Combating Racialized and Gendered Ignorance: Theorizing a Transactional Pedagogy of Friendship

Philip Olson, Laura Gillman

➡ For additional information about this article

Combating Racialized and Gendered Ignorance: Theorizing a Transactional Pedagogy of Friendship

Philip Olson and Laura Gillman

The article explores the problem of epistemological ignorance. Drawing on the literature of feminist epistemology, in particular the epistemologies of ignorance, it theorizes white ignorance and male ignorance and how it is possible to gain consciousness about one's ignorance, as well as how to be responsible for what one does not know. The article explores ignorance as unconscious habits that inform our mental schemas, our social interactions, and our physicality. It identifies and analyzes these habits of ignorance, drawing on our experiences as team teachers (one a philosophy professor, and the other a professor of women's studies and literary studies) who co-taught an interdisciplinary doctoral seminar in feminist epistemology. It describes and illustrates the pedagogical and scholarly processes that led us to view epistemology as a practice of inquiry that combats ignorance by demanding an inclusive partnership across traditional and counterhegemonic approaches to knowledge. The article claims that a transactional pedagogy of friendship makes possible the disruption and rehabituation of epistemic habits of ignorance, moving inquirers in the direction of more inclusive, reliable, and responsible knowledge.

Keywords: epistemologies of ignorance / feminist epistemology / friendship / interdisciplinary team-teaching / separatism / transactional pedagogy

Introduction

In the introduction to *Feminist Epistemologies* (1993), Linda M. Alcoff and Elizabeth Potter note that in its initial stages, feminist epistemology was

perceived as an oxymoron (1–3). With its emphasis on the contextual nature of knowledge and the significance of the status of knowers in the production of knowledge, feminist epistemology could not fit with classic epistemology's universalist account of knowledge, nor with its a priori methods and standards for justifying knowledge. Indeed, feminist epistemology's deconstructions and reconstructions of traditional accounts of reason and objectivity were perceived within the ranks of classic epistemology as dangerous (Code 1998). Happily, however, thanks to its assiduous critical engagement with classic epistemology and other philosophical subfields, including ethics and political philosophy, as well as with fields pertaining to the humanities and social sciences, feminist epistemology has since evolved into a full-fledged research program.

The co-authors of this article, one a white male professor of epistemology and ethics (Philip Olson) and the other a white female professor of literary studies and women's and gender studies (Laura Gillman), have also engaged critically with these intersecting traditions in the process of co-teaching an interdisciplinary doctoral seminar in feminist epistemology.[1] Without giving up on objectivity as an epistemic ideal, we found ourselves using as an epistemic and pedagogical resource a theme that, in her Introduction to *Engendering Rationalities* (2001), Nancy Tuana highlights as specific to feminist epistemological studies: "affective connection as a source of understanding" (7). We suggest in this article that a transactional pedagogy of friendship, one that this collaborative team came to implement, can be used as a practice of inquiry that reveals the interconnectedness of epistemic, moral, and political values; demands reciprocal engagement of traditional analytic models and counterhegemonic approaches (feminist philosophy, Africana philosophy); exposes how philosophical inquiry functions to produce and maintain racial and gender hierarchies and, in doing so, produces false knowledge about the social world; and facilitates interactions that can lead to reliable and responsible inquiry—that is, to an objective knowledge informed fundamentally by social and moral values.

In this article, we focus on the teacher/teacher, rather than on the teacher/student relationship. While interdisciplinary team-teaching has become commonplace in higher education, little attention has been given to the unique epistemological and pedagogical dynamics in team-teaching environments. Team-teaching offers distinctive opportunities (and challenges) for students and teachers alike, and attention to the relationship between faculty peers is crucial for increasing the effectiveness of teaching and learning. At the same time, we wish to go further to examine the possibilities of a more complex teacher/teacher relationship, one based on friendship, as a jumping-off point for increasing our knowledge and combating our ignorance. A more empathetic and interdependent connection than that suggested by "team teachers" or "fellow faculty members," interactions based on friendship, we came to discover, were necessary for bringing to consciousness the mechanisms through which traditional epistemological practices unwittingly reproduce white privilege within women's

studies, and gender and race privilege within classic epistemology. In this regard, our attempts to theorize a transactional pedagogy of friendship, based on our own interactions, advance strategies developed in an innovative body of work on epistemologies of ignorance (Sullivan and Tuana 2007; Tuana and Sullivan 2006). This work does not view ignorance as a mere lack of knowledge, but rather as a positive and substantive knowledge practice deeply implicated with race, class, and gender identities, ideologies, and social structures—that is, with cognitive realities of a supra-individual kind (Mills 2007, 14). As we acknowledged the impossibility of accounting for what is known without also understanding the prevailing epistemic practices that account for not knowing, we began to develop a particular type of pedagogy of friendship—what we call "transactional pedagogy"—that sought to combat epistemological ignorance and to recognize the value of friendship as a self-reflective ideal worth striving for in epistemological practice and interdisciplinary team-teaching.

Drawing from the recent work of Shannon Sullivan (2006) on transactional notions of the self, we define a transactional pedagogy of friendship as one that exposes and explains the ways in which unconscious habits of social power or powerlessness become deeply ingrained in the bodies and psyches of individuals in their co-constitutive transactions with their social and natural environments. We also take into account how individuals, in their self-recognition as members of a particular social group, become responsible for their unconscious habits. We present here our transactional practices with an aim to destabilize value-laden, ontological habits that function both consciously and unconsciously within epistemological processes to justify and enforce disparities in power.

In section 2, we provide an account of Sullivan's concept of transaction and how it relates to the literature on the epistemology of ignorance.[2] We offer our own reconceptualization of transactional relationships to include transactional friendship as a way to combat ignorance. In section 3, we identify "atomism" and "assimilation" as forms of transactional relationship based on *unfriendly* habitual interactions that invoke and reproduce hegemonic practices of ignorance that reproduce patterns of behavior based on domination and subordination.[3] We illustrate how our own habits, informed by and reproducing atomism (a turning away from the other or each other) and assimilation (the act of the more dominant person forcing the less powerful to turn to the other and the other's knowledge), resulted in ignorance. In section 4, we discuss the motivational and dialogical process by which our transactions became friendlier as a result of our progress along the continuum from ignorance to transactional knowing. We examine the value of "separatism" as an epistemic ideal that acknowledges the need for the interdependence and independence of diversely situated knowers and their meaning-making systems, in order to eliminate interactions based on dominance and subjugation. Finally, in section 5, we offer a model for a transactional pedagogy of friendship that encourages transactions by which knowers become responsible to one another, and responsible for their own ignorance.

Epistemologies of Ignorance and the
Transactional Pedagogy of Friendship

The epistemology of ignorance has garnered increased attention in the last decade, largely through the work of scholars concerned with the ways in which social identities influence epistemic practices, as well as with the theories of knowledge that describe those practices and prescribe epistemic norms. In "Epistemologies of Ignorance: Three Types" (2007), Alcoff argues that epistemologists have begun to view ignorance not simply as "*neglectful* epistemic practice," but as "a *substantive* epistemic practice in itself" (39).[4] Alcoff notes that whereas Lorraine Code's early work rightly viewed ignorance as an inevitable product of the partial perspectives of individual knowers, Sandra Harding deepened the analysis by explaining how partial perspectives are structured around features of *groups* of knowers who share an epistemic location (40). Alcoff points out that while these scholars focus on the valuable though ignored perspectives of the epistemically disenfranchised, Charles Mills scrutinizes "the *specific* knowing practices inculcated in a socially dominant group" (47).

According to Mills, whites are *positively motivated* to remain ignorant of the injustices of social reality that invent and nourish white privilege. By denying the relational construction of white identity, white privilege "naturalizes" and "dehistoricizes" itself (Alcoff 2007, 56). But once we recognize liberal individualism's historical and political genealogy, we can no longer conceive of it as a timeless and universal reality. Mills further contends that Quinean naturalism, basing its norms on actual practices of cognition, has effectively challenged analytic epistemology's presumption of individualism, obliging us to not ignore or suppress "cognitive realities of a *supra*-individual kind" (Mills 2007, 14).

Following Mills, Sullivan points out in *Revealing Whiteness: The Unconscious Habits of Racial Privilege* (2006) that white privilege conceals itself behind a veil of color-blindness, actively though unconsciously passing off as neutral or objective its own group-based perspectives and practices. What Sullivan calls "white privileged ignorance" is not a naïve, unintentional ignorance that in principle could be overcome by addressing deficiencies in well-meaning whites' knowledge about the lives of nonwhites, but a powerfully motivated deliberate ignorance that "benefits and supports the domination of white people" (18). Acknowledgment of how white male cognizers' group-based practices have influenced epistemological theory and practice should motivate a shift away from the individualistic presumption that has dominated most analytical epistemology. But, as we would learn from our seminar discussions of Mariana Ortega's (2006) and Maria Lugones's (1996) work, the obfuscation of dominant group–based perspectives and practices has "invisibly" guided work *within* feminism too.

So, how can such forms of actively veiled ignorance be overcome? If Mills (2007) is right that "[w]hite ignorance is best understood as a cognitive tendency—an inclination, a doxastic disposition—which is not insuperable" (23)

and if Sullivan is correct that the *character* of white privilege is a fabric woven of interpenetrating habits, then perhaps they are best corrected for through processes of rehabituation. If aversive racism and sexism are primarily formed by structural features of the social environment, then Sullivan may be right to suspect that the unconscious habits of white privilege cannot be overcome through conscious reflection and argumentation alone.

If the habits of white and male privilege are, in part, constituted by their positive motivation to conceal themselves, and if rational argumentation alone is impotent to overcome self-concealing habits of ignorance, then what are we to do? We propose that the cultivation of friendship can motivate and guide a noncoercive process of epistemic and ontological rehabituation involving persons who share an interest in the good of knowledge, both for its own sake and for one another's sake. Our proposal harmonizes with Lugones and Elizabeth Spelman's (1983) suggestion that "the motive of friendship, out of friendship" can prompt the demanding task of engaging in a "non-imperialist feminism," one that creates a space for speaking out against false knowledge and for listening to those who speak out (576). Recognizing that ignorance is an inevitable feature of every partial perspective, friends who share an interest in the good of knowledge also recognize their interdependence in the pursuit of that good. We now turn to examine friendship as a transactional relationship that can yield *epistemic* goods by mitigating the substantive practice of epistemic ignorance.

To some, the terms "friendship" and "transaction" may at first seem discordant. We often encounter the latter in reference to relationships that are commercial, instrumental, mechanical, formal, and so on, while friendship refers to relationships that are emotional, personal, and intimate. Philosophers, however, are familiar with a more broadly conceptualized use of the term friendship. As the standard translation of the Greek *philia*, friendship can also refer to relationships among merchants and their customers, employers and employees, fly-by-night lovers, and even masters and slaves (Aristotle 2000, 143–63). In this sense, friendship can cover relationships that the authors of this article deem profoundly *unfriendly*—largely because the relationships in question (for example, between masters and slaves) are coercive, nonegalitarian, or founded primarily upon utility or pleasure. Thus, it is *not* through a broadening of the conception of friendship, but rather through a reconceptualization of transaction that we wish to treat friendship as a form of transaction. A caring relationship is, in our sense, a transaction between persons who relate to each other (often reciprocally) in a co-constituting relationship of the "one caring" and the one "cared for." Indeed, our interest in transaction, pedagogy, and friendship has much in common with the ethics of care scholarship. The commonality is evident in our concern to articulate and illustrate an intimately personal relationship that possesses enormous potential to ameliorate deeply obstinate social ills.[5] The sense of transaction that we bind to friendship, following Sullivan's use of the term, links friendship to a self-reflective, co-constituting transaction

that can reduce power asymmetries by facilitating awareness of and inquiry into ontological difference.

Sullivan (2006) treats transaction primarily as an ontological category, using it to describe a "dynamic, co-constitutive relationship" that resists familiar dichotomies between mind and body, self and other, organism and environment (77). But the ontology of transaction is a *pragmatic* ontology in which habit plays a central role. "Habits," Sullivan writes, "are dispositions for transacting with the world, and they make up the very being that humans are" (2). Following John Dewey's *Human Nature and Conduct* ([1922]1988), Sullivan views habits as *interpenetrating*: "Habits of race and gender, to take just two examples, are not separately formed only to come into later contact with one another. My particular habits of whiteness concern my particular habits as a woman, and vice versa, and both have a great deal to do with my being middle-class and Texan (and the list could go on)" (ibid.).

Yet, habits are not features of persons in abstraction from their physical and social environments; rather, "the world inhabits us as much as we inhabit it" (ibid.). Sullivan appeals to the idea of transaction in order to conceive of habits of racism, sexism, and heterosexism, as well as classism and bias against people with disabilities, as constitutive components of human existence and experience, both facilitating and limiting what we know. For instance, she suggests that white privilege manifests itself as a habit of white solipsism, whereby white people are habituated to "ontological expansiveness," recognizing only their own individual interests as those that should prevail in the world in which they transact, causing them to ignore the interests and concerns of others (25). Habits may perpetuate ignorance by actively deflecting conscious self-examination, thereby protecting an individual from perceived threats to one's way of knowing and being (43).

There is, however, hope to be found in the idea of transactional relationships. While racial, gendered, and classed habits are entrenched, they are also historically, as well as culturally, contingent. Thus, individuals and groups can positively impact the social and natural environment through micro-processes to destabilize value-laden, ontological dichotomies that justify and enforce disparities in power (32). This often begins, we suggest, with interactions that involve the negative affective role in ignorance (including fear of self-examination; fear of losing something that is fundamental to who we are; suspicion of what the other wants from us; or concern regarding what will be revealed about us in our interactions, such as our lack of knowledge). However, it is possible to develop further interactions that use positive affective patterns—such as those found in friendship, including empathy, acknowledged interdependence, and trust—to identify that which has been ignored and, even more importantly, to take moral and epistemic responsibility for one's unconscious habits (53, 90). But as we shall soon see, transactional relationships are prone to dangers and abuses that can work against the goals of this approach to inquiry. We learned

this in the first two stages of our teaching when we unwittingly interacted with each other through normative, atomistic habits of engagement—ones that matched the habituated forms of thought contained within some of the readings that we had assigned for sake of debate. These readings argued against feminist reconstructions of epistemic norms and practices by defending liberal, individualist conceptions of knowledge.

Transactional Pedagogy in Process

Atomistic Pedagogy
In planning our course, we had agreed upon organizing a syllabus that would show the trajectory of the subfield of feminist epistemology and highlight the significant texts, as well as our particular research interests. We wanted to learn how our respective research interests meshed or clashed with feminist epistemology, and, concomitantly, to discover to what extent they were ignored or embraced by feminist theory, mainstream philosophy, and traditional epistemology.

Philip Olson
My research interests center broadly on the theory of value in both ethics and epistemology. My research on the relationships among moral and epistemic values initially motivated my interest in feminist approaches to epistemology, for feminist scholarship sought to reveal how moral, political, and epistemic values interact with one another. My hope was to gather from feminist epistemology some resources for furthering my own nonfeminist research projects.

I stated in an early meeting with Laura that I wanted to learn about feminist perspectives on knowing, but that I wanted students to feel free to explore *all* options, whether these be pro- or anti-feminist. I was surprised to hear her respond by saying that some assumptions are admissible (even expected!) in the women's and gender studies classes she teaches. As a liberal pluralist, I have made a point of not advocating any particular philosophical position in my classes. (For example, I have expressed pride in the fact that, at semester's end, my philosophy of religion students do not know my attitudes toward religion.) In my first class-related discussion with Laura, I advocated an ideal of pedagogical *neutrality,* recommending that we conceal from our students commitments that we might have regarding epistemology or feminism. My thinking was that this approach would facilitate students' autonomous exploration of the various assigned topics. However, through subsequent conversations with Laura, with our students, and through engagement with the assigned texts, I began to doubt the appropriateness of pedagogical neutrality. Did my commitment to neutrality mask "a generalization from the *subjectivity* of quite a small social group, albeit a group that has the power, security, and prestige to believe that it can generalise its experiences and normative ideals across the social order, thus producing a

group of like-minded practitioners"? (Code 1993, 22). As Code (1991) notes, epistemology uses neutrality to mask relations of power that generate and shape knowledge by affirming the irrelevance of who is doing the knowing. Leaving unmarked the interests and concerns of privileged white males, neutrality subordinates or excludes from the terrain of knowledge the interests of those who are differently gendered and/or raced (ix–x). Perhaps my endorsement of neutrality was an act of ignorance stemming from the habits ingrained in me as part of my white male group identity, formed by my training (mainly by other white males) in mainstream philosophy.

Laura Gillman
As a professor of women's studies my interest in the course was to learn more about how social identities operate as epistemic resources, yielding reliable knowledge about how power works in the social world. I sought to shore up arguments against current postmodernist tendencies to disavow the episte-mological project within feminism. I felt apprehensive as the class began and stymied in my capacity to teach *as a feminist*. At least half of the students felt committed to their training in mainstream philosophy and/or other academic fields and had taken at most one course in women's studies. Additionally, Phil openly advised that while he wanted to learn more about the subject, he did not share my assumptions about the necessity of a feminist reconstruction or transformation of the epistemological inquiry process itself. The desire to push beyond the dissonance that I experienced in an environment in which teach-ing feminism and epistemology were apparently divested from the politics of feminism led me to ask in our second class, after we had discussed works by Code (1993) and Helen Longino (1994): "Can you *do* feminist epistemology without a particular goal in mind?" Here, I was attempting to transact with our teaching and learning environment (including marking the situated status of students and faculty, as well as the authors, vis-à-vis the unmarked status of the classic epistemologists against which they were pushing). I was seeking to underscore a core assumption *in* the texts: namely, that the situated context of the knower impacts the known. The knowledge that I was trying to produce was not an interdependent one because I was not yet in an interdependent relationship with Phil, one that we define, following Sarah Hoagland (2007), as being based on a shared resistance to animating the parts of ourselves that are constructed within a dominant logic (106).

Philip
I initially submitted to Laura that no single member of the teaching team needed to be an interdisciplinarian, recommending instead that the burden of synthesis should fall on the students. It was my belief that this would foster freer inquiry. In actuality, this approach would disburden me of the need to confront and transact with Laura directly. My reluctance to assume responsibility for interdisciplinary

engagement may have been rooted in my *lack* of trust in Laura, or in a *lack* of self-confidence. My worries may have demonstrated a *lack* of "playfulness," which Lugones (1996) describes as "in part, an openness to being a fool, which is a combination of not worrying about competence, not being self-important" (431). But for all this *lack*, my interest in neutrality may have been guided by a substantive ignorance about my group-based presumption regarding my ability to occupy a position of inclusive neutrality.

Laura and Philip
The danger here is to fall back on a form of disciplinary and pedagogical *atomism*. In this practice, different "takes" on a subject matter are merely laid *side by side* or discussed in serial fashion over the course of the semester. Our atomistic pedagogy manifested itself ontologically: we physically taught side by side, but with limited engagement; we turned away from each other. By adhering to an individualist ontology (our right to have our own take), we failed to combat the cognitive norms informing what Mills (2007) refers to as the racial contract, which is, in effect, an agreement to misrepresent the world (16). Would we, as Alison Bailey (2007) suggests that whites often do to fulfill the agenda of the racial contract, manage plurality by making it look free of "ontological ambiguity" and by "actively [ignoring] multiplicity"? (85).

Philip
My commitment to pluralism, coupled with my belief that Laura and I lacked expertise in each other's field, may have encouraged atomistic pedagogical practices. But these practices might also have been encouraged by the ontological habits promoted by the whiteness and maleness of the classic epistemology in which I was cultured. Although our early interactions were tentatively friendly overall, they were perhaps at times unfriendly—that is, dismissive of the other's knowledge. Our initial inability or unwillingness to fully engage with each other did not go unnoticed by our students. One student remarked in the end-of-semester evaluation that we were not forthcoming in our disagreements: "I felt like when Phil and Laura had disagreements they didn't really go into why they were disagreeing. Perhaps it was just in an effort to be respectful of the other, but it would have been nice to hear more on that."[6] This student wanted us to dig deeper into the *sources* of our disagreements, and it seems to me that the student felt that each of us was intentionally holding something back, out of "respect." This is a rather generous reading of our pedagogical transactions, for it assumes that we *knew how* to excavate these disagreements further. But the perceived limits were often real limits at which we did *not* know how to proceed. In the context of team-teaching, the power dynamic between teachers and students takes on a new dimension. For my part, I wanted traditional philosophical epistemology to have a voice in our seminar, but I did not want Laura (or our students) to identify *me* with much of what is said in that voice.

This is because my interests lie partly outside of traditional epistemology's central concerns, but also because I did not want to be perceived as the "bad guy"—that is, the embodiment of the privileged ignorance associated with my gendered and raced identity—if and when I gave voice to certain traditional philosophical perspectives (for example, on knowledge, justification, objectivity, truth, rationality, and so on). I did not want my knowledge to be dismissed.

My anxieties about being perceived as the bad guy surfaced most intensely during our discussion of readings that argued *against* feminist reconstructions of epistemic norms and practices. Even though I wanted all of us to take seriously the concerns that motivate critics of feminist epistemology, and honestly to consider whether and to what extent their criticisms might posses merit, I did not want to be seen as an advocate of the views expressed in these texts. As I would discover, my desire to take the critics seriously made me vulnerable to being marked as the bad guy during our discussion of Gonzalo Munévar's contribution to *Scrutinizing Feminist Epistemology* (2003, 142–55). Laura and our students responded to the text with palpable antagonism, which seemed to me to morph into *ad hominem* attacks. I worried that my efforts to take Munévar seriously could expose me to similar personal assaults. Although my heartbeat quickened and my mind raced to assess the significance of the situation, I responded, as I habitually do, by concealing my irritation behind an outward disposition of "philosophical" impassivity. At one point, I calmly submitted that we consider whether Munévar's claim that Sandra Harding reasons falsely in a particular footnote within *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?* (1991) is reasonable (see Munévar 2003, 142–43). I had hoped that my calm demeanor would mark my distance from Munévar's position, but it was folly to think that I could shed my identity as a white male philosopher and occupy a position of neutrality between the still atomized perspectives alive in this discussion. A friendlier, more trusting approach would have been for me to take responsibility for my own group identity, to embrace my vulnerability, and, as Lugones and Spelman (1983) suggest, to be "willing to suffer alienation" (576). Rather than seek to suppress the emotional valences of the situation, it would have been more productive, I believe, to acknowledge the strong feelings that Munévar's essay evoked, and to discuss the value that these feelings might have in our ongoing inquiries.

Laura
I saw the emotionality deriving not from students per se, but from Munévar's (2003) vitriolic response to Harding's critique of mainstream science's objectives. The contradiction between his belief in the detached objectivity of science on the one hand, and his tone on the other, led me to search for and bring to class Harding's *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?* so that we could ascertain for ourselves the validity of Munévar's critiques of Harding's work. It was clear

to me from Munévar's overt critique of the influence of multiculturalism in the academy that his goal was not to produce good knowledge, but to show other scientists that "the quality of [Harding's] work is unacceptable" (142). For example, to prove Harding's unfamiliarity with the history of science, he states that Harding attempts to give evidence of how political interests have always driven science by arguing that the social values of the Weimar Republic influenced Einstein's theory of relativity. But, he asserts, given that Einstein created the theory before the Weimar Republic came into existence, "it is doubtful that even Einstein could have pulled that off" (143). Yet, as many historians of science have previously noted, the chronology is misleading. Einstein's theory, although published in 1905, did not begin to receive widespread attention until after 1918 thanks to the emergence of the new democracy of the Weimar Republic when Einstein's theory was tested.

Retrospectively, we *were* intentionally holding something back out of respect for each other's ignorance, as well as for each other's knowledge. I was irritated with Phil's willingness to engage the article with neutrality. Could he not consider his own idealism regarding philosophical neutrality as a form of ignorance, one that is "actively produced for the purposes of domination and exploitation," and that "at times . . . takes the form of those in the center refusing to allow the marginalized to know"? (Sullivan and Tuana 2007, 1). Frank Margonis (2007) uses Dewey as an example of how it is possible for philosophers to claim to be in favor of the democratic principle of equality and yet fail to locate their own perspectives and practices in relation to the racist and neocolonialist actions of their group, as well as to those of white citizens and leaders of their nation (189). Elizabeth Spelman's (2007) analysis of James Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time* (1963) clarifies the difficulties in eradicating the racialized attitudes driving mainstream philosophical inquiry that marginalize people of color as knowers. Her insights can be extrapolated to explain the gendered attitude informing Munévar's agenda to discredit Harding. Spelman states that ignorance is not a form of inertia, but an achievement on the part of whites to ignore "what it is about them and their institutions that have wreaked such havoc in the lives of blacks" (120). White Americans are not self-deceived; they do not *want* to know about such things so as not to have to think about them and, therefore, to be able to remain committed to not believing that they are true (122). I wondered if neutrality could mask this type of ignorance. Kristie Dotson's (2011) articulation of pernicious ignorance also illuminates the form of violence encountered in Munévar's treatment of Harding. Dotson states that when a person speaks, she depends on the audience's trust in her competence in order to successfully communicate; there is a reciprocity between speaker and listener. A particular type of epistemic violence occurs, that of "*pernicious ignorance*," when the listener (or reader) refuses, intentionally or unintentionally, to reciprocate (238).

Laura and Philip

Following Cynthia Townley (2006), we saw ignorance as both dangerous (pernicious) and valuable. This moment of unresolved tension in the class-room signaled to us, upon retrospection, these two very different valences of ignorance. We realized that ignorance is deliberate and self-serving on the one hand, but on the other it can potentially be "part of inherently valuable epistemic relationships, for example, those involving trust and empathy" (38). This is because, as Dotson states (2011), by engaging in a reciprocal exchange, one marked by dialogical dependency within a particular context, it is possible to analyze power relations and other factors within the context that make the particular practice of ignorance pernicious (239). Thus, we did not wish to devalue ignorance because to do so would be to suggest that the only valuable epistemic practice is knowledge accumulation, one often bound to individual-ism, in that it reproduces "established patterns of dominance and privilege" (Townley 2006, 37). Townley characterizes this practice as "epistemophilia," a love of knowledge that is so great that it blinds the knower to everything but accumulation in the construction of knowledge (38).

As the student's remark suggests, however, in trying to navigate the uncer-tain terrain of an interdisciplinary course in feminist/epistemology, we did not *simply* objectify each other as mere instrumental sources of knowledge, but also treated each other with respect as epistemic agents and mentors. We saw each other as trustworthy because we both viewed knowledge as being connected to values and to the subjects/agents that produce it. We recognized the possibility of not knowing, humbly, as part of "the forbearance that supports non-oppressive and cooperative relationships to the extent that these involve trust," which is why we could recognize uncertainty and "not knowing how to proceed," as Phil says, as integral to knowledge production (42).

The forbearance that friendship, even initial friendship, affords is an acknowledgment that it was not that we were *not* in a positive and productive interdependent relationship, but rather that we were not in one *yet*. We needed to go further. As Townley (2006) suggests, full interdependence would require us to interact with each other in a manner sensitive to our own *and* the other's position within the interaction "by acknowledging social positionality when seeking to know other persons" (46). Discussion of the readings (both during the course of the semester and subsequently in writing this article) afforded us the opportunity to rehabituate our transactional practices, to think through what the differences and similarities in our social positionalities afforded in terms of our capacity for averting habituated forms of epistemophilia produced by liberal assimilationism.

Assimilative Pedagogy

In addition to the atomism just described, as team-teachers of feminist epistemol-ogy we also confronted the danger of assimilative pedagogy. This danger surfaces when people do not possess an interest in the "friend" her-/himself, but instead

use each other for their own private ends. This form of transaction strikes us as very similar to the "loving, knowing ignorance" that Ortega (2006) attributes to any white woman who *uses* the speech and writing of women of color for the purpose of "legitimating her own status as a Third Wave feminist (thus showing that in the end her use of the work of women of color is instrumental)" (62). We seek instead a rehabituated transaction that Townley (2006) suggests: a friendly way of knowing that "involves instrumental ignorance" (40).

Philip
I had hoped to glean from this course certain insights from feminist scholars that I could assimilate into my own preestablished research and teaching agendas. Thus, my initial attitude may have exemplified what Ortega (2006) calls "seeing with arrogant eyes, eyes that skillfully organize the world and everything in it with reference to the arrogant perceiver's desires and interests" (59). For example, when describing to Laura my interest in teaching this class, I characterized feminist epistemology as a part of social epistemology, pointing out that this was an area in philosophical epistemology that I wanted to explore more fully. Laura resisted this characterization of the *place* of feminist epistemology. Did she sense an assimilative arrogance in my classification of feminist epistemology as part of a more comprehensive whole upon which mainstream philosophers were already working?

Laura
I was resistant to this emplacement of feminist epistemology. Feminist epistemology was not simply another research program within the domain of philosophy or an appendage to other research programs, adding new philosophical questions to the already existing ones—although it does do this (Alcoff and Kittay 2007, 8). With its knowledge of a "supra-individual kind" and its emphasis on the historically contingent and politically oriented understanding of knowledge, it is in many respects incommensurable with classic epistemology. Indeed, a primary goal of feminist epistemology is to develop greater self-consciousness about the relationship between feminist work in philosophy and traditional philosophy, which has excluded women (4). Another primary goal is to transform the discipline itself (10–12).

Philip
Early in the semester, I had been struck by Laura's question about whether one can do feminist epistemology without a particular goal in mind. That question had immediately prompted a sustained class discussion about the relationship among truth, liberation, equality, and justice, but it was not until our discussions of Susan Haack's (2003) and Louise M. Antony's (1995, 2003) works that Laura's question caused me to become more conscious of the assimilative tendencies and habits of traditional analytic epistemology.

In "Knowledge and Propaganda: Reflections of an Old Feminist" (2003), Haack expresses concern about "the imperialist ambitions of the new feminism with respect to epistemology specifically," claiming that the new feminists seek to strong-arm scientific inquiry into conformity with feminists' politically motivated ends (8).[7] She maintains that the *ideal* inquirer is one who is motivated solely by the apolitical pursuit of truth, and that the new feminists are "not really engaged in inquiry at all" because they are not in "the truth-seeking business," but rather in "the propaganda business" (15). Feminist criticisms of scientific conduct can play a useful role, but only when undertaken as a "sub-task" within the apolitical pursuit of neutral and objective truth-seeking (14). It is thus by way of a teleological ordering of ends, in which feminism serves as instrumental to the more comprehensive ends of scientific objectivity, that Haack assimilates feminist epistemology into mainstream epistemology, thereby demoting feminist epistemology to the status of an "undramatic and by no means revolutionary" program of research (ibid.).

In "Quine as Feminist: The Radical Import of Naturalized Epistemology" (2003), Antony claims that there is no unified, analytical philosophical tradition and that feminist criticisms of "analytic philosophy" are really part of a more inclusive dialectic in which traditional analytic epistemology has long been engaged (98–99). She argues that we do not need "a specifically feminist alternative to currently available epistemological frameworks" (98). We need only to address "specific questions or problems that arise as a result of feminist analysis, awareness, or experience that any adequate epistemology must *accommodate*" (ibid.; emphasis added). According to Antony, Quine's naturalized epistemology already provides a theoretical framework that accommodates feminist critiques of scientific knowledge. Antony thus assimilates the goals and interests of feminist epistemology into the more comprehensive (and already adequate) goals and interests of analytic epistemology.

But can the political goals of feminist epistemologists be accomplished if traditional epistemic frameworks are left untouched? Mills (2007) and Sullivan (2006) have given us reason to think that what now goes under the heading of "our" collective understanding of knowledge actively *contributes* to oppressive structures and practices. If they are right, then privileged agents should not be expected to overcome their group-based epistemic habits simply by including women and nonwhites in their numbers. As Miranda Fricker (2007) observes, the "epistemic objectification" of persons intrinsically harms them as knowers by instrumentalizing them into a "source of information." The person (or group) "is thus demoted from subject to object, relegated from the role of active epistemic agent, and confined to the role of passive state of affairs from which knowledge might be gleaned" (132). So long as the perspectives of women and nonwhites are viewed as instrumental to the more comprehensive goals set by white male cognizers, the oppressive practices of substantive epistemic ignorance and injustice will continue to perpetuate themselves.

Laura and Philip
It was around the discussion of Antony's piece "Sisters, Please, I'd Rather Do It Myself: A Defense of Individualism in Feminist Epistemology" (1995) that we began to examine individualism in relation to her desire to assimilate feminist social epistemology into traditional epistemology's individualism.

Laura
Against Longino's thesis (1990, 1994) that norm-driven objectivity is fundamentally social, Antony argues that feminist epistemology and the philosophy of mind should retain some version of individualism. Longino is, of course, not denying individual epistemic agency when she makes the claim that knowledge is social, nor is she denying individualist perception and judgment as components of epistemic processes. However, one thing that Longino emphasizes here is that the white males who predominantly occupy the ranks of philosophy do not have perceptual access to the same data as women. Because she actively does not recognize the "*supra*-individual perspective," Antony (1995) ignores the account of epistemic responsibility outlined by Longino (77). She instead continues to affirm that the individual can achieve "some degree of objectivity on her own [by] minimizing the influence of subjective preferences and controlling the role of background assumptions" (ibid.).

Ultimately, Antony argues that the erroneous judgments of individuals are merely *exceptions* to the otherwise reliable nature of human rational practices. She gives the following example: a brilliant female mathematician comes up with an anomalous argument (that proves to be right) that is discounted by her fellow (male) colleagues and subsequently by the female mathematician herself. Drawing from Quine's recommendation to look at actual practices of knowing, Antony argues that the erroneous judgment may be deemed rationally sufficient, given that the woman's argument represented an anomaly and because it was contributed by an *individual* who was deemed less capable. However, Antony suggests that if the nonrational social practices underlying the erroneous judgment were made explicit to well-intentioned, rational male mathematicians, then more impartial judgments would prevail (89). In this manner, she can insist that feminists assimilate to individualist forms of thinking.

But ignorance of privilege is not merely neglectful, it is substantive. The discounting of the female mathematician's brilliance is a habituated transaction, informed by liberal assimilationism, based on ignorance of how social positioning impacts the inquiry process. Antony's defense actively produces ignorance with regard to different identity-based forms of inquiry. And as Mills (2007) notes, it also acts as a *defense* mechanism to protect an individual from perceived danger. Sullivan (2006) aligns an unwillingness to relinquish mastery with the ontological expansiveness of whiteness as a "co-constitutive relationship between self and environment in which the self assumes that it can and should have total mastery over its environment" (10).

Our discussions on this essay caused me to reflect on my own habits as a knower. I was unable to hide the tension I felt in our discussion of this text. In some initial way, I began to transact with Phil's concerns and insights about the intersections of ethics and epistemology, which he incorporated into the course through a number of readings—among them, Fricker's *Epistemic Injustice: Power & the Ethics of Knowing* (2007). I discovered, only after leaving our discussion of Antony and beginning our discussion of Fricker, that Antony's unfriendly analysis of the female mathematician resulted from a testimonial transaction wherein the habits of attributing credibility were in bad standing. The female mathematician was wronged as a knower because she was not, first, recognized as a giver of knowledge (testimonial injustice); and second, because she was unable to make sense of her situation due to a general gap in collective understanding—for example, about the social powerlessness of women in mathematics (hermeneutical injustice)—the result being that the collective interpretive resources became structurally prejudiced. Testimonial injustice, in this regard, could be construed as a habituated interaction sustained by pernicious ignorance.

As a woman and feminist reader of this text, I also felt wronged, epistemically and ethically, by Antony's inability or unwillingness to correct for structural prejudice by virtuously enacting what Fricker (2007) calls "testimonial sensibility" (5, 81–85). Instead, through her rejection of Longino's theoretical virtues, she protects structurally unjust, individualist cognitive norms. As these kinds of occurrences are familiar to me due to the social fact of my gender, I am sensitized to testimony on this type of epistemic harm. I can use this anecdote along with my own experiences as sources of theoretical reflection about the salient elements constituting a female gender identity—namely, a general marginality from epistemic credibility, and, to some degree, be less ignorant about the general marginality from epistemic credibility that people of color experience. I, thus, view Antony's wanting to "do it by herself" as an unfriendly habit of turning away from epistemic responsibility and forcing the other to turn toward preexisting epistemic norms of objectivity. She is further unfriendly insofar as she denies her interdependence, at the same time that she directs herself to other feminists, as if we were in relation with one another, in the title of her piece, "Sisters, Please, I'd Rather Do It Myself." Given my cognitive advantage—namely, my heightened awareness of how as a woman I was being dismissed as a knower—I wondered if Phil had recognized my emotional response to Antony's text. Was he aware or ignorant of the fact that my participation as a knower, given my female-gender-identity location, was still restricted within the broader epistemic community? Given that such epistemic impairment is especially aggravated by the fact that mainstream epistemology reproduces social hierarchies by providing a rationale for nonprivileged groups to assimilate their ideas to normative, individualist knowledge practices, was Phil's respect enough to diminish such restrictions?

Separatism and Transactional Pedagogy
As we critically engaged standpoint theories and theories of ignorance, we became more aware of the limitations of our own cognitive realities and therefore of the requirement to rely upon the positive interdependence that friendship affords us. We were thus able to deepen our capacity to be responsible, as Sullivan suggests, for our unconscious habits; and to rehabituate our transactional interaction through empathetic attentiveness to each other's social situatedness. As Townley (2006) states, "knowledge that is shared and acquired through empathy is always situated" (44). We developed trust through the *practice* of a constellation of values that Townley highlights: *crediting the other* for taking responsibility for having knowledge and for modifying their knowledge (43); exhibiting *forbearance*, thereby allowing the other the opportunity to modify or develop knowledge (41); *being fully participatory* by working to understand *with* each other in our interdependence (40); and, most importantly, *being accountable* for the substantive ignorance we hold as socially situated knowers (ibid.).

We became conscious of the ways in which our social location, when examined against the assigned authors, produced what Alcoff (2007) calls, following Harding, "different starting belief sets based on [our] social location and [our] group-related experiences," ones that necessarily "inform [our] epistemic operations such as judging coherence and plausibility" (45). Moreover, we recognized that the perspectives of members of subordinated groups offer valuable epistemic resources because they are in a better position to understand more fully the effects of marginalization in their lives. Hoagland (2007) refers to this recognition as an initial implementation of "conceptual separatism" (105), whereby one shifts from identification with a dominant logic to a logic of resistance, refusing to subordinate or be subordinated. We would begin to engage interdependently by engaging this new logic.

As the course progressed we began to *transact* differently, sharing Hoagland's interest in "thinking about ways of opening up, listening, learning from others," and we came to recognize that "[t]his cannot be grasped in theory, separate from praxis and engagement" (113). The point is that our interests in feminist epistemology and in each other began to converge in our desire for further self-reflection and sensitivity to know and connect with the other, and a desire to know how one's experience is more or less advantaged as a resource for knowledge of the social world.

Philip
We could no longer treat feminist epistemology as a neutral, external space into which our personal and disciplinary perspectives separately entered. We were not simply teaching and learning *about* feminist epistemology, but were *doing* epistemology as differently situated feminists. As we see it, the key to our capacity to do epistemology as feminists lies in the ongoing process of befriending one another as knowers, and in that process wanting to know and

better understand how subordinated groups are impacted by white ignorance and gender ignorance. It is for this reason that we urge friendship as an *ideal* for (feminist) epistemologists and for interdisciplinary team-teaching. We recognize our interdependence as one that is relational and social—unrelated to the individualism for which Antony, for example, has campaigned—that can lead to more socially just knowledge. Hoagland (2007) reinforces this point: "When there is engagement on terms not countenanced by the dominant logic, then relationality changes and so does who we are becoming. Identities are interactive; our possibilities emerge from within the collectivities we engage. Within these collectivities are the possibilities of the interdependencies of non-dominant differences" (110). For as long as transaction carries with it the risks of atomism and assimilationism, separatism will retain its value as a way to resist the encroachments of the dominant. As Sullivan (2006) explains, the idea of transaction can be used by one group to justify its "intrusion" upon another group, as happens, for example, through the white-privileged habit of "ontological expansiveness" (177).

The separatism that Hoagland and Sullivan advocate can be, depending on the context, physical and/or conceptual. The idea of a physical separatism can function as a normative injunction against the aforementioned intrusions, thus serving nondominant groups as a way of controlling in some measure the nature and extent of their transactions with dominant groups (Sullivan 2006, ibid.). But where physical separatism is not possible, as was true in our case, a conceptual separatism in which we both ultimately participated helped us to become more aware of our habits of ontological expansiveness, even if we could not always mitigate those habits.

Laura

As a white feminist I must continuously be conscious of the ongoing need to rehabituate my transactional habits to avert habits of ontological expansiveness, thereby looking with the loving eye and recognizing the diverse perspectives of feminists. Working outside of a dominant logic means not checking up on the other to corroborate information, as an epistemophiliac would, but rather to "take her word for it," which means a commitment not to "breach the relationship" (Townley 2006, 41). Instead, I must check up on myself by placing myself within the field of vision of the arrogant eye of white feminism so that I can know myself better as a member of an identity group that has been habitually resistant to learning about those things that may be disadvantageous to my privilege (Ortega 2006, 66). This requires moving beyond the "oppressor's logic"—a concept that Ortega borrows from Lugones and that I define as the logic that assimilates every logic to itself—to a fluency in different logics (70). Given that students and faculty members in the course were all white, we had to rely upon one another and open up to one another so as not to engage this assimilationist logic.

Phil and I did so as we confronted a white female student in the class who, during our reading of Ortega's article "Being Lovingly, Knowingly Ignorant: White Feminism and Women of Color," balked at yet again having to hear such recriminations against white women. She stated that she did not really like this article because when such criticisms about the lack of white feminist responsibility had been issued against her, they were done so wrongly. As in the past incidents of recrimination, the student stated, the speaker did not know her. In response to this epistemophiliac stance, Phil and I were both obliged to struggle to disclose the unfounded fears that we felt, as "good-intentioned" white people, when distancing ourselves from the atomistic habit (of looking away) and the assimilative habit (of forcing the other to look at us) so that we could come "face-to-face with [our] ontological relationality by those structurally subordinate to [us], particularly when we are brought face-to-face with the colonial/slavery/genocidal/imperial legacy of our own locus of enunciation" (Hoagland 2007, 104). In using Ortega's knowledge as a source of our self-reflection, we achieved some success in the dialectical process that entails, following Townley (2006, 46), transferring authority; we both deliberately recognized our social positionalities as epistemic disadvantages, giving authority to Ortega's (2006) claims about the marginalization of women of color in feminist environments (58). This recognition was a first step in our practice of conceptual separatism, which facilitated the disruption of our ontological expansiveness.

Transactional Friendship

If friendship is to serve as an ideal for transactional pedagogy, and for team-teaching in general, then friendship must resist the dangers of both assimilation and atomism. To combat these substantive practices of ignorance, friendship must involve an inclusive, epistemic partnership of self-reflection: one that helps to expose, destabilize, and transform those value-laden, ontological habits of whiteness and maleness that sustain disparities in epistemic power, privilege, and opportunity. No longer could we acquiesce to atomistic interactions with the texts or with each other, nor could we execute an assimilationist interaction, obliging the other to accommodate to our own view. Rather, we sought to adopt a face-to-face exchange in our own interaction and with the authors of the assigned texts. This type of exchange allowed us to see our identities and our histories differently—not only through our own narratives of superiority, but also through the narratives of members of groups that have been subordinated. Thus, the ideal of friendship must be distinguished from those "lesser" or "imperfect" kinds of *philia* that are based merely on pleasure and utility, which Aristotle (2000) describes in the following way: "[T]hose who love for utility are fond of the other because of what is good for themselves, and those who love for pleasure because of what is pleasant for themselves, not in so far as the person they love is who he is, but in so far as he is useful or pleasant" (146). *Philia*

takes the form of an assimilative transaction when one or both parties simply see each other as *instruments* within his or her own projects. It is this form of transaction that Sullivan (2006) has in mind when she cautions against the "exoticization" of subaltern perspectives "for the purposes of . . . [hegemonic] consumption, pleasure, and profit" (175). Alternatively, *philia* takes the form of an atomistic transaction when one or both parties view the interests of the other as divested from or competing with his or her own interests.

The ideal of friendship denotes, instead, an egalitarian relationship between persons who share an interest in the good, both for its own sake and for each other's sake (Aristotle 2000, 147). Aristotle calls this "complete friendship" because friends of this sort *also* find each other both pleasant and useful, even though these features of their transactions do not constitute the grounds for their friendship. In the context of epistemology, the good in which friends share an active interest includes knowledge. What we suggest is that the cultivation of friendship can facilitate the pursuit of, or partially constitute the conditions for, more reliable knowledge and deeper understanding by encouraging the sort of cooperative inquiry in which friends recognize their interdependence in their common pursuit of epistemic goods. We do not mean to suggest that the pedagogical practices we have described capture the essence of the many ways the term "friendship" is used in contemporary parlance, but these practices helped us to cultivate personal, affective connections that seem to us natural to describe as a friendship. Moreover, while our friendship is not simply a *result* of our engagement with these practices (since the practices themselves were integral to our formation of a friendship), it also exceeds our engagements with these practices—as is to be expected of any rich personal relationship.

Friendship against Ignorance

We recommend friendship as an ideal worth striving for *especially* in transactions among persons who inhabit identities that embody unjust disparities in power, privilege, and opportunity. Our claim is that friendship among persons inhabiting asymmetrical relationships of power possesses an epistemic value that is lacking in friendships among persons inhabiting a common perspective and experience of privilege and power. Friendships of the former kind make possible the disruption and rehabitution of those practices in ways that move toward more inclusive, more reliable, and more responsible knowledge. Moreover, by resisting arrogant perception, the affective, loving features of friendship may intensify friends' motivation to pursue knowledge, both out of love for the epistemic goods themselves and out of love for one another. Friendships among persons inhabiting the same location in power, while virtuous in many ways, may provide a basis for the reinforcement and reproduction of unjust social hierarchies and one-sided, parochial epistemic practices of ignorance. In this regard, we found that sharing the same dominant racial location impeded the capacity of our pedagogy of friendship to combat racialized ignorance.

Laura

While pondering our confrontation with the white female student who recoiled against what she took to be Ortega's unwarranted reproach of white women, I had an encounter that subsequently led me to understand better the limits of my friendship with Phil as a pedagogy for combating ignorance. I ran into an African American colleague with whom I had worked closely on campus in the context of antiracist activism. In conversing with each other, we discovered that we shared an enthusiasm for meditation. But whereas I planned to continue to attend class, she told me that she had quit after her first class; she explained that this was because her mother had trained her never to close her eyes in any public situation.

Upon further reflection regarding the broader narrative that her particular situation engaged—the real, well-founded fear that people of color have because of the havoc that white people have knowingly and unknowingly wreaked upon the lives of black people—I was able to gain better knowledge of my own unconscious ontological habits of whiteness. I could close my eyes (a habit that indicated my full possession of that public space) and enjoy the comfort of not thinking about how my ignorance about the dispossession of racially subordinated groups is self-serving. My reflection reinforced to me that for my pedagogy to be effective, it needed to be done in greater interconnection with those who are racially subjugated. To develop a pedagogy of friendship that could disrupt white ignorance of countervailing evidence of white superiority would require, as Alcoff (2007) notes, an even greater disruption of traditional epistemology, which "has no space for the incorporation of this level of reflexivity" (54). This could be achieved by making central to the syllabus texts of women-of-color philosophers and by creating assignments that would oblige teachers and students alike to struggle with them. Furthermore, our epistemic authority would have to be more greatly relinquished because, as Paulo Freire, bell hooks, and other liberatory educators working within critical and feminist pedagogical traditions have affirmed, we all have distorted knowledge because of the effects of whiteness, which results in some of us having more social power than others. Consequently, in a class that aims to be liberatory, the work to understand the operations of power derived from race and/or racialized gender needs to be shared among all classroom participants.[8]

Laura and Philip

Although we consider friendship to be an ideal worth striving for, we also recognize that it is not a panacea against the many systemic epistemic harms visited upon us on account of our identity-based ignorances. We wish to grow as friends, but we sometimes worry that our transactions might have only a transitory impact due to institutional and social pressures that our personal relationship cannot directly and immediately alter. As Lugones and Spelman (1983) point out, the task of friendship "is one of extraordinary difficulty,"

demanding that we "be willing to devote a great part of [our] lives to it" (576). The sheer difficulty of this task makes it likely that even those who aspire to friendship will rarely realize it. If friendships of this sort are both highly personal and rare, one might wonder how effective they can be as a way of challenging socially systemic ignorance, bias, and injustice. But an ideal need not be easy to achieve in order to be valuable as a guide to practice, and the effects of a personal relationship need not be direct and immediate in order to bring about a *lasting* impact.

Moreover, we recognize that our particular friendship, which is properly, but not exhaustively, characterized as a friendship between two white academics (one male and one female), cannot be taken up as a formula for *all* friendships. The particulars of our relationship do not directly transfer to friendships between persons who inhabit different positionalities. We welcome the reflections of those whose friendships differ from our own. How might the practices of a transactional pedagogy of friendship change when friends are not similarly positioned and privileged in the ways we are? How might our practices be disrupted and transformed when we cultivate friendships with people who are, for example, disabled, nonwhite, nonacademic, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered? Any effort to codify the practices of a transactional pedagogy of friendship into step-by-step procedures is likely to distort the goals of this pedagogy and to pervert the meaning of friendship.

This article is above all an article written in friendship against ignorance. In becoming feminist friends, we have come to see feminist epistemology as a shared *practice of inquiry*. Essential to our process of befriending each other was the act of taking responsibility for the negligent ignorance that each of us embodied and enacted (largely unconsciously) on account of our group-based perspectives and practices. Our aim has been to articulate and illustrate this process, and to explain why we think that a transactional pedagogy of friendship can actively combat racialized and gendered ignorance, and can also combat other forms of ignorance relating to class, sexuality, and able-bodiedness. This article is itself a testament to the fact that our engagements with each other, with our students, and with feminist epistemology have impacted the trajectory of our research. Still, we aim to remain open to discovering in ourselves those habits that continue to prevent us from becoming the inquirers, knowers, teachers, and friends that we would love to be.

Acknowledgments

evolved. We also wish to thank our students, whose hard work and insightful contributions to class discussions have made a profound impression upon us. Thank you.

Philip Olson is an assistant professor in the Department of Science and Technology in Society at Virginia Tech. His work broadly centers on the intersections of moral and epistemic responsibilities and values. He has a particular interest in the ways that emerging technologies occasion reevaluation of moral and epistemic commitments. Influenced by classical American pragmatists, especially John Dewey, and by ancient and contemporary theories of virtue, he brings these resources to bear on topics in applied ethics, social epistemology, and technology studies. He can be reached at prolson@vt.edu.

Laura Gillman is an associate professor of women's and gender studies at Virginia Tech. She is the author of numerous articles on feminist theory, transnational feminisms within Africana and Latina diasporic contexts, coloniality of power, and anti-racist feminist education and pedagogy within the U.S. academy. Her recent publications include Unassimilable Feminisms: Reappraising Feminist, Womanist, and Mestiza Identity Politics *(2010) and "Narrative as a Resource for Feminist Practices of Socially Engaged Inquiry: Mayra Montero's* In the Palm of Darkness" *(2012) in* Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy. *She can be reached at lgillman@vt.edu.*

Notes

1. Ours is a truly collaborative project in which we wholly share primary authorship.
2. Sullivan seems to follow Dewey in her choice to use the term "transaction" rather than "interaction"; see, for example, John Dewey and Arthur Bentley ([1949]1989), 14, 63, 112–15.
3. Both Sullivan (2006) and Hoagland (2007) have previously identified assimilation and atomism as examples of what we call "unfriendly" transactions.
4. All emphases are original to the sources quoted unless otherwise noted.
5. There are many fertile connections between our present project and the ethics of care, particularly in light of the latter's engagement with educational theory and practice; see, for example, Eva F. Kittay (1999), Nel Noddings (1984), and Sara Ruddick (1989). A careful study of the rich ties between our work and care ethics deserves fuller discussion than we are able to provide here.
6. This comment was provided in response to one of several questions we posed in our end-of-semester questionnaire regarding discussion about teacher/teacher disagreements.
7. Haack (2003) distinguishes the "new" feminism from the older, more "modest" form of feminism, "which stressed the common humanity of women and men, focused on justice and opportunity, and was concerned primarily with issues in social and political theory" (8). She self-identifies with the older, modest form of feminism.

8. For a review of the genesis of feminist pedagogy and its current trajectory, see Robbin D. Crabtree, David Sapp, and Adela C. Licona (2009).

References

Alcoff, Linda M. 2007. "Epistemologies of Ignorance: Three Types." In *Race and Epistemologies of Ignorance*, ed. Shannon Sullivan and Nancy Tuana, 39–58. Albany: State University of New York Press.

———, and Eva F. Kittay, eds. 2007. "Introduction: Defining Feminist Philosophy." In *The Blackwell Guide to Feminist Philosophy*, 1–13. Blackwell Philosophy Guides. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

———, and Elizabeth Potter, eds. 1993. "Introduction: When Feminisms Intersect Epistemology." In *Feminist Epistemologies*, 1–14. Thinking Gender. New York: Routledge.

Antony, Louise M. 2003. "Quine as Feminist: The Radical Import of Naturalized Epistemology." In *Feminist Interpretations of W. V. Quine*, ed. Lynn Hankinson Nelson and Jack Nelson, 95–149. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.

———. 1995. "Sisters, Please, I'd Rather Do It Myself: A Defense of Individualism in Feminist Epistemology." *Philosophical Topics* 23(2): 59–93.

Aristotle. 2000. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Trans. and ed. Roger Crisp. Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy, ed. Karl Ameriks. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bailey, Alison. 2007. "Strategic Ignorance." In *Race and Epistemologies of Ignorance*, ed. Shannon Sullivan and Nancy Tuana, 77–94. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Code, Lorraine. 1998. "Voice and Voicelessness: A Modest Proposal?" In *Philosophy in a Feminist Voice: Critiques and Reconstructions*, ed. Janet Kournay, 204–30. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

———. 1993. "Taking Subjectivity into Account." In *Feminist Epistemologies*, ed. Linda M. Alcoff and Elizabeth Potter, 15–48. New York: Routledge.

———. 1991. *What Can She Know?* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Crabtree, Robbin D., David Sapp, and Adela C. Licona, eds. 2009. *Feminist Pedagogy: Looking Back to Move Forward*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Dewey, John. [1922]1988. *Human Nature and Conduct*. In *John Dewey: The Middle Works, 1899–1924*, vol. 14, ed. Jo Ann Boydston. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

———, and Arthur Bentley. [1949]1989. *Knowing and the Known*. In *John Dewey: The Later Works, 1925–1953*, vol. 16, ed. Jo Ann Boydston. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Dotson, Kristie. 2011. "Tracking Epistemic Violence, Tracking Practices of Silencing." *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy* 26(2): 236–57.

Fricker, Miranda. 2007. *Epistemic Injustice: Power & the Ethics of Knowing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Haack, Susan. 2003. "Knowledge and Propaganda: Reflections of an Old Feminist." In *Scrutinizing Feminist Epistemology: An Examination of Gender in Science*, ed. Cassandra L. Pinnick, Noretta Koertge, and Robert F. Almeder, 7–19. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Harding, Sandra. 1991. *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Hoagland, Sarah L. 2007. "Denying Relationality: Epistemology and Ethics and Ignorance." In *Race and Epistemologies of Ignorance*, ed. Shannon Sullivan and Nancy Tuana, 95–118. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Kittay, Eva F. 1999. *Love's Labor: Essays on Women, Equality, and Dependency*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Longino, Helen. 1994. "The Fate of Knowledge in Social Theories of Science." In *Socializing Epistemology: The Social Dimensions of Knowledge*, ed. Frederick F. Schmitt, 135–58. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

———. 1990. *Science as Social Knowledge*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Lugones, Maria. 1996. "Playfulness, 'World'-Travelling, and Loving Perception." In *Women, Knowledge, and Reality: Explorations in Feminist Philosophy*, ed. Ann Garry and Marilyn Pearsall, 419–33. New York: Routledge.

———, and Elizabeth V. Spelman. 1983. "Have We Got a Theory for You! Feminist Theory, Cultural Imperialism and the Demand for 'The Woman's Voice.'" *Women's Studies International Forum* 6(6): 573–81.

Margonis, Frank. 2007. "John Dewey, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Alain Locke: A Case Study in White Ignorance and Intellectual Segregation." In *Race and Epistemologies of Ignorance*, ed. Shannon Sullivan and Nancy Tuana, 173–95. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Mills, Charles. 2007. "White Ignorance." In *Race and Epistemologies of Ignorance*, ed. Shannon Sullivan and Nancy Tuana, 11–38. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Munévar, Gonzalo. 2003. "Sandra Harding's Feminist Epistemology and Political Correctness." In *Scrutinizing Feminist Epistemology: An Examination of Gender in Science*, ed. Cassandra L. Pinnick, Noretta Koertge, and Robert F. Almeder, 142–55. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Noddings, Nel. 1984. *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Ortega, Mariana. 2006. "Being Lovingly, Knowingly Ignorant: White Feminism and Women of Color." *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy* 21(3): 56–74.

Ruddick, Sara. 1989. *Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Spelman, Elizabeth V. 2007. "Managing Ignorance." In *Race and Epistemologies of Ignorance*, ed. Shannon Sullivan and Nancy Tuana, 119–31. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Sullivan, Shannon. 2006. *Revealing Whiteness: The Unconscious Habits of Racial Privilege*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

———, and Nancy Tuana, eds. 2007. *Race and Epistemologies of Ignorance*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Townley, Cynthia. 2006. "Toward a Revaluation of Ignorance." *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy* 21(3): 37–55.

Tuana, Nancy. 2001. "Introduction." In *Engendering Rationalities*, ed. Nancy Tuana and Sandra Morgen, 1–20. Albany: State University of New York Press.

———, and Shannon Sullivan, eds. 2006. "Special Issue: Feminist Epistemologies of Ignorance." *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy* 21(3): vii–ix.