his day because of their propensity to use poor arguments, to favor sophistic and broken sentiment to protect their market share, and because more often than not they stood in the way of economic prosperity. In these respects, Smith is decidedly working to break down their hold on society and to do away with their conception of the virtues because they detract from important material realities. Unlike Washington, then, when Smith advocates liberty he does it without confidence that church or state will have much to offer in the long run to material prosperity or to ensuring and protecting liberty.

Anyway, that is not part of his direct concern. Cropsey rightly notes, on the other hand, that Smith's advocacy of liberty leaves open the possibility of choosing church and state despite the fact that Smith cannot advocate such choice. Instead, Smith focuses primarily

on provision of the necessities of life and measures the strength of any polity or religious system in this light. He cannot advocate anything else because he conceives of human life as primarily a material thing, a thing dependent on wise and smoothly operating economic policy.

Thought it seems a reduction of the polity or even the household to say that it is judged primarily by its capacity for provision of the physical necessities, Smith's critique was crucial in undermining the superiority of the aristocracy and the inadequacies of mercantilism and colonization. The odd result is that the sympathy Smith advocates turns out to be supported by the rationality of materiality rather than the other way around. That is, in introducing emotion, moral sentiment, to rationality and public policy the result turns out to be an attempt to rationalize emotionality. Though Smith acknowledges the possibilities of out of control emotions he dismisses their contribution to policy making, thereby rendering the public space as decidedly less emotional, a-emotional. Instead of opening the door for the expression of all emotions the bourgeois character seems to relegate emotions in the name of appropriateness.¹⁸⁵

Smith knows enough of human nature to suggest that man is certainly driven by the desire to improve his conditions, and in this respect prudence is a critical aspect of the mind. Smith's account of the virtues, as McCloskey has pointed out, is one that refuses to see prudence in a system without any counter-balances. Smith never advocates prudence on its own terms but rather as one virtue among many. The bourgeois virtue of prudence drives Smith's economics as a consequence of the fact that Smith thought prudence was too often given short shrift by the prevailing sophistries of his day. That is,

the economic system was set up in such a way that it did not run efficiently because it failed to allow people to pursue their own interests without undue hindrance from the state, the church, and thus a broken market system prevailed. By removing these hindrances to prudence the invisible hand was given an opportunity to work its magic and restore prosperity as the chief goal of the economy.

It was never, most emphatically, a part of Smith's system to suggest that self-interest could become the point of view of morality. Smith never wanted a society developed around self-interest by itself. Though self-interest is an efficient way for markets to run, self-interest is not a sufficient way for societies to run. It must always be countered, and will be countered if Smith is to be believed, by our propensity to communicate, to love, and to live.

No small controversy was sparked by the publication of the *Wealth of Nations* and the notion that it aimed at undermining the social and political institutions of its day. Indeed, Emma Rothschild has written extensively on how Smith's views were represented and misrepresented immediately following his death in consequence of the new definitions "liberty" took on as a consequence of the American Revolution to say nothing of the dark attachments the word took on after the French Revolution. Smith was castigated in the English and Scottish press for a propensity to favor French views on many matters of politics and economy. Indeed, Rothschild notes that Smith's favor of free markets became the only thing *WN* was remembered for, and its opposition to the control of information and opposition to injustice is given short shrift. Rothschild,

The *Wealth of Nations* was reduced, in the reviews of 1800, to little more than a single “principle,” and Smith himself to a zealot of “Freedom of Trade.” Yet the most subversive parts of the *Wealth of Nations* and the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* – the passages which inspired Wollstonecraft and Sieyes, and which horrified the Scottish Tories – were not even concerned with commercial policy. The occasions when Smith becomes most indignant are the very moments which were “covered up or explained away” (to use Bonar’s phrase) in the 1790s.¹⁸⁶

“The *Wealth of Nations* is, in Nathan Rosenberg’s words, “a systematic critique of human institutions.”¹⁸⁷ “But indignation is nonetheless one of the most powerful tones in his writing, and it is used, above all, of the injustice of political and religious institutions.”¹⁸⁸ Smith, thus, cannot be easily pegged because he wrote to accomplish several aims. He admired martial virtues, but distanced himself from those who represented them. He was tolerant of standing armies, but fiercely critical of expensive and unnecessary wars. His zealotry of free trade was surpassed only by his zealotry for free thought, and his disdain for the rich. Any attempt to oversimplify his arguments or to relate them to his opinions is often undermined by other passages offering conflicting sentiments because of differing intentions.

Still, Rothschild argues that Smith thought freedom was good, and also good for prosperity. She writes,

Smith’s real sentiments were obscured by Smith himself, and by his friends and followers after his death. But they amounted, during his lifetime, to a cluster of beliefs which were distinctively influenced by French ideas. He was critical of religious establishments, of war, of poverty, and of the privileges of the rich. He was in favor of public discussion. There is nothing in Smith’s politics to bely his early Revolutionary reputation as a friend of freedom, and of France.¹⁸⁹

Furthermore,

Smith was in a secular sense a man of faith. As Macfie writes, “He was an essentially pious man.” But his faith, like Hume’s and Condorcet’s, is in the mildness and thoughtfulness of most individual men and women. He is induced, thereby, to believe that they will usually not pursue their interests in grossly oppressive ways, and that they will usually wish to live in a society in which other people are not grossly oppressed or deprived. They will wish to be decorous. This and little more, is the foundation of the system of economic freedom. It is a pious hope, as well as a shortcoming of liberal economic thought.¹⁹⁰

Smith’s propensity to write ironically and at times sardonically leads to many misunderstandings when reading him. However, he adheres to a policy that promotes liberty in virtually all settings because individuals are more likely to make good decisions on their own than legislators, scholars, or clergy are to make good decisions for them. All freedom depends on the freedom of the market, but freedom is more than the freedom of the market.

Smith conceives of self-interest as a critical aspect of what it means to be human, especially in relation to human action and the market. Although he is a fierce advocate of free markets he does not promote them under the delusion that free markets are perfect. Rather, he recognizes the acute problems resulting from the division of labor. The division of labor makes the market more efficient, but it also dulls the sensibilities making workers less interesting and less interested in the world around them. By so doing it promotes negative elements in society, but on balance is still a way of ensuring greater efficiency, and greater commensurability of goods. Additionally, Smith recognizes the virtue of prudence only when it operates along side other virtues such as courage, love, justice, and temperance. Despite advocating that free markets are the best way of

enriching the populace, Smith also promotes such things as public education and public funding for defense as ways to ensure intelligent citizens who are also safe.

Smith was not an undisciplined supporter of self-interest or for that matter selfishness. In fact, he reserved his strongest tools of invective for those who would, in their own interest, seek to control markets, decrease liberty, or wantonly pursue riches and power at the expense of liberty or happiness in society. Smith wanted to decrease the level of aggression in public affairs, he wanted to weaken the influence of parties and factions, and saw a system of liberty founded on the notion of sympathy with one another as the surest means of achieving those goals. His advocacy of free markets and his desire to see self-interest protected against the encroachments of sophistries in no way undermines his contention that enmity among men is at the source of most of our public unhappiness. Despite an unwillingness to advocate religious or even state solutions to the problem of enmity, Smith had confidence that human nature was sufficiently strong to design and order a society on the principles of liberty, and that a society so designed would have the capacity to recreate the virtues upon which it depended. Smith's advocacy of markets was done, in part, because he saw markets as one of the *topoi* in which broken sentiment had its strongest hold during his day, but also because he recognized in their form the relative strength of the virtue of prudence. He saw that markets could not be made more efficient with direct control or oversight, and he recognized that markets were a place in which to see the failings of sophistries pursued to improve the interests of factions over society as a whole. For these reasons his philosophy is an open-ended and uncertain philosophy that seeks answers to

questions of efficiency, justice, and liberty. The answers he provides to these questions are likewise uncertain and up for discussion even as they helped shape the constitution of character for the last two hundred years.

SMITH FOR THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY

Before this chapter closes, I wish to examine the ways Smith is depicted in contemporary scholarship, including how he functions both as an authoritative figure but also how his ideas are alive within contemporary debates about public life. Though it would be impossible to review all the secondary literature about Smith, it is desirable to gain a strong understanding of how Smith is becoming increasingly important to those outside the discipline of economics as an authoritative voice of reason about how to deal with the ups and downs of markets and the near totalitarian application of market principles to public life, including the econometrics now infiltrating the study of politics and the law. Indeed, the three works that characterize Smith's potential contributions to contemporary problems are those of the political philosopher Martha Nussbaum, the economist Amartya Sen, and the historian Michael Ignatieff. These three works, *Poetic Justice*, *Development as Freedom*, and *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry*, respectively, represent the most up to date and thorough re-working of Smith's sympathy for the twenty first century and they see Smith's sympathy as foundational to improving much about public affairs. Likewise, they will support my contention that rhetoric and economics are a coeval worldview in the Smith's works and that together they continue to shape our ideas of social character.

Sympathy in the Law

Nussbaum applies the concept of Smithian sympathy to the law, especially the ways in which sympathy operates in imaginative literature. By directing attention to the sympathetic emotions literature engenders in readers our capacity to focus on the possible is enhanced and although emotion does not always offer a clear guide to solving our problems it does keep our minds focused on which problems deserve solving. “Another way of putting this point,” Nussbaum writes, “is that good literature is disturbing in a way that history and social science writing frequently are not. Because it summons powerful emotions, it disconcerts and puzzles. It inspires distrust of conventional pieties and exacts a frequently painful confrontation with one’s own thoughts and intentions. One may be told many things about people in one’s own society and yet keep that knowledge at a distance. Literary works that promote identification and emotional reaction cut through those self-protective stratagems, requiring us to see and to respond to many things that may be difficult to confront – and they make this process palatable by giving us pleasure in the very act of confrontation.”¹⁹¹ In other words, it is Nussbaum’s contention reading literature enables us, through the process of sympathy, to change places in fancy with the sufferer and such place-changing will ultimately lead to a more realistic approach to the law that respects the needs of humans.

Nussbaum’s reading of Charles Dickens’ *Hard Times* gives her an acute insight into the economic mind, the Gradgrind mind, that is bent on calculation, and which fails us when applied to the law for four reasons. First, the mind not schooled by sympathetic identification reduces qualitative differences to quantitative differences, suggesting that

models of prediction or even policies carried through impact only an aggregate, “hands and stomachs,” “teeming myriads,” to borrow phrases from Dickens, and never distinct individuals who may have something to say, indeed always have something to feel about such alterations in their political and social lives.

Second, “the person becomes simply an input into a complex mathematical operation that treats the social unit as a single large system in which the preferences and satisfactions are combined and melded.”¹⁹² Not only are qualitative differences reduced, but individuals lose all sense of agency as they are reduced to a set of total or average utility rendering the aggregate superior to the individual.

Added to this is the third element of the economical mind, which is to use the false in-puts of the aggregate to “find, by some sort of “sum-ranking,” or maximizing procedure, a clear and precise solution for any human problem.”¹⁹³ Faith is based on simple arithmetic but amounts to no more than fuzzy math.

Fourthly, the economic mind fails to see the mysterious inner world of human beings including their tendency to act in selfless ways a lot of the time, rather than in self-interested ways all of the time.

These failures are the result, Nussbaum reasons, of a too methodical approach to economics, to self-interest, and become especially dangerous when applied to social matters such as the law that depend upon our capacity to switch places with those who are suffering. They can best be remedied by an imagination capable of artistically rendering the complexities of the human mind as they are. Indeed, “when simplified

conceptions of the human being are in widespread use for predictive purposes, it is all the more important to keep reminding ourselves of the richer picture of human life to which such simplified models are ultimately accountable. As the novel suggests, seeing people in the way recommended by economics does tend to spill over into the conduct of life and the choice of policies: Gradgrind's vision of the world is in that sense not an innocent "as if" operation, but a way of restructuring the human world that has, if thoroughly and habitually carried out, profound significance for the shape of human societies."¹⁹⁴ "In this sense, the vision of community embodied in the novel is, as Lionel Trilling long ago argued, a liberal vision, in which individuals are seen as valuable in their own right, and as having distinctive stories of their own to tell."¹⁹⁵

Nussbaum turns to the "emotional rationality" of Smith's *TMS* to justify her claims that literature is a means of preparing the imagination for its life of public service. She writes,

But if we have no reliable filtering device, we might still wonder whether we should trust the emotions at all. I shall now argue that such a device can be found in Adam Smith's conception of the judicious spectator, and that literary relationship (as Smith himself suggests) offers an artificial construction of the position of such a spectator. It thus supplies a filtering device for emotion of just the sort that Smith thought necessary for emotions to play the valuable role they ought to play in public life.¹⁹⁶

The judicious spectator is important for being judicious, but also for spectating.

Witnessing events he is not personally involved in, although he cares about the participants as a concerned friend, renders him capable of imagining what it must be to truly share in their woes. The importance of judging the appropriateness of those feelings, however, should not be discounted.

Nussbaum writes,

On the other hand, not all emotions are good guides. To be a good guide the emotion must, first of all, be informed by a true view of what is going on – of the facts of the case, of their significance for the actors in the situation, and of any dimensions of their true significance or importance that may elude or be distorted in the actors' own consciousness. Second, the emotion must be the emotion of a spectator, not a participant. This means not only that we must perform a reflective assessment of the situation to figure out whether the participants have understood it correctly and reacted reasonably; it means, as well, that we must omit that portion of the emotion that derives from our personal interest in our own well-being. The device of the judicious spectator is aimed above all at filtering out that portion of anger, fear, and so on, that focuses on the self.¹⁹⁷

Indeed, we must use the insights of literature and the imaginative mind to avoid becoming too focused on the self. One of Smith's contributions, then, of the sympathetic mind is to avoid too much self-interest in public affairs and also to provide an avenue for us to share in the sufferings and maladies of our countrymen. It is not to trust all emotions, but only to trust those that give a more accurate picture of the way things really are, leading us to assuage the pain that really will be if our fellow citizens continue to suffer for whatever reasons. It is not a blind faith in all emotion, per se, that guides the judicious spectator, but rather emotions that contribute to reflective assessment undertaken to determine justness and reasonableness of the actions of others, including the state or the market.

Nussbaum reasons that it is just these kinds of emotions that literature, especially fictional literature, engenders in readers. She believes "that literary works are what Smith thought they were: artificial constructions of some crucial elements in a norm of public rationality, and valuable guides to correct response."¹⁹⁸ In this constitutive view,

“the judicious spectator must go beyond empathy, assessing from her own spectatorial viewpoint the meaning of those sufferings and the implications for the lives involved.”¹⁹⁹

In this way, the judicious spectator is the ideal juror, for Nussbaum, because the capacity to imagine vividly is all too critical in judging the significance of another’s pain.

Nussbaum wishes Smith’s sympathy to be applied to the law, for the econometrics of the last two decades in the law and economics movement have done too much to narrow the scope of human feeling and the power of the law to see distinctions and nuances instead of formulas.²⁰⁰ If so applied, Nussbaum reasons that the sympathetic imagination envisioned by Smith will be capable of improving decisions in the court room because it will make judges, juries, and attorneys capable of imagining what they would feel if they were in the place of the accused. Such insight is necessary, Nussbaum reasons, especially in light of the fact that the recent trends in the law have gone toward formulaic mandatory minimum sentencing laws, three strikes-you’re-out rules, and a general tendency in society to incarcerate rather than rehabilitate, to punish rather than to see subtle distinctions. Turning *TMS* to accomplish what Nussbaum suggests, that is, the possibility that “arguments from the worlds of literature, aesthetics more generally, ethics, and emotionality that were felled by Ayer’s ax come back as materially significant and testable arguments in the social-political spheres of life,” has been an ongoing project for scholars of communication and rhetoric, and suggests that a more accurate picture of humanity could be painted in what have been traditionally humanistic enterprises (i.e., law, economics, etc.) with the assistance of insights from what have consistently remain humanistic enterprises (i.e., literature, oratory, imagination, etc.).²⁰¹

The catch is to avoid going too far in any one direction when it comes to defining human nature and using that definition in public policy. For example, in the well worn copy of *Poetic Justice* that I borrowed from Jim Aune is written the following on the title page, in Aune's own hand,

If Nussbaum is right, English departments should be the most civilized institutions in the world!

Not only should this statement be read with an understanding of Dr. Aune's infectiously dry sense of humor, but it should also stand as an acute critique of Nussbaum's claims. In other words, if imagination and literature are so great, ethically speaking, why are the so very imaginative so often very poor at practicing what they teach? Why, if the power of literature is so great at making us moral, are the most literate not always moral? I suspect that an answer to the problem posed by Aune's note can be found in a line from that great imagination-ist himself, Shakespeare. When Hamlet runs off to chase his father's ghost, Horatio declares, "He waxes desperate with imagination." Indeed, English departments, or the very literate, often wax desperate with imagination, and thus a message implied in Smith's works like nowhere else is that the imagination should be balanced with an appreciation of the insights gleaned from observation and social science so as not to become wholly desperate and unfounded, or founded only in imaginings. Thus, it may be that English departments like so much in contemporary universities are out of whack for the pure reason that their strengths have become their weakness – they have overcompensated with imagination at the expense of grounding

their claims and insights in an ontological conception. Yes, imagination is *part* of reality, but not the only part.

Sympathy as Antidote for Unfreedom

Grounding things in reality is one of Smith's strong suits, and it is also the strong suit of Smith's second most important contemporary critic, Amartya Sen. Sen's theory compensates Nussbaum's well, but it also has the adverse effect of underestimating the power of social control in a sympathetic society, as we shall see. Sen, like Smith, begins from the assumption that liberty (Sen's preferred term is freedom) is the most critical aspect of any social system and that it should serve as the measurement for how fully developed a society has become. Sen's view of freedom "involves both the *processes* that allow freedom of actions and decisions, and the actual *opportunities* that people have, given their personal and social circumstances."²⁰² Thus, though an African-American male may have more income compared to a peasant Chinese farm worker, the fact that the peasant Chinese farm worker has a longer life expectancy is evidence, for Sen, that on balance determining which is more free is a complex enterprise. However, central to the claims of his book is that such arithmetic is necessary if economists want to make arguments relevant to contemporary problems. It is not enough to simply focus on the GNP or GDP without paying attention to "unfreedom."

The forms of unfreedom are various, but include famines, little access to health care, education, gainful employment, or economic and social security, as well as greater

deprivations of freedom such as systematic denial of political liberty and basic civil rights, torture, and death at the hands of those in power. Sen reasons that the tendency has been to focus only on the processes that make freedom possible without seeing the tremendous amount of unfreedom caused by lack of access to opportunities to work, see a doctor, or learn to read. “Attention is thus paid particularly to the expansion of the ‘capabilities’ of persons to lead the kind of lives they value – and have reason to value.”²⁰³ “Substantive freedoms,” the capabilities of persons, matter just as much if not more than “utility, procedural liberty, or real income,” and thus are the focus of Sen’s book. And Sen wishes to maintain markets, as well as the unfreedom they remove, while at the same time being critical of those who would foster market solutions to every social problem or who would praise the market mechanism in areas where its impact is relatively small or negative. Seeing freedom in terms of capability is Sen’s crucial insight and he claims to have grounded it in the theories of Adam Smith.

For example, Smith, as noted above, was interested in the effects of the economic system on the poor as well as the rich, and he focused tremendous energy on criticizing the rich for their selfishness and rapacity, and their failure to see the deprivation of individual lives that result from their bad policies. Sen writes, “Adam Smith’s concern with the interests of the poor (and his outrage at the tendency for those interests to be neglected) related naturally to his use of the imagination device of what it would look like to an ‘impartial spectator’ – an inquiry that offers far-reaching insights on the requirements of fairness in social judgment.”²⁰⁴ Indeed, as observed above in relation to Smith’s rhetoric, Sen notes Smith’s argument that markets act, “to a great extent, as an

antidote to the arguments standardly used by vested interests against giving competition an adequate role. Smith's intellectual arguments were partially aimed at countering the power and effectiveness of advocacy from entrenched interests.²⁰⁵ Smith's "comeattibleness" is roughly the exact same theoretic construct as Sen's *substantive freedoms and capabilities*, though Sen's is updated to apply to 21st century problems. Stemming the tide of social waste and the loss of productive capital was as much a concern in Smith's economy as it is in Sen's, and both economists recognize "the possibility that under certain circumstances private profit motives may indeed run counter to social interests."²⁰⁶

Both economists answer the problem in much the same way. For example, both acknowledge the choice should not be an either/or fallacy between pro-market or anti-market, but should be founded rather on a many-sided approach that recognizes both interdependence in society and the nature of public goods, but that also sees the limits of markets in areas like health care, education, and the need for public provision to foster equity and efficiency. Sen urges a rational approach to economic and political problems, like famine, because it is more often than not bad policy that exacerbates minor problems causing thousands upon thousands to starve unnecessarily. However, he likewise eschews the breathtaking simplicity of most rational choice models. Finally, Sen confirms Smith's notion of self-interest as including sympathy and commitment. Sen writes,

First, our conception of self-interest may itself include our concern for others, and sympathy may thus be incorporated within the notion of the person's own well-being, broadly defined. Second, going beyond our broadly defined well-being or

self-interest we may be willing to make sacrifices in pursuit of other values, such as social justice or nationalism or communal welfare (even at some personal cost). This kind of departure, involving *commitment* (rather than just *sympathy*), invokes values other than personal well-being or self-interest (including self-interest involved in promoting the interests of those with whom we sympathize).²⁰⁷

By suggesting that self-interest is more broad than most public choice rationalizers model it is to avoid making an *ad hominem* attack on the audience.²⁰⁸ Both Smith and Sen avoid this fallacy by suggesting that, although benevolence is not often involved in economic exchanges, beneficial exchanges based on self-interest often maintain an ethical and other-directed stance.

In conclusion, Sen points out that his capability perspective is nothing more than a return “to an integrated approach to economic and social development championed particularly by Adam Smith (both in the *Wealth of Nations* and in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*).”²⁰⁹ Leading a worthwhile life is at the center of Smith’s criticisms of the division of labor and the success of sophistries in educational and market matters. Sen closes with a quote from Smith, which holds that Smith was confident in the power of education and was an “uncompromising – and even a dogmatic – ‘nurturist’” in the debate on the respective roles of “nature” versus “nurture”:

The difference of natural talents in different men is, in reality, much less than we are aware of; and the very different genius which appears to distinguish men of different professions, when grown up to maturity, is not upon many occasions so much the cause, as the effect of division of labor. The difference between the most dissimilar characters, between a philosopher and a common street porter, for example, seems to arise not so much from nature, as from habit, custom, and education. When they came into the world, and for the first six or eight years of their existence, they were, perhaps, very much alike, and neither their parents nor play-fellows could perceive any remarkable difference.²¹⁰

Sen's focus on capabilities reveals much the same conclusions of Smith and even my reading of McCloskey in the first chapter, for it is not a natural inequality that dominates the human condition, but an unnatural inequality that gives so much force to the sophistries and fallacies that predominate in public affairs. By looking past these matters we become capable of seeing that human capability itself is the crucial matter of concern for economists, politicians, or rhetoricians of any sort. Supplementing the dominant argumentative *topoi* of most contemporary economists is necessary so that they deal with issues that matter to real people. "This is because," Sen writes with another insight gleaned from Smith, "human beings are not merely means of production, but also the end of the exercise."²¹¹

Embedded in Sen's updating of Smith is a theory of globalization and human progress that is somewhat disturbing to the would-be rhetorical critic. Sen reasons, much like Anthony Giddens, that the contemporary globalizing forces are like an albatross and the best anyone can do is simply enjoy the ride of market forces as they transform traditional societies and create new values for a new world. As Sen puts it,

The threat to native cultures in the globalizing world of today is, to a considerable extent, inescapable. The one solution that is not available is that of stopping globalization of trade and economies, since the forces of economic exchange and division of labor are hard to resist in a competitive world fueled by massive technological evolution that gives modern technology an economically competitive edge.

This is a problem, but not just a problem, since global trade and commerce can bring with it – as Adam Smith foresaw – greater economic prosperity for each nation. But there can be losers as well as gainers, even if in the net the aggregate figures move up rather than down. In the context of economic disparities, the appropriate response has to include concerted efforts to make the form of globalization less destructive of employment and traditional livelihood, and to achieve gradual transition.²¹²

Alas, Sen writes this as one who knows that he is an outsider when it comes to understanding the transformations of social character and the impact of the domination of the West. He is right to note that regional self-sufficiency is deeply misleading and the notion that any group of people can simply opt out of the larger system is a farce. Still, he fails, I think, to recognize the coercive aspects of a society dominated by sympathy, namely those sociological tendencies to enforce likemindedness and uniformity through always seeing one's behavior through the eyes of others. The sociologist David Riesman has written a great deal about such matters and argues, in fact, that the other-directed social character, the social character that appears to be driven by a sense of what others think of him and how he should act in order to please them, driven by a similar moral system as Smithian sympathy, is constrained by those around him to uphold their version of morality.²¹³ Hence, the pro-globalization forces think resistance is futile; the anti-globalization forces think culture should always trump economic growth.

To speak more concretely, many of the matters Sen worries about, such as the reproductive rights of women in developing countries, are rightly phrased in moralistic terms like “women's specific freedom from the constant bearing and rearing of children that plagues the lives of young women” in developing societies, when placed in the

proper context. However, when the context changes the capacity to appreciate the force of social coercion is underrepresented in Sen's analysis. The bearing and rearing of children in developing countries where bearing and rearing children is not a choice may be seen as a plague. However, conversely, the same action when it is a free will choice is met with constant ridicule in an already developed society. I remember distinctly my mother having to explain her reproductive choices to the supermarket clerk and elsewhere to would-be social critics in America who thought she had too many children. I was walking into Barnes & Noble in College Station, Texas on another occasion with my own family and the couple walking out the door whispered under their breath, "have you ever heard of birth control?" which I took as a comment that my three daughters were somehow an excessive family size for a developed nation. I am arguing that sympathy probably promotes a uniformity of lifestyle – perhaps the imagination can only stretch so far in sympathizing with others so society regulates the limitations of the sympathetic capacity by requiring each member to live according to certain implied rules of rightness and wrongness. That is, the global market is not exactly sympathetic to eccentricity nor choices that violate social expectations, since after all the morality of the market is precisely that social expectations should play a crucial role in determining what is right and wrong. Sen, as part of the West, presumes certain matters are settled as right, others as wrong, and that to object to the dominance of that system is futile. That is, of course, the natural thing to hold for someone tenured at Oxford within the present system.

Sen avoids where possible any theological points, but he does not miss the opportunity to cite an authority on un-God, namely Bertrand Russell. Sen uses Russell to suggest that there is very little evidence of the existence of God, but is quick to point out that he agrees with the religious if they think that the problems of humanity are ours, and we must choose to deal with them. He wants a system that fosters choice and gives to individuals the opportunity and responsibility of choosing for themselves, and only by breaking through bad policies is such freedom possible. Although Sen may underestimate the relative power of society to coerce choice, even in Western societies where unfreedom appears to be the lowest anywhere at any time, including his own tendency to favor a great many choices in his book, he has that Smithian confidence in individuals to choose their own way in the world and has the liberal hope that they will choose wisely and productively despite evidence to the contrary.

Sympathy in Human Rights Discourse

Michael Ignatieff, however, does deal with some of the theological implications of Western arguments about human rights founded on Smithian sympathy. Like Sen, Ignatieff is interested in showing how Smith's concept of sympathy can be reworked for the twenty-first century. He relates sympathy to the landscape of human rights discourse and reasons that human rights discourse functions as both politics and idolatry. As politics, human rights is the language that systematically embodies the intuition that our species is one, "that each of the individuals who compose it is entitled to equal moral consideration."²¹⁴ The utopia to which this language aspires is "an international legal

order with the capacity to enforce penalties against states,” and thus the language itself upsets the traditional tendency to ground rights in nationalism or popular sovereignty.²¹⁵

The enforcement of such penalties, of course, is now a bigger problem for the West since the fall of communism has left the West freer to intervene in human rights violations throughout the world. Because these interventions have been more or less inconsistent with regard to nationalism as the means of securing human rights, not only has the legitimacy of western rights standards been called into question, Ignatieff reasons, but so has the legitimacy of rights talk as a means to solving political crises. Ignatieff writes, “When political demands are turned into rights claims, there is a real risk that the issue at stake will become irreconcilable, since to call a claim a right is to call it nonnegotiable, at least in popular parlance.”²¹⁶ Instead, Ignatieff reasons that his definition of human rights as a language, “a common framework, a common set of reference points that can assist parties in conflict to deliberate together,” offers a way out of the problem inherent in the idolatry of human rights talk and its tendency to polarize discourse.²¹⁷

Human rights is not above politics, for Ignatieff, but is best seen as an example of values that can actually constrain interests to make possible self-determination. Ignatieff reasons that the main problem facing human rights interventionists is inconsistency. He sets forth four reasons for when and why intervention is justified, and although they are beyond the scope of this essay, our failure to apply human rights interventions has led other non-western cultures to view human rights claims as simply a cover for western moral imperialism. The challenge is compounded by the fact that many who advocate

the enforcement of human rights as values have held to their inconsistent applications with religious over-zealousness. Ignatieff thinks such idolatry is not warranted if human rights is to achieve its purposes. He writes, “Human rights has become the major article of faith of a secular culture that fears it believes in nothing else. It has become the lingua franca of global moral thought, as English has become the lingua franca of the global economy. . . . It is not a creed; it is not a metaphysics.”²¹⁸

Instead, rights claims are inescapably political and in this sense Ignatieff is less concerned than Sen with non-western cultures adopting Western values without giving it Western content. How people use their freedom is up to them, as Ignatieff appreciates, and suggesting or hoping that they use it to adopt Western practices is beyond the scope of the human rights advocate. However, the would-be human rights advocate should always be concerned with seeing human beings in a realistic light, and this comes more from an understanding of history than human nature. Ignatieff writes,

We must work out a belief in human rights on the basis of human beings as they are, working on assumptions about the worst we can do, instead of hopeful expectations of the best. In other words, we do not build foundations on human nature but on human history, on what we know is likely to happen when human beings do not have the protection of human rights. We build on the testimony of fear, rather than on the expectations of hope. This, it seems to me, is how human rights consciousness has been built since the Holocaust.²¹⁹

In this sense, Ignatieff invites us to sympathize with the human suffering of the twentieth century, to place ourselves in our shared history as a world. Though it is, strictly speaking, a departure from Smith’s system to build rights on a view of history than on human nature, Ignatieff is updating the sympathetic imagination to account for the

twentieth century. Looking at the horror and depravity to which humanity can go when interests are pursued in the name of transcendental, totalizing visions may serve to appropriately balance Smith's confidence in man's native goodness.

Still, the basis of Ignatieff's claims in favor of human rights grounded in "humble humanism," is founded on the capacity to experience our own pain and to imagine the pain others feel when they are subjected to human rights abuses. He writes,

We need to stop thinking of human rights as trumps and begin thinking of them as a language that creates the basis for deliberation. In this argument, the ground we share may actually be quite limited: not much more than the basic intuition that what is pain and humiliation for you is bound to be pain and humiliation for me. But this is already something. In such a future, shared among equals, rights are not the universal credo of a global society, not a secular religion, but something much more limited and yet just as valuable: the shared vocabulary from which our arguments can begin, and the bare human minimum from which differing ideas of human flourishing can take root.²²⁰

By focusing on pain, Ignatieff reveals that the roots of his human rights theory grow in the works of Adam Smith, despite the fact that this text makes no explicit reference to Smith as do Ignatieff's earlier works.²²¹ He is under no illusion that his theory offers an easy way to achieve security for the great mass of humankind, but he thinks the only way into such security is to appreciate the pain and sufferings of others and to use that appreciation as motivation to alleviate and assuage their pain.

Ignatieff's version of human rights shares with Nussbaum and Sen an approach to practical matters of interest to contemporary scholars of the twenty-first century. All three see that many of our social problems could be more adequately handled if policy could employ the capacity to trade places with those who suffer in the imagination so that it accounts for how it makes others feel. The focus is placed on making sure that

others are not unduly burdened by their sufferings, and indeed seems to suggest that one of the great moral failings of policy is the feelings it engenders in the least powerful, least rich, and least educated. Though Ignatieff seems more confident allowing freedom to operate as it will, Sen has high hopes that non-western peoples will use freedom to achieve western goals like low birth rates and better health care, while Nussbaum simply wants good judges to decide human cases and argues that good judgment must have technical and legal knowledge, a knowledge of history, legal impartiality, and the capacity to share in fancy. These are the hopes of Smithian sympathy for our age, but they depend, again, upon communication being simple, a capacity, especially in the case of Ignatieff, to bring distant sufferings home, and to make sure that emotion does not deteriorate into a pathetic emotivism with no objective or rational criteria for what is right or wrong. These are the limits of Smithian sympathy and they are the limits of who and what Smith asks us to be.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing shows that the idea of rhetoric and economics in Smith's works are indivisible. Smith does not think that our ability to talk is unrelated to our ability to trade, or vice versa. Furthermore, he shows a myriad of ways in which both talk and trade impact the constitution of our social character. In other words, Smith's writings constitute a rhetorical and economic character – a social character that actively desires opportunity to express his ideas and to work to provide for his needs.

The whole vision of the social world depends on the possibility of experiencing the sufferings of others. Sympathy is an element of our character, the element that motivates our desire to persuade others and to trade, truck, and barter with others. Sympathy is founded on Smith's idea of human nature, which he considers to be constant and unchanging in its quest for improvement. Improvement depends on material acquisition as well as a high awareness of what others around us want and think is just and good. In this way our character is constituted through our interactions with others, our desire to meet their needs, and an intense active self striving for improvement.

The only way to understand the power of Smith's discourse is to share in his confidence that human nature will do right by itself. His liberal conception of the self is one that gives to each individual the freedom to choose for himself. The expression of that freedom rests on an assurance that it will be well used. The assurance is dependable and universal because it rests on a liberal view of human nature that gives individuals the benefit of the moral doubt. Instead of compunction about how others will use their freedom, the bourgeois character learns to trust others, generally, to make the right choice.

Motive is generated from the active principle in man's nature and relates to our quest for improvement in the form of virtuous behavior. Sharing in the lives of those around us is accounted wise to a certain point, but it should also be balanced by the critically important virtue of prudence so that our sharing in other's lives does not get lost as overly pathetic expression. Prudence is the chief virtue in Smith's system and

consists of a regard for other's needs and wants. We love our neighbor as our neighbor is capable of loving us – and nothing more is required – so that self-love is love for the other, love for the other is self-love. Because we share so closely in our nature and our view of the good life sympathy is capable of bridging the gap between minds, making communication easy.

The good life consists in commensurability, access to goods, services, and people, and the freedom to pursue the goods, services, and people of our own choosing. In this way, the answer to important social questions is liberty despite its penchant to produce inequality. Only liberty provides commensurability and makes the engines of policy more efficient and smooth. Smith's system of liberty is a system for the legislator. It is a cue for deliberative rhetoricians to pay attention to the virtues of the merchant, to learn from businessmen how to improve government and the church, the whole of life. The chief bourgeois virtue is prudence, and it is founded on the capacity to share in other's needs. Though we may not agree that masters of business administration have much to offer the political realm, we should not miss the insight that the market has virtues and an efficiency of its own. Whether those virtues and that efficiency are worth altering our view of the polity, worth changing the future and transforming our characters to acquire, remains to be seen.

CHAPTER IV

AN ARCHBISHOP'S POLITICAL ECONOMY

Richard Whately (1787-1863) was a great teacher of rhetoric and logic at Oxford, chair of political economy, and later Archbishop of Dublin for over thirty years, including the time of the Irish potato famine. Still, Whately needs some introduction to those outside of the field of rhetoric. He once wrote a review of Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* that focused on Austen's skill as an "authoress," and applauded "the insight she gives us into the peculiarities of female character," which was subsequently reprinted twice in the twentieth century by Austen's biographer in *Famous Reviews*.²²² Whately's first and most popular work, *Historic Doubts Relative to Napoleon Bonaparte*, a hilarious spoof of the Napoleon legend meant to refute Hume's argument that miracles cannot be believed on the evidence of human testimony, is still in print and witty. His *Elements of Rhetoric* was the text for Henry David Thoreau's rhetoric class at Harvard, his *Elements of Logic* was very favorably reviewed by John Stuart Mill and was the leading text on the subject for the first half of the nineteenth century until supplanted by its reviewer's. The Liberty Fund website says that Whately "brought logical clarity to the previously murky relationship between morals and the underpinnings of economics. His broad interests ranged beyond religion and economics into logic, politics, social rights, and literary reviews."²²³

He wrote, anonymously, *Letters of the Church, by an Episcopalian* in 1826 that aroused controversy at Oxford for espousing the separation of Church and State, and the holding of property by a non-state Church. Whately was, after all, a genuine inquirer and

a liberal at Oxford during a time when the university had surrendered itself to Orthodoxy and Toryism.²²⁴ Whately was, additionally, instrumental in ending the religious test oaths that effectively excluded Jews from serving in Parliament by arguing persuasively that presumption, while ordinarily in favor of any existing institutions, was, in the case of restrictions and liabilities, reversed. Furthermore, the question is not, Whately argued in 1849, whether a Jew could be a fit person to serve in Parliament, but rather whether rights were being denied to the electors who ought to be allowed to select whom should represent them.

Joseph Schumpeter argued that the most important thing Whately did was train Nassau William Senior, whom Schumpeter regarded as a member of the great tradition of defining economic analysis as an immaterial tool box.²²⁵ Maurice Cowling sees Whately as an arch-devil who betrayed the Church of England into liberalism through his adoption of the language of political economy for theology, while liberal American rhetoricians earlier in this century have accused Whately of being a reactionary Archbishop who tried to retard the development of scientific and individualist rhetorical theory.²²⁶ As Archbishop, Whately was challenged by British-Irish relations, as well as the deep divide between Catholics and Protestants in that country that came to a head during Whately's tenure over the issue of public education.²²⁷ Whately single-handedly founded the first Chair of Political Economy in Ireland, and was outspoken through his sermons about aid to the poor and for greater risk capital for Ireland during the potato famine years. The point is that his religious and economic actions throughout his life informed each other and were united by his contention that rhetoric was a latent

discipline of inquiry, ever at the root of what we say we know, and thus a contributing factor to knowledge in all fields.²²⁸ Whately has only rarely been the subject of studies seeking to connect his theories of rhetoric and logic to economics, nor is he known outside of argumentation circles despite his capacity to connect argumentation to various spheres of public life.²²⁹

It is well known that the primary influence on Whately's thought came from Aristotle, the Bible, and Adam Smith, probably in that order, but what is less well known is the way in which Whately's thought brought about fundamental changes at Oxford and in Great Britain concerning the possibilities of secular social science.²³⁰ In this respect, Whately's understanding that argumentation theory is at the root of all discourses, including the religious, political, and economic, makes possible inquiry, for example, into economic questions without raising prohibitive moral questions too early. Whately is first and foremost a theorist of argumentation and in his capacity as teacher of rhetoric and logic and later political economy at Oxford, and finally as Archbishop of Dublin, his preference for good argument never wanes or diminishes. Rather, in some ways, Whately's whole contribution can be seen in terms of bringing the theory of argumentation to bear on public life in ways that sought to improve both argumentation theory and update the skill sets of citizenship for the altered expectations created by modernity, including new technology, economic expansion, new ways of communication, and an altered relationship toward scriptural interpretation and explanation. Nevertheless, Whately's works effectively suggest that ideas and arguments gleaned in religious or secular circles can speak to each other, thereby diminishing the

boundaries so popular in the thinkers that followed Whately. Thus, in retrospect, we see in Whately that good arguments ought to have currency in all walks of life, regardless of where those arguments originate. For example, as Archbishop, Whately abhorred bad argument in the clergy and detested both their practice of speaking over the heads of the congregants and their failure to say something useful, something practical that could be used to improve the day to day existence of their congregants. But, he also criticized Oxford and her “narrow prejudices, which would set Science and Religion in array against each other.”²³¹

Thus, Whately invites us to be good arguers, above all else, but his arguments favor dividing sectarian and religious influence on the study of the economy, opening the possibilities of a truly secular social science. To put it another way, Whately is one of the first theorists to distinguish between Positive and Normative economics, and he does so by employing the tools of argument he learned teaching rhetoric and logic.²³² Without that influence, Whately’s impact on political economy would long since have been forgotten, but his capacity to speak clearly about what matters and what does not matter in the study of economics was a gift that enabled him to contribute significantly in the early days of the discipline toward the pedagogical aspects of economics and its institutional place in the academy. Furthermore, Whately’s clarity led him to argue in favor of changing the name of political economy to *Catallactics*, or the science of exchanges, which ultimately makes a lot of sense given the direction of the science of economics in the late twentieth century. Still, his greatest impact on the field may be the way in which he argued in favor of its study despite pressure from many Christians in

the United Kingdom who insisted that it was an evil science that would promote usury, selfishness, and ultimately moral poverty. Ironically, the story of economics in its early days is one long trail of standing up to authorities who forbade public discussion of certain possibilities.

One recent author, dealing with Whately's "discursive project," argues that he "is the last of the great British new-rhetoricians and one of the first modern writers on the theory of argumentation."²³³ Another book that focuses on Whately's economic theory suggests that it was Whately's "single-handed achievement" to show "that a defensible demarcation is possible between 'scientific' and theological' knowledge, thereby insulating each from illegitimate encroachment by the other," and thus defeating those who opposed the study of political economy on religious grounds.²³⁴ Whately sits at a critical juncture that might be called the end of the beginning of modernity. His work, especially in terms of rhetoric and economics, invite us to consider them from a broader view that situates his message inside modern philosophical thought, and on the cusp of our more contemporary demarcating tendencies.

Both Erkki Patokorpi and Karen Whedbee are critical of earlier studies of Whately, especially those by Douglas Ehninger and I.A. Richards, because of what Whedbee calls, "temporal bias but also a disciplinary insularity."²³⁵ Yet neither Patokorpi nor Whedbee connect Whately's rhetoric to his economics. Patokorpi is directly concerned with what he calls "Whately's discursive project of the 1820s," a focus which yields much needed insight into Whately's philosophy of language, mind, and communication. Whedbee seeks to place Whately next to many of his

contemporaries to suggest that “redefining the context for his work” will lead us in more stimulating directions.²³⁶ Indeed, here I aim to make those suggestions explicit.

Reading Whately holistically is a daunting task given that he wrote via dictation, which enabled him to publish over two million words in his lifetime.²³⁷ However, by focusing on his rhetoric and economic theories it is easy to see that he was guided in both to defend the disciplines and lend legitimacy to their study. In both cases Whately is driven to show their value for the modern student and to provide arguments that would eventually lead to the intense division today between secular and sacred knowledge. Still, Whately is by no means fully responsible for our contemporary views, but he was perhaps the most effective modern to explicitly defend the separateness of sacred and secular epistemology, despite also believing in both. Furthermore, inquiring after that separation to raise the issue of what kind of moral characters are required of us to separate our views about the ultimate meaning of life and the cosmos from our understanding of how to exchange ideas, goods, services, and money is crucial to understanding something of our contemporary tendencies regarding economic science *qua* science, and for that matter religion *qua* religion.

In fact, Whately’s economics is neither very far from his religion, just as his religion seems inundated by hints from his understanding of economics. Thus, we see in Whately what McCloskey would consider a bona fide scholar, namely one who does not hide behind disciplinary insularity as a means for defending the truth of what he argues. What he argues, repeatedly, concerning economics is something like the following:

Major Premise: We have no evidence from scripture that God hates the rich *because* they are rich, or loves the poor *because* they are poor.

Minor Premise: We have evidence from scripture that God does care how we use our money, whether we bury our talents or cast our last mite to the poor.

Conclusion: God cares more about how we use our money than about how much we have.

This syllogism is then made more general when placed in the context of Political Economy, where Whately argues that nations are not judged merely by the quantity of money that circulates, but rather by the use to which they put their wealth. One consequence of that conclusion is that Whately attempts the argument that studying how a nation can more effectively produce wealth is a question that does not need to be overly concerned with morality or religion, hence the logical reduction of economic subject matter to *Catallactics*, the “science of exchanges.”

Whately’s world of nature is very much like Aristotle’s and Adam Smith’s: rhetoric is a means of understanding the natural and social worlds, but only when its subject matter includes experience, inquiry, and logic, and when it becomes a social science informed by history and moral theory. The social universe constituted by Whately’s discourse is primarily the social universe of early nineteenth century England. We see Whately rooting out the last vestiges of religious and moral sophistry at Oxford, diminishing further the remains of the clergy’s dominance over all aspects of university life. Ironically, what Smith and Rousseau had in many ways completed for society in the 18C, Whately does for the universities of 19C Britain. Namely, he embodies the quest

for a public ethic in teaching and scholarship that looks toward freedom of inquiry as the means to achieve fulfillment and realization. The central term of meaning in Whately's discourse is *reasoning*, which encompasses everything in the art of logic and rhetoric, including, most importantly, reflection, inquiry, and speech. For example, in the introduction to his rhetoric, Whately does not wish to give a free pass to philosophers when it comes to being the subject of the rhetorical critic's gaze: "for the philosopher who undertakes, by writing or speaking, to convey his notions to others, assumes, for the time being, the character of advocate of the doctrines he maintains."²³⁸ The assumption of the "character of advocate" means one is open to criticism from others in line with the art of rhetoric. Advocacy is what reasoning inevitably leads to within any subject, including, of course, rhetoric, economics, and religion. For example, Whately was often critical of those who would read the scriptures literally all of the time because they failed to account for the fact that various readings are possible and, besides, they fundamentally misunderstand the meaning of translation.²³⁹ In other words, claims to infallible inspiration in the text of scripture, or what is today known as bibliolatry, can be refuted on the grounds that they violate rules of advocacy, namely consistency across various epistemic methods. The motive, then, in all of Whately's discourse is that we should become good arguers, no matter what walk of life we are in, because good arguments and sound reasoning are the highest ideals to which man can aspire.

His arguments about argumentation and about economics are the subject of this chapter, and examining them from the point of view of White's constitutive theory about rhetoric shows Whately's desire to see rhetoric as the main constitutive element in

human nature and human knowledge, making economics both an outgrowth of rhetoric as well as the main constitutive element of political theory. It is not, as two recent writers have put it, that Whately sought the disappearance of rhetoric into economics so much as it was that he saw rhetoric as the constitutive element of every walk of life, not just the political; and, as such, rhetoric is the only means for explaining, defining, or defending any matter that bears on public life.²⁴⁰ That Whately wanted rhetoric to disappear is just not accurate given that all of human knowledge, for Whately, grows out of rhetoric. And, anyway, rhetoric never disappeared, not from the academy, not from government, nor from public affairs generally. That is, even though Whately thought that economics is what politicians are doing by way of practice, they will do it best not when they forget the rules of rhetoric but only when they remember and inculcate them into what they are doing. This is advocacy for the appreciation of rhetoric as a mode of inquiry and a way of life. To understand this argument it is necessary first to look into Whately's views on rhetoric and economics, separately, especially as they are shaped by his views about epistemology, even with regard to religious epistemology. Second, we will examine some case studies of Whately's rhetoric to show that, in fact, he is an advocate for religion being made more practical, economics being made more simple so that ordinary people can participate more knowledgeably, and religious orthodoxy being made far weaker by permitting (in his day) and encouraging (in our day) rhetorical inquiry in other walks of life. Consistently, the character that Whately advocates is one of religious faithfulness informed by human knowledge, a modern aware of the

argumentative reality behind scripture as well as the arguments in favor of pursuing scientific knowledge to better human life.

ARCHITECTONIC RHETORIC AND LOGIC

Whately's *Elements of Rhetoric*, first published in 1828, was an adaptation of an earlier article appearing in Coleridge's *Encyclopedia Metropolitana* sometime between 1825-1827. It went through seven editions as a separate work and was revised five times during Whately's lifetime. By the final edition it was more than twice its original size. Wayland Maxfield Parrish has observed that the basic structure and design of the work remained unchanged during those two decades of revisions.²⁴¹ In addition to being well circulated in the British Isles, Whately's *Rhetoric* was also a required text for Henry David Thoreau while he studied at Harvard.²⁴² Additionally, Whately's *Elements of Logic* was the standard text on the subject in Britain until it was replaced with John Stuart Mill's *A System of Logic*.

Traditionally, scholars have discounted and criticized the *Rhetoric* for being unoriginal and repetitive. The most often repeated criticism leveled at the work is that it is too Aristotelian. I.A. Richards, as part of the introduction to his study of "misunderstandings and its remedies," suggests that the study of rhetoric begins with Aristotle and ends with Archbishop Whately.²⁴³ After providing this rather strange summing up to the study of rhetoric, Richards takes on Whately's claim to offer a philosophical version of rhetoric. Richards writes of Whately,

He says quite truly that "Rhetoric is not one of those branches of study in which we can trace with interest a progressive improvement from age to age"; he goes

on to discuss “whether Rhetoric be worth any diligent cultivation” and to decide, rather half-heartedly, that it is – provided it be taken not as *an* Art of discourse but as *the* Art – that is to say as a philosophic discipline aiming at a mastery of the fundamental laws of the use of language, not just a set of dodges that will be found to work sometimes. That claim – that Rhetoric must go deep, must take a broad philosophical view of the principles of the Art – is the climax of the Introduction; and yet in the treatise that follows nothing of the sort is attempted, nor is it in any other treatise that I know of.²⁴⁴

Richards criticizes Whately for not having provided a philosophic presentation of rhetoric – a claim that might have been more forceful if Richards did not argue that no one ever has done such a thing. Furthermore, when Whately suggests that rhetoric is *the* art of discourse, and not simply *an* art of discourse he is suggesting something much more than Richards credits. Namely, Whately is arguing that rhetoric is architectonic in the sense of Richard McKeon and Richard Lanham, that rhetoric’s greatest defense is that it is *the* philosophic art, the art of communication and construction of ideas at the root of all epistemologies, ontologies, and axiologies.²⁴⁵ Truth is constructed through *the* art of rhetoric is precisely Whately’s point, though he neither had the benefit of twentieth century vocabulary to articulate that point nor the vision to make it more clear in his rhetoric text. He did, however, make that point very clear in his life’s work, especially through his contribution to the study of economics.

Richards goes on to suggest that Whately’s work is ably arranged and organized and that it provides a catalog of skills, but that no work can actually teach the skill of public speaking. Richards then criticizes Whately for failing to provide a comprehensive philosophy about how words create meaning. Richards writes,

I choose Whately because he represents an inherent tendency in its study. When he proceeds from these large scale questions of the Ordonnance of arguments to the minute particulars of discourse – under the rubric of Style – the same thing

happens. Instead of a philosophic inquiry into how words work in discourse, we get the usual postcard's-worth of crude common sense: - be clear, yet don't be dry; be vivacious, use metaphors when they will be understood not otherwise; respect usage; don't be long-winded, on the other hand don't be gassy; avoid ambiguity; prefer the energetic to the elegant; preserve unity and coherence . . . I need not go over the other side of the postcard.²⁴⁶

Richards insults Whately's rhetoric for failing to provide "a philosophic inquiry into how words work in discourse." What Richards means when he says "philosophic inquiry into how words work in discourse" is not precisely clear. What is clear is that Richards thinks Whately has failed in that goal and in the goal he set for himself, to take a deep and broad philosophical view of the principles of the art of rhetoric.

Since Richards' criticisms seem to judge the efficacy of the work by the introduction, let us meet him on that ground to establish a defense of Whately's *Rhetoric*. There, Whately muses on why rhetoric fell into disrepute for so many years and whether it is worth rescuing as a mode of inquiry. Interestingly, he answers the first question by implicitly challenging the first question. On the difficulty of the ancients' obsession with rhetoric and the moderns, at Whately's time, near total neglect, Whately writes,

When the *only* way of addressing the public was by orations, and when all political measures were debated in popular assemblies, the characters of orator, author, and politician, almost entirely coincided; he who would communicate his ideas to the world, or would gain political power, and carry his legislative scheme into effect, was necessarily a speaker; since, as Pericles is made to remark by Thucydides, "one who forms a judgment on any point, but cannot explain himself clearly to the people, might as well have never thought at all on the subject." The consequence was, that almost all who sought, and all who professed to give, instruction, in the principles of government, and the conduct of judicial proceedings, combined these, in their minds and in their practice, with the study of Rhetoric, which was necessary to give effect to all such attainments; and in time the rhetorical writers (of whom Aristotle makes that complaint) came

to consider the science of Legislation and of Politics in general, as part of their own art.

Much, therefore, of what was formerly studied under the name of Rhetoric, is still, under other names, as generally and as diligently studied as ever.²⁴⁷

Whately's answer to the question about the *worth* of studying rhetoric hinges on a historical interpretation that begins with the contemporary disparagement of rhetoric that Whately observes in his time, and ends with the conclusion that rhetoric, though often unpopular or in disrepute, is still as diligently sought after as a means of understanding the world as it ever was. In other words, no work in public affairs can be achieved without *the* art of discourse, and that central art is rhetoric in all her varieties, despite the fact that many disparage the subject and pretend to its practice without artistry.

Whately argues that the nature of democracy demands the study of the art of rhetoric, and explains its cultivation among the ancients. The success of orators in ancient times depended on their ability to “influence not only with educated persons in dispassionate deliberation, but with a promiscuous multitude.”²⁴⁸ Furthermore, Whately thinks that the “extinction of liberty brought with it, or at least brought after it, the decline of eloquence.”²⁴⁹ Democracy demands, also, that the practitioner of rhetoric conceal his art, for the distrust caused by suspicion of rhetorical artifice causes many modern and democratic speakers to carry their points while simultaneously endeavoring to keep out of sight any superiority of skill; the democratic orator “wishes to be considered as relying rather on the strength of his cause, and the soundness of his views, than on his ingenuity and expertness as an advocate. Hence it is, that even those who have paid the greatest and the most successful attention to the study of Composition and

of Elocution, are so far from encouraging others by example or of recommendation to engage in the same pursuit, that they labour rather to conceal and disavow their own proficiency; and thus, theoretical rules are decried, even by those who owe most to them.”²⁵⁰ The modern democratic orator is led to conceal and disavow his own proficiency and to decry theoretical rules as a means of establishing his ethos, despite his complete reliance on such modes of knowing and acting, both in theory and in practice.

The utility of rhetoric depends, then, on whether oratorical skill is a public benefit or a public evil; and secondly, whether any artificial system of rules and theory is conducive to the attainment of skill. Whately suggests that the ancients seemed preoccupied with the first point, about the public benefit of rhetorical skill, while moderns neglect this issue and focus primarily on whether rhetorical skill can actually be taught. The problem is that most contemporary efforts to teach oratorical skill fail because they are not real enough.

Regarding whether the art of rhetoric can be learned Whately has a great deal to say. In fact, he is preeminently preoccupied with pedagogy in all his works, and what follows is rather astute. Whately argues that imperfect comprehension of rules, or technical skills not familiarized by practice, will prove more of a hindrance than help. Whately criticizes other authors of rhetorical theory for focusing too narrowly on minutiae of style. In addition, he thinks the value of rhetoric is not perceived because of the way rhetoric is taught. A narrow focus on composing speeches on topics unfamiliar to students is a bad idea because it will lead to miserable students who hate rhetoric, probably for the rest of their life. In fact, Whately thinks that the average person is a far

better rhetorician when he must perform in real situations than in fake classroom settings. Whately is so convinced of this truth that he would, following Milton, abolish all exercises in composition. However, Whately stops short of this recommendation because he thinks there is one remedy for the problem: creative and well thought out composition exercises which engage the students on appropriate levels and stimulating subject matter.

Whately concludes the introduction by discoursing on the relationship between a good man and effective oratory. Whately reasons,

It may fairly be doubted whether a first-rate man can be a first-rate orator. He may indeed speak admirably in a matter he has well considered; but when any *new* subject, or new point is started in the course of a debate, though he may take a juster view of it at the first glance, on the exigency of the moment, than any one else could, he will not fail – as a man of more superficial cleverness would – to perceive how impossible it must be to do full justice to a subject demanding more reflection and inquiry; nor can he therefore place himself fully on a level, in such a case, with one of shallower mind, who being in *all* cases, less able to look beneath the surface of things, obtains at the first glance the best view he can take of any subject; and therefore can display without any need of artifice, that easy unembarrassed confidence which can never be with equal effect, assumed. To speak perfectly well, in short, a man must feel he has got to the bottom of the subject; and to feel this, on occasions where, from the nature of the case, it is impossible he really can have done so, is inconsistent with the character of great profundity.²⁵¹

Whately recognizes that a good man has compunction, and will not allow himself to speak on a subject without sufficient preparation. Whereas, the evil man has no such feelings but will endeavor to persuade before he has a sufficient understanding of a topic – and will, on occasion, be successful enough to discourage the good man from speaking at all. Great profundity, on the other hand, only occurs when a speaker feels “that he has

gotten to the bottom of a subject.” It is the sense of confidence that comes from “reflection and inquiry” that leads to profound and effective oratory.

Thus, the two themes Whately thinks will speak to the issue of rhetoric’s utility center around effective pedagogy and effective argument that stems from a full comprehension of subject matter. Whately writes, “the *finding* of suitable arguments to prove a given point, and the skillful *arrangement* of them, may be considered as the immediate and proper province of Rhetoric, and of that alone.”²⁵² Needless to say, that province is incredibly massive if *all* arguments are circumscribed within. He is also quick to point out the ways that arguments actually function in our every day use of them. For example, one concern Whately has is how the same arguments can lead to different conclusions depending on direct or indirect reasoning, as when “many have been induced to admit the doctrine of Transubstantiation, from its clear connexion with the infallibility of the Romish Church; and many others, by the very same argument, have surrendered their belief in that infallibility.”²⁵³ Similarly, when reasoning from cause to effect, “we may argue both ways: e.g. we may infer a General’s success from his known skill, or, his skill, from his known success: (in this, as in all cases, assuming what is the better known as a proof of what is less-known, denied, or doubted).”²⁵⁴ In other words, every day argument calls for an appreciation of ambiguity and seems to emphasize the limits of argumentation theory.

Additionally, at several points in the treatise Whately echoes Adam Smith’s theory of sympathy as a philosophy of language and communication. Whately writes,

It is, surely the natural object of language to express as strongly as possible the speaker’s sentiments, and to convey the same to the hearers; and that

arrangement of words may fairly be accounted the most natural, by which all men are naturally led, as far as the rules of their respective languages allow them, to accomplish this object.²⁵⁵

Strong sentiment, and the conveyance of the same to the audience, is a forceful means of expressing ideas clearly. Sympathy is a natural urge that prompts humanity to communicate with one another.

Indeed, nature encourages us to maintain the appearance of having something that must be communicated. Whately writes,

Universally, a writer or speaker should endeavour to maintain the appearance of expressing himself, not, as if he wanted to say something, but as if he had something to say: i.e. not as if he had a subject set him, and was anxious to compose the best essay or declamation on it that he could; but as if he had some ideas to which he was anxious to give utterance; not as if he wanted to compose (for instance) a sermon, and was desirous of performing that task satisfactorily; but as if there was something in his mind which he was desirous of communicating to his hearers.²⁵⁶

Whately is suggesting that orators should be prompted to speak only when they have something to say. It is wise counsel, a kind of minimalist approach to communication, that would have us use words sparingly and only when we can convey the appropriate sentiment intended and when we have something in our mind which we need to get out. The desire to communicate what is in our mind should be the prompt to public speaking.²⁵⁷

Whately follows the above quotation by exhorting the would be minister to ask himself,

For what purpose am I going to preach? Wherein would any one be a loser if I were to keep silence? Is it likely that any one will learn something he was ignorant of, or be reminded forcibly of something he had forgotten, or that something he was familiar with shall be set before him in a new and striking point of view, or that some difficulty will have been explained, or some confused

ideas rendered clear; or, in short, that I shall at all have edified any one? Let it not be said, that I preached because there was to be a Sermon, and concluded when I had said enough to occupy the requisite time; careful only to avoid anything that could excite censure and content to leave the hearers just as I found them Am I then about to preach merely because I want to say something, or because I have something to say?²⁵⁸

Having something to say constitutes the heart of rhetorical theory for Whately, and it flies in the face of a sophistic world that is constantly encouraging everyone to speak up, regardless of whether they are doing so purely because they want to say something.

Saying something and having something to say are the extreme opposites, and for Whately they are the difference between rhetoric and sophistry. Whately clearly prefers that we should have something to say. Otherwise, audiences will go home unhappy and, worse, they will go home lacking much needed edification. Thus, rhetoric, for Whately, interestingly requires a deep sense of understanding your subject, and, in particular, getting to the bottom of it in order to persuade others. In that respect, rhetoric can never be something light or easily dismissed because theoretically it includes deep understanding of whatever the subject of discourse.

Whately thinks that the worst kind of sophist will endeavor, after he has begun his discourse, “to appear to say something, when there is in fact nothing to be said; so as at least to avoid the ignominy of being silenced. To this end, the more confused and unintelligible the language, the better, provided it carry with it the appearance of profound wisdom, and of being something to the purpose.”²⁵⁹ The sophist will endeavor to confuse by the appearance of profound wisdom, and will always prefer to speak than to remain silent, even when – especially when – he has nothing to say. Thus, one of rhetoric’s finer qualities, according to Whately, is the capacity to be rhetorically silent;

rhetoric also includes, to avoid sophistry, a grasp of the subject matter and a desire to share that subject with others.²⁶⁰

Rhetoric was not made “to occupy time,” and that such a goal is “remote from the province of rhetoric.”²⁶¹ Furthermore, audiences fail to comprehend sophistry because they are too easily taken in by style. “They admire the profundity of one who is mystical and obscure;” Whately writes, “mistaking the muddiness of the water for depth; and magnifying in their imaginations what is viewed through a fog; and they conclude that brilliant language must represent some brilliant ideas, without troubling themselves to enquire what those ideas are.”²⁶² This statement reveals that the roots of Whately’s rhetorical theory are embedded in pedagogy, and emphasize clarity of thought and expression. His manner was to employ arguments during class to see who could withstand his criticism. Syllogistic argument, for Whately, was the province of logic, but probability and sentiment functioned in his rhetoric to induce speakers to “get to the bottom” of their topic and speak only when they had something to say. Such a theory should prompt a re-examination of current practice, for in many contemporary situations we seem prompted more by the quantity of arguments than by their quality. Furthermore, rhetorical theory today seems to suggest that we are better off “talking things through” and “working things out” than merely “getting to the bottom” of a subject through “reflection and inquiry,” first, and then talking through second.

In summary, this rhetorical theory is tied very closely to the notion of inquiry, and the rhetoric of inquiry. It is a rhetoric that puts a high value on comprehension of a subject, which of course can be aided by the tools of rhetoric, but that also depends on a

rhetor's knowledge of the subject, and a high value on speaking when there is something that needs to be said rather than because there is opportunity. Rhetoric as a discipline of inquiry has, since ancient times, known no bounds and has a tendency of turning up again and again because it is simply unavoidable. That is, those in the law, politics, economics, etc., whatever their title, draw constantly upon the art of rhetoric without knowing it, or pretending not to know it. Conversely, rhetoric functions best in the public sphere when it has a firm grasp of its subject matter, and thus it also reaches its height of impact when it is related to inquiry in other fields, according to Whately's theory. This is not to completely contradict the notion that rhetoric is a tool for thinking and speaking on your feet. Rhetoric is such a tool, but it can, of course, also aid those who know a subject to its core but find difficulty expressing their knowledge. Whately, in this view, is updating rhetorical theory in the face of modern positivism and the recognition that the orator will be contradicted by evidence and facts unless he acquaints himself with evidence and facts, and especially the rhetorical production of evidence and facts.

Of course knowledge of facts does not explain how persuasion works, even if speakers are rhetorically savvy enough to be sure to speak only when they have something to say. Raymie McKerrow has pointed out that Whately's "persuasive process is premised on a complex interaction of reason, feelings, and the will," that tends also to favor cognitive faculties over the emotive.²⁶³ Whately's affective theory is derived from Dugald Stewart's *Outline of Moral Philosophy*, and includes appetites, desires, self-love, and the moral faculty. McKerrow notes that with respect to the latter, Whately is not

concerned with whether the moral faculty is derived from sympathy or is original with every mind. Rather Whately is concerned that men perceive goodness in the world and attribute that goodness to God.²⁶⁴ Whately observes, “We have, indeed, a certain moral faculty implanted in us which is intended to help us to the distinguishing of right and wrong: this, like all our other faculties, is capable of improvement, and liable to corruption.”²⁶⁵ And yet God is beneficent because he has implanted this moral faculty within us.

McKerrow points out that although Whately admits the emotions are as much a part of our being as reason, it is the latter that is preferred in governing our agency.

McKerrow writes,

Reason does not insure morality, but it does assist in preventing the innate moral sense from becoming corrupted by illicit desires or passions. The control exercised by the feelings and by reason is set forth by Whately as a complex web of interactions, dependent on the exercise of the “will.” Because the mind is active, it can “will” itself to reason about any subject. Reason, once activated, can indirectly influence the feelings by focusing thought on an object which is likely to arouse emotion. The feelings are then in a position to directly influence the “will,” thus promoting action.

Reason alone being unable to influence the will, any message with action as its goal must direct reason’s attention toward objects which excite the feelings or passions of the audience. A speaker must first concentrate on getting his audience to “will” themselves to think about the proposal and give their intellectual assent. Since, in Whately’s model, intellectual assent is divorced from action, the speaker must engage the reasoning process once again in order to focus attention on objects which might excite emotions and, since the emotions have a direct influence on the will, effect action. The process when viewed in its totality is not simply a linear progression from argument to persuasion, but is circular in that it involves repeated attempts to engage man’s will.²⁶⁶

Although Whately favors the cognitive, in the sense that it is reason that best governs agency, it is emotion that influences the will to act, and that influences what it is

we act upon, and thus emotion can never be left out of the persuasive cycle even though it takes a secondary position. Still, McKerrow writes, “Whately’s theory of rhetoric, because it stresses arguments which appeal to man’s cognitive powers, relies on a technical concept of reason.”²⁶⁷ “Even though Whately recognizes contingency in the world, his primary reliance on technical reason has as its consequence the perpetuation of a manipulative attitude on the part of the communicator. A complete reliance on his doctrine, to the exclusion of other considerations of reason, dehumanizes man.”²⁶⁸

McKerrow also notes that Whately’s theory suffers rhetorically because it fails to account or comment on epideictic discourse. Although it is the first precursor of contemporary attempts to define rhetoric as argument, it defines argument in a narrow, technical sense, without appreciation for the role that values play in argumentation. Chaim Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca’s *The New Rhetoric*, for example, is the best contemporary attempt to argue that rhetoric is argument, and they follow Whately’s lead in giving short shrift to epideictic discourse, according to McKerrow. Man and rhetoric are dehumanized if persuasion is only a cognitive process that posits “technical reason” to the exclusion of epideictic discourse and the emotions. Whately’s dehumanizing conception of rhetoric, however, is the most critical point of contact between his rhetorical theory and his economics, because it is just this preference for technical reason without overt concern for value questions that enables him to pursue technical knowledge in a new discipline without having to shoulder the burden of value questions, be they social, religious, or otherwise. That is, by advocating a rhetoric and logic that are primarily cleared of epideictic matters, a rhetoric that is primarily concerned with

rhetoric as argument, the cultural problem with pursuing secular knowledge, the problem Whately faced at Oxford, is removed on the grounds that such concerns are not accounted argumentative. It is a way of saying that all arguments need to be heard while simultaneously limiting the scope of argument so that it does not include moral issues. That alteration in the scope of argument may, in fact, dehumanize man, but it also opens the door for a fully secular discussion of ontology and epistemology, which is, in fact a central aim in all of Whately's scholarship.

Despite a strong theological undercurrent in all of Whately's writings, "a reader of his published and unpublished papers can find no mention of any personal religious experiences or feelings. All in all, there is no trace of the introspective probing of one's own soul which seems to be typical of both Romanticism and the present age."²⁶⁹ Thus, without speculating about whether Whately ever had any religious experiences, it is clear that the practice of his discourse was to not speak about such experiences, and in this sense he is consistent with his "dehumanizing" rhetorical theory, or with what we might decide to call the framework for secular discourse. Furthermore, such practice is related to the fact that Whately does not think there is any universal method of scientific discovery. "Whately saw the making of science as basically an argumentative activity in which a solitary philosopher assesses empirical and other information and performs thought experiments."²⁷⁰ Put together, Patokorpi reasons that Whately's discursive project was principally composed of a relativist theory of knowledge, and a normative theory of discourse ethics, linked to a Christian ethic of duty, but the latter only implicitly. "Whately thinks of science as an intellectual feat by a solitary and fallible

mind. All science, mathematical science included, is subject to the cognitive and situational limitations of an individual mind.”²⁷¹ In this respect, the differences between the natural sciences and the human sciences are rendered less acute, and the appreciation of the role of rhetoric in scientific investigation is heightened because of the respect for fallibility and limitation in human inquiry. Thus, Whately’s discursive project is as much about spaying values from rhetoric, as it is about inventing the possibilities of secular discussion in the university, on the grounds that the limitations of secular inquiry be likewise appreciated as non-absolute knowledge. Whately’s own practice on both grounds seems to comport with what he argues, namely that religious experience can be left out of secular discussions, and epideictic discourse is not really a matter of concern for secular society. The impact for such theories on economics remains to be uncovered.

POLITICAL ECONOMY

A.M.C. Waterman suggests that there was a fundamental transition between the ancient regimes that established Europe and the modern nation state. This transition was the crucial backdrop to Whately’s economics. Waterman writes,

Traditional European society – Jonathan Clark’s *ancien regime* – was founded upon the unity of ‘church’ and ‘state’. In principle at least, all social theory was therefore a branch of ecclesiology. Only when a non-theological, empirical and ‘scientific’ study of society had emerged, owing no deference to the ‘Queen of Sciences’, could there be any social theory which was not ‘Christian’.²⁷²

Political economy experienced the brunt of this problem of transition because it is, and perhaps has always been, the preeminent “social science” because of its close relation to mathematics and human behavior. As such, the opposition to the study of political

economy was well founded on tradition and religion, especially the concern or confusion that riches led to a weakening in moral and physical strength. For those in power, the opposition was also one that stemmed from uncertainty about what a modernized future might look like, including a future that allowed economics more participation in public matters.

Whately opens his discourse on political economy by suggesting that economics, like rhetoric, is a tool that can be used for good or evil. Whately writes,

It has been my first object, to combat the prevailing prejudices against the study; and especially those which represent it as unfavourable to Religion. Convinced as I am, that the world, as it always in fact has been governed by political-economists of some kind, must ultimately be under the guidance of such as have systematically applied themselves to the science, I could not but regard it as a point of primary importance, to remove the impression existing in the minds of many, both of the friends and the adversaries of Christianity, as to the hostility between that and the conclusions of Political Economy.²⁷³

Accordingly, Whately's intention appears to be an effort to overcome Christian objections to the study of political economy, and he endeavors to do this by appealing to a similar argument found in *The Elements of Rhetoric*, namely that the subject is worthy of study because of its interdisciplinary impact, and its ability to contribute to society while maintaining a neutral moral stance. That is, economics like rhetoric can be employed for good or evil, and is thus worthy of study by those who would use it to accomplish good.

Whately writes,

As the world always in fact has been, and must be, governed by political-economists, whether they have *called* themselves so or not, and whether skilful or unskillful; so, there must always be a tendency, in a country where all stations are open to men of superior qualifications – there must always, I say, be a tendency, in proportion as intellectual culture spreads, towards the placing of this

power in the hands of those who have the most successfully studied the subject.²⁷⁴

Just as rhetoric survived as a subject of study under a different name, those who have governed the nations of the earth have always been political-economists in one form or another. Governance, as such, requires familiarity with the principles of political-economy, and hence, regardless of whether orthodox Christians at Oxford are opposed to the study of political-economy, they have ever needed its tools in order to govern.

Donald Winch places Whately along with Edward Copleston and Thomas Chalmers, as “those who allied themselves with Malthus in the attempt to create a Christian alternative to the heathen version of political economy.”²⁷⁵ Furthermore, Winch categorizes Whately, along with Senior, John Stuart Mill, Thomas Malthus and Adam Smith, thusly:

In their different ways, all of these figures adopted a more restricted – or perhaps it was simply a safer and tidier – view of the scope of the ‘pure’ science of political economy, one that made a firmer distinction between ethically neutral questions of the hypothetical science and its far from ethically neutral applications to final goals or policy.²⁷⁶

The critical distinction for Whately, according to Winch, is that between theory and practice, and the hypothetical opportunity to extend economics in theory ought to, of right, be protected on the grounds that it can never have a negative moral impact on society. However, when it came to policy more careful concern was required.

Whately’s lectures are aimed at altering the impression among many at Oxford that the study of political economy is anti-Christian. Whately dismisses all arguments that Christians should not study political economy because it is inimical to Christianity by analogizing the study of economics to the study of diseases. Ill-health is certainly not

Christian, and yet diseases are study on the grounds that they can be removed. Likewise, economics can be studied on the grounds that unchristian practices in economics can be challenged. Furthermore, in his characteristic style, Whately divides the notion of wealth into individual and national wealth. Whately speaks to the would-be students of political economy,

You may easily explain to them that Political-Economy is not the art of enriching an individual, but relates to Wealth generally; - to that of a nation, and not that of an individual, except in those cases where his acquisition of it goes to enrich the community. You may point out to them that wealth has no more necessary connexion with the vice of covetousness, than with the virtue of charity; since it merely forms the subject-matter about which the one as well as the other of these is concerned: and that investigations relative to the nature, production, and distribution, of wealth, have no greater connexion with sordid selfishness, than the inquiries of the chemist and the physiologist respecting the organs and the process of digestion and absorption of nutriment, have with gluttonous excess.²⁷⁷

In the first lecture, Whately is concerned with showing the neutrality of the science of wealth called political economy, and to argue that the science is primarily concerned with the wealth of nations, anyway, and not individuals and on those grounds it qualifies as morally neutral, if not good. One of the means of showing this neutrality is criticism of the name political economy, which Whately thinks was “most unfortunately chosen,” as it refers rather to the governance of a household in its etymology than a nation. He proposes, although at least fifty years too late, an alternative, *Catallactics* – the science of exchanges.²⁷⁸ The name change was a good one considering Whately’s aim of making political economy into a more neutral term, despite his preference for the study to be concerned primarily with the wealth of nations. The change would certainly have made the study of economics more rationalistic and scientific, and in some ways prefigured the

more recent dropping of the term “political” from the Enlightenment concept, so that the discipline is, since Alfred Marshall, known only as economics.

Whately continues his defense of political economy as a neutral science by suggesting that those Christians (he calls them moralists at this point) most opposed to the study of economics are the same who “also advocat[e] every measure or institution that tends to the increase in wealth.” Such inconsistencies ought to be avoided. In addition, Whately points out that wealth does not necessarily bring happiness and that poverty does not necessarily bring virtue. The affluent do spend much time in the pursuit of gain, Whately admits, “but they *may* also, and sometimes do, devote themselves altogether to Literature, or Science, or other pursuits altogether remote from this: those, on the other hand, who *must* maintain themselves by labour or attention to business, are at least not the *less* liable to the temptation of too anxiously taking thought for the morrow.”²⁷⁹ Thus, the conclusion is that more depends on the use we make of “these bounties of Providence, than on the advantages themselves.”²⁸⁰

Indeed, this is the major syllogism that governs Whately’s lectures:

Major Premise: WE have no evidence that God loves the rich because they are rich, or loves the poor because they are poor.

Minor Premise: We have evidence from scripture indicating that God does care how we use our money.

Conclusion: God cares more about how we spend our money than about how much we have.

By formulating the matter in this way Whately is able to avoid the criticism traditionally leveled at the study of economics that it is concerned solely with getting more money. Instead, Whately argues that it is concerned primarily with how wealth is used, distributed, and not merely with how it is produced.

Salim Rashid concludes that Whately's contribution is less on the theoretical level and more on the level of encouraging study. Rashid writes,

Whately's contributions to pure economic theory are few, which is not surprising since he was primarily concerned with encouraging others to study the subject rather than with advancing it himself. With his keen logical mind, Whately, it is safe to say, would have made a fine theoretical economist had he but tried he was continually urging the study of Political Economy upon children, students, laymen (especially the laboring classes), and, above all, religious men.²⁸¹

Whately made significant in-roads at Oxford and later in Dublin in encouraging the study of political economy among all segments of the population because it was this way that he thought a significant change could be made in political and economic affairs. If every member of society could understand the principles of the new art and be led to look toward the future of public policy they could participate in driving improvements. Indeed, this is the reason that Whately's most recent biographer has stated that Whately held the chair of political economy "less as a scientific observer of mercantile interchange, than as a missionary taking a new gospel to a benighted land."²⁸²

Neilson Hancock, one of Whately's students and occupant of the Whately Chair of Political Economy at Dublin College, praised Whately's defense in the face of opposition at Oxford,

It is still more difficult to form a just estimate of the full effects of that noble stand for truth and progress, and of the popularity which his example and lectures

gave to the study of political economy at Oxford. The students of that day are the statesmen of the present, and Oxford, then so full of prejudice against the science, is now represented in parliament by a Chancellor of the Exchequer remarkable above all his predecessors for the extent to which he has applied to public affairs a profound knowledge of political economy.²⁸³

Rashid summarizes Whately's view when he states that the rejection of the study of political economy "by labeling it as 'immoral' and 'unchristian' was to Whately a painful confusion of logic with ethics."²⁸⁴

Waterman thinks that Whately's *Lectures on Political Economy* were really a defense of middle ground between the Christians who decried the study for religious reasons, and against the radicals for whom he had to show that additional value premises were necessary for public policy. Waterman thinks Whately's epistemological distinction, borrowed from his former pupil, Samuel Hinds, between secular knowledge, or knowledge of nature, and sacred knowledge, or knowledge of God was serviceable to both goals. Indeed Waterman suggests that these two kinds of knowledge are distinguished only by their method. Secular knowledge consists of "theory," or rhetoric, which may or may not turn out to be true, but its truth or falsity is determined by "our own natural faculties" and on the basis of "proper evidence." Sacred knowledge, on the other hand, comes by "faith," by means of which we can see God's self-revelation in scripture. Thus scripture is not a test for secular knowledge but the means used "to reveal to us religious and moral truths."²⁸⁵ Thus, Whately is suggesting that faith is a method of gaining divine knowledge, and "theory," which may or may not turn out to be true, in other words rhetoric, is another method for obtaining knowledge. Neither

method, according to Whately, can be used to check the other without further examination given that both methods are employed by fallible human minds.

Furthermore, Waterman argues that this epistemological division became an important tool to update Paley's natural theology by smuggling in moral sense, but also a tool to combat the Utilitarians who denied a moral sense. Waterman characterizes Paley's thought as "theological utilitarianism," and argues that such a theory would have been a complete failure were it not for Whately who attached to it a moral sense. The addition of the moral sense enabled Whately's economic thought to be "a two-edged sword, one edge of which was used to cut the ground from under the feet of the utilitarians, the other to smite low-church bigots who pretended that scripture was the only source of knowledge."²⁸⁶ Whately writes,

I have said, that the object of the Scriptures is to reveal to us religious and moral truths; but even this, as far as regards the latter, must be admitted with considerable modification. God has *not* revealed to us a system of morality such as would have been needed for Beings who had no other means of distinguishing right and wrong. On the contrary, the inculcation of virtue and reprobation of vice in Scripture are in such a tone as seems to presuppose a natural power, or a capacity for acquiring the power, to distinguish them. And if a man denying or renouncing all claims of natural conscience, should practice without scruple every thing he did not find expressly forbidden in Scripture, and think himself not bound to do any thing that is not there expressly enjoined, exclaiming at every turn, "Is it so written in the Bond?" he would be leading a life very unlike what a Christian should be.²⁸⁷

Indeed, much of Whately's work in Ireland during his years as Archbishop can be viewed as a subtle attempt to liberalize, or convert, the Utilitarians who were dominating political discussions during that time and to mollify the religious bigots who would discourage any attempt to relate to Enlightenment epistemology. "One strategic, discursive instrument in Whately's pocket was the so-called 'principle of economy.' The

main job of this instrument was to establish agreement in words and thus cover from sight all disagreements in beliefs. In one of his parliamentary speeches Whately in fact gives a real-life example of the principle of economy, when trying to accommodate the Christian ethics of duty and the Utilitarian ethics of maximal expediency.²⁸⁸ Because man is a being who has many other means of distinguishing right and wrong, and because the preponderance of scripture suggested to Whately that we should use that ‘natural power’ and ‘capacity’ to do good without being told in every instance what good is, the study of political economy was a natural outgrowth of his theology and his systematic effort of liberal church reform.

Whately’s contribution to economics is primarily that of granting legitimacy to its study. Waterman writes,

What gives it such high importance in the story of Christian Political Economy is not so much its part in the origin and filiation of ideas as the sanction of respectability it conferred upon those ideas during the last decade of the *ancien regime*. For new ideas must make their way in society like new aspirants to patrician status, depending at least as much upon the accidents of patronage and fashion as upon their intrinsic merit and potential usefulness.²⁸⁹

The consensus seems to be that Whately should not be judged strictly by his economic theory, but by the change he brought about in the reception of political economy at Oxford and Cambridge, and later in Dublin. It was Whately and Copleston, Waterman reasons, who “enabled Christian Political Economy to pass through the filter and enter the mainstream of respectable opinion.”²⁹⁰ The mainstreaming of political economy was a crucial function that allowed the study to progress into areas of new ground that would have remained closed had the *ancien regime* persisted. Additionally, Waterman points out that Whately and Copleston should be most honored for their attempt to take a

middle ground between religion and Enlightenment Liberalism, and for defending orthodoxy “not by denying but by incorporating the social and physical science of the Enlightenment.”²⁹¹

Sharon Quiroz argues that Adam Smith’s strategy had been to change the terms of Mandeville’s argument: “the fundamental opposition was not between virtue and vice, equated with public and private benefits respectively, Smith said, but between public and private good, and public and private ills.”²⁹² Despite Smith’s earlier resolution, the question regarding the opposition of wealth and virtue was still strong enough to power major controversy in Whately’s day.²⁹³ All of Whately’s works, Quiroz argues, can be read as a defense of modern commercial society against an older Christian ideal society, and ideal that Whately in turn helped to reconstitute for liberal consumption.

Regarding the progress of society in knowledge and production, Whately considered such progress to be intricately related to virtue, and that one job of scholars and social observers would be to ensure that the higher virtues eventually won out over the lower virtues. For example, regarding man’s propensity to seek after knowledge and to share it, Whately writes,

And here, again, we may perceive the benevolent wisdom of Providence, in not making the public good dependent on pure public-spirit. He who labours to acquire, and then to communicate, important knowledge, solely, or principally, with a view to the benefit of his fellow-creatures, is a character far more admirable than it is common. Knowledge would not have made the advances it has, if it had been promoted only by such persons. Far the greater part of it may be considered as the gift, not of human, but of divine, benevolence; which has implanted in man a thirst after knowledge for its own sake, accompanied with a sort of instinctive desire to impart it. For I think there is in man, independent of the desire of admiration, (called, in its faulty excess, *Vanity*,) which is a most powerful stimulus to the acquisition and propagation of knowledge – independent of this, I say, there is, connected with the desire of gaining

knowledge, a desire (founded, I imagine, on Sympathy) of communicating it to others, as an ultimate end. This, and also the love of display, are, no doubt, inferior motives, and will be superseded by a higher principle, in proportion as the individual advances in moral excellence.²⁹⁴

Thank heaven, Whately reasons, that public good does not depend upon pure public spirit. Sometimes, public good comes from a private desire for gain. And yet, despite this reality, we should promote, or at the very least allow, the private desire for gain or knowledge to be pursued solely on those grounds given that it may eventually lead to public good. “These motives constitute, as it were, a kind of scaffolding, which should be taken down little by little, as the perfect building advances, but which is of indispensable use till that is completed.”²⁹⁵ The inferior motives serve an important purpose even if they ought to eventually be replaced by higher order virtues.

Indeed, Whately’s lectures on political economy “firmly collapsed national wealth into civic virtue.”²⁹⁶ It did not do so, however, without some qualification, namely that although growth in national wealth would precede growth in civilization and morality, it would also necessitate self-awareness regarding the virtues lost in promoting wealth. That is, as the pursuit of knowledge may be aided by ulterior motives, the same is true for economies because ulterior motives here also promote the general good.

Whately writes,

Let a Nation, though still in a rude state, possess the knowledge of some of the simplest and most essential arts – a certain degree of division of labor – and above all a recognition, and tolerable security, of *property*; and it will not fail, unless very grievously harassed by wars, inundations, or some such calamities, to increase its wealth, and to advance, more or less, in civilization.²⁹⁷

Despite the fact that the advancement in wealth requires some lesser virtues to be promoted, advancement in wealth also lays the foundation for higher virtues to be pursued and promoted. Thus, we ought to allow wealth to increase.

The collapsing of national wealth into civic virtue is made more abundantly clear in the following passage. Whately writes,

On the whole, then, there seems every reason to believe, that, as a general rule, that advancement in National Prosperity which mankind are, by the Governor of the universe, adapted, and impelled, to promote, must be favourable to moral improvement.²⁹⁸

Admittedly, this is a very confusing passage. I take it to mean, 1. God programs humans to promote economic growth, and 2. Economic growth (nationally) improves morality. Economic growth, in fact, Whately reasons, is impeded primarily by “slothful and negligent habits, by war, rapine, and oppression, (in short, by violations of divine commands,) which progress inevitably tends towards a greater and greater moral corruption.”²⁹⁹ On the other hand, national prosperity at least has the potential to open doors of opportunity for those who would not have a chance to progress morally, and thus it should be promoted. At the very least, even if those against national progress are right, that no economic growth and progress is preferable to economic growth and progress given that the latter undermines higher virtues, they advocate a melancholy truth.

In summary, Whately sees that lower order virtues are promoted so that national wealth can increase. However, he prefers this promotion given that it is only scaffolding, only a temporary defacement on the nation that can be later removed when the higher virtues are promoted *as a direct result* of the growth in national prosperity. To suggest

that national growth should be curbed or halted because it requires a temporary promotion of lesser virtues is, at the very least, melancholic advice. One wonders, however, how Whately's argument might hold up in the face of globalization, given that national wealth is no longer seen as the chief priority of economies, and that the connection between wealth and virtue may be murkier today than it was in Whately's day. Interestingly, those who favor material and social progress in a liberal sense, do so knowing that such progress may undermine the virtues upon which material and social progress was first reared. In other words, liberals still face the problem that advocacy of a liberal system of social and economic growth depends upon virtues that it does not of itself readily summon.³⁰⁰ Whately resolves this point in his writing by arguing that promotion of lower order virtues, such as vanity or utility, presents no terrible problem because they potentially increase civic or national virtue by nature of what they can accomplish. Furthermore, Whately holds out hope that as national and civic virtue increases we will find higher order motives to guide our actions in the public sphere that will allow us to tear down the lower order virtues as so much scaffolding. The catch, however, as I see it, is that we have relinquished ourselves to a system of economic prosperity that is contingent upon economic growth, tying us to a depletion of our natural resources and to the increased production of goods and services in a disconnected way from the needs of individuals within society; that is, there never seems to have been a point when the higher order virtues gained the higher ground in order to remove or reform the bourgeois virtue system. Still, as a matter of ingenuity, Whately's arguments serve the purpose of convincing many within the Church of England and in English

society that the pursuit of wealth is not necessarily an evil, and that the sin of avarice is not necessarily unique to the rich, despite the fact that Christian political economy declined sharply after Whately's time.

ARCHBISHOPRIC CASE STUDIES

In 1832 Whately was appointed to be Archbishop of Dublin by Earl Grey. The Earl had never met Whately before his appointment, but the appointment was not surprising because the Whigs were looking for liberal churchmen who would reform the church from within and because the Whigs shared Whately's "enthusiasm for the new academic discipline of political economy." Furthermore, many years after his appointment, Lord Brougham recalled that he promoted Whately's appointment by recommending one of his [Whately's] books to the premier, Lord Grey. As a result, Grey gave his recommendation to Whately with "perfect confidence."³⁰¹ Thus, Whately's scholarship played a dominant role in his appointment as Archbishop, especially his agreement on economic matters. Nearly his first move once in Ireland was to establish a Chair of Political Economy at Trinity College, Dublin. Whately personally selected the chairs during his lifetime and paid their salaries from his own pocket. The chair carried a five-year appointment and required the delivery of nine lectures each year and the publication of one of those lectures. The chair served the function of attracting young graduates, most of which did not enter the field of political economy after their service, and had the effect of bringing a succession of young minds in contact with the

subject and ensured the publication of their views, an effect, foreseen, no doubt, by Whately.³⁰²

Thus, many of Whately's important contributions as Archbishop came in the form of his rhetoric of political economy. In particular, part of his message was to show that scripture and religion has reasonable and rational things to say about economics. Additionally, Whately understood that many of the problems facing the people of Ireland were a direct result of poor economic planning and bad economic actions. Though he suspected and often claimed that some of these poor plans and acts were a result of Catholicism, his chief concern hinged on educating the populace and the clergy about the contribution that rational economic thought could make to effective aid to the poor, including the working poor. J.G. Smith writes that Whately was a strong influence in Ireland, and, "for the next thirty-four years, until his death in 1865, he was an outstanding personality in every movement in Ireland which was concerned with education and with culture."³⁰³ Whately made his presence felt in economics by publishing a shortened version of his *Lectures on Political Economy* as *Easy Lessons on Money Matters for Young People* (1837). The condensed version was part of a larger project Whately headed to create effective but cheap schoolbooks for Irish children, schoolbooks that were so well done a conservative estimate suggests that over 1 million were in circulation in England by 1859 (in addition to the over half million circulating in Ireland by 1852).³⁰⁴ This led to great resentment on the part of English publishers who contested the publication of the schoolbooks in England, ironically because, they claimed, that the publication went against free market principles by allowing

government to participate in the market for schoolbooks.³⁰⁵ Of course the reason the books were printed was to provide cheap, effective books. Nevertheless, the success of the schoolbooks led Whately to rework them for a working-class audience with whom they found a great and grateful acceptance. Akenson writes of Whately, “for a time he became not only the head schoolmaster of the Irish people, but through his school texts one of the chief instructors of the English working classes as well.”³⁰⁶

In addition to working in education, Whately also chaired a committee to study the poor in Ireland while he was Archbishop. His service on this committee meant that he knew more, by 1835, about the condition of the Irish poor than anyone previously had known.³⁰⁷ In fact, Whately was also archbishop during the Irish potato famine, and he was quite critical of the Irish in general for having brought the famine on themselves by their ignorance of economic matters. Whately surmised correctly that the problem facing Ireland was that she was starved for risk capital. Ireland, in Whately’s view, had been diligent in her religious observance, but had neglected the active services that must be performed as men in order to withstand the difficulties of economic hardship.³⁰⁸

In order to more fully develop Whately’s contribution to economic rhetoric, I examine three of his works during Archbishop that serve as good artifacts of economic rhetoric and can be instructive more generally for the purpose of aiding our discussion of character and virtue in the concluding chapter. Despite the fact that Whately’s scholarly project is still worthy of study, very little work has been done drawing directly on his insights, so in lieu of examining the impact of his rhetoric, economic and otherwise, in contemporary times, I propose to examine three separate case studies of his own rhetoric

for a deeper understanding of what Christian political economy meant in the nineteenth century. These case studies are chosen as representative of Whately's work as Archbishop, and the way in which his economic theory impacted that work in different areas of responsibility.

The first artifact, "Christ's Example, An Instruction as to the Best Modes of Dispensing Christian Charity," (1835), a sermon, was delivered for the purpose of providing aid for a Christian hospital.³⁰⁹ The second artifact, *Easy Lessons on Money Matters for the Use of Young People* (1836), is a short essay, written for young people and their working class parents in Ireland to instruct them in the basic workings of the economy and the consequences of certain economic behaviors. The third artifact, "Reflections on a Grant to a Roman Catholic Seminary; Being a Charge," June 1845, contains the substance of a speech Whately delivered in the House of Lords 3 June 1845 to defend the state's contribution to a Roman Catholic Seminary in Ireland.

These artifacts represent three different genres of discourse, a sermon, an educational essay for widespread public consumption, and a political speech in the House of Lords. As such, they provide varying glimpses into Archbishop Whately's rhetoric as Archbishop, especially as that rhetoric impinged on economic matters. Decidedly, these are not exhaustive of the numerous artifacts available to a critic of Whately's work, and yet it is hoped that they will in some way represent consistency across occasions as well as insight into the workings of Whately's mind as it tried to grapple with the difficult issue of relating Christian belief and practice to the liberal economics he both lived, taught, and believed would be central to assuaging many of the

social problems faced by his Irish constituency. The lessons from these works will likewise illuminate, it is hoped, not only specific moments of economic decision making in the nineteenth century, but also what is required of the “Christian Political Economist,” or the Christian who entertains hope of participating in the modern and liberal marketplace. This discussion will, of course, have greater relevance in the last chapter of this work where discussion Deirdre McCloskey’s conception of the bourgeois virtues is related and compared to the Homeric and Christian virtues.

Christ’s Example on Dispensing Charity, 1835

In Whately’s sermon, “Christ’s Example, An Instruction as to the Best modes of Dispensing Charity” delivered in 1835, Whately argues, speaking of Jesus, that “so many of the things He said and did, were designed to answer *several different* purposes at once.”³¹⁰ In this respect, we should observe his actions not only for the doctrines that they teach or for the spiritual effect of his ministry, but also for their practical benefit as exemplary of human behavior. It goes without saying, Whately observes, that the Christian is under some obligation to dispense charity to those he may meet, but Whately wants to uncover the “best modes” of dispensing such charities. He observes that Jesus was sustained by contributions given by those disciples who had sufficient means for such support. He also notes, for example, that each time Jesus used supernatural powers to feed the hungry, he also used natural powers, on each occasion, to take care and “gather up the fragments that remained, that nothing might be lost.”³¹¹ This suggests that Jesus did not design ordinarily to repeat a miracle if not necessary. However, Whately

notes, “we meet with no instance of any one’s applying to Him for a cure *without* obtaining it.”³¹² Thus, two practical matters Jesus taught about dispensing charity to the poor are, first, we should take care to gather leftovers so they might go as far as possible, and, second, we should, whenever asked, offer assistance.

From these observations, Whately suggests that Jesus meant to tell us something, namely that he [Jesus] did not intend to provide the daily renewal of the miracle of feeding the five thousand. Though it may have been in his power, Jesus was did not provide literally for each person’s welfare during his mortal ministry. Whately says,

But it seems at least probable, that in making the relief of the sick and his constant and habitual exercise of beneficence, and the feeding the hungry, only occasional, our Lord did design to afford us some instruction from his example, as to the mode of our charity. Thus much, at least, we shall find is certain – that the reasons for this distinction are now, and ever must be, the same as at that time.

The distinction I mean is this – all the distresses and wants of men, which can be relieved by their brethren, may be regarded as coming under two classes; the first comprehending, not merely hunger, but all the wants which depend merely and wholly on *poverty*; the other comprehending not only sickness, but all such destitution as is the result both of sickness and of every description of casual infirmity – such as blindness, dumbness, idiocy, lunacy, and the like.

Now, the relief of distresses of this latter class, has plainly no tendency to *increase the want* of such relief. Careless and uninquiring bounty may, indeed, induce impostors to *feign* sickness or infirmity, for the sake of imposing on the credulous; but the number of those really sick or helpless is evidently not increased, but rather diminished, by the aid afforded them. On the other hand, the relief of mere poverty – the supply of food, clothing, and the like, to all that are in want of them – if this be done, not occasionally, and in certain peculiar cases, but regularly and indiscriminately – such charity so distributed must manifestly tend to multiply its own objects. It could not fail to happen but that vast multitudes would forsake their usual occupations and cease to work, when they found that they could be maintained in idleness.³¹³

Like many of his contemporaries, Whately is arguing via the insights of political economy, that Christian charity should not be put in the service of greater economic

distress for those who are the target of such charitable offerings. He appreciates the fact that there are many different kinds of distress, including many different reasons why individuals are economically disadvantaged. Sometimes the disadvantage is only temporary, other times it is of a more lasting kind. Christians, Whately observes, should take care that their aid does not in fact increase the suffering of those it is intended to relieve. This seems like a very reasonable concern, and especially in light of the fact that the sermon is being delivered for the express purpose of soliciting contributions to a relief and clothing fund at Stevens' hospital that will not indiscriminately provide aid to those who seek it.³¹⁴ But, is it also a legitimate religious concern?

Whately says if a Christian does not take this second step to ask whether his aid in fact does the poor good rather than deprive him of opportunity to earn money legitimately somewhere else in the economy, then "He must be like a shipwrecked mariner, whom, by the most laborious and judicious exertions, we should have saved from perishing in the waves, and then left unaided to die of exhaustion on the beach."³¹⁵ Moreover, Whately opines that perhaps those who give charity indiscriminately are, after all, aiding only their own conscience rather than having a true charitable concern for others. Our alms to street beggars do not rescue, and are not even designed to rescue those who ask for our help. Thus, we should contribute "to preserve, not *in* beggary, but *from* beggary."³¹⁶ This can only be done Whately notes in this sermon, by making contributions that alter the scene, institutionalizing aid thereby perpetuating its usefulness for the future.

An interesting drawback of institutionalizing aid to the poor is that many of those who give aid to institutions never see those who are benefited by that aid. Whately says some deliberately avoid the sight “because it would give them uneasiness and disgust,” while others simply do not seek opportunity of visiting the distressed poor, “and thus it is that there is considerable truth in the common saying, that half the world do not know how the other half live.”³¹⁷ Still, those well off who do encounter the poor do so most often in the form of street beggars. These commit a sin, Whately says, when they offer aid to poor beggars because they create incentive for street beggary. Whately says,

And what would you say of the *sin* – I say the *sin* – of any one who should contribute to keep up the number of these wretched victims, and perpetuate so vast an evil? Now, since it is plain that *if no one relieved beggars*, there would be *no such class of persons* as beggars, such *is* the *sin* of every one who does give alms to them; and such is the evil he will have to answer for having helped to keep up; for he who gives to a beggar does not even think to rescue him *from* beggary, but encourages him to continue in beggary.³¹⁸

This seems an interesting statement under the heading of “Christ’s Example,” but it is representative of the kind of rhetoric spoken by many in England and America during the nineteenth century. The application of economic logic to this religious occasion suggests giving alms to street beggars creates incentive for begging, incentive for idleness instead of work. In the context of a sermon to persuade listeners to give to a new institutional arrangement for relief to the poor, perhaps Whately’s claims make more sense, but the overall tone of the passage suggests something more like too much logic applied to religious behavior and too little sentiment.

He returns to a more sympathetic account of religion when he discusses how the rich respond to giving alms. Whately said,

Many, however, are accustomed to say, too hastily, that they cannot *afford* to give, or that they give as much as they can *afford*, without enough considering how much they contrive to afford for expenses of a very different kind – for costly dress – (perhaps often beyond their station in life) – for luxury and ostentation of various kinds: and then, afterwards, they give to the poor all that they can spare – spare, *i.e.* from their superfluous abundance – from that which they hardly know how to dispose of otherwise; instead of delighting to make some *sacrifice* for Christ’s sake, and to mark their love to Him and to their brethren for his sake, by denying themselves some gratification of vanity or sensual enjoyment. Instead of fulfilling the precept, “seek ye *first* the kingdom of heaven,” some persons rather reverse it, as if it had been “seek ye *last* the kingdom of heaven, after every thing else has been amply provided for.”³¹⁹

Keeping in line with Smith’s criticisms of the rich, Whately notes that better-off Christians are more apt to consider the poor last, after everything else has been provided for, and also likely to overestimate their “needs” relative to their capacity to aid the poor. “It is impossible,” Whately continues,

to lay down any rule which will apply itself to each particular case. Each best knows his own circumstances: and his own heart he will *one day* know, though he may not know it now. The best rule, therefore, that can be suggested is, to look forward to *that* day; to consider attentively, not what you are most inclined to do *now*, but what article of expense you will look back to with most satisfaction at the hour of death, and at the day of judgment, thousands of ages hence, and for ever: and then give bountifully according to your means, but “not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver.” Pray then that He will give you a kind, and liberal, and Christian heart – the heart to feel highly honoured in your being thus made a fellow-labourer and companion of our Lord, in ministering to the wants of those He calls his “brethren.”³²⁰

Thus Whately ends the sermon by considering on what we might give if we were faced with our own mortality, just as surely as the poor are often faced, and then give cheerfully, kindly, and liberally. In this sense, one of the practical insights that religion offers to economic behavior is that it invites us to consider more motives than merely our benefit, to be ware of giving grudgingly or to please others, and to think at least as much of fraternity we do of liberty when making economic choices.

Easy Lessons on Money Matters, 1836

As part of a quest to educate the Irish, young and old, rich and poor, Whately's *Easy Lessons on Money Matters for the Use of Young People* stands as a tremendously rich and fitting monument. Extracts of the proposed work were first published in the *Saturday Magazine* and these having satisfied the English Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge that such a work on political economy for young people had merit, moved the committee to commission John W. Parker to publish the complete work. However, the society insisted that their official publisher, John W. Parker, print the work as a private venture because of suspicion that political economy was not a worthy subject of study.³²¹ Akenson estimates conservatively that Whately's text was used to educate over 340,000 children in Ireland and England. By 1862 the text was in its sixteenth English edition, and translated into dozens of languages, including Maori. Some of the English editions were even targeted at working-class children and their parents as a means of improving their understanding of political and economic matters, "and certainly in the middle third of the nineteenth century the total number of English and Irish children who were taught Whatelian political economy during their elementary schooling numbered not in the hundreds of thousands, but in the millions."³²²

The impact of the book recommends inquiry after its contents and despite the fact that it is little read today the *idea* of such a work is what especially recommends it to us. Of course, aimed as it is at a juvenile audience the content of the text is neither surprising nor anything more than simple. A mere eighty-six pages it could easily be read in an hour, perhaps two or three for a child of eight. Nevertheless, it contains some

interesting ideas about political economy and its rhetoric. Whately begins by noting the universality of economic practice, and hence the need to understand how economies work, including the fact that much of our economic behavior is governed by habit and common sense. He also warns that the lessons “were not designed to be learnt continuously, but at intervals; intermixed with corresponding lessons in Sacred and Profane History, Geography, Natural History, and whatever else the learner may be engaged in. . . . If this method should be adopted, perhaps a year or two may intervene between the beginning and the concluding of this little work.”³²³ Though such an extended time for studying such a short work seems incredibly excessive to one who has read the work, the notion that political economy is only one subject among many is refreshing from an economist, for like rhetoric, economics has also a tendency to extend itself as a mode of seeing the world into every nook and cranny of our lives.

Whately creates an imaginary dialogue in the preface between a teacher and a pupil, wherein the teacher is made to say,

Don’t you think it very foolish for different nations to quarrel and fight, and refuse to trade with one another? God has made other countries useful to us, and has made us useful to other countries. Did not God mean to show us by that arrangement, that we ought to live in peace with one another, and to assist one another?³²⁴

Here the notion that we are all children of God and brothers and sisters on the earth is used to advocate the idea of free trade with other nations and to discourage war. Later, in the lecture on commerce, Whately reiterates this idea: “What a folly it is, as well as a sin, for different nations to be jealous of each other, and to go to war, instead of trading together peaceably; by which both parties would be the richer and the better off. But the

best gifts of God are given in vain to those who are perverse.”³²⁵ Such passages tie morality, religion, international conduct, and free trade policy together with seeming ease. It is also suggested subtly that trade is a means of replacing war in international affairs.

In a lecture on value, Whately points out that value is not always a matter of how useful a thing is, but is rather a matter of their exchange value as well as their scarcity.

Whately writes,

To understand this, you must remember that it is not always the most *useful* things that are of the most *value*. Nothing is more useful than air and water; without which we could not live. Yet these are, in most places, of no *value*, in the proper sense of that word; that is, no one will give anything in *exchange* for them; because he can have them without. . . . It is *scarcity* that gives value.³²⁶

He also later foresees the labor theory of value,

It is not, therefore, labour that makes things valuable, but their being valuable that makes them worth labouring for. And God, having judged his wisdom that it is not good for man to be idle, has so appointed things by his Providence, that few of the things that are most desirable can be obtained without labour. It is ordained for man to eat bread in the sweat of his face; and almost all the necessaries, comforts, and luxuries of life, are obtained by labour.³²⁷

These selections from the lecture on value suggest that Whately’s attempt to present economics in a simple way is fairly successful. The use of definition, example, and scripture are also matters for serious consideration.

The lengthiest section of the work deals with the economic gap between rich and poor, including the causes and effects of the gap, which are depicted as both positive and negative. In Lesson VII, Whately writes of the rich upper class who are not required to labor,

There can be but few of such persons, compared with those who are obliged to work for their living. But though there can be no Country where all, or the greater part, are rich enough to live without labour, there are several Countries where all are poor. And in those Countries where all are forced to live by their labour, the people are much worse off than most of the labourers are in this country. . . . It is, of course, not to be expected that *many* poor men should become rich; nor ought any man to set his heart on being so; but it is an allowable, and a cheering thought, that no one is shut out from the hope of bettering his condition, and providing for his children.³²⁸

It is easy to see the moralizing aspect of this discourse, including the paraphrasing of scripture to make points about the morality of certain economic conditions. Additionally, however, is the inclusion of a sense of fairness when liberty is the implied as the chief value. Although the argument expressed in this passage is entirely lifted from Adam Smith, the sentiment it conveys is unique to Whately and to a “Christian” vocabulary of economic fairness.

He goes on to echo Smith in his defense of rich men, even selfish rich men, so long as they use their wealth to some purpose. Whately writes,

Some rich men, indeed, make a much better use of their fortunes than others: but one who is ever so selfish in his disposition can hardly help spending it on his neighbours. If a man has an income of five thousand pounds a year, some people might think at first sight, that if his estate were divided among one hundred poor families, which would give each of them fifty pounds a year, there would thus be, by such a division, one hundred poor families the more enabled to subsist in the Country. But this is quite a mistake. Such would indeed be the case if the rich man had been used to *eat* as much food as one hundred poor families, and to wear out as much clothing as all of them. But we know this is not the case. He pays away his income to servants, and labourers, and tradesmen, and manufacturers of different articles; who lay out the money in food and clothing for their families. So that in reality, the same sort of division of it is made as if it had been taken away from him. He may, perhaps, if he be a selfish man, care nothing for the maintaining of all these families; but still he does maintain them.³²⁹

This parable of a rich man, as it were, shows a great deal more respect for the rich than Smith was ever willing to show, however, it does represent one of Smith's central messages and that is that individuals should be left alone to make use of their economic resources, and when this is done all are still in some way benefited.

Whately seems to be contradicting himself slightly because he had earlier maintained in his *Introductory Lectures on Political Economy* that God in fact cares deeply about what use we make of our money. In this passage he seems to be suggesting that the rich are less accountable for the use of their wealth so long as they do use it. The rich man does not really "consume" his wealth, "but is the only channel through which it flows to others."³³⁰ Yet, a page further he points out that the rich man's use of his riches "is no merit of his. On the other hand, a rich man who seeks for deserving objects to relieve the and assist, and is, as the Apostle expresses it, 'ready to give, and glad to distribute, is laying up in store for himself, a good foundation for the time to come, that he may lay hold on eternal life.' It is plain from this, and from many other injunctions of the Apostles, that they did not intend to destroy among Christians, the security of property which leads to the distinction between the rich and the poor."³³¹ Indeed, any scriptural injunction for the rich to give to the poor would be absurd if it was not allowed that any should be rich, "and there could be no such thing as *charity* in giving anything to the poor, if it were not left to each man's free *choice*, to give or spend, what is his own."³³²

The rhetoric, then, of *Easy Lessons on Money Matters* is to mingle scriptural injunctions and syllogisms from the scripture with the philosophy of economics in such a

way that the two seem to correspond to each other, thus rendering instruction in both *faith* and *theory* at once suggesting that the two methods in Whately's mind could at least function simultaneously to address certain problems. That such a mixture is entirely appropriate within the confines of religious instruction in a religious school makes sense, although such instruction would today, at least in America, spark much controversy about what counts as a significant means to knowledge and about whether such instruction could enable the learner to function appropriately in society. Nevertheless, the aim to simplify the science of economics so that it could be easily understood by both the laboring classes and children is a noble pursuit, and *Easy Lessons* is certainly committed to that end, even if it aims to accomplish it by mixing religious discourse with liberal, progressive discourse.

Reflections on a Grant to a Roman Catholic Seminary, 1845

In a sermon delivered in November of 1844, "The Christian Duty of Educating the Poor," Whately argues that the only evident difference between a degraded, ferocious, mischievous, treacherous brute and a civilized, enlightened Christian is *education*. "Each one of you would, if by some accident you had been left alone in infancy on the coast of New Holland, and reared among those savage tribes, have grown up to manhood as one of them. . . . Are you then duly sensible of the bounty of that Providence who has thus favored you? If so, you cannot but rejoice in the opportunity of doing something, according to your means, towards imparting a like benefit to your poorer brethren."³³³ Hence, the modern Christian is duty bound to provide for the

education of their poorer brethren, not because such is a specific injunction of scripture, but rather, Whately reasons, because such can be inferred from the fact that we are dependent upon each other for every advantage we receive, and that education is a channel of aid to the poor through which the most good can be accomplished in providing them with the other necessities of life.

Educating the poor does “both a *greater amount* of good, and also a more *permanent* good . . . than could be effected in most other ways at the same cost.”³³⁴

Thus,

Without deprecating the duty of relieving the bodily wants of our poorer brethren, it does seem to me one of the most important of our duties, to feed the hungry and thirsty *mind* – to relieve those whose sickness consists of intellectual and moral disease or infirmity – to clothe those whose nakedness is mental, with whatever sound principles and useful knowledge we can supply to them, and to release them from the bondage of gross ignorance and barbarism, giving free play to the faculties with which man is endowed by his Maker. This is a kind of good, we should remember, which can be accomplished to a greater extent than many others which we are bound to aim at. The distresses of penury and sickness we can relieve in this or that *particular instance*, and we are bound to do so according to our opportunities; but these are evils which can never, with all our efforts, be completely *abolished* in this world. But gross barbarian and brutish ignorance *may*; if all men would be exert themselves as they ought. . . the savage ignorance of the totally uneducated is an evil which might be *wholly* eradicated.”³³⁵

The good of educating the poor is one that might be accomplished “wholly,” “abolishing” and “eradicating” ignorance, and the chance of success is offered as one reason why it *ought* to be pursued by Christians who are otherwise specifically commanded only to relieve the hunger and thirst of the body. Some may consider Whately’s metaphorical use of feeding and clothing the mind to be a mere stylistic attempt to assert the rightness of educating the poor, and such it is, but it is also a logical

extension of the command regarding the body given that very little distinction can be made between providing the poor with an education and providing them with the means to seek out their own solutions to their economic or bodily woes.

Such was the philosophy that guided Whately's actions and rhetoric through the Maynooth episode of 1845, which Akenson describes as a controversy with "more froth than substance," but that still stands as an interesting moment of economic rhetoric within the body of Whately's works.³³⁶ The government proposed to increase the grant to the Roman Catholic Seminary at Maynooth, Co. Kildare, a grant which the state had been consistently making since the seminary had opened in the late eighteenth century. The original intention had been to provide a domestic educational alternative for Catholic clergy rather than being educated on the continent in countries hostile to the British government. In 1845 the government proposed to make a further capital expenditures grant of £30,000, and to raise the annual grant from £9,000 to £26,360.³³⁷ "This proposal provided the opportunity for those of tender conscience to torment themselves with elaborate scruples (Gladstone's resignation from the government is the product of one such writhing), and for ultra-Protestants to raise an anti-Catholic agitation. In Protestant circles in Ireland, the augmented grant was especially unpopular."³³⁸ Leading the opposition to the grant was the Orange Lodges in Ireland and Exeter Hall in England. Lord Macaulay said in Parliament, "the Orangeman raises his howl, and Exeter Hall sets up its bray."³³⁹ Collectively they exacerbated what Harriet Martineau called "the great political controversy of the year – the subject on which the public seemed to be going mad."³⁴⁰

Opposing the madness of ultra-Protestants was something that came naturally to Whately, but given the tremendous opposition to increasing the grants both in Ireland and England, Whately's response can only be seen as courageous. Whately delivered a speech in the House of Lords, 3 June 1845, arguing in favor of the grant for a number of reasons, not the least of which was that he thought the state's fund of wealth was a purely secular fund belonging to all of the inhabitants of the British Isles, and not merely to those the Church of England persuasion. Another point was one of clarification, for some in opposition to the grants had used Whately's name, specifically his criticism of the education offered by Maynooth Seminary, as evidence for his opposition to the grants. Whately said,

I had occasion, more than once, to examine persons who had been brought up there; and had noticed in them various and great deficiencies; which might indeed have been altogether the fault of those individual students themselves, but which did appear to me to be no unnatural result of the paltry salaries allotted to the Instructors, and the general slovenly condition of the whole Establishment, arising from the miserably scantiness of the pittance allotted for its support.³⁴¹

Thus the poor education offered at Maynooth was not reason to reject increased support, rather it was a direct result of the failure to offer adequate support in the first instance, and, hence, Whately's remarks had been misconstrued to support the opposition rather than to lead the charge in support of the grants.

Far from opposing the grants, Whately wanted them multiplied:

We cannot by any legislative acts convert six or seven millions of Roman Catholics into Protestants; but we may possibly find means of making them better and happier as Roman Catholics. We cannot, as long experience has proved, compel or otherwise induce them by penal laws, or by laws of any kind, to receive such instruction as *we* might judge the best; but to provide them better instruction than they have hitherto had, and thus to mitigate at least some of the

evils under which this Country has long been suffering – this may be within the reach of judicious legislation.³⁴²

Only in this way could some of the longstanding difficulties in Ireland be remedied, and, furthermore, only by multiplying the grants can liberal ideals be clarified and lived.

No excuse can be made, Whately reasoned, for those who would confuse the matter of providing aid with whether or not that aid went to those of the same religion.

I can make great allowance for the dullness and indistinctness of thought, which one may often meet with as the result of a narrow and imperfect, and ill-conducted education, which almost incapacitates many men from distinguishing different questions that are in themselves quite distinct; which leads them to confound together, for instance, the question, What religion is *true*? And the question as to the way in which *we should treat* those whom we think in error; - which makes them prone to confound liberal tolerance with latitudinarian indifference; and which leaves them at a loss to understand how any one can be fully impressed with the importance of a right faith, who yet feels bound to leave his neighbours free to decide for themselves what faith they shall adhere to. But no intellectual weakness and confusion of thought can excuse the absence of a Christian temper.³⁴³

One tendency that Whately would like to see corrected was the tendency to “confound liberal tolerance with latitudinarian indifference.” Such confusion led too often to a failure to live up to Christian ideals, especially where those ideals overlapped with how people of one denomination ought to treat people of a different religious persuasion.

And anyway, given the length of the annual grants existence, the burden of proof rests with those, Whately pointed out, who would stop the aid rather than with those who would increase it. “For it would be absurd to maintain that though it be allowable to assign 12,000*l.* to a Roman Catholic College, the assignment of 30,000*l.* becomes a national sin, and a measure on which we have no right even to deliberate.”³⁴⁴ On the contrary, failure to support the education, where possible, would be the greater sin.

Indeed, in an important footnote appended to the published address, Whately cites his first essay from *The Kingdom of Christ Delineated* wherein he argues, “In every Age and Country, as a general rule, tolerant principles have (however imperfectly) gained ground wherever spiritual knowledge has gained ground. And a presumption is thus afforded that a still further advance of the one would lead to a corresponding advance in the other.” For this reason, aiding Catholics in educating their clergy should not be looked upon as a failed attempt to spread the religion of the Church of England or as state support for Catholicism, but rather an opportunity to increase liberal and tolerant principles throughout the country.

Furthermore, Whately is quick to point out that increasing the grant monies should not be looked upon as an opportunity to subvert the Catholic Church.

Do I then – it may be asked – anticipate from an improved education of Roman Catholics their conversion to our Church? I acknowledge that I do not expect, to any appreciable extent, such a result. Political and national animosities have been too much and too long mixed up with ecclesiastical questions, to render an ecclesiastical union probable. But though the Roman Catholics may not join *our* Church, they may, to an indefinite extent, improve their own.³⁴⁵

Education is a tool for improvement, and wherever it flourishes, liberal principles will also be found, much to the same extent, flourishing. Hence it is that support for the Roman Catholic Seminary should be increased even if such increases do not make Anglicans out of all the Catholics.

These were unusual words for a Protestant archbishop, especially a Protestant archbishop in Ireland, and despite the fact that the archbishops of York and Canterbury voted against the grants, Whately cast his vote in favor of it.³⁴⁶ The increased grants passed in Parliament, and three years later the government offered subsidies to Catholic

schools in England. Animosity between Protestants and Catholics in Ireland, of course, continued. “However, as E.R. Norman argues, there was a keen awareness that the winds of liberalism were blowing away the older, traditional notions of the monopolist privileges, the primacy, of an established church and of a confessional state and to the fear of the retreat of the Established Church was added the complementary but even greater fear of Catholic advance - - an advance that would inevitably, it was argued, result in state support for the Catholic Church in both England and Ireland. That fear is well captured by the frenzied speeches in Exeter Hall, speeches which, in their anti-Catholic vehemence, reproduced in England the prejudices and violent language of the Irish Protestant Orange Societies.”³⁴⁷ The advance of the Catholics on liberal principles was, nevertheless, precisely what Whately advocated for he was convinced that it would bring with it advances in other areas of life, especially, he hoped, in economic matters.

Whately’s arguments on this occasion contributed to the idea of a liberal, secular state that needed to see past religious squabbles in order to provide appropriate educational funds to all students in the state. Furthermore, as far as Whately’s rhetoric is concerned, it indicates that Enlightenment principles had changed Christianity – and even Roman Catholicism – for good by allowing, at least in the case of Roman Catholics, for the translation of the scriptures into English and for instruction in Astronomy for which Galileo was much earlier condemned. In other words, for Whately and for many liberal-Christians who followed, there was very little separation between their religious beliefs and their beliefs in other areas of life. Indeed, Whately’s notion that liberal tolerance was a form of spiritual growth is extremely difficult to refute, and

contributed to his ideas about logically and rhetorically separating the difference between educational aid that is deserved by citizens of the state from educational aid that may in some way relate to sectarian concerns. Though there may be no way of knowing whether liberal, modern Christianity is anything like its ancient ideal, this does not prevent us from attempting to reconcile, where possible, our Christian beliefs with our secular knowledge and practices, and anyway, even if such reconciliation is not possible, we are not excused from maintaining a Christian temper. Economic justice as fairness is held out as an ideal when it comes to supporting the Catholic Seminary because such support is generated from the state which can no longer afford to not support the education of those not of the state's chosen religion.

MICHAEL NOVAK AND *THE SPIRIT OF DEMOCRATIC CAPITALISM*

Although there is no explicit extension of Whatelian rhetoric that can be traced in contemporary times, as is the clear case with Smith and Mill, there is still a mutual relationship between Capitalism and Christianity that deserves further discussion for, as noted above, this relationship is at the heart of Whately's project. Although not related directly to Whately, Michael Novak's *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* develops ideas friendly to Whately's project, especially in explicating how capitalism through the promotion of liberty makes possible a complete practice of Christian principles. Put another way, Whately argued in his time that it was too early to tell for sure if Christianity and Capitalism were in contradiction, and his rhetoric as Archbishop even seems to indicate that the two concepts could inform each other – could open the door

for a peaceful coexistence in modernity – and thereby effectively alter the meaning of Capitalism and the Anglican Church. Indeed, Whately anticipated a liberalizing of the church and of the manner of interpreting the scriptures as a direct consequence of freer trade. He wanted the church to become more liberal, more rational, and more modern. He also argued that the Christian tradition was strong enough to serve as an effective balance to whatever might prove to be the ethical weaknesses promoted by Capitalism. Though he may not have known it, Whately’s rhetoric poured a foundation for later identifications between the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, which reached the high point of their expression in the work of Novak especially because it came mixed with a Cold War mentality that elevated the idea of Capitalism to a cultural ideal in opposition to the evils of Soviet Communism.

Novak opens his book quoting Shakespeare’s *Henry V*:

Many things, having full reference
 To one consent, may work contrariously;
 As many arrows, loosed several ways,
 Fly to one mark; as many ways meet in one town;
 As many lines close in the dial’s center;
 So many thousand actions, once afoot,
 End in one purpose, and be all well borne
 Without defeat.

Though at first blush capitalism appears inimical to Christianity, in fact the two work contrariously, “as many ways meet in one town,” Novak reasons, and this is why capitalism seems necessary for a full expression of Christianity.

The central argument in support for this claim comes from Smith’s argument that only a free market promotes liberty. What follows then is an argument that capitalism has preserved freedom best for those who want it – and a necessary condition of the idea

of freedom is the ability to enter into whatever associations you prefer, be they Christian, Jewish, Muslim, or no. A comparison between primarily Catholic countries in South America and the Protestant United States indicates that where Catholic clergy were in opposition to capitalism for religious reasons the liberty of their congregants suffered as the various socialist regimes that ruled the Southern American nations proved capable of stealing, as it were, from society's funds. After citing figures indicating the strength of the Latin American economy, Novak writes, "These figures show that Latin America already has at its disposal sufficient annual income and gross national product to raise the level of its 56 million destitute persons almost immediately. The economic capacity is present. The political will and the economic techniques may not yet be present."³⁴⁸ In short, it was the cultural and value functions of capitalism that were absent in Latin America – not the capacity to generate the same wealth as North America.

Taking his lead from Smith, Novak reasons that it was Smith who conceived of the economy with businessmen at its heart, not economists, purchasers and suppliers – people with which the economy and its study is concerned. "The people desire bread. They also desire liberty. Not only is it possible to have both, the second is key to the first." And, when they get the second they are free to enter into associations, churches, schools, of their own free will and hence to practice Christianity – or any religion – without interference. For this reason capitalism should be promoted. Taking care to ensure that he does not bind down his "theology of democratic capitalism," Novak writes,

For all such contexts, Scripture has words of universal power. It is a mistake, I believe, to try to bind the cogency of Scripture to one system merely. The Word

of God is transcendent. It judges each and every system, and finds each gravely wanting. Liberation theologians in the Third World today err in binding Scripture to a socialist political economy, and I do not wish to indulge in a parallel mistake.³⁴⁹

In other words, Novak is going to read the scriptures as a liberal, giving other people the freedom to read them however they will while still asserting the supremacy of the Word of God. His scriptural interpretation will not be bound to any system – since all systems are inferior to Scripture – and in this manner his reading takes on just the liberal outlook endorsed by Whately.

The scriptures in Novak’s hands reveal that “Judaism and Christianity are religions of narrative and liberty.”

In every story in the Bible, attention is focused upon the moment of decision. In any given story, dramatic interest is aroused because the outcome remains in doubt until the closing lines. King David might, or might not, betray his closest friend. In some episodes, David is virtuous; in others, vicious. The same human being, in his liberty, may say yes to grace, or like the rich young man turn sadly away in declination. Judaism and Christianity, in other words, envisage human life as a contest.³⁵⁰

Having the freedom to make choices is the underlying given in Judaic and Christian thought. Take that away and the idea of virtue goes out the window with it. And, if there is a loving God, then virtue is rewarded.

“Virtue can hardly help bearing material fruit when conditions are right,” Novak notes. “Still one must insist that Christian grace is never measured either by virtue or by worldly success.”³⁵¹ Yet that admission does not preclude Novak’s argument that competition is not inimical to a Christian worldview. Rather, it can be identified with the worldview of Christianity.

Critics sometimes suggest that competitiveness is foreign to a religion of love, meekness, and peace. They have no idea how hard it is to be meeker than one's neighbor. There are abuses of the competitive spirit, of course, as there are love, meekness, and peace. But to compete – *com + petere*, “to seek together although against each other” – is not a vice. It is, in a sense, the form of every virtue and an indispensable element in natural and spiritual growth. Competition is the natural play of the free person. All striving is based upon measurement of oneself by some ideal and under some judgment.³⁵²

There is nothing inimical to Christianity in competition. Instead, competition, Novak argues, is a part of human nature. There even seems to be nothing wrong with trying to be meeker than your neighbor, and the possibility that such strivings might undermine entirely the idea of meekness does not seem to arise for Novak. “To live in a slack age of low standards is a curse upon self-realization. To live among bright, alert, striving rivals is a great gift to one's own development.”³⁵³ For Novak, rivalry carries no negative connotation.

Instead, Novak writes, “it seems wrong to imagine that the spirit of competition is foreign to the gospels, and that, in particular, competition for money is humankind's most mortal spiritual danger.”³⁵⁴ Indeed, the Creator who respects liberty, allows for sin, so the possibility that competition might get out of whack with regard to the “against each other,” liberty provides for the possibility that “seeking together” might justly justify competition in our quest for resources. And, the ideal for Novak is by no means competitive. Instead, it is *caritas* or love of the other for the other's sake that is to serve as the ideal possibility of Democratic Capitalism.

Within such a system, each person is regarded as an originating source of insight, choice, action, and love. Yet each is also a part of all the others. The goal of the republic is to inspire in each and every citizen the desire to become all that each can become . . . A cognate goal is to inspire the disciplines of realistic judgment: “Confirm thy soul in self-control!” as the hymn puts it. The vision is that of a

republic of independent, self-reliant, fraternal, and cooperative citizens, each of whose interests includes the interests of all in brotherhood from “sea to shining sea.”³⁵⁵

The contrariety of capitalism and Christianity is resolved, for Novak, because capitalism still holds out the possibility of Christian *caritas*. Regarding Whately and Novak, *caritas* is always contingent on free choice – and capitalists are as free as democratic socialists to make the choice for charity. Charity cannot be codified into the law for by so doing it smudges its purity. Despite that, only a system that promotes liberty can make for pure charity because only through liberty can we gain self-reliance, independence, fraternity, and the grounds for self-control. Thus, it is possible to see that Whately’s ideas about the ways in which capitalism and Christianity could be related, bringing about changes in both simultaneously, find friendship in Novak’s ideas of democratic capitalism. Like Whately, Novak argues for a liberal reading of the scriptures that allows others their own readings, while at the same time submitting the idea that capitalism can also give vent to certain natural propensities to compete, strengthening our resolve to live a moral life. If we are allowed to pursue self-interest publicly than we will be better able to pursue sympathetic interests privately, and the sympathetic interests are what truly matter in the end.

For Novak the sympathetic interests include, most importantly, the family unit that some writers of communism and socialism failed to see as the fundamental unit of society and the reason for preserving self-interest as a public good. In other words, if self-interest becomes a private good it opens the door for the dissolution of the family, and the same is true if sympathetic interests become too public. It amounts to the same

thing if the family falls apart because of too much selfishness from within or too much sympathy from without. The family is preserved only when, for Novak, the contrarily moving forces in society strike the right balance between individual liberty that expresses itself through competition and love, and group cohesion that is best preserved when individuals have room for the expression of competition and love – or, what amounts to the same thing, when individual liberty is preserved.

Some drawbacks of Novak's analysis seem to be his failure to see the ways in which free markets undermine families and communities. This comes about primarily through the globalization of capital and the resultant divide between the rich and poor that has become more entrenched since Novak wrote *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*. These changes push more parents into dual-career family structures, or necessitate employment in more than one job, diminishing the potential of family time. Likewise, forces of global capital tend to homogenize communities, weakening cultural foundations for community and virtue. This comes about because Novak seems to identify too strongly with Adam Smith's vision of free markets despite the reality that present day economies of scale appear far beyond anything Smith advocated. Additionally, coming as it did at the height of cold war rhetoric, Novak's book blows the trumpet of American triumphalism, suggesting that he may identify free markets with American markets, and the American system of government.

Still, by seeing Christianity and capitalism as crucial elements in the mixture of contemporary social life, Novak's work relates closely to that of Archbishop Whately. Where Whately was unsure capitalism connected with Christianity, Novak has filled in

the relationship indicating that the two are infinitely compatible, perhaps even able to enrich both systems. If properly balanced, Novak reasons that Christianity and capitalism can result in the highest achievement of humanity, to choose life when given liberty. Such is the vision underlying Whately's hopes, and such vision finds eloquent expression in Novak's work.

CONCLUSION

Whately argues that the world of nature is only understood through fallible human minds, and despite the fact that he holds that God has revealed his word to us through scripture, scripture is nevertheless read and interpreted by fallible minds that may miss important aspects, fail to grasp higher order truths, or purposely twist a passage to their own destruction. Furthermore, we also have as our guide to interpret the world of nature the ideas of other men, ideas that originate in and are interpreted by, once again, fallible minds. Hence, we should not place very much confidence in what we think we know, whether we think it comes from God or whether we know it comes from another man. Whately constitutes a character in his work that recognizes his own limitations, sees the social world as made up primarily through the exercise of rhetoric, and wishes to see liberty enthroned as a guiding principle for exchanges.

The case studies teach a number of different lessons that are central to Whately's hope that spiritual and secular knowledge can exist side by side. Namely, the first case study concerning "Christ's Example, An Instruction as to the Best Modes of Dispensing Christian Charity," (1835), shows that Whately wanted knowledge gleaned from the

scriptures to be seen as capable of providing sound practical advice to those who would aid the poor, despite the fact that in practice some scriptural injunctions contradicted known economic principles. Furthermore, he also hoped that the scriptures could be read by the light of economic science from time to time so that “the best mode,” or the most efficient way of aiding the poor could be looked for within the text of the scripture and realized in the real world.

The second artifact, *Easy Lessons on Money Matters for the Use of Young People* (1836), reiterates Whately’s undying concern for education, namely the education of young people and of the working classes. It exhibits Whately’s interest in showing that he is very serious about the power of economics as a tool for changing individual behavior relative to economic matters pertaining to employment and security of provision. With it, Whately attempts to underwrite active participation in public affairs with a competent understanding of political economy in the citizenry.

The third case study, “Reflections on a Grant to a Roman Catholic Seminary; Being a Charge,” June 1845, contributes to our understanding that the secular state plays an important part in achieving justice as fairness in economic matters. Additionally, it shows that Whately could not countenance religious intolerance on any level either within his own church or without. He identifies religious tolerance and political tolerance and advocates a social reality that respects both and secures justice as fairness in the provision of educational access. He advocates a justice as fairness model for the state as a means toward accomplishing tolerance in all areas of life and society.

Indeed, we have to get along in the world, and the social world created by the corpus of Whately's discourse is one that is composed and guided by liberal principles that appreciate the rights of others to disagree or to hope for something altogether different from the majority. Education is the chief means by which such liberal principles might be established and perpetuated, for despite the fact that our minds are fallible they are also capable of improvement. When properly educated, society will, in Whately's discourse, first and foremost, choose to uphold the rights of minorities, and they will also hold a proper respect for the power of persuasion as a means of changing minds and practices to more closely approach the liberal ideal. Education promotes liberal tolerance and the capacity to reason with one another about what constitutes the good of the nation, and therefore its support is tantamount to the health and vigor of the state. Education is best conceived when it contains various disciplines, economics as well as history, rhetoric as well as mathematics, and unduly limiting certain areas of study for moral reasons will, in the long run, diminish the quality and quantity of our moral strength because it is tied to the pursuit of truth.

The character constituted by Whately's discourse is one capable of holding religious belief alongside enlightenment ideas of skepticism and rational science. Despite a widespread belief during his time that such beliefs were incompatible with a religious mind, Whately thought they would only improve the religious mind by opening new possibilities within the Church. Though he clearly advocated religion, Whately also recognized the essential bourgeois principle of tolerance for those with other beliefs. He helped constitute a liberal religious character who recognized that part of community

living was achieved through the application of enlightenment rationality and science. If efficiency could be inserted into the system to make it work more smoothly there was no reason why the Christian should object on the face of it. Though Whately never fully conflated free market ideas with Christianity, he helped usher in the adoption of a new vocabulary that was comfortable discussing political economy in a sermon or reading scripture in the context of political economy. The contribution of this new way of talk provided the capacity for thinking of Christianity and capitalism in common.

Speech is the dominant mode of reasoning that is recognized as valid in Whately's discourse, because it is through deliberation and discussion that we can come to understand what our political and party opposition desire and, more importantly, what the state needs, both in the long run and the short run. Of course, speech, as such, is expensive and has a tendency to descend into party feeling and animosity rather than to ascend to its higher potential as a means to political accomplishment. Nevertheless, as a tool and an ideal it is the only means we have of treating those we disagree with peaceably and rightly. The advocate, though he is met only with obloquy and suspicion, hostility and the imputation of weakness and insincerity, must remember that "the steady though quiet current of sound reason will prevail."³⁵⁶ Such, at least, is the only confidence we may have in a liberal, fallible human mind.

CHAPTER V

MILL AND THE ART AND BUSINESS OF LIFE

The life and work of John Stuart Mill is probably as well known as it is misunderstood. Mill, himself, in fact, contributed a great deal to this misunderstanding by publishing an account of his life side by side his many other volumes of writing that is at once both a captivating account of a mid-nineteenth century life and a deep and thorough argument in favor of his philosophy of Utilitarianism. Nevertheless, for some time scholars have been arguing about Mill's intentions while his philosophy has served as the foundation of an ever-expanding and dominant form of social thought that draws upon principles he first articulated and defended as a young man and which grew into maturity with him. Despite the reality that Mill's collected works fill over thirty volumes, the first principles of his philosophy, which he of course recognized as last principles, are relatively direct and comprehensible and include both rhetoric and economics as methods for understanding and living life. Though most scholars, especially economists, have been taking Mill to mean something very different than his words will bear, his works do belie a preference for the prosaic in practice, despite minor protestations to the contrary. He aims to instill a liberal ethic of society that prefers happiness for the greatest number so long as that happiness includes, which Mill is sure it must, a preference for higher order virtues coupled with a strong defense of liberty.

Mill's certainty about mankind's preference for higher virtues stems from his extensive educational experience. Indeed, his education could be held up as a model for everything that is good or everything that is bad about Victorian society, depending upon

your critical preference, for Mill was, under the close direction of his father, reading Greek at three, writing independently at six, reading Latin at eight, and publishing frequently in his late teenage years, all the while assisting his father in publishing his own works on political economy and tutoring his younger siblings. What Mill accomplished by his twentieth year is enough to take your breath away, and though his education certainly sounds Gradgrindian by his own account, it succeeded in preparing him for a life of scholarship and continued learning, which was its chief aim. As such, it instilled in him a strong tolerance of uncertainty and an intense reverence for diversity that he maintained as critical components throughout his philosophy and through his life.³⁵⁷

However, much of that appreciation for uncertainty and diversity waited until after the expiration of his period of “youthful propagandism,” as he calls it, in which he exerted all his efforts in disseminating the gospel of Utilitarianism as taught by his two chief teachers, James Mill and Jeremy Bentham. In fact, Mill goes so far as to describe that period of his life and its eventual passing in very religious terms, no doubt a rhetorical decision, but one that shows in some ways how he looked critically upon that time in his later life. Indeed, his actions during that period have led others to characterize his reputation as one of pure and unadulterated selfishness in public affairs, indeed, Henry Adams called Mill “his satanic free-trade majesty,” despite the fact that Mill developed a sophisticated socialism critical of absolute free-trade and economic growth in his later life.³⁵⁸

The great bulk of his life was spent working as a quasi-bureaucrat-scholar for the East India Company in which he found an escape from the wearying analysis of his scholarship in the ordinary and day-to-day activities of an office. Nevertheless, he spent a great deal of time publishing and editing scholarly pieces, as well as working on his larger works. In 1830 he fell madly in love with Harriet Taylor but had to wait twenty years for her husband to die before he could marry her, and during that waiting many of his other relationships were negatively impacted by his relationship to Harriet Taylor. Mill had no children of his own, but was very close to his step-daughter Helen Taylor, who assisted him in his scholarly work after the death of her mother and who is also responsible for keeping some of his works in print after his death. More, of course, will be said of the influence of Harriet Taylor on Mill's scholarship, but suffice it here to add that Mill was appreciative of the impact she had on improving the rights component of Utilitarianism.

In any event, Mill reflected upon his youthful years not altogether with glee, but still a deep appreciation for the manner in which his education prepared him to participate in scholarship. The account of his eventual traumatic break with the philosophy of his father and Bentham, and his eventual "conversion" to a conception of happiness that included more appreciation for history, poetry, and uncertainty is well documented in the *Autobiography* and in much of Millian scholarship, in which much has concluded that the *Autobiography* is also a rhetorical work that seeks to persuade the readers that Mill's Utilitarianism is a corrected, softened, enlightened version of his

predecessors, and that indeed he managed to work out many of the kinks in their earlier works.

Such a reading, especially under the guidance of Alan Ryan, clarifies Mill's own position relative to the relationship between Utilitarianism, as a philosophy and also Mill's book by the same title, and *On Liberty*. Initially many scholars thought of these two works as presenting a contradiction in terms that Mill was unable himself to resolve, one arguing for the greatest happiness for the greatest number and the other advocating freedom to do what one wishes so long as it does not interfere with others. Ryan's work suggests, rather, that instead of contradiction we can see consistency if we understand the mental breakdown of the *Autobiography* not as a break with Utilitarianism nor as only a faithful account of a momentary personal and professional crisis, but also as a revision of the philosophy of utilitarianism. Included in this revision is Mill's notion of rights as described in his works *On Liberty* and *On the Subjection of Women*, both of which were strongly influenced by Harriet Taylor, and both of which gave Mill a very sterling and deserved reputation as a defender of individual rights in the face of the tyranny of the crowd, despite the fact that Mill's liberalism can still be read as representing a weak concept of rights relative to contemporary liberalism because of the overarching power of the principle of utility.

More will be said of both Mill's conceptions of rights below as well as the relationship between Mill and Taylor, but first a discussion of what character is constituted by Mill's scholarship, especially as it relates to his conception of rhetoric and economics. Mill was fond of intellectual debate and argument and saw it as a critical

component of both scholarship and liberty, and, as such, he was a firm defender of the right to speak your mind and to participate in public affairs on the grounds that such a defense would, hopefully, improve both our knowledge of truth as well as our capacity to distinguish it from its opposite. It will always improve our practice of public life. Indeed, his occasional lapses of judgment, like his proposal that smart people should get more than one vote in elections, now look like evidence for his certainty that liberty is more important than stopping the utterance of falsehoods because time will tell. Still, as an advocate for intellectual debate his utilitarianism “brings us constantly to the question ‘what are the facts?’,” and “a wider acceptance of Mill’s utilitarian outlook would do a lot of good to current moral debates” if this question and element could be more often remembered.³⁵⁹

That is, Mill defines the world of nature primarily as a British empiricist intent on discovering “reality” through scientific investigation and then using those discoveries to inform public affairs. Custom, authority, or revelation should be forthrightly dismissed as should the geometric method practiced poorly, in Mill’s estimation, by Hobbes and Bentham, “since single motives – mutual dread and the pursuit of worldly self-interest, respectively” can never be taken as the causes of societal phenomenon.³⁶⁰ Instead, as Donald Levine notes, Mill prefers the concrete deductive method of physics that allows the deduction of all the causes that conjointly produce a given effect to govern sociological investigation.

Men . . . in a state of society are still men; their actions and passions are obedient to the laws of individual human nature. Men are not, when brought together, converted into another kind of substance, with different properties: as hydrogen and oxygen are different from water, or as hydrogen, oxygen, carbon, and azote

are different from nerves, muscles, and tendons. Human beings in society have no properties but those which are derived from, and may be resolved into, the laws of the nature of individual man. In social phenomena the Composition of Causes is the universal law.³⁶¹

Mill preserves from Hobbes and Locke a preference for atomic individualism as the starting point for public life, and upholds the idea that society does not have the capacity to alter the composition or constitution “of the nature of individual man.” As such, his notion of morality is drawn from individuality rather than from the group or society.

The social universe constituted by Mill’s discourse, namely a universe of individuals who agree about what it means to be happy and can also agree that the greatest number of happy individuals is the best achievement for society. “The creed which accepts as the foundation of morals ‘utility’ or ‘the greatest happiness principle’ holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness; wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain and the privation of pleasure.”³⁶² Since Mill conceives of nature informed by Hutcheson, Hume, and Shaftesbury, as well as Hobbes, Locke, and Bentham, he is convinced that as individuals, or by nature, we prefer higher order virtues, higher kinds of happiness. Thus he rejects those who would claim that Utilitarianism is just another way of saying that humans prefer to be pigs wallowing in the mire instead of productive members of society. Furthermore, Mill asserts that it is empirically wrong to assume that, if given the chance, people will choose pleasures of a lower moral order, or advocate such. Besides, happiness refers to the collectivity in the Utilitarian doctrine so it would be impossible to refute solely on the grounds that some individuals might exercise their liberty to roll in the mud and be pigs. Mill is no utopian

in this respect because he believes firmly in the necessity of society's educating the young and in using the state as an apparatus for assisting individuals in choosing higher order virtues, thus in promoting a happiness common to our individual needs.

The central term in all of Mill's discourse is utility, and it serves as the basis of both a consequence of the natural world insofar as man is constituted as animal and the high point of the social world from which, as a principle and philosophy, all other social values, such as liberty, justice, and scholarship flow. As such, the Utilitarian world is one that privileges reason and rationality, even after Mill's additions, and that privileges prose as a mode of communication. It reflects, in some ways as a high point, the British tradition of sociology that thought of society as a function of individuals choosing to assent to collective living, but with the express limitation that such a choice is contingent on collective living in fact improving one's condition. Consequently, such theorizing and speaking that posits utility as the chief aim in life deflects other essential values such as Rousseau's conception of fraternity even while it reflects a high regard for democratic liberalism, including the preservation of the rights of the indigent, the subjected, and the strange. Mill's is always democracy without a buddy and this flows from the high point that utility plays in both the conception of happiness and the means to achieve it.³⁶³ For example, and this seems to be reflected through much of Mill's life, the principles of utility do not seem to make for a great social companion. One does not think of having a beer with utility, and, as such, despite Mill's protestations to the contrary, and despite the philosophical and rhetorical qualifications, the principle continues to lack a certain

sense of warmth or of human regard that is implicit in, for example, the works of Rousseau or even Benjamin Constant.

In that respect, the forms of reasoning held out as valid are always a bit serious, unmediated, perhaps too logical, a tad prosaic or even boring. That's not to say that Mill's rhetoric is always uninspiring, it is just that those parts most inspiring are sometimes only included after hundreds and hundreds of pages of absolute drudgery from the point of view of a reader, especially a contemporary reader whose attention so easily drifts to *Don Quixote*, *Moby-Dick*, or *The Daily Show*. There is no way, in any respect, to read Mill's works without a sense that time is passing around you, and even more so, perhaps, than reading Smith or Whately, so it cannot be only a function of the times in which Mill was writing. It is the style, and style goes all the way down, and style necessarily tells us something about not only what kind of reasoning is happening but also the quality of the reasoning. It is difficult to hear Mill laughing as he writes anything, and indeed that is one of the great contradictions between him and Smith and one of the things in my estimation that weakens Mill's effect as well as his arguments. At least the tedium of Smith's writing is more than once acknowledged and apologized for, and even then there are occasional flourishes of stylistic devices, while Mill composes prose, well polished, but of only passable physique incapable of removing the doldrums. This is not intended to reflect altogether poorly on the mind, for it was certainly first-rate and formidable despite its prosaic propensity, but it is to acknowledge that one cannot escape a certain sense of familiarity with the doctrine of utilitarianism as reached through the style of its defenders.

Still, Mill characterizes his ideal social character as educable, improvable, and desirous of the same, and above all rational and willing to make the social order as efficient as possible by regard for his own innate and social needs, as well as the needs of a greater whole. In conjunction with this character, Mill recognizes the implicit need for liberty as a component of happiness, a component of pleasure, without which happiness could not possibly exist, flourish, or be a model held up for society to wish for and to work toward. Ideally, of course, prophetic rhetoric promises that happiness is possible for all, but “Mill was no prophet,” either in this respect or in seeing the irrational forces of mankind that would come to dictate most of human history since Mill’s time.³⁶⁴ Instead Utilitarianism has built into its method and end a sense that human happiness is necessarily limited, and, therefore, the pursuit of happiness should be calculated, modified, re-calculated until it achieves only the best of what it might achieve and that is a greater amount of happiness – never a fullness of joy. If Mill thought that one day happiness for the greatest number might include some calculation that would bring happiness to all, he never said so, and the promise of utilitarianism today certainly does think such is possible.

And with regard to the story I am telling here about rhetoric and economics, Mill’s work reveals much by way of which the rhetorical mind-set is employed to influence an economics that respects uncertainty, demands liberty, and cannot countenance a view of human nature employed to erect a science of political economy that is allowed to become more than a science in the abstract only. Hence, this chapter on Mill will reveal not only that rhetorical thinking was a way in which Mill understood

the limits of political economy as a form of inquiry relative to self-awareness in a historical sense, but also a political economy that never forgets that articulate precision matters as soon as political economy becomes strictly political capacity. To put it another way, Mill's qualified faith in political economy's predictive value as well as his insistent reminder of political economy's caricature of human motives stemmed directly from his understanding of rhetoric and the human mind, of which, he was certain, only held out the possibility of "rational assurance," and never "absolute certainty." Indeed, the great lament of Mill's works today is that they do not include a systematic treatise on practical argument, despite, as many have pointed out, Mill's awareness that such a form existed and was critical to social life. Nevertheless, what remains of his investigations is enough to formulate not only what his theory of practical argument would look like but also to understand how that could have and did impact his reasoning about political economy, Utilitarianism, and social life. Mill takes a lot of flack for trying to synthesize utilitarianism with justice, laissez-faire with socialism, and empiricism with a creative view of the mind because he never fully succeeds, but his writing is more subtle and aware of counter-arguments than most people think.³⁶⁵ His writings show that morality should never let itself get too far away from the facts, whatever they are and however they are constituted, for only then is it capable of rational improvement. A societal vision that could see the importance of free speech alongside a free market that contributed to democratic values through the possibilities offered by socialism is a societal vision worthy of study and hope. Such was the program of a morality that stuck close to the facts, a democratic morality that did not accept reverence for authority or

tradition for a guide, a morality interested in utility; as such, Mill's writings are, to their deepest core rhetorical and economical.

LOGIC, LIBERTY, AND THE ENDS OF RHETORIC

Given the dominance of John Stuart Mill's scientific thought, it is often believed that he had no clearly defined rhetorical theory or that he was not interested in the sphere of life known as practical argument. Of course his *On Liberty* is one of the most eloquent defenses of the whole idea of what a society must look to preserve with regard to practical reasoning and cooperation, and his scientific writings also suggest that he is *explicitly* not speaking words that should have any consequence on the realm of practical argumentation. Indeed, Mill himself wishes to emphasize connections in his *Autobiography* between himself and the ancients, including reporting on his having read Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, "which, as the first expressly scientific treatise on any moral or psychological subject which I had read, and containing many of the best observations of the ancients on human nature and life, my father made me study with peculiar care, and throw the matter of it into synoptic tables."³⁶⁶ Of course his having read the *Rhetoric* does not mean that he had a distinct rhetorical theory, but his life and writings bear out the idea that he did have specific ideas about rhetoric as practical argument, not merely as, what we would consider today as rhetoric, a specific theory about scientific inquiry and writing, which I doubt anyone would deny as explicit in his writings..³⁶⁷

By relying on a connection to the past, John F. Tinkler reasons that Mill's rhetorical theory extends more directly from his kinship with Renaissance humanism,

especially his tendency to mimic the dictates of Renaissance humanism in his life and writing. For example, Mill's extensive education trained him to be a rhetorician, especially one familiar with the works of Aristotle, Demosthenes, Quintilian, Pericles, and his tendency to use the pseudonym "Antiquus" in his very first article in the *Monthly Review*, and continuing for sometime thereafter, all point to a familiarity with the rhetoric of Renaissance humanism and a willingness to practice it.³⁶⁸ Additionally, Tinkler argues that Mill's later career is essentially humanist: "A career in foreign correspondence may strike us as at best wayward, but it had been a characteristic occupation for humanist *literati* for millennia."³⁶⁹

Indeed, Tinkler points out that Mill tells us almost nothing in the *Autobiography* about his thirty-six years as a professional correspondent for the East India Company, but what he does tell is instructive. Mill writes,

I do not know of any one of the occupations by which a subsistence can now be gained, more suitable than such as this to any one who, not being in independent circumstances, desires to devote a part of the twenty-four hours to private intellectual pursuits. Writing for the press, cannot be recommended as a permanent resource to any one qualified to accomplish anything in the higher departments of literature or thought: not only on account of the uncertainty of this means of livelihood, especially if the writer has a conscience, and will not consent to serve any opinions except his own; but also because the writings by which one can live, are not the writings which themselves live, and are never those in which the writer does his best. Books destined to form future thinkers take too much time to write, and when written come in general too slowly into notice and repute, to be relied on for subsistence. Those who have to support themselves by their pen must depend on literary drudgery, or at best on writings addressed to the multitude; and can employ in the pursuits of their own choice only such time as they can spare from those of necessity; which is generally far more enervating and fatiguing. For my own part, I have, through life, found office duties an actual rest from the other mental occupations which I have carried on simultaneously with them. They were sufficiently intellectual not to be a distasteful drudgery, without being such as to cause any strain upon the mental

powers of a person used to abstract thought, or to the labour of careful literary composition.³⁷⁰

Tinkler points out that the professional status and regularity were a boon to Mill, not to mention the income generated by his work as a professional secretary, all of which come under the rubric of Renaissance humanism and its tendency to promote intellectual culture through leisure, or *otium*, and the relative informality of pursuing knowledge as a kind of private practice with public benefits.

Another important point in the passage above concerns Mill's recognition concerning the rhetoric of publishing. In particular, he notes the difficulty of publishing quality work when publishing is demanded as a central aspect of your career. If writing solely with an eye to professional advancement, or in the case of a periodical author, for the sake of your next meal, the tendency due to time constraints is to borrow or lean too heavily on the opinions of others. "The writings by which one can live, are not the writings which themselves live, and are never those in which the writer does his best." Hence, in order to write for the ages one must cultivate a capacity to write at their own pace, or at least with the means to support a pace which reasonably allows one to think through problems and difficulties thereby making conclusions on their own. Furthermore, the disinterest that is promoted by not having to depend upon your writings for a living is tantamount to a Renaissance humanism conception of scholarship.

Indeed, Mill needed the money he received from working as a professional correspondent, as Tinkler points out, but he fulfilled his intellectual interests elsewhere. Incidentally, he retained throughout his life a disdain for universities, his words were "indignant disgust," which led him to seek alternate educational channels in private

study groups and debating societies. The point of all this is to indicate that Mill's roots are deep in notions of Renaissance humanism, and those ideas, including especially the debating societies served as his "paradigm for intellectual and political activity."³⁷¹ That paradigm was largely rhetorical, we can infer, given that Renaissance humanism likewise found the bulk of its nourishment in rhetorical theory. It is a paradigm, in Mill's case, that favors the private debating society which aims not at truth, "but at best *probable*, probability, or *verisimile*, 'truth-likeness.'"³⁷² Mill's solution for how to use what is probable and like truth is a sense of balance, a recognition and appreciation of opposing views, and is characterized by a rejection of authority.

Not only was he committed to rhetorize and intellectualize politics, but also to rhetorize intellectual inquiry and to bring it into a public arena. He observed that both Bentham and Coleridge, "dissimilar in almost all else, agreed in being closet-students – secluded in a peculiar degree, by circumstances and character, from the business and intercourse of the world." His own self-appointed function was to interpret such closet-writers to a wider audience, and to bring them into open controversy.³⁷³

The aim of much of his scholarship, then, is to bring about improved understanding about the controversy of scholarship generally, as well as the benefit such controversy brings to those who would have a well functioning scholarly community or polity. Indeed, Tinkler writes, "Mill's whole system – perhaps his whole society – is a kind of constantly contested rhetorical controversy."³⁷⁴

Tinkler's work does an excellent job of describing the *consequences*, in true Millian fashion, of Mill's rhetorical theory, but he offers little by way of informing us how he in fact Mill theorized about public argument, or about the very complex relationship Mill constructed between what he considered to be public argument and

science. That is, Tinkler tells us that the consequences of the residual Renaissance humanism in Mill's corpus is that he favored freedom of thought and inquiry because he recognized that scholarship and public life were dependent upon debate that sought effective consequences and policies. Almost all of Mill's writings can be contained within the genre of deliberative rhetoric, as Tinkler notes, and this indicates that Mill was interested in participating in a public culture and climate that accounted rhetorically for man's capacity for self-improvement. This, however, does not altogether define the limits of Millian rhetorical theory or how that might be implicated in his economic work.

Wilbur Samuel Howell, perhaps the greatest student of British logic and rhetoric, argues that Mill's work, especially *A System of Logic*, fits into the story of communication as the culmination of at least two centuries of attempting to divorce rhetoric from logic, and vice versa, within the British tradition of thought. In his *Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1500-1700* he argues that a consistency in Ancient, Medieval, and Renaissance thought is the notion that rhetoric and logic share, in effect, the same "flesh and blood, the same defensive and offensive function, and the same skeletal structure . . . logic and rhetoric are the two great arts of communication, and that the complete theory of communication is largely identified, not with one, not with the other, but with both."³⁷⁵ Indeed, the interest in "general accumulated wisdom as the starting point for man's thinking about his world was gradually lost, and an interest in direct observation of reality as the starting point was gradually established." This argument pertains to Mill's *A System of Logic*, Howell argues, in that that work finally succeeds in establishing a born again logic not at all centrally interested in communicating ideas or

assisting man in understanding “accumulated wisdom,” but rather with the scientific generation of a new kind of knowledge.

Mill’s logic “dissociated itself completely from [logic’s] former interest in the enterprise of communicating our thoughts to others. It drew observation and experiment within the speculative concerns of logic, as if it were consciously seeking to prove Whately wrong in suggesting that the process of investigation could never adequately be brought into scientific form, and that only argumentation was capable of strict logical treatment.”³⁷⁶ Since Mill’s work is the first to make a full break between scientific reasoning and the art of practical reasoning explicit, and all of the former as falling under the head of logic as no other author had so divided it, his work was often misconstrued as suggesting things that were no part of its intention. For example, Howell is quick to point out that Mill was not throwing away syllogistic reasoning altogether, nor was he suggesting that scientific reasoning be enthroned as *the* way to communicate thoughts in public space. Rather, as will be shown below, Mill argues for a very complex relationship between the art of practical reasoning and scientific logic, rendering him, unlike Whately, sure of what can be known through the processes of science. Where Whately would have seen only a fallible mind reasoning, only syllogistic logic all the way down, Mill sees a certainty of knowledge that can be attained through scientific investigation and a separate mode of thinking, syllogistic reasoning, that is still necessary for public life.

Fortunately or unfortunately, Mill left no treatise on practical reasoning, but one can certainly be patched together from his voluminous writings that suggest a high

degree of awareness of the need for such a theory and a high degree of sophistication about what such a theory might look like as part of an actual society. For example, in one of Mill's earliest published essays he takes up the problem of the relationship between poetics and eloquence, and I trust no violence is done if we substitute rhetoric for eloquence, in which Mill argues for eloquence to be considered as an art that aims for a certain impression or purpose, an art framed by intention. Mill writes,

All poetry is of the nature of soliloquy. It may be said that poetry which is printed on hot-pressed paper and sold at bookseller's shop, is a soliloquy in full dress and on the stage. But there is nothing absurd in such a mode of soliloquizing. What we have said to ourselves we may tell to others afterward, what we have said or done in solitude, we may voluntarily reproduce when we know that other eyes are upon us. But no trace of consciousness that any eyes are upon us must be visible in the work itself . . . When he [the poet] turns round and addresses himself to another person; when the act of utterance is not in itself the end, but a means to an end – viz. by the feelings he himself expresses, to work upon the feelings, or upon the belief, or the will, of another, – when the expression of his emotions, or of his thoughts tinged by his emotions, is tinged also by that purpose, by that desire of making an impression upon another mind, then it ceases to be poetry, and becomes eloquence.³⁷⁷

Granted this passage focuses mainly on what a poet is and does, but it still indicates that discourse would be judged primarily by the intended effect on auditors. Hoyt Hudson points out that Mill summarized this difference in the well known maxim, "Eloquence is written to be heard, Poetry to be overheard;" or "Poetry . . . is the natural fruit of solitude and meditation; eloquence of intercourse with the world."³⁷⁸ In this sense, Mill considers rhetoric or eloquence to be a function of trying to instill words with feelings for some purpose, or to make some impression on another mind. Of course, as Hudson notes, that distinction is mostly untenable except for didactic purposes given that it is, at very best,

extremely difficult to know an author's intention in any sense of the word based solely on the texts their mind has left us.

Not only is poetics different from rhetoric, but they differ most in their intended effect, and despite the fact that it is customary now to blur the boundary between rhetoric and poetics, Mill's conception is of antiquity in its origins: Rhetoric operates on another's mind by purpose and intention more so than does poetics. Rhetoric also includes a respect for the syllogism and a deep awareness of the reality that public life is not characterized by certainty or a high degree of agreement. Instead, most often public life is characterized by too much respect for received opinion, according to Mill, and is best when confrontation of thought and opinion are allowed, and even fostered, by healthy institutions and sound character in citizens. Hence, a sound process that defends freedom of speech and inquiry is essential to accomplishing a just and happy polity, but it is not sufficient. Indeed, another crucial aspect is the necessity of keeping liberty in opinions from becoming itself a tyranny or allowing it to work too far away from any conception of what is. In other words, the crucial distinction in understanding the difference between the ends of rhetoric and the means of rhetoric in Mill's thought is to understand that he makes a crucial distinction between how we know what is, how we decide what ought to be, and how the two questions are related. Generally, Mill relates them under the rubric of science and art, but always in conjunction with an understanding of utility, or the greatest happiness principle, as the greatest virtue. It is to this relationship we turn in the next section.

UTILITY, RHETORIC, AND THE ART OF LIFE

In order to appreciate how Mill conceived of his rhetorical theory operating in society it is necessary to appreciate his distinction between science and art, and then his further categorization of art as the “art of life.” The prime distinction between science and art is that one looks at what *is* while the other looks at what *ought* to be. Of course, the two interact quite often in a healthy society, but the primary way is that art goes about setting objectives for what ends are morally, prudently, or aesthetically right and then relies upon science to find out what actions might bring about the desired result keeping in mind that it is art that in the end would make the judgment about implementing the findings of science. It is in this manner that a healthy art of life might be established that respects both the findings of empirical inquiry and implicates them with the desires of the community. Of course, it must be remembered that, for Mill, the art of life has its full realization in the principle of utility, or the greatest happiness principle. That is, never in all of this discussion about how rhetoric can work in a society does Mill ever doubt the question of the highest end of man, which is the greatest happiness for the greatest number.

It has been pointed out by several writers that Mill had to update Bentham and his father’s concept of utility because it had no capacity to account for a happiness derived from ideas of pleasure and pain. Where Bentham and James Mill had reduced all utility calculations to actual feelings of pleasure and pain, they could not account for the kind of pleasure one feels in looking at a beautiful statue, reading a lovely poem, or the pleasure of expectation, as one might experience when about to be reunited with a loved

one. As the well known account goes of Mill's twenty first year, he came to a mental crisis in his development and outlook on life that stemmed from a realization that Utilitarianism as he had been preaching it in his later teenage years was an empty and hopeless vision of humanity.³⁷⁹ A severe depression ensued from which Mill could only free himself through poetry, especially the poetry of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Mill recounts his mental crisis:

From the winter of 1821, when I first read Bentham, and especially from the commencement of the *Westminster Review*, I had what might truly be called an object in life; to be a reformer of the world. My conception of my own happiness was entirely identified with this object. The personal sympathies I wished for were those of fellow labourers in this enterprise I was accustomed to felicitate myself on the certainty of a happy life which I enjoyed, through placing my happiness in something durable and distant, in which some progress might be always making, while it could never be exhausted by complete attainment. This did very well for several years, during which the general improvement going on in the world and the idea of myself as engaged with others in struggling to promote it, seemed enough to fill up an interesting and animated existence. But the time came when I awakened from this as from a dream.³⁸⁰

What Mill awakens to is a sense that Utilitarianism, as advocated by James Mill and Jeremy Bentham, is without "charm" and has "nothing in it to attract sympathy."³⁸¹ The rest of the chapter is devoted to Mill's rebirth in feeling, including the awareness that feeling itself, in contradistinction to rational calculation, could produce happiness. "Of the truth of this I was convinced," Mill writes, "but to know that a feeling would make me happy if I had it, did not give me the feeling. My education, I thought, had failed to create these feelings in sufficient strength to resist the dissolving influence of analysis."³⁸² What finally brings feeling, after months without it, was reading Marmontel's *Memoirs* wherein the author relates his father's death. This "small ray of light" was enough for Mill to realize that he "was no longer hopeless," "not a stock or a

stone.”³⁸³ Mill then reads Wordsworth for the first time and relates how it opened him up to a “pleasurable susceptibilit[y],” to the “power of rural beauty,” and that these words were “medicine” for his state of mind and delivered him from the grips of depression, “and I felt myself at once better and happier” and was made to “feel that there was real, permanent happiness in tranquil contemplation.”³⁸⁴

This narrative gives the impression that Mill was converted as it were from the depressingly stark Utilitarianism of his father and Bentham to an enlightened and poetic view of truth and happiness. I argue that this is not the case. Instead, as I alluded earlier, Ryan argues that this narrative functions to support Utilitarianism. I go further by saying explicitly that Mill never fully inverts the hierarchy of analysis over feeling, of poetry over prose, but instead only appends feeling to analysis as a kind of qualifier. Analysis and rational calculation are always the sure means to happiness though, it is admitted, feeling plays a part in what it means to be happy, not in what it means to achieve happiness. Ryan writes:

Since the concept of utility or happiness is a disputed one, a moralist’s value must depend very heavily on how well he understands the diversity of human happiness Mill wanted to expand, not renounce his inheritance. Utilitarianism had to be enlarged to cover those aspects of human life which Bentham did not see; majority rule had to be rendered compatible with due deference to elite opinion, and the underlying social theory had to expand to take in cultural and historical factors of a new kind (54-56).

Mill’s autobiographical narrative does not undermine Utilitarianism, but instead seeks to reinforce Mill’s version of Utilitarianism. One of the problems resolved by reading Mill in this manner is that utility and liberty are no longer seen at odds, since liberty, like poetry, is a component of utility.

What else composes a happy character? Or, in other words, if science composes the art of what *is*, the substance of which will be dealt with below in the section defining political economy, what composes the art of the *ought*, or what Mill calls the art of life? And, once we understand how Mill thinks of the art of life, what are the implications of the art of life for rhetoric, or vice versa?

First, Mill says that there are three aspects of the art of life, morality, prudence, and aesthetics. In *On Liberty* Mill condemns any attempt to legislate on the realm of liberty, and many have assumed that this condemnation rested solely upon the distinction between self-regarding actions, contained in the realm of liberty or morality, and other-regarding actions, contained in the realm of law. Ryan rejects this distinction arguing that in place of law and morality is a distinction between prudence and aesthetics. The three branches of the art of life are:

1. Moral/Legal: What is right?
2. Prudential: What is expedient?
3. Aesthetic: What is beautiful?

About any action we can ask ourselves, correspondingly:

1. Who is right?
2. What did we get out of it?
3. How well did we do it?³⁸⁵

Only the first branch, the Moral/Legal branch, deals with social relations, and only this branch can be referred to by societal constraints. The other two branches constitute the realm of liberty and cannot be interfered with by society. “Whereas morality and

prudence both involve calculating the consequences of our behavior, the first to others, the second to ourselves, aesthetics seems to involve something more akin to perception than to calculation.”³⁸⁶

A distinction between morality, prudence, and aesthetics is crucial to understanding Mill’s theory of rhetoric. Ryan writes,

Aesthetics is critical and revisionary; morality is concerned with clearing a space within which aesthetic and personal ideals can flourish, within which people can pursue their own goods. An example will bring out the way the different considerations are to be handled. Suppose a man repays a debt. This has an other-regarding side to it; we ask the moral question ‘Did he do what was right?’ and we are told yes, he paid back money, fulfilling an obligation and thus contributing to the maintenance of honesty, trust, and so on. It also has a self-regarding aspect, a prudential aspect, for we can ask ‘What did he get out of it?’ and we may learn that he succeeded in creating a good climate for larger loan, or else that he had ruined himself in the repayment. And it also has an aesthetic aspect; whether the man is to be regarded as rash, or unfortunate, or brave, we prefer to see him go to his ruin with his head up rather than bemoaning his fate.³⁸⁷

Only whether he does right or wrong is a subject for society, and only if that judgment is rendered on the other-regarding aspects of an action. Otherwise, society is in no position to render any judgment over the individual. “If we say that an action is wrong, we are committing ourselves to the view that the action is socially harmful, and we are invoking the aid of public opinion in stopping that action.”³⁸⁸

Mill is attempting to correct some weaknesses of Enlightenment rhetorics by reviving some of classical rhetorical theory, but also by making the distinction between scientific knowledge and practical argument more pronounced or specific than it ever had been before. Scientific rhetoric is inductive and has an acute consciousness of data, primarily concerned with what is, while practical rhetoric is syllogistic and deals with

desires, aversion, and habits of behavior, and contributes to what ought to be, but only within the confines of the guiding light of utility that says what ought to be will always work out as the greatest happiness for the greatest number.³⁸⁹ The excellent work of Karen Whedbee points out that Mill's logic of art, or his notion of practical argument, his rhetorical theory, is based in his reaction to intuitionism and his firm contention that experience and habit, whether our own or inherited from mankind, governs reasoning about moral laws. And, since there is no universal agreement about moral laws, we are led to govern them by the two sovereign masters of pain and pleasure, as long as we can conceive of these masters as being broad in scope, broad enough to include the ideas of pleasure and pain, or what Mill might call poetry. Pleasure and pain, in Mill's system, are also governed by an awareness of volitions and habits, or Mill sees desires as a seeking after pleasure and aversions as attempts to avoid pain, or, as Mill says, "will is the child of desire, and passes out of the dominion of its parent only to come under that of habit."³⁹⁰

We are not constantly charged with making anew the rules of practical business, but instead can and must rely on the received opinions of mankind, as well as our own tendencies for habitual behavior, to get on with the business of life. "They guide us tentatively in our approach to particular situations, helping us to pick out the salient features of those situations. When there is not time to analyze the consequences of a particular action, or where our judgment may be distorted by our peculiar biases and passions, it is better to follow a good summary rule than to make a hasty and inadequate decision."³⁹¹ We rely on rules and habits because they often point out the ways in which

it will be least perilous to act, or when we have not time to come to any conclusions about how we should act. In other words, habits, customs, and received opinions have a limited usefulness, for Mill, but they are still incredibly useful, but only when connected to an awareness that science can inform them given time and resources to investigate.

Indeed this is one of the reasons why Mill is strongly in favor of stability in regimes:

Both in feeling and in conduct, habit is the only thing which imparts certainty; and it is because of the importance to others of being able to rely absolutely on one's feelings and conduct, and to oneself of being able to rely on one's own, that the will to do right ought to be cultivated into this habitual independence.³⁹²

The means for cultivating the certain habits that lend certainty to feeling and conduct are education and the family, both derived from state stability. Mill even looks to religion at the end of his career to supply that certainty imparted by feeling and conduct, but considered religion unviable unless it was a new religion, the "Religion of Humanity," a secularized religion that took its cue from Jesus and his teachings rather than from God himself.³⁹³

As a primarily secular theorist Mill thought of this secularization of religion not as a negation of religion but as its fulfillment.³⁹⁴ Nevertheless, he persisted in placing more faith in education and the family than in religion because as he wrote in *The Subjection of Women*, "the family, justly constituted, would be the real school of the virtues of freedom. It is sure to be a sufficient one of everything else. It will always be a school of obedience for the children, of command for the parents. What is needed is, that it should be a school of sympathy in equality, of living together in love, without power on one side or obedience on the other."³⁹⁵ Indeed, Berkowitz points out that Mill did not want the state in the business of providing a universal education because he feared

intractable controversies about the curriculum. Instead Mill conceived of education as the responsibility of parents, a responsibility that the state should assume only if parents abdicated it, and then only through the action of transfer payments so that parents could “purchase” education in conjunction with their own wishes and as free of state intervention as could otherwise be provided by a public school system. It is not a bland and universal education that Mill advocates, but rather one that produces individuality in politically responsible citizens, and this achievement Mill believes is only possible in a representative government, or what we would commonly call a liberal democracy.

Berkowitz writes,

In contrast to many contemporary forms of liberalism, Mill’s liberalism puts first neither markets nor procedures nor rights. Rather, his liberalism grows out of, and constantly returns to, questions of character and the ends of a human life. And in contrast to postmodern theorists who celebrate choice, diversity, and self-making in opposition to the very idea of discipline, Mill champions diversity and choice in terms of a particular discipline, the discipline of individuality, which is a conception of human excellence that is achieved through a rigorous moral and intellectual training. Where the discipline of individuality is lacking, the capacity for reasoned choice that in Mill’s view made men and women truly human cannot in its fullness and vitality be present.³⁹⁶

As goes the rhetoric so goes society, and vice versa, for Mill never conceived of a rhetoric that could do away with individuality. He never wanted a society that could not conceive of virtue, or that limited that virtue to straw man versions of pleasure and pain, but instead advocated a constant checking of the facts in close association with a view of the ends or purpose of life, a purpose that found its greatest fulfillment in free individuals who freely embraced the responsibilities and obligations of community living.

The process through which this was achieved is a rhetorical process, and so while he logically arranged his system so that liberty would be an essential element of happiness, he likewise arranged happiness so that it would depend upon individuals exercising virtue through their liberty, which in turn depended upon the capacity to persuade and reason with others as well as the capacity to sympathize. Mill writes,

All valid arguments in favour of virtue, presuppose that we already desire virtue, or desire some of its ends and objects. You may prove to us that virtue tends to the happiness of mankind or of our country; but that supposes that we already care for mankind or for our country. . . . The love of virtue, and every other noble feeling, is not communicated by reasoning, but caught by inspiration or sympathy from those who already have it.³⁹⁷

Mill does not so much explicitly support a natural moral sense as argue that society is the source of defining virtue in a particular age, and in passing that shared definition and conception, almost as one might pass a virus, on to younger generations. Indeed, it is the obligation for parents, Mill maintains, to pass such virtues on through education, but it is likewise an obligation that no one lends too much credence to tradition or the religious mindset, but rather focus a progressive orientation toward public affairs.

The quest for virtue in Mill's work hinges on a conception of human nature that treats "rational and affective dispositions with equal seriousness."³⁹⁸ As Whedbee has noted, "our reasoning abilities . . . shape the way we express and direct our non-rational feelings and desires. On the other hand, unless the feelings and desires exist in some form or another, rational argument by itself cannot generate the feelings and desires," which are absolutely necessary for us to set the ends or purposes of human life in view.³⁹⁹ Whedbee continues, "According to Mill, when we make an evaluative appraisal of some object, we must justify that appraisal through argument. And when we provide

such justification, we generate *ought* statements. In turn, these *ought* statements function as the major premises in practical argument.”⁴⁰⁰ Mill’s “art of life” is a theory of social control that relies almost entirely upon persuasion, and resorts to violence only as a last resort and to the least possible degree. As such, it maintains an area of life, the self-regarding actions, which is entirely free from societal interference despite traditional, historic, and human tendencies that aim to subject it also to such control. It also maintains that other elements of life must be subject, either occasionally or constantly, to societal control, and in this area that control should hinge on persuasion where possible. The “art of life” recognizes that there are certain prerequisites of human happiness that are fixed due to universal capacities of human beings as a species, but that there must also be a component of human happiness that is indeterminate.⁴⁰¹ The most important fixed component of happiness is security, stability, and predictability in social relations, some of which grow from our innate desire to be social animals and to sympathize with all sentient beings, but security is also maintained by societal compulsion when and where necessary in order to protect property and ensure domestic tranquility.

Happiness, then, in the differing spheres of life, depends on doing what is right, what is expedient, and what is beautiful. The laws of morality assist us in determining what is right and wrong, prudential rules govern what is expedient, and aesthetic rules govern what is beautiful, and in order for us to achieve happiness on any occasion we must apply to the question at hand the standards of these different aspects of the art of life. The department of morality, or what is right, is “concerned with protecting our permanent interests in personal security and social stability,” and, as such, is subject to

societal implication. By contrast, the departments of prudence and aesthetics, or what is expedient and inexpedient and beautiful or base, are not subject to societal influence. Instead, they deal, respectively, with aiding individuals and communities in attaining simple self-interested pleasures in either the short-term or long-term, and in promoting interest in self-improvement and self-actualization.⁴⁰² Hence happiness is never a clearly defined thing in Mill's Utilitarianism. Only the components are clearly defined but then left open to particular manifestations depending on age and culture, making Mill's happiness relativistic, but also universal. The "art of life" then is a means from which to view Mill's economic theory, including his desire to define political economy as a science and not an art, his thoughts on distribution of property within society, and his arguments in favor of liberal socialism. It is to these matters we turn our attention.

DEFINING POLITICAL ECONOMY AS SCIENCE

It is difficult to imagine that such books as *If You're So Smart, How to Be Human** **Though an Economist*, or *The Crisis in Economics: The Post-Autistic Economics Movement: The First 600 Days*, or for that matter the whole idea of the rhetoric of economics movement, if it can be called such, should have ever been so critically necessary if, every fall, economists were in the habit of re-reading Mill's essay "On the Definition of Political Economy; and on the Method of Investigation Proper to It," as rhetoricians re-read the *Gorgias* and the *Phaedrus*. Indeed, the essay is so full of crucial reminders for social scientists that its general character should be explored more deeply as a means for improving both didactic and deliberative rhetoric, especially as

that rhetoric is informed by social science in any form. Mill thought so much of the essay that in January of 1834, in a letter to J.P. Nichol's expressing gratitude for Nichol's praise of the essay, he asks him "to suggest all manner of further developments, clearer explanations and apter illustrations," because ". . . I am ambitious that the essay, even if for that end it should remain unpublished for twenty years, should become classical and of authority . . ." ⁴⁰³ The piece, first published in the *London and Westminster* in 1836, was later included in the work from which it was first taken, *Essays on Some Unsettled Questions of Political Economy*, which were published in 1844 following the success of Mill's *System of Logic*. Although there were no second printings of the piece in Mill's life, a second edition was published in 1874, presumably prepared by Helen Taylor.

The essay begins by pointing out that when one teaches a science she usually places at the beginning some definition of the science and some first principles pertaining to that science. Likewise, when an essay begins on any science it typically commences with an attempt to express a clear definition of the science and the first principles pertaining to that science. We might be led, then, to believe that the science began with such definitions and first principles and that the rest of what pertains to that science followed from them in a logical and orderly way. "This, however, is far from having been the case," Mill reminds us. ⁴⁰⁴

The definition of a science has almost invariably not preceded, but followed, the creation of the science itself. Like the wall of a city, it has usually been erected, not to be a receptacle for such edifices as might afterwards spring up, but to circumscribe an aggregation already in existence. Mankind did not measure out the ground for intellectual cultivation before they began to plant it; they did not divide the field of human investigation into regular compartments first, and then

begin to collect truths for the purpose of being therein deposited; they proceeded in a less systematic manner.⁴⁰⁵

In fact, “there is scarcely any investigation in the whole body of a science requiring so high degree of analysis and abstraction, as the inquiry, what the science itself is; in other words, what are the properties common to all the truths composing it, and distinguishing them from all other truths.”⁴⁰⁶ What we commonly call first principles are really last principles, according to Mill, because the degree of sophistication necessary to call anything a first principle or to speak of a definition is of a “high degree of analysis and abstraction,” and even then every definition offered will very much open to “well-grounded logical objections.”⁴⁰⁷

Indeed it was Dugald Stewart, Mill reminds, who observed “that the first principles of all sciences belong to the philosophy of the human mind.” It is this fact that has contributed to vagueness and uncertainty when it comes to defining a mode of inquiry regardless of what branch of knowledge that mode served. “If we open any book, even mathematics or natural philosophy, it is impossible not to be struck with the mistiness of what we find represented as preliminary and fundamental notions, and the very insufficient manner in which the propositions which are palmed upon us as first principles seem to be made out, contrasted with the lucidity of the explanations and the conclusiveness of the proofs as soon as the writer enters upon the details of his subject.”⁴⁰⁸ What, Mill asks, can explain this anomaly? For Mill, all scientific thought finds its roots in induction, and as one approaches anything like general rules for the sake of inquiry or life he enters a misty and insufficient realm.

Still, he provides a definition of political economy that follows Smith's lead, defining "political economy as a science which teaches, or professes to teach, in what manner a nation may be made rich."⁴⁰⁹ Mill reminds us that the definition rests on a critically important distinction, for him, between science and art that extends to a fuller appreciation of how science is formed and how it develops. Mill writes,

With respect to the definition in question, if definition it can be called which is not found in any set form of words, but left to be arrived at by a process of abstraction from a hundred current modes of speaking on the subject; it seems liable to the conclusive objection, that it confounds the essentially distinct, though closely connected, ideas of *science* and *art*. These two ideas differ from one another as the understanding differs from the will, or as the indicative mood in grammar differs from the imperative. The one deals in facts, the other in precepts. Science is a collection of *truths*; art, a body of *rules*, or directions for conduct. The language of science is, This is, or, This is not; This does, or does not, happen. The language of art is, Do this; Avoid that. Science takes cognizance of a *phenomenon*, and endeavours to discover its *law*; art proposes to itself an *end*, and looks out for *means* to effect it.⁴¹⁰

Mill reasons that the science of political economy, especially its definition, is constituted through human speech, "through a hundred current modes of speaking on the subject" one reaches a definition, and it is the modes of speaking that demarcate the extent of the definition, not the words that make up the definition. McCloskey has been making this point for years, and economists continually misunderstand by assuming that what she is talking about is merely the words rather than the substance of the talk. In other words, words and substance are not divided in rhetorical pursuits.

Nevertheless, Mill goes on to further distinguish between science and art, and he classifies the two primarily by their consequences, for science cognizes phenomenon to discover their laws, art proposes an end and looks for the means to bring it about. Note that the order and verbs, too, are important in the distinction for it is science that comes

first, science that cognizes; art comes second and is propositions in search of realization.

“The difference originates in what Aristotle would call the distinction between knowledge and action, and in what Hume would call the distinction between the *is* and the *ought*.”⁴¹¹

Whedbee points out that what makes Mill’s rhetoric unique on this score is not that he differentiates between *is* and *ought*, knowledge and action, science and art, but rather that he gives a detailed explanation about how science interacts with art as in the last chapter of *A System of Logic*:

The art proposes to itself an end to be attained, defines the end, and hands it over to the science. The science receives it, considers it as a phenomenon or effect to be studied, and having investigated its causes and conditions sends it back to art with a theorem of the combinations of circumstances by which it could be produced. Art then examines these combinations of circumstances, and pronounces the end attainable or not. The only one of the premises, therefore, which Art supplies, is the original major premise, which asserts that the attainment of the given end is desirable. Science then lends to Art the propositions (obtained by a series of inductions or of deductions) that the performance of certain actions will attain in the end. From these premises action is desirable, and finding it also practicable converts the theorem into a rule or precept.⁴¹²

On rare occasions will science or art have much to offer humanity in moral terms if they try to do without the other. Rather, Mill proposes that science and art be made to work together, each one checking the other so that the consequences of inquiry are made not only effective and viable in reality but also so that they adhere to the moral needs of the community that they serve.

And, in the case of economics, anyway, only Political Economy is a science, “but domestic economy, so far as it is capable of being reduced to principles, is an art. It consists of rules, or maxims of prudence, for keeping the family regularly supplied with

what its wants require, and securing, with any given amount of means, the greatest possible quantity of physical comfort and enjoyment.”⁴¹³ That is, Political Economy is not in the same relationship to the state as domestic economy is to the family. Political Economy “is conversant with laws of nature, not with maxims of conduct, and teaches us how things take place of themselves, not in what manner it is advisable for us to shape them, in order to attain some particular end.”⁴¹⁴ Hence it is, for Mill, that Political Economy is closely related to the physical sciences, draws upon physical laws for much of the production of wealth, and presupposes the physical sciences, though it is not itself a physical science. What follows in the essay is a rather torturous delineation between the physical sciences and the moral sciences at the end of which Mill reveals that Political Economy is:

1. The science which treats of the production and distribution of wealth, so far as they depend upon the laws of human nature.

Or thus –

2. The science relating to the moral or psychological laws of the production and distribution of wealth.⁴¹⁵

Obviously these definitions exhibit how strongly Mill believes that science is rooted in “a hundred current modes of speaking,” that regardless of science’s utilitarian character it is still the product of talking.

Economic talk, specifically, Mill urges us, must make certain assumptions about human nature, mainly under the rubric of profit or wealth as a motive, but that whenever the political economist does this he must remember that he is operating in the realm of

moral science, or what can be accomplished with the human mind. As such, political economy “is not the science of speculative politics, but a branch of that science.” Mill writes,

All these operations, though many of them are really the result of a plurality of motives, are considered by Political Economy as flowing solely from the desire of wealth. The science then proceeds to investigate the laws which govern these several operations, under the supposition that man is a being who is determined, by the necessity of his nature, to prefer a greater portion of wealth to a smaller in all cases, without any other exception than that constituted by the two counter-motives already specified. Not that any political economist was ever so absurd as to suppose that mankind are really thus constituted, but because this is the mode in which science must necessarily proceed.⁴¹⁶

It is alright to hypothesize that man is moved by only a single motive, especially if it opens the door for a greater understanding of how man provides for his physical needs, but if it is forgotten that real men are moved by more than a single motive such inquiry becomes entirely “absurd.” And, insofar as other motives can be proven to move mankind in the pursuit of wealth than “the conclusions of Political Economy will so far fail of being applicable to the explanation or prediction of real events, until they are modified by a correct allowance for the degree of influence exercised by the other cause.”⁴¹⁷

Mill then proposes another definition of Political Economy, just in case the reader missed the point that science is not systematic, definitive, or constructed in a straight line. Mill writes,

Political Economy, then, may be defined as follows; and the definition seems to be complete:—

The science which traces the laws of such of the phenomena of society as arise from the combined operations of mankind for the production of wealth, in so far as those phenomena are not modified by the pursuit of any other object.⁴¹⁸

And lest the reader think the use of all this talk about definitions can be relegated only to the way in which Political Economy might fit in a constellation containing all the disciplines, Mill reminds, “that, with the consideration of the definition of a science, is inseparably connected that of the *philosophic method* of the science; the nature of the process by which its investigations are to be carried on, its truths to be arrived at.”⁴¹⁹

Economists, then, are justified in assuming that mankind is moved by only a single motive when it comes to the abstract science of economics, when it comes to how far their argument goes, but the conclusions of Political Economy, consequently, “are only true, as the common phrase is, *in the abstract*; that is, they are only true under certain suppositions, in which none but general causes – causes common to the *whole* class of cases under consideration – are taken into the account.”⁴²⁰ The arbitrary definition of man is only worth anything in an abstract sense, unless, of course, our knowledge of causes are revealed to us by infallible authority and our abstract science is perfect. And then we would be prophets. “But the causes are not so revealed: they are to be collected by observation; and observation in circumstances of complexity is apt to be imperfect.”⁴²¹ So then,

No one who attempts to lay down propositions for the guidance of mankind, however perfect his scientific acquirements, can dispense with a practical knowledge of the actual modes in which the affairs of the world are carried on, and an extensive personal experience of the actual ideas, feelings, and intellectual and moral tendencies of his own country and of his own age. The true practical statesman is he who combines this experience with a profound knowledge of abstract political philosophy. Either acquirement, without the other, leaves him lame and impotent if he is sensible of the deficiency; renders him obstinate and presumptuous if, as is more probable, he is entirely unconscious of it.⁴²²

And so it is that science and art divorced from each other, as they too often are, end up impotent. The one seeking knowledge on the periphery, the other trying to bring things together; the one knowing only the facts, the other not knowing enough facts; the one not concerned with defining, the other ceaselessly and constantly in the habit of defining; neither going anywhere or doing anything important without the other. And, regardless of whether Mill's carefully thought out distinctions between science and art still hold up today, it seems apparent that too much inquiry fails to engage because it fails to account for the distinction Mill observes with regard to political economy. That is, the effective statesman has to be exactly that, both effective and a statesman. He has to be capable of appreciating the consequences of his policies, but not only of appreciating the consequences; he must also be capable of setting a course for what ought to be. Mill wanted to be both an expert economist and philosopher of Utilitarianism alongside a stellar career standing up for the rights of others, even if it looked as if the latter was undermining the former. Reading "On the Definition of Political Economy" indicates that Mill was aware of the limitations of all human inquiry, and, furthermore, that although the tendency is for scientists and artists to fail in their awareness of the other, that is no excuse for the resultant failures in their scholarship. Mill is saying only what McCloskey has been repeating and that is that good scholarship depends on the capacity to recognize both the facts and the values, both the knowledge and the action, both the is and the ought. Those who prove incapable of pursuing both end up writing misunderstanding into their work rather than serving to remove it.

On Capitalist Growth and Distribution

It is no small piece of irony that despite Mill's commitment to the science of economics what remains of his writings on economics and economies that is most instructive are those that deal specifically with what *ought* to be done to counteract the negative effects of capitalism, socialism, and communism. In economics, the *ought* endures and has more staying power than the *is*. Indeed, Mill's writings show a deep sympathy toward utopian groups that sought to establish property sharing initiatives in which workers were employed for the general good of society, but despite that sympathy he still held that the focus of political economy should be on making the system of private property more advantageous to all.

Mill's thoughts on the system of private property and how its advantages could be, and ought to be, shared with all in society are perhaps some of the most relevant insights of his rhetoric and economics. What Mill said one hundred and fifty-seven years ago is still true today: "The laws of property have never yet conformed to the principles on which the justification of property rests."⁴²³ What are the principles on which the justification of property rests, for Mill, and why have the laws of property never conformed to these principles? And, what relevance does such discussion continue to hold for us?

The liberal in Mill maintains that the purpose of private property is to protect a fair start for all in the economic race, and to diffuse the tendency for property to be accumulated in two few hands. Instead of justifying a just distribution of property inside of the idea of property rights, Mill writes,

They have not held the balance fairly between human beings, but have heaped impediments upon some, to give advantage to others; they have purposely fostered inequalities, and prevented all from starting fair in the race. That all should indeed start on perfectly equal terms is inconsistent with any law of private property: but if as much pains as has been taken to aggravate the inequality of chances arising from the natural working of the principle, had been taken to temper that inequality by every means not subversive of the principle itself; if the tendency of legislation had been to favour the diffusion, instead of the concentration of wealth – to encourage the subdivision of the large masses, instead of striving to keep them together; the principle of individual property would have been found to have no necessary connexion with the physical and social evils which almost all Socialist writers assume to be inseparable from it.⁴²⁴

Hence, without recognizing it the defenders of private property have been advocating for private property in such a manner that it undermines the public benefit. That is, the tendency has been to favor large concentrations of wealth through strict inheritance laws even though it throws the whole prospect of private property into doubt for society as a whole.

Mill's arguments about private property stem from his rejection of the laws of primogeniture and the primacy of the family in society, which he sees as our inheritance from European feudalism. Consequently, Mill advocates new laws of inheritance to contradict the capitalist tendency to make acquisition easier and diffusion of property more difficult. He starts from the contention that the individual, not the family, is the primary unit of society, and then reasons about what any single individual could possibly require as a matter of inheritance. Mill concludes that a standard that could occupy our attention in this regard is that of the illegitimate child. For those in the upper and middle classes a just bequest to an illegitimate child would be such as could give him a fair start in life, roughly something like room and board to a certain age as well as, perhaps, a college education. Anything more than that is superfluous, and in most cases does a

positive harm to society by making a single individual wealthier than he needs to be, so to speak. For Mill, it also does a disservice to the individual because he is not challenged to make his own way.

Mill qualifies these arguments by acknowledging that one aspect of ownership is the implied capacity to pass on the things owned to one's heirs. For example, in Mill's system a man would have the right to acquire property by the fruits of his own labor and abstinence, but his desire to pass those fruits on to his heir's would be outweighed by the good that could come to society by denying that right, or, at least for Mill, in qualifying that right. The good that can come to society is two-fold. First, Mill thinks that an heir who stands to inherit a large sum of money upon say, his father's death, will in some instances end up contributing less to society because of the expectation of inheritance. Take away the expectation and you would likely increase that individual's desire to make a positive contribution to society. Secondly, there is the more egregious problem of the concentration of wealth that is inherent in all economic systems, but especially capitalism, and results from having too few conditions in the laws of inheritance. Instead of diffusing wealth, these laws promote its concentration thereby denying a certain amount of leisure and liberty to others. Of course, Mill is aware of the limitations of liberty upon any rule that might prevent a person from bestowing what they will to whom, so he advocates instead a system that would simply limit the amount any one person could inherit.

For example, we might find a man with a five million dollar estate who has two children and six grandchildren. The right to bequest the entire estate to one child rather

than the other, perhaps because the other child had dishonored him in life, would certainly be protected. However, under Mill's system, the amount of inheritance would be limited to say, one million dollars, so the man would have to make another arrangement. Namely, he would be free to disburse the funds in million dollar increments to whomever he wished, perhaps to his child and grandchildren, but he could not disburse the money in a way that would contribute to the concentration of wealth to any great degree such that it would injure society. In other words, Mill accepts the idea that private ownership implies a capacity to disburse that property whenever to whomever however, but he does not accept that this is true absolutely. Instead, he contends that "property is only a means to an end, not itself the end."⁴²⁵ That is, it's the means for "that fair chance of a desirable existence," and, of sorts, as a means, property should be protected for another person only 'til death do us part. There is no reason as far as Mill can see why property should be protected beyond that time without qualifications, especially when inheritance laws tend "to conflict with the permanent interests of the human race."⁴²⁶

That conflict is exacerbated when inheritance is not qualified, but Mill can "see nothing objectionable in fixing a limit to what any one may acquire by the mere favour of others, without any exercise of his faculties, and in requiring that if he desires any further accession of fortune, he shall work for it."⁴²⁷ The most any of us can expect from the state in terms of its protection of our property is that which we need to subsist to as high a degree of comfort as possible without thereby diminishing the comfort of those around us. Hence, Mill's Utilitarianism, in this regard, leads to a constant attention to the

permanent needs of human society, and measures those needs against the present while still recognizing and protecting liberty.⁴²⁸

Mill deals with the problem of the concentration of wealth again when he discusses the issue of a capitalist system eventually reaching a stage of stagnation. Adam Smith and other theorists, including Bentham and James Mill, believed that Capitalism would ebb and flow between periods of growth and periods of stagnation. Smith believed that such periods of stagnation, or prolonged recession, would have a negative impact on society because it would cause poverty and unemployment. John Stuart Mill, however, saw that continuous growth had two severe drawbacks. The first is that continual growth encouraged men to be constantly inclined toward accumulating more wealth, or at least constantly concerned with how to provide for their needs and wishes. Mill writes, "I confess I am not charmed with the ideal of life held out by those who think that the normal state of human beings is that of struggling to get on; that the trampling, crushing, elbowing, and treading on each other's heels, which form the existing type of social life, are the most desirable lot of human kind, or anything but the disagreeable symptoms of one of the phases of industrial progress."⁴²⁹ In other words, he hoped that the behaviors men engaged in during periods of growth, what others have called "irrational exuberance," would be only a passing phase on the way to a greater appreciation of leisure, study, and higher pursuits.

Secondly, Mill thought that periods of growth without slowing or stagnation would make everyone want to be rich, and thereby debase them selves. "But the best state for human nature is that in which, while no one is poor, no one desires to be richer,

nor has any reason to fear being thrust back by the efforts of others to push themselves forward.”⁴³⁰ Although the politicians will always be excited by “the mere increase of production and accumulation,” society should not be so easily misled by a desire for riches beyond what is needed. Mill writes,

I know not why it should be matter of congratulation that persons who are already richer than any one needs to be, should have doubled their means of consuming things which give little or no pleasure except as representative of wealth; or that numbers of individuals should pass over, every year, from the middle classes into a richer class, or from the class of the occupied rich to that of the unoccupied. It is only in the backward countries of the world that increased production is still an important object: in those most advanced, what is economically needed is a better distribution, of which one indispensable means is a stricter restraint on population. Levelling institutions, either of a just or unjust kind, cannot alone accomplish it; they may lower the heights of society, but they cannot, of themselves, permanently raise the depths.⁴³¹

Mill thought that there must be a way to counteract the negative effects of wealth accumulation while still protecting the rights of all to enjoy the fruits of their “prudence and frugality.” Keeping the height of fortunes on a level plane was the first way to seek societal benefit without unduly harming those who have more than anyone could possibly use in one lifetime.

The power of a stationary state to diminish the tendency to love riches, to halt or slow the accumulation of great sums of money, and the added benefit that Mill thought would come during stationary times, a slowing of population growth, suggest that a condition of society “so greatly preferable to the present, is not only perfectly compatible with the stationary state, but, it would seem, more naturally allied with that state than with any other.”⁴³² A stationary state opens the possibility that man will for once settle with what he has and be less concerned about getting more. If that could be

achieved, Mill thought, then the art of living will have a much greater chance of flourishing, and minds would be improved most when they “ceased to be engrossed by the art of getting on.”⁴³³

Just as Adam Smith acknowledged that the division of labor had the capacity to create incredible wealth but also, consequently, would weaken the mind, Mill foresaw a political economy that had a balanced appreciation for the growth of the economy and the mind, and advocated that attention be paid to both aspects of life with due regard for the negative impact of continuous growth. Mill believed that capitalism had the capacity, as long as wealth was not completely concentrated, to offer the life of the mind to every member of society in spite of his position in the supply chain. Mill hoped that the appreciation of the mind would outweigh the love of riches, and thereby pave the way for the universal growth and expansion of the human mind, and not merely the universal growth and expansion of the human pocketbook.

MILL’S BUSINESS OF LIFE

As Mill’s *A System of Logic* ends with a discourse on the “art of life,” which is discussed explicitly above, Mill’s *Principles of Political Economy* ends with a discourse on the “business of life,” under the heading of “Limits of the Province of Government.” Mill’s discourse on the “business of life” is critically important for understanding Millian rhetoric in contemporary times because, I argue, it serves as the basis for the two most important strands that seek to extend Mill’s theories to present circumstances, namely, American Pragmatism, as primarily represented below by the work of Richard Rorty,

and Rational Choice, or Public Choice Theory, as represented by James Buchanan. Mill's business of life is the starting point from which these two theories diverge, suddenly and irreparably, in terms of their conceptions of the role of government in assisting and promoting the business of life.

After assuming that there is a circle around every individual beyond which government must never reach, after defining liberty in Isaiah Berlin's terms as "negative liberty," Mill argues that there are certain reasons why government should not be allowed to extend into other areas of life. The contest between government and the individual is where precisely the line should be drawn between the two. Mill reasons, too, about when it is permissible for government to participate in an interventionist way in the workings of society, or, put another way, when government can intervene in the workings between individuals.

Besides securing the realm of liberty, individuals should be careful to watch that interventionist plans of the government do not unnecessarily increase the power of government. Experience proves, Mill warns, that when power is committed to the hands of representatives they will seek to increase that power, and since present circumstances give power only to individuals acting in masses we are warned to prohibit government intervention. Mill writes, "hence it is no less important in a democratic than in any other government, that all tendency on the part of the public authorities to stretch their interference, and assume a power of any sort which can easily be dispensed with, should be regarded with unremitting jealousy."⁴³⁴ Indeed, especially in a democracy this should be guarded against because "where public opinion is sovereign, an individual who is

oppressed by the sovereign does not, as in most other states of things, find a rival power to which he can appeal for relief, or, at all events, for sympathy.”⁴³⁵

The freedom from government interference should also be zealously protected because government is already burdened with a great deal of work which it has not the time to accomplish. Though, Mill points out, the real problem is not that government has too much to do but that it does not divide up labor effectively or locally enough. Government feels overburdened because it does not hold its own authorities accountable only for their own actions, or for the consequences of their actions. These failures give the impression of backlog among government workers, according to Mill.

But the real issue why governments should not be allowed to interfere between individuals is that government actions are necessarily less efficient than private agreements. Mill writes,

But though a better organization of governments would greatly diminish the force of the objection to the mere multiplication of their duties, it would still remain true that in all the more advanced communities the great majority of things are worse done by the intervention of government, than the individuals most interested in the matter would do them or cause them to be done, if left to themselves. The grounds of this truth are expressed with tolerable exactness in the popular dictum, that people understand their own business and their own interests better, and care for them more, than the government does, or can be expected to do. This maxim holds true throughout the greatest part of the business of life, and wherever it is true we ought to condemn every kind of government intervention that conflicts with it.⁴³⁶

This statement is critically important for understanding the most often repeated maxims of contemporary economics, that governments are inefficient while people in markets are efficient. Notice that Mill grounds the claim in rhetoric, in a popular dictum that tells us government is inferior to individuals pursuing their own interests. The business of life

proceeds better when individuals are left to themselves than when government interferes with their work.

Furthermore, even if government could somehow gather all of the greatest talents of a society under its control it would still be essential that government should not interfere in all of life because practical reasoning and common sense are fostered by being left to our own devices. “The business of life is an essential part of the practical education of a people; without which, book and school instruction, though most necessary and salutary, does not suffice to qualify them for conduct, and for the adaptation of means to ends.”⁴³⁷ Hence,

As practical beings it is our business to free human life from as many as possible of its difficulties, and not to keep up a stock of them as hunters preserve game for the exercise of pursuing it. But since the need of active talent and practical judgment in the affairs of life can only be diminished, and no, even on the most favourable supposition, done away with, it is important that those endowments should be cultivated not merely in a select few, but in all, and that the cultivation should be more varied and complete than most persons are able to find in the narrow sphere of their merely individual interests.⁴³⁸

In essence, being left to our own devices cultivates those devices, and hence government interference should be fought on those grounds.

“We have observed that, as a general rule, the business of life is better performed when those who have an immediate interest in it are left to take their own course, uncontrolled either by the mandate of law or by the meddling of any public functionary.”⁴³⁹ People who do the work, any work, are better able to know what aims will be best for accomplishing their purposes, and hence government should be kept out of the business of life. Indeed, Mill thinks this is the most important reason why government interference should be thwarted at every opportunity, that “*Laissez-faire*, in

short, should be the general practice: every departure from it, unless required by some great good, is a certain evil.”⁴⁴⁰ Mill is astute enough to recognize that many times government intervention achieves great good, or at least the removal of great harm which in Utilitarian calculus amounts to the same thing, and hence should be promoted.

What are the areas in which government intervention, according to Mill, ought to be allowed or even fostered? They are: 1. Education, both elementary and advanced; 2. Legal intervention in favor of children; 3. When an individual decides irrevocably for the future; 4. Government needs to, at least, control certain areas of commerce including roads, railways, canals, etc.; 5. In regulating the length of the laboring day; 6. Actions done for the interests of other people, especially when individual acts cannot be enough, as in offering assistance to nations stricken by a tsunami; 7. Actions of individuals that may extend indefinitely beyond them, as in the case of colonization, but also includes financial incentives for the sciences and exploration. Each of these will be discussed in turn to explain what Mill took to be the advantages of government interference between individuals.

Principles of Political Economy expresses an acute awareness throughout that times are changing in Europe and that the age of feudalism and the old ideas of society that would keep the laboring classes down while feigning a willingness to lead them and provide for them are passing. What is necessary is a new, capitalist/socialist conception of society in which everyone is considered a laborer and in which everyone is expected to contribute. A just society should expect you to labor both for yourself and for society until such time as you deserve rest because of labor already performed. The notion that

anyone should be allowed, because of riches, to be a non-laborer is a “great social evil” as it creates class division, resentment, and a sense of entitlement in the so-called higher classes. A model of society that tolerates or even promotes such division is unacceptable, perhaps unjust. Still, in the meantime Mill makes some recommendations for the state of the working classes. Namely, the day of treating women and the poor as if they are incapable of caring or choosing for themselves has passed, hence, “to their own qualities must now be commended the care of their destiny.”⁴⁴¹ Their capacity to care for themselves is contingent upon access to education and opportunity for social advancement in the form of employment. Mill acknowledges the capacity of newspapers and political tracts and other types of cheap media to help educate the poor, and he believed that these were already the means to increase their understanding of the world beyond a scant existence. He also advocated the use of state resources to be used for education, where parents were unable or unwilling to provide it.

I have already noted above that Mill’s ideas of liberty are somewhat limited or, at least, qualified by his notion of utility. Fortunately, his advocacy of laissez-faire, or non-interference by the government, is also regulated by a universal happiness calculation such that his laissez-faire ideas are also limited, restricted by utility, much more so than by those, mostly economists, who advocate Utilitarianism in the name of free market principles applied to public life. In other words, although he sees the capacity of markets to benefit society in many ways, Mill never suggests that markets ought to be applied to all of life.

In fact, the area of education is one of those elements of the business of life that cannot be left to market forces. Indeed, the customer in the case of education is never right! Perhaps with regard to material objects the customer is always right, “but there are other things, of the worth of which the demand of the market is by no means a test; things of which the utility does not consist in ministering to inclinations, nor in serving the daily uses of life, and the want of which is least felt where the need is the greatest. This is peculiarly true of those things which are chiefly useful as tending to raise the character of human beings.”⁴⁴² Education is the chief means of raising the character of human beings and, therefore, it falls under the province of government to observe and contribute.

The exception to the rule that government cannot interfere with individuals can be carried the furthest, according to Mill, in the area of elementary education because it is in this area that the greatest good or harm can be done to an individual, and thus to society, if elementary education is not carried out properly.⁴⁴³ Because so much hangs in the balance of elementary education, a whole life of contribution to or dead weight upon society, society should provide. “And this is not one of the cases in which the tender of help perpetuates the state of things which renders help necessary.”⁴⁴⁴ Effective instruction enlarges the mind and capacities of those who receive it, instilling the spirit of independence and making them more, rather than less, free of needing to depend on society. “It is help towards doing without help,” that is the chief reason for supporting public funding of education.⁴⁴⁵

The same can be extended with some reservations to advanced education, primarily because opportunity in the private sector will not be sufficient to meet demand. However, the government must never be allowed to have a monopoly over education. It should never require a license to teach, or take care that its teachers are the only available. “Though government teachers will probably be superior to the average of private instructors,” Mill writes, “they will not embody all the knowledge and sagacity to be found in all instructors taken together, and it is desirable to leave open as many roads as possible to the desired end.”⁴⁴⁶

Government intervention in education is desirable, then, as long as it meets these conditions, which are, in summary, that education be cultivated for all at the elementary level as “help towards doing without help,” provided that the help offered is never a monopoly by market effect or by law. Educational interference by the state is always justified best on the grounds that education is “not one in which the interest and judgment of the consumer are sufficient security for the goodness of the commodity.”⁴⁴⁷ Because educational standards are best set by those who know, be they in the family, church, state, or school, and never by the customer, provision must be made for the quality of the product from above or from ahead rather than from, democratically speaking, the bottom up. Hence the state has a crucial role to play, for Mill, in making sure that parents provide an education, and, if not, in providing it for its citizens as a means of eventually making them self-sufficient and capable of giving back to society.

Secondly, as noted above, state intervention is justified in matters between parents and children when the safety of children is at risk. Mill’s contention is against

tyranny in this regard and aims at more laws designed to protect children from the tyranny of their parents. “The domestic life of domestic tyrants,” Mill writes, “is one of the things which it is the most imperative on the law to interfere with; and it is to be regretted that metaphysical scruples respecting the nature and source of the authority of government should induce many warm supporters of laws against cruelty to animals to seek for a justification of such laws in the incidental consequences of the indulgence of ferocious habits to the interests of human beings, rather than in the intrinsic merits of the case itself.”⁴⁴⁸

Government should also intervene in cases when a person decides irrevocably for the future, as when a person might sign a contract to enter a nursing home that would thereby limit their ability to ever decide to leave said home, either because the contract is too stiff or because it removes from the person agency to do something else by nature of the contract itself. If a contract is in perpetuity then contracts should not be left free, according to Mill, because no individual party is competent to judge or can be expected to see into the long-term future. This point extends into Mill’s fourth reason for government to intervene, and that is in cases where, even though it might be more efficient economically speaking to allow a private contractor to, say, build a road, it is still in the best interest of the state to regulate the administration of the road after it is built for the good of the community. Mill certainly allows for private contractors to work roads and canals, and argues that if done in this manner they will be more efficiently worked, but he does not concede that the interest of the state should ever be lost with regard to the property or the perpetual use of it.

Fifthly, although Mill agrees primarily with employers with regard to the length of the working day, he believes that each employee should be allowed to enter into a private contract, such that if a single employee believes that the working day should be nine hours instead of ten then he should be allowed to work nine hours without the government interfering and forcing him to work the tenth hour, as was commonly practiced in that time. This is protected on the grounds that a shorter work day can only become effectual, even as a law, if it is “enforced by opinion with a rigour practically equal to that of law.”⁴⁴⁹ In other words, a worker’s right to express his opinion in the matter of the length of the work week is infringed when the government steps in on behalf of the employer. Hence, though Mill agrees with the employer in this case, his agreement cannot extend to a limitation on the liberty of the worker. The state should intervene on behalf of the worker by not intervening in behalf of the employer, thus allowing for freedom of expression to see if opinion might take hold and give force to a new labor laws.

Another moment when the state should intervene, Mill believes, is when the actions being done are on behalf of others. Individuals are the best judge of what is best for them selves, but when it comes to making decisions for other people they are not always better judges than government. Included in this notion is the subject of public charity. Public charity is often imperfect, Mill notes, giving great abundance here and leaving great want there. It is, of course, right that human beings should help one another, “and the more so, in proportion to the urgency of the need: and none needs help so urgently as one who is starving.”⁴⁵⁰ But care should be taken not because of the

consequences of the assistance itself, but because of “the consequences of relying on the assistance.”⁴⁵¹ Usually individuals are not capable of observing, because of the time or resources involved in overseeing tragedies on the scale of the Irish Potato Famine or the 2004 Southeast Asian Tsunami, what the precise consequences of their aid entail. Hence, government is justified in intervening in these matters to be sure that the aid does not itself have a crippling effect. Mill writes,

When the condition of any one is so disastrous that his energies are paralyzed by discouragement, assistance is a tonic, not a sedative: it braces instead of deadening the active faculties: always provided that the assistance is not such as to dispense with self-help, by substituting itself for the person’s own labour, skill, and prudence, but it is limited to affording him a better hope of attaining success by those legitimate means. This accordingly is a test to which all plans of philanthropy and benevolence should be brought, whether intended for the benefit of individuals or of classes, and whether conducted on the voluntary or on the government principle.⁴⁵²

It is the ever present concern with self-help, with making sure not to paralyze a person by assistance, by always helping them rather than letting them help themselves when the time comes that governs whether government should intervene. If individuals want to help others, but cannot foresee the consequences of that aid, the government is justified in making sure that this test of self-help is applied.

A related issue is the reality that the state must give assistance to the criminal poor when incarcerated, so if they do not also give aid to the free poor than they are creating an incentive for criminality. In other words it is clear from the text that Mill is not simply advocating government oversight of private charitable giving, but also that the government itself should play an active role in seeking out the poor and offering

relief to their suffering, and being sure that its actions do not create incentives among the poor that would complicate their situation.

The final area in which government intervention is looked upon sympathetically regards actions of individuals that may extend indefinitely beyond them. For example, a very wealthy person might donate money for a school and then prescribe with that donation what must be taught at the school in perpetuity. Mill thinks that such an action would be very foolish indeed given his preference for a brighter future, and, hence, he might consider it a place where government could intervene down the road to ensure that the education offered at the college met with some minimum of societal standards for learning. The same principle would apply to colonization, voyages of geographical or scientific exploration, monetary incentive for scientific researches, and the cultivation of speculative knowledge. Only government could be made to have incentive to participate in these arenas, and only government could work to ensure that such interventions were of benefit to society as a whole and not merely to some subset seeking profit.

Thus it is that Mill thinks society is best judged by “private and voluntary agency,” with those qualifications listed above. Aid should be carefully watched, and “so given as to be as far as possible a course of education for the people in the art of accomplishing great objects by individual energy and voluntary co-operation.”⁴⁵³ The liberality that accompanies this sentiment is widespread, and when connected to the principles of Utilitarianism has a capacity to enhance the functioning of society by paying attention to the consequences, but also recognizing the obligations that society has to her citizens. Ideally, a balance would be struck between what is and what ought to

be, keeping in mind that the business of life, the business of getting on in the world, must occupy a central concern in our theorizing and policy-making. Even though the business of life is a subset of the art of life, it is, perhaps, the matter that most directly concerns societal relations. Mill's arguments in the discourse on the business of life that government can have a positive effect in many cases, that "metaphysical scruples" should be overlooked when it comes to the capacity of government to intervene, and that government should always provide "help towards doing without help," ensuring "that the assistance is not such as to dispense with self-help, by substituting itself for the person's own labour, skill, and prudence, but it is limited to affording him a better hope of attaining success by those legitimate means," is the foundation of his impact on the American scene.

A BUSINESS OF LIFE FOR THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY

Mill's contention that government can contribute positively to social needs is the basis for Pragmatists such as William James and Richard Rorty to lean their philosophy on Mill. Conversely, other aspects of the discourse on the business of life that show what are taken to be severe limitations on the role of government in society are the jumping board for Rational Choice theorists such as James Buchanan. For example, when Mill says there is a circle around each individual beyond which government can never go, it is the aim of rational choice theorists to enlarge that circle of individual felicities as far as possible. It is public choice theorists purpose to show again and again that government intervention is always less efficient than could be got by private contract,

and that Mill's "liberty of private life" is an absolute. It goes so far, as James Aune and others have noted, that when Mill says that "it is the interest of each to do what is good for all, but only if others will do likewise," that rational choice theorists conclude others will never do likewise, and hence we should work only for ourselves.⁴⁵⁴ On the other hand, the Pragmatists see evidence in Mill's arguments on the business of life to support the idea of government intervention because they understand from Mill that the public does have a common sense and with it the ability to reason together about the ends of life.

In other words, I argue that two divergent views of social life find an earlier expression in Mill's discourse on the business of life, and that these two divergent views focus Mill's contribution for the next century. Though I do not believe that either view offers sole allegiance to Mill's conception of the business of life, I do think that the discourse on the business of life is one of the few common places American Pragmatism and Rational Choice theory share. The first, American Pragmatism, takes what might be called the softer version of the business of life. It is less mathematical and, therefore, less economic in its outlook on life, but holds to Mill's principles regarding fair government intervention. Whereas the Public Choice theorists jump from Mill in an entirely different direction, emphasizing his explication of the logic of science from which to reason about what ought to be because of what is the reality as shown through mathematical inquiry, including first and foremost a contention that government intervention is necessarily less efficient than private enterprise, and that the circle surrounding the individual should be expanded, such that at a public choice seminar at George Mason University one of the

leaders of the group told us with a straight face that prostitution should be legal, as should the selling of babies, kidneys, or anything else that might be circumscribed in a very large circle around the individual.

Though it is not possible, by any means, whether intellectually or space, to give a deep analysis of these two areas in which Mill's rhetoric continues to function in the contemporary sphere within this chapter, it is, I hope, possible to show briefly how Mill's rhetorical influence is felt within the strain of American Pragmatism as represented by Richard Rorty, and in Public Choice theory circles as represented by James Buchanan. Both Rorty and Buchanan are universities in their own right, not merely as they intersect occasionally with what Mill has taught them, nevertheless it is hoped that the reader may gain something from seeing that Mill's rhetoric continues to have sway in current debates, even if in a sense far distant from his intentions. It will be a useful exercise merely for the purposes of tracing the history of ideas, but if it also leads the reader to consider new ways to read Mill, pragmatism, or public choice theory then I will consider it to have been a success.

Mill's Influence on American Pragmatism

“TO THE MEMORY OF JOHN STUART MILL FROM WHOM I FIRST LEARNED THE PRAGMATIC OPENESS OF MIND AND WHOM MY FANCY LIKES TO PICTURE AS OUR LEADER WERE HE ALIVE TO-DAY,” is the dedication on the frontispiece of William James' *Pragmatism*.⁴⁵⁵ James' philosophy of pragmatism is mainly a method, “*the attitude of looking away from first things, principles, 'categories,'*

*supposed necessities; and of looking toward last things, fruits, consequences, facts.*⁴⁵⁶ It is an attempt to bring science and metaphysics much closer together to generate a way of thinking, primarily conditioned by a stance of optimism toward the immediate present and how the world can and should be constructed to make our lives better. It dismisses on principle lengthy discussions about truth and falsity or about matters which are not shown to be pragmatically valuable insofar as those discussions stray from the pragmatic point of improving the present. It is an empirical stance toward the world that values the consequences of experience and seeks to make a philosophy out of those consequences. As such, admittedly, it is anti-intellectual because it has no doctrines save its method and no dogmas. James is, of course, emphatic about Pragmatism being capable of preserving religious world views in their entirety, but hinges that upon religious world views, in turn, being capable of discussing and agreeing about what is pragmatic for society.

“The pragmatist clings to facts and concreteness, observes truth at its work in particular cases, and generalizes. Truth, for him, becomes a class-name for all sorts of definite working-values in experience.”⁴⁵⁷ And, “being nothing essentially new, it harmonizes with many ancient philosophic tendencies. It agrees with nominalism, for instance, in always appealing to particulars; with utilitarianism in emphasizing practical aspects; with positivism in its disdain for verbal solutions, useless questions and metaphysical abstractions.”⁴⁵⁸

It is just this clinging to facts, concreteness, observation, and only then generalization that exhibits a shared kinship with Mill’s dichotomy between science and art. It would be ridiculous to assume that James’ pragmatic philosophy is descended

from Mill because it is so entirely original, however, Mill's emphasis on *is* and *ought*, as noted above, coupled with his deliberative Utilitarianism that leaves happiness with an open-ended definition exhibits a very close kinship, philosophically with James' Pragmatism.⁴⁵⁹ James' pragmatism is altogether too mystical for Mill, and yet there remains a strong kinship between utilitarianism and pragmatism, such that John Dewey also spent considerable effort showing how the two differed. And it was Dewey who recognized that pragmatism carried with it no absolute capacity to comprehend the greatest happiness for the greatest number.

In particular, Dewey criticizes the precision with which utilitarianism depends, in particular any attempt to codify pleasure and pain given the Pragmatist argument that pleasure and pain above anything else depends upon accident. Dewey writes,

Tendency is not good enough for the utilitarians. They want a mathematical equation of act and consequence. Hence they make light of the steady and controllable factor of disposition, and fasten upon just the things which are most subject to incalculable accident – pleasures and pains – and embark upon the hopeless enterprise of judging an act apart from character on the basis of definite results. An honestly modest theory will stick to the probabilities of tendency, and not import mathematics into morals.⁴⁶⁰

Mathematical calculation, for the pragmatists, does not belong in reasoning about morals because it is just the area of morals that is outside of or incompatible with mathematics. Instead, Dewey points out that the Pragmatist would depend more upon habits than the utilitarians because acts do not always have clear consequences and the utilitarians want to experience their acts and consequences outside of time. Time teaches the pragmatist of change to morals, and “time is of the essence of moral struggle.”⁴⁶¹

It is time that again distinguishes pragmatism from utilitarianism for Dewey. The utilitarians should be congratulated for striving to make good and evil, right and wrong, as matters of conscious experience, and for bringing them down to everyday experience. They are also right in their striving to humanize other-worldly goods, Dewey writes, “But they retained the notion that the good is future The future end is for them not so remote from present action as the Platonic realm of ideals, or as the Aristotelian rational thought, or the Christian heaven, or Spinoza’s conception of the universal whole. But still it is separate in principle and fact from present activity.”⁴⁶² This difference is important because the utilitarians, including Mill, talk about the happiness as a futuristic, as coming only after rational calculation, but never a part of rational calculation or capable of infusing the present with a sense of joy or joyfulness derived as experience, which is the height of pragmatism’s aim.

Finally, Dewey takes aim at the utilitarian emphasis on consequences as the prime point of moral perfection because it suggests somehow that the self is divorced from acts and consequences in a way that misses the pragmatic point of unity. Dewey writes,

It is not too much to say that the key to a correct theory of morality is recognition of the *essential unity of the self and its acts*, if the latter have any moral significance; while errors in theory arise as soon as the self and acts (and their consequences) are separated from each other, and moral worth is attributed to one more than to the other. The unity of self and action underlies all judgment that is distinctively moral in character. We may judge a happening to be useful or harmful in its consequences, as when we speak of a kindly rain or a destructive torrent. We do not, however, imply moral valuation, because we do not impute connection with character or with a self to rain or flood.⁴⁶³

If a moral theory judges only the consequences of acts as they produce pleasure or pain it misses a critical aspect of morality and that is that it extends from an agent capable of choice. For the pragmatists, utilitarianism did not go far enough in showing how the self, acts, and consequences are inextricably linked.

Hence, pragmatism's leader is John Stuart Mill, but he is not the finisher of their faith. Instead, they look for a moral theory that has the capacity to recognize the importance of acts and consequences as a component of happiness, but they do not think those components can be reduced to mathematical precision; pragmatists look for morality that is connected to consequences that will bring happiness but they do not wish to speak of the consequences of acts as being some part of future experience but rather as part of the ever-present "stream of experience"; and finally, pragmatists appreciate consequentialist thinking only if it is understood to relate directly to character, to acts and consequences in necessary relation to an actor. In this way, pragmatism is not utilitarianism, but it is plain to see that such cousinhood in the respective philosophies indicates derivation, or, at least, explicit concession and acknowledgment.

Following James and Dewey, Richard Rorty acknowledges intellectual indebtedness to Mill, but offers a further difference that since Dewey pragmatists have consistently offered inspiring narratives and fuzzy utopias that contain a smattering from a number of thinkers – and Mill is always on the list.⁴⁶⁴ What seems most critical in Rorty's reception of Mill is his notion that any given individual's calculus for happiness, any given expression of liberty should never infringe on the liberty (and ideally happiness) of another.⁴⁶⁵ The pragmatist admiration of Mill, in James and Rorty, coheres

around the identification of *ought* with what is *desired* by any given individual, circumstance, or society. Rorty writes,

This echo of the most ridiculed sentence in Mill's *Utilitarianism* is, I suspect, deliberate. One of James most heartfelt convictions was that to know whether a claim should be met, we need *only* ask which other claims – 'claims actually made by some concrete person' – it runs athwart. We need not also ask whether it is a 'valid' claim. He deplored the fact that philosophers still followed Kant rather than Mill, still thought of validity as raining down upon a claim 'from some sublime dimension of being, which the moral law inhabits, much as upon the steel of the compass-needle the influence of the Pole rains down from out of the starry heavens'.⁴⁶⁶

Consequently, consequences matter, even for, especially for pragmatists who want to break free from idealism, who are "doing to our concept of truth what Mill had done to our concept of right action."⁴⁶⁷

By expanding the concept of right action Mill had introduced to moral thinking a capacity for pluralism, and it is just this capacity that Rorty thinks is essential for a contemporary liberalism to embrace as central to its mission and aims. "Mill had learned from the Romantics," Rorty writes, "that there may be no point in grading either poems or people according to a single, pre-established scale; what counts is originality and authenticity, rather than conformity to an antecedent standard."⁴⁶⁸ This deliberative, romantic utilitarianism infuses social thought with an appreciation for pluralism that in Rorty's pragmatism becomes absolute and infinite. Rorty writes,

So for Mill and other romantic utilitarians, it became possible both to think that the only plausible answer to the question 'What is intrinsically good?' is 'human happiness', and to admit that this answer provides no guidance for choices between alternative human lives. Mill knew that his and Harriet Taylor's lives were better than those of most of their fellow citizens, just as he knew that Socrates' life was better than that of a pig. But he was willing to admit that he could not prove this to the satisfaction of those fellow citizens, and to conclude

that democratic citizenship does not require agreement on the relative value of these sorts of lives.⁴⁶⁹

The plurality of pragmatism, though different from Mill's, acknowledges its roots in Mill's rhetoric and seeks to use that root to nourish a newer conception of society.

Rorty is insistent that utilitarianism and pragmatism are similar and that they aim at an absolute pluralism:

The utilitarian claim that we have no goal save human happiness and that no divine command or philosophical principle has any moral authority unless it contributes to the achievement of this goal, has as a corollary the pragmatist claim that our desire for truth cannot take precedence over our desire for happiness. In a sense, the critics of utilitarianism and pragmatism are right in saying that these doctrines animalize human beings. For both drop the idea of the extra added ingredient. They substitute the idea that human beings have, thanks to having invented language, a much larger behavioral repertoire than the beasts, and thus much more diverse and interesting ways of finding joy.⁴⁷⁰

As such, Rorty seeks a philosophy of society that protects absolute liberty in things pertaining to the "infinity of equally valuable ways to lead a human life," a "philosophical pluralism" that echoes the much earlier sophists in its admitted incapacity to conceive of human excellence independent of freedom of the will. Our agency in and of itself, for Rorty, is what constitutes the goodness of our character, and "that form of pluralism is woven into the founding documents of both utilitarianism and pragmatism."⁴⁷¹

Although it is difficult to impossible to say whether Mill intended to be understood in this manner, it seems clear from the above that Mill's conception of the art of life provided, at least, for slightly more structure when it comes to judging the quality of human acts in proportion to their capacity to contribute to overall happiness. Though he is unwilling to forthrightly declare what the components of a happy life are, as Rorty

acknowledges, Mill is less willing than Rorty to suggest that any way of living is *really living*, according to the principles of utility. In other words, Mill does not abandon so far as I understand it a claim for human excellence. Instead, he suggests that one aspect of our nature is to conceive of excellence as a component of human happiness, and, therefore, he does not appear to suggest that all ways of life are equally good ways of life. Nevertheless, James, Dewey, and Rorty respectfully nod to Mill in providing their theories with a grounding in objects and facts, attention to the consequences of actions, an awareness of pleasure and pain at the societal level, and, especially in Rorty, a recognition that government should play an active role in sorting out human problems, and must do so to some minimum standard of providing for food, shelter, and health care.⁴⁷² In these ways Mill's romantic and deliberative utilitarianism, though it cannot measure up to pragmatism's standards, played a crucial role in forming those standards and providing them with a vision of what can be accomplished through connecting scientific observation with moral and social thought.

Mill and Rational Choice Theory

The principles of Utilitarianism since Mill's time have taken many hard knocks but continue to occupy a large number of scholars in researching the question of how to maximize utility for society, and economists constitute, by far, the largest portion of scholars who continue to pursue Utilitarianism in this manner.⁴⁷³ Although these scholars are less likely to refer to themselves as Utilitarians today, instead taking the title of Public Choice theorists, concentrate virtually all their efforts on upholding two

elements derived from Mill's work, namely, the calculus behind the greatest happiness principle and Mill's notion of "a circle around every individual human being which no government, be it that of one, of a few, or of the many, ought to be permitted to overstep."⁴⁷⁴ This divergence from Mill and for that matter the work of the American pragmatists is in all respects more focused on mathematics as a way of understanding and explaining the world, and more interested in defining human nature with a one dimensional moral sense.

James Aune has argued that the most pernicious aspect of Rational Choice or Public Choice theory is that of defining humans as *only* rational actors in society.⁴⁷⁵ For the most part the theory is based on blackboard economics of the variety that make for supply and demand curves and then inferring from those supply and demand curves actions among humans. Aune has summarized the principles of rational choice: 1. people respond to incentives; 2. there is an inverse relationship between price and quantity demanded; 3. efficiency defined in terms of wealth maximization is a useful standard for evaluating public policy; 4. information and transaction costs must be considered when analyzing human behavior and policy outcomes.⁴⁷⁶

Due to the constraints of my subject and space I aim only to show that there is a distinct influence of John Stuart Mill on the most expert and prolific advocate of Public Choice theory, James Buchanan. Though I cannot spend too much time examining this relationship in great detail, I think that Mill's influence will be easily revealed and suggests an alternate way of using his insights in public affairs in contemporary rhetoric. Buchanan was one of the founders of Public Choice theory with his seminal book *The*

Calculus of Consent written with Gordon Tullock. In that book Buchanan and Tullock rely on “methodological individualism,” or “an attempt to reduce all issues of political organization to the individual's confrontation with alternatives and his choice among them,” to develop a theory of constitutional rules whereby a society of free men could be made and sustained.⁴⁷⁷ The “logic of choice” is the central area of analysis, and “methodological individualism” should not be confused with “individualism,” or an “organizational norm” involving “explicit acceptance of certain value criteria.”⁴⁷⁸

“Methodological individualism” focuses attention on the primary question of what is involved in the calculus of an individual decision. Choosing to call such individual decision-making “calculus” has important rhetorical functions. Namely, it suggests that the process we go through in choosing between alternatives is a “highly systematic” and necessarily related to “algebraic notations” be they “differential, integral, or infinitesimal.”⁴⁷⁹ Etymologically the word is also related to stones used in reckoning, and, pathologically, to stones or concretions in the gall bladder, kidneys, or other parts of the body. Such consubstantiality doubtless would have brought a great scatological joke from Kenneth Burke, but in my hands it is sufficient only to point out that Buchanan and Tullock are taking Mill’s logic for the sciences and making it applicable to all of social life because it applies to individuals. They place in their sights the question of where Mill’s all-important circle around the individual should be drawn, and they seek to answer that question through mathematical and logical modeling. Buchanan writes, “The important choice that the group must make, willy-nilly, is: How shall the dividing line between collective action and private action be drawn? What is

the realm for social and for private or individual choice? It is not the function of a theory to draw a precise line; theory assumes meaning only in terms of an analytical model which describes or explains the processes through which individuals of the group can make this all-important decision.”⁴⁸⁰

The answer to this important question comes “only in terms of an analytical model,” that reasons that groups make decisions in just the same way that individuals make decisions, so that although the writers do not substitute group for individual, they write, “throughout our analysis the word ‘group’ could be substituted for the word ‘individual’ without significantly affecting the results. In this way a group calculus may be developed.”⁴⁸¹ The development of group calculus hinges on the idea that statesman do what they do just as merchants do what they do, and that the consequences in both cases end up being good for society.

Although Buchanan’s use of the rational actor model is sufficiently qualified so as to be respectable, it does not adequately paint a picture of human nature as it relates to rhetoric. In other words, Buchanan wants to think of human irrationality as the central problem in society and government, therefore the only solution can be found in rationality. That is, “the same basic values motivate individuals in the two cases,” economics and politics.⁴⁸² Buchanan writes,

Reduced to its bare essentials, the economic assumption is simply that the representative or the average individual, when confronted with real choice in exchange, will choose “more” rather than “less.” The only important question concerns the strength of this acknowledged force. An equally logical theory could be constructed from the opposite assumption that the average will choose “less” rather than “more.” However, to our knowledge, no one has proposed such a theory as being even remotely descriptive of reality.⁴⁸³

The idea, that humans when confronted with choice will choose more, is too limited as to be plausible, not even remotely descriptive of reality, and yet it forms the basis of their experimental theory of public choice and is explicitly derived from Utilitarianism. Buchanan writes,

This view of human nature is, of course, essentially that taken by the utilitarian philosophers. From this, it follows directly that the individual human being must undergo some effort in restraining his “passions” and that he must act in accordance with ethical or moral principles whenever social institutions and mores dictate some departure from the pursuit of private interests. Such effort, as with all effort, is scarce: that is to say, it is economic. Therefore, it should be economized upon in its employment. Insofar as possible, institutions and legal constraints should be developed which will order the pursuit of private gain in such a way as to make it consistent with, rather than contrary to, the attainment of the objectives of the group as a whole.⁴⁸⁴

Public Choice theory gains its ethical foundation from Mill’s Utilitarianism, and wants to focus the attention of that ethical theory on the workings of government to ensure that the circle around the individual remains in tact and as large as possible.

To uphold the validity of such researches Buchanan finds it necessary to persist in Mill’s dichotomy between art and science, but persists with Mill’s tendency to suggest that economic analysis is science – even though Buchanan distinguishes between the science of economics and the science of political economy, even though the science of political economy in his system says what *ought* to be alternative versions of the political structure and is therefore related to Mill’s conception of art. Buchanan writes,

In the former role, they will try to construct more satisfactory models of human behaviour within historically observed institutional structures, with empirical tests being used as an important criterion of scientific progress. . . . In the comparison of institutional alternatives, the “science of political economy” emerges to occupy a role that is perhaps more important than its predictive counterpart. In the ultimate sense, this science, too, finds its normative purpose in *control*, that which is exercised upon our behaviour by the selection of

institutional-constitutional constraints within which we interact one with another. But the vital distinction between the use of science to assist in the control of subjects-objects (animate or inanimate) and the use of science to assist in the self-imposed control of the behaviour of those who are simultaneously the controllers and the controlled must be kept in mind.⁴⁸⁵

Economics refers to the empirical tests within observed institutional structures, whereas political economy as science is defined as proposals for alternative institutional structures that individuals enter into through “mutual adjustment” as it were, and which can never attain the same level of precision as such.⁴⁸⁶

The communication model that emerges from this system is still rhetoric *as* exchange, rhetoric as trading ideas that belies the reality that communication is more than the information exchanged. The principle of synergy for communication theorists comes about by focusing more on the individuals and the constitution of their identity, relationships, and lives, as such, rather than on the subject of their messages and the capacity to use those messages for individual or mutual gain. Although the economist would simply suggest that this is an external factor, or a subset of what it means to profit from exchange, the communication scholar abjures by saying that the idea of information exchange in a vacuum is a pathetic claim about human nature. Aune points out that in addition to Public Choice and Rational Choice theories failure to hold up empirically or to withstand the test of counter-examples, it’s real failure is in misunderstanding communication without being self-aware of the reduction. Rational Choice theory cannot account for the development of social norms, Aune points out, and hence the rational choice theory of communication amounts to what Deirdre McCloskey has called the “Roto-rooter theory of communication,” the idea that people communicate

through “pipes between minds” that sometimes require an occasional reaming in order to keep the channels open.⁴⁸⁷ As rational choice theorists gloss over the question of social norms, they misunderstand rhetoric and hence, fail to grasp the real strength of their theory. Aune writes,

When the question of social norms emerges, the significance of rhetoric and communication emerges as well, for the role of things like epideictic oratory in shaping and reinforcing community norms, as well as the role of strategic persuasion in public life, now have a place even in the analysis of economic behavior. Simply reducing communication to the exchange of information fails to account for attitude and behavior change, and also fails to account for the persuasiveness of the theory itself.⁴⁸⁸

In failing to understand the importance of communication and persuasion to their own theories, rational choice theorists miss the fact that they rely exclusively on the realist style.⁴⁸⁹ Buchanan’s work, too, despite the acknowledgement of political economy as a distinct and related realm appears to do too little in stemming the tide among his economist friends and their penchant for over-simplifying the realities of human life, and in defining human nature without a significant rhetorical aspect. Nevertheless, as it represents a departure from Mill’s rhetoric, it is easy to see that Public Choice theory derives its stance toward limiting government and expanding the area of liberty from Mill’s *Principles of Political Economy* insofar as Mill is shown above to prefer as a matter of presumption a minimalist state, and an absolute realm for the individual. Furthermore, the fact that Buchanan and other practitioners of Public Choice theory depend upon calculus as the method individuals use to make choices between various alternatives, in contradistinction to the rhetorical method or stasis theory, suggests a kinship to Utilitarianism generally, if not directly related to Mill with respect

to Buchanan's differentiation between the science of economy and the science of political economy, or the *is* and the *ought* of economic life.

CONCLUSION

The art of life, the art of living well, is attained for Mill when a balance is struck between morality, prudence, and aesthetics. Most of Mill's prose suggests that prudence dictates the promotion of a logical empiricism committed to uncovering the laws of nature. Morality, the law, and aesthetics, on the other hand, depend upon mutual adaptation and, therefore, on a theory of public and practical argument. Indeed, the art of life advances daily when the business of life is given the space and conditions to operate smoothly.

The business of life contains all the activities that individual actors pursue in the course of their average week. The business of life hinges on the circle that separates the individual from society. Where to draw that circle in relation to government determines in large measure the form Mill's work will take in contemporary times. Contemporary pragmatists like Richard Rorty depend on Mill for a vision of the rights of the individual and to justify state intervention on behalf of the individual so that each might have a fair start in life. Contemporary Public Choice theorists take a different view of Mill's work, arguing that what is absolutely critical is protecting the circle around the individual by dismissing government intervention to foster the provision of individual needs through private contract. In James Buchanan it is the possibility of a calculus for achieving societal success that should really hold our attention.

These two divergent views arise from Mill's discourse on the business of life, and contribute to ethical theory that insists consequences matter. By paying attention to ends – in rhetoric – in economics – in life – Mill urges us to respect data and facts, but only insofar as they are a part of what it means to really live.

Really living in Mill's writings is prosaic, unprophetic, and almost boring as it occasionally loses connection – as his thirty-two volumes suggest it can – with the religious and the beautiful. And yet from the same mind we have some of the most eloquent defenses of liberty yet penned by man. Even then, however, a passage written around the same time as *On Liberty* corroborates the view that Mill's outlook on life is of a slightly anti-poetic kind. The passage comes from Mill's *Three Essays on Religion* that was, like the *Autobiography*, published posthumously though written much earlier. In one essay, "On the Utility of Religion," Mill writes: "Religion and poetry address themselves, at least in one of their aspects, to the same part of the human constitution: they both supply the same want, that of ideal conceptions grander and more beautiful than we see realized in the prose of human life."⁴⁹⁰

The observation that life is prosaic and that religion and poetry simply run interference for the heart is not without significance in interpreting and mis-interpreting Mill. Mill's writing carries a burden of objectivity and prose, especially, as ever, the burden of nonfiction prose – that burden is one that would see "happiness" as the "greatest happiness principle," and finally, then, as "utility," without having the capacity to show how utility inspires. A question that arises from using White's scheme to read Mill is whether we are to believe in the character the author thinks we *ought* to have, and

in this sense, “constitutes,” or whether or not we should also impute some relative weight to the character the author, in fact, manifests in their works?

In the case of Mill it seems that he wants us to become at once great scientists and great artists, in touch with the true and the beautiful, he wants us to look both to what is and to what ought to be. In various ways Mill himself measures up to this achievement as a sociologist, but we should not be misled into thinking that his counsel holds only for those who sit in the few characteristic disciplines that straddle the science/art distinction: politics, economics, communication, and sociology. Instead, Mill may be saying that a critic of art or literature may also improve whatever it is they do if they paid attention not only to what an artifact is, but also to what it ought to be. The same holds for chemists and biologists. It is an implied element of a liberal academic community that places a responsibility on the shoulders of the inquirer to know as much as he can and to seek to communicate it in ways that respect both what is and what the community hopes will be. Mill is not asking us to be both scientists and artists, as if that mattered, but rather to incorporate aspects of both within our art of life, as conceived by us as individuals.

Thus, despite the fact that Mill’s life and rhetoric exemplify the prosaic at times – I have not as yet found a single line of poetry ever written by Mill – there may still be a poetic conclusion that is, in the last measure, an improvement of life – and that conceived more abundantly. In this view the art of life subsumes rhetoric and economics, liberty and political economy. Society should pay closer attention to the ends of such a life.

The character Mill constitutes is a middle class person who must work out his own way in life according to the exercise of his own liberty. He should not be unduly harmed by the influence of a large inheritance or government intervention. Instead, he should through his own efforts decide on his preferences and work to achieve them. This character is capable, should he choose, of limiting his own happiness for the benefit of others – especially with regard to inheritance laws. In other words, his relationship to the whole of society is only to ensure that as fair a start as possible is guaranteed to all.

The social universe that Mill wants us to inhabit is one that preserves the beauties of nature and poetry, but that also has a place for the provision of the necessities of life without government constantly intervening in the lives of individuals. The pattern that emerges is one of respect for individuals in the context of respect for society, and allows for the pursuit of scientific knowledge within a community of rigorous debate that will not allow science – especially economic science – to trump ends of society. In this way, Mill preserves a realm of practical argument that, in fact, dictates the other aspects of the art of life. This is a critical observation because although his *System of Logic* suggests a new way of life – and indeed helped to usher in a new way of thought – it was intended to be subordinate to the practical affairs, subordinate to the business of life which is, in turn, an element of the balance achieved by the proper ordering of the art of life. Failure to achieve the proper balance is a failure to achieve the consequences Mill sought through his life of scholarship. Though we continue to fail, the promise set up by his system may yet encourage us to continue our efforts to improve life, to improve ourselves.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

At the outset of this study I confess to having expected to uncover the moral bankruptcy of capitalism and the sham roots of economic thought in the work of my protagonists, Adam Smith, Richard Whately, and John Stuart Mill. Instead I conclude that both capitalism and the idea of contemporary economics were originally reared on a solid foundation of virtue, what McCloskey has elsewhere called the bourgeois or mercantile virtues, including hard work, self-reliance, prudence, honesty, enterprise, humor, respect, modesty, consideration, thrift, self-possession, and affection.⁴⁹¹ Despite McCloskey's hope that these virtues in their current ranking in society are not at all at odds with the Christian virtues, I argue that, in fact, the bourgeois virtues are not the best of all possible combinations of the virtues and that more must be done to ensure in contemporary society a place for alternate virtue hierarchies insofar as they accomplish a better balance between liberty, equality, and justice. To put it another way, the bourgeois virtues, though great for producing wealth and middle class values, cannot succeed in isolation from other virtue hierarchies because they are implicated in fostering only a bland, prosaic, apolitical view of life. Instead of merchants, what is needed is a healthier view of citizenship that can account for man's propensity to talk and trade in abundance.

At the outset of my conclusion I turn to the work of two important social theorists to ground my discussion of our current milieu and for guidance in understanding possible alternatives. Indeed, I find strongest agreement with the work of Jacques Barzun and Jane Jacobs on describing our current ills, ills of our bourgeois

culture.⁴⁹² Barzun's work is altogether more historical and great in giving a full picture of the strength of cultural forces in the last 500 years of western life, whereas Jacobs work is much more homely and simple. Yet both paint a picture of a society in decline without succumbing to the temptation to lose faith in the future. Barzun's picture comes as an excerpt from a hypothetical, fictional piece describing our age of Uncertainty, Science, Nihilism, Massacres, Masses, Globalism, Dictatorships, Design, Defeat, Communication, Common Man, Cinema and Democracy, Child, Anxiety, Anger, and Absurd Expectations. With regard to my subject, Barzun writes,

Their business affairs were in the hands of corporation executives whose view of their role resembled that of their medieval ancestors. Not the accumulation of territories but of companies and control over markets were their one aim in life, sanctified by efficiency. The pretext was rarely borne out, but the game prospered and the character of the players followed another medieval prototype: constant nervousness punctuated by violent and arbitrary acts against persons and firms. Dismissals, resignations, wholesale firings of workers and staffs were daily events. There being no visible bloodshed, wounds and distress were veiled. The comprehensive welfare system, improved since its inception, repaired the damage. Its decisions being all made by computer on the basis of each citizen's set of identity numbers, there could be few tenable grievances. Those due to typing errors would be corrected – in time. There was thus no place for the citizen-voter and the perpetual clash of opinions that had paralyzed representative governments.⁴⁹³

This picture beautifully painted by Barzun represents the courses of man, their seeming endlessness in prosperity and futility, and the undying urge to veil the artifice and injustice of it all. Barzun, however, refuses to see this as the end, only as what will become a new beginning. He documents, and apparently distrusts, the demise of the citizen-voter and with it the end of the continual sifting of opinion so necessary for a free life. Put another way, in terms of communication, Barzun notes that it has been a long time since the morning mail could be referred to as correspondence – another way of

saying that bureaucratic talk and business matters have paralyzed the style of democratic living.

Jacobs sees the oncoming Dark Age from a different perspective, as an age brought about primarily through failures in public life, failures to keep the bourgeois virtues in check. She posits five reasons for our decline: 1. Communities and families rigged to fail because the economic forces that place home ownership out of reach and that put undue demands on parents to provide; 2. Higher education catering to the demands of the marketplace by making the student into a consumer – even though that consumer has no possible way of judging the quality of the product – offering credentials in the place of instruction; 3. A decline in the effective practice of science and science-based technology, including a failure to promote imagination and courage in scientific inquiry and due respect for environmental realities; 4. Taxes and governmental powers out of touch with citizens' needs and possibilities; 5. Self-policing by the professions in stark decline, subverted for power or gain – like sending letters to the families of dead soldiers with word-processed signatures. If these forces are not checked, as surely they must be, the society we now know will enter a dark age and what will emerge is anybody's guess.

Yet for both Barzun and Jacobs, a nonagenarian and an octogenarian, respectively, hope is not lost. Rather, for both, there is still enough strength within western cultural forces to make for a possible renewal or renaissance of virtue, democracy, and character. However, such will only come about through directed effort at acknowledging the role of cultural forces in our lives, including the role our daily

actions play in constituting and reconstituting ourselves and those around us, and not limiting culture to the market sphere. To that end, this chapter summarizes the development and constitution of character in the work of Adam Smith, Richard Whately, and John Stuart Mill to show the manner in which the bourgeois character is constituted, including the capacity to be just to those not likewise constituted, which is the real strength of the bourgeois virtues if they uphold liberal ideals, and that despite their all too real capacity to generate abundant wealth. I will also briefly examine in conjunction with the bourgeois character the character constitutions of three other systems, namely the Homeric or heroic virtues, the Christian virtues, and Rousseau's virtues to show agreement with McCloskey's claim that there are other ways to rank order the virtues that have played crucial roles at various times in our cultural history. Then I disagree with her conclusion on the relative strength of the bourgeois virtues since I view them as only good when they are relegated to the market and not made to constitute our religious, educational, and, for that matter, vocational characters in full. Certainly one reality from the work of Whately and Novak, as noted above, is that the bourgeois virtues have been working for the last three hundred years or so to alter our understanding and conception of other virtue systems. Nevertheless, I still believe there is enough strength in liberalism's other virtuous possibilities that the whole of life is not required to make obeisance to the market.

CHARACTER AS CONSTITUTED IN MY PROTAGONISTS

It is easy to be misled into thinking that the father of political economy had a great faith in the power to predict market outcomes and an even greater appreciation for the rich. I hope the foregoing shows that Adam Smith is not that kind of person. Nor does he wish that we should be so constituted. Instead, he conceived of a “system of liberty” that would raise the poorest members of society to a level whereby they could find provision and a little extra to meet their needs and to provide them with more opportunities for learning and enjoyment.

Fortunately or unfortunately there is latent in his rhetorical works a vision that is antithetical to the capacity of government to intervene efficiently in public affairs beyond the provision of minimal public education, defense, and protection of property. For sure, the greatest achievement of his project is the working out of a sympathetic imagination capable of underwriting a society founded upon respect for propriety, merit, duty, utility, custom, and virtue that at the same time could generate wealth and prosperity for each and every member of that society without regard to their familial lineage or historical heritage. This was no small revolution, and the character that emerged was, as I have noted, a hardworking, reasonable, dutiful, and useful character: primarily that of an honest merchant capable of sympathizing with those in distress. There was little place for greed, cheating, or un-sportsmanship, only a strong desire for self-improvement that would in turn touch those around you to better themselves and seek the provision of their neighbor because of the demands of self-betterment. The motive for participation came from a regard to your own self-interest as well as a more

powerful sympathetic regard for the needs of your neighbors. Hence, Smith asks us to love our neighbor as our neighbor is capable of loving us.

The work of Martha Nussbaum, Amartya Sen, and Michael Ignatieff indicate that Smith's conceptual framework for understanding liberal society from the point of view of sympathy still has great relevancy. In the law, Nussbaum thinks introducing the notion of the sympathetic imagination to court decision-making is crucial for helping those decisions avoid illiberality. Sen works to show how aiding the poor and providing education are demanded by the sympathetic imagination, and that any system of free markets that cannot realize this is on ethical quicksand. The sympathetic imagination is only worth something if it manifests as a capacity to influence public affairs. Likewise, Ignatieff chooses to apply the sympathetic imagination to human rights in a way that is similar to Sen, but that expands the application of the sympathetic imagination beyond the nation state to more fully encompass human rights in the world. Both thinkers, Sen and Ignatieff, are concerned with relations between nations, but Ignatieff reasons more about human rights language and the way that language constitutes individuals as rights-bearers.

Still, all advance the consequences of a sympathetic imagination within those who are rights-bearers with constitutional protection as they reason about those who have no such protections. In other words, Sen uses sympathy in the discourse of economics, Ignatieff applies it to the discourse of human rights, but both understand the complexities of the overlap, that being our relation to others in a global society. The point is that Smith's conceptual framework for a society founded upon sympathy has

great appeal to contemporary debates regarding the meaning of law, economics, and human rights in the twenty-first century. The Smithian sympathetic character endured, prospered, and grew wealthy during the eighteenth and nineteenth century.

Although, as noted, the universities and churches were slow to catch on, as they always are and always will be, Richard Whately took what he saw were good elements in Smith's system and propagated them as a means to liberalize the university and the church from within. By so doing he helped constitute a new clerical character that could read the scriptures with his own mind and that would read history by the same tool. This was a radical change for institutions that thrived on backward thinking with respect to faith and learning. Whately worked to open the possibilities for free market thinking as a means to a fuller expression of the scholarly and/or Christian life. He was promoted deliberately with the aim of liberalizing the church and its relations to the Irish people as a consequence of his economic theory, and he worked to make the consequences of free markets change the meaning of scriptural interpretation and the church as he had previously done for the place of economic research in the university.⁴⁹⁴

The legacy of Whately's work is a character guided by liberty and sympathy, but preoccupied with accomplishing the will of God through liberty and sympathy, even while holding out the possibility that economic reasoning can contribute to a more efficient Christian practice. Although efficiency is not anathema to Christian principles on the face of it, a question I will ask below is how precisely such injections of economic thought change at least the rhetoric of Christianity, for good and ill? The clearest statement of the character constituted by Whately's life and works is that of

fallible minds stumbling in darkness for truth, using faith and reason, God and science, but relying on the logic and rhetoric of the mind. That character is aware of the need for humility in pursuing truth claims and questions, and has an understanding that extends only finitely, but hopes that extend infinitely.

The work of Michael Novak serves as a case study for the extension of the problems Whately dealt with in his writings, and though not explicitly descended or related to Whately, Novak's work in *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* is concerned to show that while others think only socialism is a means to a Christian life – “one doesn't need to be a socialist to show a little love and human kindness.”⁴⁹⁵ Though it would be impossible to *prove* finally whether Christianity is in contradiction with capitalism, or vice versa, cases are widely available for showing that many businessmen regulate their economic activity because of their religious faith, and hence the notion of compatibility seems abundant notwithstanding the tendency, which Novak seeks to combat, to lend stronger ethical credence in some circles to socialism than capitalism. The underlying cousinhood with Whately is that of focusing in on the relation between free markets and the consequences for liberalizing the church and scriptural interpretation. Updating Christianity to account for factors the free market teaches is an interesting concept with which many religious individuals, if I judge solely on the basis of my interactions with undergraduates, are entirely ignorant.

Mill, too, sees fallibility in human constructions relating to society, but he chooses to see such fallibility as, once again, the reason to protect the sphere of liberty and the capacity for society to promote freedom of contract and protection from

government against its encroachment. Political economy is not easily defined, and even when it is it must be remembered that the definition is a consequence of our discourse on the subject, not its genesis. Furthermore, Political Economy should be appreciated, Mill advises, as a subset of the Art of Life, a crucial aspect that will make our deliberative judgments more informed and more, in that sense, right, but that cannot of itself generate what society ought to do on any given occasion. Mill is certain, however, that property rights be secure, along with a limitation placed on inheritance laws to ensure that persons have ownership and determination over their property but also to counteract the problem of allowing property to be consolidated to such a degree that no one gets a fair start in life.

Understanding that the Art of Life is constituted by the daily business of life ensures that one will not mistakenly assume that Mill is focused only on ends. His discourse on the business of life starts from the assumption that those who have an immediate interest in the outcome of any decision should be left free of government and societal constraints to make decisions because they will do so in the best manner when left to themselves. Mill's longstanding argument about the sphere of liberty against the tyranny of any majority is the crucial element of his rhetoric. Namely, Mill constitutes characters as atomic individuals capable of reaching agreement about the direction society should take through practical reasoning and argument. He refuses to surrender the idea of individuality from any point of his system, and thus maintains a commitment to individual rights while acknowledging a need for dialogue in civic affairs. The individual then has to cultivate the capacity for argument, and this is done by being

aware of how science and art as constructs generate the methods for attaining ends set by art, hence Mill's character is required to be rational and reasonable, capable of calculating for the greatest happiness principle, but capable, too, of rejecting or opposing the principle of utility.

In this way, the American Pragmatists and the Public Choice theorists diverge from Mill's rhetoric in different directions. Namely, the pragmatists continue to emphasize an interest in ends, but also wish to make utility more immediate, more present, than the Utilitarians, as well as wanting to update the Utilitarian conception of the self to ensure that its account unifies the self with action, thus ensuring that we are still talking about morality. The Pragmatists also take aim at the idea that a calculus can be achieved that would make moral outcomes into an absolute, natural science. That hesitancy reflects the greatest divide between the Pragmatists and the Public Choice theorists, for the latter strive to calculate the exact conditions that can bring about the absolute tyranny of the individual, as it were, over the state. The Public Choice theorists originate primarily in economics departments, claiming that market forces can dictate much more of social life than even Mill thought possible. By applying market forces to all aspects of life outside of government provision for security they seek to uncover a more efficient system of government that provides only for the necessary conditions of private property and international defense, leaving virtually everything else to private contract. In so doing, the Public Choice theorists focus intensely on the circle Mill draws around the individual and ignore his clear qualifications of the circle, as well as Mill's more socialistic tendencies. Hence, the character constituted by those who develop

Mill's thought is different than Mill's character constitution nevertheless the intellectual descent is clear.

These three chapters are snapshots, as it were, of acceptable variations among characters that constitute the social world of political liberalism. Although they are very closely related because they deal with the subject of rhetoric and economics, they also indicate a wide range of possibility regarding the scope of political liberalism. Imagination, religion, reason and argument converge to exhibit various approaches for meeting the minimum requirements sketched by John Rawls in *Political Liberalism*. Namely, Rawls reasons that the chief component of a liberal is reason, a shared reason among characters who hold different, often opposing or conflicting worldviews, but who are capable of talking together. Rawls is not interested in generating a notion of liberalism that originates in the science of human nature, like those of the eighteenth and nineteenth century I have studied here, but rather he wishes to develop "a scheme of concepts and principles for expressing a certain political conception of the person and an ideal of citizenship."⁴⁹⁶

Rawls's scheme rests on the contention that justice is the most crucial element of liberalism. Justice is "the highest-order interest" that obtains between liberal characters for it ensures that the undertaking of collective interest is not in vain.⁴⁹⁷ Only with justice guaranteed can we ever hope to attain what Rawls calls "overlapping consensus," or the shared sense of values and character overlap required for us to communicate or accomplish anything together. Rawls considers that the political person is required to meet certain standards in order to contribute effectively to a politically liberal state. To

wit, the political liberal must have the capacity to think of himself as free, and with it the capacity to “conceive of themselves and one another as having the moral power to have a conception of the good.”⁴⁹⁸ Such conceptions of self, justice, and the good are malleable for Rawls and necessarily so since there can be no *a priori* set of selves, goods, or justices from which an ideal may be formed. In other words, his hope is to begin with the elements of an ideal situation and to reason what kind of character would be required to reproduce such ideals in the real world.

In addition, then, of being capable of a shared conception of justice and the good, persons must recognize that they have two identities. “Citizens usually have both political and nonpolitical aims and commitments.”⁴⁹⁹ They may affirm the values of political justice, Rawls argues, and hence desire to see them embodied in political and social institutions, but this does not preclude their capacity to desire and work for other values in non-public life through their own associations.⁵⁰⁰ Rawls writes,

These two kinds of commitments and attachments – political and nonpolitical – specify moral identity and give shape to a person’s way of life, what one sees oneself as doing and trying to accomplish in the social world. . . . But our conceptions of the good may and often do change over time, usually slowly but sometimes rather suddenly. When these changes are sudden, we like to say that we are no longer the same person. . . . On the road to Damascus Saul of Tarsus becomes Paul the Apostle. Yet such a conversion implies no change in our public or institutional identity . . .⁵⁰¹

In fact, in a well-ordered society Rawls contends that through the virtue of overlapping consensus elements of one’s institutional identity will be the same as one’s noninstitutional or moral identity. Hence, a political liberal should have the capacity to identify with both his political and his moral sense.

Citizens must also view themselves as “self-authenticating sources of valid claims,” meaning that they should think of themselves as entitled to make claims on their institutions, to petition the government for a redress of grievances. Another element of liberal personhood is that persons are entitled to take responsibility for their ends. They must be able to reasonably deal with the fact that they may have limited means available to them for reaching their ends, and thus take care to ensure that their reach does not exceed their grasp. In other words, if you start with Rawls’ basic idea that society is a fair system of cooperation, then taking responsibility for the ends of your life requires taking care that those ends, whatever they be, are capable of being reached by the means you can reasonably expect to acquire in life.

This conception of personhood, in essence, calls for a wall of separation between church and state within individual identities as a way for securing the grounds of political liberalism, thus ensuring a regimes maintenance and longevity. Although Rawls wants the noninstitutional or moral identity to have a range and sphere of its own, it is apparent that such space is not without consequence for the institutional or political self. Without such security of division over the self, the liberal system runs the risk of self-destruction because it would, in essence, forbid virtues necessary for its own survival.⁵⁰² Indeed, that is Rawls’ point because he aims in part to protect the moral identity from withering.

Peter Berkowitz has argued further along these lines that liberalism faces just this problem as a societal system, namely it requires virtues that it does not readily summon. Metaphorically speaking, Berkowitz reasons that political liberalism is a keyboard, and

that if allowed access to every key – as liberalism proposes – great songs are capable of being produced. However, if a particular member(s) of society decides to beat incessantly on a single key – as Berkowitz believes, for example, deliberative democrats, many feminists, and many postmodernists have done by beating their respective liberalist key, one attempting to expand the political meaning of the liberal principle that government should be based on the consent of the governed, the second, tolerating differences, especially between men and women, the third, postmodernists, attempting to be free from arbitrary, oppressive, and often hidden hierarchies – than they succeed only in caricaturizing the idea of liberalism, weakening its moral claim on individuals and society, and undermining its strength as a system.

In other words, Berkowitz agrees with the Rawlsian distinction between political and moral identities, and he calls for increased attention on the family and societal capacity to foster the virtues, the “Tocquevillian thesis that a vibrant society supports democracy in America by fostering certain essential habits of the heart and mind,” is not to be ignored.⁵⁰³ The challenge calls for steady nerves and self-discipline, Berkowitz warns, because, as Tocqueville envisioned, “a vibrant civil society depends on good character, and good character depends on a vibrant civil society.”⁵⁰⁴ And if liberalism depends on virtues that it does not readily summon or cannot cultivate vigorously because of its own high ideals, then the only means for its survival is to cultivate an awareness of what virtues it requires and how to preserve those in proper balance with moral institutions.

That brings us to a second major point about the foregoing, namely that in addition to being a work on the intellectual history of rhetoric and economics, the chapters on Smith, Whately, and Mill illustrate attempts by some leading historical liberals to clarify the scope of virtues that the market can offer AS a moral institution, and as distinguished in the Rawlsian sense from a political institution. Albeit, none of the thinkers had the capacity to recognize, nor did they desire, that the market should not be subservient to the needs of a nation state. Nevertheless their scholarship collectively fosters what McCloskey has called the bourgeois virtues, or a system of virtues independent of the state, or that arise in conjunction with the state, but do not depend on the state. They are, in short, market virtues, virtues that the market promotes, fosters, and requires to run smoothly.

As such, these thinkers, Smith, Whately, Mill, provide grounding for a discussion of the bourgeois virtues and the ways in which they serve to potentially balance the moral weaknesses inherent in liberalism because of the latter's seeming contention to remain neutral on moral issues, or at least to respect a certain sense of uncertainty about what is right and wrong coupled with a seeming incapacity to say just what is right and what is wrong. In this manner, liberalism may need the market for certain virtues. However, I contend that the virtues produced by the market are only necessary but not sufficient for a full and ideal conception of a liberal citizen. The rest of this chapter will deal with the ascendancy of the bourgeois virtues over the other virtues of life and argues that the bourgeois virtues ought to be relegated to the market and never be

allowed to expand, as is their want, as is the tendency of every moral system, into other areas that are better guided by their respective moral systems.

MCCLOSKEY'S ACCOUNT OF THE VIRTUES

Donald McCloskey, when he first started writing about the virtues did so in the context of a quasi-sociological argument about the force of virtues in human life.⁵⁰⁵ Namely, he argued that, historically speaking, broadly applied, western history can be seen as progressing from the Homeric virtues that ruled ancient Athens to the Christian virtues that inspired the Middle and Dark Ages to the age of Bourgeois ascendancy. His claim throughout this discussion suggests that he favors the bourgeois virtues for promoting a better kind of social character, a more liberal, free society, and wealth.

According to this account only the Heroic or Aristocratic virtues of Homer and the Christian or plebian virtues of St. Paul inform the way we traditionally talk about virtues causing us to neglect the virtues of the bourgeois, considering them anti-virtues. Our talk “is usually to praise a pagan or a Christian virtue and then to complain about how much we moderns lack it. Shamefully, we bourgeois are neither saints nor heroes.”⁵⁰⁶ Indeed, it is not only the character of the bourgeois that is so easily impugned by the intelligentsia and upper class but it is also a matter of language. McCloskey writes,

A potent source of bourgeois virtue and a check on bourgeois vice is the premium that a bourgeois society puts on discourse. The bourgeois must talk. The aristocrat gives a speech, the peasant tells a tale. But the bourgeois must in the bulk of his transactions talk to an equal. It is wrong to imagine, as modern economics does, that the market is a field of silence. “I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following What news on the

Rialto? . . . the bourgeois stoops metaphorically to make his will quite clear, and to know the will and reason of the other. . . . The proof of the irrationality of the square root of 2 convinces (*vincere*, to conquer). The bourgeois by contrast must persuade, sweetly (*suadeo*, from the same root as the English *sweet*).⁵⁰⁷

Following Hirschman, McCloskey notes that it is the bourgeois who “sweet talk,” or persuade by “sweetening the deal.” In other words, the great oratorical flourishes of the aristocracy or the peasant tales have very little command over bourgeois behavior. It is talk among equals.

McCloskey makes a complete identification between the virtues of the bourgeoisie and the virtues of citizenship in the contemporary town. “The virtues of the bourgeois are those necessary for town life, for commerce and self-government.”⁵⁰⁸ They are American virtues at their core, the virtues of Benjamin Franklin. McCloskey lists them as secular, pride of action, integrity, honesty, trustworthiness, enterprise, humor, respect, modesty, consideration, responsibility, prudence, thrift, affection, self-possession.⁵⁰⁹ If they would be more cultivated, McCloskey argues, they would foster greater charitable giving in communities, more sympathy with the poor, fewer wars, richer people and communities, and more markets. After all, they are the virtues on which the modern capitalist state was built, the virtues that thrived until the state tried to codify charity into the law and sought to dismiss the bourgeois ethic as nothing more than admiration for selfishness.

It was just at the time of the publication of this article that Donald N. McCloskey was undergoing a change to become Deirdre N. McCloskey.⁵¹⁰ The only books published during her transitory phase were *Knowledge and Persuasion in Economics* and *The Vices of Economists – The Virtues of the Bourgeoisie*, both of which challenge

economics as a science in the strict sense that economists have grown accustomed to talking about it, as if it were more like the natural science of physics than the human science of sociology, as if it didn't need rhetoric. Both works, too, are just a tinge autobiographical, and reach their high-point in, *Crossing: A Memoir*, published in 1999. Of course they are likely to continue as subject for discussion by McCloskey in her proposed two volume work on the bourgeois virtues. In any event, the point is that changes came to McCloskey's life in the 1990s, and along side those changes was development in her theory of the bourgeois virtues. After changing her gender she converted to Christianity, becoming an Episcopalian. From my experience, these changes are handled in poor taste by economists but in good humor among Deirdre's friends in the rhetoric community. Nevertheless, do any of these changes matter for our interpretation of her scholarship on the bourgeois virtues? I submit that they are relevant, please let me explain.

It is difficult if not impossible to separate the idea of the self from the idea of virtue. Indeed, insofar as we persist in saying things like "she's a good woman," or "he's a lovely man," we carry on identifying goodness, badness, rightness, and wrongness and so on ad infinitum with individuals. It is right that we do this; indeed, it is an inherent and unavoidable part of our language that we go on making value judgments. We cannot help to talk without making value judgments of a million different kinds. If we are going to talk, we are going to implicate values and we are going to infer connections between what values a person believes in and advocates with what kind of person we consider them to be. I cannot think of any good reasons why this should not be so, but a thousand

for why it should. First and foremost, however, is that the idea of the self is itself constructed, constituted by language and action. To talk is to do something, and talk has long been afforded ethical weight, for good and ill. And the more a person asserts that their actions do not impact their character the more we go on disbelieving them. I hasten to add that I do not wish anything I say here to be wrongly imputed against my fellows in the humanities, or to suggest that I agree with the economists who by my own experience and McCloskey's account have been, at times, less than supportive to her throughout her changes. I knew Deirdre McCloskey was a beautiful human being from her writings, and meeting her a few months ago in Chicago only added to that estimation. She has a style and wit all her own and it is but a little lower than the angels, and I want nothing I say to take away or diminish that assertion.

However, I hope the foregoing chapters on Smith, Whately, and Mill, suggest that I do not agree with a view scholarship that is willing to divorce a person's identity from what they say or do. I cannot assent that *ethos* is irrelevant to communication, and I think *ethos* is broad enough to encompass all our actions. I think it impossible to let McCloskey's 1990s pass without comment. At the outset, let me clarify that though I never knew Donald, and though I am only an acquaintance of Deirdre's that she may not even remember, I find his and her account of the virtues to suggest an interesting turn – especially as it relates to the idea of Christianity and the bourgeoisie that I think is relevant to the conclusions I hope to draw in this chapter. I do not wish to be categorized as one of the malicious or innocent, stupid or intelligent, in short, the wrong, who have tried to discuss, in the midst of misunderstanding, why Donald or any person for that

matter would change their gender.⁵¹¹ While I find that an interesting point, it is beyond the scope of this work. Instead, I only want to show, in a limited way and scope, a difference that has taken place in the way Deirdre talks about the virtues vis-à-vis Donald. That is, I believe, an interesting area of discussion given Rawls' contention, noted above, that such changes to our moral identity do not alter our view of citizenship. I think that they do, for good or ill, and I aim only to show that. Additionally, I hope to clarify a bit more, to contribute if only a little, to McCloskey's contention that we need more discussion of the bourgeois virtues and their impact on public life.

Donald McCloskey called the Christian virtues slave morality – the plebian or peasant virtues, and by his account they did not contain faith. His style suggests he is grateful they belong only to the slaves. Likewise, he snubbed the Aristocratic, Patrician, Pagan, virtues in comparison to the bourgeois virtues because the former are too noble and wrathful. The Christian virtues belong in the common, the pagan virtues in the camp, but the bourgeois virtues belong in the town. Since we all as a society are leaving the camps and commons and moving to the towns we should, McCloskey suggests, update our virtue system accordingly.⁵¹² Yet Deirdre McCloskey, only a few years after writing that piece “was baptized in the Episcopalian church, led by Alice and Lori and Bob.”⁵¹³ Has anything, then, changed about her view of the Christian virtues? Is this indication of a preference for the commons? Well, my discussion and ranking, below, of the chief virtues of the Homeric and Christian societies is slightly altered from Donald's list, but I have maintained Deirdre's rankings of Adam Smith's virtues for purposes of discussing the bourgeois virtues.

Homeric Virtues

Cunning
 Honor Strength
 Long-Suffering Beauty

McCloskey, in a quasi-sociological way suggests that virtues have long governed society, but that at different times because of different cultural forces the relative strength of certain value hierarchies has changed over time. In the ancient world during the time of the epic poet Homer, the Homeric or heroic virtues held greatest sway. To wit, these are the virtues most directly displayed in the Homeric poems the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, they are the virtues of a world no one longs to return to for it was governed by force, heredity, and honor. Its justice is the justice of the sword, the justice of sheer power. It may be a great place to visit, especially in your imagination through the new translations by Stanley Lombardo, but it is no place you want to live. In some ways its virtues are the very same that govern the world of sports, both on American campuses and professionally, as players seek to show off their physical power and their cunning ability. They are the virtues that teach you to win at all costs, to seek honor on the field of battle, and to use force and brute strength to get on in the world. These are, according to McCloskey, “a male ethic, a dream of courage.”⁵¹⁴

Christian Virtues

Charity
 Hope Faith
 Mercy Meekness

In this ranking of the Christian virtues I include the word faith, for I start with St. Paul's dictum that Faith, Hope, and Charity abide, but the greatest of these is Charity. From Charity and meekness flow all the virtues that might be called Christian. It is the Christian who declares that as pride is in all our vices, so humility is in all our virtues. Though these virtues have, as ever, greatest appeal among the poor in heart, this segment usually overlaps best with the literal poor, and hence the adjective of plebian morality is well put if it applies in this broader way. The advocates of this way of life have most often been traditionally called prophets or apostles, witnesses, and such prophets do not sweet talk. Instead, *thus saith the Lord* is their watch-cry, and righteousness is their call.

Though it is doubtful that such virtues have ever truly governed societies of men, there are records and hopes that point to the possibility that such virtues might obtain among Saints. These records, like the Bible, and these hopes, like those generically common among many Christians of different denominations, rest upon the human capacity to be born-again, cleansed from their fallen nature to attain a new identity as a Saint. There has long been a tension in Christian thought over the meaning of such strict, strait, and narrow requirements. John Locke said, God, when he made the prophet, did not unmake the man. Augustine, earlier, advocated a fuller transformation, "Let me not be mine own life; from myself I lived ill, death was I to myself; and I revive in Thee."⁵¹⁵ Drawing the circle between man and God is as difficult to draw as that between man and his government, and stating just whether Locke is more right than Augustine is not my aim. Instead, it is to point out that for the Christian a fundamental change of identity, or

a change of heart, the implication of a broken heart and a contrite spirit is a prerequisite for the life of a Saint, and a prerequisite to a collective society of Saints.

That such changes are possible and desirable, I do not deny. Whether they have the capacity to be put into practice among men at a societal level remains to be seen, however, the role of the Christian virtues vis-à-vis the citizen does not, I believe, depend upon such societal realization. Rather it is possible that a Christian character can obtain among individuals, which then manifests itself in societal practice on some level. In other words, I still see a fundamental difference, especially in contemporary secular societies, between individual characters guided by the Christian virtues and a society dictated or governed by the virtues. The latter I do not see as a plausible reality in the short or long term barring divine intervention of some kind, but the former, I think, is already among us to some, however small, degree. In any event, the Christian virtues constitute another idea or way of talking about the virtues. “It is a female ethic,” McCloskey writes, “a dream of love.”⁵¹⁶

McCloskey’s Talk on the Bourgeois Virtues

	Prudence	
Temperance		Justice
Courage		Love

This ranking of the virtues occurs at the end of McCloskey’s *The Vices of Economists – The Virtues of the Bourgeoisie*, and these virtues triumph, in part, over the other virtues because they are liberal virtues, but also, elsewhere, because they are wealth producing.⁵¹⁷ They also have to be constructed in this way to constitute a liberal society:

Courage and Love were placed at the edges on purpose, as dangerous. Smith, for example, had little enthusiasm for commercial Courage, enterprise. He did not rely excessively on universal Love, either. He put most emphasis in all his works on the three central virtues, Prudence (in *The Wealth of Nations*), Temperance (in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*) and Justice (in his unpublished *Lectures on Jurisprudence*). The point is that Smith admired Prudence only in a system containing all the virtues. He did not isolate it in the way of Benthamite and then Samuelsonian economics.⁵¹⁸

If kept in the proper balance, the bourgeois virtues promote wealth in society and they allow for liberality to emerge, for liberalism to be planted in the hearts of the citizens, making possible a liberal state, and a liberal way of life. Indeed, as Hirschman has argued in *The Passions and the Interests* it is such balance between passion and interest that makes possible liberal life. McCloskey stands by that claim, and extends it to defend contemporary markets on the ethical ground created by the balance. McCloskey's central point, of course, is that economists, starting at least as far back as Bentham, have employed Smith as favoring Prudence as the sole virtue, independent of other virtues that may serve as counterweight. Too many since the time of Smith have made this mistake about his work, McCloskey thinks, in part because they have never read his first book. However, more to the point, the notion that material wealth is the source of happiness still carries strong attraction, and thus Prudence as the sole virtue of life can be seen as carrying strong weight, despite the fact that McCloskey and many, many others claim that life may be better constituted more broadly. The dust jacket to McCloskey's *The Vices of Economists – The Virtues of the Bourgeoisie* says that “McCloskey recommends a ‘bourgeois’, even feminine, virtue to replace the aristocratic and masculine vices of economics.” Elsewhere I have not found any indication that she

thinks of the bourgeois virtues as feminine, however, she does consider them to be liberal and “beyond the sandbox and its little boys.”⁵¹⁹

McCloskey on Theology and Economics

In 1991 McCloskey argued for a vision of social thought that put economics and theology together, “Economics and theology look to modern eyes like strange partners. . . . Religion is what we make of life. Economics . . . is the religion of the ordinary. . . . For better or worse, economics is the theology of the modern religion.”⁵²⁰ Too few of us are willing to see economics and theology as constituting a whole. “Most people are satisfied to remain ignorant of the other. . . . The theologian who thinks that a dimly remembered Marxism is all he needs to know of economics, or the economist who thinks that religion is merely what’s left over when science has done its job, no longer has an excuse.”⁵²¹

Instead, we need an open road between science and humanism – especially in policymaking circles – that will allow us to address “meaning and statement together.”⁵²² Late in the 1990s McCloskey admits that her “approach to Christianity is rather too bookish,” but throughout the 1990s she maintains that religion is feminine.⁵²³ Nevertheless, she maintains that the virtues of capitalism, the bourgeois virtues, are not in any way incompatible with the virtues of Christianity. For McCloskey, the bourgeois virtues can be seen as serving Christian purposes in more ways than one. To start, the bourgeois are virtuous, she repeats, and their virtues are at the very least contained in the virtues of being Christian.

That is, after her conversion to Anglicanism, McCloskey writes in 2004 that the bourgeois virtues and the Christian virtues are not so very incompatible – as the virtues of the merchant and the slave are. Instead, she conceives of what might be called a liberal Christianity (be sure to read Protestant, too) capable of containing the bourgeois virtues within its faith. In particular, the problems with society are indeed problems of virtues out of balance, but they are more often than not failures by individuals who receive condemnation from the bourgeois. And, after all, the bourgeois always were religious. “Markets, I am now claiming, exhibit behavior that Jesus would have approved of – in fact, behavior that he did, textually, once in a while, approve of. In any event, I want to claim that the imperfect economy we now inhabit contains in its very functioning a large amount of God-regarding virtue.”⁵²⁴

The virtues of the bourgeois and the Christian show up in ways surprisingly related to markets. McCloskey posits five in particular that will likely be unpopular for Christians to handle: 1. Virtues underlay the market and its triumph; 2. The triumph of the market was a necessary condition for modern economic growth; 3. Modern economic growth has been much greater than most intellectuals realize; 4. Modern economic growth has transformed the ethical universe for its beneficiaries, who are everyone involved; 5. The Malthusian and now environmentalist notion that population growth is itself an evil and is the source of our poverty has been proven false.⁵²⁵ Since modern economic growth is seen to benefit everyone, in just the liberal way Smith, Whately, and Mill promised it would, McCloskey concludes that we are a view of Christian life with a little more prudence is not contradictory. Thus McCloskey, “I realize that saying such

things brings a hard, unchristian tone into the analysis. But surely it is incumbent upon a Christian heart to help the poor prudently, not in order to save money but in order to really save the poor. Prudence, I said, is a virtue. In such matters, practical wisdom, knowing how to achieve a spiritual end, proves itself.”⁵²⁶

Thus the liberal Christian of the first world can avoid the guilty feelings of prospering while others around you perish because if they perish it is because some third party has denied them the exercise of prudence. “The plight of the world’s poor,” McCloskey writes,

is indeed caused by insufficient Christian charity. It is caused by greed. But the greed and lack of charity is not that of the First World. A Christian economics should concern itself with the ethical grounding not of Danish journalists or American college professors but of African politicians and Latin American generals.⁵²⁷

In this narrative it seems a good thing that markets thrive because they thrive always on virtue. To wit, the thriving of markets is cause for celebration – and maybe even a little of congratulation. In particular, American college professors are off the hook, as it were, by one of their own, because markets work, and markets work on virtues, and virtues are a part of Christianity. It is Christianity-lite, a liberal Christianity of the contemporary world that would lessen the constraints of conscience in the name of Prudence. Of course, we know what McCloskey means, that free markets are better than un-free markets, and that where free-markets prevail there is more opportunity for what we might call the Christian life. Still, her account suggests Christianity is entirely comfortable with contemporary economic realities as a way of thought and a way of life. That seems, at best, a stretch.

Prudent Christianity's rhetoric, in McCloskey's hands, is of salvation, to be sure, but of salvation through immanence, a salvation tied closely to the here and now, with thought for the morrow and sweet talk for today. In other words, to hear Donald speak of the Christian virtues in *The American Scholar* is to mostly understand that they are antiquated. To hear Deirdre talk of them in "Avarice, Prudence, and the Bourgeois Virtues," is to understand that the bourgeois character is about to be translated on Mount Zion, swept up to heaven in a chariot of fire. Indeed, she insists that she only wishes to say that economists can learn from theologians and theologians can learn from economists, but this does not do justice to the power of her words. Her words sound like the bourgeois virtues and the Christian virtues live side by side in complete harmony.⁵²⁸

CAN PRUDENCE, AND COMPETITION FOUNDED ON IT, BE A CHRISTIAN VIRTUE?

In "The Ethics of Competition," Frank H. Knight, a founder of the Chicago School of Economics, argues that the ethics of competition are in contradiction with the ethics of Christianity. Noting that in ancient Greek literature the intellectual quality of ethics is the capacity of discrimination between true and false values, economic ethics, or the ethics of competition is an ethics based on the ability to foresee changes and adapt means to ends.⁵²⁹ And though the Christian view of ethics is often contested or interpreted in conflicting ways, Knight sees no way for uncertainty about the Christian ethic to allow for the admission of competition (as Novak has done, see above, Chapter IV). Knight writes,

If there is anything on which divergent interpretations would have to agree, it would be the admission that the Christian conception of goodness is the antithesis of competitive. We are by no means forced to believe that the central figure of the Gospels was an ascetic; he never condemned pleasure as such, and seems to have had his own pleasure in life. But his participation in any sort of competitive sport is not to be imagined. Among his most characteristic utterances were the fervent exhortations that the last should be first and that he who would be chief should be the servant of all. The Christian ethical ideal contrasts as sharply with the Greek as either does with modern ideas derived from natural science and political economy.⁵³⁰

The Greek ethic with its ideal in esthetic beauty, Christianity with its ideal as “spirituality,” and Economics with its ideal in prudent competition are all fundamentally at odds for Knight, and cannot be conflated.

Both the Greek and Christian ideals differ from the scientific empiricism of economics in that they are both *qualitative* in their ideals, whereas economics is often solely quantitative. “It seems fairly clear to the writer that it is from Christianity (and from Kant, who merely systematized Christian, or Pauline, principles) that modern common sense derives its conceptions of what is ethical when that point is explicitly under discussion.” In other words, the way we talk about ethics today is decidedly slanted toward the Christian vocabulary. This much McCloskey has told us, but Knight posits that such ethical or moral talk is its separation from practice. “The striking fact in modern life,” Knight writes, “is the virtually complete separation between the spiritual ethics which constitutes its accepted theory of conduct and the unethical, uncriticized notion of efficiency which forms its substitute for a practical working ideal, its effective values being accepted unconsciously from tradition or the manipulations of commercial sales managers, with a very slight admixture of esthetic principles.”⁵³¹

Evidence for this claim about modern life rests in Knight's observation that fewer and fewer reserve a portion of the seventh day for spirituality, and even those who do find that time transformed by organizations into esthetic diversion or pure commercialism, and "all the while there are multiplying evidences of a genuine spiritual hunger in the modern peoples. They have got away from the spiritual attitude toward life, and do not know how to get back."⁵³² To raise questions about the game everyone is playing is to be disagreeable, Knight observes. To "play the game" is the current version of accepting the universe and protest is blasphemy; the good man has given place to the good sport, for Knight. Economics appeals to us as a competitive game, and such a metaphor or way of talking has notable shortcomings, but this does not stop us from failing to see the contradiction at the heart of liberal society. For Knight, competition is antithetical to esthetic philosophy; Competition is antithetical to Christianity. Beauty, perfection, spirituality, knowledge, and consciousness are not the values of the economic competitive order.

In a remarkable book, *The Economic Order and Religion*, Knight argues with his co-author Thornton Merriam – Knight taking the position that Christianity and contemporary economics are diametrically opposed, Merriam the position that there is a new, modern idea of liberal Christianity that shows economics and religion can coexist peacefully. In all the changes brought on by the Enlightenment, Knight argues that the Church "opposed tooth and nail every phase of what we now view as progress, particularly the intellectual advance." But then, before long, the Church embraced the progress:

The modern economic order of free enterprise and market competition has been Christian to those who favored and unchristian to those who opposed it (at least those Christians) from its inception to the days of social planning. Democracy as a political system, once established, became the only Christian form of government, just as absolute monarchy was the only Christian form in pre-revolutionary France and England, and as feudalism had been a little while before.⁵³³

And so on and so on for the Church's position vis-à-vis slavery in the Southern United States, and evolution at the close of the nineteenth century, indicating, for Knight, that Christianity fails to update itself, or only updates itself as a consequence of the success of secular and scientific thought. The course of history suggests a shift in the power of science, knowledge directed by rational and humanitarian ends, as Knight defines it, to drive changes in the Christian churches and their outlook on the world. Liberal Christianity was formed as an outgrowth of Protestantism, which is itself a plurality of sects and the liberalizing of the institution of Christianity because of the spread of new knowledge. Christian Churches often weakened their claim, according to Knight, because of their intense focus on the afterlife and the promotion of what has come to be known as "interim ethics," or what is good until the afterlife – the latter being all that truly matters.

"Practically speaking," Knight writes, "the keynote for mundane living was passive acceptance of material and social conditions as one found them and obedience to established authority plus humaneness in personal relations. Economics and politics were a matter of indifference in comparison with 'spiritual values,' and even an obstacle to the spiritual life."⁵³⁴ Yet Knight's co-author, Thornton W. Merriam, counters Knight's claims by showing the ways in which liberal Christianity has managed to accommodate

the claims of modern life while still maintaining a Christian outlook. He notes, for example, the high number of members in any congregation who are both businessmen and church-goers, and argues that it is economics that has the church-goers wrong:

Economics . . . has a bias against that trenchant reexamination of assumptions which liberal religion demands; it is anti-philosophical for it prides itself on knowing nothing about ethics; it is attached to an outmoded psychology regarding the relation of fact and value; it has little in the way of social morality and is afraid of getting any. . . . Economics must get rid of what almost amounts to an anti-intellectualism in the field of values and irresponsibility in the moral realm.⁵³⁵

For Merriam, it is Knight and economics that have missed the way the church has changed and tried to reach for a theory of social justice for the here and now which should not be slighted for being interim given the success it has found, for example, in the underground railroad of the nineteenth century and the denunciation of the powerful and wealthy at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Knight and Merriam in lively debate succeed in showing that it is easy to contend over the meaning of the scriptural texts. Knight prefers to read scripture primarily as a text, whereas Merriam and McCloskey appear to read them as experiences to be lived. Knight notes in his debate with Merriam, however, that to conflate Christianity with Liberalism requires two moves: 1. a tendency to overlook the prophetic power that Christianity has long claimed, which is a tendency inherent in Protestantism, and 2. a willingness to overlook the indefensible history of Christianity as it relates to problems of politics and economics. Merriam counters, and McCloskey seemingly is there with him, that such a view overlooks the ways in which liberal Christians think of prophecy as opposition to tyranny and that they have necessarily had to live their faith *in the*

world, which requires a capacity to manage uncertainty about the future by seeing the sins of the past as sins, as failures to meet the ideal.

The difficulty with Knight's view of prophetic rhetoric, in particular, is the question of talk; specifically, if Knight is right in implying that the prophetic tradition is lost in Protestantism and liberal Christianity, how can bourgeois- or liberal-Christians, who organize around sweet talk, justify the loss? In other words, it is hard to conceive of the prophetic tradition from Isaiah and Jeremiah to St. Peter and St. Paul as a tradition of anything but "hard talk;" Prophecy is always the rhetoric of the messenger, it is radical, it lacks flexibility and looseness, it lacks that "bargaining side of intelligence that characterizes the conduct and thinking of 'reasonable' persons," and is characterized by *krisis*, decision or judgment, as well as martyrdom.⁵³⁶ These are hardly the bourgeois virtues, and, as such, liberal Christianity whether defended by Merriam or McCloskey falls short of prophetic ideals inherent in both the text of scripture (Knight's point), as well as the experience of scripture. And despite Merriam's contention that liberal Christianity has elements of the prophetic tradition in its willingness to talk back to power, it belies the reality that those who talk back are often shunned as illiberal, un-bourgeois heretics and thus cannot be characterized as "liberal Christians" of the sort who prefer sweet talk.

The difficulty in this area is always that of treading on thin ice in either direction. Both Knight and Merriam make good arguments to defend their positions. Certainly historical and textual data is not all that matters toward deciding the power of contemporary Christian lives any more than one is justified in assuming that a person

cannot be bourgeois and a Christian simultaneously, or, likewise, that liberal Christians should receive a free pass when they discount prophetic rhetoric and its power to inspire. Nevertheless, the aim for my purposes is to show that Knight makes a strong case that the bourgeois virtues and Christianity cannot be conflated without serious controversy on the part of those who are paying attention to the values at the root of the controversy. To do so is to render Christianity far too prudent to hold onto the prophetic tradition; to do without such prudence is to leave Christianity in an earlier, illiberal, pre-Enlightenment age without the resources and tools of contemporary social science, perhaps rendering it backward and out of touch. We are not forced with such either/or fallacies in real life, of course, because those who desire to be authentic Christians will use the power of investigation and reflection over their motives and actions to find what amount to reasonable ways to negotiate the contested terrain. But all of that assumes that the Enlightenment has operated as a powerful cultural force that informs all of the ways we think and talk – including Christian thought and talk – and all of that sounds like support for liberal Christianity.

The catch comes when we move from the individual to the societal level for it is here that we see that a society dictated by Prudence, with love on the margin, as McCloskey, Smith, Whately, and Mill have suggested it is and ought to be, is not a Christian society with the pure love of Christ at the center followed closely by Faith and Hope. They cannot be conflated. Insofar as the bourgeois society succeeds in maintaining liberty it may hold out the possibility that certain associations may exist that place Faith, Hope, and Charity at the summit of their allegiance, but bourgeois society,

contrary to McCloskey's claims, has been notoriously bad at maintaining such liberties. Most commentators agree that in the United States, for example, the protections offered by Supreme Court jurisprudence, especially on questions of the free-exercise clause of the First Amendment, show a propensity by the court to favor Protestant-like rationales for attacking non-Protestant religious action.⁵³⁷ In other words, McCloskey's claim that bourgeois society is virtuous and that such virtues are part of what it means to be Christian is true as far as it goes.

However, it only goes so far as Protestant-American-Christianity will allow, and no further. For Catholics, Jews, and Mormons who think of a dichotomy between belief and action as less tenable, the Protestant account of the virtues will never do. Moreover, it does not follow either that theocracies are necessarily illiberal any more than it makes sense to argue that Christians are more incapable than others to defend the rights of those they disagree with. Certainly history suggests that liberal theocracies are not easy to find and that religiously motivated conduct tends toward the illiberal, but that is not reason to assert suddenly that bourgeois society carries with it, indeed already embodies, the promise of solving the Christian problem of how to live in the world but not of it, or of rendering to Caesar that which is Caesar's and to God that which is God's. Indeed, economics has become as illiberal and is in danger of becoming a theocracy of sorts for the academy. In other words there is room enough in bourgeois history to show that its liberality may be nothing less than its implicit tendency to require a low common denominator of action and virtue. Perhaps the bourgeois liberality is nothing more than a tyranny of the majority that comes about by prescribing a sphere of individual action

constituted as normal by cultural forces like state mandated education and jurisprudence of a certain kind that renders sameness of behavior the rule across the board.

Inside of this context the notion of conflating Christianity with bourgeois virtue is either entirely fantastic or so sensible as to pass without comment. Indeed, it is difficult to conceive of Western Christians in a position to renounce the bourgeois virtues, and yet agreeing that they are an unobjectionable aspect of the Christian life is to agree to make religion in the image of reason, rationality, and liberality without wincing. For my part, it seems impossible to assert that Christians, be they western journalists or professors, are justified in being let off the hook, any hook, as it were, because of the wrongs and atrocities of third world dictators. We should not advocate Christianity or political economy oversimplify geo-political realities. For some ancient Christians the answer was found in claiming that their payment of taxes and tolls constituted their freedom from civil authority, while for the state the requirement of taxes and tolls was evidence that they were justified in their claim of ownership and provision. In other words, to suggest that political economy, Christianity, and divides between the first world and the third world can be resolved with markets seems a bit premature. Hugh Nibley, a historian of the ancient world comes to an interesting conclusion regarding attempts to conflate such disparate views of human, political and spiritual life:

If it comes as a surprise to learn that the clothes we wear today were designed thousands of years ago for the comfort of riders on the windy steppes of Asia, one is no less bemused at the thought that our basic political philosophy comes from the same world. Our storm driven ancestors met the challenge of their predicament with two solutions: the one sought to make the earth a permanent home and possess it wholly; the other to move on to some happier home, whatever and wherever that might be. The one philosophy is based on the firm belief that this is our only world, the other on the equally convincing and far

more easily demonstrable proposition that we are transients who “here have no abiding kingdom.” The paying of tolls and taxes has made it possible for the two ideologies to coexist in the world; it is an arrangement by which each side humors the other: the payer of taxes concedes to the recipient the right to imagine himself as the owner of the earth, while the latter in return for this recognition allows his client the luxury of imagining himself the citizen of another world. The one while ceaselessly ranging abroad in the earth thinks of himself as lord of an immovable possession, while the other, tied to his patch of glebe or dingy workshop, thinks of himself as a courser through the endless expanse of heaven. The common symbol of both, the sign of possession and of wandering, is the tent.

Living in an atmosphere of emergency and uncertainty, the state has always been obliged to tax to preserve its identity. Taxes are viewed by those who are asked to pay the most as a personal insult and an affront to the sacredness of property. That is exactly what they are, and what they were originally meant to be. An ancient tax-notice, an imperious tap on the shield, was nothing less than an invitation to a sojourner in a land to justify his presence there either by satisfying the claims of the owner to recognition or meeting him in open combat for possession. We may deplore taxes, but we may not resent them.⁵³⁸

In other words the contest between the parties who seek ownership of the earth and the parties who reject such ownership finds its compromise in taxes and tolling, its identification in the tent. Some Christians in the ancient world, and other religious who reject the power of the state to own the earth, find freedom from guilt in rendering to Caesar what is Caesar’s without resentment so that Caesar is left to fend for himself. Hence, in short, the controversy between prophetic Christians and liberal Christians may boil down to just how much they wish to assume and defend the political powers that be. The desire to assert identification between the rhetoric of Jesus, or any great prophet, with the powers of the state is a key to understanding the abounding failures in history of all such attempts to establish illiberal regimes constituted by so-called religious authority. It likely changes very little if that identification rests on the authority of the market rather than the authority of Caesar.

If we accept that the market can provide salvation for the contemporary Christian, or for the poor, we are likely to miss the point of the prophetic hard talk of the Jewish and Christian Bible. Not all the directives therein were meant for efficient implementation. Bad policy or a misguided will efficiently implanted is still bad policy or a misguided will. Though the rendering of religious behavior as more efficient may find more corollaries in contemporary Protestant thought it is not justification for the advocacy of such efficiencies. Indeed contemporary Christians, especially bourgeois Christians, may be more likely to dismiss prophets, prophecy, and the hard requirements of such hard talk. That may not be a good reason for dismissing out of hand any attempts to liberalize Christianity or to introduce sweet talk into the equation, but it is a way of making note of just how the liberalizing process is occurring in order to understand it and the ways in which it reads scriptural texts. If the Bible is to be read not as a text but as an experience to be lived – good – all the better than if we read it merely as a text – but then we should be all the more careful to experience the pure religion of those who visit the fatherless and clothe the naked, taking care to avoid those who “thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money” as well as those who “kept back part of the price” – even if they did it in the name of prudence, or because the market shows such promise for the future.

My chief point is that McCloskey and anyone else who wishes to assert that the identity required by contemporary markets and bourgeois society is entirely compatible with the identity called forth by prophetic rhetoric of any kind had better understand that such identifications rest on an implicit assumption that Enlightenment rhetorics have

somehow updated, and thoroughly altered the meaning of prophetic discourse as well as the call to discipleship once and for all. Otherwise, I argue, such identifications are, in their own way, illiberal in the extreme in their reading and experiencing of prophetic texts. The divide between the world of economics and the world of the prophets seems unbridgeable, and to assert that one can stand with one foot in Zion and the other foot in Babylon is only to ask for very long legs. That the contemporary mind is capable of reaching such reasonable compromises may not be sufficiently convincing for us to reorder the ancient world in our own image, any more than it justifies us in the eyes of whatever God may be.

ROUSSEAU, OR A HYPOTHETICAL ALTERNATE LIBERALISM

I began this investigation by citing Michael Ignatieff's contention that we live and talk as merchants but we wish we lived and talked as citizens, and that the reality of our talk is evidence that the bourgeois ideals of Adam Smith and his followers have triumphed over Rousseau's notions of the ideal city-state republic.⁵³⁹ Rousseau's republic, I believe, would have been constituted with the following virtues at the high point of the value hierarchy:

	Leisure	
	Equality	Fraternity
Desire		Love

These values are values of liberty, but more importantly of equality, too, and they have been increasingly under pressure from the bourgeois virtues to remake life in the image of the market, and to reconceptualize personhood in the image of merchants.⁵⁴⁰ The

virtues of the field, the commons, the market, and the republic may all legitimately have a place in our society, but only if their areas of respective influence do not take on a megalomania, or force the others to bow in their presence.

Rousseau's vision of the state finds embodiment in the gift from France to the United States, the statue of liberty. Here liberty and the state are depicted as a beautiful and triumphant woman in flowing robes and her subjects are made to desire her, to love the state and be bound to her interests, not because of their own interests, as Smith or Mill would have, but because of her own beauty and inherent loveliness. The subjects are constituted as "citizens," etymologically carrying an implicit connection to womanliness and femininity, as well as duties, obligations, and privileges, the challenge and reward of being part of something bigger than your self.

The society Rousseau envisions is one based in right. The state must have a universal and compelling force in order to command that each part operates for the good of the whole. This universal, or general will, is established as the sovereign people agree to give up their natural liberty in exchange for civil liberty. The conditions of civil liberty bring with them a system of inequality as a consequence, but the consequences of this inequality are at the forefront for Rousseau and can be avoided if the state itself, that is, the general will, recognizes how dangerous wealth and especially luxury are to the state. Rousseau envisions, then, a kind of quasi-Spartan republican state, a general will that enforces equality thereby accomplishing what is best for particular wills – in the very long run. Thus, Robert Nisbet observes that Rousseau does not really favor liberty, while Judith Shklar counters that Rousseau is looking at society from the perspective of

the least well off person.⁵⁴¹ This perspective, shared by John Rawls, leads to different insights about Rousseau's contribution to social thought. Namely, Rousseau claims that natural liberty, the freedom to be left alone and the necessity of defending your self with power, can be exchanged for civil liberty, which carries with it all kinds of obligations, turns possession into property, compels man to be free, and establishes inequality. Only the general will which establishes civil liberty can be just if it guards against wealth and luxury, preserving justice for the most disadvantaged. Rousseau thought that was only likely if the state could preserve its identity as a beautiful woman, an object of desire in the hearts of the members of society sufficient to transform them into loyal citizens and not merely merchants. Rousseau writes,

Rightly understood, these clauses can all be reduced to one alone, namely, the total alienation of each associate with all his rights to the whole community. For, in the first place, since each person gives himself entirely, the condition is equal for all, and since the condition is equal for all, no one has an interest in making it burdensome for the others.⁵⁴²

By giving up the natural, personal identity that adheres in the state of natural liberty, individuals assume a new identity, and a new kind of personhood is born which assumes equality and interest in the group first. "This public person, which is thus formed by the union of all the other persons, formerly took the name of *city* and now takes that of *republic* or *body politic* . . . they collectively take the name of the *people*, and, individually, they are called *citizens* . . ." ⁵⁴³

Hence the puzzle Rousseau strives to solve, the problem between being a merchant or being a citizen is just the problem I take aim at above, first by showing what the merchant is as constituted by the writings of Smith, Whately, and Mill – what market

rhetoric makes the man to be in the market, and then by indicating what compromises are necessary for the bourgeois merchant to coexist peacefully with his religion, and his state. The Rousseauian vision of a republican ideal capable of providing and protecting the needs of its individual members by giving them the identity of a group loses its traction in a bourgeois society that has members that believe they have provided for themselves. Allegiance to the state is not a primary matter of concern for a vision that preserves liberty before, or seemingly independent, of justice and equality. Likewise, the attraction of group membership and loyalty and love for the group diminishes as the values of the market expand into new and exploitable areas of talk and trade. Economy becomes growth, faster and more growth, justified because it will, the bourgeois promise, be growth for all, instead “of the popular meaning of the word *economy*, which is understood to mean the wise use of what one has rather than the means of acquiring what one does not have.”⁵⁴⁴

It is a Rousseau-like communitarian vision that embodied the nineteenth century utopias of the American landscape, Mormonism, the Shakers, the Amish, etc., that each sought in their way to account for citizenship to earthly and heavenly communities without undue allegiance to market forces or political rhetoric, refusing even the possibility that the bourgeois virtues might work because of certainty that they will from time to time fail. In other words, Rousseau’s arguments fall squarely within the liberal tradition because of his emphasis on the fact that his vision of an ideal society is constructed on an understanding that men are men, not gods or Saints. It is the vision of man that is like Madison’s *Federalist* No. 10 because it is not a utopian vision for

angels. Rousseau's liberality extends from his desire to place chains on men so that they cannot be so man-like, so driven to ignore the needs of others in their community, to remake them as civil man. Insofar as the communitarian visions of nineteenth century America invite men to become Saints, they depart from Rousseau's liberal ideal and justifiably fall outside the liberal tradition. However, inasmuch as these communitarian visions and Rousseau's social contract share a conviction that man should be conceived as a member of a larger group first, as a citizen of society, be it the French polity or the kingdom of God on earth, and provide a vision worthy of a prophet in the way it preserves devotion and desire in and from the heart to the group and a poetic awareness of the transitory nature of human institutions, they share common characteristics of citizenship as opposed to merchant-ship.

Indeed, Rousseau argued that the body politic, just like the body of a man or a market, begins dying as soon as it is born. "To succeed," he warns, "we must not attempt the impossible, nor should we flatter ourselves that we may give the work of men a stability that human things do not allow." Though every body will eventually die, whether it is the body of a man, the body politic, or the market body, "each of these bodies may have a constitution that is more or less robust and suited to preserve it for a longer or shorter period of time."⁵⁴⁵ A key to the robustness of the body politic is strong laws, laws supported by both the habits and mores of the people as well as by their reason, education, and religion. A compelling interest is not sufficient for the body politic to remain strong if that compelling interest remains personal or individual. "As soon as public service ceases to be the principle concern of the citizens, and they prefer

to serve with their purses rather than their persons, the state is already nearing its ruin. . . . Thanks to laziness and money, they finally have soldiers to enslave the homeland and representatives to sell it.”⁵⁴⁶ In short, the healthier the body politic, “the more public concerns prevail over private ones in the minds of the citizens.”⁵⁴⁷

What is interesting, in particular, is the way Rousseau’s vision, and communitarian-utopian visions in America, contrast with the vision offered by those who prefer the market as an organizing force in society. Although I have shown, following McCloskey’s nod in that direction, that Smith, Whately, and Mill represent a softer, more community and communication oriented view of society than most humanities scholars first realize, their vision of market society populated by merchants never inverts the individual-over-community or liberty-over-equality hierarchy. Indeed, it was Adam Smith himself who praised Rousseau’s “Discourse on Political Economy” for having “softened, improved, and embellished, and stript of all that tendency to corruption and licentiousness” found in the vision of society presented by Bernard de Mandeville’s *Fable of the Bees*, but who nevertheless weighed Rousseau’s contribution as having “all the purity and sublimity of the morals of Plato, and to be only the true spirit of a republican carried a little too far.”⁵⁴⁸ In other words, it was Smith, Whately, and Mill who would check the passions of man with interest, put the brakes on a republican ideal that would make us into brothers and sisters first, merchants second. While it was Rousseau who wanted passion on a level with interest and who thought good citizens had to be passionate, not merely a bourgeois passion for level-headedness

and money-making, but an ardent, dithyrambic and fervent, even erotic passion for the whole.

In this respect the writings of Rousseau have the fire of a prophet, not merely the call for more profits. It was Whately not long ago who cautioned us that we should not expect too much from the writing of economists for it would always be a “somewhat repulsive logical *dryness* of style,” and that “eloquence, in the sense of what is called *fine writing*, is not to be looked for” in the writing of economists. He also warned that “there is a neatness indeed, and a sort of beauty resulting from the appearance of healthful vigour, in a well-tilled corn-field; but one which is overspread with blue and red flowers, gives no promise of a crop,” and, furthermore, that eloquence in economics is likely to lead to “mischievous results.”⁵⁴⁹ The difference between Smith, Whately, and Mill taken collectively and the writing of Rousseau is the power of rhetorical style, the former choosing dryness and logic, the latter passion and eloquence. It is not only skin deep, for style is substance.

The style of a citizen as opposed to a merchant is the style of recognizing one’s origins with the group and one’s allegiance to the group, and the relationship between a citizen and a state can never be like the relationship between a seller and a buyer. Of course today we acknowledge through a certain sophistication the capacity to have many identities, to sell in the morning and vote in the afternoon, and we do not consider contradictions between activities or subtle incompatibilities. My purpose is not to suggest that a bourgeois person is incapable of being a citizen, only to say that he is a certain kind of citizen, not to say that the bourgeois never thinks of the group, only that

he is conditioned first to think for himself. In this way, his character differs from a citizen conceived in Rousseau's republic. Insofar as the merchant-citizen is embodied in the contemporary rights-talking, "rights-based social imagination," he is a citizen that thinks of himself first.⁵⁵⁰ Michael Schudson notes that opposition to the rights based citizen arose from the Republican Party in the late 1990s in the United States – establishing an ironic and strange unity between a party that has long attempted to establish itself as free market, and more recently promoting a quasi-religious platform that is, as yet, opposed to a rights-orientation. "They seem to be saying that we would be better off if . . . our political culture did not so readily encourage people to think of themselves as victims," and presumably a proper understanding of the role of markets would work to discourage the posture of the victim further, "but broadsides against rights-talk do not seem a promising method for getting from here to there."⁵⁵¹

Another way of talking about the style of citizenship found in Rousseau is to inject a notion of vision. Rousseau's visions about the origins of political thought and behavior as well as a certainty about their limitations make for very interesting confrontations between the view that the earth can be owned and the view that the earth and its produce belong to all. Sheldon Wolin noted the similarities between Augustine and Aquinas's *corpus mysticism*, or the consecrated host, *corpus Christi*, as the unifying element of society and Rousseau's social contract with his observation, "as soon as he is alone, man is nothing." The economic organization of society calls for a balance between competing impulses of enmity and sympathy in man, giving free reign to conflict and domination in the marketplace to weaken their impact in the home and so-

called private life. But Rousseau's vision, like Augustine and Aquinas, "connoted harmonious fellowship."⁵⁵² Wolin writes,

These ideas of the redemptive community and the "new man" that issues from it recurred in the romantic and nationalistic literature of the nineteenth century. Articulate writers, voicing the loneliness of large and increasingly impersonal societies, clutched for ideas of a close communion which would turn highly utilitarian political organizations into vibrant communities and its apathetic citizens into fervent communicants.⁵⁵³

It was not a quest *for* bourgeois society, but a desire to escape its bureaucratic, predictable loneliness and sweet talk that instilled the impulse to find and constitute "vibrant" citizens, "fervent communicants" who "clutched for ideas of a close communion."

It was Adam Smith who long ago recognized that although the division of labor could make you more pins and more money, more efficiently, it would also, in the end, make you bored, prosaic, a sleep-walking bourgeoisie who in the words of the poet Victor Hugo, never change their house or their opinions. Smith thought progress lie in becoming a more mercantile society, and so in opposition to the old notions of citizenship he fostered the trucking and trading instinct in man. "Nobody ever saw a dog make a fair and deliberate exchange of one bone for another with another dog," Smith writes. Durkheim later struggled about the ideal division of labor, but it has long since been forgotten that Smith deplored that tendency of the division of labor to weaken the minds of those whose minds are employed in mindless, fragmented work. It was not all celebratory back-slapping that ushered in the bourgeois virtues, or that sustains them, and the consequences of the fragmentation of the self reached farther than the market.

It is easy for us today to conceive of our selves as capable of “shifting gears” or “changing hats” as we transition from one responsibility to another. And I am not calling for the resurrection of an earlier age of the republican tradition when the occupation of buying and selling disqualified one for citizenship. Nor would I promote a Christian vision of society that would say matters of the body are not matters of the heart.⁵⁵⁴ Nevertheless, a complete vision of the character of a citizen requires a complete vision of character and citizenship, an *ethos* of nature, the individual, and the society constituting a single whole. No longer can we rest satisfied with only a partial view of man’s religious, rhetorical, economic, or political character. The limitations of excluding the characters constituted in the field, the commons, the market, or the republic, or the tendency of making all characters subservient to the market, is no way for us to regain the prophetic vision necessary to produce the inspiration and call to the constant re-conceptualizing of our interests in conjunction with our duties as citizens – as whole persons.

“The chopping up of political man,” Wolin writes, “is but part of a broader process which had been at work in political and social theory.” The problems left us from the twentieth century are not necessarily the problems of too little market expansion, or too little division of labor. Wolin writes,

Is it rather that the contemporary challenge is to recognize that totalitarianism has shown that societies can react sharply to the disintegration wrought by the fetish of groupism; that they will resort to even the most extreme methods to re-assert the political in an age of fragmentation? If this should be the case, the task of non-totalitarian societies is to temper the excesses of pluralism. This means recognizing that the specialized roles assigned the individual, or adopted by him, are not a full substitute for citizenship because citizenship provides what the other roles cannot, namely an integrative experience which brings together

multiple role-activities of the contemporary person and demands that the separate roles be surveyed from a more general point of view.⁵⁵⁵

We need an understanding of politics and vision, of politics as vision, that will help us to see our “common involvements,” to see what is “general and integrative to men,” and a proper understanding of how citizenship may give us this power of sight, this power of oversight on all our different and varied activities. This is the essence of what Rousseau’s republican vision longed to realize.⁵⁵⁶ It is a general will that respects particular wills without requiring them to adopt the character of a common denomination. It is a vision that allows for the bourgeois virtues in the marketplace but does not require them in the university. It is a politics that can integrate all of the different aspects of personhood that are important to individual persons without then forsaking the needs of the collective group, and it will not rest satisfied if the market asks for more than its share.

RHETORIC AND ECONOMICS RECONCEIVED

Conceiving of man as a political animal that both talks and trades is a necessary first step to realizing the ideal oversight citizenship makes available to persons. Making obeisance to false priesthoods that want only better talk, only more markets, only more efficient policy is no way to long for such changes to assert themselves in our age, or any age. Only a social organization that longs for equality and liberty, that promises brotherhood and agency, that hears and sees, once and for all, a society with a political vision of the whole man in all his activities is capable of actualizing a sustainable vision of public life. This vision must retain Rousseau’s contention that our public offerings be

of free will to the end of equality, of Smith's claim that markets produce efficient results and that the bourgeois virtues are in fact virtuous, of Whately's idea that liberality and efficiency can be, from time to time, applied to religious and cultural matters, of Mill's contention that we pay attention to the ends of life and do not sacrifice our liberty for continuous and never ending market expansion or growth, of Rawls insistence that justice characterize our political ideals, and of Barzun's observation that our "nascent – or perhaps one should say, renascent – culture" has the capacity to resurrect enthusiasm in the young and talented so they can "keep exclaiming what a joy it is to be alive."⁵⁵⁷ Only the whole picture of a whole man will make for a whole politics and a wholesome state.

McCloskey sees rhetoric as a way to bring the whole together, but most of the time she, that is rhetoric, has done a poor job of keeping herself unsullied by the world's way of doing business. Perhaps the tools are found in rhetoric's bag of tricks, but her history has not been altogether more promising than economics at keeping a whole vision of personhood at the forefront of political and social thought. No doubt, her best features like maintaining freedom of expression and a willingness to experiment with new ideas are essential for any hope of a more complete view of citizenship. Rhetoric reminds us to keep paying attention to the words people use, to the emotions they try to make us feel, and to the character they make of themselves and, in turn, of us.

Economics, in a different way, reminds us that we have to pay attention to facts from time to time, and that just because the facts are socially constructed they still have meaning as facts. It may be all imaginary reality or artistic proof, but there is still no

way that artistic proof can warm your body or fill your belly. It is a kind of realism or materialism but it is more than that when it is seen as part of our constitution – both individual and political. We do not live by bread alone but we do not live without it either. Economics reminds rhetoric that she has a body, not just a mind, and that the body has its needs as well as its contributions to the social order and to virtue.

Rhetoric and economics, together, help us know what it means to be in a transitory world. James Boyd White says that upon the discovery of only a shifting sea and sky and wind with no earth or rock to stand on our response should not be to “lament the loss of fixity but to learn to sail.”⁵⁵⁸ Sailing, especially tacking, is an apt metaphor to conclude this story. Tacking, or turning the bow to the wind so as to follow a course against the wind by a series of tacks is just what rhetoric and economics try to accomplish. They are both tacking arts for they are born in uncertainty but seek to address uncertainty. They are both like sailing. Rhetoric tries to sail by easily adjustable memories and experience in many things. Economics chooses to sail by attempting to make fixed principles for continued economic growth. The best social theory will learn to incorporate aspects of both rhetoric and economics for dealing with uncertainty, for in sailing we must judge quickly the shifting winds and waves; but when the storms clear we fix our place by the stars. To think in public life that we can do without the tacking rhetoric and economics supply may be to miss a point about our natures. To think rhetoric and economics are all we need to guide us may be to forget the stars while lost at sea.

CONCLUDING REMARK

Put crudely, the relationship between a citizen and her society and a merchant and his society can be characterized in a word as the difference between “habits of the heart” and “interests.” No single person, arguably, fits safely in either characteristic. Adam Smith is often made to represent the camp of interests, Rousseau the claim that a society that coheres because of habits of the heart is stronger and healthier. Of course Smith recognized, as noted above, the critical importance of habits, duties, and mores, he also thought that interests were a good way to balance the passions – rendering society more just and more free. Rousseau, by contrast, placed faith in a vision that saw all as indivisible parts of the whole, and who could not countenance inequality of opportunity or vision. Whately did not wish to excuse the religious from contemporary life because he believed, and because he believed that people respond to arguments. Mill’s art of life was one deeply connected with the business of life and that could not see everyday-ness as something altogether different from enduringness in social thought. Mill knew for certain that only some writing endured, and it was generally the writing that came from everyday people with thoughts for every time. As scholars, these three, Smith, Whately, and Mill, though each in their way tremendously different, respected the virtues of free inquiry, free thought, and free speech, and each presented a view of the bourgeois character without apology. Though none succeeded in establishing a decent society once and for all, each contributed to the hope that such societies were worth writing and thinking about.

Free markets may be better than many alternatives, and they certainly are good at producing wealth and virtue, at least such is the consequence of most contemporary rhetoric. Still, this does not mean that markets should dictate the whole of our lives. The encroachment of the market on other non-market aspects of life is the result of choosing to talk one way about the market while discounting talk that disagrees. Markets are not going to bring us salvation, not for the bourgeois, the poor, or the rich. They are only going to go on providing for us in uneven, incomplete, sometimes unjust ways. What is crucial for a healthy society is to cultivate the capacity to see from all angles the different aspects of our private and social existence. The notion that market behavior can be divorced from home life, or that talk in the classroom is independent of acts in the legislature, or that books read and websites viewed are of no consequence on our social disposition are long since passed their expiration date. What we need is a vision that recognizes the force of hearing, a conception of man that is capable of incorporating the soul, body and spirit, into one great whole. A politics that can account for our social and material needs and desires, our rhetorical and economic natures, is required, and will not be achieved if we lack the fundamental characteristic of citizenship which is the capacity to feel with the heart and see with the mind all the words and actions of our fellow citizens. Government exists to regulate the interests between men, but society can contribute the necessary counterweight to interests by promoting the habits of the heart that are necessary for healthy government. If the *ethos* of citizenship does not account for the fact that we talk and trade, that we persuade and exchange, it is likely to fall short of the hopes of the bourgeois and Christian, the hero and the prophet, indeed, it will fall

short of the hopes of humanity because it will not realize a holistically constituted citizen. Only a view that sees a whole person, body and spirit, will realize liberty and justice for all.

NOTES

- ¹ Michael Ignatieff, "The Myth of Citizenship," in *Theorizing Citizenship*, Ed. Ronald Beiner (Albany: SUNY Press, 1995): 54.
- ² Thomas M. Conley, *Rhetoric in the European Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990): 4.
- ³ For background on the idea of constitutive rhetoric see Richard M. Weaver, "Language is Sermonic," and "The *Phaedrus* and the Nature of Rhetoric," in *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present*, Ed. Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg (New York: Bedford/St. Martin's Press, 2001): 1351-1371; James Boyd White's *When Words Lose Their Meaning: Constitutions and Reconstitutions of Language, Character, and Community* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1984), *Justice as Translation: An Essay in Cultural and Legal Criticism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), and *Acts of Hope: Creating Authority in Literature, Law, and Politics* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995).
- ⁴ See, for example, Maurice Charland, "Constitutive Rhetoric: The Case of the People Quebecois," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* (May 1987): 133-150, and Michael Calvin McGee, "In Search of 'The People': A Rhetorical Alternative," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 61 (October 1975): 235-249.
- ⁵ White, *When Words Lose Their Meaning*, xi.
- ⁶ White, *When Words Lose Their Meaning*, xi.
- ⁷ White, *When Words Lose Their Meaning*, 22.
- ⁸ See Deirdre McCloskey, *The Rhetoric of Economics*, 2nd Edition (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), A.O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), and James Arnt Aune, *Selling the Free Market: The Rhetoric of Economic Correctness* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2001).
- ⁹ White, *When Words Lose Their Meaning*, 3-23.
- ¹⁰ John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993). See also John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).
- ¹¹ See Sheldon Wolin, *Politics and Vision* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1960).
- ¹² On new ways to read the sophists see W.K.C. Guthrie, *The Sophists* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971); G.B. Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); John Poulakos, "Rhetoric, the Sophists, and the Possible," *Communication Monographs* (Sept. 1984): 215-227; John Poulakos, "Toward a Sophistic Definition of Rhetoric," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 16 (1983): 35-48; Susan C. Jarratt, *Rereading the Sophists: Classical Rhetoric Reconfigured* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1991); and John Poulakos, *Sophistical Rhetoric in Classical Greece* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1995).
- ¹³ Eva Brann, "Introduction to Reading the *Republic*," in Eva Brann, *The Music of the Republic: Essays on Socrates' Conversations and Plato's Writings* (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2004): 91.
- ¹⁴ For example, see Plato's dialogues *Gorgias*, *Phaedrus*, *Statesman*, *Protagoras*, and *Sophist*.

¹⁵ Eva Brann, Peter Kalkavage, and Eric Salem, "Introduction to the *Sophist*," in Eva Brann, *The Music of the Republic: Essays on Socrates' Conversations and Plato's Writings* (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2004): 282.

¹⁶ Plato, *Sophist* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1993): 7; 222a.

¹⁷ Plato, *Sophist*, 9; 223b.

¹⁸ Plato, *Sophist*, 9; 223b.

¹⁹ Plato, *Sophist*, 10; 224.

²⁰ Plato, *Sophist*, 18; 231d.

²¹ Plato, *Sophist*, 10; 224e.

²² Brann, Kalkavage, and Salem, "Introduction to the *Sophist*," 282.

²³ Brann, Kalkavage, and Salem, "Introduction to the *Sophist*," 291.

²⁴ *The Greek Sophists*, Ed. John Dillon and Tania Gergel (London: Penguin Books, 2003): 142-144.

²⁵ The "American Question" as formulated by Deirdre McCloskey is "If you're so smart, why ain't you rich?" In other words, the world is built on an illusion that money proves worth and value, and the American question reminds us of the illusion. See Deirdre McCloskey, *If You're So Smart: The Narrative of Economic Expertise* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992): 111-122.

²⁶ See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. One, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin Books, 1976) especially 253, note 6.

²⁷ The discussion of Economics and Chrematistics is in Aristotle, *The Politics*, trans. T.A. Sinclair (New York: Penguin Books, 1992): 75-87; Book I, Ch. viii-x.

²⁸ Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*, trans. George A. Kennedy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991): 53-54.

²⁹ Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*, trans. George A. Kennedy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991): 170-171.

³⁰ I am indebted to Martin J. Medhurst for encouraging me to look more closely at Isocrates in the history of rhetoric. See his "Why Isocrates Would Have Liked Ike: Moral Character & Political Appeal in the Eisenhower Era," Emil C. Weis Lecture, Southeast Missouri State University, 1998.

³¹ See Isocrates, "On the Peace," in *Isocrates: Volume II*, trans. George Norlin (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).

³² Isocrates, "On the Peace," 87.

³³ Two economists have estimated that one fourth, perhaps more, of our Gross Domestic Product is pure persuasion. See Arjo Klamer and Deirdre McCloskey, "One Quarter of GDP is Persuasion," *American Economic Review* (May 1995): 191-196.

³⁴ Stobaeus, *Anthology* IV 33,10 = B29 as quoted in *The Greek Sophists*: 253.

- ³⁵ See notes in Dillon and Gergel, *The Greek Sophists*, 250-253.
- ³⁶ See Jacques Barzun, *The House of Intellect* (New York: Perennial Classics, 1959) and “The Battle Over Brains in Democratic Education,” *University of Toronto Quarterly* 23 (1954): 109-121.
- ³⁷ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (New York: Penguin Classics, 1985): 704.
- ³⁸ Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 706.
- ³⁹ An ancient symbol of rhetoric was the open hand; Logic was symbolized as a closed fist. See Wilbur Samuel Howell, *Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1500-1700* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956) for a discussion of the symbolism of rhetoric as an open hand.
- ⁴⁰ “An Ancient Christian Sermon (2 Clement),” in *The Apostolic Fathers*, Ed. Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999): 127.
- ⁴¹ “The Letter of Ignatius to the Romans,” in *The Apostolic Fathers*, Ed. Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999): 171.
- ⁴² “The Didache,” in *The Apostolic Fathers*, Ed. Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999): 255.
- ⁴³ “The Didache,” in *The Apostolic Fathers*, Ed. Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999): 265-267.
- ⁴⁴ “The Epistle of Barnabas,” in *The Apostolic Fathers*, Ed. Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999): 323.
- ⁴⁵ “The Shepherd of Hermas,” in *The Apostolic Fathers*, Ed. Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999): 425.
- ⁴⁶ “The Shepherd of Hermas,” in *The Apostolic Fathers*, Ed. Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999): 427.
- ⁴⁷ Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989): 111.
- ⁴⁸ See *The Nag Hammadi Library: Revised Edition*, trans. James M. Robinson and Richard Smith (New York: HarperCollins Publisher, 1990).
- ⁴⁹ Hugh Nibley, “*Victoriosa Loquacitas*: The Rise of Rhetoric and the Decline of Everything Else,” *Western Speech* (Spring 1956): 64.
- ⁵⁰ Nibley, “*Victoriosa*,” 60.
- ⁵¹ Nibley, “*Victoriosa*,” 62.
- ⁵² Nibley, “*Victoriosa*,” 61-62.
- ⁵³ Nibley, “*Victoriosa*,” 62.

⁵⁴ On lumping Jefferson in this group see Drew R. McCoy, *The Elusive Republic: Political Economy in Jeffersonian America* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1982).

⁵⁵ See *Buckley v. Valeo*, 424 U.S. 1 (1976) and *Colorado Republican Federal Campaign Committee v. Federal Elections Commission* (FEC), 518 U.S. 604 (1996).

⁵⁶ See <http://www.uiowa.edu/~poroi/index.html> for more information on the POROI.

⁵⁷ See Deirdre N. McCloskey, *Crossing: A Memoir* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1999).

⁵⁸ It would be impossible to catalogue the entire conversation to which *The Rhetoric of Economics* responds, and which it started. However, see Deirdre N. McCloskey, "The Rhetoric of Economics," *Journal of Economic Literature* 21 (Jun. 1983): 481-517, *The Rhetoric of Economics*, 2nd Edition (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), *If You're So Smart: The Narrative of Economic Expertise* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), *Knowledge and Persuasion in Economics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994a); Albert O. Hirschman, *Exit, Voice, Loyalty* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), *The Passions and the Interests* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), and *The Rhetoric of Reaction: Perversity, Futility, Jeopardy* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1991); *Conversations with Economists*, Ed. Arjo Klamer (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Allanheld, 1984); *The Consequences of Economic Rhetoric*, Eds. Arjo Klamer, Deirdre N. McCloskey, and Robert M. Solow (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); James Burk, *Values in the Marketplace* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1988); Bruce G. Carruthers and Wendy Nelson Espeland, "Accounting for Rationality: Double-Entry Bookkeeping and the Rhetoric of Economic Rationality," *American Journal of Sociology* 97 (July 1991): 31-69; Joseph Farrell, "Talk is Cheap," *The American Economic Review* 85 (May 1995): 186-190.

⁵⁹ See her *Economic Maturity and Entrepreneurial Decline: British Iron and Steel, 1870-1913* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), or her *Enterprise and Trade in Victorian Britain* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1981).

⁶⁰ See especially her "Keeping the Company of Economists" in Deirdre N. McCloskey, *If You're So Smart: The Narrative of Economic Expertise* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990): 135-149.

⁶¹ As part of the growing body of literature in rhetorical studies on rhetoric and economics see James Arnt Aune, *Rhetoric and Marxism* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), *Selling the Free Market: The Rhetoric of Economic Correctness* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2001); *Economics and Language*, Eds. Willie Henderson, Tony Dudley-Evans, and Roger Backhouse (London: Routledge, 1993); Amos Kiewe and Davis Houck, *A Shining City on a Hill: Ronald Reagan's Economic Rhetoric, 1951-1989* (New York: Praeger, 1991); Davis Houck, *Rhetoric as Currency: Hoover, Roosevelt, and the Great Depression* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001); Edward Panetta and Marouf Hasian, "Anti-Rhetoric as Rhetoric: The Law and Economics Movement," *Communication Quarterly* 42 (Winter 1994): 57-74; Oscar H. Gandy, Jr., "Toward a Political Economy of Personal Information," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 10 (March 1993): 70-97; Kimber Charles Pearce, "Narrative Reason and Cold War Economic Diplomacy in W.W. Rostow's *Stages of Economic Growth*," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 2 (Fall 1999): 395-414, *Rostow, Kennedy, and the Rhetoric of Foreign Aid* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2001); Oren M. Levin-Waldman, "The Rhetorical Evolution of the Minimum Wage," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 3 (Summer 2000): 131-153; Davis W. Houck, "Rhetoric as Currency: Herbert Hoover and the 1929 Stock Market Crash," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 3 (Summer 2000): 155-182; David G. Levasseur, "The Rhetorical Construction of Economic Policy: Political Judgment and the 1995 Budget Debate," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 3 (Summer 2000): 183-210; and Kevin Michael DeLuca, "Trains in the Wilderness: The Corporate Roots of Environmentalism," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 4 (Winter 2001): 633-652.

⁶² See www.paecon.net along with back issues of the *Post-Autistic Economics Review* as well as *The Crisis in Economics: The Post-Autistic Economics Movement: The First 600 Days*, Ed. Edward Fullbrook (London: Routledge, 2003). See also *A Guide to What's Wrong with Economics*, Ed. Edward Fullbrook (London: Anthem Press, 2004).

⁶³ McCloskey, *If You're So Smart*, 117.

⁶⁴ McCloskey, *If You're So Smart*, 117.

⁶⁵ Burk, *Values in the Marketplace*, 45-46.

⁶⁶ Burk, *Values in the Marketplace*, 46.

⁶⁷ McCloskey, *If You're So Smart*, 29.

⁶⁸ Deirdre N. McCloskey, "How to Work," *How to Be Human* *Though an Economist* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000): 106.

⁶⁹ McCloskey, "How to Work," 108.

⁷⁰ McCloskey, *If You're So Smart*, 70.

⁷¹ McCloskey, *If You're So Smart*, 73.

⁷² McCloskey, *If You're So Smart*, 73.

⁷³ McCloskey, *If You're So Smart*, 74-75.

⁷⁴ McCloskey, *How to be Human*, 77.

⁷⁵ McCloskey, *How to be Human*, 76.

⁷⁶ Deirdre McCloskey, "Keynes Was a Sophist, and a Good Thing, Too," in *How to be Human* *Though an Economist*, 126-127.

⁷⁷ McCloskey, *How to be Human*, 127.

⁷⁸ McCloskey, *How to be Human*, 129.

⁷⁹ It is significant to note here that the term rhetoric is a feminine word in Greek and that rhetoric is classically depicted as a woman.

⁸⁰ Deirdre McCloskey, "Economics: Art or Science or Who Cares?," in *How to be Human* *Though an Economist*, 161-166.

⁸¹ Sister Miriam Joseph, *The Trivium: The Liberal Arts of Logic, Grammar, and Rhetoric* (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2002): 9.

⁸² Joseph, *Trivium*, 4.

⁸³ McCloskey, *How to be Human*, 115.

- ⁸⁴ McCloskey, *How to be Human*, 56-57.
- ⁸⁵ McCloskey, *If You're So Smart*, 122.
- ⁸⁶ A.O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997): 27-28.
- ⁸⁷ Hirschman, *Passions and Interests*, 31.
- ⁸⁸ Hirschman, *Passions and Interests*, 32-33.
- ⁸⁹ Hirschman, *Passions and Interests*, 49.
- ⁹⁰ Hirschman, *Passions and Interests*, 59.
- ⁹¹ Hirschman, *Passions and Interests*, 124-125.
- ⁹² See Stephen T. Ziliak, "Economic History and the Rebirth of Respectable Characters," *Post Autistic Economics Review*, Issue 17, December 4, 2002, article 1. http://www.btinternet.com/~pae_news/reviews/issue17.htm and Vivienne Brown, *Adam Smith's Discourse* (London: Routledge, 1994), especially her discussion on how to read Adam Smith.
- ⁹³ Robert Hariman, *Political Style: The Artistry of Power* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995): 13.
- ⁹⁴ James Arnt Aune, *Selling the Free Market: The Rhetoric of Economic Correctness* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2001): 41.
- ⁹⁵ Aune, *Selling the Free Market*, 40.
- ⁹⁶ Aune, *Selling the Free Market*, 42.
- ⁹⁷ Deirdre N. McCloskey, "The Essential Rhetoric of Law, Literature, and Liberty," *Critical Review* (Spring 1991): 209.
- ⁹⁸ Aune, *Selling the Free Market*, 76.
- ⁹⁹ Aune, *Selling the Free Market*, 168.
- ¹⁰⁰ Aune, *Selling the Free Market*, 177.
- ¹⁰¹ Aune, *Selling the Free Market*, 170, emphasis original.
- ¹⁰² Aune, *Selling the Free Market*, 170.
- ¹⁰³ Deirdre McCloskey, *If You're So Smart: The Narrative of Economic Expertise* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990): 135.
- ¹⁰⁴ For what is at stake in the distinction between positive and negative liberty see Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty," in Isaiah Berlin, *Liberty*, Ed. Henry Hardy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002): 166-217. Succinctly, positive liberty is freedom to act, negative liberty is freedom from coercion or force. I argue that Smith is often wrongly accounted a proponent of negative liberty because of his desire to free the market from state intervention. However, in the context of Berlin's discussion, Smith's definition of

human nature as primarily active and desirous of self-improvement suggests that Smith could reasonably be seen as an advocate of positive liberty.

¹⁰⁵ See Harold Bloom, *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* (New York: Riverhead Trade, 1999).

¹⁰⁶ Louis Schneider, "Introduction," in Louis Schneider, *The Scottish Moralists: On Human Nature and Society* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1967): xvi.

¹⁰⁷ Schneider, Introduction, xxi.

¹⁰⁸ As quoted in Schneider, xxvi.

¹⁰⁹ Schneider, Introduction, xxviii.

¹¹⁰ See Vivienne Brown, *Adam Smith's Discourse* (London: Routledge, 1994): 27-43.

¹¹¹ See Peter Minowitz, *Profits, Priests, and Princes: Adam Smith's Emancipation of Economics from Politics and Religion* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993).

¹¹² Alec Macfie, "The Invisible Hand of Jupiter," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 32 (Nov.-Dec., 1971): 595-599.

¹¹³ Emma Rothschild, *Economic Sentiments: Adam Smith, Condorcet, and the Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001): 116.

¹¹⁴ Adam Smith, "The Principles Which Lead and Direct Philosophical Enquiries: Illustrated by the History of Astronomy," in Adam Smith, *Essays on Philosophical Subjects*, Ed. W.P.D. Wightman (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1982): 49.

¹¹⁵ Smith, History of Astronomy, 49-50.

¹¹⁶ Macfie, Invisible Hand of Jupiter, 596.

¹¹⁷ Alec Macfie, Invisible Hand of Jupiter, 597.

¹¹⁸ Rothschild, *Economic Sentiments*, 116-121.

¹¹⁹ *TMS*, 232-233.

¹²⁰ *TMS*, 312.

¹²¹ *WN*, 769-770.

¹²² *WN*, 493-494.

¹²³ *WN*, 493.

¹²⁴ *WN*, 773.

¹²⁵ *WN*, 781.

¹²⁶ *WN*, 780-781.

- ¹²⁷ Jerry Z. Muller, *Adam Smith in His Time and Ours* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993): 150.
- ¹²⁸ Muller, *Adam Smith*, 151.
- ¹²⁹ Muller, *Adam Smith*, 152.
- ¹³⁰ *WN*, II, 418-419.
- ¹³¹ As quoted in E.G. West, *Adam Smith: The Man and His Works* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1976): 135.
- ¹³² West, *Adam Smith*, 137.
- ¹³³ In West, *Adam Smith*, 151-152.
- ¹³⁴ See Stephen J. McKenna, "Fitting Words: Propriety in Adam Smith's Rhetoric and Ethics," in *Scottish Rhetoric and Its Influences*, Ed. Lynee Lewis Gaillet (Mahwah, NJ: Hermagoras Press, 1998): 57-77.
- ¹³⁵ See David Daiches Raphael, "Adam Smith and the 'Infection of David Hume's Society': New Light on an Old Controversy, Together With the Text of a Hitherto Unpublished Manuscript," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 30 (1969): 225-248. There is a brief discussion of Hume's influence on Smith and the aim of Smith's moral theory.
- ¹³⁶ Raphael, "Infection of David Hume's Society, 243.
- ¹³⁷ Raphael, "Infection of David Hume's Society, 243.
- ¹³⁸ See Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. D.D. Raphael and A.L. Macfie (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1984). Smith personally edited six editions of TMS during his lifetime. This edition, printed by the Liberty Fund, was originally published as part of the Glasgow Edition of The Works and Correspondence of Adam Smith at Oxford by Oxford University Press. The changes Smith made are preserved in the footnotes of this edition. Hereafter cited as TMS.
- ¹³⁹ *TMS*, 9.
- ¹⁴⁰ *TMS*, 12.
- ¹⁴¹ John Durham Peters, "Publicity and Pain: Self-Abstraction in Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*," *Public Culture* 7 (1995): 660. See also TMS, 47.
- ¹⁴² Peters, "Publicity and Pain," 661. See also TMS, 22.
- ¹⁴³ *TMS*, 10.
- ¹⁴⁴ Smith, *TMS*, 110.
- ¹⁴⁵ Smith, *TMS*, 128-130.
- ¹⁴⁶ John Durham Peters, *Speaking Into the Air: A History of the Idea of Communication* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1999): 132.

- ¹⁴⁷ Peters, *Speaking Into the Air*, 133-134.
- ¹⁴⁸ Peters, "Publicity and Pain," 658.
- ¹⁴⁹ Peters, "Publicity and Pain," 658.
- ¹⁵⁰ Smith, *TMS*, 25.
- ¹⁵¹ Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 2nd Edition (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1984): 49.
- ¹⁵² MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 50.
- ¹⁵³ Smith, *TMS*, VII.iii.I.4, 317.
- ¹⁵⁴ Smith, *TMS*, VII.iv.28, 337.
- ¹⁵⁵ Smith, *TMS*, VII.iv.28, 337-338.
- ¹⁵⁶ Keith Tribe, "General Introduction," in *A Critical Bibliography of Adam Smith*, ed. Keith Tribe and Hiroshi Mizuta (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2002): 11.
- ¹⁵⁷ See D.D. Raphael, "The Glasgow Edition of the Collected Works of Adam Smith," in *A Critical Bibliography of Adam Smith*, Ed. Keith Tribe (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2002): 50-60.
- ¹⁵⁸ Among them, see Vincent M. Bevilacqua, "Adam Smith's Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres," *Studies in Scottish Literature* 3 (1965): 41-60, and "Adam Smith and some Philosophical Origins of Eighteenth-Century Rhetorical Theory," *Modern Language Review* 63 (1968): 559-568; Patricia Spence, "Sympathy and Propriety in Adam Smith's Rhetoric," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 60 (1974): 92-99; Andrew Skinner, "Adam Smith: Rhetoric and the Communication of Ideas," in *Methodological Controversy in Economics: Historical Essays in Honour of T.W. Hutchison*, ed. A.W. Coats (London: JAI Press Inc., 1983): 71-88; and J. Michael Hogan, "Historiography and Ethics in Adam Smith's Lectures on Rhetoric," *Rhetorica* 2 (1984): 75-91.
- ¹⁵⁹ Vivienne Brown, *Adam Smith's Discourse*, 21.
- ¹⁶⁰ Jerry Z. Muller, *Adam Smith In His Time and Ours* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 9. Emphasis Muller's.
- ¹⁶¹ Brown, *Adam Smith's Discourse*, 54.
- ¹⁶² Brown, *Adam Smith's Discourse*, 54.
- ¹⁶³ See Laurence Dickey, "Historicizing the "Adam Smith Problem": Conceptual, Historiographical, and Textual Issues," *The Journal of Modern History* 58 (Sep. 1986): 579-609 for more on the problem.
- ¹⁶⁴ Brown, *Adam Smith's Discourse*, 75.
- ¹⁶⁵ Minowitz, *Profits, Priests, and Princes*, 252.
- ¹⁶⁶ Minowitz, *Profits, Priests, and Princes*, 256.

- ¹⁶⁷ See for example, Vivienne Brown, *Adam Smith's Discourse*.
- ¹⁶⁸ James L. Golden, "The Rhetorical Theory of Adam Smith," *Southern Speech Journal* 33 (Spring 1968): 214.
- ¹⁶⁹ Adam Smith, *Lectures on Jurisprudence*, ed. R.L. Meek, D.D. Raphael, and P.G. Stein. (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1982b): 493-494.
- ¹⁷⁰ Wilbur Samuel Howell, *Eighteenth-Century British Logic and Rhetoric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971): 75.
- ¹⁷¹ Howell, *Eighteenth-Century British*, 76.
- ¹⁷² For Rothbard's position see his lectures at <http://www.mises.org/rothspeak/murray.asp>
- ¹⁷³ Peter Minowitz, *Profits, Priests, and Princes: Adam Smith's Emancipation of Economics from Politics and Religion* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993): 2.
- ¹⁷⁴ See Susan E. Gallagher, *The Rule of the Rich? Adam Smith's Argument Against Political Power* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998) for more on the argument against romanticizing the period before Smith and for attempting to limit Smith's criticism of church and state to his period only.
- ¹⁷⁵ Peter Minowitz, *Profits, Priests, and Princes*, 252-258.
- ¹⁷⁶ Joseph Cropsey, *Polity and Economy* (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine's Press, 1957, 2001): 74.
- ¹⁷⁷ Joseph Cropsey, *Polity and Economy* (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine's Press, 2001): 125.
- ¹⁷⁸ Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Eds. D.D. Raphael and A.L. Macfie (Indianapolis: The Liberty Fund, 1984): 106.
- ¹⁷⁹ Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 237.
- ¹⁸⁰ Cropsey, *Polity and Economy*, 137.
- ¹⁸¹ Adam Smith, *LJA*, 343.
- ¹⁸² Smith, *WN*, I.i.11, 22-24.
- ¹⁸³ Cropsey, *Polity and Economy*, 142-143.
- ¹⁸⁴ Brown, *Adam Smith's Discourse*, 156.
- ¹⁸⁵ For more on the way emotion is shaped and impacted in the contemporary workplace see B.E. Ashforth and R.H. Humphrey, "Emotional Labor in Service Roles: The Influence of Identity," *Academy of Management Review* 18 (1993): 88-115 and Katherine Miller, "The Experience of Emotion in the Workplace: Professing in the Midst of Tragedy," *Management Communication Quarterly* 15 (May 2002): 571-600.
- ¹⁸⁶ Emma Rothschild, *Economic Sentiments* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001): 67-68.

- ¹⁸⁷ Rothschild, *Economic Sentiments*, 68.
- ¹⁸⁸ Rothschild, *Economic Sentiments*, 68.
- ¹⁸⁹ Rothschild, *Economic Sentiments*, 71.
- ¹⁹⁰ Rothschild, *Economic Sentiments*, 156.
- ¹⁹¹ Martha Nussbaum, *Poetic Justice: The Literary Imagination and Public Life* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995): 5-6.
- ¹⁹² Nussbaum, *Poetic Justice*, 21.
- ¹⁹³ Nussbaum, *Poetic Justice*, 23.
- ¹⁹⁴ Nussbaum, *Poetic Justice*, 47.
- ¹⁹⁵ Nussbaum, *Poetic Justice*, 70.
- ¹⁹⁶ Nussbaum, *Poetic Justice*, 72.
- ¹⁹⁷ Nussbaum, *Poetic Justice*, 74.
- ¹⁹⁸ Nussbaum, *Poetic Justice*, 78.
- ¹⁹⁹ Nussbaum, *Poetic Justice*, 90.
- ²⁰⁰ See Deirdre McCloskey, "The Essential Rhetoric of Law, Literature, and Liberty," *Critical Review* (Spring 1991): 203-223.
- ²⁰¹ Bruce E. Gronbeck, "The Status of Sentimental Arguments for Public Policies: The Love-Ins at the 2000 National Party Conventions," in *Arguing Communication & Culture: Selected Papers from the Twelfth NCA/AFA Conference on Argumentation*, ed. G. Thomas Goodnight (Washington, DC: National Communication Association, 2002): 508.
- ²⁰² Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York: Anchor Books, 1999): 17.
- ²⁰³ Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 18.
- ²⁰⁴ Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 92.
- ²⁰⁵ Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 121.
- ²⁰⁶ Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 125-126.
- ²⁰⁷ Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 270.
- ²⁰⁸ See Deirdre McCloskey, *The Rhetoric of Economics*, 2nd Edition (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1998): 26.
- ²⁰⁹ Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 294.

- ²¹⁰ WN, 28-29; see also Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 294-295.
- ²¹¹ Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 295-296.
- ²¹² Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 240.
- ²¹³ See David Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001) and *Abundance for What?* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1993).
- ²¹⁴ Michael Ignatieff, *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001): 3-4.
- ²¹⁵ Ignatieff, *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry*, 13-14.
- ²¹⁶ Ignatieff, *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry*, 20. See also, for example, one case study where rights claims have been taken to their entelechial extension: Robert C. Rowland and David A. Frank, *Shared Land/Conflicting Identity: Trajectories of Israeli and Palestinian Symbol Use* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2002).
- ²¹⁷ Ignatieff, *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry*, 20.
- ²¹⁸ Ignatieff, *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry*, 53.
- ²¹⁹ Ignatieff, *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry*, 80.
- ²²⁰ Ignatieff, *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry*, 95.
- ²²¹ See *Wealth and Virtue: The Shaping of Political Economy in the Scottish Enlightenment*, Ed. Istvan Hont and Michael Ignatieff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983) and Michael Ignatieff, *The Needs of Strangers* (New York: Picador USA, 1984).
- ²²² See R. Brimley Johnson, *Famous Reviews* (Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1967).
- ²²³ See <http://www.econlib.org/library/briefbios.html#walker>; See also Howard Coughlin, "Signs of Whately's Influence in Thoreau's *Walden*," in Richard Whately, *Elements of Rhetoric* (Ann Arbor, MI: Scholar's Facsimiles & Reprints, 2001): 17-24.
- ²²⁴ Salim Rashid, "Richard Whately and Christian Political Economy at Oxford and Dublin," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 38 (1977): 148.
- ²²⁵ See Joseph A. Schumpeter, *History of Economic Analysis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954).
- ²²⁶ See Douglas Ehninger, "Introduction," in Richard Whately, *Elements of Rhetoric*, Ed. Douglas Ehninger (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1963) and Sharon Rogers Quiroz, *Rhetoric and the Conduct of Public Business: A Critical Reading of Works on Rhetoric and Political Economy by Adam Smith, Richard Whately, and Herbert Spencer* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Wayne State University, 1987): 148-149.
- ²²⁷ For more on this controversy, see D.H. Akenson, "The Irish Textbooks Controversy and the Gospel of Free Trade," *Journal of Educational Administration and History* 3 (Dec. 1970): 19-23.

²²⁸ At some point in the twentieth century with the rise of social science research a split occurred in the teaching and study of argumentation, such that typically there are two classes that deal with the subject. At Texas A&M University, for example, historical notions of argumentation as rhetoric and logic are taught in “Argumentation & Debate,” whereas social scientific theories of argumentation are taught in a course entitled “Persuasion.” Whately impacted the former primarily through the widely influential Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1971).

²²⁹ See G. Thomas Goodnight and David B. Hinstman, “Rhetoric and Political Economy at the Aesthetic Nexus: A Study of Archbishop Whately,” in *Rhetorical Agendas: Political, Ethical, Spiritual*, ed. Patricia Bizzell, Lawrence Erlbaum, 2005: *forthcoming*; Erkki Patokorpi, *Rhetoric, Argumentative and Divine: Richard Whately and His Discursive Project of the 1820s* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1996); A.M.C. Waterman, *Revolution, Economics and Religion: Christian Political Economy, 1798-1833* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Karen Whedbee, “Authority, Freedom and Liberal Judgment: The Presumptions and Presumptuousness of Whately, Mill and Tocqueville,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 84 (1998); and Susan Rogers Quiroz, *Rhetoric and the Conduct of Public Business: A Critical Reading of Works on Rhetoric and Political Economy by Adam Smith, Richard Whately, and Herbert Spencer* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Wayne State University, 1987) for some examples of recent work on Whately. Only two aim specifically to connect Whately’s rhetorical theory with his economic theory, and they will be discussed below.

²³⁰ See the only comprehensive biography of Whately, Donald Harman Akenson, *A Protestant in Purgatory: Richard Whately, Archbishop of Dublin* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1981) for more on intellectual influence. See also Raymie E. McKerrow, *Whately’s Theory of Rhetoric* (Ph.D. diss., University of Iowa, 1974).

²³¹ Richard Whately, *Introductory Lectures on Political Economy* (London: B. Fellowes, Ludgate Street, 1832; New York: Augustus M. Kelley, Publishers, 1966): ix.

²³² Rashid, “Richard Whately on Political Economy,” 151.

²³³ Erkki Patokorpi, *Rhetoric, Argumentative and Divine: Richard Whately and His Discursive Project of the 1820s* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1996): 128.

²³⁴ A.M.C. Waterman, *Revolution, Economics and Religion: Christian Political Economy, 1798-1833* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991): 10-11.

²³⁵ Karen Whedbee, “Authority, Freedom and Liberal Judgment: The Presumptions and Presumptuousness of Whately, Mill and Tocqueville,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 84 (1998): 185.

²³⁶ Whedbee, “Authority, Freedom and Liberal Judgment,” 185.

²³⁷ Donald Harman Akenson, *Protestant in Purgatory: Richard Whately, Archbishop of Dublin* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1981).

²³⁸ Whately, *Elements of Rhetoric* (Ann Arbor, MI: Scholar’s Facsimiles & Reprints, 2001): 17.

²³⁹ See especially his criticism in *The Errors of Romanism Traced to their Origin in Human Nature* and Whately’s sermon, “Condition of a Church Militant, A Charge,” delivered 16 June 1863.

²⁴⁰ See G. Thomas Goodnight and David B. Hinstman, "Rhetoric and Political Economy at the Aesthetic Nexus: A Study of Archbishop Whately," in *Rhetorical Agendas: Political, Ethical, Spiritual*, ed. Patricia Bizzell, Lawrence Erlbaum, 2005: *forthcoming*.

²⁴¹ Wayland Maxfield Parrish, "Whately and his Rhetoric," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* XV (February 1929): 58-79.

²⁴² See Howard Coughlin, "Signs of Whately's Influence in Thoreau's *Walden*," in Richard Whately, *Elements of Rhetoric (1846)* (Ann Arbor: Scholar's Facsimiles & Reprints, 2001): 17-24.

²⁴³ I.A. Richards, *Philosophy of Rhetoric* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1936): 3-7.

²⁴⁴ Richards, *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 6-7.

²⁴⁵ See Richard A. Lanham, *The Electronic Word: Democracy, Technology, and the Arts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993) and Richard McKeon, *Rhetoric: Essays in Invention and Discovery*, Ed. Mark Backman (Woodbridge, CO: Oxbow Press, 1987).

²⁴⁶ Richards, *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 8.

²⁴⁷ Whately, *Rhetoric*, 22.

²⁴⁸ Whately, *Rhetoric*, 21.

²⁴⁹ Whately, *Rhetoric*, 21.

²⁵⁰ Whately, *Rhetoric*, 23.

²⁵¹ Whately, *Rhetoric*, 33.

²⁵² Whately, *Rhetoric*, 37; emphasis original.

²⁵³ Whately, *Rhetoric*, 40.

²⁵⁴ Whately, *Rhetoric*, 49.

²⁵⁵ Whately, *Rhetoric*, 228.

²⁵⁶ Whately, *Rhetoric*, 244.

²⁵⁷ This theory has obvious consequences for democracy that are beyond the scope of this essay. However, let us briefly ask what would happen in current public debates if rhetors were more concerned with quality than quantity? We may also ask, how can rhetoricians focus would-be citizen-critics attention to issues of quality in communication? See Rosa A. Eberly, *Citizen Critics: Literary Public Spheres* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000).

²⁵⁸ Whately, *Rhetoric*, 244-245.

²⁵⁹ Whately, *Rhetoric*, 187.

- ²⁶⁰ For more on rhetorical silence, see William F. Harlow, *Thundering Silence: The Rhetorical Reconstruction of George H.W. Bush's Foreign Policy Discourse* (College Station, TX: Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Texas A&M University, 2002).
- ²⁶¹ Whately, *Rhetoric*, 185.
- ²⁶² Whately, *Rhetoric*, 191.
- ²⁶³ McKerrow, *Whately's Theory of Rhetoric*, 370.
- ²⁶⁴ McKerrow, *Whately's Theory of Rhetoric*, 351.
- ²⁶⁵ Richard Whately, "The Judgment of Conscience and Other Sermons," Ed. E. Jane Whately (London: Longman, 1864): 9, as cited in McKerrow, *Whately's Theory of Rhetoric*, 351.
- ²⁶⁶ McKerrow, *Whately's Theory of Rhetoric*, 352-353.
- ²⁶⁷ McKerrow, *Whately's Theory of Rhetoric*, 392.
- ²⁶⁸ McKerrow, *Whately's Theory of Rhetoric*, 393.
- ²⁶⁹ Erkki Patokorpi, *Rhetoric, Argumentative and Divine: Richard Whately and His Discursive Project of the 1820s* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996): 275.
- ²⁷⁰ Patokorpi, *Rhetoric, Argumentative and Divine*, 283.
- ²⁷¹ Patokorpi, *Rhetoric, Argumentative and Divine*, 111.
- ²⁷² Waterman, *Revolution, Economics and Religion*, 10.
- ²⁷³ Richard Whately, *Introductory Lectures on Political Economy* (London: B. Fellowes, 1832): vi-vii.
- ²⁷⁴ Whately, *Lectures on PE*, 83.
- ²⁷⁵ Donald Winch, *Riches and Poverty: An Intellectual History of Political Economy in Britain: 1750-1834* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996): 16.
- ²⁷⁶ Winch, *Riches and Poverty*, 399.
- ²⁷⁷ Whately, *Political Economy*, 26.
- ²⁷⁸ Whately, *Political Economy*, 6.
- ²⁷⁹ Whately, *PE*, 53.
- ²⁸⁰ Whately, *PE*, 59.
- ²⁸¹ Salim Rashid, "Richard Whately and Christian Political Economy at Oxford and Dublin," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 38 (Jan.-Mar. 1977): 152-153.
- ²⁸² Akenson, *Protestant in Purgatory*, 69.

²⁸³ As quoted in Rashid, "Richard Whately," 154. Rashid appends the following note: "Hancock may be exaggerating his former teacher's influence somewhat; still, it is worth pointing out that in the 25 years Whately spent at Oxford he came to know closely Sir Robert Peel, the Earls of Derby, Carlile, and Rosse, Gladstone (later Prime Minister), Bethell (later Lord Chancellor), and Sir Charles Wood."

²⁸⁴ Rashid, "Richard Whately," 150.

²⁸⁵ Waterman, *Revolution, Economics and Religion*, 207-208; see also Whately, *PE*, 30-32.

²⁸⁶ Waterman, *Revolution, Economics and Religion*, 215.

²⁸⁷ Whately, *Lectures on PE*, 32-33.

²⁸⁸ Patokorpi, *Rhetoric, Argumentative and Divine*, 281-282.

²⁸⁹ Waterman, *Revolution, Economics and Religion*, 216.

²⁹⁰ Waterman, *Revolution, Economics and Religion*, 216.

²⁹¹ Waterman, *Revolution, Economics and Religion*, 216.

²⁹² Sharon Rogers Quiroz, *Rhetoric and the Conduct of Public Business: A Critical Reading of Works on Rhetoric and Political Economy by Adam Smith, Richard Whately, and Herbert Spencer* (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Wayne State University, 1987): 72.

²⁹³ Quiroz, *Rhetoric and the Conduct of Public Business*, 155.

²⁹⁴ Whately, *Lectures on PE*, 162-163.

²⁹⁵ Whately, *Lectures on PE*, 163.

²⁹⁶ Quiroz, *Rhetoric and the Conduct of Public Business*, 161.

²⁹⁷ Whately, *Lectures on PE*, 133.

²⁹⁸ Whately, *Lectures on PE*, 173.

²⁹⁹ Whately, *Lectures on PE*, 174.

³⁰⁰ See Peter Berkowitz, *Virtue and the Making of Modern Liberalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

³⁰¹ See David De Giustino, "Finding an Archbishop: The Whigs and Richard Whately in 1831," *Church History* 64 (1995): 225, 227-228.

³⁰² R.D. Black, "Trinity College, Dublin, and the Theory of Value, 1832-1863," *Economica* 12 (Aug. 1945): 140-141.

³⁰³ J.G. Smith, "Some Nineteenth Century Irish Economists," *Economica* (Feb. 1935): 20.

³⁰⁴ Akenson, *Protestant in Purgatory*, 175.

³⁰⁵ For more on this controversy, see D.H. Akenson, “The Irish Textbooks Controversy and the Gospel of Free Trade,” *Journal of Educational Administration and History* 3 (Dec. 1970): 19-23.

³⁰⁶ Donald Harman Akenson, *A Protestant in Purgatory: Richard Whately, Archbishop of Dublin* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1981): 172.

³⁰⁷ Akenson, *Protestant in Purgatory*, 127.

³⁰⁸ Akenson, *Protestant in Purgatory*, 126.

³⁰⁹ This sermon was retrieved by the author from the archives of Lambeth Palace Library, Principal Library and Records Office for the Church of England, London, SE1 7JU, United Kingdom.

³¹⁰ Richard Whately, “Christ’s Example, An Instruction as to the Best Modes of Dispensing Christian Charity,” Delivered for the Benefit of the Relief and Clothing Fund, in Doctor Steevens’ Hospital (Dublin: Milliken and Son, 104, Grafton-Street, Booksellers to the University. B. Fellowes, Ludgate-Street, London, 1835): 5. Emphasis original.

³¹¹ Whately, “Christ’s Example,” 8; see also St. Matthew 14:20; St. Mark 6:43; St. Luke 9:17; and St. John 6:12. (All Biblical quotations herein are from the King James Version.)

³¹² Whately, “Christ’s Example,” 9. Emphasis original.

³¹³ Whatley, “Christ’s Example,” 10-11.

³¹⁴ By the way, this is just the sort of charitable organization that Milton Friedman cites as evidence that his brand of capitalism *does* promote charity, for it was the highpoint of laissez faire capitalism that gave birth to such societies. For the libertarian Christian, it is not just a matter of whether the poor receive aid, it is how they receive that aid. Namely, aid is only charitable in the sense of representing the pure love of Christ if it comes by free will and not in the form of a transfer payment. See *Capitalism and Freedom*, 190.

³¹⁵ Whately, “Christ’s Example,” 15.

³¹⁶ Whately, “Christ’s Example,” 25.

³¹⁷ Whately, “Christ’s Example,” 19.

³¹⁸ Whately, “Christ’s Example,” 22.

³¹⁹ Whately, “Christ’s Example,” 28-29.

³²⁰ Whately, “Christ’s Example,” 29-30.

³²¹ Akenson, *A Protestant in Purgatory*, 177.

³²² Akenson, *A Protestant in Purgatory*, 179.

³²³ Whately, *Easy Lessons on Money Matters* (London: John W. Parker, West Strand, 1836): viii.

³²⁴ Whately, *Easy Lessons on Money Matters*, xi.

- ³²⁵ Whately, *Easy Lessons on Money Matters*, 21.
- ³²⁶ Whately, *Easy Lessons on Money Matters*, 27.
- ³²⁷ Whately, *Easy Lessons on Money Matters*, 33.
- ³²⁸ Whately, *Easy Lessons on Money Matters*, 44.
- ³²⁹ Whately, *Easy Lessons on Money Matters*, 47.
- ³³⁰ Whately, *Easy Lessons on Money Matters*, 49.
- ³³¹ Whately, *Easy Lessons on Money Matters*, 50.
- ³³² Whately, *Easy Lessons on Money Matters*, 51.
- ³³³ Richard Whately, *The Christian Duty of Educating the Poor; A Discourse Delivered in St. Patrick's Cathedral, 24th November 1844* (Dublin: Wm. Curry, Jun., and Co., 1845): 19-20.
- ³³⁴ Whately, *Christian Duty of Educating*, 8-9.
- ³³⁵ Whately, *Christian Duty of Educating*, 9.
- ³³⁶ Akenson, *A Protestant in Purgatory*, 139.
- ³³⁷ Akenson, *A Protestant in Purgatory*, 140.
- ³³⁸ Akenson, *A Protestant in Purgatory*, 140.
- ³³⁹ Hansard, LXXIX, 657 as quoted in Edward R. Norman, *Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1968): 29. See also Anthony S. Wohl, "The Maynooth Grant," at the Victorian Web: Literature, History & Culture in the Age of Victoria: http://www.victorianweb.org/religion/Maynooth_Grant.html
- ³⁴⁰ *A History of the Thirty Years' Peace* (1878): 247 as quoted in Norman, *Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England*, 23.
- ³⁴¹ Richard Whately, "Reflections on a Grant to a Roman Catholic Seminary, 26 June, 1845; Comprising the Substance of a Speech Delivered in the House of Lords, 3 June 1845" (London: B. Fellowes, 1845): 9-10.
- ³⁴² Whately, "Reflections on a Grant," 14.
- ³⁴³ Whately, "Reflections on a Grant," 16.
- ³⁴⁴ Whately, "Reflections on a Grant," 31-32.
- ³⁴⁵ Whately, "Reflections on a Grant," 46-47.
- ³⁴⁶ Akenson, *A Protestant in Purgatory*, 141.

- ³⁴⁷ Wohl, "The Maynooth Grant," http://www.victorianweb.org/religion/Maynooth_Grant.html
- ³⁴⁸ Michael Novak, *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* (New York: Madison Books, 1991): 311.
- ³⁴⁹ Novak, *Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*, 335.
- ³⁵⁰ Novak, *Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*, 344.
- ³⁵¹ Novak, *Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*, 346.
- ³⁵² Novak, *Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*, 347.
- ³⁵³ Novak, *Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*, 347.
- ³⁵⁴ Novak, *Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*, 349.
- ³⁵⁵ Novak, *Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*, 357.
- ³⁵⁶ Richard Whately, *The Use and Abuse of Party-Feeling in Matters of Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1822): 273.
- ³⁵⁷ John Gray, "John Stuart Mill: Traditional and Revisionist Interpretations," *Literature of Liberty*, vol. II, no. 2, (April-June, 1979); republished <http://www.econlib.org/library/Essays/LtrLbrty/gryMTR1.html> with permission.
- ³⁵⁸ Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams* (New York: The Modern Library, 1999): 72.
- ³⁵⁹ Alan Ryan, "John Stuart Mill's Art of Living," in *J.S. Mill On Liberty in Focus*, Ed. John Gray and G.W. Smith (London: Routledge, 1991): 168.
- ³⁶⁰ Donald N. Levine, *Visions of the Sociological Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995): 141.
- ³⁶¹ *A System of Logic*, CW, VIII, Bk. VI, Ch. vii, sec. 1,
- ³⁶² John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, CW, X, 210.
- ³⁶³ See David Gore, "The Rhetoric of Happiness in Joseph Smith and John Stuart Mill," in *Rhetorical Agendas: Political, Ethical, Spiritual*, ed. Patricia Bizzell, Lawrence Erlbaum, 2005: *forthcoming*.
- ³⁶⁴ Isaiah Berlin, "John Stuart Mill and the Ends of Life," in *Liberty*, Ed. Henry Hardy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002): 242.
- ³⁶⁵ See John N. Gray, "John Stuart Mill: Traditional and Revisionist Interpretations," *Literature of Liberty* (April-June 1979): <http://www.econlib.org/library/Essays/LtrLbrty/gryMTR.html>
- ³⁶⁶ John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography* (New York: Penguin Books, 1989): 32.
- ³⁶⁷ See for example, Alan G. Gross, *The Rhetoric of Science* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996).

- ³⁶⁸ John F. Tinkler, "J.S. Mill as a Nineteenth-Century Humanist," *Rhetorica* (Spring 1992): 168-169. See also John M. Robson, "The Rhetoric of J.S. Mill's Periodical Articles," *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter* 10 (1977): 122-129.
- ³⁶⁹ Tinkler, "Nineteenth-Century Humanist," 170.
- ³⁷⁰ *Autobiography*, *CW* 1: 85.
- ³⁷¹ Tinkler, "J.S. Mill as Humanist," 182.
- ³⁷² Tinkler, "J.S. Mill as Humanist," 183.
- ³⁷³ Tinkler, "J.S. Mill as Humanist," 182.
- ³⁷⁴ Tinkler, "J.S. Mill as Humanist," 186.
- ³⁷⁵ Wilbur Samuel Howell, *Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1500-1700* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1961): 4.
- ³⁷⁶ Wilbur Samuel Howell, *Eighteenth-Century British Logic and Rhetoric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971): 704-705.
- ³⁷⁷ "Thoughts on Poetry and its Varieties," *CW*, 1: 349. See also Hoyt H. Hudson, "Rhetoric and Poetry," *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education* 10 (1924): 144.
- ³⁷⁸ "Thoughts on Poetry and its Varieties," *CW*, I, 349.
- ³⁷⁹ Some of the ideas in this section are related to the author's chapter, "The Spiritual and Secular Rhetoric of Happiness in Joseph Smith and John Stuart Mill," in *Rhetorical Agendas: Political, Ethical, Spiritual*, ed. Patricia Bizzell, Lawrence Erlbaum, 2005: *forthcoming*.
- ³⁸⁰ *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 137.
- ³⁸¹ *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 139.
- ³⁸² *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 142.
- ³⁸³ *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 144.
- ³⁸⁴ *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 150.
- ³⁸⁵ These questions and portions of this section are adapted from James Burk's lectures in Classical Sociological Theory, Texas A&M University, September 11 and September 18, 2001.
- ³⁸⁶ Alan Ryan, "John Stuart Mill's Art of Living," in *J.S. Mill on Liberty in Focus*, Ed. John Gray and G.W. Smith (London: Routledge, 1991): 164.
- ³⁸⁷ Ryan, "Art of Living," 165.
- ³⁸⁸ Ryan, "Art of Living," 166.

- ³⁸⁹ Karen Elizabeth Whedbee, *John Stuart Mill's Theory of Practical Argument and Political Advocacy* (Madison: Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1993): iii-iv.
- ³⁹⁰ *Utilitarianism*, CW, X: 239. Whedbee, *Mill's Theory of Practical Argument*, 215.
- ³⁹¹ Whedbee, *Mill's Theory of Practical Argument*, 223.
- ³⁹² *Utilitarianism*, CW, X: 239.
- ³⁹³ See John Stuart Mill, *Three Essays on Religion* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1998): 109.
- ³⁹⁴ Peter Berkowitz, *Virtue and the Making of Modern Liberalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999): 159.
- ³⁹⁵ John Stuart Mill, *The Subjection of Women* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1988): 47.
- ³⁹⁶ Berkowitz, *Virtue and Modern Liberalism*, 168-169.
- ³⁹⁷ "Plato's *Gorgias*," CW, XI: 24.
- ³⁹⁸ Levine, *Visions of the Sociological Tradition*, 149.
- ³⁹⁹ Whedbee, *Mill's Theory of Practical Argument*, 229.
- ⁴⁰⁰ Whedbee, *Mill's Theory of Practical Argument*, 244.
- ⁴⁰¹ Whedbee, *Mill's Theory of Practical Argument*, 271.
- ⁴⁰² Whedbee, *Mill's Theory of Practical Argument*, 299-300.
- ⁴⁰³ John Stuart Mill, *Collected Works*, XII, Ed. John M. Robson and Francis E. Mineka (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962): 211. *Collected Works* hereinafter CW followed by volume and page number.
- ⁴⁰⁴ "On the Definition of Political Economy," CW, IV, 310.
- ⁴⁰⁵ "On the Definition of Political Economy," CW, IV, 310.
- ⁴⁰⁶ "On the Definition of Political Economy," CW, IV, 310.
- ⁴⁰⁷ "On the Definition of Political Economy," CW, IV, 310.
- ⁴⁰⁸ "On the Definition of Political Economy," CW, IV, 311.
- ⁴⁰⁹ "On the Definition of Political Economy," CW, IV, 312.
- ⁴¹⁰ "On the Definition of Political Economy," CW, IV, 312.
- ⁴¹¹ Karen Elizabeth Whedbee, *John Stuart Mill's Theory of Practical Argument and Political Advocacy* (Madison: Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, 1993): 47.
- ⁴¹² *A System of Logic*, CW, VIII, bk. VI, ch. xii, sec. 2, pp.944-945.

- ⁴¹³ “On the Definition of Political Economy,” *CW*, IV, 315.
- ⁴¹⁴ “On the Definition of Political Economy,” *CW*, IV, 315.
- ⁴¹⁵ “On the Definition of Political Economy,” *CW*, IV, 318.
- ⁴¹⁶ “On the Definition of Political Economy,” *CW*, IV, 322.
- ⁴¹⁷ “On the Definition of Political Economy,” *CW*, IV, 323.
- ⁴¹⁸ “On the Definition of Political Economy,” *CW*, IV, 323.
- ⁴¹⁹ “On the Definition of Political Economy,” *CW*, IV, 324.
- ⁴²⁰ “On the Definition of Political Economy,” *CW*, IV, 326.
- ⁴²¹ “On the Definition of Political Economy,” *CW*, IV, 332.
- ⁴²² “On the Definition of Political Economy,” *CW*, IV, 333.
- ⁴²³ *Principles of Political Economy*, *CW*, II, Book II, Ch. I, sec. 3, 208.
- ⁴²⁴ *Principles of Political Economy*, *CW*, II, Book II, Ch. I, sec. 3, 209.
- ⁴²⁵ *Principles of Political Economy*, *CW*, II, Book II, Ch. I, sec. 4, 226.
- ⁴²⁶ *Principles of Political Economy*, *CW*, II, Book II, Ch. I, sec. 4, 226.
- ⁴²⁷ *Principles of Political Economy*, *CW*, II, Book II, Ch. I, sec. 4, 228.
- ⁴²⁸ An interesting footnote here is the realization that Mill’s system of rights is much weaker in degree compared to that which we see presently. He cannot conceive of liberty or individual rights without concession to Utilitarianism, even in his enlightened sense because liberty is subsumed within Utility. Hence, it can be said that Mill’s defense of rights is not absolute, but always qualified by Utilitarianism. Though his defense of rights may not be weak, it is also nevertheless never absolute.
- ⁴²⁹ *Principles of Political Economy*, *CW*, III, Book IV, Ch. VI, sec. 2, 748.
- ⁴³⁰ *Principles of Political Economy*, *CW*, III, Book IV, Ch. VI, sec. 2, 748-749.
- ⁴³¹ *Principles of Political Economy*, *CW*, III, Book IV, Ch. VI, sec. 2, 749.
- ⁴³² *Principles of Political Economy*, *CW*, III, Book IV, Ch. VI, sec. 2, 750.
- ⁴³³ *Principles of Political Economy*, *CW*, III, Book IV, Ch. VI, sec. 2, 751.
- ⁴³⁴ *Principles of Political Economy*, *CW*, III, Book V, Ch. XI, sec. 3, 945.
- ⁴³⁵ *Principles of Political Economy*, *CW*, III, Book V, Ch. XI, sec. 3, 945.

- ⁴³⁶ *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, III, Book V, Ch. XI, sec. 5, 947.
- ⁴³⁷ *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, III, Book V, Ch. XI, sec. 6, 948.
- ⁴³⁸ *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, III, Book V, Ch. XI, sec. 6, 948.
- ⁴³⁹ *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, III, Book V, Ch. XI, sec. 7, 952.
- ⁴⁴⁰ *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, III, Book V, Ch. XI, sec. 7, 950.
- ⁴⁴¹ *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, III, Book IV, Ch. VII, sec. 2, 757.
- ⁴⁴² *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, III, Book IV, Ch. XI, sec. 8, 953.
- ⁴⁴³ *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, III, Book IV, Ch. XI, sec. 8, 954.
- ⁴⁴⁴ *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, III, Book IV, Ch. XI, sec. 8, 955.
- ⁴⁴⁵ *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, III, Book IV, Ch. XI, sec. 8, 955.
- ⁴⁴⁶ *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, III, Book IV, Ch. XI, sec. 8, 956.
- ⁴⁴⁷ *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, III, Book IV, Ch. XI, sec. 9, 956.
- ⁴⁴⁸ *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, III, Book IV, Ch. XI, sec. 9, 958.
- ⁴⁴⁹ *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, III, Book IV, Ch. XI, sec. 12, 964.
- ⁴⁵⁰ *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, III, Book IV, Ch. XI, sec. 13, 967.
- ⁴⁵¹ *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, III, Book IV, Ch. XI, sec. 13, 967.
- ⁴⁵² *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, III, Book IV, Ch. XI, sec. 13, 968.
- ⁴⁵³ *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, III, Book IV, Ch. XI, sec. 16, 978.
- ⁴⁵⁴ Which seem to be the effect of the arguments by example in, for example, David Friedman, "Market Failure: Why We Are Not All Happy, Wealthy, Wise, and Married," in David Friedman, *Hidden Order: The Economics of Everyday Life* (New York: Harper Collins, 1996): 260-278.
- ⁴⁵⁵ Emphasis original.
- ⁴⁵⁶ William James, *Pragmatism* in *William James: Writings 1902-1910* (New York: Library of America, 1987): 510; emphasis original.
- ⁴⁵⁷ James, *Pragmatism*, 516.
- ⁴⁵⁸ James, *Pragmatism*, 510.
- ⁴⁵⁹ See David O. Brink, "Mill's Deliberative Utilitarianism," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 21 (Winter 1992): 67-103.

- ⁴⁶⁰ John Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct* in *The Essential John Dewey*, vol. 2, Ed. Larry A. Hickman and Thomas M. Alexander (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998): 36.
- ⁴⁶¹ John Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, 36.
- ⁴⁶² Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, 325.
- ⁴⁶³ John Dewey, *Ethics* in *The Essential John Dewey*, vol. 2, Ed. Larry A. Hickman and Thomas M. Alexander (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998): 343.
- ⁴⁶⁴ See Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and Social Hope* (New York: Penguin Books, 1999): 17, 120.
- ⁴⁶⁵ Rorty, *Philosophy and Social Hope*, 154, 235.
- ⁴⁶⁶ Rorty, "Religious Faith, Intellectual Responsibility and Romance," in *Philosophy and Social Hope*, 148.
- ⁴⁶⁷ Rorty, "Afterword: Pragmatism, Pluralism and Postmodernism," in *Philosophy and Social Hope*, 268.
- ⁴⁶⁸ Rorty, "Afterword: Pragmatism, Pluralism and Postmodernism," in *Philosophy and Social Hope*, 267.
- ⁴⁶⁹ Rorty, "Afterword: Pragmatism, Pluralism and Postmodernism," in *Philosophy and Social Hope*, 267.
- ⁴⁷⁰ Rorty, "Afterword: Pragmatism, Pluralism and Postmodernism," in *Philosophy and Social Hope*, 268.
- ⁴⁷¹ Rorty, "Afterword: Pragmatism, Pluralism and Postmodernism," in *Philosophy and Social Hope*, 268.
- ⁴⁷² Richard Rorty, "Looking Backwards from the Year 2096," in *Philosophy and Social Hope*, 243-251.
- ⁴⁷³ Peter J. Hammond, "Utilitarianism, Uncertainty, and Information," in *Utilitarianism and Beyond*, Ed. Amartya Sen and Bernard Williams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991): 85.
- ⁴⁷⁴ *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, III, Book V, Ch. XI, sec. 2, 943.
- ⁴⁷⁵ Public Choice and Rational Choice Theory are virtually synonymous. See James Arnt Aune, *Selling the Free Market: The Rhetoric of Economic Correctness* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2001).
- ⁴⁷⁶ Aune, *Selling the Free Market*, 22.
- ⁴⁷⁷ James Buchanan (with Gordon Tullock), *The Collected Works of James M. Buchanan (Volume 3): The Calculus of Consent: Logical Foundation of Constitutional Democracy* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1999): paragraph 6. Available at <http://www.econlib.org/library/Buchanan/buchCv3c0.html#Preface>
- ⁴⁷⁸ Buchanan, *Calculus of Consent*, paragraph 6.
- ⁴⁷⁹ *Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: Gramercy Books, 1989): 209-210.
- ⁴⁸⁰ Buchanan, *Calculus of Consent*, Ch. 1, paragraph 10.
- ⁴⁸¹ Buchanan, *Calculus of Consent*, Ch. 1, paragraph 17.

- ⁴⁸² Buchanan, *Calculus of Consent*, Ch. 3, paragraph 8.
- ⁴⁸³ Buchanan, *Calculus of Consent*, Ch. 3, paragraph 4.
- ⁴⁸⁴ Buchanan, *Calculus of Consent*, Ch. 3, paragraph 26.
- ⁴⁸⁵ James M. Buchanan, "The Related but Distinct "Sciences" of Economics and Political Economy," in *The Collected Works of James M. Buchanan (Volume 17): Moral Science and Moral Order* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2001): 54.
- ⁴⁸⁶ Buchanan, "Related but Distinct Sciences," 43.
- ⁴⁸⁷ Deirdre N. McCloskey, "The Essential Rhetoric of Law, Literature, and Liberty," *Critical Review* (Spring 1991): 209.
- ⁴⁸⁸ Aune, *Selling the Free Market*, 24.
- ⁴⁸⁹ See Robert Hariman, *Political Style* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).
- ⁴⁹⁰ Mill, *Three Essays on Religion*, 103.
- ⁴⁹¹ Deirdre N. McCloskey, "Bourgeois Virtue," *The American Scholar* 63 (Spring 1994b): 177-191.
- ⁴⁹² Among many great works by both scholars, see especially Jacques Barzun, *From Dawn to Decadence: 500 Years of Western Cultural Life, 1500 to the Present* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2000) and Jane Jacobs, *Dark Age Ahead* (New York: Random House, 2004).
- ⁴⁹³ Barzun, *From Dawn to Decadence*, 800-801.
- ⁴⁹⁴ See De Giustino.
- ⁴⁹⁵ Michael Novak, "Afterword for the 1991 Edition," *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* (New York: Madison Books, 1991): 418.
- ⁴⁹⁶ John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996): 87.
- ⁴⁹⁷ Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, 75.
- ⁴⁹⁸ Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, 30.
- ⁴⁹⁹ Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, 30.
- ⁵⁰⁰ Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, 30-31.
- ⁵⁰¹ Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, 31.
- ⁵⁰² Peter Berkowitz, *Virtue and the Making of Modern Liberalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999). See also criticism of Rawls' liberalism in the form of a communitarian vision in Michael J. Sandel, *Democracy's Discontent: America In Search of a Public Philosophy* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996) and *Debating Democracy's Discontent: Essays on American Politics, Law, and Public Philosophy*, Ed. Anita L. Allen and Milton C. Regan, Jr. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

- ⁵⁰³ Berkowitz, *Virtue and the Making of Modern Liberalism*, 187.
- ⁵⁰⁴ Berkowitz, *Virtue and the Making of Modern Liberalism*, 188.
- ⁵⁰⁵ Deirdre N. McCloskey, "Bourgeois Virtue," *The American Scholar* 63 (Spring 1994b): 177-191.
- ⁵⁰⁶ McCloskey, "Bourgeois Virtue," 178.
- ⁵⁰⁷ McCloskey, "Bourgeois Virtue," 183-184.
- ⁵⁰⁸ McCloskey, "Bourgeois Virtue," 187.
- ⁵⁰⁹ McCloskey, "Bourgeois Virtue," 179.
- ⁵¹⁰ See Deirdre McCloskey, *Crossing: A Memoir* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1999).
- ⁵¹¹ See especially McCloskey, *Crossing*, 250-254.
- ⁵¹² See McCloskey, "Bourgeois Virtue."
- ⁵¹³ McCloskey, *Crossing*, 264.
- ⁵¹⁴ Deirdre N. McCloskey, *The Vices of Economists – The Virtues of the Bourgeoisie* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996): 126.
- ⁵¹⁵ Augustine, *The Confessions of St. Augustine*, trans. E.B. Pusey (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1999): 290.
- ⁵¹⁶ McCloskey, *Vices of Economists – Virtues of the Bourgeoisie*, 126.
- ⁵¹⁷ See Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* and Deirdre McCloskey, "Capital Gains: How Economic Growth Benefits the World," *Christian Century* (May 4, 2004): 24-30.
- ⁵¹⁸ McCloskey, *Vices of Economists – Virtues of the Bourgeoisie*, 129.
- ⁵¹⁹ McCloskey, *Vices of Economists – Virtues of the Bourgeoisie*, 130.
- ⁵²⁰ The deleted sections of this quote show that McCloskey is agreeing with the arguments of Robert Nelson, for whom he is writing a foreword: Deirdre N. McCloskey, "Foreword," in Robert H. Nelson, *Reaching for Heaven on Earth: The Theological Meaning of Economics* (Savage, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1991): xiii-xiv.
- ⁵²¹ McCloskey, "Foreword," *Reaching for Heaven*, xv-xvi.
- ⁵²² McCloskey, "Foreword," *Reaching for Heaven*, xvii.
- ⁵²³ McCloskey, *Crossing*, 264; See also McCloskey, "Bourgeois Virtue," and *The Vices of Economists – The Virtues of the Bourgeoisie*.
- ⁵²⁴ Deirdre McCloskey, "Capital Gains: How Economic Growth Benefits the World," *Christian Century* (May 4, 2004): 24.

- ⁵²⁵ McCloskey, "Capital Gains," 27-29.
- ⁵²⁶ McCloskey, "Capital Gains," 29.
- ⁵²⁷ McCloskey, "Capital Gains," 30.
- ⁵²⁸ See Deirdre McCloskey, "Avarice, Prudence, and the Bourgeois Virtues," in *Having: Property and Possession in Religious and Social Life*, Ed. William Schweiker and Charles Mathewes (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004): 312-336.
- ⁵²⁹ Frank H. Knight, "The Ethics of Competition," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 37 (Aug. 1923): 620.
- ⁵³⁰ Knight, "Ethics of Competition," 620.
- ⁵³¹ Knight, "Ethics of Competition," 621.
- ⁵³² Knight, "Ethics of Competition," 622.
- ⁵³³ Frank H. Knight and Thornton W. Merriam, *The Economic Order and Religion* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1945): 24.
- ⁵³⁴ Knight and Merriam, *Economic Order and Religion*, 31.
- ⁵³⁵ Knight and Merriam, *Economic Order and Religion*, 142-143.
- ⁵³⁶ James Darsey, *The Prophetic Tradition and Radical Rhetoric in America* (New York: New York University Press, 1997): 20-23.
- ⁵³⁷ See *Reynolds v. United States* 98 U.S. 145 (1879); *Sherbert v. Verner* 374 U.S. 398 (1963); *Wisconsin v. Yoder* 406 U.S. 205 (1972).
- ⁵³⁸ Hugh Nibley, "Tenting, Toll, and Taxing," *Western Political Quarterly* 19 (Dec. 1966): 630.
- ⁵³⁹ For more background on the meaning and debate concerning the role of republicanism relative to liberalism see Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic 1776-1787* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969); Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967); J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975); and Richard H. Fallon, Jr., "What is Republicanism and Is It Worth Reviving?" *Harvard Law Review* 102 (1989): 1695-1735.
- ⁵⁴⁰ See anything by Deirdre McCloskey or James Aune, and Robert Kuttner, *Everything For Sale: The Virtues and Limits of Markets* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).
- ⁵⁴¹ See Robert Nisbet, "Rousseau & Equality," and Judith N. Shklar, "Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Equality," in *Rousseau's Political Writings*, Ed. Alan Ritter and Julia Conaway Bondanella (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1988): 244-260; 260-274.
- ⁵⁴² Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract* in *Rousseau's Political Writings*, Ed. Alan Ritter and Julia Conaway Bondanella (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1988): 92.

- ⁵⁴³ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 93.
- ⁵⁴⁴ Rousseau, "Discourse on Political Economy," in *Rousseau's Political Writings*, Ed. Alan Ritter and Julia Conaway Bondanella (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1988): 78.
- ⁵⁴⁵ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 139.
- ⁵⁴⁶ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 143.
- ⁵⁴⁷ Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 143.
- ⁵⁴⁸ Adam Smith, *Essays on Philosophical Subjects*, Ed. W.P.D. Wightman and J.C. Bryce (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1982a): 250-251.
- ⁵⁴⁹ Whately, *Introductory Lectures on Political Economy*, 255.
- ⁵⁵⁰ Michael Schudson, *The Good Citizen* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998): 290. See also Charles R. Epp, *The Rights Revolution: Lawyers, Activists, and Supreme Courts in Comparative Perspective* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1998) and Mary Ann Glendon, *Rights Talk: The Impoverishment of Political Discourse* (New York: The Free Press, 1991).
- ⁵⁵¹ Schudson, *The Good Citizen*, 292.
- ⁵⁵² Sheldon Wolin, *Politics and Vision* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1960): 130.
- ⁵⁵³ Wolin, *Politics and Vision*, 133.
- ⁵⁵⁴ See Jerry Z. Muller, *The Mind and the Market: Capitalism in Modern European Thought* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002): 61.
- ⁵⁵⁵ Wolin, *Politics and Vision*, 434.
- ⁵⁵⁶ Wolin, *Politics and Vision*, 434.
- ⁵⁵⁷ Barzun, *From Dawn to Decadence*, 801.
- ⁵⁵⁸ White, *When Words Lose Their Meaning*, 278.

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