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#NotAllMen and #NotMyPresident: The Limits of Moral Disassociation*

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Abstract

Moral disassociation occurs when an agent separates herself from an unjust collective practice that is upheld by a social group to which she belongs. I examine two contemporary phenomena that can plausibly be understood in at least some cases as attempts to morally disassociate from injustice: #NotAllMen and #NotMyPresident. I argue that even though moral disassociation matters for the moral assessment of individual agents, it is far less important for the project of social change. More specifically, I show that even in the best cases, questions of moral disassociation function to draw our focus toward "good" vs. "bad" individual actors, actions, and attitudes—thereby diverting attention away from wider systemic processes of injustice. At best, moral disassociation is nonessential, and at worst, specious or counterproductive, because what matters most for

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rectifying structural injustice is recognizing that we *all* bear remedial responsibility for collectively bringing about radical transformation.

Key Words: moral disassociation, collective responsibility, blame, social change, structural injustice

In 2016, just hours after the election of U.S. President Donald Trump, the hashtag #NotMyPresident became the top trending topic on Twitter. Users unequivocally condemned Trump's prejudice and bigotry with such Tweets as: "We just elected a president that is racist, sexist, and has no political or military background. Way to go. #Unbelievable #NOTmypresident" (Walsh, 2016). On the streets that week, protests erupted in 275 cities across the country, gathering crowds ranging from hundreds to thousands; in addition to "Not my president!" they took up chants like "We reject/The President-Elect" and "Donald Trump, go away! / Sexist, racist, anti-gay!" (Gold et al., 2016). Two days after the election, *The Huffington Post* published an opinion piece titled, simply, "#NotMyPresident" (Beyer, 2016); months later, in January, the *New York Times* ran a spread featuring reactions to the presidential inauguration, topped by an article titled "Not My President, Not Now, Not Ever" (West, 2017). The following month saw another wave of protests on President's Day, February 20, as groups in dozens of cities, including Los Angeles, Atlanta, and Austin, launched "Not My President's Day" rallies (Francescani & Chiarito, 2017).

These #NotMyPresident actions seem to be paradigmatic examples of what philosophers call *moral disassociation*, that is, an agent's separating herself from an unjust collective practice upheld by a social group to which she belongs. The significance of moral disassociation lies in the fact that, for many theorists, an individual is *not* responsible for some collective injustice if she disassociated herself from it (Feinberg, 1968; Lucas, 1995; McGary, 1986). In other words, she exonerates herself from the blameworthiness that she would otherwise incur in virtue of being a member of that group. This makes intuitive sense: it seems unfitting and unfair to blame an agent for something to which her own actions and attitudes, which form the very basis for moral assessments such as praise and blame, were wholly opposed. On the contrary, these dissident actions and attitudes should warrant praise.

I wholeheartedly agree that people participating in anti-Trump resistance deserve praise for their efforts. In this paper, however, I want to raise some concerns regarding a particular strand of that resistance—namely, the sort which seems to be concerned, perhaps unconsciously, with a kind of moral disassociation. In my view, while studying moral disassociation might serve the purpose of determining the blame- or praiseworthiness of individual moral agents, such assessments are unnecessary for—and indeed, often distract from—the project of actually bringing about transformative social change. My strategy will be to compare #NotMyPresident with another phenomenon that rose to attention around the same time: #NotAllMen. While the problems with #NotAllMen have been widely recognized, similarly problematic features of #NotMyPresident seem to be less so. I conclude that we should not be so taken by the notion of exceptional individuals who succeed in "bucking" the system, but instead aspire to reshape unjust social structures whilst acknowledging how we are all deeply embedded within and conditioned by them.

I. Collective Responsibility and Moral Disassociation

Reacting to the horrors of the Second World War, philosophers such as Hannah Arendt (1987) and Karl Jaspers (2000) began reflecting on questions of collective guilt and responsibility—the foremost being, should the German people as a whole be considered guilty for the crimes of the Holocaust? In the 1960s and '70s, as the U.S. national conscience was roused by the Civil Rights movement and outraged by the Vietnam War (especially events such as the My Lai massacre), such questions were further taken up. Much discussion focused on the question of whether it is metaphysically possible for there to be collective agents, and if so, whether they can be treated as moral agents in the same way as individual flesh-and-blood agents. A second line of thinking emerged from the work of philosophers such as Joel Feinberg (1968), Virginia Held (1970),

Peter A. French (1998), Howard McGary (1986), Larry May (1992), and Tracy Isaacs (2011), who raised questions about social groups too loosely organized to be considered an unified collective agent. While collective *agents* (e.g. corporations, the military, the state) can exhibit special features that make them relevantly similar to ordinary moral agents (e.g. a reasons-responsive decision-making procedure), these features are typically lacking in mere social groups such as "Asians" or "suburbanites." Yet there seems to be reason to think that individuals belonging to these groups can and should sometimes be held morally responsible for acts perpetrated by fellow members, particularly when these acts are explicitly done in their name or on their behalf—e.g., that white people as a whole share responsibility for white supremacy, even if they did not personally commit racist acts. On the other hand, it seems too unsavory a conclusion, bordering on stereotyping, to hold this of *all* white people (Radzik, 2001)—to tar them all with the same brush, as it were. For clearly the spread of attitudes and actions within the group is highly heterogeneous: while some white people join the Ku Klux Klan and hold racist attitudes, others are Civil Rights activists who have devoted their lives to combating racism.

Enter the concept of moral disassociation. It has been argued on various grounds[1] that white people as a whole are blameworthy for racism—*except* for those who disassociated themselves. The clearest and most well-known formulation of this "Dissociation Condition" is Howard McGary's (1986: 164), according to which an individual "can be held morally liable if he fails to disassociate from an unjust practice caused by a group that he identifies with." McGary explains:

> Disassociation can involve publicly denouncing a practice,

[1] Proposals include shared attitudes and ways of life, feelings of solidarity and identification with other members of the group, and benefiting from unjust enrichment. See, e.g., Feinberg (1968), McGary (1986), May (1992), and Radzik (2001).

> but only if that is all that one can do, and a refusal to accept any enrichment that occurs as a result of the faulty practice. But usually it will require direct action and a refusal to accept further enrichment. In either case the moral agent is required to do something that separates him from the faulty practice. (164)

By invoking the concept of moral disassociation, we can preserve both intuitions: that the entire group shares responsibility for acts committed in their name, but also that certain individuals are excused by virtue of their active opposition.

Theorists of moral dissociation have not spelled out precisely the exact nature of disassociation, preferring to leave open a wide range of potential actions, dependent on the various constraints to which individuals may be subject (Hill, 1979; Isaacs, 2011; McGary, 1986). Such actions include public denunciation of the unjust practice, refusal to accept further enrichment from it, and both formal and informal methods of distancing from one's social group (e.g. resignation, refusal to pay dues or otherwise participate, expression of one's disapproval). Across these discussions, however, it is possible to discern one main criterion for moral disassociation, along with a variety of other considerations on which theorists disagree.

The basic minimum requirement is this. Moral disassociation must involve distancing oneself from the actions of other members of one's group, where that comprises both an internal and external component: an individual must possess strongly negative attitudes, e.g. condemnation, toward the actions of her fellow group members, and she must act on (or at the very least, express) these attitudes in some overt, publicly discernible, and oppositional way. Hill (1979: 92) stresses that a mere inward feeling of disapproval is not sufficient to qualify as disassociating; conversely, nor does the mere performance of an empty gesture. Both the internal attitude and its external manifestation must be present.

However, not every external manifestation is sufficient to qualify as disassociating oneself. For instance, one important factor

is the *costliness* of the act to the agent: the more costly it is, the more it signifies a desire on the part of the agent to distance herself from the rest of her group. Thus, McGary (1986) indicates that a greater willingness to incur risk, stronger refusal to accept further enrichment, and greater investment of power, influence, and time all serve to strengthen the disassociation. Isaacs (2011: 114), moreover, claims that disassociation from unjust acts of a collective agent, such as one's employer, requires acting in a way that might result in losing one's job, if it is to truly exonerate one from blameworthiness. This may seem to set the bar quite high, but it is also important for McGary, at least, that the standard for disassociation remains achievable. He argues that "the present state of mass media and the varied organizations that allow for political participation" (1986: 164) make it "realistic" to assume that in most cases of serious injustice there exist political avenues for action, and he provides the example of participants in anti-slavery abolitionist movements as an instance of successful disassociation (163-164).

Another factor is the *efficacy* of the agent's action: the more effectively it furthers social change (or is likely to), the more it should be considered a form of responsibility-absolving disassociation. Here, there is significant disagreement over how high to set the bar. Hill (1979) argues that disassociation can be achieved through purely symbolic protest, i.e. protest which one knows will not change any outcomes.[2] By contrast, Räikkä (1997: 96) holds that purely symbolic protest (even if it counts as disassociation) does not excuse individuals from blame, for only *genuine* opposition can do so. To count as genuine, opposition must be sufficiently efficacious: not too late nor counterproductive, and not expressed inefficiently if more efficient methods are available. Indeed, for Räikkä, even genuine opposition is not sufficient for escaping blameworthiness if the opposition itself involves some blameworthy action (e.g.

[2] However, even for Hill, symbolic protest only counts as disassociation in the absence of opportunities for genuine opposition, and he considers the likelihood of successful amelioration through disassociation as one factor in its praiseworthiness.

generating carbon emissions on the way to a conference protesting lack of action on climate change). Moreover, it is arguable that individuals should not be blamed for failing to disassociate themselves from a practice if they have good reason to believe that there is no possibility of successfully ending it (Zimmerman, 1985). Or, it might turn out that maintaining the group association and working "undercover" from within to reform or destroy the practice is most effective (Downie, 1998; McGary, 1986). In all of these cases, efficacy is part of the equation.

Other details that factor into the overall moral status of disassociation include how egregiously unjust the collective practice is, the particular means by which disassociation is enacted, the availability of legal and political avenues for disassociation, the type of object from which one is disassociating (e.g. a collective agent, an unorganized group, an individual, or only a particular practice), and the individual's motives for choosing to disassociate (Hill, 1979; McGary, 1986). Again, what these factors function together to delineate is the distinction between those members of a social group who are blameworthy for an unjust practice, and those who are not.

I do not intend to adjudicate these questions or offer a theory of moral disassociation here. Instead, I will simply assume henceforth that #NotMyPresident represents the type of successful moral disassociation envisioned by theorists.[3] Participants strongly condemned Trump's disregard for core values and publicly denounced him, participating in various political actions while incurring various levels of cost and risk to themselves, particularly

[3] For an exceptionally well-developed account of moral disassociation (though not conceived in those terms) applied specifically to the case of citizens and their political representatives, see Eric Beerbohm's (2012) *In Our Name: The Ethics of Democracy*. Beerbohm discusses "distancing," "extricating," and "untethering" from or "voiding" the relationship between citizen and political institutions, which are clearly forms of moral disassociation. Protests represent one important way of doing this, among many other mechanisms proposed by Beerbohm, e.g. plebiscite voting, monetary opt-outs, or citizen signing statements. I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for encouraging me to include this discussion.

those engaged in organized, mass, direct action (which is a highly efficacious driver of social change, if not the only one). Moreover, there is reason to think that at least some of these anti-Trump movements self-consciously took themselves to be engaging in moral disassociation. This is manifested in the sentiment expressed in a popular bumper sticker stating baldly: "DON'T BLAME ME: I'm from Massachusetts." Originally produced in 1972, when Massachusetts was the only state in the country to vote for Democratic presidential candidate George McGovern over the eventual winner Richard Nixon, the stickers were newly re-released in direct response to 2016 election by the Environmental League of Massachusetts (Palma, 2016). Variations, such as "Don't Blame Me: I'm from California," "I voted for Hillary," or "I voted Remain" (in the UK, following the 2016 Brexit referendum) quickly followed.

Again, I want to reiterate my strong support for the organized mass resistance undertaken by #NotMyPresident participants. In what follows, however, I will argue that the implicit concern with moral disassociation—which no doubt appears to varying degrees, and with varying levels of consciousness, amongst different individuals—should be abandoned. At best, moral disassociation is nonessential and insufficient for transformative social change; at worst, it may actually undermine efforts to achieve change. To bring this out, I will first examine the widely-discussed case of #NotAllMen.

II. #NotAllMen: Two Feminist Replies

By the time the hashtag #NotAllMen made news headlines in 2013-2014, the phrase was already well-known for its satirical use, as in a viral Tweet by Shafiqah Hudson[4] (Zimmerman, 2014).

[4] The Tweet reads: "ME: Men and boys are socially instructed to not listen to us. They are taught to interrupt us when we- RANDOM MAN: Excuse me. Not ALL men" (McKinney, 2014).

Indeed, the popular hashtag #YesAllWomen, used in the wake of the explicitly misogynist Isla Vista shootings, was clearly meant to forestall the #NotAllMen responses that users anticipated receiving from men. Nevertheless, as women began using the #MeToo hashtag en masse to divulge their experiences with sexual violence three years later, it remained a common online response to women's testimony (Emery, 2017). In brief, #NotAllMen is a protest, made in reaction to some instance of feminist criticism, asserting that the negative statement in question does not apply to all individuals belonging to the social category of "men."

Feminists have adopted two distinct strategies in response to #NotAllMen, which may appear at first glance to be contradictory. The first, which I will call a "first-order critique," is to essentially accept the validity of the Dissociation Condition and grant that many men fall outside the scope of the claims being made. Thus, a number of feminist commentators argue that the problem is a lack of charitable interpretation on the part of interlocutors who deploy #NotAllMen. Rather than take women's claims literally and reject the universal generalization, men should understand that the targets of these claims are restricted to actual harassers, rapists, batterers, and other perpetrators of sexism. This first-order critique of #NotAllMen thus retains the central distinction needed for moral disassociation: the distinction between those who are blameworthy for sexist harms and those excused from such responsibility. This is exemplified by another viral social media post that reads as follows: "Just your daily reminders. Racists are a problem. White people are not. Homophobes are a problem. Straight people are not. Transphobes are a problem. Cis people are not. Sexists are a problem. Men are not" (Blaque, 2015). Starkly put, this distinction boils down to the difference between "bad men" vs. "good men."

On this view, then, #NotAllMen *could* be legitimately deployed as a form of moral disassociation by those who distance themselves from the offenses of their fellow men (see, e.g. Mehar, 2017)—but the problem is that most instances of its use turn out to

be specious attempts to evade responsibility. In many cases, #NotAllMen is simply a refusal to engage with criticism, under the guise of a purportedly legitimate rejection of false generalizations. In some cases, men invoking #NotAllMen do not even express condemnatory attitudes towards the behavior of fellow men. Even when they do, most instances of #NotAllMen are not costly for individual men and unlikely to effectively combat sexism: for instance, most users do not make any attempt to renounce the benefits of their male privilege. Philosophers have warned that weak attempts at moral disassociation do not amount to anything of moral worth. Hill (1979: 90) remarks that "to proclaim repeatedly, 'I am not one of them!' seems self-righteous and unnecessary" and Radzik (2001: 468) argues that a member of a group that has committed crimes who "meets a member of the victimized group with the message, 'Don't look at me, I don't consider myself one of them' . . . will probably not dissipate her reasonable fears." So many uses of #NotAllMen simply do not count as successful moral disassociation at all.

The first-order critique is complicated by the fact that most people who make it go on to argue that men who object to feminist criticism with #NotAllMen unwittingly contribute to the problem *in virtue of* so objecting. As one writes, "To avoid addressing and listening to concerns made about how males treat females in this society, and instead complaining of a perceived generalization, is unhelpful. It makes you a part of the problem" (Klingbeil, 2016). Ultimately, then, these commentators end up eliding the distinction between "good" vs. "bad" men, or else setting the bar higher—Unless you take measures to speak up against everyday sexism when you see it . . . you're not much better than the men in their stories" (2016), so that many fewer men are likely to meet it. This has the effect of bringing it much closer to the second strategy, which I call a "second-order critique."

On the second-order critique, the "good"/"bad" men binary is rejected altogether. In effect, this response argues that "it *is* all men,

actually" (Khan & Fabello, 2016). Both philosophers and commentators have provided a number of arguments to buttress this kind of second-order critique. First, they argue that even good men (good white people, good heterosexuals, etc.) are unjustly enriched by their male privilege, even if they are not sexist (racist, homophobic, etc.) or do not commit crimes like rape. Regardless of what they choose to do themselves, they benefit from what *others* do, because their perspectives are viewed by society at large as normal, valuable, and representative of their respective groups, while others' are perceived as marginal or deviant (Blaque, 2015; May & Strikwerda, 1994; cf. Alcoff, 1998).[5] Second, even good men (etc.) are all socialized into roles of dominance and importance within a gender (etc.) hierarchy that prescribes submission and irrelevance for others. Hence, they are likely to engage in many non-consciously sexist (etc.) behaviors that negatively impact others, either by condoning oppressive behavior or failing to prevent their fellow group members from engaging in it (Blaque, 2015; May & Strikwerda, 1994; Weiss, 2016). Third, commentators have pointed out that women cannot distinguish from the outside which men engage in overt or violent sexist behavior, and which do not (Plait, 2014; Weiss, 2016). May and Strikwerda (1994) have further argued that many men are relevantly similar to actual rapists (sexual harassers, etc.), in that they *would* perpetrate these harms if given the opportunity. To put the point a little differently, *all* men are, in virtue of their dominant social position, granted certain powers over women (especially women's bodies). Whether or not they choose to exercise that power in harmful ways, they still possess it.

The two strategies thus turn out to be compatible with one another. In one sense, i.e. from the individualist perspective of moral assessment, it should be understood that feminist critiques apply only to guilty perpetrators and that we can draw moral distinctions

[5] There are, of course, also significant material advantages associated with social privilege: higher wages, access to jobs, etc.

amongst different men. In another sense, i.e. from the structuralist perspective of trying to bring about transformative change, feminist critiques *are* meant and *do* appropriately apply to all men.

The second-order critique thus illustrates the deeper problem inherent to all uses of #NotAllMen—and, I claim, moral disassociation more generally, even the successful cases. Both of these function to shift the conversation away from discussion of sexist *structural processes* and toward the evaluation of good vs. bad *actors*. As one blogger writes:

> [W]hat the men who leap to remind us that "not all men are like that," are actually saying is, "I'm not like that." Or to put it another way, they are letting women know that discussing misogyny makes them uncomfortable, and they'd like to be absolved of any blame before they will let women continue. (Strickland, 2017)

Thus the focus of conversation is shifted to the evaluating the blameworthiness of the individual male interlocutor—at best, temporarily, and at worst, permanently. Others explain: "[Men] see themselves in stories about women's oppression and don't like how they're being represented. But these stories aren't about them" (Weiss, 2016). Again, the problem here is the attention spent on *the very question* of how we should morally evaluate male actors, however we end up making that evaluation. For this is inevitably attention diverted away from the problems that *women* experience. A (male) commentator reports after reposting a number of #YesAllWomen Tweets: "In almost all the cases I saw, the men commenting were reacting to it, being defensive about the hashtag instead of listening to what was being said" (Plait, 2014).

I want to emphasize that these harmful effects occur *whether or not* the individual men in question really are blameworthy. The damage is done, regardless of what the answer turns out to be. These accounts demonstrate the adverse effects of focusing on moral disassociation rather than transformative change—of adopting an individualist rather than structuralist approach.

Note that once we have shifted to the structuralist perspective, we can take the further step of noticing that not only has the distinction between *"good" men vs. "bad" men* become less salient, so too has the very distinction between *men vs. women*. When the harms in question are *structurally* produced by cumulative systemic processes that far outstrip the actions and attitudes of particular individuals, there is good reason to assign what David Miller (2007) calls *remedial responsibility* to everyone who participates in such a process. To bear remedial responsibility is to be assigned the burdens of remedying some harm. While remedial responsibility is typically assigned on the basis of blameworthiness and fault, it need not be; in cases of vicarious or strict liability, for instance, the remedial responsibility is borne by agents who did not themselves perform the harmful action. This is the view advocated by recent theorists of structural injustice: that *all* individuals bear remedial responsibility for transforming systems of sexism, racism, etc. (Young, 2011; Zheng, 2018). Thus, every man bears this kind of *forward-looking* responsibility for reshaping norms of masculinity, whether or not he himself commits sexist harm.[6] Everyone else—including women—also bears the same forward-looking remedial responsibility for transforming the patriarchy.

Of course, this responsibility must be discharged in very distinct ways. [7] Men and women are positioned to make different

[6] However, it does not follow from this that individuals thereby *lack* backward-looking responsibility altogether. Young (2011) emphasizes that remedial responsibility *supplements* rather than replaces the kind of backward-looking responsibility associated with blame. See also fn. 8 below.

[7] Alternatively, one might reformulate this to say that oppressors and victims bear different kinds of remedial responsibility, or different degrees of it, in virtue of the difference in their social locations. I am not opposed to these views, so long as we understand that *everyone* bears some kind of remedial responsibility. But I think there are advantages of construing the responsibility as equally shared but discharged differently according to social location. For instance, it shifts the conversation to forward-looking remedial considerations, rather than miring us in the tricky business of sifting through backward-looking differences between groups that are universally implicated in injustice (albeit, again, in very different ways). I

contributions to the collective project of overcoming sexist oppression; women will not be privy to male locker-room conversations, for instance, or to father-son relationships through which boys are socialized into masculine norms. These important differences cannot be ignored: I do not want to skate over the fact that men occupy a dominant social location vis-à-vis women, i.e. that men unjustly possess a certain kind of patriarchal power over women. (However, whether any particular man is able to effectively exercise it over any particular woman is a different matter, because there are many other dimensions of power and subordination, e.g. race and class, that interact with patriarchal power.) Beneath these important differences, there is a fundamental similarity in the moral demand for men and women to take on the burdens of transformative social change, albeit in dissimilar ways.

From this vantage point, then, things look very different compared to where we began. To be sure, remedial responsibility represents a different concept of responsibility[8] than the traditional one involving blameworthiness which is at issue in discussions of moral disassociation. Yet as I have shown, ascriptions of remedial responsibility are what matters most for the project of structural transformation—while ascriptions of (and attempts to avoid) blameworthiness targeting ordinary individual agents who participate in injustice can sometimes undermine it.[9] Insofar as everyone bears *remedial* responsibility for injustice, moral

am grateful to two anonymous reviewers for discussion on this point.

[8] For more on these concepts of responsibility, see Zheng (2019). Remedial responsibility is a conception of responsibility as *accountability*, while traditional discussions concern various conceptions of responsibility as *attributability*.

[9] The situation is somewhat different when it comes to blaming particularly powerful and collective agents, or in cases of particularly egregious misconduct. See McKeown (2015) on the role of powerful agents in structural injustice and Javeline (2003) on the importance of blame in motivating collective action for social change. However, as I explain shortly in the case of blame targeted at the U.S. president, even in these cases it can be counterproductive to focus too much on blaming a single agent.

disassociation—successful or not—does not nullify it. Though it might exonerate certain individuals from responsibility understood in terms of blame, the question of blameworthiness is simply not the most salient or important issue at hand if we aim to raise consciousness of the need for structural transformation.

III. #NotMyPresident and Anti-Trumpism

In light of the foregoing discussion, I want to return to the case of #NotMyPresident. Again, my critique here is not meant to target all uses of #NotMyPresident, but only those instances that manifest (implicitly or explicitly) a kind of moral disassociation on the part of some Americans seeking to separate themselves from the regime that was erected by the American electorate as a whole, and from Trump voters more specifically. Here again, we can perform both a first-order and second-order analysis.

On a first-order level, there seems to be an important difference between #NotMyPresident and #NotAllMen. As I have argued above, many instances of the former count as genuine cases of (successful) moral disassociation, while the latter do not. Once we turn to the second-order critique, however, the same problems with #NotAllMen arise equally for #NotMyPresident.

First and foremost, #NotMyPresident anti-Trumpism tends to obscure the structural dimensions of injustice. Its hyper-concentrated focus on Donald Trump mislocates the source of the problem in an individual agent rather than the structural conditions under which he came to power. While Trump is indeed an exceptionally powerful (and perhaps exceptionally depraved) individual, he is *not* the primary cause of injustice; nor would his removal put much of a dent in existing systems of capitalist exploitation, white supremacy, patriarchal oppression, homo- and transphobia, ableism, xenophobia, environmental degradation, and so on. I do not mean to deny here that Trump's words and actions have significantly emboldened particularly virulent right-wing

movements and authorized previously condemned forms of racist, misogynist, xenophobic, and otherwise morally appalling discourse, while further fattening the wallets of the wealthy and aggrandizing the already powerful—for there is ample evidence to show that they have. Again, my intention is not to condemn all anti-Trump resistance: these movements represent a crucial effort to draw a line in the sand, a bulwark against the disintegration of hard-won legal rights, social values, and egalitarian commitments which are currently under threat. Yet precisely because Trump has functioned as a lightning-rod for political resistance, too much anti-Trump resistance has construed its target too narrowly, reducing it to a single odious individual.

For just as #NotAllMen demonstrates the pitfalls of diverting conversation away from women's lived experiences of the patriarchy toward the question of whether individual men have moral disassociated themselves, so too does anti-Trumpism divert the country's attention away from the long-standing structural processes that brought him to power and toward the question of whether he is a "good" or "bad" person. Consider, for instance, the fact that it has become a standard right-wing talking point to answer condemnation of Trump's policies by claiming (1) that the media is biased against him, and/or liberals criticize his every move,[10] or (2) that his policies, like family separation at the border,[11] are not

[10] After allegations of sexual assault surfaced against Trump, a conservative columnist responded with statistics demonstrating that the allegations received 11 and 23 times more media coverage than Clinton campaign emails obtained from Wikileaks (which included some racially derogatory remarks) (Concha, 2016). In answer to a question over whether Trump had instrumentalized a war widow's grief to boost his public image, a Republican Congressman replied: "It's the other side who find nothing positive about anything President Trump does . . . . And so they have to criticize everything he does, they have to judge his motive, and they're cruel about doing that. But they're not going to stop. I don't think they're going to stop at all" (Devaney, 2017).

[11] In response to the controversy over family separations, Trump's campaign manager Tweeted, "Fact: Over 90,000 kids were detained under Obama. And no one cared" (Sherman, 2018). At a rally after Trump described Baltimore as "rat

substantially different from those of Obama and other liberals. Even if (1) and (2) are true, these would not amount to *defenses* of bad policies against criticism; family separations would be abhorrent all the same. Instead, these conversational moves perform the very important function of *deflecting* criticism away from the processes of neo-imperialism, the military-industrial complex, xenophobic racism, and anger at economic decline occasioned by neoliberal capitalism that combine to make a policy like "Build the wall" so popular. But they are only able to do so—in other words, these claims are only even intelligible as responses to policy critique, rather than complete non sequiturs—because of our wider individualistic culture and ideology, which engenders a preoccupation with moral disassociation. Such individualism renders it all too easy to go down the rabbit hole of what Young (2011) calls the "blame game," in which people point fingers back and forth at various agents who *all* participate in injustice. Rather than discuss deep-seated inequalities baked into background structures, the bulk of public discourse has devolved into debates over the individual actions of Trump, Obama, and so on—a far more sensational (and hence lucrative) source of fodder for media news cycles.

In seeking to morally disassociate themselves from the rest of the American public who elected Trump, then, certain anti-Trump advocates of #NotMyPresident have adopted a rhetoric with the unfortunate effect of boiling down structural injustice to an individual act: the act of choosing Donald Trump or not at the 2016 ballot box. In the same way that #NotAllMen establishes a binary between "good" and "bad" men, #NotMyPresident sets up a binary between "good," anti-Trump Americans and "bad" pro- Trump Americans. The most notorious demonstration of this was Hillary

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and rodent infested mess," his son countered: "It's amazing that when Donald Trump makes a comment about Baltimore, it's racist, it's terrible, it's this. But when the mayor of that town, when the congressman from that town, says the exact same thing, 'Oh! No problem!'" (Plott, 2019).

Clinton's widely-publicized remark that "you could put half of Trump's supporters into what I call the basket of deplorables . . . racist, sexist, homophobic, xenophobic—Islamophobic—you name it" (Miller, 2016). (To be fair, Clinton herself prefaced the claim with a warning that it was "grossly generalist.") Just as before, this binary crumbles in the face of the many ways in which *all* Americans are entangled in deeply unjust social-structural processes.

Thus, the three arguments described above in the second-order critique of #NotAllMen apply equally well to #NotMyPresident. First, all Americans benefit at least to some degree from U.S. imperialist policies and military dominance, dearly paid for by those in the global South (see, e.g., Galeano, 1997; Rodney, 2018). Second, even Americans who voted against Trump have been socialized into deeply racist, sexist, and xenophobic ideologies. Research on implicit biases, for instance, shows that the majority of Americans (75%) exhibit implicit anti-bias, even when they do not reflectively endorse it (Banaji & Greenwald, 2013). The #MeToo movement made it irrefutably clear that sexual harassment is rampant on both sides of the political aisle and in all industries (Carlsen et al., 2018; Griffin et al., 2018).

Finally, there are some rather less obvious ways in which a certain class of #NotMyPresident anti-Trumpists are unaware of their dominant social position vis-à-vis a certain class of Trump supporters. Focusing on two symbolically freighted cases, though I do not intend to single them out, I will now examine the stylized figures of the "Massachusetts liberal" and the "white working-class Trump voter." In what follows, I highlight the way that middle-class self-interest—a vice conspicuously missing from the list deplored by Clinton—is deeply implicated in the perpetuation of racist (xenophobic, etc.) animosity.

IV. The "Massachusetts Liberal"

Historian Lily Geismer's (2014) *Don't Blame Me: Suburban*

Liberals and the Transformation of the Democratic Party focuses on what she calls "suburban liberals" in Boston's Route 128 high-tech corridor throughout the 1960s-'80s. Geismer's study reveals a far more checkered history than would be suggested by Massachusetts' true-blue progressive credentials. As was the case elsewhere,[12] such suburban communities thrived on the expanded post-WWII military budget that generously funded a class of middle-class professionals working in research and technology.

At the same time that Boston suburbanites prided themselves on their activism around issues such as racial integration, affirmative action, reproductive rights, environmentalism, and anti-war efforts, they also strenuously maintained policies that perpetuated racial and class inequality. For instance, grassroots suburban organizations launched a "Good Neighbors for Fair Housing" campaign, in which residents signed pledges not to racially discriminate in the renting or sale of their properties. Yet a major cause of racial segregation in Boston was the suburban zoning restrictions that only allowed for single-family homes on a minimum one-acre lot, which effectively made these neighborhoods inaccessible to people of color, who had disproportionately lower incomes. (Of course, such restrictions thereby also made housing in the area inaccessible to lower-class white people.) Indeed, a 1975 report by the U.S. Civil Rights Commission entitled *Route 128: Boston's Road to Segregation* declared of the suburbs that "their beauty was paid for, in part, by the ugliness of others" (as cited in Geismer, 2014: 29). Geismer concludes, in line with activists at the time, that efforts to cultivate welcoming attitudes in individuals—which, in any case, extended only to the tiny fraction of middle-class professionals of color who could even afford it—had negligible effects when the real problem was the lack of low- and middle-income housing due to suburban

[12] See Lisa McGirr's (2002) *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* and Matthew Lassiter's (2013) *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* for accounts of how a broadly similar story played out in suburbs across other parts of the country.

zoning restrictions. Yet attempts to construct affordable housing in these same suburbs were vigorously opposed by residents who feared that doing so would lower property values (Geismer, 2014: 197).[13]

Geismer and others argue that a defining feature of suburban liberals is their ideological commitment to the idea of meritocracy, according to which justice is served by removing obstacles from the efforts of talented, deserving individuals (Lacy, 2007; Lassiter, 2013). As most suburban liberals are middle-class professionals, they prize values such as intelligence, expertise, and hard work through education. (Notably, this rapid growth of "knowledge workers" was itself the result of an increase in state research spending motivated by the Cold War impulse to fight Communism.) Thus, they enthusiastically supported the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO), a one-way voluntary integration that bused a small number of African-Americans from the city of Boston into suburban schools. However, the program added only one or two Black students to each classroom; moreover, once state funding for the program was reduced, suburban residents vetoed any expansion that would cut into their own municipal budgets. By contrast, affordable housing initiatives would have been much more effective in generating longer-lasting and wide-scale racial integration. The belief in meritocracy also led suburbanites to believe that their neighborhoods were superior due to the wise decisions of their local leaders, rather than their racial and class exclusivity. All in all, Geismer writes:

> Suburban liberals achieved their greatest victories in campaigns that proposed individualist solutions to rights-related issues, required limited financial sacrifice, and offered tangible quality-of-life benefits . . . . Issues that

[13] Affordable housing construction was also opposed by environmentalists concerned to protect fragile wetlands, who neglected to consider how zoning restrictions made it so that the only possible plots available happened to be situated on wetlands.

> challenged structural inequalities and threatened residents' property values and the entitlements of homeownership met greater resistance and far less success. (6)

Seen in this light, then, the moral disassociation of Massachusetts liberals feels significantly more hollow. Although they certainly possessed and overtly expressed progressive attitudes, they were not willing to renounce benefits they themselves reaped from unjust racial and class hierarchies. Nor were they willing to pursue remedies that would have more effectively transformed unjust social structures; rather than dismantle existing hierarchies, they sought to elevate a small number of talented individuals up the ladder while nonetheless keeping the ladder in place. While disassociating themselves from bigots, these liberals simultaneously benefited from, and reenforced, the more deep-seated, underground structural foundations that sustained unjust processes of racial discrimination, imperialist war, environmental degradation, etc.

Indeed, not only is suburban liberal moral disassociation often unhelpful, it can actually undermine broader efforts at social change by licensing a kind of moral complacency.[14] In Boston, such liberalism functioned to sustain and even strengthen structural injustice, by painting the issue as a problem of hearts and minds (of "good" open-minded liberals vs. "bad" hate-filled bigots) rather than entrenched structural patterns of privilege and exclusion. Geismer argues that this individualist, meritocratic mindset eventually pervaded the Democratic Party, as suburban liberals gained greater influence in the party while the power of older constituencies like the labor movement—which emphasized collective action and obligation—began to wane. This meritocratic worldview is evident in the overhaul of the welfare system and the "tough on crime" policies spearheaded by Democrats in the 1990s, in which government support was to be meted out strictly and exclusively to those deemed good and deserving, and increasingly

[14] I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for this way of putting the point.

severe punishment was to be heaped on the bad and undeserving. All of these policies disproportionately disadvantaged African-Americans and other people of color (Bobo et al., 1997). In short, the causes of injustice were pinned on the choices of individual actors, rather than the wider social structures within they were forced to make their choices.[15] Thus, just as men who invoke #NotAllMen thereby become part of the problem, so too can "Don't Blame Me" liberals become part of the problem through that very act of moral dissociation.

From a structural perspective, however, for the reasons outlined earlier, this investment in meritocracy and individual choice is sorely misguided, because *everyone*—those with sincere egalitarian attitudes alongside those without—participates in unjust social-structural processes. Rather than seek to escape blame, or to draw lines between "good" and "bad" persons, we all need to take responsibility for fundamentally transforming the system.

V. The "White Working-Class Trump Voter"

Recent ethnographic studies of certain pro-Trump constituencies, such as political scientist Katherine Cramer's (2016) *The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the Rise of Scott Walker* and anthropologist Arlie Hochschild's (2016) *Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right*, have excavated the roots of white working and lower-middle class conservatism. Examining supporters of Scott Walker in rural Wisconsin, and the Tea Party in southern Louisiana, respectively, Cramer and Hochschild find that their subjects' identities are tightly bound up with anger and resentment toward

[15] This problematic was mirrored in philosophical debates over "choice" or "luck" egalitarianism, which sought to show that justice required individuals to be insulated only from disadvantages stemming from circumstance ("brute" bad luck), not those caused by choice. For the canonical critique of luck egalitarianism, see Anderson (1999).

urban and suburban centers. In particular, people in these communities feel that middle-class professionals, especially those bureaucrats who administer federal- and state-level government, fail to understand and respect their values and ways of life.

Hochschild finds that her subjects take pride in trying to live up to their religious values; these provide "an honor they felt to be invisible to liberals" (Hochschild, 2016: 155). While getting an abortion would have been easier than trying to raise a baby, for instance, they felt it was admirable to stick to their moral code; and while they devoted themselves to Bible study, they knew that their beliefs about creation, evolution, etc. were "seen in the eyes of a wider, more secular world as signs of a poor education" (Hochschild, 2016: 155-156). Hochschild finds that a major reason for her subjects' anti-elitism is that they feel their economic hardships do not receive the same support as those of racial and other minorities—that the latter are cutting in line, as it were, and receiving undeserved aid. One subject candidly explains: "Liberals want us to feel sympathy for blacks, women, the poor, and of course I do, up to a point . . . . I hear stories and they break my heart. But then sometimes, I don't know if I'm being had . . . . I give [people] a job and they don't show up. Is it just to put on their record that they applied and can continue on unemployment insurance?" (108).

Likewise, Cramer (2016) finds that her subjects possess a distinctive "sense that rural areas do not get their share of power, respect, or resources and that rural folks prefer lifestyles that differ fundamentally from those of city people" (89). Her subjects express feelings of being ignored ("[People in Madison and Washington D.C.] haven't got a clue what the rest of the nation is up too, they're so absorbed studying their own belly button" [61]); of working harder but receiving fewer benefits ("Ya educated people get all the money . . . . I worked, we worked in the trades, we don't get anywhere near that kind of money that they get, and all the benefits they get . . . . They bleed the rest of us to death." [187]); of having their interests subordinated to the values of others ("[The proposed iron ore mine is] garnering national attention and everybody from

out of the area . . . probably never been here in their life. But they want to save it." [191-192]); and of being viewed as inferior ("Almost as if the outlying areas, people are not intelligent enough to know what is going on" [202]). Cramer argues that her subjects' conservatism is not grounded in support for limited government *per se*, but by their perception that the present government is using their hard-earned tax money to support poor people (of color) in cities when they themselves are in dire economic straits. By tapping into this rural consciousness, Cramer argues, politicians like Wisconsin Scott Walker—and certainly Trump—amass support because they portray themselves as challengers of liberal government elites.[16]

This kind of white resentment, however, has been in the making for decades. Edsall and Edsall (1992) argue that a major realignment of American politics took place in the 1960s and '70s, when the "bottom-up" Democratic Party of the New Deal, a coalition of white and non-white poor, working, and lower middle classes, lost the white working and middle classes to the Republican party, which forged a new coalition between them and the (overwhelmingly white) upper and middle classes. They argue that the key factors behind this realignment were the parties' respective approaches to race and taxes, which solidified in fights around issues such as affirmative action and residential segregation. They quote a Chicago carpenter saying, as early as 1988:

> It's well and good we should have compassion for these people, but your compassion only goes so far . . . . Unfortunately, most of the people who need help in this situation are black and most of the people who are doing the helping are white . . . . We [white, Cook County voters] are tired of paying for the Chicago Housing Authority, and for public housing and public transportation that we don't use. (6)

[16] Of course, there are no doubt far more insidious sentiments also being invoked here: racism, sexism and misogyny, xenophobia, and the like.

Edsall and Edsall (1992: 14) and others argue that the greatest burdens[17] of Civil Rights legislation fell on the white working class, who were "on the frontlines of urban housing integration, who were the subjects of busing orders, who were competitors for jobs as policemen, firemen, and union craftsmen governed by affirmative action consent decrees" (see also Alexander, 2010; Lassiter, 2013). After all, as I discussed above, zoning restrictions ensured that white suburban neighborhoods remained largely unchanged in their racial composition; moreover, their own employment as highly-educated professionals was far less likely to be challenged by disproportionately less-educated people of color. Thus, many of those whites who demonstrated the greatest support for racially egalitarian policies were also the least likely to experience their impact.

VI. Moral Disassociation, Trumpism, and Anti-Trumpism

What this means for #NotMyPresident, I think, is that moral disassociation is particularly disingenuous and wrongheaded when it is divorced from a truly radical politics—that is, a politics calling for complete structural overhaul, and hence a politics on which advocating moral disassociation makes little sense. The juxtaposition of Massachusetts liberals with Walker-supporters and Tea Partiers exposes the sharp limitations of attempts to elevate the status of poor and working-class people of color without altering underlying structures of stark economic inequality. So long as this hierarchy remains in place, those on the second-to-lowest rung will be terrified and resentful of those below them, and will accept what W.E.B. Du

[17] I do not mean to imply that living alongside people of color should be considered a genuine "burden," or that there is anything unpleasant about doing so. The people in question certainly experienced it as burdensome, no doubt in part due to racism and xenophobia—but perhaps also in some measure because unfamiliar changes of any sort are naturally experienced as unsettling.

Bois called the "wages of whiteness" in exchange for not being at the very bottom (Du Bois, 1990). Racial equality cannot be achieved without eliminating the economic exploitation for all. Such radical transformation will require *all* of us to substantially change our attitudes and lifestyles (cf. Fraser, 1997), and not just those deplored as racist (etc.) by middle-class #NotMyPresident anti-Trumpists.[18]

It might be objected here, of course, that the actions of suburban liberals simply fail to count as genuine moral disassociation—because they do not sufficiently renounce unjust enrichment, take the most effective means of opposing unjust practices, and so on. I suspect, however, that this line of thinking leads to the result that only a very small number of individuals will qualify as having achieved genuine moral association (leaving out many who were initially counted as such by the original theorists of moral disassociation). From a structural perspective, this is no accident, but reflects the fact that we truly are all *inextricably* implicated in unjust processes. Recall Räikkä's (1997) point that even genuine opposition to an unjust practice may entail acting in ways that also generate injustice. He suggests that people are mistaken when they "think social practices are necessarily distinct such that one can always oppose one evil practice without

[18] The well-known case of Charlotte, North Carolina, offers reason to hope that more wide-ranging transformative change can overcome racial animosity (Lassiter, 2013). The city achieved unprecedented levels of racial integration after Federal District Court Judge James B. MacMillan, who was himself initially opposed school busing, recognized that there was no other way to enforce the federal desegregation mandate (Greenberg, 1999). The decision was initially faced with tremendous white hostility, expressed through death threats, firebombing, and beatings of Black schoolchildren, but the Supreme Court backed the decision, and MacMillan—who was burned in effigy—stood his ground (Ayres, 1975; Greenberg, 1999). Once Charlotte residents realized that they could not escape the busing order, new plans were made and implemented with community input. The new plans, which involved two-way busing, received significant support from both Black and white communities (Ayres, 1975). A key factor in the success of the Charlotte plan was that wealthy middle-class whites were not exempted, which helped appease poorer whites (Greenberg, 1999; Lassiter, 2013).

supporting another, or that opposing an evil practice does not require that, as a matter [of] fact, it is supported" (101). Where Räikkä would argue that *everyone* is therefore blameworthy for participation in unavoidable unjust structures, however, structural theorists contend that assessments of blameworthiness are altogether unhelpful in such cases, focusing instead on forward-looking remedial responsibilities.

This is not to deny, of course, that different social groups and actors may genuinely exhibit different levels of blameworthiness. But practically speaking, we must be cognizant of the way that the very attempt at moral disassociation—whether successful or not—provokes intense anger and resentment amongst those from whom others choose to distance themselves, that is, those who sense that they are regarded by others as morally despicable. Indeed, a major source of Trump's appeal to many voters is the feeling that he restores their keenly-felt loss of moral standing in the public eye.[19] Hochschild (2016: 162) quotes one of her subjects saying: "People think we're not good people if we don't feel sorry for blacks and immigrants and Syrian refugees. But I am a good person and I *don't* feel sorry for them." She finds that one woman's ardent love of conservative talk radio host Rush Limbaugh came down to "the basic feeling that Limbaugh was defending her against insults she felt liberals were lobbing at her: 'Oh, liberals think that Bible-believing Southerners are ignorant, backward, rednecks, losers. They think we're racist, sexist, homophobic, and maybe fat'" (Hochschild, 2016: 27). A recurring theme amongst attendees at a Trump rally is that they are "tired of being called racists" (Plott, 2019). And a Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) report found that white working-class voters who agreed with the claim that "Society punishes men just for acting like men" were significantly more likely to vote for Trump than those who disagreed (Cox et al., 2017). In

[19] Of course, this is not the whole story behind Trump's success, as he received support from a wide variety of groups, including significant portions of the educated middle-class, as well as people of color.

other words, Trump has revalorized the social identities of those who feel morally looked down upon by liberals—men, white people, Christians, the poorly educated, etc.—by reassuring them that these are sources of pride, and not morally tarnished identities of which to be ashamed. During his victory speech after the Nevada presidential primary, Trump declared:

> We won with highly educated. We won with poorly educated. I love the poorly educated. We're the smartest people, we're the most loyal people . . . . So I'm very proud of you, this is an amazing night . . . . You're going to be proud of your president, and you're going to be even prouder of your country, OK? (Quartz, 2016)

In short, many Trump voters have felt ignored, despised, disrespected, maligned and made out to be ignorant, morally bad people by their fellow Americans. It is true that bigotry, xenophobia, misogyny, homo- and transphobia are absolutely inexcusable. Still, there are also undeniable grounds for Trump voters' feelings. Consider this excerpt from the *Huffington Post* "#NotMyPresident" article, which was written by an executive director of a major non-profit and previous candidate for state senator:

> Right now I don't care that the white working class is hurting, I really don't. Everything the Democratic party has done of significance for decades has been on their behalf—Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, the Affordable Care Act, VAWA, pay equity, etc.—who do you think benefits most from all that? They're ungrateful; they don't understand the simplest basics of civics. They are the poorly educated and Trump is one of them. We hurt their pride and now they want revenge. We need to return fire. (Beyer, 2016)

While her anger and disgust at Trump's racism and transphobia is completely justified, this kind of extreme disassociation (in which the writer is undoubtedly not alone) from people construed as ungrateful and ignorant is surely excessive—not to mention highly

counterproductive. Amy Olberding has cogently argued that we must guard against the temptation to what she calls "righteous incivility," directed towards "*those people* who reject my views and values" (2019: 145). Olberding warns that such temptation is strongest precisely because it is grounded in our genuine moral commitments, and because it occasions the undeniable pleasures of "triumph in one's own rightness and others' wrongness [and] smug delight in delivering a 'sick burn'" (147). Once we erode the distinction between *those people* and *my people*, as in the case of discovering oppressive attitudes in our loved ones, we experience this as tragic rather than pleasurable, with pain rather than resentment.

Before concluding, let me stress one last time that the foregoing discussion is *not* an apology for white racism, sexism, and the like. Rather, it is a repudiation of myths like "Southern exceptionalism,"[20] and a demonstration of the way in which all of us, no matter how and if we voted, are implicated in the rise of Trump. Since everyone is implicated in various unjust social-structural processes, most people exhibit a mixture of praiseworthy *and* blameworthy behaviors. Just as the Massachusetts liberal is capable of both courageous moral action and self-interested hoarding of privilege, the racist and xenophobic biases of the white working-class Trump voter may be paired with admirable virtue and generosity (expressed, e.g., through private or religious charity); both exhibit egregious moral blind spots. For this reason, we need something altogether different from moral disassociation.

[20] Southern exceptionalism is the view that white supremacy is a regional phenomenon limited to the Southern U.S., and that there is a qualitative difference between the *de jure* racial segregation of the South and the *de facto* racial segregation of the North. In the 1960s-'70s, it formed the basis for key court cases in Boston and elsewhere that undermined busing and other structural efforts toward racial integration (Lassiter, 2013).

VII. Conclusion

I have argued that though moral disassociation matters for the moral assessment of individual agents, it is far less important, and potentially detrimental, for the project of social change. I have shown that even in the best cases, questions of moral disassociation functions to draw our attention toward "good" vs. "bad" individual actors, actions, and attitudes—thereby diverting it away from wider systemic processes of injustice. At best, moral disassociation is nonessential, and at worst, specious or counterproductive, because what matters most for rectifying structural injustice is recognizing that we *all* bear remedial responsibility for collectively bringing about radical transformation.

Thus, rather than respond to Trump's election by morally disassociating from those who voted for him, we need to take responsibility for our own involvement in the larger systemic forces that helped fuel his rise to power. I have argued elsewhere that we can do so through and in virtue of the various social roles we occupy (Zheng, 2018). Rather than distancing ourselves from the social groups with which we are identified, we can make use of the privileges, resources, and connections they afford us by putting them in the service of pushing the boundaries of those roles.

Linda Alcoff, in her critique of radical leftist "race traitor" politics, offers an example of what this might look like. Race traitors "disavow all claims or ties to whiteness" (1998: 8); this repudiation of all whiteness amounts to a rejection of white identity altogether (to the point of telling others that they are not white). In other words, race traitors adopt a conscious strategy of moral disassociation followed to the very limit, along the lines suggested by McGary. Alcoff raises concerns similar to those I discussed earlier, to the effect that this strategy sometimes causes harm to people of color, and that simply disavowing whiteness does not prevent people from benefiting from its privileges. She also makes an additional argument, as follows:

> [Race traitors] makes its appeal to whites by arguing that racist practices really served only the interests of the rich, and thus that poor whites were used as dupes to support racism. Although this strategy supplies a needed class analysis of the history of racism, it does not help whites think about how to overcome their own connection to a racist past. It simply says, "you are not really connected to that racist past." (23)

This failure to acknowledge historical connections to racism is a problem, Alcoff contends, because "White supremacy may be all that poor whites have to hold on to in order to maintain a sense of self-love" (1998: 18). For Alcoff, to utterly and completely disassociate from whiteness—or to denounce it as wholly evil and undesirable—would be to deprive some people of a crucial source of identity and value. As Trump's success makes evident: if the choice is between moral disassociation from whiteness, on the one hand, versus embracing whiteness and condoning the racism associated with it, on the other, then far too many Americans would rather choose the latter.

By way of an alternative, Alcoff defends a third way, according to which white people should develop a "white double consciousness," which she describes as "an everpresent acknowledgment of the historical legacy of white identity constructions in the persistent structures of inequality and exploitation, as well as a newly awakened memory of the many white traitors to white privilege who have struggled to contribute to the building of an inclusive human community" (1998: 25). Instead of disassociating from one's group, then, white people should embrace this two-sided history of whiteness, acknowledging both their responsibility for crimes committed in their name as well as their potential to engage in radical struggle. Similarly, then, *all* men should—rather than objecting that "Not All Men"—recognize that they participate in and benefit from the patriarchy, but that this simultaneously grants them special prerogatives to take an active, central role in fighting it. And *all* Americans should, rather than

focus their energies on the pillory and disclaiming of an individual leader, learn to recognize the extent to which they are beholden to ways of life that must be drastically transformed, if we are to rectify the injustice suffered by masses of people in and outside the country.

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#NotAllMen以及#NotMyPresident: 道德切割的限度

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摘　要

道德切割發生於個人自外於其所屬社群所從事的不正義之行為。我檢視兩個當代的現象——#NotAllMen 以及#NotMyPresident，至少在某些情況下，此兩者可被合理地理解為道德切割。我主張，道德切割即使能影響我們對行為者個人的道德評價，其對社會改革的影響卻微乎其微。進一步而言，我說明即使在最佳狀況下，道德切割使我們將注意力集中在「好」與「壞」的個人行為者、行為，以及態度，因此忽略了更廣泛的、系統性的不正義過程。道德切割充其量是無關緊要的，而在最糟的狀況下，它是誤導、適得其反的。因為對改正結構性的不正義來說，最重要的是我們認識到，要集體實現根本的轉變，所有人都要承擔修補的責任。

關鍵詞：道德切割、共同責任、責備、社會改革、結構不正義