

## NOTES

1. The term, originated by Nicolas Bourriaud, is often used interchangeably with others, including relational art and social practice, though the different coinages of each offer slightly different inflections. See Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics* (Dijon: Les presses du réel, 2002).
2. Henry David Thoreau, *Walden* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1910), 8.
3. *Ibid.* 127.
4. *Ibid.* 430.
5. Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Self-Reliance, The Over-Soul, and Other Essays* (Claremont: Coyote Canyon, 2010), 55–68.
6. Thoreau 107.
7. *Ibid.* 23.
8. Claire Bishop argues for greater scrutiny of the power dynamics developed through relational aesthetics projects, though she considers conspicuously transparent exploitation to be a valid tactic for spurring social engagement. For the first iteration of her argument, see Claire Bishop, "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics," *October* 110 (2004): 51–79.
9. An archived website created in conjunction with the project can be found at <http://www.diaart.org/gransci-monument/index.php>.
10. Tania Bruguera, "Partido Del Pueblo Migrant/Immigrant Movement International," 6 Aug. 2015, <immigrant-movement.us/>.
11. Theater Gates, "Theater Gates—Dorchester Projects," 6 Aug. 2015, <http://theatergates.com/section/117693\_Dorchester\_Projects.html>.
12. Thoreau 185–86.

## Sentimental Education: Critical Common Sense and the Social Intuitionist Model in Psychology

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This essay develops Peirce's doctrine of Critical Common Sense in light of Jonathan Haidt's Social Intuitionist Model of moral judgment. Peirce's Common Sense account both thoroughly anticipates Haidt's model and benefits considerably from the recent empirical research supporting it. More importantly, Peirce's *critical*, or Pragmaticist, approach provides a compelling alternative to this model's diminished conception of rationality in relation to sentiment. Peirce heartily agrees with Haidt that criticism is difficult and, particularly where morals are concerned, elusive, but rather than foreclosing deliberate moral progress, Critical Common Sense both shows how it is possible and provides tools necessary to secure it. The Pragmaticist's goal is not to have reason rule over sentiment—both Peirce and Haidt agree that this is a misleading and pernicious description of the relation between the two—but rather to render them continuous in a process that results in what I call ongoing *sentimental education*. The first two sections below briefly recall Peirce's view and explain Haidt's model to illustrate areas of convergence. The third develops Critical Common Sense as a form of deliberate moral inquiry to indicate how genuine criticism, and therefore moral progress, remains possible even in light of the recent empirical findings of Haidt and others regarding our intuitive moral sense.

### I. Sentiment, Common Sense, and the Need for Criticism

"Western philosophy," according to Haidt, "has been worshipping reason and distrusting the passions for thousands of years" (Haidt, *Righteous Mind* 34). If so, then Peirce is surely an exception. He sides with the passions, or what he calls sentiment, and distrusts the worshippers of reason. Peirce considers reason a poor substitute for sentiment in practical matters, and he

thinks little of persons who are easily persuaded by abstract arguments that run contrary to sentiment:

We do not say that sentiment is never to be influenced by reason, nor that under no circumstances would we advocate radical reforms. We only say that the man who would allow his religious life to be wounded by any sudden acceptance of a philosophy of religion or who would precipitately change his code of morals at the dictate of a philosophy of ethics—who would, let us say, hastily practice incest—is a man whom we should consider unwise. (CP 1.633)<sup>1</sup>

As Peirce sees it, sentiment comprises a suite of instincts that have grown up over time, have been thoroughly tested by experience, and have been passed from one generation to the next (CP 1.654).<sup>2</sup> "Sentiment," Peirce writes, "is an instinctive induction" that, while not absolutely infallible is, practically speaking from the perspective of the individual, nearly so (1.633). "[I]nstant seldom errs, while reason goes wrong nearly half the time, if not more frequently" (5.445). Peirce trusts sentiment over reason precisely because reason is so unreliable in matters of practical, especially moral, concern.

Moreover, in Peirce's view, moral reasoning is itself ineluctably grounded in sentiment, in man's "occult nature," which provides a common or shared moral sense that is embodied in the members of a community. "Conscience," according to Peirce, "really belongs to the subconscious man, to that part of the soul which is hardly distinct in different individuals, a sort of community-consciousness, or public spirit, not absolutely one and the same in different citizens, and yet not by any means independent of them" (CP 1.56; cf. Liszka 76). Morality is therefore fundamentally conservative in nature (CP 1.50). "To be a moral man is to obey the traditional maxims of your community without hesitation or discussion" (1.666). "[I]t is behaving as you were brought up to behave, that is, to think you ought to be punished for not behaving" (1.666). According to Peirce, "[s]entimentalism implies conservatism; and it is of the essence of conservatism to refuse to push any practical principle to its extreme limits—including the principle of conservatism itself" (1.633). Commonsense beliefs form traditions that usually change little, though they may be somewhat modified in a short period of time, and on occasion dramatically so (5.445).

Yet Peirce realizes that inherited common sense is no longer enough. Traditional beliefs may be reliable under conditions similar to those that forged them, but modern science has placed us in a new world; now, "[s]ome of the old beliefs have no application except in extended senses, and in such extended

senses they are sometimes dubitable and subject to just criticism" (CP 5.513). The Scotch tradition of Common Sense, which Peirce critically appropriates, "failed to recognize . . . that the original beliefs only remain indubitable in their application to affairs that resemble those of a primitive mode of life" (5.445). Common sense must now become critical, and Peirce invites us to attach great value to genuine doubt, to hunger for it, as means for testing and revising original and inherited beliefs (5.514). The Critical Common Sensitive is not content to ask himself whether he does doubt, but he invents a plan for attaining to doubt, elaborates it in detail, and then puts it into practice, although this may involve a solid month of hard work; and it is only after having gone through such an examination that he will pronounce a belief to be indubitable" (5.451). Approval *still* remains provisional, however, for he "fully acknowledges that even then it may be that some of his indubitable beliefs may be proved false" (5.451). As noted above, the Critical Common Sensitive does not rule out radical reform: even the principle of conservatism is applied conservatively, but deliberate change calls for demanding consideration, caution, and above all sincere fallibilism in the application of reason, given its propensity to go significantly awry.

Peirce also believes that securing true beliefs with respect to common sense is especially challenging because the relationship between reasoning—conscious, deliberate, controlled thought—and sentiment is often lubricious, deceptive. "[W]henver one turns a critical glance upon one of our original beliefs," Peirce observes, "the mind at once seems vaguely to pretend to have reasons for believing it" (CP 5.516; cf. de Waal 86–87). We do not just reason; we rationalize. Men often think they are acting for reasons, but are deluded: "[T]he reasons they attribute to themselves are nothing but excuses which unconscious instinct invents to satisfy the teasing 'whys' of the *ego*" (CP 1.631). Consciousness, Peirce writes, "may be set down as one of the most mendacious witnesses that ever was questioned" (1.580). It seems that instinct may not only elude reason, but parasitize it, securing conscious endorsement for preference and staid practice instead of triggering concern or genuine doubt with regard to established belief that might otherwise elicit stern reconsideration. This is especially true, Peirce claims, when we try to reason about morality:

When men begin to rationalize about their conduct, the first effect is to deliver them over to their passions and produce the most frightful demoralization, especially in sexual matters. . . . Men, then, continue to tell themselves they regulate their conduct by reason; but they learn

to look forward and see what conclusions a given method will lead to before they give their adhesion to it. In short, it is no longer the reasoning which determines what the conclusion shall be, but it is the conclusion which determines what the reasoning shall be. This is sham reasoning. (CP 1.57)

To make matters worse, we also cannot naïvely rely on others to accurately report their beliefs, even if they are in earnest, because they are as often misled as we are: men *parade* one belief, Peirce writes, while their conduct *betrays* another (CP 5.445n1). And ethics, which Peirce describes as the study of conformity of conduct to an ideal, amounts to little more than “a sort of composite photograph of the conscience of the members of the community” (1.573). It is a “traditional standard” not subject to radical criticism, “but with a silly pretence of critical examination” (1.573). However well intended, ethics not only remain ensconced in inherited belief, but their claims are often further insulated from doubt by a protective shroud of rational endorsement. For inquiry to be successful, Peirce insists, inquirers cannot implicitly rig the game in favor of particular outcomes in advance (e.g., justifying practices already embraced by the community, such as pederasty in ancient Greece (Peirce’s example) or the many common forms of discrimination); to be successful—to avoid sham reasoning—inquirers must wholly surrender in advance, committing themselves to following wherever inquiry leads. As Peirce acerbically writes: “There must be no reservations” (1.57).

Genuine criticism is therefore surely difficult, according to Peirce, for at least four reasons: (1) reason is highly fallible, guessing right only slightly better than half the time, and wont to go alarmingly astray; (2) rational deliberation is misled by non-conscious processes that give plausible, but misleading rationales for conduct; (3) people learn to manage, or “reverse engineer,” their reasonings to reach desired results (sham reasoning); and (4) other people deceive us (and possibly themselves) in offering one belief but acting on another. These are considerable obstacles, yet Peirce holds out for the possibility of securing deliberate moral progress. Before taking up Peirce’s critical approach, however, first consider the support his view derives from Haidt’s recent studies in social intuitionism and moral reasoning.

## II. Moral Intuitions and Post Hoc Rationalization

Like Peirce, Haidt distinguishes between reason and sentiment, or what Haidt calls “intuition.” The distinction is not between cognition and emotion, but between two kinds of cognition: fast intuition, which sometimes involves

an emotional component, and slower, higher-order reasoning (Haidt and Bjorklund 200). Again like Peirce, Haidt finds that intuition (or “sentiment”) typically does nearly all the work, especially in matters concerning moral and political judgment. Studies conducted by Haidt, Richard Shweder, Alan Fiske, Frans de Waal, and Donald Brown all suggest there is indeed a small set of moral intuitions common to all societies and even found across species (Haidt and Bjorklund 202). These have to do with issues related to specific domains of social conduct, such as fairness, care, loyalty, sanctity, and respect. They are, as Peirce observed, the basis of a shared moral common sense. Cultures vary, Haidt suggests, insofar as different communities express different patterns of cultivating these social concerns (Haidt and Bjorklund 210). And just as Peirce recognized original belief as reflecting the habits of family, tribe, and community along with primitive beliefs of the species, Haidt sees intuition as expressing both what we all genuinely share and its diverse development as explaining how norms and practices vary widely across cultures (Haidt and Bjorklund 202).

Whereas rational approaches in moral psychology assume that moral judgment is primarily a matter of reasoning and reflection, Haidt describes it as “a kind of rapid, automatic process more akin to the judgments animals make as they move through the world, feeling themselves drawn toward or away from various things” (Haidt, *Righteous Mind* 72). In the division between reason and intuition, intuition is primary, not only because it happens first and fast, but also because it is *constant*. The mind, without our conscious awareness, continuously monitors and morally evaluates people around it (64–66). Recent studies, including infants as young as 6 and 10 months old, indicate that rapid, intuitive moral evaluation is indeed included in the suite of instincts we inherit as members of our species (75). It turns out that judgment, as Peirce had it, is indeed a matter of expressing immediate common sense in the context of the community in which we grow up.

By comparison, reason, Haidt argues, is slow, episodic, and always already constrained by automatic, intuitive processes: “Even when people engage in moral reasoning, they do so in a mental space that has already been restructured by intuitive processes, including affective reactions that prepare the brain to approach or avoid the person or proposition being considered” (Haidt and Kesebir 803). Moreover, like Peirce, Haidt observes that when conscious deliberation occurs, it is often given over to rationalization, or “sham reasoning,” rather than genuine criticism. As Haidt writes: “Reasoning can take us to almost any conclusion we want to reach, because we ask ‘Can I believe it?’ when we want to believe something, but ‘Must I believe it?’ when we don’t

want to believe. The answer is almost always yes to the first question and no to the second" (Haidt, *Righteous Mind* 107). When we want to believe something, we run ahead to see if we can generate reasons that will be plausible to others; if we do not, we run ahead to see if there is some reason we just cannot avoid. In fact, it seems that the *function* of conscious reasoning in this domain is often persuasion, not discovery of truth, and certainly not self-criticism. What matters socially in everyday life is that we convince others, and, as Philip Tetlock observes, "the process of considering the justifiability of one's choices may be so prevalent that decision makers not only search for convincing reasons to make a choice when they must explain that choice to others, they search for reasons to convince themselves that they have made the 'right' choice" (Lerner and Tetlock 433). When we ask ourselves—or someone asks us—"why," it triggers the mind to act more like a press secretary, or a lawyer, than a scientist (Haidt, *Righteous Mind* 91–92).<sup>3</sup> From a social perspective, people are usually more invested in *looking right* than in *being right* (89), so much so that we convince ourselves we *are* right (through various modes of sham reasoning) so as to be more persuasive in *appearance*.<sup>4</sup> The metaphor Haidt invokes to capture this relationship in his earlier writings is that between an emotional dog and its rational tail. Tails do not wag dogs; they communicate with other dogs, not their tails (i.e., the emotional part, not the rational), conveying information intended to modify other dogs' social behavior (Haidt and Kesebir 823–25).

Evidence for Haidt's view of moral reasoning derives in part from studies he and colleagues conducted in Brazil and the United States involving subjects across cultures, class, gender, and education.<sup>5</sup> Haidt constructed stories involving harmless acts that were designed to elicit moral judgment. Here are two examples:

A family's dog was killed by a car in front of their house. They had heard that dog meat was delicious, so they cut up the dog's body and cooked it and ate it for dinner. Nobody saw them do this. (Haidt, *Righteous Mind* 3)

A man goes to the supermarket once a week and buys a chicken. But before cooking the chicken, he has sexual intercourse with it. Then he cooks it and eats it. (Haidt, *Righteous Mind* 4)

And here is a third example that pointedly recalls Peirce's discussion of incest: Julie and Mark, who are sister and brother, are traveling together in France. They are both on summer vacation from college. One night

they are staying alone in a cabin near the beach. They decide that it would be interesting and fun if they tried making love. At the very least it would be a new experience for each of them. Julie is already taking birth control pills, but Mark uses a condom too, just to be safe. They both enjoy it, but they decide not to do it again. They keep that night as a special secret between them, which makes them feel even closer to each other. So what do you think about this? Was it wrong for them to have sex? (Haidt, *Righteous Mind* 45)

According to Haidt, people typically respond to these stories immediately and very emotionally. This is intuition at work, expressing uncritically what Peirce calls conscience. But when asked *why* these acts are wrong, they struggle to support their judgment, often invoking or inventing various sorts of harms: here is post hoc reasoning searching for persuasive justification for moral condemnation. As with Peirce's "teasing why's of the ego," the nonconscious, intuitive part of the mind generates a plausible reason. When people are forced to see that no harm was done (the dog and chicken were already dead, the siblings enjoyed the experience, no third parties witnessed anything, etc.), they continue searching for reasons, flailing but rarely questioning their initial judgment. Haidt describes this as being "morally dumbfounded" and claims it is clear that "[r]easoning was merely the servant of the passions, and when the servant failed to find any good arguments, the master did not change his mind" (*Righteous Mind* 29, 47). Indeed, a curious aspect of these interviews is that pressure from interviewers did not cause participants to question their views: they instead became more entrenched, sometimes pausing and just staring at the interviewer. As Haidt puts it: "Those pauses and stares seemed to say, *You mean you don't know why it's wrong to do that to a chicken? I have to explain this to you? What planet are you from?*" (*Righteous Mind* 111).

In his most recent work, Haidt describes the relation between reason and sentiment as that between a large elephant and its tiny, rather precarious rider. Sentiment, the elephant, constantly responds to its surroundings, leaning one way or another; reason, the rider, mostly follows where the elephant leads. Only rarely can a rider change the elephant's directions and Haidt advises that we "talk to the elephant" if we want to modify ourselves and influence others' conduct and beliefs. As a matter of *fact*, if not *norm*, it turns out that Hume was right: reason *is* the slave of the passions. Recognizing this fact allows us to set aside rationalistic approaches that encourage us to think that we can change people's behaviour directly by rationally changing their mind through argument. As Haidt writes: "Nobody is ever going to invent an ethics class that makes people behave ethically after they step out of the classroom."

Classes are for riders, and riders are just going to use their new knowledge to serve their elephants more effectively" (*Righteous Mind* 106).

Hume's insight, supported by Haidt's research, leads to intuitionism, which Haidt believes helps us see the futility of rational argument and encourages us to devise other means of modifying behavior (*Righteous Mind* 106, 134–35). Tweaking the environment in ways that exploit the elephant's inclinations, it turns out, is far more promising. For example, rather than admonish people not to cheat or offer philosophical arguments against cheating, Haidt points to research indicating that if you *really* want to reduce cheating in a range of different contexts, implement procedures that influence the elephant's behavior, such as the perception of being monitored, using evocative language (such as "cheater" rather than "cheating"), and requiring signatures at the beginning of forms and reports (rather than the end).<sup>6</sup> These directly affect intuitive responses and are far more likely to be effective. Haidt suggests, than trying to persuade riders whose judgment is clouded and whose influence is typically marginal anyway.

### III. Critical Common Sense and Moral Progress

Peirce and Haidt dovetail descriptively, and Haidt's research significantly supports Peirce's view of sentiment. But they clearly diverge with regard to deliberate reform of personal conduct and social practice. Without discounting Haidt's empirical findings, which are enormously helpful in supporting and further refining Peirce's view, Pragmatism nonetheless shows how deliberate criticism remains possible, if demanding. First, we may recall that at the heart of Pragmatism is Peirce's method of clarification of ideas. The Pragmatist is "attentive to all those matters of every-day facts which critical common-sensism takes into account," and he pursues "whatever can go toward teaching him to distinguish accurately between truth and falsity, probability and improbability" (CP 5.499). He accomplishes this, in part, by applying the pragmatic method, that is, by doggedly operationalizing belief-habits, rendering possible consequences of vaguely held beliefs concrete in imagination in order to subject them to the harsh light of criticism (EP 2:400–402; Burke 30–33, 48).<sup>7</sup> "All the instinctive beliefs," Peirce observes, "are vague" (CP 6.499) and in need of clarification. This is a more precise description of what Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., once metaphorically referred to as exposing dragons to daylight: "When you get the dragon out of his cave on to the plain and in the daylight, you can count his teeth and claws, and see just what is his strength. But to get him out is only the first step. The next

is either to kill him, or to tame him and make him a useful animal" (Holmes 170). Taming a belief, rendering it useful, means not only considering the possible consequences of the belief in practice, but also identifying facts implied in holding that belief and determining their respective truth.<sup>8</sup> Where specifically moral beliefs are concerned, it further involves evaluation of the desirability of the possible social consequences bound up with adopting a particular belief-habit to inform an act or course of conduct, both for oneself and others. The principle problem, as Peirce sees it, is not that the faculty of reason (the rider) is too puny to influence intuition (the elephant), but rather that our belief-habits are so vague that they often elude thoughtful criticism. As Peirce perceptively writes in his early *How to Make Our Ideas Clear*:

Many a man has cherished for years as his hobby some vague shadow of an idea, too meaningless to be positively false; he has nevertheless, passionately loved it, has made it his companion by day and by night, and has given to it his strength and his life, leaving all other occupations for its sake, and in short has lived with it and for it, until it has become, as it were, flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone; and then he has waked up some bright morning to find it gone, clean vanished away like the beautiful Melusina of the fable, and the essence of his life gone with it. (EP 1:127)

Operationalizing belief-habits renders otherwise vague ideas—to which we may be extraordinarily attached, such as ideas involving religion, patriotism, marriage, what constitutes a "meaningful" life, and so on—sufficiently concrete to be deliberately evaluated in light of established facts and other beliefs.

A poignant example is provided by Stanley Fish, who recounts a story he heard on National Public Radio about a former white supremacist. When Terry Gross, the host of the program, asked what changed his mind, the former supremacist told a short story in which he learned, more precisely, what would happen when the group came to power. As Fish writes:

[T]he blacks would be sent back to Africa; the Jews would be sent back to all the countries that had expelled them in the first place; criminals would be executed; the diseased would be quarantined; and defectives of a variety of kinds would be put into special colonies or otherwise dealt with. This last point was accompanied by a list of defectives, and among those named were persons with cleft palates. It so happened that the daughter of the once, and now instantly former, white supremacist was herself afflicted by that condition. The result? Conversion on the spot, the scales falling from his eyes and a new life as the author of a best-selling exposé. (Fish 282)

What caused that result? The former supremacist had passionately embraced a vague, but in some ways rather attractive ideal (one that promises group or "family" membership, power, a purpose, as authoritarian programs often do), but when the consequences of this idea got fleshed out (the idea was operationalized *for him*—he did not do it himself), he suddenly came up against a possibility he could not live with, and so he abruptly changed his mind (or rather, his mind was changed). As Fish points out, the story does not convey a reasoned analysis (Fish 282). Rather, clarification elicited an abrupt firing of sentiment (or Haidt's intuition), reflecting other desires and commitments, making the change perfectly obvious. This is why clarification of ideas, a seemingly modest recommendation, can be extremely powerful: it gets dragons out of caves, allowing imaginative inquiry to do its work, permitting us to draw on our other reliable intuitions for guidance and critique.

Regarding Haidt's findings, this Pragmatist approach to clarifying ideas is consistent with, rather than challenging, his intuitionist model. The process of clarification is not tantamount to imposing reason, conceived as a separate faculty (Haidt's rider), on sentiment (his bullish elephant). Rather, clarification merely brings into view a wider range of potential consequences that may elicit far different intuitive responses. Keeping with Haidt's metaphor, clarification does not control (or reform) the elephant, but rather *informs it*, encourages it to take into account consequences it may well want to avoid. Elephants (the intuitive system) can be relatively blind, shortsighted, and impetuous, and may benefit from corrective, more expansive vision.

A second feature of Peirce's Pragmatism that also coheres with Haidt's empirical findings and his resulting intuitionist model is that Peirce provides an "off-line" model of criticism. Peirce fully recognizes (perhaps concedes is a better word) that judgment "in the moment"—such as occurs spontaneously in response to Haidt's provocative stories, the endlessly varied trolley problems that form the substance of accounts of "trolleyology," and the immediate crises of everyday life—is almost entirely out of personal control. In the moment, Peirce would surely agree that the so-called elephant is (and Peirce believes generally should be) in charge. The future, however, is another matter altogether. As Peirce writes:

The necessitarians tell us that when we act, we act under a necessity we cannot control. I am inclined to think that this is substantially so. . . . I fancy it is too late to control what is happening at the very instant present. You cannot prevent what already is. If this be true, it is true that *when we act*, we do act under a necessity we cannot control. But our *future* actions we can determine in a great measure; can we not?" (EP 2:245)

Unlike immediate, intuitive responses, future actions are subject to control through a distinct process recruiting what the psychologist Gary Marcus calls "the latest in evolutionary technology" (Marcus 52): deliberative imagination. Imagination is a crucible—or as Peirce refers to it, a stadium of thought or mental action (EP 1:129; cf. EP 2:403)—in which beliefs are tried, tested, and more or less adopted or rejected not only reflectively, but habitually, that is, *ingrained* into habit that will affect future conduct not as a rider (rational reflection), but as instinct or encultured intuition (the elephant).

As Peirce explains, every one of us inherits a range of ideals in childhood (EP 2:246). These have been gradually shaped both by personal nature and the ideas of our particular social circles. In considering these many, sometimes conflicting ideals as we become distinctly self-aware individuals, we acquire a certain taste for some, considering them fine, or admirable (we might, for example, embrace a heightened sense of social justice in comparison with other members of our community). We then struggle to shape these approved ideals into consistency with one another as we become aware of conflicts resulting from the consequences of implementing these ideals. In the process, we develop rules of conduct for dealing with the future that imperceptibly modify our natures to conform to the ideals (EP 2:246). Admiring the ideal of justice, for example, we develop our own rules for implementing it, and these rules become habitual, presenting themselves when the need arises. When we reflect on how we will act on some future occasion, we imagine it in light of these current dispositions, and form a resolution, a plan, or what Peirce calls a *diagram*. Diagrammatic consideration in imagination converts it into a *determination*, by which Peirce means an efficient agency in our nature that expresses itself as a desire or need to act in a certain way under specific conditions, that is, a new disposition, that will be operative in the future (EP 2:246–247; cf. Liszka 56). When the occasion arises, we *then* automatically act (more or less) accordingly. As Haidt would put it, we act intuitively, the elephant having free rein, but following Peirce, the unfettered elephant's conduct is now the result (to some extent, at least) of prior deliberate, and deliberative, action. It is the result of what I call sentimental education, a process that allows elephants to act more intelligently, more reasonably, without having to employ deliberate judgment (which takes time, and is often wrong anyway).

Moreover, retrospective examination of performance, which may occur much later and over long periods of time, similarly opens prospects for progressive comparison of conduct against comprehensive sets of ideals and related desires. More specifically, Peirce notes that we may progress through five cascading levels of review: We may (1) compare what we've just done to

what we planned to accomplish; (2) determine whether our conduct accorded with our general intentions; (3) compare our conduct against our ideals, as "fitting to a man like me"; (4) review those ideals in light of recent experience; and (5) consider the very nature of ideals themselves (EP 2.247–248).<sup>9</sup> Not all of these ascending forms of criticism are commonly deployed in review of any particular act, but one or more, and potentially all five, are available and may be further cultivated. To the extent that specific conduct is approved against these measures, it is further absorbed into our nature, modifying present tendencies, which in turn further informs future conduct (including future reflection) (EP 2.247). The whole point of Pragmatism, in relation to practical conduct, is to make it a habit to *prepare* and then *review*, so as to render reflection "in the moment" unnecessary because conduct will already "fit" the demands of the imposing situation. In other words, when the alarm goes off (in the form of some morally demanding situation), we will already be disposed to do what we think we should under the circumstances. In this regard, elephants can be not only *informed*, but *reformed*, or rather, educated in light of criticism of ongoing actual and imaginative experience.<sup>10</sup>

All of this suggests one crucial respect in which Peirce's approach surpasses Haidt's social intuitionist model. Rather than retaining a dualistic conception of reason and intuition, in which the latter is inflated at the expense of the former, Peirce's model dissolves the dualism in favor of genuine continuity. Reason, as the Pragmatist conceives it, does not oppose sentiment; it imaginatively calls up sentiments by invoking and cultivating possibilities both desirable in oneself and conducive and consistent with other values and courses of action. In this respect, the Pragmatist is always speaking to the elephant by imaginatively invoking and contrasting sentiments to refine, correct, and sometimes set aside prevailing belief-habits. The point is not merely control or suppression of instinct (a model of mind that must be abandoned), but (again) the *education of sentiment*. As Jim Garrison points out, "learning has a firm biological basis and mind is not separate from the body's feelings, desires, interests, and actions" (Garrison 193). The whole point of preparation and review is precisely to inscribe habits or dispositions toward feeling, desire, interests, and action that have been deliberately approved by a thoughtful self. As Peirce writes, with uncharacteristic emphasis:

Moreover—*here is the point*—every man exercises more or less control over himself by means of modifying his own habits. . . . [H]e is virtually well-acquainted with the important principle that *reiterations in the inner world—fancied reiterations—if well-intensified by direct efforts, produce habits*, just as do reiterations in the outer world, and these habits

*will have power to influence actual behaviour in the outer world; especially, if each reiteration be accompanied by a peculiar strong effort that is usually likened to issuing a command to one's future self.* (CP 5.487)

As an insightful example of this process, Peirce recalls a story about his brother, Herbert, who, when they were children, had responded quickly and skillfully to a lady's dress catching on fire. When Peirce asked him how he had been able to perform so well, Herbert explained that he had *prepared*: he had repeatedly gone over in imagination what he should do in such an emergency, and when it happened, he acted spontaneously, without even thinking (CP 5.487n1). This is intelligent intuition at work. "Reason," on this account, is not regarded as a separate faculty, but rather the ongoing process of rendering sentiment—intuitive, immediate judgments—more reasonable in practice.<sup>11</sup> As Pragmatists, we can only start from where we are, but that does not mean we are always starting over. We learn. And that means we can progressively develop, that is, render more reasonable, the sentiments we inherit as a result of our native endowment, cultural development, and the vicissitudes of everyday experience. Viewed as a continuous process, both with regard to the relation between reason and sentiment and over time, Pragmatism holds out the possibility of deliberate moral progress.

Even on this account, Haidt is still certainly right that ethics classes do not improve persons, at least not as currently taught. What is required is a distinct form of criticism and ongoing inquiry directed at improving sentiment. This is a form of practice, a distinctively social one, which brings us to a further crucial aspect of Peirce's approach. As is well known, Peirce considers community, not reason per se, the ultimate corrective of wayward opinion.<sup>12</sup> Perhaps Darwin rightly observes that we do not know how so many absurd rules of conduct and religious belief originated in all quarters of the world (Darwin 834), but we may suspect isolation a contributing factor, and commerce, the sharing of ideas, artifacts, and ways of life—that is, nascent community—the best available method of casting accrued errors of fact and judgment into critical relief (CP 1.45, 5.387). Beliefs familiar to us, no matter how grotesque, may appear lovely or at least unexceptional or somehow necessary, while others readily perceive their contingency and radical imperfections. Peirce's Critical Common Sense counsels caution, and Peirce proudly advertised and defended his conservatism, but there is also ground for encouragement.<sup>13</sup> Change occurs, and progress is sometimes appreciable. As Peirce writes, a man's sentiments change from year to year, sometimes considerably (CP 5.445). Social practices also change, sometimes abruptly (and for the better), as Steven Pinker notes in his discussion of dueling in Europe:

an honored practice for centuries disappeared virtually overnight subject to ridicule (Pinker 21–23). Moreover, exposure to outsiders, even when unwelcome, may bring desirable change in retrospect. As Jared Diamond reports, tribespeople of New Guinea frequently comment on their improved quality of life as a result of colonial rule forcefully ending tribal warfare (a cycle of violence they could not escape on their own). When asked by anthropologists whether they preferred the old ways, they are astonished anyone should ask such a silly question (Diamond 148–49). The apropos metaphor is Peirce's, when he compares a boat casting on a broad sea eventually coming to shore to one towed toward nearest land (CP 7.78). It is not just change, but the rate of change, and the direction, that the Pragmatist pursues.

To accomplish this, the Pragmatist not only employs the method of inquiry, but seeks to develop a *shared culture* in which members increasingly rely on the difference between (a) belief-habits deliberately adopted or approved through experimental testing and the exchange of reasons with other inquirers (which Peirce early called the method of science) (EP 1:120–122), and (b) belief-habits merely inherited and maintained either because persons passionately cling to them or because they are socially imposed by force from above (EP 1:118–119).<sup>14</sup> On one hand, this method demands that persons have, or develop, good reasons for what may appear otherwise as questionable acts and practices. In the above story about the former white supremacist, Fish's own point is that the story did not have to turn out that way. The man's reaction could have been something like "that's unfortunate for my daughter, but I guess she'll have to go. The Cause is the Cause" (Fish 282). Similarly, with cultural practices like honor killings (which significantly accelerated between 1989 and 2009), there are numerous examples of men who genuinely love their daughters (or sisters) and brutally kill them anyway out of devotion to a faith (as a tragic example, Moral O. was stabbed twenty times in 2008 by her brother for her allegedly impure moral conduct. He claimed afterward that he loved her very much).<sup>15</sup> With respect to these sorts of acts, Steven Pinker is surely correct when he writes "[t]he world has far too much morality" (Pinker 622), by which he means that moral judgment too often issues in astonishing violence that does no one any good (honor killings like the one discussed above occur some *five thousand* times a year (some suggest more)).

Such cases indicate that moral inquiry, when carried out individually, shows severe limits: because subjecting a belief-habit to inquiry is only possible against a background of other belief-habits, some of which may be extremely difficult to shake, morally desirable outcomes are far from guaranteed. As Haidt points out, and Peirce would obviously agree: "We should not expect

individuals to produce good, open-minded, truth-seeking reasoning, particularly when self-interest or reputational concerns [such as honor] are in play" (Haidt, *Righteous Mind* 105). But collaborative moral inquiry opens the way to mutual criticism, in which members are able to expose one another's errors. While we are, as Peirce observes, "[b]lind to our own blindness," we are keenly aware of the mistakes of others.<sup>16</sup> According to Dan Sperber, human beings have a *suite* of abilities that contribute to this form of vigilance (Sperber 65). We automatically evaluate others, a fact that may be more fully exploited in the context of communal criticism, provided that members share appropriate concern and respect for one another.

Following Peirce's Pragmatist approach, acts and practices that cannot be broadly justified to all affected others—such as honor killings, genocide, and various forms of violence toward vulnerable groups—may be reasonably prohibited and sanctioned by the larger community. On the other hand, where broadly acceptable reasons for criticism are not available—when we find an act or practice immoral but we are demonstrably "dumbfounded" as to why it should be judged so—a culture of communal criticism sets aside its own (all too human) authoritarian tendencies, which Peirce recognized as issuing in cruelty toward those holding "tabooed belief" in favor of tolerance and tentative acceptance (EP 1:122). As John Lachs observes: "Controlling others is actually more than a desire; it is a burning urge" (Lachs 117). The urge notwithstanding, we should, as William James suggests, "tolerate, respect, and indulge those whom we see harmlessly interested and happy in their own ways, however unintelligible these may be to us" (James 645) when we cannot find good reasons to restrain them. Perhaps somewhat paradoxically, being better morally often consists in *doing less*, or nothing at all. We may, using Haidt's example of someone having sex with a chicken, be disgusted and morally outraged by that act or practice. But if there is no good reason to object to it, we can reasonably forgo our intuitive impulse to punish, seeing it (from our perspective) as quite strange but nevertheless (as far we can tell) harmless. As Lachs rhetorically asks:

We cannot calculate the harm that has come from the conviction that everything, or a large number of things, matter for our welfare and that therefore the world should operate just so. Yet how can it affect my good if others worship the wrong god or the right god in the wrong way? Is it really a disaster if my neighbors enjoy open marriages and members of some political parties closed minds? (Lachs 123)

In these cases, we (again following Lachs) reduce the amount of (undesirable) morality—of unnecessary suffering in the world—by just leaving people alone. This *via negativa* is at least as morally helpful as positive reconstruction.

To some extent, Haidt would surely endorse this Peircean model of shared social criticism, for he agrees that social persuasion frequently occurs. He writes that "friends can do for us what we cannot do for ourselves: they can challenge us, giving us reasons and arguments . . . that sometimes trigger new intuitions, thereby making it possible for us to change our minds" (*Righteous Mind* 55). But as Joshua Greene points out, Haidt's view remains a severely diminished one. Social persuasion for Haidt works not by appeal to deliberate reasoning, but to automatic, intuitive feelings. Rather than developing a reasoned assessment of the desirability of an act or practice in light of its conditions and consequences, facilitated by mutual criticism, this is a strategic process that merely triggers different response from the elephant. As Greene perceptively writes: "Here the 'reasons' that Person A produces function like a song that succeeds in moving Person B" (Greene 385n336). And recall that, for Haidt, the tail does not wag the dog; it wags *other dogs* by influencing how they feel. This suggests that the only way for one person to change another person's mind on an important issue is to modify that person's *feelings*, when in fact the point is that we sometimes have to override or otherwise set aside engrained intuitive response. Greene, a neuroscientist and philosopher at the forefront of studies in intuitive responses (he focuses on "trolleyology"), concludes that Haidt's picture of moral psychology is incorrect and contrary to experiment (Greene 385–86n336). Perhaps he is right—the question requires considerable further empirical studies—but I suggest the way forward yet again lies in following Peirce. Rather than resurrecting a pernicious distinction between reason and emotion (as Greene [15] does by contrasting two modes of moral machinery, the "manual" and "automatic"), we recognize instead the need to develop a genuine culture of inquiry, one that incorporates a suite of habits that encourages us to cultivate doubt, the exchange of reasons, and experimentation that may lead us to adopt new ideals that, in the process outlined by Peirce above, lead us to gradually modify our habitual responses to come more in line with these newly adopted ideals. Peirce, like Haidt, rightly observes that we cannot dismiss instinct or well-developed social intuition—instinct gives reason the lie—but practice, iteration over time, gradually molds instinct and habit. In other words, we do not have to override intuitions; we just need to intelligently facilitate their reform in light of other, deliberately cultivated intuitions.

A Peircean culture of moral inquiry also allows us to set aside Haidt's narrow view regarding how to improve moral behavior. To secure moral improvement, Haidt concludes that we should direct our efforts at manipulating the environment in order to take advantage of elephants' inclinations: "You can hire Glaucon as a consultant and ask him how to design institutions in which

real human beings, always concerned about their reputations, will behave more ethically" (Haidt, *Righteous Mind* 106). While the Pragmatist surely agrees that institutional changes may dramatically help, he still holds out individual and communal inquiry as viable and far more attractive alternatives in the long run, particularly to one that resorts to deliberate manipulation of moral conditions. It is, after all, individual persons who must both embody those institutional changes and continually reform them over time. As Haidt correctly observes, it is often difficult to change people's intuitions. But real differences in our *approaches* to intuitive moral judgment already exist. For example, in his own research, Haidt found that university students, as a group, were far more likely (73%, the only majority group) to tolerate acts they found disgusting (like the chicken story), invoking something like a harm principle in conjunction with rights to privacy: "As one Penn student said, 'It's perverted, but if it's done in private, it's his right'" (Haidt, *Righteous Mind* 112). These students have clearly adopted a norm, one that (as Peirce would have it) reflects an ideal (the harm principle), which dissolves initial response. A student may be intuitively disgusted, but the habit of considering potential harm has also become intuitive, automatic, resulting in a felt need to tolerate, or perhaps a feeling of indifference or amusement. Here, reason does not override emotion; rather, a suite of sentiments (some learned) resolve conflict in a more or less intelligent way.<sup>17</sup> On this view, the point of an ethics class (along with other forms of deliberately constructed communal practice) would not be to canvass various historical positions as to the nature of morality, but to develop precisely the suite of sentiments necessary to conduct critical, collaborate inquiry that facilitates moral progress over time.<sup>18</sup>

Finally, it is worth noting that changing minds may not *always* be so difficult. As Peirce points out, beliefs significantly differ in terms of how difficult they are to change. Haidt dramatically supports his case by focusing on acts that elicit strong reaction, such as incest. But we do not always have such strong intuitions, and even when we do, they differ in their susceptibility to change. For example, the prohibition against incest is stubbornly obdurate: as Peirce writes, "we may infer that if some rationalistic brother and sister were to marry, they would find that the conviction of horrible guilt could not be shaken off" (CP 5.445; cf. 2.172). But other beliefs, such as the view that suicide is murder, is more tractable, even if we are strongly against it—and we know this because (1) it is confined to only part of the world, and (2) "when it comes to the point of actual self-debate, this belief seems to be completely expunged and ex-sponged [*sic*] from the mind" (5.445). Just how difficult change is turns on which beliefs are in question, and considerable inquiry and experiment is needed here, rather than

a blanket conclusion that changing intuitions is difficult. For example, we may duly ask just how intractable is the practice of honor killing? Could it, too, not go the way of dueling—a practice that endured for centuries and then disappeared suddenly? And how might we help that along without excessively intruding on another culture or actually making things worse for those involved? There are myriad questions needing answers here (as with any number of other difficult moral issues), which (yet again) call for shared, sustained, and refined inquiry. This suggests that, rather than giving up and hiring Glaucon, we would be better off implementing Peirce's model of Critical Common Sense, which may well provide us with at least some of the tools needed to secure deliberate moral progress if conducted by mutually engaged and concerned inquirers.

#### IV. Conclusion

Jonathan Haidt's work in moral psychology provides significant support for an intuitionist model of moral judgment, a view that was already developed by Charles Peirce in terms of sentiment. In addressing the relationship between reason and sentiment, Haidt considers three models: a Platonic one, in which reason rules, a Jeffersonian one in which each rules its own estate, and a Humean one, according to which reason is notoriously the slave of the passions (Haidt, *Righteous Mind* 36). Haidt claims that modern science vindicates Hume: most of the time, intuitions come first, and reason—when it appears at all—follows with retrospective rationalization (Haidt, *Righteous Mind* 135). Rarely, Haidt concludes, are moral decisions made deliberately. A Peircean approach to moral judgment recognizes, as empirical fact, that, in the moment, judgment is intuitive and rarely gives rise to reflection. But Peirce also provides a powerful model we may deliberately adopt in order to subject future conduct to self- and communal criticism. This is a model that renders reason continuous with intuition insofar as moral inquiry renders intuition progressively more reasonable. The goal of the Pragmatist is, in short, *sentimental education* in pursuit of moral progress, which Peirce's model, if developed as a robust culture of inquiry, may help secure.

#### NOTES

1. All references to the *Collected Papers* will be to volume and paragraph (e.g., CP 1.601). All references to *The Essential Peirce* will be to volume and page (e.g., EP 1.3 or EP 2.6).
2. Such instincts may be rather complex. Peirce writes: "The instincts connected with the need of nutrition have furnished all animals with some virtual knowledge of space and of force, and made them applied physicists. The instincts connected with sexual

reproduction have furnished all animals at all like ourselves with some virtual comprehension of the minds of other animals of their kind, so that they are applied psychiatrists" (CP 5.586; cf. 5.592, 5.603, 6.418).

3. See also Kurzbach (57–59), in which the author describes moral reasoning as a "press secretary" conveying and spinning information to others for purposes of persuasion.

4. For an evolutionary account of deceit and self-deception, see Trivers.

5. There is also evidence from neuroscience based on studies of split-brain patients. See Gazzaniga.

6. See <http://ethicalsystems.org/content/cheating-honesty>.

7. My impression is that many find Peirce's limiting pragmatism to a method of clarification disappointing (rather than extending it to a theory of meaning, truth, or even metaphysics). I would emphasize that, as a method of clarification, pragmatism is extremely useful, *especially* as applied to moral and political discourse, which often thrives on vagueness. Peirce and James obviously thought the pragmatic method of clarification useful, and close reading of Dewey finds him similarly operationalizing not only ideas, but values and other philosophical theories (Dewey 273, 580–82).

8. As Peirce points out, some beliefs are adopted consciously, deliberately, but the Pragmatist understands that we accrue other beliefs either *acritically*, as when a belief results implicitly from another belief, or by *association*, when a belief is determined by another belief without our even being aware of it (EP 2.348).

9. See Masscare for a more detailed explanation of this process.

10. Peirce's view may appear to conflict with Haidt's, given his claim that moral reasoning is "rare, occurring primarily in cases in which the intuition is weak and processing capacity is high" (Haidt and Kesebir 819). But Peirce's view is consistent with Haidt not only because it focuses on "off-line" reasoning but also it emphasizes how *hard* this truly is. Doubt does not come easily—we must *hunger* for it—and that takes deliberate practice. The difference between Haidt and Peirce here is that Haidt is providing an empirical description with which Peirce would heartily agree, while Peirce is providing a possible normative approach.

11. Haidt's metaphors (emotional dog/rational tail and elephant/rider) are extremely insightful, but also support or reinscribe dualism between reason and sentiment, and so must be ultimately set aside.

12. Haidt also recognizes that community can correct opinion where persons know they are going to be accountable to others for their decisions and justifications (Haidt, *Righteous Mind* 88–89), but nowhere does he tap the rich potential of a community of inquiry, which lies at the heart of Peirce's writings on science.

13. It is tempting to contrast Peirce's conservatism with James's apparent radicalism, but this misses James's own stated view, to wit, human beings are by nature conservative and, in many cases (if not all), this is a good thing (James 419, 624). It is our experience, rather than an appetite for risk, that forces us to revise our beliefs (James 438).

14. This contrast refers to Peirce's identification of four methods of belief formation in his essay, "The Fixation of Belief." The essay has been very diversely interpreted, and this cannot be addressed here. For an excellent treatment of the essay, see Short; for a more recent discussion and summary of how the essay has been interpreted, see Talisse.

15. See <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/an-honor-killing-in-germany-afghan-girl-s-death-sparks-national-debate-a-548666.html>.

16. Peirce, *Writings* 381.

17. Interestingly, in my own experience sharing these stories with students (in Ankara, Turkey), the students rarely express anger. The chicken story makes them laugh.

It's gross, but not terribly important; they tend to shrug it off. The incest story does not make them angry either; instead, they generally express *concern*. They worry about the siblings and are suspicious that the controlling assumption, that the experience had no harmful results, could possibly be true.

18. Although well beyond the scope of this article, I would argue that this is precisely what Dewey provides in his theory of education: a socialization of individuals that enables them to participate in, and meaningfully contribute to, a lifetime of collaborative practices, some of which include deliberative inquiry.

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