SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY:
A PHENOMENOLOGY AND CRITIQUE OF PHILOSOPHY TWITTER
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1. PREFACE AND INTRODUCTION.

This article derives from data collected over a six-month period between February and August 2022. Its sampling pertains to members of two general Twitter Lists of philosophy professionals: "[Philosophers on Twitter](#)", limited to a maximum of 4500 active accounts, and "[Philosophers](#)", restricted to accounts surpassing 1000 followers and currently including over 1,100 individuals. The totality of members of these two Lists is referenced in this article as "Philosophy Twitter".

Data was collected in five principal ways from members of these two Lists: 1) Monitoring the List streams, 2) addressing members, including following, retweeting, liking, endorsing, asking, commenting, and replying, 3) probing members' Twitter activities in their Profiles ("Tweets & replies"), 4) reviewing members' Twitter Bios, CVs, professional profiles, and websites, and 5) network analysis of members' quantitative and qualitative association and interaction profiles.

The study of this material aimed at revealing interpersonal social structures and processes of philosophy professionals by their Twitter conduct. Its personal purview focused on creators, teachers, researchers, and students and thus excepted schools, colleges, universities, formal associations, and publishers. Particular attention was given to gaining insights on substantive orientation, cooperation, and constructive dialogue versus hierarchic and tribal characteristics.

It may take a philosopher like me, who is not at present part of academic philosophy, to pursue these inquiries without restraint. My work has been unmoved by how my career or reputation might be affected. On the downside, my insights derive from a vantage point outside academic philosophy. Anecdotal input by colleagues in academic philosophy has been helpful, but cannot replace contemporary, continual immersion. Without doubt then, my position entails a trade-off, exposing my interpretations and conclusions to welcome review and possibly contest.

A further valid concern is that non-virtual behavior of professionals might not be accurately mirrored or represented at all on Twitter. Far from all who qualify worldwide have joined. And although the two Lists include thousands, only a small fraction is regularly active. Further, both representation and activity are massively weighted to the Anglosphere, and variances in other spheres may render inferences not archetypal of the philosophy community at large. Additional distortions may stem from intrinsic aspects of Twitter as a particularly fashioned public social medium, and from how List members apply its facilities. All this complicates deriving an overall objective assessment of the philosophy profession within and beyond the confines of Twitter.

Finally, for almost all observations and derivations exist contrary or alternative examples. None of the participants or groups of Philosophy Twitter are identical, and many are complex and unique. So the summarizing assessments made in this article involve broad brushstrokes that may depict parts inaccurately, may be overstatements, and may not address exceptions.

These issues place this article in a foundational category, and its methods and results should be considered open to change and expansion. Its work has been undertaken in hopes of providing a basis as well as incentive for further inquiry that might profit from additional data collection and analysis. All this study can wish to achieve is identifying and describing patterns of conduct. Readers are encouraged to relate these accounts to their experiences or those of acquaintances in the field. But they are also encouraged to contemplate findings in this article not reflected in such experiences and to imagine themselves in other participants' circumstances. This is hoped to afford them added perspectives on Philosophy Twitter's social dynamics and their conduct.

The above caveats might suggest waiting for more elaborate data or analysis before publishing results. However, this would not only fail the intent of inspiring and assisting the formulation of further studies. It also would discount the urgency of several existential challenges to academic philosophy that keep it from facing its obligations to itself and humanity. Notwithstanding this study's shortcomings and the preliminarity of its results, it confirms these challenges and points to their scope and causes. If nothing else comes from it but heightened awareness and debate of these issues, its efforts will have been worthwhile. Such awareness cannot be achieved, or debate conducted successfully, unless we each contemplate how we contribute to problems and can contribute to their solutions. Fostering this process is the ultimate intent of this work.

2. THE PHILOSOPHY COMMUNITY ON TWITTER.

The initial and overarching examination of this study has been to determine the extent to which Philosophy Twitter can be considered a community of philosophy professionals. The existence of some type of community stands to reason, given that constituent List members work in the same overall discipline, experience similar study and practice conditions, and share partial but often overlapping features such as provenance, identity, institutions, interests, viewpoints, or opinions. They may be or have been studying together or with the same professors, be or have been members of the same associations, faculties, study groups, or programs. They may know of one another from publications, other media, or from crossing paths at events or conventions.

The conjunctive layers established by these personal and professional connectors, expanded by Twitter communication and search functions, may be thought to easily lead to the formation of a community. The collection of professionals in the two Lists subject to this study further assists connection efforts. Interested parties can simply tune into the streams populated by tweets of List members and the Profiles of appealing members to find connections. Combing through Bios and Profiles of 4500 members on the "Philosophers on Twitter" List requires determination. But the "Philosophers" List, limited to professionals with more than 1000 followers, is additionally organized into a searchable data base with rankings, subcategories, multiple metrics, and links.

Not all philosophy professionals on Twitter may avail themselves of such potentials. But many active and passive participants appear to justify their presence with an impression of Twitter as prevalent social medium for the profession. And tweets referencing or directed to "Philosophy Twitter", "philosophers on Twitter", "philosophers", or other philosophy professionals confirm such awareness. Cognizance of the two constituent Lists is hard to gauge. But network analysis indicates extensive, if widely varying, conjunction overlap within and between these Lists.

General factors for members' participation are their types and levels of interest, age, account age and size, how long they are in the field, how renowned they are, and how much time they can and want to afford. Practitioners might not be on Twitter at all if their career predated its 2006 launch. If they are, they are likely to not be as active as generations for whom it is a more natural part of their personal and professional lives. However, these factors cannot sufficiently explain the overall picture drawn from network analysis of constituent behavior. That overall picture is characterized by the absence of anything resembling one integrative or integrated group, and by momentous divisions between multiple association types. Effects of experience overlays are overwhelmingly not connective or community-affirming. Much to the contrary, experience categories work to create and enhance segregation. Only in a minority of incidents do they allow or foster conjunctions with other experience types. The result is a class system.

This scenario may not be suggested to the casual reviewer of tweet streams. In many respects, Philosophy Twitter resembles a nerdy version of Twitter at large, with somewhat more restraint as would be expected from aspiring and actual professionals. Philosophical themes dominate many members' timelines. Yet very few use their accounts entirely for philosophical purposes.

List streams usually display blends of personal and professional tweets. They refer to members' or other parties' accomplishments, publications, events, or interests, cite quotes, and record considerations. There is plentiful retweeting of political, science, health, culture, or other news or opinion, with a heavy weight toward the political. Numerous tweets focus on the lighter side of the profession, philosophy, or life. A notable contingent broadcasts professional substance in various depth and form. And approachability, interest, responsiveness, inclusivity, friendliness, generosity, and care by some members might imply all is well in the Philosophy Twitter world. Yet, a review of member relations evidences pervasive and troubling social dysfunction.

3. SUBDIVISIONS OF PHILOSOPHY TWITTER.

Due to the organic genesis and lack of organization of Philosophy Twitter, there are no rules of conduct beyond the framework set by Twitter. And taking part in Philosophy Twitter should not force us to connect or communicate with everybody or anybody. Indeed, one of the attractants of Twitter generally is that we can shape associations with which we want to be in touch and that we can choose types and intensities of our engagements, including not communicating at all. We should not be criticized for involvement levels according to our preferences. We may not have agreed to be on either of the two constituting Lists and not be aware we are included. And even if this is untrue, we may reject activity expectations as Philosophy Twitter inhabitants.

With this in mind, conduct of List members can be distinguished into several principal sociability patterns. Any number of these patterns may coincide and reinforce or attenuate one another.

3.1 Unilateral and Unidirectional Posting. A small number of members post without intent of connecting or reacting to replies. They seem to use Twitter as notepad or diary. Apart maybe from positive echoing, they are uninterested in reactions to their entries, and steadily refuse discussions. This may not be obvious from their tweets. Some post quite a bit, often on a range of subjects. Some may on occasion respond. This is bound to use up considerable amounts of initial social goodwill from inexperienced members in repeated ill-fated contact attempts. The only other way to obtain some guidance might be to look at past tweets from such persons to determine how much Philosophy Twitter reacts to them and how much they engage in turn.

A step up in sociability, though minor, is represented by a much larger contingent of members who retweet third-party information without comment, and are about as responsive as those posting for themselves. Many such pure retweets concern publications or events in the field. A constructive service since tweeted information is so quickly supplanted by subsequent entries.

Retweets of professional subjects are frequently interspersed with news, analysis, or opinion in other areas. Some of the most stalwart retweeters focus almost exclusively on political, and to a lesser degree on other, content they would like to be known. Depending on the content, such pure retweets can generate moderate audience reactions, particularly on professional topics. But normally, retweeting of news does not receive much measurable attention, and this seems expected by pure retweeters. Their correlated nonresponsiveness may be irritating to some, but the retweet typology allows others to swiftly learn and gear their reactions accordingly.

Detecting the unidirectional intent of retweeters is more difficult if they provide comment on, or summaries of, their retweets. Such personal voicing may be understood as an invitation to converse regarding the retweet, and this initial impression is thus more troublesome to dispel.

Yet, projecting personal social norms on unilateral or unidirectional posting practices generally seems inapposite. Twitter's original intent and initial capacity was, under its early 140-character limitation, to be a platform for news and microblogging rather than substantive conversations. And newscasters or bloggers are not traditionally held to personal conversational norms. Social networking aspects became more prominent after the character limit was lifted to 280 in 2017 and tweet threading was introduced that same year. This, and growing uses in lieu of personal interaction, may obscure Twitter's origins and render nonresponsive uses unwelcome to many.

"Posting the news" has become a familiar jab deriding tweeters for underusing Twitter's social facilities. When social network customs are applied, nonresponsive communication becomes an oddity. Still, once identified, consistently practiced nonengagement becomes a relatively minor and manageable nuisance. And in view of Twitter's broadcasting origins, it might be excused.

But different considerations apply once participants employ bi-directional communication. Even if they do so irregularly, it signals fundamental openness to interaction. Holding them then to interactive norms appears particularly warranted if they make philosophy-related statements, show awareness of Philosophy Twitter as collegial forum, or use it for professional messaging. As in traditional collegial settings, their activity implies readiness to engage with others about it.

3.2 Academic Stratification. In such more regular social contexts, an acutely destructive pattern of Philosophy Twitter is the stratification of interactions according to academic status, because it cuts its social functionalities to pieces. This cliquishness includes groups of institutional elites on one end, new students on the other, and about any level between. The applicable markers are personal academic rank and institutional ranking, prominence in a field, and friendship or acquaintance. Some groups are more exclusive than others in delineating their membership. And none of them do so expressly. Rarely does one see membership in more than one group.

Exchanges between these stratifications or with parties outside of them are infrequent as well. The scarcest showings of conversational contact are between students and teachers. More, but still infrequent, contacts occur between those populating upper levels and arrived rungs on the academic ladder. The exclusivities of academic stratification are frequently pursued to a point of total lack of interest in, or responsiveness to, anyone and anything outside the vetted group.

And these exclusivities are not much tested. Apparently, most everybody except maybe novices knows better than to communicate with academic groups outside one's own. And experienced unattached professionals appear habitually hesitant to disturb them. This is evidenced by how carefully they choose contacts with members of exclusive groups only after these are known to be approachable, and only for important reasons such as to make career-elevating impressions. Exceptions to the restrictiveness of status groups are more regularly made when someone with superior standing grants them or their members consideration. Yet this is very much out of the ordinary. And references to superior rungs usually stop short of addressing them directly.

Expressions of these status-oriented patterns reflect classic tribal and hierarchic sentiments. In their primeval contexts, applicable rules remain unspoken but widely understood, bolstered by threats of reduced group standing, curbing of interaction, and bans on joining or rejoining.

The intense inward orientation of these groups has them use Twitter like a messaging system or chat room for their members. But their intransigence is mostly not obvious to novices seeking professional connection. Its identification is complicated by precautionary responsiveness until the vetting of a contactor's status. And it may be difficult to ascertain the existence and scope of an exclusive group because not all its members may be firmly committed to its exclusivity. But most confusingly, members are habitually gregarious and easygoing in their group, which attracts interaction from outside. Multiple frustrations may be needed for contactors to realize they are purposely ignored. After all, reaction failures may have innocent explanations, such as personal or professional schedules, time zone variances, or no time to recap incoming activity between attendances. Or communication filters may be active without recall or awareness of their existence or function. Members seeking contact may be especially prone to ascribe lapses to such innocent causes and excuse them since asocial intent runs counter to their disposition.

3.3 Content Exclusivity. Beyond academic standing, some group arrangements center around areas of interest or subdisciplines in philosophy, shared political focus, or religious ideologies. The exclusivity of many such groups rivals and at times exceeds status-related exclusive circles.

Some political groups reflect uncompromising fanaticism about their subject and flat out reject any dialogue outside, or even inside, their ideology unless it is conforming. Others might at first appear less strident because leaders of such groups engage in some discussion regarding their ideology. However, this apparent space is quickly squelched in vociferous reprisals by followers.

Besides radical political cadres, some of the most inflexible and inward-oriented types of groups are religious or have a religious angle. Many of them hold on to remnants of the long Western history of conflating knowledge and belief during millennia of religious suppression or direction of rational thought. Their continuing attempts to mix and deny the incompatibilities of faith and philosophy's quest for knowledge make these groups and their stances systemic anachronisms in a discipline that by and large subscribes to rationality in objective and method. Apparently true to their unwillingness to accept this standard, except to the extent it confirms their beliefs, members of these ideologies regularly abstain from substantive interaction outside their group.

But even groups that can be legitimately slotted as philosophical in their subjects and professed methods often display remarkable resistance to permitting anybody outside the group to join a discussion, let alone the group, and group members regularly ignore contributions by outsiders.

This content-related exclusivity is often jealously enforced by participants if one of them begins to communicate outside the group. Correction is imposed by ignoring newcomers and carrying on conversations, including those begun by newcomers, by responding only to the group with newcomers blocked or deselected. More open engagement outside such groups is, if occurring at all, regularly limited to participants whose qualifications are carefully vetted as comparable.

On occasion, exclusivities according to content combine with exclusive stratifications according to academic standing. The additional requirements of compatibility and common denominators among these classes tend to restrict group membership and communication to very select few.

Groups practicing content-related exclusivity may indeed engage in the discussion of content. And it may be interesting to merely listen to them, and appropriate not to seek involvement, unless one can ask a relevant question or make a competent contribution. However, the regular ignoring of serious comments or questions beyond these groups demonstrates that the ulterior

motive for their exclusivity is social. Content-related debates appear to have the initial function of testing substantive prowess to prove worthy of admission to the group. As group members become familiar with one another, they customarily engage in additional sparring to reinforce their membership and build out their relationship. Such ritualized utilization of content tends to neglect its substance as the focal point of discussion, and discussion qualities often reflect this. Together with the exclusion of outside contributors, expectations of trials and transitory bouts of shadow-boxing inside the group threaten to render attempts at a serious discussion futile. Ironically then, groupings with an apparent purpose of substantive attention may prevent it.

A conceivable additional and maybe principal contributing factor might be the expectation that Twitter is not a medium for serious philosophical discussions in the first place. Activity dynamics in content-related exchanges suggest a broad perception that it is primarily suited for posing positions without much follow-up. Brief exchanges are therefore normal. Protracted discussions or suggestions to continue discussions in a different venue or manner occur only rarely.

One might ask then why the posing of positions is a relatively popular occurrence of content on Philosophy Twitter. Apart from the discussed buttressing of affiliation with a particular group, more general reasons may be at work. These include the signaling of status or competence in the profession, on Philosophy Twitter, or to specific levels or segments, seeking kindred minds, or inviting substantive dialogue against the odds. Such tweets may further be pursued in plans of building a substantive profile to eventually be admitted into an exclusive substantive group.

Principal purposes of content-related communication then appear to be very similar to those of status-related exclusive groups: Representing and testing worthiness, hobnobbing with peers, reveling in mutual acceptance, support, and affirmation, and preparing possible accession.

Exclusive groups of either kind may still draw traffic by outsiders who have not caught on to, or who accept, their exclusivity. Such outsiders may still comment, retweet, or like in typically ill-fated hopes of finding attention by proscribed groups or their apparently exalted members. Or they may seek connection with one another in hanger-on purgatories created by these actions.

3.4 Celebrity. Similar attitudes abound toward a small number of celebrities who have achieved preeminent professional standing, and even fewer who have reached prominence among non-professionals. Both kinds of celebrities frequently constitute centers of exclusivity on their own. They are generally nonreactive to contacts by members of the public. And they are scarcely responsive to, or seeking, collegial dialogue. Conversely, approaches by colleagues are usually delimited to sporadic conforming or critical remarks or to efforts of endearment. This collegial disconnection results from a split of the profession into two diametric types of disposition.

The profession has long been taken over by formalists, administrators, and personalities aiming at leading a quiet, ordered, safe life in relative obscurity instead of adding their fire toward the enlightenment of humanity. This follower mentality is contrasted by a far smaller collection of leader-type personalities. Both classes are active on Philosophy Twitter: The former sheltered in traditional philosophers and teachings, and the latter steering attention to themselves and their subjects. The frequency and intensity of Twitter activity is naturally weighted in favor of those seeking the limelight, but sometimes rivaled by the steadiness of traditional clerical reporting.

Interchange between these divisions is much lower than a classic follower-leadership structure suggests. One reason is that avantgarde leadership commonly has problems finding acceptance.

Because philosophy is historically establishment-oriented, innovative ideas must surmount high barriers before they can become generally accepted. And avantgarde professionals may not aim or succeed to advance philosophical concerns as much as their personal or political interests. A corresponding reason is that a great majority of professional followers follows the leadership of canonical philosophers and interpreters who continue their traditions. These causes result in a bifurcation of philosophical celebrities: Classic scholars who are mainly, and mostly exclusively, established in the profession, and innovative personalities who may have a harder time being widely accepted in the profession and thus may seek unconventional validation by the public.

Either kind of celebrity tends to be isolated. It is difficult to say whether this isolation is entirely intentional. Nonresponsiveness by celebrities can be caused by the communicative onslaught to which they may be exposed. This is particularly so when their fame surpasses mere professional philosophy and draws attention from a large pool of lurkers, trolls, admirers, and adversaries. Still, the selectivity of celebrities' responses suggests arbitrage of communicative worthiness by status of the counterpart. This may not be solely by their determination. Their accounts may be managed by agents that act as filters and switchboards for their social media activities. Tweets may be generated by agents or scheduled automatically to free philosophy celebrities for tasks more worth their presence. And they may be so tied up in their pursuits that there is no or very little time left to engage in conversations with the public or even within their profession. Still, the general remoteness of celebrities suggests that this is the social arrangement they desire.

Twitter in its original news and micro-blogging form was rapidly adopted by celebrities as the perfect platform for unidirectional communications. And this use has continued undiminished. Celebrities' communiques are often promotional, only thinly veiling or unabashedly expressing marketing intent. Many have a publication or event to peddle. And even if this is not so at the time, they seek to maintain or improve their public image, awareness, and celebrity level. Their currying favor may imply interest in, and responsiveness to, their audience. But they habitually disappoint such expectations. Their allotments of time and effort for thought and discussion, their plasticity of concepts, have passed. They and their work have become marketed products. They are not interested in dialogue unless it serves their marketing objective. And any dialogue that is not mass communication to this effect fails to capably advance that objective. Individual exchanges on Twitter are likely not qualifying unless they are with other celebrities or go viral.

But this is only one cause of their nonresponsiveness. The other is innate in creating celebrity. It requires effecting social distance and elevation differentials that appear necessary for others to adore and follow. Part of this divide may be initiated or driven by admirers. But celebrities who enjoy being and remaining celebrities are vested in fostering or at least in comporting with this expectation. Twitter is just one more way to achieve and maintain this stance. Protestations to the contrary and sporadic mingling are merely propaganda to gain trust and provide excuses for celebrities' privilege by declaring them humble or approachable. As celebrity grows, sociability demonstrations become increasingly unnecessary, and not acting according to elevated status threatens to diminish it. Celebrity leadership is shown by self-assured one-way communication.

The rejection of dialogue then becomes a vital means to build and maintain celebrity status.

To signal or bolster elevated status on Twitter, celebrities and multitudes more who aspire to such status pursue strategies minimizing their following others, even fellow professionals, while increasing follower counts. Some will relentlessly fail to follow, or unfollow after first following

or following back. A slap in the face of colleagues following them that these will not bear if they have self-respect. And yet, startling numbers of colleagues follow such narcissists unilaterally, possibly in surrender to their superiority or in faint hopes of finding their favor against all odds.

Philosophy Twitter novices may not be too surprised realizing that celebrities in philosophy use it as a one-way conveyance. General celebrity culture may have already primed them to be only on receiving ends of information. And yet, the discouraging of engagement by asocial collegial behavior of philosophy celebrities is significant because they claim or are seen to be idols and paragons of the profession. Their example is likely to be aspired to and emulated even though it greatly damages the discursive process in which philosophy is generated and further advanced.

3.5 General Political Activity. Political tweets are the most eminent kind on Philosophy Twitter. They mostly reflect views from the left of the spectrum. Given this massive opinion overweight, voicing dissenting opinions or even countervailing facts runs a risk of reprimand by colleagues and their public followers and, if maintained, professional isolation. These conditions cause an almost complete absence of debate. Political tweets are popular with aligned professionals and public followers because they reaffirm. This correlation may be perceived as an opportunity by both authors of tweets and readers to connect, communicate, and bond over shared views.

The enthusiasm political tweets reflect and evoke among Philosophy Twitter members stands out as an example of interactive vibrance, although it primarily derives from mutual affirmation and expansion. Philosophy practitioners may target political controversy to escape the dullness of philosophical discourse and to make a name for themselves. Yet such public exposure comes at a steep price because it invites reaction beyond the, despite all its faults, still self-possessed philosophy community. Both verbal actions taken and reactions prompted add to and reflect in public polarization and incite crude displays of tribality. Professionals seeking public attention may agree to pay this price. But the consequences of such misguided grasps at relevance are necessarily devastating for philosophy. Not only is it deprived of philosophical efforts. It is also converted into a partisan instrument. Far removed seem the ideals of philosophy stepping back to impartially and calmly consider facts and arguments by all angles in approaching objectivity. Philosophy's loss of philosophical methods, ethics, and its standing as arbiter among positions argued, proved, and debated are steep costs of such publicity that threaten its very essence.

3.6 Announcements and Endorsements. Besides celebrities, many other members use Twitter to announce their publications, appearances, or career events. Replies to these are often sparse and non-substantive. Even applauded notices tend to receive only polite felicitations, retweets, or likes from group members or acquaintances. Maybe this is all that is intended. Most issuers of announcements seem disinterested in follow-up exchanges even if these might help publicize their causes. They might think that one-way communications employed by celebrities work for them as well or that responsiveness foils their ambitions of being acknowledged as celebrities. They may lack confidence in their work, or assume lack of interest, and be keener on publicizing being published than discussing their publication's substance or dealing with being slighted.

An about equal number of announcements endorse publications, appearances, or career events of other philosophy professionals who are ordinarily on Philosophy Twitter as well. These are often services based on friendship or on planned or practiced mutual benefit. They may also be self-promoting if the issuer has contributed to the featured or general work or the career of the endorsed originator. But here again, their issuance does not induce much substantive dialogue.

The superficiality and ineffectiveness of announcements or endorsements is often evidenced by their form. Tweets referencing a piece of work may not indicate what type of publication it is, what it is about, or why it warrants attention or endorsement. Attachments might take care of that. But often their title is hidden or cut off, or their subject or rationale not readily apparent.

3.7 Humor. Numerous tweets are ironic, sarcastic, satiric, or otherwise humorous. This manner of socializing can be an exceedingly effective tool in building a community. Yet, on Philosophy Twitter, levity rarely translates into camaraderie, community spirit, or substantive interaction.

And humor is only tepidly used due to the difficulty of grasping who is receptive to it and what can be safely said. Great sensibility variances among members pose formidable obstacles. Even if targets of a joke would not take offense, they might react adversely if others do. And others may feel entitled to take offense on behalf of purported victims of a joke or a perceived class of victims. Such risks merge with members' own political correctness standards and obligations or opportunities of virtue signaling in their private and professional social circles. This makes many prone to entirely avoid critical or over the top humor, leaving a severely narrowed spectrum of innocuous banter, puns, philosophy jokes, or Twitter memes sure not to draw reproaches.

This caution is bound to have a thoroughly chilling effect on the connecting social functions of humor. There are two recognized exceptions to this mindset. But they represent modalities that separate instead of uniting the profession. One variation is the no-holds-barred open season for slurs against individuals and groups determined by governing consent to be legitimate targets.

Victims of this mob mentality are unlikely to respond, either because they are not represented on Philosophy Twitter or because they do not dare speak up for fear of reprisals. Characteristic for such almost completely political humor is its particular viciousness and intent of insult and schadenfreude that regularly violate conventions of human dignity and reconciliation. Possibly, the prejudice of these tweets is fueled by the lack of other permissible outlets for frustration.

Another irritating exception is that some who deal out jabs lose their sense of humor if they or anything pertaining or dear to them becomes a subject of irreverence by others. Perceptions of celebrity, affiliation or affinity with persons, groups, or ideas, as well as personal or professional insecurities seem to contribute to this differentiation in standards. Identifying these pitfalls and even more working around them, or simply ignoring them, is commonly too much of a risk or challenge. This leads to strange constellations on Philosophy Twitter where certain individuals are permitted to joke while others are not, or at least not with near equal space or impunity.

3.8 Substantive Activity. Serious substantive academic undertakings are sparse, and it is easy to see a major reason for this. Expositions of members' thoughts frequently remain unrequited by anything matching the original effort. This may be due to the ephemeral quality of tweets that are moving down a timeline or stream before interested parties can detect their existence and engage in a conversation. But there also seems to be scant appetite on Twitter to engage in such exchanges. Where these are attempted in response to substantive tweets, reactions, if at all forthcoming, are surprisingly often full of annoyance and curtness, sometimes accompanied by advisories that the author of the original tweet does not wish to engage in an argument. As if discussion of philosophical points they deemed important enough to publicize were an affront.

This may not describe the attitude of the majority of substantive tweet authors. And not many may respond rudely. But most fail to engage, or only engage in throw-away manners, thereby

indicating no interest in further conversation. This is not to say that every substantive tweet can or needs to be the overture to a protracted back-and-forth. Maybe most tweets fall into this category. Nevertheless, overwhelming avoidance of constructive conversation upon worthwhile statements makes Philosophy Twitter ineffective and inefficient for those taking it seriously as a marketplace of ideas and of supportive socialization fostering their exchange and development.

An endearing, if often annoying, exception to the dodging of substantive discourse is regularly created by philosophy professionals in training who try out what they recently learned and use exchanges on Philosophy Twitter to impress and to signal how much they already qualify and belong. Endless name-dropping of philosophers, teachers, books, theories, and technical terms combines with daring assertions about any number of philosophical subjects and personalities. Contributions turn into series in which apprentices outbid one another in such respects, often without understanding one another. This disconnect causes exchanges to run out before long.

Awkward and unproductive as such exchanges may be, these students practice the discursive spirit of philosophy, a vital, storied foundation of philosophy that is apparently still taught to them and in which they still believe at that stage. That those teaching them often sadly ignore these principles warrants the question who is more of a poser. And the lack of skill, precision, and caution by students also evidences the poor state of instruction on philosophical discourse.

3.9 Cultural Separation and Foreign Language Tweets. Philosophy Twitter does not have many members from outside the Anglosphere, indicating substantial room for member growth and participation. This poor showing may be in part attributable to a lower popularity of Twitter in other areas of the world. But differences in cultural acceptance may go beyond that. In many countries, presence on social media seems to be frowned upon as unprofessional and beneath academic dignity. And universities and departments that do not see value in social media for their purposes may also deem involvement by their employees frivolous, wasteful, and possibly damaging to the reputation of both. Even in absence of formal policies on the topic, academics at these institutions may not want to expose themselves to ridicule or criticism, particularly after they realize how little Philosophy Twitter in its current configuration can assist them.

To the extent there is foreign involvement, it is overwhelmingly directed to members within the same culture. Unsurprisingly then, foreign members mostly tweet in a foreign language. Twitter offers an easily accessible translation feature for these. But how many members not speaking a language will click this feature to find out what a tweet says? And how many feel, or in fact are, invited to communicate across cultural boundaries? Until Twitter automatically translates all tweets in the List streams into a reader's preferred language, diversity of languages will be an obstacle to building a worldwide philosophy community. Even then, the question remains how cultural parochialism finding expression in the use of a foreign languages can be bridged.

This is by no means only a problem of other cultures. The Anglosphere is home to some of the most parochial philosophy practices in the world. These are topped by the international oddity of "Analytic Philosophy", which is widely claimed there to be new, separate, and superior to all other philosophy, including European philosophy, which is termed "Continental". As if analysis were not all along part of philosophy. The artificiality and audacity of these claims derive from delusions of cultural exceptionalism and the opportunity of making academic disconnection a virtue. And though Analytic Philosophy has made useful contributions, it also designated areas as philosophy that should have been accorded to or termed other disciplines. This opened the

gate for political or humanistic scientific movements in the Anglosphere to claim the status of a philosophical subdiscipline, producing pseudo-expansions the rest of the world resists sharing. All this insolence reduces grasp and work on European, including traditional British, philosophy. Yet, reinforced by enduring colonial attitudes and racial sentiments, it also causes contempt for, and ignorance of, non-European philosophies that only very recently have begun to be lifted.

The parochiality of scholarship in the Anglosphere is also evident when philosophies originating in other languages are addressed on their terms. Here, the problem is inadequate knowledge of involved languages and reliance on compromised translations. Missing language skills also often cause ignorance of foreign secondary literature. Still, such daunting deficits rarely stop scholars on foreign philosophies from assuredly claiming adventurous interpretations and conclusions.

Pointing to these weaknesses or suggesting alternatives seems offensive and futile considering Philosophy Twitter's governing Anglo-Saxon monoculture. Its parochiality may form the hardest barrier to building a worldwide philosophy community on Twitter. Inward orientation and lack of interest by colleagues outside this culture may be formidable adversities as well. But these would only come into play if Philosophy Twitter were a welcoming place for professionals from other parts of the world. Unrepentant distancing from these parts and overconfident assertions of interpretations in their native philosophies make this a nearly impossible undertaking.

4. INITIATIVE AND RESPONSIVENESS.

4.1 Varied Effort. The exclusionary variants described in the previous Section debilitate initial engagement and responsiveness within Philosophy Twitter. Members whose attributes entitle them to inclusion in its exclusive preferences may find it welcoming and adequately productive.

But the average experience is dishearteningly poor. Still, many long-time members may resist admissions of defeat, particularly if they have invested effort. They may want to save face by staying involved or hang on hoping for improved communication. But they may scale back their investment of time and effort to make it more proportionate to their lack or hope of benefit.

And, over the period of this study, a notable number of enthusiastic entrants soon vanished or drastically reduced their presence. Even after being repeatedly snubbed on Philosophy Twitter, some new members may continue to engage believing they will have to pay their dues to be eventually accepted. But many more take its rebukes to heart and lose patience and interest.

In this state, even active members are set to draw and hold attention without much effort. This attitude is nurtured by the fleeting nature and low impact of member tweets, which seem to render any more input futile. In successful participants, this futility often prompts a love-hate mindset, which expresses itself in attention-seeking, short-tempered egocentricity, and lack of care. Their activities oscillate between arousing attention and dispatching it. Ultimately, they may wonder how success on Twitter benefits them. Their dominance on Philosophy Twitter in spite of themselves can drain purpose and resolve from struggling authentic members as well.

Many less ambitious members already rate its value low, as shown by their neglect regarding their own and counterparts' tweets. They may tweet statements, questions, or polls but fail to pursue them. Or they respond to contacts, responses, questions, and endorsements, no matter how thoughtful, at best perfunctorily. Even if dialogue occurs, it often lacks commitment. That some responses in a thread are only comprehensible if viewed in context is not surprising. But if

they do not carry enough interest to evoke further inquiry into a thread, they can prevent third-party involvement and quickly truncate an ongoing conversation. Many initiating tweets display communicative deficiencies as well. Some Dadaist or otherwise inscrutable statements puzzle readers with their absurdity. Many more are so cryptic that they do not furnish readers enough information to assess interest. It is almost as if their originators presumed curiosity despite little or no knowledge of what their tweet is about, or as if they intended non-sequiturs they cause.

4.2 Low Participation. It is hard to tell whether these deficits are causes or consequences of the desolate shape of Philosophy Twitter. In any event, communication opportunities are regularly wasted. Typical as this might be for Twitter generally, such short shrift in a professional context raises the issue whether Philosophy Twitter is worth stepped-up participation if it already does not yield expected results. Its present shape and dynamics instill severe doubts about that.

One may wonder how widespread asociality is to deserve such attention in this article. Taken together, asocial behavioral patterns described in this and the preceding Section threaten to suffocate social commerce on Philosophy Twitter. If one includes perfunctory responses such as likes, emojis, or set phrase responses into the classification of asocial nonresponsiveness, then substantive social engagement about any subject becomes a remarkably rarified occurrence.

All these negatives make Philosophy Twitter, even for many of the privileged, highly laborious, undignified, and exasperating to navigate. Its ubiquitous mazes of dead-ends inhibit meaningful exchanges. They also blunt the rise of a community of philosophy professionals at large or more comprehensive communities in subdisciplines. And they discourage engagement with existing and potential associates for concern this might be another occasion for social disappointment. These conditions reflect in a poor participation rate among qualifying members. On a good day, which might occur between Monday and Thursday, a few hundred members participate, with a minority contributing and the majority retweeting, liking, and at times commenting. Even many members with large follower numbers show little interest in participating. And many more who are less connected and should want to constructively use Philosophy Twitter opt to refrain.

No data is accessible on how many philosophy professionals have joined Twitter since inception and left or become inactive due to disillusionment. The two Lists contain almost entirely active members. And, as they reflect to some extent, active accounts appear to have increased rather steadily over recent years. Yet still, considering the number of professionals in university level philosophy programs, even if one limited the count to the English-speaking world, Twitter has integrated only a small fraction of candidates. This may have several reasons like the popularity of social media generally or Twitter particularly, professional, personal, or cultural reservations, or technical issues. Some philosophy professionals might not deem Twitter worthwhile even at its imaginable best. But quite possibly Philosophy Twitter's dysfunction constitutes a major, if not the most decisive, reason for limiting broader acceptance as professional social platform.

Its deficiencies are not only likely to be noticed by members suffering from them. Members are not voicing many complaints on Twitter itself, probably because they cannot see how this could improve their experiences. They are more likely to speak up when colleagues ask them about joining. A high incidence of such inquiries seems assured since the proliferation of membership among colleagues has already, or is likely to, put the rest on notice. That so many professionals have not joined should give anybody who perceives value or potential in Twitter pause. It could mean that, unless corrective action is taken, Philosophy Twitter may be approaching its limits.

The desolation of Philosophy Twitter precipitates momentous consequences past professional aspects since its social potential is much larger than the profession. After all, philosophy deems itself essential inspiring and leading human civilization and development to enlightenment. The social facilities of Twitter offer philosophy unique prospects to assume this function. If not here, where else would academic philosophy try to connect with the public? And if it were otherwise relating to the public, should there not be a healthy reflection of this on Twitter? So it seems fair to ask how its professionals use and could use Twitter in the pursuit of this public purpose.

5. PUBLIC PHILOSOPHY ON PHILOSOPHY TWITTER.

5.1 Absence. Philosophy Twitter can only to a very limited extent be described as being in the service of public philosophy. This may seem explainable by the fact that the Lists constituting Philosophy Twitter concentrate on professionals, excluding the rest of the public. However, if its members were to practice public outreach, such activities and ensuing popular interactions would involve their Twitter accounts, if only by reference in public discussion. There is very little sign of this. Not all professionals claiming to practice public philosophy are on Twitter. This may count as a shortcoming in itself. But of those who are, a high number is not credibly following up their claims with expressions of interest or exchanges involving the public in either direction.

This is odd considering that public philosophy is said to gain an ever-higher profile in philosophy departments. Public involvement and practical purpose, possibly even supporting or leading to careers in the real world, are to justify their continuation and budgetary wants. And yet, with not many exceptions, some of the most unsocial, unworldly, or elitist people seem to populate outreach programs, and this sharply bleeds through to public philosophy indications on Twitter.

5.2 Distance. Twitter's character limit does not allow for elaborate presentations. But it seems perfect for piquing public interest in short expositions linked to embedded or external media. It also could host follow-up discussions, clarifications, or the asking and answering of questions.

Philosophy professionals tend to avoid such involvements. Their programs and advertisements of them often stop short of prompting, curating, accepting, or even enabling dialogue with or among the public, or of igniting and assisting independent philosophical efforts by the public. Programs are customarily self-contained and their information flows intended to be one-sided.

Their purveyors largely keep distance from commoners, obviously not interested in entertaining any sort of follow-up with, or input by, them. The shift to on-line programs cannot be blamed for this since their technologies regularly offer comment or discussion forums. Many presenters elect not to permit or engage these facilities. They abuse remote technologies to avoid person-to-person involvement and safeguard self-isolation. All while giving a superficial air of populism to support acceptance by the public and authorities who tasked them with public interaction.

5.3 Substantive Failure. Public programs might make amends for their isolation if they were of a high quality and already proficient in answering questions. Some present adequately or even nicely. But the majority of programs summarizes or abridges regular student fare to where its concepts become impenetrable, encyclopedic data points. Often, this reduction coincides with an infantilization of these points. Most programs deem it sufficient to lecture the public in mere accounts of who said what, and how it compares to what someone else asserted. Marking such citations as wisdom, they regularly leave it to members of the public to expand their absorption of presented concepts, particularize them to their conditions, and practically integrate them.

To the extent attempts are made to explain underlying premises and derivations of concepts or to bridge classic philosophy into public concerns, they are frequently clumsy and unconvincing in their claims of relevance. Some presentations lead with an appealing subject only to quickly fall back into abstract academics without relating these. Such approaches cannot sustain much attention. These deficiencies of presentations are amply paralleled and repeated by profusions of purportedly popular philosophy books that frequently pander to the public by catchy titles. The ultimate insults to public receptiveness and academic philosophy itself, and wastes of both, are exploitative books that belabor alleged philosophies of pop culture phenomena. As if the real-life concerns of the general population were not worth being addressed philosophically.

Many buy trivialized philosophy books or watch summarized or dumbed down presentations in efforts to round out their knowledge and education generally. But this will not likely assist them much in their lives with direct philosophical insight or development of their own philosophical faculties. High media purchase or viewing numbers cannot change this. They merely reflect the sincerity of interest by the public, which academic philosophy continues to bitterly disappoint.

5.4 Systemic Failure. Several reasons are conceivable for this delinquency. Inability is not likely since academics are trained to teach unfamiliar students. Limits of time or energy may be more valid. Some academic professionals may be so preoccupied with administrative, teaching, and other engagements that they cannot engage in, or do justice to, public philosophy efforts.

But why is it that so many professionals who include public philosophy in their job descriptions are not doing better? Should they not want to succeed meeting public and their department's demands? The only remaining explanations for observed failures are unwillingness or not taking the task seriously. One cannot help but deduce that forays into public philosophy are generally not geared toward reforming or expanding philosophy into a live science. They are by and large forced efforts to satisfy institutional pressures or to make the same old tales seem relevant and hip, so departments will be left alone and permitted to carry on in their traditional ways. They appear to be defensive moves to protect these ways, not to stir them up or add to them in any meaningful way. This renders most public outreach an insincere, ineffective, empty gesture.

Philosophy Twitter reflects all these failings. Its public involvement profile turns out to be even more disappointing than its professional realm. This is predictable because the systemic issues hobbling professional socialization compound those of public philosophy. The lack of sociability among colleagues punches through with amplified vehemence and prejudice in contact with a public that is generally considered not the focus of philosophy but rather an imposed nuisance.

6. DYSFUNCTION AND UNDERLYING CAUSES.

6.1 General Disposition. The collegial and public social deficits described in previous sections raise questions about underlying causes. The already discussed variants leading to failures of initiating contact and replying have a number of systemic roots worth exploring. But members' nonattendances or deficiencies in social interaction could also have more innocuous reasons.

The most immediate of such causes is a fundamental lack of interest by members to participate in Philosophy Twitter. Only few members uphold this attitude absolutely. But a larger minority appears to be content using it sporadically or passively, without paying much attention to the professional philosophy community or interacting past limited selections of counterparts. Their participation might not change significantly regardless of conduciveness, available facilities, or

who else might join. Members might not want to know about these features, or they might have understood them and adjusted their participation accordingly. Members may not want to subscribe to the social opportunities of Philosophy Twitter, instead using their accounts as if it did not exist. Any of this is their sole choice. But the overwhelming majority are involved, and more than passively or tentatively. And most engaging in unidirectional statements or selective sociability take advantage of Philosophy Twitter's other interactive aspects when it suits them.

Another willful reason for absence of engagement would be limited and diversified interests. Members may not be interested to tweet about certain subjects or to entertain a conversation about them. Asking them to feign interest for the sake of community would be preposterous. Philosophy Twitter is only worthwhile if members find it useful in the pursuit of their interests.

A third source of curbed interaction is failure to review contacts made by colleagues. Members usually neither have time nor inclination to monitor incoming moves on their Profiles. Twitter Notifications can relieve them from this inconvenience. Nevertheless, members may not react to these or otherwise catch up with incoming entries in their timelines between attendances. Inattention may also result from a failure to manage the complexities of Twitter filtering tools regarding incoming communications that blindsides members to collegial contact attempts.

Unintentional as these non-reactions might be, they could be prevented if members had more enthusiasm for their participation in Philosophy Twitter. In many cases, they may have made a decision to limit their attention. This is certainly so when they select to mute certain parties or categories of communications through filtering. Its arsenal can be deployed to great effect in excluding unwanted contacts. Filtering choices on Philosophy Twitter are hard to assess since these features, apart from rare blocking, are invisible to the persons affected. But in the end, it does not matter whether a member ignores communications or instructs Twitter to do so.

The plainest reason might be that members lack suitable knowledge of the facilities Twitter and particularly Philosophy Twitter offer. They may not partake in constituent List streams and thus only know a smaller segment of the philosophy professionals present on Twitter. They may not have realized how Philosophy Twitter can at least in theory be used for the promotion of their interests. It seems difficult to believe, however, that philosophy professionals who use Twitter would not look into its Lists and offerings even as they see or hear colleagues using these.

More probably, most Philosophy Twitter members do not take it very seriously. They may use it as diversion that allows them to socialize with colleagues on demand, see snapshots of what is going on in the profession, or obtain brief composites of current substantive matters. They may use it as a platform to lodge announcements about them, their work, or other items important to them for whatever that may be worth. Or they may simply be there because others are.

6.2 Inequity. But general disposition only supplies partial explanations for the observed paltry participation ratio and low intensity of engagement. Another is disillusionment after expending constructive efforts. There is no guidance on how to succeed on Philosophy Twitter, and scarce potential beyond being favored by its earlier portrayed grading and degrading principles. Other examples of success are rare, and their constructive specifics are often difficult to emulate.

Many socialization efforts may thus be useless. But even considered, quality efforts are serially disappointed and rapidly worn. For a vast majority, Philosophy Twitter in its present state is of very limited or no utility, no matter what they do and how much they want to be part of it.

The most prohibitive explanation for fundamental lack of engagement is thus its niche utility. Unless professionals possess connections that are translatable into on-line friendship, support, or attention, unless they are accepted in status or interest groups, or unless they are celebrities with willing consumers who do not expect personal attention, Philosophy Twitter seems futile. Its narrowness of effective niches makes few members press harder, motivates some others to only be active if they do, or can hope to, fulfill one, and discourages the majority of accounts. Irrational barriers, ideological zeal, insecurity, egotism, arrogance, elimination of interpersonal and collegial decency, and apathy combine to make it for many an avoidable tenth circle of hell.

Philosophy Twitter is not entirely horrid. Some participants attempt to use it constructively with some success. They would likely welcome better site conditions assisting them in their efforts.

But standing in the way of this positivity on approach and development is an active contingent of members who abuse Philosophy Twitter to serve their dysfunctions or those of others. The privileged connected control Philosophy Twitter as their playground. And under their rule, who one is, and what reputation one has, matters infinitely more than what one has to say. Its class order is established and maintained by unremitting composites of hierarchy and tribality. While declaring advancement of the highest instincts and capabilities as philosophy's purpose, it uses the lowest human social instincts to serve petty privileges for some, at the cost of a majority of professionals, the profession, and humanity. Challenges to this inhumane order are dealt with by silence, passive aggression, denunciation, or exclusion. The new social liberties of Twitter are misapplied to skirt social consideration and institutional decorum. Preexisting asocial academic leanings and usually hidden or subdued aspects can find release in less inhibited expression.

6.3 Organizational Restraints. In such excesses, Philosophy Twitter bares academic philosophy as a remnant of a medieval feudal guild and apprenticeship system. This is not surprising since universities and departments have long traditions of being so organized. To advance or even stay in this feudal system, apprentices must fit into hierarchic requirements that are defined by institutional frameworks and specified by masters. Success is tied to compliance and obedience. Hence, students at any level do as they are told, cater to the powers that be to earn favor or at least indulgence, and keep their peers close for emotional support. Corresponding exterior and internalized pressures force them to meet trials without question until validation by a degree, employment, and ultimately tenure, when they will be permitted to join the system's circle of beneficiaries, protectors, and actuators, passing the discipline they took to further generations.

This feudal system is combined with a caste system within and among institutions according to which philosophy professionals and their activities are judged by their pedigree. This pedigree consists not much of racial, religious, national, wealth, or family aspects anymore. Its defining characteristics are tribal: The relative institutional ranking of one's philosophy schooling. This makes acceptance and retention by programs of highest possible standing extremely important. These pressures provide additional reinforcement to hierarchic institutional oppressions. Some may be able to escape lower rungs and qualify for accension into higher castes as they progress through their education and formational years of practice. But once academic pedigree and its trajectory have been sufficiently established, the system keeps professionals in their place.

A third systematic force in the organization of academic philosophy is imparted by its likeness to religious order. As I similarly stated before, it comports itself as rationally disguised religion, including gods, priests, dogmas, hierarchies, seminaries, disciples, confirmations, ordinations as

well as contests and arrangements between denominations. This organizational likeness carries ramifications for the substance of academic philosophy, which has to comply with, and support, its organizational strictures. Its roots are preemption, subsumption, and cooption of philosophy by religion and its incorporation into religious organization for most of its existence. During this period of substantive conformity, attitudes and mechanisms of worldly and religious control meshed as well to define academic philosophy. So much that upon its liberation from religious control, academic philosophy expanded into the regime of which it previously was a mere part, to fill it with its own substance and organization. Whether by default or calculated, philosophy ascended to claim similar infallibility, control, and detachment as its religious predecessor.

The combination of these influences finds stark expression in relations on Philosophy Twitter. With very few exceptions, members faithfully enforce its hierarchies and tribalities and function according to assigned places. Dominant and submissive attitudes merge with notions of sticking to one's kind and rejecting or not daring associations with other groups. Resulting conduct is characterized by sycophantic cheer for even the most trivial tweets by favored peers, superiors, or admired or coveted in-crowds. This devotion is often harshly contrasted by self-dispensation with common social and professional graces past such contacts regardless of proffered content.

6.4 Asociality. Criticisms of such deportment may be deemed unjustified. Arguably, philosophy professionals must suit themselves according to what is best for their careers under governing conditions of academic philosophy. But this begs the question whether asocial conduct toward colleagues is in the interest of any philosophy professionals. Why commit affronts that induce ill sentiments, prevent communication or force its breakdown, and not act like a well-mannered person in personal interaction would? Such behavior has no place in the philosophy profession. Nor does it make any sense on Philosophy Twitter. The different communication modalities of Twitter do not provide valid excuses for failing to hold up collegial standards of conduct.

Sociability and philosophical processes it enabled shaped the very foundations of philosophy. They involved genuine interest in others and their contributions, unprejudiced engagement on equal footings in gives-and-takes of inquiry, and intent of elevating all participants' minds and lives. Conceit, indifference, and rejection destroy this fabric and prevent its weaving.

These principles are requisites of developing philosophy even today. Exchanges may appear too specialized to involve colleagues or non-professionals not proficient in discussed subjects. And finer points may require a focused circle of experts to advance. But if one cannot explain these points to someone who does not take as much for granted, one might not have as much clarity about discussed matters as one may think. And what good is their theoretical advancement if it is not communicated to and discussed with those who could expand on it or benefit from it?

Hence, particularities of philosophical subjects do not justify nonresponsiveness to good faith commentary or questions from anybody, including professionals or lay persons. This is so even if offered contributions should not be deemed helpful for, or on point with, relevant concerns. In addition to realizing their responsibility and opportunity of sharing knowledge with others, professionals must not view themselves beyond considering contributions since any of them might afford hitherto unexplored or insufficiently explored angles. Fresh questions and insights may help to advance matters. Both these giving and receiving aspects are innate to academic philosophy. This is why the ancient ones not only endured but sought discourse in the broadest manner possible. That this stance is almost totally forgotten shows the defeat of philosophy.

6.5 Adversity to Innovation. Another sign of defeat is the nearly total aversion in the profession toward new philosophy. Denizens are primed to practice repetition and interpretation instead of progress. It is difficult to see how this outlook could change. Some may say there is a lack of new philosophy worth the bother. This may be true. But it seems to be a result of conservative, defensive attitudes inculcated in traditional philosophy and adopted into new subdisciplines. So chances of anything new or even incrementally important emerging from academic philosophy are slim. And if it does, chances are it will be ignored, ridiculed, or fought. This deficit is joined by a rejection of anything originating outside academic philosophy. Some new subdisciplines made it into the fold due to political pressure. But work without such backing is unlikely to find attention. And other sciences have about lost interest connecting because academic philosophy maintains it can govern their philosophy without including their insights into its considerations.

This dismissal of innovative substance constitutes a massively consequential failure of academic philosophy. By closing itself off to the development of its subjects, it sentences itself to death. A slow death on life support perhaps. But as universities, societies, and humanity move on, they may be increasingly inclined to switch off their support if they perceive insufficient useful life left in philosophy. At best, philosophy risks relegation to the quaintness of a dusty old library or book store with knowledgeable librarians. Examples for such similarities already come to mind.

6.6 Twitter Issues. The above-termed problems and effects endemic to current philosophy are painfully evident on Philosophy Twitter. But they might not present the entirety of reasons for its dysfunction. Maybe parts of objectionable conditions are not attributable to members' poor conduct but technical shortcomings and idiosyncrasies of Twitter. Maybe members are gearing their input to these. Maybe those with a vision that Twitter can play a central role in advancing the socialization of philosophy are fundamentally unrealistic in relying on Twitter's capacities.

Yet, its expandable brevity seems compatible with, and supportive of, this vision. Members are not even fully using the basic social features of Twitter, let alone expanded conversation tools it offers. The most plausible of these tools is the Communities feature, which facilitates tweets in thematic subdivisions. There is also Twitter Spaces, which provides moderated live audio events with up to ten speakers. Members hardly use either. This disproves that Twitter is an obstacle to deeper discourse. But it also dispels hope other tools toward this purpose will be accepted.

If these features were for some reason not practicable solutions for Philosophy Twitter users' communication needs, they would direct their contacts and conversations to other platforms. But this is not occurring to any noteworthy extent either. Facebook and other communication platforms have a much smaller presence of philosophy professionals. And although members refer to presentations on other platforms, these tend to not noticeably expand communication. Such is plainly the case when they restrict themselves to unidirectional modes. But even if they offer bilateral or multilateral communication, they rarely give rise to much collegial interaction, which also is not integrated back into Twitter. Apparently, then, there is no current demand for added or different kinds of on-line communication facilities within the philosophy profession.

6.7 Public Exposure. Another chilling effect could result from the fact that Philosophy Twitter can be read by colleagues and the public. While this may not bother many members, it is only natural their conduct is undertaken with awareness of such access and possibly considerations how their statements will play in the professional or public arena. This is obviously the case for celebrity members who have found note beyond Philosophy Twitter. But even other members

must be conscious of this prospect. And all of them must be keenly aware their employers and institutions, past, present, and future will likely have access to and review their activities.

Arguably, this exposure should not deter members from activity. Philosophy Twitter is unlikely to impose social restrictions to which they would not already be adapted in their professional arenas. Still, such restrictions may encumber debate of topics by preventing opinions and facts from being stated. This may be particularly effective on Philosophy Twitter because all factions of the profession are probably represented. This means that perceived infractions of existing or proposed community standards are rather certain to be detected and to result in repercussions.

6.8 Types of Dysfunction. All discussed dysfunctions of Philosophy Twitter suggest themselves to be of a social nature. It fails to achieve much since its utilizations are tentative, prejudicial, or abusive and thus inefficient and ineffective. But these dysfunctions also leave us with hope they can be fixed by social engagement. The only conceivable reservation to this outlook would arise from causes that could not be resolved by conventional interpersonal socialization efforts.

Observers not professionally schooled in mental disorders may be tempted to ascribe some of the observed misconduct to social disorder syndromes. However, such lay perceptions are at best hypotheses that run a serious risk of misinterpreting and confusing underlying causes.

Even psychology professionals could only speculate on pathologies from the data of this study. And the collection of information according to psychological standards, as well as the discussion of types or distributions of pathological dysfunction on Philosophy Twitter or in the profession, exceed this article's scope and its author's expertise. This does not mean such research should not be undertaken if it were indicated and could manage a workable collection of the necessary facts. Whether this is so, and whether social archetypes identified in this article point toward worthwhile subjects for psychological research, shall be left to psychology professionals.

While the issue of pathological obstacles to socialization thus remains undeveloped for the time being, the negative patterns this study detected all seem open to non-pathological explanations found in tradition, human nature, and human failings. Their analysis reveals extensive potential for resolving their social dysfunctions through conventional social efforts. These efforts include this article's description of this potential, its incentives, requirements, and impediments.

7. IMPROVEMENTS, INCENTIVES, REQUIREMENTS, AND IMPEDIMENTS.

7.1 Foundations. Now that we have a better picture of Philosophy Twitter, let us ask how it can be improved. Not all may be interested. The very small cluster of colleagues using Twitter non-professionally without exception may continue to not want to be tied into the types of social networking and communications suggested in this article. This is still their sole prerogative. And even if they have interest in Philosophy Twitter, their level and type of involvement is entirely up to them. This part only seeks to establish receptiveness for a baseline of collegial openness, comity, and respect that can be beneficially applied to any purpose and level of involvement, but also lays a foundation for advancement. It is trying to launch a common code of conduct.

Members and philosophy professionals outside might participate or participate more intensely if they saw a path toward drawing increased benefits by better utilization of current and future Twitter features. Yet, without willingness to engage, tools of engagement are irrelevant. Before they matter, the suffocating social issues of Philosophy Twitter must be addressed and solved.

This generally means interaction across the board of philosophy professionals. Beyond already described reflections establishing philosophy as an innately inclusive social discipline, there are specific concerns of professional integration. Communication among colleagues must not occur at the exclusion of any colleagues, who should be trusted to exercise discretion about weighing in on a topic. The reasons for such openness are simple. It is a natural feature and should be the prime ambition of Philosophy Twitter to incorporate all diversities of members in the profession with varying backgrounds, fields of study, and levels of expertise. Any higher-caliber participant should recall once being an uninitiated beginner who benefited greatly from being educated by preceding experts. Asking such participants to return these favors does not seem unreasonable, even if it is on a different communication platform. Upper echelon professionals should want to meet and interest fellow professionals of all stages of development in their work. Lower-rung professionals should want to connect with colleagues who might grant incentive and support to their development and careers. And different subcategories should be enticements to connect, not barriers. The practice of any subcategory lacks perspective and purpose without placing it in the context of other subcategories and philosophy overall. Also, many subdisciplines are less discrete than one might think and can draw benefits from approaches by other subdisciplines.

So let us see in conversation whether colleagues comprehend an aspect better than others. If this is so, let us share it. If not, let us search together whether we should and can do better. To excel in advancing humanity, philosophy must work toward a reflected collegial consensus.

To be effective and efficient, this advancement has to be defined in the course of professional socialization, but even more so in socialization with other disciplines and the public. We must communicate with professionals in disciplines whose fields relate to ours. Their knowledge may inform our pursuits to make these more relevant to theirs. And our collaboration with them can raise prospects that our work will constructively influence philosophy and the real world. And we must open all these discussions toward socialization with an informed and educated public.

For these intentions to succeed, elitism, parochialism, and obsolete practices must be abolished because they quell social connection and conversation. This inertia endangers philosophy, and human wellbeing and possibly existence, since it prevents philosophy from fulfilling its claimed responsibility and promise of enlightenment and guidance. Twitter may display these problems with particular clarity. But they have been festering in academic philosophy for a long time.

7.2 Stasis and Defensiveness. The dire need for better socialization is only rivaled by the urgent charge on philosophy to convey relevance and advancement onto itself for humanity's and its own sake. Yet, academic philosophy does not appear to pick up or even grasp either challenge. Its by far most important focus is passing on philosophical knowledge to inceptive generations and turning out teachers who will secure this enterprise into the future. Institutionalized self-perpetuation motivates its participants by this very intent, but also by offering them talked-up opportunities to make their mark on the profession, prestige, and a secure, conducive lifestyle.

A closely connected concentration of effort seems to be the continuing study and exegesis of classic texts. Nobody appears to resolutely question their wisdom or utility, if somewhat more their interpretations, or whether further interpretation is still necessary after preceding work. Nobody seems to demand this body of work prove itself and, where it does not, be discarded or advanced by new theorems and their proof. Philosophical acumen is frozen in idolization. The wisdom of established philosophers seems unassailable. And it habitually is deemed definitive.

Much of academic philosophy is occupied continuing its traditional rut, dismissing, attacking, or ignoring anyone questioning it. Yet, even if these defenses prove successful, the issue persists. All this organizing, belaboring, teaching, and learning can only matter if the subjects matter. But discussions of philosophical subjects on Philosophy Twitter leave mostly unclear what is to be achieved in their pursuit or even how it should proceed. Objectives, and advancements toward them, are rarely mentioned or referred to as being planned, implemented, tracked, or attained.

No doubt, there are exceptions to this rut. Rigorous adherences to administrative traditions and canons of classic philosophy do not represent all academic philosophy. A host of newly defined philosophical subjects have sprung up in recent years. However, upon closer inspection of these and their promoters' conduct, most do not qualify as new philosophies, let alone philosophical branches or subdisciplines. Rather, they seek to assert, justify, and promote political activism. Their works do not have independently selected or objectively handled subjects. Some might shield their prejudices by veneers of scientific method. But most drop such pretenses in favor of manifestos too partisan to even qualify as political studies. Such alleged philosophies represent radicalized ideologies of societal struggles. And they often reflect personal or intimately related experiences, identifications, or identities of proponents, who may manage to make a career of their or represented victimization. Valid as these causes might be, their aggressive subjectivity tends to make them neglect philosophical approaches, processes, contexts, and perspectives.

In this posture, many of these purportedly new subdisciplines appear to have learned well from the conceited defensiveness and bullying tactics long employed by classic philosophy. And they appear to have understood they must entrench themselves in or as department subdisciplines, and in the political power structures of educational institutions, to maximize their survival and success. As a result, most of these subdisciplines have made themselves already as unassailable and self-perpetuating as the classic philosophical categories they recently joined. And because their political character allows them claims of heightened current relevance, they have eclipsed the influence of classic philosophy and its doctrines in many institutions and public discussion.

Thus, many new subdisciplines that were thought of as prompts for philosophy to look at itself critically, or to open itself to examinations about its societal relevance, disappoint and join the preexisting establishment of thought paralysis. Philosophy Twitter reflects much of this because advocates and followers of claimed new subdisciplines make up the probably largest contingent of continually active members. Some of the most intransigent and exclusive groups congregate around such subdisciplines, sternly submitting to their ideology, ignoring outsiders, and fighting criticisms or even questions about their tenets as personal, existential offenses. Ironically, while shunning dialogue, such new subdisciplines and their members frequently lament the outside world's incomprehension, obstinacy, and disrespect, making this a prime focus of their activism.

Meanwhile, philosophy languishes from mindless traditionality, aimless pedantry, and attempts to turn it into a political instrument. Professionals who genuinely pursue its advancement seem to eventually give up, go on to more purpose-bound disciplines, or leave academia altogether. And representatives of other academic disciplines, as well as masses of spiritualists, promoters of religions, and other charlatans, swoop in to fill the voids left by academic philosophy.

These tribulations find reaction in superficial attempts of denial shown by clinging to academic processes, customs, and status in lieu of substance. Such attitudes are promoted by institutions where philosophy supposedly lives and whose business benefits from these ostentations.

7.3 Creative Pretense. A matching attitude is promoted by academic philosophy professionals who habitually identify as philosophers when they are mere repeaters, translators, interpreters, collectors, comparers, or learners of philosophies. The obvious difference must be apparent to them since they are continually being confronted by it. Ignoring this and claiming no difference carries semblances of deep professional insecurity, confusion, or delusion, and related hubris.

This stance is all the more remarkable since many structures, processes, attitudes, and practices in academic philosophy exhibit an extraordinary similitude to those of religion. That philosophy teachers, researchers, and students would self-identify as philosophers seems as immodest as priests, religious scholars, or disciples designating themselves and their kind as gods or saints.

Of course, there are academic philosophy professionals who as founders or key developers of philosophies can rightly be called philosophers. However, where such achievements or efforts are absent, their pride and primary activity are demonstrating their knowledge of philosophers and philosophical works that by broad consensus have been found to be worthy of apotheosis. Their subjection to institutional, procedural, and canonical strictures is telling proof they are no philosophers. Creators of philosophy should want to argue its substance, discuss it, and engage socially to proliferate it. They should take questions and comments seriously and try to address them. To promote interest, they should be sociable in professional and public realms. However, philosophy academics often display diametrically reverse conduct, as evidenced on Twitter.

The habit of calling academic philosophy professionals philosophers carries implications beyond its presumptuousness. It grants permission to dispense with the mission of creating philosophy. Administrating, repeating, or interpreting extant philosophies and politicizing the profession are deemed suitable to count as a philosopher, leaving philosophy with ever less to show for itself.

7.4 Impending Challenges. But why go on about this? Why raise controversy and risk alienating colleagues? Why study Philosophy Twitter to reveal it as the tip of a dysfunctional iceberg of academic philosophy? I undertook this work because I know philosophy has a vital function for the well-being and existence of humanity that it is failing miserably at present. And because I recognize that Twitter offers unique opportunities to inject life into professional philosophy.

The social dimension of philosophy embodied in Twitter could be engaged for much more than a side-show to philosophical organization and practice. Farfetched as it might seem in view of current conditions, social media could be an essential cornerstone in the future of philosophy if it is to have a meaningful extension. And failure to engage the opportunities offered by social media positively and in good faith may seal the irrelevance and demise of academic philosophy.

What a realization of this risk might look like is already visible. Some places of higher education have begun to ask, and many more are likely to ask, what philosophy adds to the preparation of students for their careers and what philosophy can offer to address problems in the real world. This is particularly so in times of budget restraints that force departmental reductions or cuts.

But even without extraordinary curbs, novel or intensified challenges facing humanity, and new disciplines dealing with them, require expansions of educational institutions into these fields. This places pressure on disciplines whose value for humanity's development and survival is not convincingly established. The historical role of philosophy as parent and repository of science, and its clinging to general fields offspring sciences have not claimed, do not carry much weight anymore. Institutions may also favor the idea of closing entire philosophy departments since it

lets them dispatch political subdisciplines that have pushed to the fore of academic philosophy and institutional politics, and that they deem counterproductive, without singling them out.

7.5 Revision of Purpose. The core of the problem is that philosophy, apart from few exceptions that could be integrated into other disciplines, cannot show purpose. Self-perpetuation based on respect for philosophies and the idea they deserve to be preserved by teaching them as an important part of heritage and culture may still apply to some extent. But even decisionmakers who believe in this mission seem content if it is pursued in a few main locations. Unquestioned conviction, originating in antiquity and maintained until modern times, that philosophy must be part of higher education is rapidly attenuating. Philosophy is increasingly asked why it should be indispensable. It is being put on the spot to show what it is doing and how it can contribute.

Philosophy's record in elevating humanity is not impressive. And its avowals of making students better thinkers, and pledges that something worthwhile will come from it in the future, are not sufficient anymore to justify its continued participation in many institutions' missions. Political activism in most contemporary contributions engenders division and alienation instead of well-considered broadening of philosophical horizons. And attempts at public outreach merely prove how far philosophy is distanced from most interests of the public. The era of philosophy being considered a natural part in the coverage of institutions of higher learning is drawing to an end.

This transformation places philosophy as a discipline, but much more philosophy professionals, into a tight spot. Philosophy will probably continue to be perpetuated and taught somewhere in its current ways, just concentrated and likely reduced in a few traditional universities. But what are the increasingly redundant philosophy professionals in practice and training to do?

Before too long, most philosophy professionals will be facing this existential question. There are only few options to address it. They can struggle on in hopes of securing a position in the ever-smaller number of continuing institutions, retire, or change careers. Or they can change their institution and their work in it to make their missions, projects, and results more relevant.

This is a tall challenge for professionals who so far found training, and justification of their work and position, on detached terms of perpetuation, refinement, and teaching. Satisfying this new utility standard may be problematic due to its challenge of advancing philosophy. And time to generate results is pressing. But an even more problematic issue is whether professionals who were not educated and engaged in such work have the necessary skills. Unless these are taught, tested, and made requirements for academic approbation, practitioners may be overwhelmed by imposed productivity changes. This may hit established practitioners without the benefits of being in training particularly hard. And they are currently the teachers of the profession.

7.6 Utility Prospects. Reversing this downturn will take sustained professional engagement in communication, organization, and support to define, spread, and implement essential changes. Philosophy Twitter offers an existing platform for this task. It already is the preferred choice of professional philosophy. Other social platforms may be helpful as well. But for now, none have attracted nearly the presence of professionals, presumably due to the unique features Twitter provides for philosophy. How might these features be used more effectively and expanded on?

The most important first step would be to make better use of Philosophy Twitter as forum for ideas and their advancement. Sensibly covering the resulting range of subjects might suggest branching the discourse in Twitter Communities at some point, each maybe paired with regular

live chats on Twitter Spaces and linked events on other platforms. Philosophy Twitter's two List streams would remain vital for central tasks. They could coordinate its branches, including the provision of directories, announcements, invitations, reminders. They could host new topics, general matters of interest to philosophy professionals, and general socialization. As Philosophy Twitter grows, its bifurcation into the two constituent Lists may continue to make sense with the more experienced members of the "Philosophers" List taking on its organizational lead.

7.7 Managers and Creators. This work focuses on academic teaching, research, and study since almost all philosophy professionals are employed in them, and Philosophy Twitter reflects this demography. Queries about social conduct, its deficits, and how it can be improved therefore mostly occur in that sphere. Creators of philosophy, including in academia, are a small minority with too few on Twitter to draw general profiles. But the earlier stated ideals of their sociability may not prevail. They as well may suffer asocial afflictions. Some of these may be of the types detected in philosophic academia generally, particularly if creators are part of it. Other creators may retreat from contact and interaction after being ignored or rebuffed. Or they may forsake Philosophy Twitter and seek direct contact with the public. If they succeed, they may be averse to engaging professionally anymore. If they fail, they may become disillusioned recluses.

Creators of philosophy may also be arrogant, especially if they are successful, or as a defense if they are not. They may need to be reminded of humility and cooperation should they take too much pride in their creations. And they may get so wrapped up in their methods and systems, advocate so much for their ideas, that they miss aspects of consideration or misjudge them, or lose sight of a wider context. Philosophy teachers and researchers are experts in awareness of multiple philosophies and comparing or analyzing them. Their input with critique, perspective, correction, advancement, and promulgation of creators' philosophies is indispensable.

7.8 Collegiality as Necessity. Thus, saving philosophy by its socialization concerns all of us. We must develop an esprit de corps if we want to rescue philosophy from becoming a corpse. We must mind, respect, and assist one another. Professional philosophy, pursued with enthusiasm, taxes its participants at a very high rate of time and energy and demands sacrifice. It is a prickly, laborious, and often unrewarding enterprise that may test our patience and sanity. And we may be ridiculed by those unfamiliar with what we do and go through to secure even small victories of enlightenment. Some of this may be deserved due to pettiness and misdirection of our work. But disrespect often continues even as we attempt to spread our insights for general benefit.

This is not necessarily our fault. Professional philosophy sat on the sidelines for too long and did not assert itself when rationality and a clear view of humanity were dearly needed. Regaining or gaining trust, confidence, and respect will be difficult considering this record. As necessary as placing ourselves in the public sphere is, it also makes us and what we state subject to public discourse and quite possibly dissonance. This may cause many of us stresses that may be hard to bear. Without mutual support, we may falter and fail to see our part of the mission through. The least we can and should do to stand by the promise of philosophy to the world, and our responsibility in spreading consideration and insight, is to enable one another and to serve as examples in conduct. Compared to the magnitude of this task, there are frightfully few of us. Each of us is thus precious and warrants inviting attitude, friendship, support, and protection.

Collegiality to advance ourselves and our profession should not be unreachable for any of us. And we would not be in this profession if we did not care about humanity. But to practice this

care we must first practice it on one another. We must become reliable partners. We can relate to colleagues as fellow professionals. But we also must relate on a human level to be collegial.

7.9 Suggested Code of Conduct. Thus, next time a colleague writes you, write back. And when a colleague follows you, grant the basic courtesy of following back. When a colleague makes an announcement, react. In case of an event or publication, check it out and comment. Actively contact and communicate with colleagues in your range of interests. Catch up on notifications between attendances. Do not unfollow or constrain communications with colleagues except for persuasive reasons. Substantive disagreement should never be considered grounds. The brevity of the Twitter format can make us believe a tweet is overstated or offensive. Such tweets self-disqualify if they do not have a point. But, as in real life, some of us may get overly excited, or may believe they need to overstress a point to draw attention to it. This should be permissible. We must be big enough to still calmly engage with the substance. And we should practice this patience in our other communications. We must detach the contest of matters from persons.

To get to the core of philosophical matters, we need to make one another feel welcome and safe, not judged at every turn. Dismissing others divides us at a time when we need all hands on deck. We may not know what even a few words of acknowledgment or encouragement may do to lift the spirits of our brothers or sisters. And we will probably benefit from having our spirits lifted as well, if for no other reason that our profession forces us into asocial conditions.

Despite all the traditional and now additional ways in which we can socialize in the profession, our attempts to make sense and order of what we perceive in our minds are still chiefly solitary. We spend extensive stretches of our careers trying to understand what dead people are trying, or often not even trying very hard, to relate to us. This is counter to our social needs and the discursive nature of good philosophy. In the interest of the profession and us as its constituents we must escape our unnatural solitary confinement through contact. Philosophy Twitter offers us precious social resources to transcend this debilitating seclusion wherever we might be.

So be attentive and considerate. Be kind, appreciative, and forgiving. And add a sense of humor and self-deprecation. Care about your counterparts and what they have to say. None of us can be active all the time. But for the period we spend on Twitter, let us be present and the sort of person to which we ought to aspire. Our isolation may atrophy our social capacities and graces. However, as this article shows, there are a number of other factors at work as well. To address them, we each must honestly assess and, if needed, correct shortcomings in our social conduct. And we must take our calling, ourselves, and one another more seriously, placing us in service to one another for the advancement of humankind. Let us caucus what this means, what it entails, and what each of us and the categories in which we work can and should contribute.

7.10 Outlook. Will any of this happen? Some colleagues have by nature or design already made headway in this direction. But will other colleagues develop the fortitude to take critical reviews of themselves and the profession and correct what is askew? Will they realize how crucial their refocused and intensified contributions are? Or will they carry on with the academic business as usual, attending trifling objectives, and muting frustrations and shame about wasted chances of saving themselves, the profession, and humanity? If I did not have confidence that all this can be turned around, I would not have undertaken the heavy investment of time and effort in this work. Colleagues may disagree with its findings and interpretations. But I hope it can help in the long overdue discussion where professional philosophy can go, where it must go, from here.