Women in Philosophy:
Quantitative Analyses of Specialization, Prevalence, Visibility, and Generational Change

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Abstract:

We present several quantitative analyses of the prevalence and visibility of women in moral, political, and social philosophy, compared to other areas of philosophy, and how the situation has changed over time. Measures include faculty lists from the Philosophical Gourmet Report, PhD job placement data from the Academic Placement Data and Analysis project, the National Science Foundation's Survey of Earned Doctorates, conference programs of the American Philosophical Association, authorship in elite philosophy journals, citation in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, and extended discussion in abstracts from the Philosopher's Index. Our data strongly support three conclusions: (1) Gender disparity remains large in mainstream Anglophone philosophy; (2) ethics, construed broadly to include social and political philosophy, is closer to gender parity than are other fields in philosophy; and (3) women's involvement in philosophy has increased since the 1970s. However, by most measures, women's involvement and visibility in mainstream Anglophone philosophy has increased only slowly; and by some measures there has been virtually no gain since the 1990s. We find mixed evidence on the question of whether gender disparity is even more pronounced at the highest level of visibility or prestige than at more moderate levels of visibility or prestige.

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1. Introduction.

Women are half of the population, but they do not occupy half of all full-time university faculty

positions, publish half of all academic journal articles, nor constitute half of the highest social

status members of academia.[1] The last several decades have seen substantial progress toward

gender parity in most disciplines, but philosophy remains strikingly imbalanced in faculty ratios

and in citation patterns in leading philosophical journals.[2] The persistent gender imbalance in

philosophy is particularly noteworthy because (a) feminism is an important subfield within

philosophy and many philosophers explicitly identify as feminist, suggesting that the discipline

ought to be a leader rather than a laggard in addressing gender issues; (b) most of the humanities

and social sciences have shifted much closer toward parity than has philosophy, leaving

philosophy with gender ratios more characteristic of disciplines superficially very different, such

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[1] For example: Grove 2013; Larivière, Ni, Gingras, Cronin, and Sugimoto 2013; Morley and Crossouard 2014; Australian Government 2015; National Center for Education Statistics 2015; Cameron, White, and Gray 2016.

[2] Beebee and Saul 2011 estimated women to be 24% of permanent philosophy staff in the U.K. in 2008-2011. Paxton, Figdor, and Tiberius 2012 report women to be 19% of full professors in philosophy in 56 U.S. institutions examined in 2011, as well as 23% of associate professors, 43% of assistant professors, and 19% of adjuncts. In slightly older data, Norlock 2006/2011 reports United States National Center for Education Statistics data from 2003 according to which women are 21% of post-secondary philosophy instructors (17% of full-time instructors and 26% of part-time instructors). Haslanger 2008 reports 19% women faculty in a sample of the 20 top-ranked departments in the Philosophical Gourmet Report. Goddard 2008 reports 23% women faculty in continuing teaching-and-research positions in Philosophy in Australian universities in 2006. On gender and philosophy citation, see Healy 2013.

as engineering and the physical sciences; and (c) some measures suggest that progress toward gender parity in philosophy has stopped or slowed since the 1980s.[3]

Previous work in the sociology of academia suggests that gender ratios differ substantially between subfields within academic disciplines, possibly with women more common in subfields regarded as less prestigious.[4] Preliminary data suggest that ethical, political, and social philosophy might be closer to gender parity than other areas of philosophy, and many of the most prominent women philosophers of the past hundred years have been known primarily for their work in these areas (e.g. Simone de Beauvoir, Hannah Arendt, Philippa Foot, Martha Nussbaum, and Christine Korsgaard).[5]

Below we present data from several sources on the prevalence and visibility of women in philosophy over the past several decades. We focus on philosophy in the English-speaking world, especially the United States. There is, we believe, a sociological center of dominance in philosophy as practiced at universities in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia. We will call this sociological center *mainstream Anglophone philosophy*, without intending any judgments about the quality of mainstream Anglophone philosophical work compared to work in other languages or traditions or outside of this sociologically defined mainstream. Visibility in mainstream Anglophone philosophy can be measured in a variety of ways, among them membership in highly ranked departments in the Philosophical Gourmet Report; publication in and citation in journals that are viewed as "top" journals (e.g. *Philosophical Review* and *Ethics*, which tend to lead journal-ranking polls on Anglophone

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[3] For example, Alcoff 2011, discussing some of the U.S. NSF Survey of Earned Doctorates data we analyze further in Section 4 below.

[4] For example, Pion et al. 1996; Hirshfield 2010; Cohen 2011. For a broad look at subfield data in sciences and engineering by gender in the U.S., see the NSF Survey of Earned Doctorates, 2014 data Table 16: http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/2016/nsf16300/data-tables.cfm.

[5] Schwitzgebel 2012, 2014a, 2015.

philosophy blogs with large readerships among professional philosophers); and citation in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

We aim to test four hypotheses:

(1) Confirming other recent work, gender disparity remains large in mainstream Anglophone philosophy, across several methods of measuring women's involvement or visibility.

(2) Ethics, construed broadly to include social and political philosophy, is closer to gender parity than are other areas of philosophy.

(3) The gender disparity in mainstream Anglophone philosophy is even more pronounced at the highest levels of visibility or prestige than at moderate levels of visibility or prestige.

(4) Women's involvement and visibility in mainstream Anglophone philosophy has increased over time, but only slowly in the past few decades. (We would regard a 10% increase over 40 years to be slow, whether it is from 5% to 15% or 25% to 35%.)

2. Analysis of the 2014 Philosophical Gourmet Report.

The Philosophical Gourmet Report (PGR), edited by Brian Leiter and Berit Brogaard, is a survey of philosophy faculty quality or reputation. Every few years hundreds of "research active" philosophers are asked to numerically rate overall faculty quality at dozens of PhD programs – programs that in the view of the editorial board stand a reasonable chance of being among the

top 50 in the U.S., the top 15 in Britain, the top 5 in Canada, or the top 5 in Australasia. These numerical ratings are averaged to create overall rankings.[6]

We examined the faculty lists provided to the PGR evaluators in 2014 for all departments in the United States (59 total departments), removing from the list faculty listed as "cognate" or "part-time." Subfield was determined by area of specialization information available on department or faculty websites and sorted into four categories: "Value Theory", "Language, Epistemology, Mind, and Metaphysics" (LEMM), "History and Traditions", and "Science, Logic, and Math". These categories were chosen using the PhilPapers Taxonomy from the PhilPapers Categorization Project (combining the categories of "History of Western Philosophy" and "Philosophical Traditions" into "History and Traditions"), and areas of specialization were fit into subfields based on that taxonomy.[7] Faculty whose work crossed subfields were classified based on their first listed area of specialization. For example, if a faculty member listed "Ancient Philosophy" and "Virtue Ethics" in that order, she would be classified under History and Traditions; if she listed "Kant's ethics", she would be classified under Value Theory. Gender was classified based on name, website photo, and personal knowledge. In no case was gender judged to be intermediate or indeterminable.

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[6] For more detail on methodology and results see http://www.philosophicalgourmet.com
[7] Value Theory includes Aesthetics; Applied Ethics; Normative Ethics; Philosophy of Gender, Race, and Sexuality; Philosophy of Law; and Social and Political Philosophy. LEMM includes Epistemology, Metaphilosophy, Metaphysics, Philosophy of Action, Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of Mind, and Philosophy of Religion. History and Traditions includes African/Africana Philosophy, Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy, Asian Philosophy, Continental Philosophy, European Philosophy, Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy, Philosophy of the Americas, 17th/18th Century Philosophy, 19th Century Philosophy, and 20th Century Philosophy. Science, Logic, and Math includes Logic and Philosophy of Logic, Philosophy of Biology, Philosophy of Cognitive Science, Philosophy of Computing and Information, Philosophy of Mathematics, Philosophy of Physical Science, Philosophy of Social Science, Philosophy of Probability, and General Philosophy of Science.

Of the 1104 analyzed faculty, 25% (271) were women, a number roughly consistent with previous estimates that women are about 21% of U.S. faculty in philosophy overall. The distribution of women and men across different subfields was significantly different (χ^2 [3] = 31.0, p < .001), as shown in Table 1. If we confine the analysis to the 258 faculty at the top twelve[8] ranked universities according to the 2014 PGR, the percentage of women is about the same: 61/258 (24%).[9]

Table 1: Percentage of faculty in each subfield who are women, among 2014 PGR-ranked faculty in the United States.

Subfield	# women	# men	% women
Value Theory	90	176	34%
Language, Epistemology, Mind, and Metaphysics	65	266	20%
History and Traditions	78	185	30%
Science, Logic, and Math	38	206	16%

Value theorists constituted 22% (56/258) of faculty at the top-twelve rated universities and 25% (210/846) of faculty at the remaining universities, a difference in proportion that was not statistically significant (z = -1.0, p = .31, all z's two-tailed unless otherwise specified). The mean PGR rating was 3.02 for faculty in the Value Theory subfield and 3.12 for faculty in all other subfields, a statistically marginal trend (t = -1.9, p = .06).

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[8] We had planned on looking at the top 10 but extended to 12 due to a three-way tie for 10th.

[9] Perhaps this differs from the situation in 2004, as presented in Alcoff's 2011 summary of data made available by Julie Van Camp that suggest a negative relationship between percentage of women on the faculty and PGR ranking. Current data available at http://web.csulb.edu/~jvancamp/doctoral_2004.html (accessed Jan. 21, 2016).

Table 2 displays the data by academic rank. The different distributions of women and men in these academic ranks was statistically significant (χ^2 [2] = 23.1, p < .001), with a higher proportion of women at the rank of assistant and associate professor than at the rank of full professor. The trend was evident both in Value Theory (43% women among faculty at assistant rank, 55% among faculty at associate, 26% among faculty at full) and in all other subfields combined (36%, 22%, 18%).

Table 2: Percentage of faculty at each professional rank who are women, among 2014 PGR-ranked faculty.

Rank	# women	# men	% women
Assistant professor	58	97	37%
Associate professor	72	180	29%
Full professor	141	556	20%

These data thus support Hypothesis 1: At 25% women faculty, gender disparity among faculty at PGR-ranked U.S. PhD programs is large and approximately in line with previous estimates. Hypothesis 2 is also supported: Women were not proportionately represented among the subfields, with the highest proportion in Value Theory (34%) and the lowest proportion in Science, Logic, and Math (16%). Hypothesis 3, however, is not supported: 2014 PGR-rated PhD programs in the United States do not appear to contain a lower percentage of women than U.S. faculty as a whole, nor did we find evidence that the top 12 programs contain proportionately fewer women than the other rated programs. The difference in distribution between men and women with respect to faculty rank is consistent with an increase in women recently entering the

faculty (Hypothesis 4) but is also consistent with higher attrition rates or lower promotion rates for women.

3. Analysis of PhD Job Placement Data, 2012-2015.

The Academic Placement Data and Analysis project (APDA), directed by Carolyn Dicey Jennings, maintains placement information for PhD graduates from 146 English-language philosophy programs around the world (the data for 128 of which are included here). This information has been largely provided by the graduates themselves, placement directors, and department chairs. Collected information includes name; area(s) of specialization; graduation year and program; and placement institution, type, and year. While the APDA database is the most complete record of placement information for the field of philosophy, it nonetheless incomplete for graduation years before 2012 and for some categories of data, such as non-academic placements and temporary placements. Gender was determined by first name, using an online gender probability generator (genderize.io) and the cutoff of .6 probability to assign gender. For those below the cutoff, gender was classified based on website photo and personal knowledge. In 2% of cases (40/1802) gender was judged to be indeterminable or non-binary. Those individuals were excluded from further analysis. Area of specialization was grouped using the same system used in section 2.[10]

Among recent graduates with recorded academic placements (graduating between 2012 and 2015), 28% were women (424/1509), which is statistically somewhat higher than most estimates of the overall percentage of women in philosophy faculty positions in English-speaking countries (the 95% confidence interval of 424/1509 is 26% to 30%). Among recent graduates

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[10] For further information on the APDA, see http://placementdata.com/about/

with permanent academic placements, 32% were women (231/723, CI 29% to 35%), also higher, though not higher than the proportion of women we found at the assistant professor rank in the PGR-ranked universities discussed above (37%).

Area of specialization was not consistently provided, so we had to leave subfield unclassified for 25% of the dataset (449/1762). The most common reason for missing subfield information was that the graduating program did not track this information. Missing subfield information did appear to track PGR rating: Field information was missing for 31% of individuals from unrated programs, compared to 23% from PGR-rated programs (169/539 vs. 280/1223, $z = 3.8$, $p < .001$); and among the rated programs, the mean PGR rating was 3.04 for graduates with missing subfield information and 3.15 for all other graduates ($t = -2.5$, $p = .01$). However, the difference between the proportion of women and men with missing subfield information was not statistically significant (23% vs. 26%, $z = -1.5$, $p = .12$). For those with classified subfields, area of specialization was significantly different by gender, but not as strikingly so as among PGR faculty (χ^2 [3] $= 8.4$, $p = .04$). See Table 3.

Table 3: Percentage of graduates in each subfield who are women, among 2012-2015 graduates in APDA database.

Subfield	# women	# men	% women
Value Theory	143	287	33%
Language, Epistemology, Mind, and Metaphysics	92	288	24%
History and Traditions	94	231	29%
Science, Logic, and Math	48	130	27%

We did not see evidence of gender differences based on the 2014 PGR rating of the PhD-granting university. Among universities rated in the 2014 PGR, the mean rating of the granting university was virtually the same for women and men (3.14 vs. 3.12, t = -0.3, p = .74) as was the proportion of women among graduates from PGR rated programs (28% of both groups).

Among PGR-rated programs, we did not see a statistically significant tendency for certain subfields to associate with more highly rated graduating departments (F [3, 939] = 1.2, p = .30). However, graduates from unrated programs were less likely to specialize in Language, Epistemology, Mind, and Metaphysics (14% vs. 35%) and more likely to specialize in History and Traditions (45% vs. 17%) than were graduates from rated programs; but the rates of specialization in Value Theory were similar for unrated and rated institutions (36% vs. 31%).

Hypotheses 1 and 2 are thus supported: Gender disparities are large in this dataset, with women disproportionately specializing in Value Theory. Hypothesis 3 is again not supported: The percentages of women do not appear to change at the highest levels of status. These data are consistent with, and perhaps support, Hypothesis 4: If 28% of recent PhD graduates with recorded academic placements are women, this might reflect a trend toward decreasing gender disparity, if women comprise fewer than 25% of existing faculty in the relevant range of hiring departments – though the unsystematic geographic mix of hiring departments makes a strict comparison impossible.

In this section and the last, we categorized philosophers according to the PhilPapers taxonomy, focusing on its Value Theory subfield. Although most philosophers working in Value Theory specialize in ethics broadly construed to include applied ethics, normative ethics, meta-ethics, social and political philosophy, and law, some work on aesthetics (in this data set, 18 out of 430 value theorists), and others work on gender, race, and sexuality (14 out of 430) which

often but not always fits within ethics broadly construed. Given the small numbers in each of those groups, this labeling issue does not make much overall difference to the results above. However, in the remaining sections we focus on ethics broadly construed, excluding aesthetics and including gender, race, and sexuality only when those directly pertain to ethics broadly construed.

4. Survey of Earned Doctorates, 1973-2014.

The Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED) is a questionnaire distributed by the U.S. National Science Foundation to doctorate recipients at all accredited U.S. universities, which draws response rates over 90% annually. Publicly available data are published on the NSF website for 2009-2014. Upon request, the NSF supplied us with data going back to 1973. Available data include gender by subfield, with one subfield being "philosophy" (1973-2014) and another (much smaller) "ethics" (2012-2014). For analysis, we merged these two subfields. The large majority of philosophy PhD recipients in the United States aim to enter careers teaching philosophy at either the university or college level.[11]

For 2009-2014, 29% of "philosophy" and "ethics" SED respondents who reported gender were women, in line with the 28% of PhD placements who were women in a similar period in the Anglophone-dominated (but not exclusively U.S.) dataset analyzed in Section 3 (811/2840, CI 27%-30%). In the same period, women received 51% of PhD degrees in the humanities as a whole (16,330/31,734). However, philosophy was not entirely alone among the humanities in its gender disparity: Among the 33 humanities categories, "music theory and composition" was

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[11] For details on information on the SED see http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/srvydoctorates/

even more gender skewed at 22% women (127/587). The third most skewed humanities discipline was "religion/religious studies, Jewish/Judaic studies", at 34% women (646/1876).

Figure 1 shows historical trends back to 1973.[12] A linear regression predicting percentage of doctorates awarded to women by year of award is significantly different from zero slope (t = 8.6, p < .001) but the slope is still rather flat, with an increase of only 0.30% per year. Since we had hypothesized that change in disparity might be slowing, we also tried fitting a quadratic curve, displayed in black in Figure 1. The quadratic curve does indeed fit much better than the linear, with a difference of 11.40 in the AICc scores (which penalize models with more parameters): The AICc relative likelihood of the quadratic vs. the linear is .996 to .004. In other words, the visually apparent flattening is highly unlikely to be chance variation in a linear trend. (We use the quadratic only to test for flattening, not to extrapolate beyond the measurement years.) One intuitive way to see the slowing is to aggregate the data by decade: in 1973-1979 17% of U.S. philosophy PhDs went to women; in the 1980s, 22%; in the 1990s, 27%; in the 2000s, also 27%; and in 2010-2014, 28%.

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[12] Temporal data on female faculty in philosophy are somewhat difficult to find. Norlock 2006/2011 estimates 13% to 17% in women full-time Philosophy faculty in U.S. 4-year-universities in 1992. Goddard 2008 shows a clear trend in Australian universities from under 5% women in continuing teaching and research positions in 1970 to over 20% in 2006.

Percentage of U.S. Philosophy PhDs Earned by Women, by Year

Figure 1: Based on SED data. The gray line is the best linear fit. The black line is the best quadratic fit.

These data confirm Hypothesis 1: Gender disparity in philosophy remains large. Hypothesis 4 is also confirmed: Disparity has decreased, but this decrease has slowed over time.

5. American Philosophical Association Gender Data.

The American Philosophical Association (APA) is the main professional association of philosophy professors in the United States (with substantial Canadian and other international involvement). In 2014 and 2015 it conducted demographic surveys of its members. In 2014, 4152 out of 9180 members responded with gender information (45% response rate).[13] Among those, 983 (24%) were women and 1 responded with "something else." In 2015, 3362 out of 8975 members responded (38% response rate), 805 (24%) women, 4 "something else", and 19

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[13] Results at
http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.apaonline.org/resource/resmgr/Data_on_Profession/Member_Demo-Chart_FY2015.pdf

"prefer not to answer." Although these numbers are similar to other estimates that support Hypothesis 1, reasons for caution include (a) that women may be more or less likely than men to be APA members or (b) that women may be more or less likely to respond to such a demographic survey.

6. Appearance on American Philosophical Association Programs, 1955-2015.
Long term temporal trends might also be evident from patterns of participation in meetings of the American Philosophical Association. By examining the roles women play in the program (e.g. invited speaker, commenter, session chair), we can also explore questions about prestige and visibility.

The APA contains three divisions: Eastern, Central (formerly Western), and Pacific, each of which meets separately, with participants from across the world. There is no primary meeting of the entire APA. Meetings consist of a "main program" organized by program committees and a "group program" separately organized by subgroups of philosophers. Some of the main program sessions are "special sessions" on issues like the teaching of philosophy or on the status of women or ethnic minorities. The remaining sessions are focused on research topics in philosophy. "Colloquium" sessions normally consist of submitted and refereed papers, often by less senior faculty. Some "symposium" sessions are similarly refereed, while others are invited. "Colloquium" sessions typically have only one commentator; "symposium" sessions have longer talks with more than one commentator. Other sessions are invited, normally featuring senior, visible people in the profession. Some sessions are named, and typically regarded as especially prestigious, such as the "Dewey Lectures" or the Presidential addresses (each division has its own President). Also notable are "Author Meets Critics" sessions, which feature a panel of

invited critical treatments of a recent book and a reply by the author. Every session has a "chair", which (despite the title) is a less visible and prestigious role than speaking or commenting, normally confined to keeping the session on schedule and managing the question queue.

We examined main session programs for all three divisions from five sample years: 1955, 1975, 1995, and 2014-2015, excluding special sessions.[14] The gender of every program participant was coded based on first name or personal knowledge, excluding cases judged to be ambiguous, such as where only first initial was provided, where the name was gender ambiguous (e.g. "Pat"), or names where gender associations were unknown to the coder (e.g. "Lijun"). Overall, 8% (240/3180) names were judged indeterminable, with a trend toward a more indeterminability in the 2014-2015 data (10%: 177/1703; impressionistically, due to a higher rate of non-Anglophone names). We sorted program role into five categories in what we judged to be decreasing order of perceived prestige: (1) named lecture, author in author-meets-critics, or symposium speaker with at least one commentator dedicated specifically to her presentation; (2) non-colloquium speaker not in Category 1, including critic in author-meets-critics, (3) non-colloquium commentator, (4) colloquium speaker or commentator, (5) chair of any session. Finally, we classified each participant as ethics (construed broadly to include political and social philosophy, but not including other value theory fields, such as aesthetics), non-ethics, or mixed/excluded (including intermediate topics such as philosophy of action and philosophy of religion without an explicitly ethical component, and including treatments of historical figures known for contributions both in ethics and outside of ethics if the ethical or non-ethical focus was not explicit). Thus, we could examine temporal trends in women's involvement in APA

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[14] Data are from the American Philosophical Association website and relevant issues of *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association.* The Eastern Division did not meet in 2015, shifting from a December to a January schedule in 2016, so 2014 is used instead.

programs, both in ethics and in non-ethics, and whether women are more or less likely to serve in prestigious roles on the program.

Figure 2 displays the data on women's overall involvement in ethics and non-ethics sessions in the four time periods. As is evident from the figure, women's involvement has increased substantially since 1955 and 1975. Overall, women were 6% of program participants in 1955 (7/121, excluding 5 indeterminable), 16% in 1975 (62/397, excl. 20), 25% in 1995 (220/896, excl. 38), and 32% in 2014-2015 (481/1526, excl. 177). By 2014-2015, 41% (206/500) of participants in ethics sessions were women. The increase in women was statistically significant both for ethics and non-ethics (correlating year 1955, etc., with gender = 1 for women and 0 for men yields $r = .18$ in ethics, $r = .13$ in non-ethics, with both p values $< .001$ [treating 2014 as 2015]). Women were statistically more likely to appear in ethics roles than non-ethics roles in 1995 and 2015 (1955 Fisher's exact $p = .09$, two-tailed; 1975 $z = -0.5$, $p = .64$; 1995 and 2014-2015 z's > 5.0, p's $< .001$).
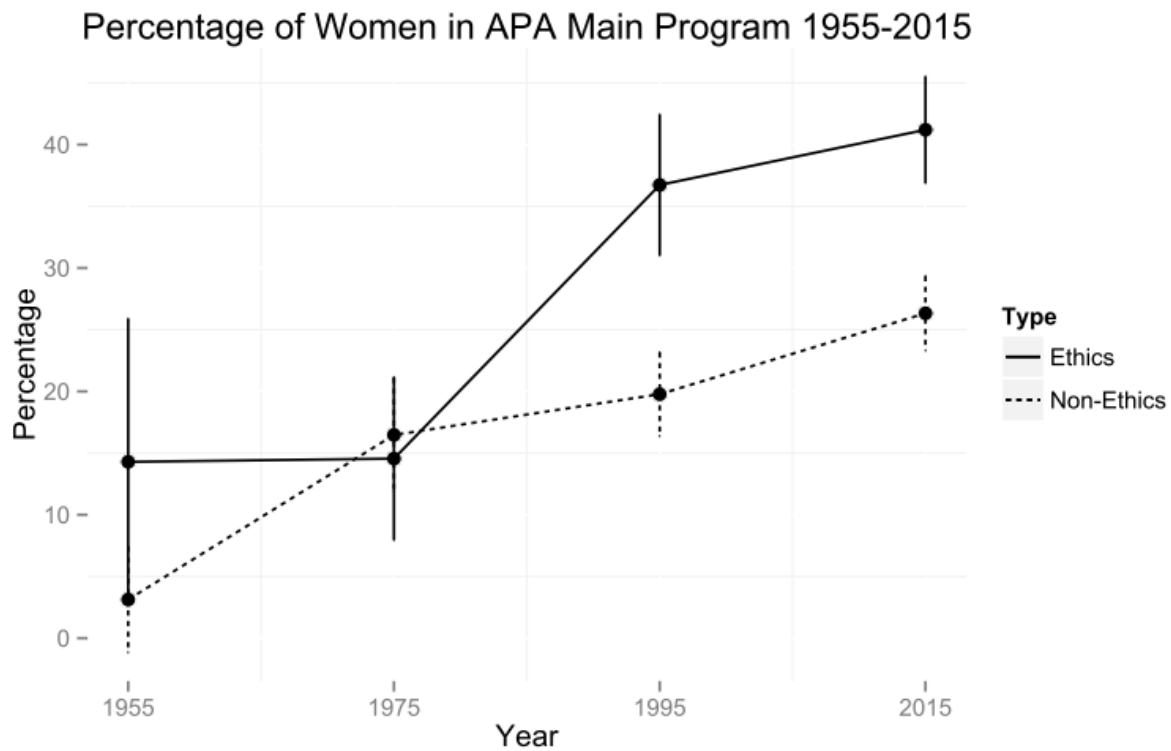
Figure 1: Based on APA data. The vertical lines indicate 95% confidence intervals.

Overall program role data are displayed in Table 4, with 1955 and 1975 merged for presentation. Chi-square analysis of 2014-2015 shows a statistically significant relationship between gender and program role (χ^2 [4] = 18.9, p = .001). In 2014-2015, women were more likely to appear as invited speakers, but not in the highest prestige invitations, and as session chairs (Categories 2 and 5), than to appear in the highest prestige lectures and as colloquium speakers (Categories 1 and 4), but since this doesn't map neatly onto our initial hypothesis about prestige, and since it is not consistent across the sampled years, we interpret the results cautiously.

Table 4: Percent of women in different program roles, for APA meetings in sample years from 1955-2015.

Role	1955-1975	1995	2014-2015
Category 1 (most prestige)	5/34 (15%)	11/46 (24%)	27/99 (27%)
Category 2	4/63 (6%)	28/104 (27%)	117/314 (37%)
Category 3	8/61 (13%)	15/51 (29%)	29/96 (30%)
Category 4	38/256 (15%)	104/463 (22%)	155/597 (26%)
Category 5 (least prestige)	14/104 (13%)	62/232 (27%)	153/420 (36%)

These results compare interestingly with the results of other measures. Overall APA main program participation (excluding special sessions) was 32% women with a 95% confidence interval from 29% to 34%. If the population of women in the profession is 28% or less, as it would appear to be from our data in previous sections as well as data from other investigators, then women are proportionately more likely to appear in APA main programs than are men. Several past APA program committee members have told us that they have made efforts to include more women on the program. These data suggest that their efforts may have been successful, perhaps especially in the invited parts of the program (all but Category 4, which at least in recent years tends to be anonymously refereed). Another possible explanation is greater interest in APA meetings among women than among men.

These data confirm Hypotheses 1 and 2 (gender disparity, but less in ethics), and provide mixed results regarding Hypothesis 3 (that disparity is largest at the highest levels of prestige). Hypothesis 4 is that women's involvement has increased over time but only slowly in the past

few decades. These data confirm women's increased involvement. Whether the increase has been "slow" depends on whether an increase from 16% to 32% over forty years (1975-2015) is slow.

7. Authorship in Five Elite Journals, 1954-2015.

To further examine temporal trends in visibility at the highest levels of prestige, we examined authorship rates over time in five elite journals. Three of the journals were *Philosophical Review, Mind,* and *Journal of Philosophy,* sometimes referred to as the "big three" general philosophy journals. All three have been regarded as leading journals since at least the early 20th century, and they tend to top informal polls of journal prestige, such as polls on the Leiter Reports blog, sometimes alongside relative newcomer *Noûs* (e.g. Leiter 2013, 2015). Since these journals publish proportionately less in ethics than in other areas of philosophy, we also include two elite ethics journals, *Ethics* and *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, which tend to top polls of ethics journals (e.g. Bradley 2005, Leiter 2009), although *Philosophy & Public Affairs* has only been publishing since 1972.

In December 2014, we examined the names of all authors publishing articles, commentaries, or responses (but not book reviews, editorial remarks, or retrospectives), in four time periods: 1954-1955, 1974-1975, 1994-1995, and 2014-2015. (However, since not all 2015 issues of *Philosophical Review* and *Journal of Philosophy* had been released at the time of data collection, we went back into late 2013 for these two journals to have a full two-year sample.) All articles in *Ethics* and *Philosophy & Public Affairs* were coded as "ethics." Articles in the other three were coded as either "ethics" or "non-ethics" depending on article title or a brief skim of the article contents when the title was ambiguous. Gender was coded based on first name or personal knowledge, or in cases of uncertainty a brief web search for gender-identifying

information such as a gender-typical photo or references to the person as "him" or "her" in discussions of that person's work. In only 11 cases out of 1202 were we unable to make a determination. We treated non-first-authors in the same manner as first authors, but only 53 out of 1143 articles (5%) had more than one author.

Figure 3 displays the results. Increases in the rates of women authors were statistically significant, though small, both overall (r = .10, p = .001) and for ethics and non-ethics considered separately (ethics r = .10, p = .03; non-ethics r = .08, p = .04). Ethics authors were significantly more likely to be women in 1974-1975 and in 1994-1995 (26/161 vs. 13/192, z = 2.7, p = .006; 21/119 vs. 11/127, z = 2.1, p = .04), but no statistical difference was evident in the earlier or later time samples (5/107 vs. 12/236, z = -0.2, p = .87; 18/119 vs. 14/130, z = 1.0, p = .31).
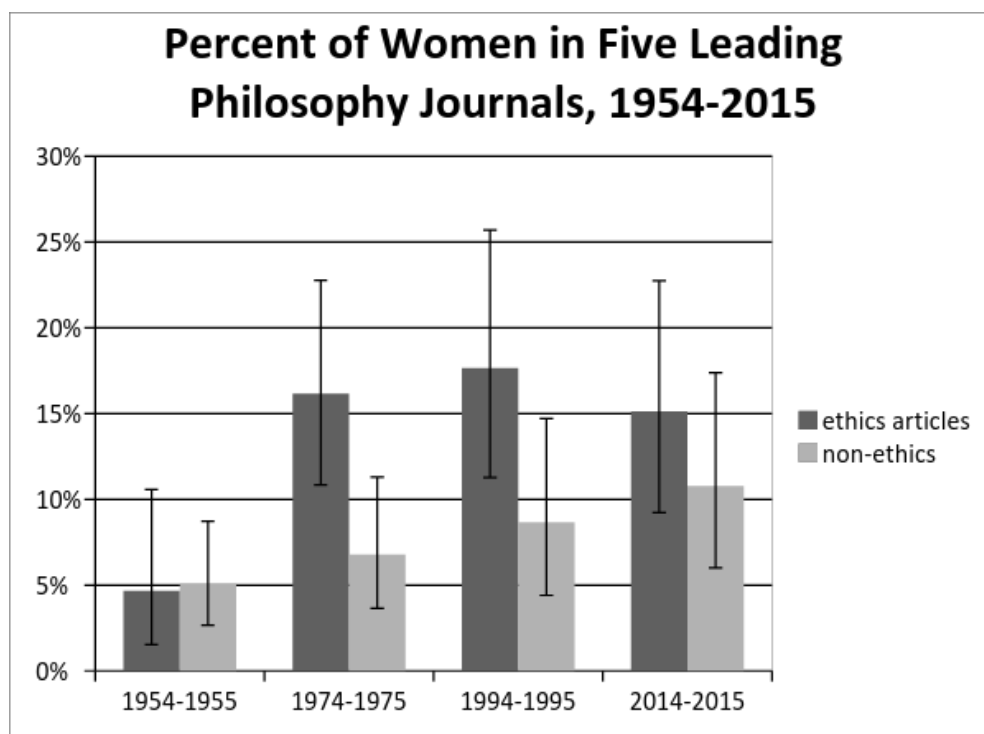

Figure 3: Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

The 2014-2015 results are strikingly low. Merging the ethics and non-ethics for analysis (which probably somewhat overrepresents ethics compared to philosophy as a whole), only 13% of authors were women (32/249). This is significantly lower than even the more pessimistic estimates of the percentage of women in the profession, with a 95% confidence interval from 9% to 18%, and these percentages are vastly lower than the APA percentages, especially for ethics: In 2014-2015, only 15% of authors publishing ethics in the most elite journals were women, despite women constituting 41% of APA ethics session participants.

In this data set, little change is evident since the 1970s. Given the large error bars and the dangers of post-hoc analysis, we would interpret that fact cautiously. However, these low and flat numbers since the 1970s are also consistent with data from 2002-2007 for these same journals, compiled by Sally Haslanger (2008). Haslanger found 12% women authors in a selection of eight elite journals, and 13% in the five journals we have analyzed.

These data confirm Hypothesis 1, that gender disparities in philosophy are high. They provide mixed evidence for Hypothesis 2, with significantly less disparity in ethics than in non-ethics for two of the four sampled time periods. They support Hypothesis 3: Authorship in one of these journals plausibly constitutes a higher level of visibility in mainstream Anglophone philosophy than does faculty membership (at least outside PGR-ranked departments), and at this high level of visibility the percentage of women is lower than that in the population of faculty as a whole. These data also support Hypothesis 4: Disparity has decreased since the 1950s, but only slowly if at all since the 1970s.

8. Most-Cited Authors in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.

The *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (SEP) is widely viewed as the premier resource for up-to-date literature reviews in mainstream Anglophone philosophy. Our impression is that frequent citation in the SEP is a better measure of visibility in mainstream Anglophone philosophy than are more standard measures in the bibliometrics of other fields, such as the ISI Web of Science database and Google Scholar. We will present some confirmatory tests of our SEP measure below.

In summer 2014, we downloaded the bibliographical section of every main entry from the SEP (approximately 1400 encyclopedia entries, containing over 100,000 citations). Looking only at first-authorship, we looked at authors who appeared at least once in the bibliographies of at least twenty separate main entries (not sub-entries), hand-separating authors with common names (e.g. "J. Cohen"), hand-merging individuals who used different names in different periods of their career (e.g. "Ruth Barcan" = "Ruth Marcus"), and excluding authors born before 1900. In this way we generated a ranked list of the 267 contemporary authors appearing as first author in the greatest number of SEP front-page entries. We will call these the "most cited" authors in the SEP. (We had been aiming for 250, but a large tie for rank 243 gave us 267 total. The full list was posted on Eric Schwitzgebel's blog, The Splintered Mind, and generated enough interest to result in a few minor corrections. See Schwitzgebel 2014b for the full list.)

Partly based on reader's reactions, we believe this list has surface plausibility as an approximate measure of visibility in mainstream Anglophone philosophy. The top ten in order are David Lewis, W.V.O. Quine, Hilary Putnam, Donald Davidson, John Rawls, Saul Kripke, Bernard Williams, Robert Nozick, and (tied) Thomas Nagel and Martha Nussbaum. Further evidence of the validity of this method as a measure of visibility or prominence in the target social group is: (1) similar names appear near the top of reputational polls on philosophy blogs,

such as Leiter's (2015b) poll of "the most important Anglophone philosophers, 1945-2000" which lists Quine, Kripke, Rawls, Lewis, and Putnam, in that order; and (2) a good correlation between departments' PGR rankings and their rankings based upon the SEP citation numbers of their faculty (Leiter 2014).

Women are underrepresented on this list. Only one woman appears in the top 50, Martha Nussbaum (tied for 9th). Six more fill out the top hundred: Christine Korsgaard, G.E.M. Anscombe, Elizabeth Anderson, Julia Annas, Judith Jarvis Thomson, and Iris Marion Young. Women constitute 10% of the total list (27/267). We classified philosophers on this list as primarily known for their work in ethics (construed broadly to include political and social philosophy as well as history of ethics) or not primarily known for their work in ethics. Despite some close calls,[15] most classifications were clear. Although women were only 6% of the non-ethicists on this list (12/197), they were 21% of ethicists (15/70), a difference large enough to be statistically significant even in this relatively small sample ($z = 3.0$, $p = .002$; given the sample size and clear directional hypotheses all proportion tests in this section are one-tailed to improve power).

Table 5: Women among the most-cited contemporary authors in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

Citation Rank	ethicists		non-ethicists	
	women	men	women	men

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[15] G.E.M. Anscombe and Susan Wolf were the most important close calls. For both, their leading works in philosophy of action are slightly more cited that their leading works in ethics. By classifying them as non-ethicists, we err, if at all, conservatively against the direction of our hypothesis.

1-48[16]	1	12	0	40
54-150[17]	6	22	3	67
152-267	8	21	9	78

We also noted the birth year, usually based on biographical information available on the web, and in a few cases estimated from other information such as year of BA, PhD, or first publication (estimating 22 years for BA and 29 years for PhD or first publication). The mean birth year for men was 1939, a bit earlier than women's mean birth year of 1945 ($t = 2.4$, $p = .03$), suggesting that women are a bit better represented in the younger generation than in earlier generations. Based on data from the Philosopher's Index abstracts, analyzed in Schwitzgebel (2010; see also below), philosophers appear to achieve peak influence around ages 55-70. If we look at philosophers born 1946 or later among the 267 most-cited philosophers in the Stanford Encyclopedia – the most influential Anglophone philosophers in the world, at or near the peak of their influence – 16% are women (17/107), compared to 6% in the earlier generation born 1900-1945 (10/160, $z = 2.4$, $p = .008$). Of these post-war women, 59% are ethicists (10/17), compared to only 21% ethicists among men (19/90, $z = 3.0$, $p = .001$).

These data support all four of our hypotheses. The percentage of women is small (Hypothesis 1); it is greater in ethics (Hypothesis 2); it is lower at the highest levels of visibility than at more moderate levels of visibility, both within these data (top 50 vs. the rest) and comparing these data with the prevalence of women in the profession as a whole (Hypothesis 3); and the percentages are increasing, though perhaps only slowly (Hypothesis 4).

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[16] Although the intention had been to look at ranks 1-50, a 6-way tie at rank 48 gives 53 people in this group.

[17] A two-way tie at rank 150 gives 98 people in this group.

9. Analysis of "he" and "she" in Selected Philosopher's Index Abstracts, 1970-2015.

Another measure of visibility is the mention of one's name in article abstracts in the *Philosopher's Index*, the standard source of English-language philosophy abstracts since 1940 (though now facing competition from PhilPapers). Schwitzgebel (2010) defines this as "discussion" and analyzes the temporal course of the discussion rates of selected prominent philosophers, finding (as mentioned above) peak discussion typically around ages 55-70.

"Extended discussion" might be operationalized as reference at least twice in the abstract of an article, by either name or pronoun, suggesting a very high level of attention: an article published primarily as a treatment of another philosopher's work. Outside of history of philosophy, such treatments are a small percentage of articles. The nominative pronoun might be especially telling, since its presence suggests that the person is being referred to repeatedly in independent clauses. For example:

> Later, **Nussbaum** gradually reconsidered the notion of patriotism in texts that remained largely unknown and rarely discussed. This article begins with a brief account of **her** shift from cosmopolitanism to what **she** terms 'a globally sensitive patriotism,' and the task assigned to education within this framework....

This suggests a possible rough and simple measure of the rates at which women receive this sort of discussion, compared to men: Compare the ratio of "she" to "he" in philosophy abstracts, then remove cases in which those words are used with generic intent (e.g. "If the agent wouldn't have done otherwise whether or not she could have….") or otherwise not referring to an individual philosopher whose work is being discussed (e.g. reference to historical leaders or third-person reference to the author him- or herself for abstracts written in the third person).

We searched the Philosopher's Index for all appearances of "she" or "he" from 1970 to 2015 in a sample of ten ethics journals and ten general philosophy journals.[18] This yielded a total of 876 ethics journal abstracts and 1445 non-ethics abstracts. Limitation to abstracts in which "she" or "he" refers to an individual philosopher reduced the totals to 620 in ethics and 932 in non-ethics. An approximate total universe of abstracts was estimated by searching for "the" in abstract field, which yielded about 6700 hits in the ethics journals during this period and 11,600 in the non-ethics journals – thus only about 9% of ethics abstracts and 8% of non-ethics abstracts met the criterion for containing extended discussion of an individual philosopher. Being mentioned multiple times in the abstract of a journal article is a high and unusual level of attention in mainstream Anglophone philosophy.

Gender trends by decade are displayed in Table 4. Consistent with the data from the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, at this extremely high level of visibility the gender skew is very large, especially in non-ethics and especially in the older generation. In the ten selected non-ethics journals, from 1970s through the 1980s, 267 abstracts contained extended discussion of the work of men and only 4 contained extended discussion of the work of women. The numbers do appear to increase over time, clearly so in the non-ethics journals (r = .14, p < .001)

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[18] Ethics journals were the top ranked journals in surveys reported in Bradley 2005 and Leiter 2015a (excluding the non-ethics journals appearing in the latter) and include *Ethics, Philosophy & Public Affairs, Journal of Political Philosophy, Utilitas, Social Philosophy and Policy, Journal of Ethics, Ethical Theory & Moral Practice, Journal of Social Philosophy, Journal of Value Inquiry,* and *Journal of Moral Philosophy*. The comparison list was a stratified sample of "general" philosophy journals drawn from Leiter 2013 and 2015b and included *Nous, Midwest Studies in Philosophy, Synthese, Mind, Philosophical Studies, Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, European Journal of Philosophy, Dialectica, Philosophical Topics, and Theoria*. The sample was stratified so that the selected journals would not differ too much in overall prestige from the ethics journals.

but with only marginal statistical significance in the ethics journals (r = .07, p = .09).[19] Merging

the data from the 2010s, which might somewhat overrepresent ethics relative to the profession as

a whole, only 13% of the recipients of extended discussion were women. Merging across the

decades, women received extended discussion more frequently in the ethics abstracts than in the

non-ethics abstracts (z = 3.2, p = .002).

Table 5: Extended discussion as measured by use of "she" or "he" to refer to individual

philosophers in the abstracts of 10 selected ethics journals and 10 selected non-ethics

journals, 1970-2015.

Decade	Ethics			Non-Ethics		
	# she	# he	% she	# she	# he	% she
1970s	8	84	9%	4	129	3%
1980s	3	74	4%	0	137	0%
1990s	20	127	14%	9	180	5%
2000s	16	168	9%	16	213	7%
2010s	19	101	16%	27	217	11%

Given that the philosophical canon was overwhelmingly male before the 20th century, we

conducted a second analysis removing pronouns referring to philosophers whose primary work

was done before 1900. (Frege, an important borderline case, we classified as pre-20th century.)

This resulted in the removal of 364 abstracts (23% of the total) and did not have a large effect on

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[19] Increase was tested by assigning each data point a gender (1 = woman, 0=man) and the
median year of the time period (1974.5, 1984.5, 1994.5, 2004.5, 2013.5), then correlating the two
variables (N = 620 for ethics, 932 for non-ethics).

the results, with 20th-21st century women receiving 7% of extended discussion in the 1970s (12/161) and still only 14% in the 2010s (44/305). The 95% confidence interval around this last number is 11%-19%, significantly lower than the percentage of the women currently in the profession, but perhaps not lower than the percentage several decades ago (see footnote 12). This data set supports Hypotheses 1, 2, and 4: There's a substantial gender disparity in targets of extended philosophical discussion, more so in ethics, and with a slow increase in the proportion of women over time. Hypothesis 3 is that the disparity is more severe at the highest levels of visibility than at more moderate levels of visibility. Whether this hypothesis receives support is harder to assess, since philosophers are sometimes targeted for extended discussion decades after their relevant work, so one might expect discussion percentages to reflect a compromise between the percentage of currently active women and percentages from a few decades previously.

10. Conclusion.

We began with four hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1 was that *gender disparity remains large in mainstream Anglophone philosophy.* This hypothesis was *strongly supported.* Women constituted 24% of U.S. PGR-ranked faculty, 28% of recently placed PhD's, 28% of recent philosophy PhD's in the U.S., 24% of APA members who reported their gender, 32% of recent APA program participants, 13% of authors in five elite journals, 10% of the most-cited contemporary authors in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, and 14% of 20th-21st century philosophers recently receiving extended discussion in the abstracts of 20 sampled journals. Only one measure approached gender parity: women were 41% of participants in APA ethics sessions in 2014-2015.

Hypothesis 2 was that *ethics, construed broadly to include social and political philosophy, is closer to gender parity than are other areas of philosophy*. This hypothesis was also *strongly supported*. The proportion of women in ethics substantially exceeded the proportion in other areas of philosophy among U.S. PGR-ranked faculty, recent job placements, APA program participants, authorship in elite journals, highly cited authors, and targets of extended journal article discussion. Although the difference is not statistically significant for every time sample in every measure, across the board it is a consistent story.

Hypothesis 3 was that *at the highest levels of visibility or prestige within mainstream Anglophone philosophy, gender disparity is even more pronounced that at more moderate levels of visibility or prestige*. Evidence for this hypothesis was *mixed*. Contra Hypothesis 3, the percentage of women faculty at PGR-ranked PhD departments was similar to the percentage in the discipline as a whole, and the percentage among the top-12 ranked programs was also similar. Also contra Hypothesis 3, recently placed women did not tend to receive their degrees from lower-ranked institutions than their male counterparts; nor were they disproportionately likely to have less prestigious roles on the APA program. However, consistent with Hypothesis 3, women were considerably less likely to have full professor rank in PGR-ranked PhD departments than assistant or associate rank, were a disproportionately small percentage of authors in elite journals (13%), were a disproportionately small percentage of most-cited SEP authors (10%; 16% among authors born 1946 or later), and perhaps were a disproportionately small percentage of authors recently receiving extended discussion in journal abstracts (14%).

Hypothesis 4 divides into two sub-hypotheses: 4a, that *women's involvement and visibility has increased over time*, and 4b, *that increase has been slow in the past few decades*. Hypothesis 4a received *strong support* and Hypothesis 4b received *support*. The PGR data

perhaps support 4a if the presence of more women at the assistant and associate professor level than at the full professor level is interpreted as indicating youth rather than slower rates of promotion. (It might well reflect both.) The APA data strongly support 4a but perhaps not 4b: Women's participation in APA programs has increased substantially in the past few decades, at a pace that somewhat over our 10%-per-40-years criterion for slowness. Elite journal authorship data support both 4a and 4b: Despite an increase since the 1950s, rates of authorship appear to have flattened in the low teens since the 1970s. Rates of extended discussion have likewise risen, but slowly at best in ethics. Also supporting hypothesis 4a is the somewhat younger mean birth year of women than men among authors most cited in the SEP. Perhaps the clearest evidence for both 4a and 4b is the data from the Survey of Earned Doctorates: The best-fitting quadratic curve shows a substantial increase of the percentage of philosophy PhD's awarded to women, from 17% in the 1970s to 22% 1980s, but then flattening out around 27-28% from the 1990s to the present.

We leave speculation on causes and possible remedies to others. However we emphasize three features of our findings that might be especially relevant to policy:

A. Journal editors and conference organizers in ethics should not assume that a proportion of women consistent with the proportion in philosophy as a whole (say, in the low 20%'s) is representative of the proportion of available philosophers in ethics.

B. Although the gender disparity in philosophy is large, it is even larger outside of ethics than it is in ethics. Non-ethics fields might be in even more need of intervention than would appear to be the case looking at the numbers in philosophy as whole.

C. If it is true that the 20th-century trend toward less gender disparity has slowed or stopped, then current practices to encourage gender parity might not be enough to ensure further progress toward that aim, and more assertive action might be required.[20]

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