Oppression and the Struggle for Hope

by

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Abstract

This dissertation has three central goals: (1) to develop an account of the nature and value of hope, paying explicit attention to the ways in which patterns of privilege and oppression based on gender, race, class, and other features of social difference affect experiences of hope; (2) to describe the relationship between hope and anger in these contexts; and (3) to demonstrate the nature and role of hope in collective struggles against oppression.

In Chapter Two, I offer an account of hope according to which hope involves the desire for an outcome, the belief in the possibility (but not certainty) that the desired outcome will occur, a perception of that possibility as encouraging to varying degrees, and corresponding hopeful feelings. In orienting the discussion around hope in contexts of oppression, I argue that oppression is a *threat* to hope: it creates conditions under which certain people, in virtue of their membership in certain social groups, must "hope against hope" for many of the outcomes they desire if they are capable of sustaining hope at all. I then offer a framework for evaluating hope in Chapter Three. Hope can be evaluated for (epistemic and practical) rationality, but also fittingness and moral justification.

In Chapter Four, I argue that we can't adequately understand hope in contexts of oppression without considering the relationship between hope and anger, and that there is a complicated relationship between these two emotions. Anger often responds to *thwarted* hopes: we place hope in other people, groups, and institutions to live up to the demands of morality and justice, and when they fail to do so, anger tends to ensue. But anger also tends to be accompanied by new hopes: the hope that wrongdoers will be punished, the hope that they will display remorse, the hope that the criminal justice system will do right by victims, and so on. These specific hopes all embody the more general hope for repair.

But the anger of members of oppressed groups is not often met with what philosophers have called "emotional uptake," and their hopes for repair tend to be left unrealized. In Chapter Five, I argue that in these cases, anger often evolves into the emotion of moral bitterness. *Moral* bitterness, on my view, is paradigmatically a form of anger involving a loss of hope that an injustice or other moral wrong will be sufficiently acknowledged and addressed. And I defend the idea that, despite the emotion's reputation as an inherently inappropriate and destructive emotion, bitterness can sometimes be a justified emotional response.

I then turn to the final and more uplifting goal of demonstrating the potential role of hope in collective struggles against oppression. In Chapter Six, I argue that faith is an important part of what sustains agents in moral and political struggles with or without hope that their efforts will be successful. And through what I call moral-political solidarity, a kind of collective hope emerges. Joining with others who share one's experiences or commitments for a better life and world, and uniting with them in collective action, can restore and strengthen hope for the future when hope might otherwise be lost.

Acknowledgements

Chapter One: Introduction

1. Oppression and the Question of Hope

I'm sure that all readers can remember times at which they were told to "be hopeful," to "never give up hope," and that "there is always room for hope." Hope, we learn at a very young age, is always good to have. Fortunately, too, there is (allegedly) always hope to find. If we focus hard enough, we can supposedly sustain hope—even when the world around us is frightening, dark, and unjust. Losing hope, or being suspected of losing hope, is often met with condemnation. "You shouldn't get bogged down in negative thinking like that. Stay hopeful!" we often hear from our family, friends, and the media. But what is this thing "hope" that ends up in so many sentences, news headlines, and inspirational quotes? And why is hope so valuable that we are so often urged to preserve and protect it?

This dissertation is about the role of hope in human life, particularly in the lives we lead as moral, social, and political beings. It is about the nature and value of hope in the real world in which we live, a non-ideal world that includes suffering, disadvantage, luck, violence, exploitation, harm, and loss. I want to understand what human agents hope for in this world, whether hope is valuable to us as we navigate our vulnerabilities and the hardships of life, and the relationship between hope and other elements of our psychologies such as expectation, anger, trust, and faith. This project is an inquiry in moral

psychology: a field concerned with how "we function as moral agents" and the roles of cognition, perception, and emotion in moral agency (Walker 2004, x).[1]

The approach to hope I take is quite different from how philosophers have traditionally approached the subject. Discussions of hope in the philosophical literature have typically taken place in the existential and pragmatist traditions, the philosophy of religion, and bioethics. Until recently, hope had earned surprisingly little attention in analytic philosophy, the field in which I situate my work. But beginning in the 1950s, analytic philosophers began to see the relevance of hope to areas of the discipline such as epistemology, rational decision theory, and moral psychology. Hope, most of us agree, involves some combination of belief and desire; and realizing that hope involves cognitive and conative elements, philosophers interested in rationality and motivation were naturally drawn to think about hope. In 2014, Adrienne M. Martin published the first book length work on hope in analytic philosophy and proposed a sophisticated theory of hope, its relationship to faith, and the role of hope in interpersonal relationships. The John Templeton Foundation also launched the *Hope & Optimism: Conceptual and Empirical*

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[1] Margaret Urban Walker helpfully distinguishes moral psychology as a sub-discipline of philosophy from empirical moral psychology, as well as the importance of cross-disciplinary engagement and critique. Philosophical moral psychology is part of ethics; it is both a descriptive and normative project that "discovers our real possibilities and limits, and assesses morally our adequacy for living our lives" (xiii). As she says: "As part of ethics, moral psychology isn't itself an empirical or experimental inquiry... But natural and social sciences offer theories and findings about human capacities and reactions, human learning and moral reasoning, the effects of social environments, and the meanings of interactions between people.... Philosophical moral psychology can and must attend to what we can learn from the results of these empirical investigations. At the same time, philosophical reflection can and should take a searching and critical view of scientific claims." See Walker, "Introduction" in *Moral Psychology: Feminist Ethics and Social Theory*, edited by Peggy DesAutels and Margaret Urban Walker (Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.), xi. Walker's description of moral psychology captures how I characterize my work.

Investigations Project at the University of Notre Dame and Cornell University that year, bringing together philosophers, social scientists, and religious studies scholars from around the world to explore hope, optimism, and related states.

The claim that hope has received insufficient attention in the (analytic) philosophical literature, so often made in philosophical work on hope, is losing its legitimacy given this recent interest in the subject. Yet, it remains true that there is very little discussion of hope in moral, social, and political philosophy—an astonishing gap in the philosophical literature, in my view, given what seems like the obvious relevance of hope to our moral practices, as well as the use of the language of hope in politics. From utterances such as "oh, I hope she keeps her promise" to the Obama hope poster that, I suspect, most readers will be able to call to mind as they read this sentence, hope seems to have earned a prominent place in our moral, social, and political lives.

My interest in hope emerged as I learned more about feminist approaches to philosophy. Feminist perspectives have helped to make visible the ways in which persistent, widespread, multi-faceted oppressions structure certain individuals' lives: oppressions based not only on gender, but also race, class, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, and other features of social difference. Oppression, as many feminist philosophers have argued, is a type of structural or social injustice that confines, restricts, or immobilizes certain people in virtue of their membership in certain social groups (Frye 1983; Young 1990; Cudd 2006). As Marilyn Frye famously argues, the experience of oppression is analogous to that of a bird locked away in a cage: if you look closely at just one wire, you do not see the other wires, and you may wonder why the bird doesn't just fly around it and escape. To

understand that the bird is caged in, you must step back and look at the cage macroscopically. Only then does it become obvious that the bird is caught within a network of systematically related barriers and forces (Frye 1983, 5).

One shift in thinking that taking a macroscopic perspective involves is a shift in focus from the individual to the collective and institutional: how is this particular moral injury connected to a broader system of oppression? For example, how is this particular murder of an indigenous woman in Canada connected to the systemic injustice of widespread missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, and how is this systemic injustice a product of sexism, colonialism, racism, and poverty? Or, how is this particular suicide of a transgender person connected to the systemic problem of widespread suicides by transgender persons, and how has the oppression of transgender persons led to this devastating pattern? Taking a step back to examine moral problems macroscopically is necessary to understand and address oppression, but it can be as discouraging as it can be enlightening for the moral agent who does so. Shifting one's perspective so that one can better see just how pervasive and often hidden oppressions are may cause the moral agent to doubt whether oppression will ever be eliminated.

The situation becomes worse when one notices the limitations of the birdcage analogy. It is not the case that individuals who are oppressed are locked in the same cage, experiencing the same forces and barriers in their everyday lives. As Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) and many feminists who follow her argue, some individuals occupy multiply marginalized social locations (for example, black women) that cause them to experience multiple and sometimes fundamentally different oppressions than individuals who occupy

singly marginalized social locations (for example, white women). When one comes to realize that there are multiple systems of oppression at work, the possibility that oppression will end seems far more out of reach. Even worse, oppression operates in the lives of members of oppressed groups along multiple dimensions: *politically*, in the denial of certain rights; *socially*, in the practices and norms that become dominant in a society; *economically*, in unequal pay and employment discrimination; and *psychologically*, in the psychological and emotional burdens and harms that members of oppressed groups face. The "material effects" of oppression are also diverse: they include such things as torture, beatings, malnourishment, unemployment, and enforced servitude (Cudd 2006, 12).

In my own moral reflections, confronting oppression has caused me to struggle with questions about hope: how can we hope to build a better world in the face of so many distinct but also overlapping forms of oppression that are not going away any time soon, and in the face of persistent individual, collective, and institutional failures on the part of privileged members of society to respond in appropriate ways to past injustices brought about by oppression, and those that are continuing? How can we hope for just outcomes in the future when injustices in the past have been left unaddressed? Is it even rational, or justified, to hope under these conditions? And as I struggle with hope as someone who is privileged along multiple dimensions, I wonder: how can individuals with far less social and political power than I hope for change in their own lives within the confines of their

oppressions?[2] As Ann C. Cudd (2006) reminds us, "oppression often seems to flourish when kept in place… by willing, or at least grudging, compliance by the oppressed" (11). How might oppression diminish people's hopes, and prevent them from forming hopes for a better life and world?

These are some of the questions that have inspired the topic of this dissertation, some of which call for empirical investigation while others are appropriate subjects of philosophical analysis. They have led to much broader and deeper questions about the nature and value of hope, the dangers of hope, the relationship between hope and other attitudes and emotions, and the role of collective hope in solidarity against oppression. If we begin from the recognition that all human beings exist, deliberate, choose, and act from within the confines of systems of privilege and oppression that structure our world, what insights might we gain about hope? This question is the starting point of my project.

I spent the 2016-2017 academic year writing this dissertation at Cornell University as part of the *Hope & Optimism Conceptual and Empirical Investigations Project*, and writing about hope in 2016 and 2017 from the United States of America has been particularly difficult. In 2016, Donald J. Trump was elected as the 45th president of the United States, fulfilling the hopes of many Americans who saw him as the anti-establishment solution to their social and economic troubles. At the same time, the hopes of millions of people were shattered on the night the election results were announced. Democrats as well as many allies of feminists, immigrants, people of colour, members of the LGBTQ community, and

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[2] My own struggles with hope are not unique within feminist circles. As Rebecca Coleman and Debra Ferreday point out: "In recent years, feminism has seen the production of a prevailing mood of hopelessness around a generational model of progress, which is widely imagined to have 'failed'" (2010, 313). See Ferreday and Coleman, "Introduction: Hope and Feminist Theory" in *Journal for Cultural Research* 14, 4 (2010): 313-321.

disabled people in the United States and around the world had been hoping that Hillary

Clinton, the democratic nominee, would win the election. In fact, many were optimistic

that she would win: confident that there was no way Donald J. Trump, a candidate without

any government or political experience, would be elected over a woman whom many were

describing as the most qualified presidential candidate in modern history. When it was

announced that Trump would be the 45th president of the United States of America,

Clinton supporters' hopes were disappointed; anger, shock, disorientation, and despair

were common responses that took hope's place.

Trump's language and behaviour throughout the campaign, as well as the policies

he defended, have been (accurately, in my view) described as xenophobic, racist, sexist,

homophobic, and ableist. So many people saw his election as an enormous setback for the

rights and wellbeing of immigrants, refugees, certain religious groups, people of colour,

women, the LGBTQ community, and people with disabilities. These groups have

historically been, and continue to be, oppressed in the United States of America and

elsewhere in the world. And many judge that the hope for a better world, one in which

oppression is eliminated and members of such groups no longer live under the experience

and threat of injustice, is threatened under the Trump administration.

At the time of writing this dissertation, Trump is living up to predictive

expectations[3] about what he would do if he were to become president of the United States.

There are, at this point in time, few good reasons to hope that the government will stand

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[3] The language of "predictive expectation" is used here to signify what people anticipated
would take place, not what they felt entitled to. As we will see, people also form normative
expectations: that is, expectations of others based on what they believe others should do
(whether or not they predictively expect, or anticipate, that they will follow through).

up for the rights and wellbeing of oppressed social groups. But despite the barriers to hope in the present political climate, people are still engaging politically; and many people who had previously been politically inactive have begun to take an interest in, care about, and engage in politics. People are, in other words, motivated to resist the powerful agents sustaining, changing, and worsening conditions for members of oppressed social groups (whether they have much hope that their actions will make much of a difference or not). This is an example of the phenomena I am interested in, of the ways in which people form and lose hopes for their own lives and the lives of those they care about, how they pick up the shattered pieces of their lives and continue fighting for what they believe is morally right and just, and what is going on with moral character as agents face oppression.

To understand hope in these contexts, we must first figure out what, exactly, hope is. In Chapter Two, "What Hope Is Like," I review and critique some prominent accounts of the nature of hope that have emerged in recent years, demonstrating the virtues of each while ultimately arguing that none of the accounts adequately capture the nature of hope. I offer a new account of hope as an emotion. Hope, I argue, involves the desire for an outcome, the belief in the possibility (but not certainty) that the desired outcome will obtain, a perception of the possible-but-not-certain desired outcome as encouraging to varying degrees, and hopeful feelings. Hope also involves an explicit or implicit acknowledgement of the insufficiency of one's own agency in bringing about the hoped-for outcome. And I emphasize that in societies structured to reward privilege for some people at the expense of others, the hopes of members of privileged groups for their own lives are often more likely to be realized than the hopes of members of oppressed groups. So I argue

that oppression is a threat to hope: it creates conditions under which certain people, in virtue of their membership in certain social groups, must "hope against hope" for many of the outcomes they desire if they are capable of sustaining hope at all.

One of the major challenges to thinking about hope in contexts of oppression is figuring out whether, and when, hope is rational or justified: specifically, whether the hopes of people living under oppressive conditions, and those hoping in solidarity with them, are rational or justified given the evidence before us. In Chapter Three, "The Value of Hope," I offer a framework for evaluating hope. Drawing upon recent literature in moral psychology, I demonstrate the complex ways in which evaluating hope requires attending to both epistemic and practical reason. But I argue that assessments of rationality do not exhaust the full range of evaluative questions we can ask about hope, including whether hope is a fitting response to the situation in question, whether it is morally justified, and whether "all things considered" an individual should continue to hope. On my view, the most important evaluative question about hope is one of moral justification: however rational or fitting a hope might be for an agent, if the hope is ruled out on moral grounds, it ought to be given up. I then demonstrate the value and risks of hope in fraught social and political contexts in which the question of hope arises for moral agents. I argue that the most promising framework for evaluating hope in these contexts is one in which, following Victoria McGeer (2004), we ask whether the agent is "hoping well."

In Chapter Four, "Hope and Moral Anger," I argue that that we can't adequately understand hope in fraught social and political contexts without considering how hope is so often cultivated, sustained, and lost alongside the emotion of anger: an emotion that

many have argued is rational and justified in response to moral wrongdoing, injustice, and oppression.[4] Many feminist scholars and scholars of race, for example, have called attention to the instrumental value of anger in motivating people to struggle against oppression. I argue that there is a complicated relationship between hope and anger. On the one hand, anger often responds to thwarted hopes: we place hope in other people, groups, and institutions to live up to the demands of morality and justice, and when they fail to do so, anger tends to ensue. But anger is often accompanied by the formation of new hopes: the hope that wrongdoers will be punished, the hope that they will display remorse, the hope that the criminal justice system will do right by victims, and so on. These specific hopes all embody the more general hope for repair.

But the anger of members of oppressed groups is not commonly met with what philosophers have called "emotional uptake," and their hopes for repair are often left unrealized. While philosophers have long been interested in how individuals can move from anger to forgiveness—for example, when their anger is met with a reparative response and individuals acquire moral reasons to forgive—less attention has been paid to what happens to anger when the hopes embodied in our anger responses are themselves not realized. In Chapter Five, "Losing Hope, Becoming Embittered," I argue that anger sometimes evolves into the emotion of moral bitterness. Moral bitterness, on my view, is paradigmatically a form of anger involving a loss of hope that an injustice or other moral wrong will be sufficiently acknowledged and addressed. And I defend the idea that, despite

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[4] In fact, I think that much can be learned by considering the relationship between many attitudes, emotions, moods, character traits, and other elements of our psychologies: not only hope and anger but also shame, sadness, depression, grief, and so on. But in focusing on hope in contexts of oppression, contexts in which anger is such a prominent emotion, developing a philosophical analysis of the relationship between hope and anger is apt.

the emotion's reputation as an inherently inappropriate and destructive emotion, bitterness can sometimes be a justified emotional response.

I then turn to the more uplifting goal of demonstrating the inter-related roles of hope and faith in collective struggles against oppression. In Chapter Six, "Hope, Faith, and Solidarity," I explore three kinds of faith that are important to moral and political struggles: religious faith, faith in humanity, and moral faith. All of these forms of faith help agents remain resilient to the conditions in which they find themselves, and they often serve as a bedrock for the renewal and strengthening of hope when hope might otherwise be lost. Faith, in other words, is part of the story of what brings people together in solidarity against oppression. And through what I call moral-political solidarity—that is, solidarity based in a shared moral vision carried out through political action—a kind of collective hope emerges. Joining with others who share one's experiences or commitments for a better life and world, and uniting with them in collective action, can restore and strengthen hope for the future when hope might otherwise be lost. I argue that sharing in the hope of solidarity is a way in which moral agents facing oppression hope well.

Ultimately, this dissertation seeks to offer a new voice to the philosophical literature on hope that challenges philosophers to take seriously the nature and scope of oppression, how its presence threatens the possibility of hope for many of us, and how we might—nevertheless—find ways to live on with hope together.

Chapter Two: What Hope is Like

1. Introduction

Hope is something that nearly all of us experience, struggle with, lose, and cultivate in our lives. It is often quite easy to identify instances of hope: to know when we have it and when we have lost it. We are even quite good at recognizing hopefulness and hopelessness in others through their verbal and behavioural expressions. But while we seem to be skilled at recognizing hope when we see it, it is far less clear what hope is: for example, whether hope is an attitude or emotion, and what exactly is happening in our minds when we hope.

In this chapter, I develop an account of hope that resolves difficulties facing prominent accounts in the literature. In section 2, I argue that hope is an emotion involving the desire for an outcome, the belief that the outcome's obtaining is possible but not certain, a perception of the possible-but-not-certain desired outcome as encouraging to varying degrees, and corresponding feelings of hopefulness. I begin by reviewing some of the leading accounts of the nature of hope in the literature: the belief-desire account (Wheatley 1958; Downie 1963; Day 1969), Luc Bovens' (1999) "mental imaging" account, Philip Pettit's (2004) "cognitive resolve" account, and Adrienne M. Martin's (2014) "incorporation analysis" of hope. I argue that none of these views fully capture the nature of hope. Although Martin's view makes progress in terms of capturing the richness of hope and its affective dimensions, her account is ultimately too rationalistic. In arguing that hope involves incorporating the desire element of hope into one's rational agency, Martin misses the important sense in which hope can be passive and conflicted. The account of

hope I offer, inspired by insights in the philosophy of the emotions about the relationship between belief, perception, and feeling, is better able to capture experiences of hope.

In section 3, I turn to a feature of hope that helps us begin to make sense of the importance of attending to dimensions of power, privilege, and oppression in theorizing hope. When we hope, we explicitly or implicitly acknowledge the insufficiency of our own agency, to varying degrees, in bringing about the hoped-for outcome. Exploring more deeply the insufficiency of human beings' agency in fulling our desires enables reflection on the ways in which all of us are vulnerable to luck and dependent on other people, groups, and institutions. It also turns our attention toward the relevance of social, political, and economic privilege and disadvantage in influencing individuals' hopes.

In light of these considerations, I argue that philosophers need to move beyond the tendency to focus on commonality in theorizing our limitations as agents and the vulnerabilities with which we live. While hope is common to nearly all human beings, and perhaps other creatures like us, hope's manifestation in our lives can be incredibly varied. Some people are hopeful about many things in life, while others find it difficult to hope for much at all; some people's hopes are often realized, while other people's hopes are frequently disappointed or lost; and though we seem to share many hopes, we also form hopes for very different things. To understand this variation, we must shift toward an emphasis on human difference in thinking about hope—including differences in our individual experiences and personalities, but also differences in our social, political, economic, and cultural locations. Feminist philosophy has made important contributions to understandings of human difference and its implications for moral, social, and political

thought. I argue, in section 4, that feminist insights into the relational nature of the self, which call attention to where selves are socially situated in related to other people, help to reveal some of the social and political dimensions of hope arising from human difference that have received insufficient attention in the philosophical literature. One important implication of this analysis is that oppression is a threat to hope: it creates conditions under which certain people must "hope against hope" for many of their hopes to be realized, if they are capable of sustaining hope at all.

In section 5, I develop an account of moral hope to orient the discussion around hope in response to social and political injustices under oppressive conditions. Moral hopes are hopes for outcomes that one feels morally entitled to have fulfilled. I also discuss the politics of hope; that is, the ways in which hope is used politically by individuals and institutions in positions of power. Attending to the politics of hope encourages reflection on the ways in which hoping often involves placing hope in other moral agents, including individuals, groups, and institutions, to live up to the demands of morality and justice.

In section 6, I explore the phenomenon of placing hope in others whose agency is necessary to realize one's hopes. I consider and critique Martin's (2014) account of "normative hope" that aims to make sense of this phenomenon. I argue that her view fails to correctly identify the predictive and reactive attitudes that accompany normative hope, and offer an alternative account that solves this problem. Martin's claim that we feel gratitude when our normative hopes are realized and disappointment when they are not realized cannot adequately make sense of cases involving members of privileged and oppressed groups. I argue that there are many cases in which members of oppressed groups

do not and should not feel gratitude when members of privileged groups realize their hopes, and they do and quite reasonably feel anger when members of privileged groups fail to realize their hopes. Martin's view leads us astray because the relationship between normative hope and normative expectation is more complicated than her view allows. I provide a more nuanced account of the relationship between normative hope and normative expectation to more accurately trace the connection between hope and the predictive and reactive attitudes.

In section 7, I explain more thoroughly the relationship between hope and normative expectation, as well as the relationship between hope and trust. I consider Margaret Urban Walker's (2006) account of the relationship between these concepts and raise the worry that hope, trust, and normative expectation are not as closely connected as she suggests. I argue that moral trust—that is, a form of trust we place in others to behave as morality requires—involves a presumption of the agent's moral integrity: we trust others to live up to our moral expectations not only when we presume that they share our moral expectations, but also when we judge that they have the integrity to act in accordance with them. Hope, in contrast, is broader: I can hope that you will live up to my moral expectations even if I do not trust that you will do so.

2. What is Hope?

We often see the word "hope" alongside optimism, pessimism, and despair. Philosophers tend to agree that when we are optimistic that p, we are quite confident that p will occur. It makes sense, for example, to say, "I not only hope that p; I am actually pretty

optimistic that *p* will obtain!" where the expression of optimism reveals a greater level of confidence that *p* will obtain than the hope. It is also possible to be pessimistic that *p*, but still hope that *p*. It makes sense to say, "you know, I am pretty pessimistic that *p* but I do still have some hope that *p* will occur." Despair, in contrast, is at odds with hope. We cannot both despair of an outcome and hope that it will obtain. I take these distinctions between hope, optimism, pessimism, and despair for granted, focusing on the nature of hope as an attitude that is compatible with pessimism, embodies less confidence than optimism, and is inconsistent with despair. I set aside the question of what it means to be an optimistic, pessimistic, or hopeful person. I am interested in the attitude of hope (more accurately, as I will argue, the emotion of hope), more so than hope as a character trait.

Virtually everyone agrees that hope involves at least the desire for an outcome and the belief that the outcome is possible but not certain (Wheatley 1958; Downie 1963; Day 1969; Ben-Ze'ev 2001). But recent scholars have argued that this standard account of hope as a combination of belief and desire does not quite capture the nature of hope (Bovens 1999; Pettit 2004; Meirav 2009; Martin 2014; Calhoun, forthcoming). In one of the earlier accounts that challenges us to move beyond the standard belief-desire model, Luc Bovens (1999) demonstrate the importance of thinking, imagining, and feeling to hope. He introduces *The Sophie Case* to motivate his account of hope as "mental imaging."

Bovens asks the reader to imagine being at a party where your friend Sophie arrives. Sophie approaches you and asks, "had you been hoping that I would come?" On reflection, you realize that you certainly desired that Sophie come; you are friends with Sophie, and you consider her a welcome guest. You also believed that she might come. But until the

point at which Sophie asked you if you had been hoping that she would arrive, you hadn't

been thinking about Sophie's arrival at all. So, Bovens argues, it would be strange for you

to answer her question in the affirmative. Had you been thinking about Sophie, glancing at

your watch and wondering if she would arrive, had you asked a friend if they had seen

Sophie, and so on, then you would have been hoping that Sophie would come.

The case is meant to show that hope involves more than belief and desire. It

involves conscious thoughts, what Bovens calls "mental imaging," about the desired

outcome: engagement in some degree of intermittent mental energy to thoughts about

what it would be like if the desired outcome were to occur. Hope, according to Bovens, is

"just having the proper belief and desire in conjunction with being engaged to some degree

of mental imaging" (674). And through engaging in mental imaging, we tend to feel

pleasurable feelings of anticipation about the possibility that the outcome might obtain. So

the belief that a desired outcome is possible but not certain is made *hope* by our conscious

thoughts, imaginings, and resultant pleasant feelings about the outcome. Bovens' view

begins to make sense of the importance of imagining and feeling to hope.

Philip Pettit (2004) offers an account of hope that emphasizes the ways in which

hope influences intention and action. He distinguishes between superficial hopes and

substantial hopes to motivate his view of hope as "cognitive resolve." Pettit argues that the

standard belief-desire model of hope can, in fact, accommodate many of the superficial

hopes with which we find ourselves, such as the hope that the sun will come out soon or

the hope that one's favourite song will come on the radio. But problems for the belief-

desire model of hope arise when we consider cases of substantial hope, that is, hopes in

which we are significantly invested and which are formed in the face of barriers to their realization. In these cases, Pettit argues that hope involves a kind of cognitive resolve whereby one acts as if the desired outcome will obtain independently of the probability assigned to the hoped-for outcome. To hope, according to Pettit, "is to form an overall outlook akin to that which would be appropriate in the event of the hoped-for scenario's being a firm or good prospect" (158). Hope is "a focused enterprise in which people are willing to stand aside from the beliefs that come most naturally to them and to order their mental and active lives around more galvanizing assumptions: around a cognitive plan" (Pettit 2004, 159). Pettit's view helps us to see the ways in which hoping tends to involve acting in ways that assume, or rely, on the desired outcome's obtaining.

Martin (2014) offers an example that she calls *Cancer Research* to illustrate the inadequacy of the standard belief-desire account, as well as Bovens' and Pettit's views. She considers two hypothetical patients, Alan and Bess, both of whom suffer from terminal cancer and have exhausted standard treatment options. Alan and Bess enroll in an early-phase clinical trial of an experimental drug; they know that there is a less than one percent chance that they will receive medical benefit from the drug, and they share a strong desire to find a miracle cure. Alan notes that, while he hopes the drug will turn out to be a miracle cure, he has enrolled in the trial primarily to benefit future patients due to the unlikelihood of his hope's being realized. Bess, on the other hand, appeals to her hope that she will be the one percent as "what keeps her going," and notes that she has enrolled in the trial primarily because of this possibility (14-5). Martin argues that Bess but not Alan can be described as "hoping against hope": her hope for a miracle cure is strong despite the

odds against her. And Bess's hope is stronger than Alan's even though both patients assign the very same probability estimate to the miracle cure and their desires for a miracle cure are equally strong. This case is meant to show that, to account for the fact that Alan's and Bess's shared hopes differ in strength, there must be some additional feature of hope beyond belief and desire.[5]

Martin (2014) points out that neither Bovens' nor Pettit's views can explain why Bess is more hopeful than Alan. Bess and Alan might dedicate the very same amount of mental energy to thoughts about what it would be like if the drug were to cure them, while Bess's hope remains stronger. So Bovens' addition of "mental imaging" does not help to explain the differences between their hopes, and Pettit's view fares no better. If hope involves a kind of cognitive resolve whereby the hopeful person acts as if the desired outcome were going to occur, then in hoping, Bess would say something like: "I grant you the chance is only one in a thousand, but don't think about *that*!" (Martin 2014, 22). Martin points out that this description does not cohere with cancer patients' actual experiences of hope in these cases.[6] Instead, patients like Bess who hope for a miracle tend to say things like: "I grant you the chance is only one in a thousand, but it is *possible*!" (Martin 2014, 21). So it is not that hopeful patients resolve to act as if the drug will be a miracle cure, but that they tend to "hope for the best, plan for the worst" (Martin 2014,

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[5] As Ariel Meirav (2009) points out, it is even possible for two people to have equivalent desires and to assign the exact same probability estimates to the desired outcome (such as in the case of Alan and Bess), while one person hopes and the other *despairs*. In other words, despair—that is, the opposite of hope—also involves the belief in the possibility (but not certainty) that a desired outcome will obtain. So the standard belief-desire account of hope cannot be right.

[6] The *Cancer Research* case comes from Martin's encounters with real patient-participants in clinical trials during her postdoctoral fellowship at the National Institute of Health.

22). Hopeful patients, Martin explains, typically have back-up plans, even if they rely on the desired outcome's obtaining in their overall plans. They might, for example, buy a ticket for a cruise, but be sure that it can be transferred to someone else (Martin 2014, 22).

Martin argues that, although neither Bovens' nor Pettit's views are ultimately successful, both accounts get something right about hope. Pettit is right that, in hope, people tend to act in ways that are consistent with the desired outcome's obtaining. And Bovens is right to think that hope entails the disposition to engage in certain kinds of thoughts with respect to the hoped-for outcome. When we hope, we do tend to engage in forms of thinking and imagining about what it would be like for the desired outcome to occur. Martin, though, argues that what Bovens calls "mental imaging" is just a manifestation of *desire*. A desire, Martin points out, is a set of dispositions to strive toward that which one desires; in hope, it is "a disposition to try to bring about the hoped-for outcome, a disposition to feel pleasure in anticipating the outcome's desirable features and to possible routes to it, a disposition to think about the outcome and imagine what it would be like for it to happen, and so on" (Martin 2014, 18).[7] Put simply, thinking, imagining, and acting in accordance with one's hope is a manifestation of desire, not a distinct element of hope. So what, then, is hope beyond belief and desire?

Martin defends what she calls the "incorporation analysis of hope" in an effort to accommodate attractive features of both Bovens' and Pettit's views, while resolving the difficulties noted above. She argues that thinking, imagining, and acting in accordance

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[7] In the *Sophie Case*, Martin argues that you might not have had the *desire* for Sophie to arrive since you were not disposed to urge her to come, to feel pleasure in anticipating her arrival, or to imagine what the party might be like if Sophie were to come. Or, if you did desire her to come, your mind's being occupied with other matters during the party resulted in the desire (and thus the hope) being latent (Martin 2014, 18).

with one's desire are *hopeful activities* in which people engage, among other hopeful

activities including fantasizing, planning, intending, and feeling in certain ways directed

toward the possible-but-not-certain desired outcome in the future. Martin argues that these

hopeful activities are not necessary and sufficient conditions, but constitutive features of

hope as a syndrome. For example, in hoping, we might fantasize about and imagine the

fulfillment of our desires (that is, engage in hopeful thoughts) and we might anticipate

their occurrence (that is, we might *feel* hopeful). Martin describes anticipation as a kind of

positive feeling about the possibility of the outcome obtaining, a feeling that is captured by

thoughts such as "wouldn't it be wonderful if..." (33). On the other hand, when we despair

(that is, when we are not at all hopeful), we experience gloomy feelings that lead to

thoughts like, "how unfortunate... the world is so hard..., etc." (33).

Martin acknowledges that, although a syndrome analysis of hope that makes sense

of the full range of volitional activities involved in hoping captures the richness of hope in

ways that previous views cannot, it runs the risk of being *ad hoc*, allowing for any and all

mental activities to count as part of hope. So she argues there must be some element of

hope that unifies the activities constitutive of hope as a syndrome, uniting them together as

features of hope and not just a random collection of things. Martin argues that the

unifying element of hope is "incorporation." More specifically, in hope, we *incorporate* our

desire for an outcome into our rational scheme of ends, judging that there are sufficient

reasons to engage in thoughts, feelings, activities, and modes of perception directed toward

the fulfillment of our desire. What is missing from the belief-desire account of hope is the

idea that "hope is a way of seeing one's situation, such that one stands ready to offer a certain kind of justificatory rationale for… forms of planning, thought, and feeling" (35).

Importantly, Martin's incorporation analysis of hope relies on a dualist theory of motivation, according to which agents are capable not only of desiring an outcome in the sense of being attracted to it; they are also capable of representing the outcome's desirable features as providing reasons, or failing to provide reasons, for pursuing it. When we hope, on Martin's view, we see the probability (however small) as nevertheless *possible*, and as licensing us (on grounds of practical reason) to treat our desire for the hoped-for outcome, and the outcome's desirable features, as reasons for engaging in the hopeful activities of thinking, imagining, fantasizing, and so on directed toward desire-fulfillment.[8] So for Martin, "to hope for an outcome is to desire (be attracted to) it, to assign a probability somewhere between 0 and 1 to it, and to judge that there are sufficient reasons to engage in certain feelings and activities directed toward it" (Martin 2014, 8). In *Cancer Research*, Bess sees the one percent probability (belief) as a reason to treat her attraction to the miracle cure (desire) as justification for engaging in thoughts, feelings, and activities aimed at the hope for a miracle cure's being realized.

I think that Martin's view goes too far in suggesting that, in hope, we treat the combination of our belief in the possibility (but not certainty) that an outcome will obtain

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[8] Martin suggests that, in cases of hoping against hope, a fully articulated deliberate process whereby the hopeful agent adopts a licensing stance would look something like the following: "I'm facing incredibly bad odds, but if I focus on this fact, I'm going to be paralyzed by despair. I won't be able to go on. So I'd best not think about how poor the odds are, and instead focus on the fact that they are in the realm of possibility; nothing is certain, 'miracles' happen, and so it is *possible* that I will get what I so desperately desire" (emphasis removed). See Adrienne M. Martin, *How We Hope: A Moral Psychology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 49.

and our desire for the outcome as *justification* for engaging in thoughts, feelings, and activities directed toward the possible-but-not-certain desired outcome in the future. We can imagine a revision to *Cancer Research* where Bess does *not* take herself to have sufficient reasons to engage in hopeful activities, yet continues to hope against hope (unlike Alan). In the revised case, Bess's hope is stronger than Alan's because she sees the situation differently than he does (as in Martin's original formulation); but revised Bess does *not* consider herself to be justified in planning, thinking, and feeling in ways directed toward the possible-but-not-certain desired outcome's being obtained. For example, when Bess finds herself imagining and fantasizing about her life post-cure, she might catch herself and try to suppress her hopeful thoughts and feelings, judging that she does not have reason to allow them to occupy her mind and that they are doing more harm than good. Moreover, if a family member were to criticize Bess's hope as irrational, she might reply by saying: "I know that my hope for a miracle cure is irrational and I know that my thoughts, feelings, and activities directed toward the miracle cure are not justified given the terrible odds. But I can't help it. I can't give up hope." Bess, of course, might be wrong that her hope is unjustified; perhaps the fact that her hope keeps her going is sufficient to justify it in this case. But it does seem that there are situations in which a hopeful person considers her hope to be unjustified, yet cannot help but hold on to it. The sense that one is justified in one's hope, or that one has sufficient reason to engage in certain thoughts, activities, and feelings directed toward it, is independent from the hope itself.

So I do not think that hoping involves "standing ready to offer a certain kind of justificatory rationale for engaging in certain kinds of thought, feeling, and planning" (11).

Nevertheless, that Bess sees the situation differently than Alan still helps to make sense of the difference between their hopes. Hope, on my view, is an emotion that involves, beyond belief and desire, a way of seeing a desired outcome as encouraging to varying degrees, and corresponding hopeful feelings. As we will see, this understanding of hope best captures the differences between Alan's and Bess's hopes in *Cancer Research*, retains the attractive features of Martin's (as well as Bovens' and Pettit's views), but does not commit us to the implausible view that, in hoping, we see ourselves as having sufficient reasons to engage in hopeful activities, standing ready to offer a justificatory rationale for doing so.

So I am claiming, first, that hope is an emotion. Martin (2014) explicitly notes that she does not engage with the question of whether hope is an emotion precisely to avoid the question of what counts as an emotion.[9] But aside from the prominent example of Martin, many philosophers take it to be the case that hope is either an emotion or significantly involves emotion. Walker (2006), for example, suggests that hope is an "emotional stance" comprised of desire and belief, as well as forms of attention, thoughts, and feelings (48). McGeer (2004) similarly characterizes hope as a "complex dynamic" involving attitude, emotion, activity, and disposition (101). Alan Mittleman (2009) argues that hope is an emotion in his *Hope in a Democratic Age*, then proceeds to defend hope as a civic virtue throughout the book. In an earlier article, Martin even assumes that hope is an emotion and cites work in the philosophy of the emotions to support her claims about hope in medical contexts (Martin 2008). Interestingly, many philosophers writing in the philosophy

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[9] In a footnote, Martin writes: "In general, I am going to avoid the term 'emotion' throughout this book. This is because I do not subscribe to any particular 'theory of the emotions'—the things we call emotions vary too widely, in my view, to be caught up by a single theory" (24).

of the emotions use the example of hope in illustrating their views, and consider it to be an

emotion without question (de Sousa 1987 & 2004; Gordon 1987;[10] D'Arms and Jacobson

2000; Roberts 2003; Deigh 2004; Goldie 2004; Nussbaum 2004).[11]

There is good reason for philosophers to have assumed that hope is an emotion.

Hope, like other emotions, is intentional, embodies a way of seeing, and involves feeling.

Hope always (or at least often)[12] has an intentional object: when we hope, we hope for

something to obtain. And in hoping for something, we also perceive or see the possibility

that it will obtain in a certain way. As Martha C. Nussbaum (2004) explains:

> Emotions are not about their objects merely in the sense of being pointed at them
>
> and let go, the way an arrow is let go against its target. Their aboutness is more
>
> internal and embodies a way of seeing... it is not like being given a snapshot of an
>
> object, but requires looking at it, so to speak, through one's own window. (188)

When we hope, our subjectivity—the unique angle from which we experience, interpret,

and engage with the world—influences how we see the possibility that the desired outcome

will obtain (more on this below). In *Cancer Research*, it is because Bess sees the one percent

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[10] Robert Gordon (1987) characterizes hope as an "epistemic emotion," that is, a forward-looking emotion that is about uncertainty. See Robert Gordon, *The Structure of Emotions: Investigations in Cognitive Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 1987), 65-66.

[11] There is some defense of hope as an emotion in the psychological literature. See, for example, Richard Lazarus (1999), "Hope: An Emotion and Vital Coping Resource Against Despair" in *Social Research* 66, 2: 653-678.

[12] For a defense of hope as "existential feeling" (that is, hope without an object), see Matthew Ratcliffe, "What is it to Lose Hope?" in *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences* 12, 4, (2013): 597-614. Cheshire Calhoun (drawing upon Ratcliffe) similarly explores the phenomenon of basal hopefulness, that is, taking an interest in the future generally or globally: having, in other words, a phenomenological idea of the future (see Calhoun, "Motivating Hope" in *Doing Valuable Time: The Present, The Future, and Meaningful Living* (New York: Oxford University Press)), forthcoming.

possibility of the drug's being a miracle cure as encouraging that she enrolls in the clinical trial, and focuses on that possibility to keep her going; and it is because Alan sees the one percent possibility of finding a miracle cure as discouraging that he enrolls in the clinical trial to benefit future patients, and focuses on the odds against him.

So even though Bess and Alan share the same belief—namely, the belief that the probability of a miracle cure is one percent—Bess sees the probability estimate as encouraging whereas Alan does not. How can this be? The beliefs we form (in part) based on evidence available to us, including our rational beliefs, are not equivalent to how we perceive the evidence. When my partner is fearful on an airplane, it is not as though he believes that the airplane will crash; he is well-informed about there being a small chance that the airplane will crash. Rather, he perceives the situation as frightening or dangerous; his (accurate) belief and the way he sees the situation are at odds. And my partner does not endorse seeing the situation as frightening or dangerous, standing ready to offer a justificatory rationale for doing so; he believes that he ought not to feel that way and wishes he was not so fearful of flying. He just can't help but feel fear on each air travel adventure.

Cancer Research is similar. Bess and Alan share the same belief that there is a one percent chance the experimental drug will cure them; but Bess perceives the one percent as encouraging, while Alan perceives the one percent as discouraging. Bess and Alan need not endorse their ways of seeing (as Martin's view requires). As I argued above, Bess might believe that a one percent chance is discouraging but nevertheless see it as encouraging, believing that "there is no hope" yet continuing to hope.[13] I come back to the question of

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whether it is rational or justified to see low probability estimates as encouraging in Chapter Three. What is important here is that hope, like other emotions, involves a way of seeing that helps to explain the differences between Alan's and Bess's hopes.

Beyond belief and perception, hope, like other emotions, also tends to involve some kind of feeling. As Peter Goldie (2004) explains, "when an emotion is directed toward its object, then this is a sort of feeling toward the object" (96). The relevant feeling is not a bodily feeling (although it may accompany bodily feelings), like the feeling of one's heart pounding or the feeling of sweaty palms. Rather, it is an emotional feeling: a feeling that is directed toward an object in the world "beyond the bounds of the body," a feeling that is bound up with how we take in the world of experience (Goldie 2009, 238). Walker (2006) captures the relationship between perception and feeling in her own description of hope. As she says, "in hoping, the world is, in some respect that one cares about, construed as open to the outcome one favors. And this is not merely an 'estimate of probability,' but something else as well: there is a sense, and it can be an actual feeling, of 'pulling for' the yet undetermined resolution one desires" (45).

Hope has a phenomenology: a "what it is like" to be in a state of hope. In hoping for an outcome and seeing the desired outcome that is possible but not certain as encouraging, we might feel anxious, assured, restless, or excited; or we might describe our feelings of hopefulness in another way. How hope feels will depend upon the agent with

the hope and the context in question.[14] And, often, the stronger the desire or the more

invested we are in the hope's obtaining, the more intense our feelings will be.

So, on my view, hope is an emotion that involves:

(1) The desire for an outcome.

(2) The belief that the outcome's obtaining is possible but not certain.

(3) Seeing the possible-but-uncertain desired outcome as encouraging to varying

   degrees.

(4) An emotional feeling of hopefulness.

Martin would likely object that, in giving up the element of incorporation, we have

lost what unifies the constitutive features of hope as a syndrome. But the elements of hope

are not so easily pulled apart when we see that hope is like other emotions. As Robert C.

Roberts (2003) says of the relationship between perception and feeling:

> Affect is not something in addition to emotion… Just as in the visual experience of
>
> a house one is appeared to in the way characteristic of house-sightings, so in fear
>
> one is appeared to (in feeling) in the way characteristic of threat-confrontations (the
>
> threat being directed at something one cares about). (48)

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[14] J.R. Averill, C. Catlin, and K.K. Chon reported results from an empirical study in which
subjects described how they felt when they started to hope. The authors note that their
findings about the widespread variation in descriptions of what it feels like to hope
demonstrates "how misleading it can be to speak of hopeful feelings as though they form a
single affective state." See Averill, Catlin, and Chon, *Rules of Hope* (New York: Springer-
Verlag, 1990), 22.

It is not necessary, on my view, to find a unifying element (such as that of incorporation) that unites the constitutive elements of hope as a syndrome precisely because belief, desire, perception, and feeling are all inter-related elements of hope that run together when one finds oneself with hope. They are not distinct and separable occurrences.

Understanding hope in this way also helps to make sense of why hope is experienced differently across individuals, such as in the case of Alan and Bess. People's character traits, past experiences, social, cultural, and religious affiliations, among other things all contribute to how they perceive the world around them. As Cheshire Calhoun (1984) points out, we all have "cognitive sets" or "interpretive schemes" that influence our emotional experiences (338). These sets or schemes make up the unarticulated, pre-reflective portion of our cognitive lives. We passively acquire our own cognitive sets as we navigate the world beginning in childhood, picking up new information and experiences that come to bear on how we interpret and respond emotionally to the world around us. So, too, with hope. If I am a pessimist, I may be disposed to be less hopeful than an optimist with respect to any number of hopes I might come to form, seeing the same probability estimates as discouraging that optimists see as encouraging. If I have had bad luck with my health in the past, then when I find myself with a new illness, I may be inclined to perceive the possibility of recovery as discouraging and feel less hopeful about my fate. Or, if I am currently in a happy mood, then I may feel more hopeful about the possibility that certain hopes of mine will obtain than when I am feeling gloomy or depressed. As Roberts says of the emotions: "beautiful surroundings, usual comforts, and the friendliness and calm of one's associates can increase one's joy, gratitude, or hope

without being what any such emotion is about. All these factors have their effect, it seems, by contributing to one's impression of the character of the situation" (Roberts 2003, 135).

Beyond personality traits and past experiences, our social, cultural, and religious affiliations can affect how we see the world around us and, consequently, how we hope. For example, living in a supportive community—such as having supportive family, friends, colleagues, and being part of a religious or cultural community—may foster conditions under which the possibility of being disappointed is less likely to deter one from cultivating or sustaining hope. If I am a member of a supportive community, I may be more inclined to embrace the inherent vulnerability that comes with hope than if I have minimal social support in my life. The degree to which we hope, which goes beyond the strength of a desire and the probability assignment we give to an outcome, varies across individuals and over time.[15] Understanding hope as an emotion involving not only belief and desire, but also perception and feeling, helps to make sense of this variation.

But attending to the widespread variation in how individuals with different histories, backgrounds, and personalities experience hope brings into view the importance of attending to human difference in theorizing hope. Philosophers have traditionally emphasized commonality in thinking about the nature (and value) of hope; namely, by pointing out that hope is something universal to all human beings. As Victoria McGeer explains, "to be a full-blown intentional agent—to be a creature with a rich profile of

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[15] There are also cross-cultural differences in experiences of hope. Averill, Catlin, and Chon found that whereas Americans associate hope with coping, feeling, faith, prayer, belief, and trust, Koreans associate hope (*himang*) with ideal, ambition, pursuit, success, effort, and goal (Averill, Catlin, and Chon 1990, 76). The perspective on hope I offer touches on many of the themes from both cultures, but it is influenced much more by American understandings of hope.

intentional and emotional states and capacities—is to be an agent that hopes" (2004, 101).

And, as she says rather strongly, "to live a life devoid of hope is simply not to live a human

life; it is not to function—or tragically, it is to cease to function—as a human being" (101).

Similarly, Aaron Ben Ze'ev suggests that "hope is a kind of background framework that is

crucial for human life: a person is someone with hope—someone 'without hope' is close to

the grave" (2001, 475). Hope is commonly theorized as something that all intentional

agents experience, struggle with, lose, and cultivate as we make our way through the world.

But we should be careful about just how fundamental we take hope to be to human

life. Human beings with severe cognitive disabilities may not have hopes, or the capacity to

form hopes—though they very much count as "human."[16] And though it is true that nearly

all of us have the capacity to hope, hope's manifestation in our lives can be incredibly

varied. Some people are hopeful about many things in life, while others find it difficult to

hope for much at all; some people's hopes are often realized, while other people's hopes

are frequently disappointed or lost; and though we seem to share many hopes, we also

form hopes for very different things. These differences are not trivial, either.

Understanding why we hope differently, and what sorts of things influence how we come

to hope, will be important in answering normative questions about hope: to what extent

people can be criticized for failing to hope at all, failing to act on their hopes, hoping too

much or too little, or hoping for the wrong things. If, for example, some people's capacities

for hope are often threatened and damaged by the social, political, and economic

circumstances in which they live (as I will argue), then such considerations ought to come

to bear on whether they can be criticized for living without hope, or living in despair.

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[16] Thanks to Susan Sherwin for reminding me of this important point.

Many feminist scholars—including, notably, black feminists and other women of colour feminists—emphasize the importance of attending to human difference in moral, social, and political thought: particularly, the ways in which systems of privilege and oppression based on such things as gender, race, class, ethnicity, sexuality, and ability status structure our lives in important ways. Taking a feminist approach to moral psychology involves attending to the ways in which systems of privilege and oppression can affect the attitudes, desires, emotions, beliefs, and character traits of individuals. And I think that such an approach to hope can help to reveal the ways in which patterns of privilege and oppression can affect individuals' capacities for hope, the specific hopes they come to form, and those that are out of their reach. Specifically, as I will argue, a feminist relational understanding of the self—according to which the self is socially situated, and developed in relation to other people, social groups, and institutions—helps bring to light the ways in which hope manifests differently in human lives.

Drawing attention to the relationship between hope, agency, and the self will put us in a better position to explore the relational nature of the selfhood and agency in connection to hope.

3. Hope, Agency, and the Self

So far, I have argued that hope is an emotion involving the desire for an outcome, the belief that the outcome's obtaining is possible but not certain, a perception of the outcome as encouraging to varying degrees, and hopeful feelings. But there is also a fourth feature of hope that is not so much experienced as it is implicit in hope's occurrence: that

is, the insufficiency of one's own agency in bringing about the desired outcome. In other words, we find ourselves with hopes because we explicitly or implicitly recognize that our own actions will not be enough to bring about whatever outcomes we desire. As Walker reminds us, human agency is "hopelessly 'impure'" in Bernard Williams' sense of the term (Walker 1991, 17): "One's history as an agent is a web in which anything that is the product of the will is surrounded and held up and partly formed by things that are not" (Williams 1981, 29). Hope is an emotion common to much of human life that we share as impure agents, navigating a world in which whatever we will cannot make certain the effects we intend. In hope, we acknowledge our impurity, vulnerability, and dependence.

I understand this feature of hope, acknowledgement of the insufficiency of one's own agency in bringing about the desired outcome, as a necessary condition of hope because of the belief constraint on hope. As Wheatley puts the point, "to hope, regarding the future, is in part to expect but not to be sure" (1958, 127). Pettit observes that "just as hope requires that one not rule out the hoped-for possibility, so it requires that one does not rule it in as a matter of absolute certainty either" (2004, 153). And this belief constraint on hope implies that our own agency is insufficient to bring about the outcomes for which we hope: our belief in uncertainty with respect to the desired outcome arises in part because we judge that no matter how hard we try, nothing we do can make certain that the desired outcome will obtain. Such things as luck, environmental conditions, and the agency of other people and institutions can affect the probability that all of our hopes will be realized. The outcomes for which we hope are always, as Meirav says, "beyond the reach of [one's] causal or epistemic powers" (2009, 228). Walker explicitly connects the

uncertainty constraint on belief to agency. She explains that "hope goes to what hovers before us with a sense that all is not decided for us; what is not yet known is… open to chance and action" (2006, 45). As McGeer puts it, "hope signifies our recognition that what we desire is beyond our current (or sole) capacity to bring about" (2004, 103).

Hope thus necessarily implies an acknowledgement of the insufficiency of one's own agency in bringing about the desired outcome. Moreover, the extent to which we are limited in our abilities to affect the possibility that outcomes for which we hope will occur depends upon the bearer of the hope and/or its objects. Sometimes, our agency will not affect the probability that the hoped-for outcome will obtain at all, such as when I hope that the sun will come out soon. In other cases, our agency can make a difference but insignificantly so, such as when I hope that a presidential candidate in another country will not win an election. When I have this hope, I know that I have almost no say in the matter. I can't vote for the candidate of my choice, and my efforts to persuade citizens of that country in conversation or through social media to vote for someone else are unlikely to make much, if any, difference to the probability that my hope will be realized—even if my efforts of persuasion are effective in some cases. I have almost no authority, virtually no power, to affect the probability that my hope will be realized.

On the other hand, there are some cases of hope in which we know that our own agency can make a moderate difference, but that the difference our agency can make still cannot secure the desired outcome. For example, I may hope that I will be awarded a research grant, and I know that the work I put into it will very much affect the probability that my hope will be realized. But no matter how hard I try, the decision about whether to

award me the research grant is ultimately up to others; my own agency is insufficient to make it happen. We even acknowledge the insufficiency of our own agency in bringing about hoped-for outcomes in cases in which our agency makes almost all of the difference to whether the hope will be realized. For example, when I hope that I will arrive at an important meeting on time, I can be almost certain that my agency is sufficient to realize my hope. Nevertheless, I might still find myself with hope; in focusing on the importance of arriving on time and how much I care about doing so, I might start thinking about the possibility that traffic will be particularly bad on the route I have to take.

Hope thus seems to tell us something about the kinds of creatures we are: we are creatures who, because of the constraints we necessarily and contingently face as agents, must depend on factors external to ourselves for our desires to be fulfilled. But though hope reminds us that we are limited in our capacities to affect the world, hope also involves engaging our agency in important ways aimed at hoped-for outcomes. As McGeer says:

> Hoping can empower us to acknowledge, explore, and sometimes patiently bide our limitations as agents—riding out feelings of anxiety, fear, or anticipated disappointment that might otherwise cause us to give up on our projects, our plans, or our interests because of the external contingencies over which we have limited control. Thus, even in cases of extreme limitation, our persisting capacity to hope signifies that we are still taking an agential interest in the world, and in the opportunities it may afford, come what may. Our interests, our concerns, our

desires, our passions—all of these continue to be engaged in exploring the contours of what might be. (2008, 256)[17]

Hoping is one potential response to the inherent vulnerabilities and limitations we face that involves engaging our agency in ways directed toward possible future states of the world. But not all of us respond to constraints to our agency with hope. Some people are more prone to respond to limitations they face with anger, frustration, doubt, or sadness rather than hope. So there is an important question as to what explains our differential capacities to respond to the world with hope, the widespread variation in the content of our hopes, and the forms of agency we can and do engage in hoping. In a world that is structured such that some people move about the world more freely than others and are more powerful in affecting the world, features of human difference—including social, political, and economic difference—will inevitably affect how we hope.

The above examples are rather mundane, but even in those examples, many features of human difference will affect the content of the agent's hope (that is, what the agent ends up hoping for), and her power to contribute to its realization. The desire part of my hope that a presidential candidate in another country does not win the election is formed based on the values I endorse, which are a product of my social upbringing, cultural affiliations, past experiences and understandings of history, philosophical reflections, political commitments, among other things. Moreover, my agential power to

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[17] We are not so invested in all of our hopes. If I say to the stranger sitting beside me on an airplane, "I hope you enjoy your stay in Halifax," I may never think about the person again. This does not mean that my hope was not genuine, but only that I was not significantly invested in the stranger's enjoying his vacation in Halifax.

affect the probability that my hope will be realized is affected by my social, political, and economic position. While I—as a non-citizen bystander of a presidential election—have very little agential power to affect the probability that my hope will be realized, I will have more power if I am educated, skilled on social media, affluent (and so can make financial contributions to another candidate's campaign), and so on. Or, when I hope that I will arrive at an important meeting on time, my being an able-bodied person who is generally unaffected by disruptions to my mobility make it more likely that my own agency will almost certainly be enough to secure the outcome. Human difference influences the hopes we come to have, as well as our various powers as agents to affect future states of the world.

I want to develop this insight further by arguing that a feminist relational conception of the self—one that attends explicitly to the ways in which the self is developed in relation to other people, social groups, and institutions—is helpful in exploring how, and in what ways, hope manifests differently in human lives. As we will see, doing so opens up space for understanding the nature, value, and risks of hope in contexts of oppression.

McGeer's (2004) discussion of how the self develops the capacity for hope is a good starting point for understanding how interpersonal relationships can affect whether we respond to limitations to our agency with hope. She explains that, in their early experiences, children are constantly confronted with agential limitations, leading to responses such as distress, frustration, and anger. Through parents' emotional support of children in the face of challenges that come their way, and through parents' assistance of children in navigating the limitations and potential of their agency in the world, children

begin to develop hope as "a fundamental stabilizing and directive force in adult agency" (2004, 107). McGeer argues that with good parental scaffolding:

> Any initial experience of limited and dependent quasi-agency will migrate into an energizing sense of potential agency—that is, an energizing sense that one can, through effortful interaction with a suitably responsive world, enhance one's powers to live more capably, more expansively, more richly in that world despite the many challenges it presents. (2004, 108)

But parental scaffolding is not enough for agents to maintain this capacity to respond to the world with hope. McGeer points out that even for adult agents, "it is others who invest us with our sense of how we can be in the world—who literally make it possible for us to take a hopeful, constructive stance toward the future" (2004, 108).

McGeer's discussion tells us something interesting about the self (as well as hope): we are all born into relationships with other people and continue to exist in relationships with others that affect our capacities for and experiences of hope. Some people, in virtue of the supportive scaffolding they receive from parents and peers, are more capable of cultivating and sustaining hope than others. This discussion lays the foundation for understanding why some people find it more difficult to hope in the face of uncertainty than others whose interpersonal relationships have been more supportive. But McGeer's analysis is, as it stands, incomplete. It is not only interpersonal relationships that affect how hope manifests differently in our lives; the social, political, and economic positions we occupy in relation to others can and do affect whether and how we hope.

I think that we can strengthen McGeer's argument by understanding selves that hope as relationally constituted: as subjects whose identities, experiences, opportunities, and choices are all shaped by the various interpersonal and public relationships in which they exist. The relationships that constitute our social environments affect the content of our hopes, the forms of agency we can and do engage in hope, and our capacities for hope. As we will see, an important implication is that oppression is a threat to hope.

4. Relational Selves: Oppression as a Threat to Hope

Many feminist philosophers have called attention to the socially situated nature of persons and the ways in which relationships shape and constrain how people develop, change, deliberate, choose, and act (Mackenzie and Stoljar 2000; Downie and Llewellyn 2012). The understanding of the self as relational is often contrasted with liberal conceptions of the self that are overly individualistic, where the self is conceived as independent, rational, and self-sufficient. As Susan Sherwin (1998) explains:

> The view of individuals as isolated social units is not only false but impoverished: much of who we are and what we value is rooted in our relationships and affinities with others... all persons are, to a significant degree, socially constructed... their identities, values, concepts, and perceptions are, in large measure, products of their social environment. (35-5)

According to relational conceptions of the self, the people we become, the values we endorse, and the choices we make are all shaped by social relationships: not only

interpersonal relationships, such as our relationships to family members and friends, but also public relationships based on features of our identities such as gender, race, and class. These features are not, as Chandra Talpede Mohanty puts it, "static, embodied categories but... histories and experiences that tie us together—that are fundamentally interwoven into our lives" (2003, 191). About her own identity, Mohanty says, "'race' or 'Asianness' or 'brownness' is not embodied in me, but a history of colonialism, racism, sexism, as well as of privilege (class and status) is involved in my relation to white people as well as people of color in the United States" (2003, 191). In other words, social features of our identities place us into relationships with histories, other people, social groups, and institutions; and these relationships all influence who we are and how we interact with the world.

The relationships into which we are born and from which our characters develop will affect our beliefs, desires, perceptions, and ultimately our hopes. Our beliefs and desires are part of who we are, and they, like other features of the self, are formed within the social contexts in which we exist. For example, how we are socialized very much affects the desires we form, including those desires that constitute our hopes. What we learn from our parents, teachers, and peers influences how we think, feel, and value; they also affect what we come to see as desirable, and worth pursuing.

Where we are situated within systems of privilege and oppression can also influence the specific hopes we come to form. Oppression is, as many feminist philosophers have argued, a form of structural or social injustice that confines, restricts, or immobilizes certain people in virtue of their membership in certain social groups (Frye 1983; Young 1990; Cudd 2006). The relationship between men and women, white people and people of

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colour, the rich and the poor, are relations that are structured by privilege and oppression. I'm specifically interested in how these relationships help to shape how we hope.

The ways in which oppression operates in particular individuals' lives varies, but the oppressed often find themselves subjected to various kinds of injustices such as employment and housing discrimination, poor education, lack of access to health care, violence, poverty, incarceration, and cultural dislocation. Living under oppression, and being subjected to the threat and experience of injustices in virtue of one's membership in certain social groups, can profoundly affect the content of the hopes that individuals come to form. Members of oppressed groups often form hopes only because they live under the threat or experience of injustice—such as the hopes to be free from violence, harassment, and neglect. People of colour may form the hope that they will not be subjected to violence at the hands of police, a hope they form in reaction to the widespread use of excessive force by police against people of colour under conditions of racial oppression. Or, women may form the hope that they will not be subjected to sexual violence at some point in their lives, a hope women might form in reaction to the widespread instances of sexual violence against women under conditions of gender oppression. White people in the first case, and men in the second, do not need (and cannot have or share) these hopes because their safety is not threatened in virtue of their membership in a certain social group.

And while oppression creates conditions under which members of oppressed groups may find themselves hoping that they will not be subjected to unjust forms of treatment based on social features of their identities, they may not (for very good reasons) have much hope that they will escape such treatment. History, past experiences, and their

knowledge of present conditions may lead them to assign a low probability estimate to the possibility that their hopes will be realized. People of colour may decide to avoid police at all costs because they do not have much hope that they will be safe in their interactions with police, and women may decide to avoid walking places alone at night because they lack hope that they will be safe alone on dark streets.[18]

Interestingly, it is more common to talk of *fear* in these sorts of cases than it is to talk of hope. People of colour fear the police, and women tend to fear men (specific men, as in cases of domestic abuse, or even most or all men, as in cases where women are traumatized by experiences of sexual violence in the past). But fear and hope are not at odds, and sometimes hope is based in a fear. When I find myself hoping that I will make it home safe, my hope is formed largely because I fear for my safety as a woman; and I experience my hope as *fearful hope*: a hope tainted with fear, not a hope accompanied by the sorts of pleasant feelings that philosophers have typically associated with hope. Of course, hopes formed in oppressive contexts are not the only fearful hopes; a person might fearfully hope to escape death upon finding oneself at gunpoint in a random act of violence. The difference between fearful hopes under oppression and fearful hopes more generally is the systematic nature of fearful hopes in the former case: how one finds oneself fearfully hoping *as* a member of an oppressed social group.

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[18] In a workshop on hope in which I discussed this example, one woman remarked that this example does not cohere with her own experiences. She does not hope, or even think about, her safety when she leaves home at night. But once we started to flesh out the details of what such a case might look like, this woman started to see why many women likely do have this hope. For example, women who are traumatized by because they were subjected to sexual violence in the past, women who live in unsafe neighbourhoods without access to safe transportation and devices such as cell phones that can increase their senses of safety, women who know about the widespread instances of attacks on women in the areas in which they live, and so on, might (understandably) form such a hope.

Importantly, living under oppressive conditions can render it unlikely for any number of one's hopes to be realized in virtue of the unjust barriers, constraints, and threats such people face—not just the hopes they form in response to their oppression. The hope to become a doctor, to live a long and healthy life, to be a successful politician—the probability that all of these hopes will be realized is affected by gender, race, class, sexual orientation, ability status, and so on. And many of us find it difficult to sustain hope in the face of what seems like inevitable failure; when the evidence before us suggests that our hopes are far out of reach, we often lose the hope for our lives we once had.

Oppression, more generally, can thus be understood as a threat to hope: it creates conditions under which certain people, in virtue of their social, political, and economic locations, must "hope against hope" for many of the outcomes they desire—if they are capable of sustaining hope at all. Hoping against hope is, as Martin (2014) argues, "hope for an outcome that, first, amounts to overcoming or at least abiding some profound challenge to one's values or welfare; and, second, it is an extremely improbable hope" (14). In societies structured to reward privilege for some people at the expense of others, many of the hopes of members of privileged groups for their own lives are often more likely to be realized than the hopes of members of oppressed groups.

To clarify, oppression is a threat and not necessarily a damage much less an end to hope. It is a remarkable fact that certain people are capable of sustaining hope despite the conditions in which they find themselves, and some members of oppressed groups are often capable of sustaining hope even when their hopes are not likely to be realized. It is also the case that people who occupy positions of privilege are sometimes less hopeful

about their own and others' circumstances and opportunities than members of oppressed groups. This difference in how individuals experience the world in which they form hopes can be explained by the diversity of human characters, religious affiliations, education, cultures, degrees of social support and their senses of community, among many other things. But it is equally true that oppressive conditions can and do damage certain individuals' hopes (while, at the same time, unjustly bolstering possibilities for hope for others). Some people living under oppression find it difficult and sometimes impossible to form hopes for their own lives, for the lives of their loved ones, and for improved social, economic, and political conditions. As E.J.R. David and Annie O. Derthick argue, "oppression is perhaps the most important sociopolitical factor that influences the entire range of [oppressed individuals'] psychological experiences" (2013, 2).

Oppression can threaten and damage hope through diminishing the likelihood that the hope will be realized, through a loss of desire, or both. A teenager's hope to become a doctor is much less likely to be realized if she is living in poverty than if she comes from an affluent family. Our class status, which is affected by other social factors such as race, significantly affects the opportunities available to us: the teenager living in poverty may not have access to quality education, she may have no choice but to work part-time jobs to help support her family, she may therefore have little time to complete her homework and study, and she may suffer from health issues related to the economic and social problems she faces. Living in poverty creates a range of barriers to the possibility that the teenager's hope to become a doctor will be realized, and it diminishes her ability to engage in activities that will make the desired outcome more likely. The impoverished teenager may

have no time, resources, social support, or energy to work toward her goal; and her hope to become a doctor may fade. As Walker points out, losing one's sense of agency "can lead to hopelessness, even if there remains some desire and sense of possibility" (2006, 61). Eventually, the teenager may even give up her desire to become a doctor altogether. She might judge, for example, that there is no point in desiring what she will never obtain. Or, the desire might diminish naturally as the teenager adapts to her busy, stressful, and demanding everyday life.[19]

Oppression can also threaten and damage individuals' capacities for hope: the very ability to hope at all. Calhoun (2008) calls attention to the ways in which certain background beliefs or attitudes about one's agency, what she calls "frames of agency," must be secured in order for an agent to continue to take an interest in leading one's own life and hence to be secured against conditions such as depression, hopelessness, and despair. These frames of agency include—for example—having a sense that one's life has meaning, confidence in the efficacy of instrumental reasoning (or that one's actions will produce their intended effects), and confidence in one's relative security from profound misfortune and harm (Calhoun 2008, 198). In the absence of one or more of these frames of agency, agents might become depressed or demoralized, failing to see any point in engaging in the volitional activities of reflecting, deliberating, choosing, and acting altogether. They might, in other words, lose the ability to function as an agent. And importantly for our purposes,

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[19] Oppression might also cause people to form adaptive or deformed hopes based in what many scholars have called "adaptive preferences" or "deformed desires," such as the hopes of oppressed people who adapt to their social and economic situation by entering into gangs, adopting a subculture, and forming hopes that are intertwined with their social identities. I owe this example to Alex Esposito.

since hope necessarily involves exercising agency in some way, when one loses the ability to function as an agent, one loses the capacity for hope.[20]

Indigenous scholars John Gonzalez, Estelle Simard, Twyla Baker-Demaray, and Chase Iron Eyes demonstrate the damages to indigenous peoples' capacities for hope in North America that result from their experience living on reserves: communities that are plagued with poverty, unemployment, and other social and health issues brought about by colonialism and other forms of oppression. They explain:

> Internalized oppression... exists when indigenous people are *immobilized* and cannot be all that they want to be. This includes fulfilling their purpose in life... In a contemporary context, it is one's inability to sustain one's family, and the truly devastating feelings this situation leaves on that person. It is the *powerlessness* when they cannot buy their child a winter jacket or boots because of the cut-backs to tribal or First Nation welfare programs. It is the *fear* a mother feels when she welcomes her baby into the world, because she knows the reality of child welfare... At times, our internalized oppression is the *pain* and *anger* we feel about our situation in life: *We might not have a job, we are dependent on the reserve to make jobs, they give the jobs to non-natives, they have no job training programs, and so on*—all of which negatively exasperate a person's worth as a man or a woman... In the end,

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[20] What I am calling a loss of the capacity for hope—that is, loss of the ability to form hopes for one's own life—is similar to what Calhoun in more recent work calls a loss of "basal hopefulness": hopefulness that consists in taking an interest in the future generally or globally, rather than taking an interest in pursuing particular future outcomes. Calhoun argues that basal hopefulness is lost in depression: "the depressed are not dispirited about this or that bit of the future, but about the future generally. They lose a globally motivating interest in The Future" (117). See Calhoun, "Motivating Hope" in *Doing Valuable Time: The Present, The Future, and Meaningful Living* (New York: Oxford University Press), forthcoming.

internalized oppression is the *profound despair* when choosing suicide as the only

option. (2013, 45, emphasis in the original)

This passage suggests that the material and psychological effects of living under oppressive

conditions that indigenous peoples in North America experience can be so severe so as to

lead to "profound despair" with devastating consequences. The social, political, cultural,

and economic realities that indigenous peoples face shatter the frames of agency they need

to live on with hope, and in many cases, to live on at all. One's sense of purpose,

confidence that what one does will produce one's intended effects, and belief that one is

secure from profound misfortune and harm are often lost under conditions of poverty,

colonialism, racism, and sexism—systems of oppression that profoundly shape the lives of

many indigenous peoples.

There is some recent empirical data that reveals the extent of the damages to

indigenous peoples' hopes in the Canadian context. In Pimicikamak Cree nation, a

community of 8200 people, there were over 140 suicide attempts in a two-week period and

over 150 students in a local high school of 2000 total students were on suicide watch in the

spring of 2016 (Baum 2016). In Attawapiskat First Nation, a community of 2000 people,

eleven people attempted suicide on April 9, 2016 alone and there were 101 suicide

attempts from September to April (Assembly of First Nations 2016). These are devastating

numbers, and the problem is widespread amongst indigenous communities across the

country and elsewhere in the world.[21] In Canada, suicide and other self-inflicted injuries

are the leading cause of death for First Nations people up to 44 years of age, First Nations

youth are five to six times more likely than non-indigenous Canadians to die of suicide,

and Inuit youth suicide rates are among the highest worldwide (Baum 2016).

Interestingly, hope features prominently in discussions about what is lacking in

these communities, and what is required to remedy the public health crisis. In response to

the crisis in Attawapiskat First Nation and Pimicikamak Cree Nation, National Chief of

the Assembly of First Nations, Perry Bellegarde, appealed to hope in his call for action:

> We need a sustained commitment to address long-standing issues that lead to
>
> hopelessness among our peoples, particularly the youth. And, we need to see
>
> investments from the federal budget on the ground in our communities
>
> immediately – to support our families to enjoy safe and thriving communities that
>
> foster hope. (Assembly of First Nations 2016)

Similarly, in his call for an emergency House of Commons debate to discuss the situation

in Attawapiskat, New Democratic Party Member of Parliament Charlie Angus suggested

that "the heartbreaking tragedy" should be turned into "a moment of hope-making… to

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[21] For example, in 2015, on Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, home to the Oglala
Sioux tribe, there were nine suicides and at least 103 suicide attempts by people ages 12 to 24
in a four-month period alone (Bosman 2015). In Australia, cultural dislocation, trauma,
racism, alienation, and exclusion have been found to contribute to the disproportionate
numbers of mental health issues, substance abuse issues, and suicides across Australian
indigenous communities (Department of Health 2013). In Brazil, indigenous people are
committing suicide at an average rate 22 times higher than that of non-indigenous Brazilians
(Nolen 2017).

start to lay the path forward to give hope to the children in our northern and all our Indigenous communities" (Parliament of Canada 2016).

But it is important to reflect on what it would mean to "make hope" or "give hope" to indigenous Canadians and indigenous peoples elsewhere in the world. A feminist relational perspective on hope helps call attention to the ways in which inter-related systems of oppression are responsible for bringing about the overwhelming sense of despair in indigenous communities, and suggests that if hope is something that individuals and communities need, then what should be offered is *reasons* for hope: not only the provision of culturally appropriate mental health resources with the goal of encouraging individuals to cultivate hope for their own wellbeing, but committed social justice efforts that address poverty, colonialism, sexism, and racism: systems of oppression that are directly tied to the devastating circumstances in which so many indigenous peoples exist. We have yet to see what will ultimately come of these calls for hope.

5. Moral Hope and the Politics of Hope

This section explores further the social and political dimensions of hope, particularly with respect to the hopes that people have for improved social, political, and economic conditions. I use the term "moral hope" to refer to hopes that are about moral outcomes, such the hopes for justice, equality, and respect, the hopes for freedom from violence and discrimination, the hope that harms brought about by injustices will be addressed, and the hope that oppressive conditions will be eliminated. Hopes for *non*-moral outcomes are hopes we form for things that we judge to be outside of the bounds of

morality: the hope to have time to take one's dog for a walk, the hope that one contestant over another will win a reality television show, and the hope that one's miniature schnauzer will not bark too loudly when a new friend visits one's home—these are all non-moral hopes. Moral hopes, on the other hand, are hopes that fall within the bounds of morality: how we judge that we and others ought (morally) to be treated, how the world's resources ought (morally) be divided up, what ought (morally) be done when people do not live up to their moral obligations, and so on. Moral hopes are hopes whose objects are outcomes that individuals bearing them feel entitled to have fulfilled.

Human agents experience morality as placing demands on all of us; and, so, our moral hopes are often hopes we place in people, groups, and institutions to live up to the moral obligations we judge them to have. The phenomenon of placing hope in others might prompt one to think about the politics of hope: the fact that hope is a powerful political tool that is used by politicians, government officials, activists, and other agents in positions of power to encourage people to vote for a particular leader, or to believe or participate in social movements of various kinds. Discussion of the ways in which hope is used politically helps to explain the formation of moral hopes.

One widely known case of placing hope in a political figure is that of Barack Obama. Obama emerged as a symbol of hope for America beginning with his 2004 keynote address at the National Democratic Convention as a senator. The speech gained widespread attention, inspired Obama's 2006 book *The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream*, and ultimately helped him to win the presidential election. In his book, Obama explains what he means by the "audacity of hope." It is a term he

borrowed from pastor Rev. Jeremiah A. Wright Jr. to refer to "the best of the American spirit" (356). It is:

> Having the audacity to believe despite all the evidence to the contrary that [Americans] could restore a sense of community to a nation torn by conflict; the gall to believe that despite personal setbacks, the loss of a job or an illness in the family or a childhood mired in poverty, [they] had some control—and therefore responsibility—over [their] own fate. (Obama 2006, 356)

Obama cites this audacity of hope as the spirit of his own family and the American story as a whole. And evidence suggests that Obama's politics of hope did in fact increase American citizens' hopes for improved race relations in the country. In 2008, it was reported in *The Economist* that 80 percent of African-Americans polled believed that Obama's victory was "a dream come true," and 96 percent thought it would improve race relations (Teasley and Ikard 2010, 418). A 2009 *CBS News/New York Times* poll found that 59 percent of African-Americans thought that race relations were "good," compared to 29 percent who thought so prior to Obama's election (Teasley and Ikard 2010).

Beyond political campaigns, countless organizations and charities with particular moral and political goals have been established in hope's name. For example, the Canadian organization *Bracelet of Hope* was founded in 2006 following the birth of Masai: an HIV-negative child born in Canada to HIV-positive Ethiopian-Canadian parents. Anne-Marie Zajdlik, who founded the Masai Centre for Local, Regional, and Global Health and the *Bracelet of Hope* in response to this incident, noted that Masai's healthy birth was a "turning

point" for her, and symbolized "the contrast between rich nations and poor, hope and despair, well being and daily misery, life and death" (Bracelet of Hope 2015). Interestingly, in this description, rich nations are equated with hope, wellbeing, and life, while poor nations are equated with despair, misery, and death.

But contrary to what this characterization suggests, and as we have seen, there are social and political injustices within Canada and other wealthy nations that, too, can be associated with despair, misery, and death rather than hope, wellbeing, and life. Colonial violence and inter-generational trauma, poverty, sexual violence, racism, and other forms of oppression exist within wealthy countries, and have given rise to similar organizations and campaigns in the name of hope. For example, in 2000, the Aboriginal Healing Foundation in Canada established *The Legacy of Hope*: a national charity that aims to educate and raise awareness about the Indian Residential Schools and their ongoing impact on the relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous Canadians today (Legacy of Hope 2015). Similarly, in 2015, the Canadian Women's Foundation's *Move for Hope* and *Shop for Hope* campaigns fundraised $390,000 to "raise hope for women" who have experienced physical or emotional violence (Canadian Women's Foundation, 2015).

Reflection on the politics of hope brings to light the ways in which hope is often promised, manufactured, sold, and bought into.[22] It helps us to see the ways in which discussions of hope in moral, social, and political contexts requires attending to relations of power, privilege, and oppression: it is most often individuals with social and political

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[22] Peter Drahos' "Trading in Public Hope" in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 592: 18-38 is a helpful discussion of how corporations use hope to sell its products. See also Adrienne M. Martin's "Hope and Exploitation" in the *Hastings Center Report* 38, 5 (2008): 49-55 for discussion of the ways in which patients' and research participants' hopes in medical contexts are sometimes exploited.

power that promise hope to individuals who occupy disadvantaged positions in society, and who are most dependent on others to realize their hopes.

I come back to the significance of the politics of hope to assessing hope's justification in Chapter Three. But reflection on the politics of hope also helps to demonstrate that hope is often placed in other people, social groups, and institutions to bring about moral and political goals such as equality, justice, freedom from violence, to make reparations for past injustices, and so on. These are hopes about the ways in which human beings relate to one another interpersonally and as members of moral and political communities; they are about how we hope to be treated in a shared social world.

6. Placing Hope in Others

Martin (2014) defends an account of what she calls "normative hope" in an effort to make sense of the kinds of hopes we place in other people. Her account is a helpful step toward understanding an important role of hope in the broader social and political contexts in which I am interested; that is, the kind of hope we must place in other agents, including individuals, groups, and institutions, to realize our moral hopes. But I want to argue that attending to the social and political dimensions of hope, and specifically, the ways in which patterns of privilege and oppression factor into individuals' experiences, raises problems for Martin's account. Her view fails to (a) adequately describe what normative hope is, (b) correctly identify the relationship between normative hope and normative expectation, and (c) track the connection between normative hope, normative

expectation, and the reactive attitudes. In this section, I explain Martin's view, raise these objections, and offer an alternative account of normative hope that avoids these problems.

Martin considers normative hope to be a "close sibling" to normative expectation. To normatively expect something of a person is, according to Martin, to "demand that she regulate her behavior according to certain requirements or prohibitions" (123). This is different from predictive expectation, or anticipation that a certain outcome will obtain (whether one desires it or not). Martin draws upon Peter F. Strawson (2008) and others who follow him in theorizing the reactive attitudes to argue that normative expectations are "conceptually tied" to the reactive attitudes: those attitudes we adopt as a way of holding individuals responsible for their behaviour (Martin 2014, 123). When our normative expectations are violated, we feel resentment or indignation; and when our normative expectations are met, we feel satisfaction or relief. According to Martin, normative hope is conceptually tied to different reactive attitudes than normative expectation: when our normative hopes are thwarted, we feel disappointed (rather than resentful or indignant); and when they are met, we feel gratitude (rather than satisfaction or relief).

But Martin admits that agents sometimes adopt a "two-fold attitude" of normative hope and normative expectation in cases where we judge that a person ought to do something even though we can't be certain that they will follow through. She explains:

It is possible to simultaneously see a person's status or situation as a reasoner in both hopeful and expectant ways: thus one stands ready to justify feeling both disappointed and resentful if the person in question fails to meet one's hope and expectation, both grateful and satisfied if she meets them. (136)

Martin's "two-fold attitude" account of this scenario suggests that the two ways of relating to a person (through normative hope and through normative expectation) are fundamentally distinct: normative expectations are accompanied by feelings of entitlement, while normative hopes are accompanied by feelings of anticipation. If I judge that a person has reason to do something that I can't be certain she will do and so invest hope in her to do it, then when she conforms to the norm, my resultant gratitude tracks the normative hope's being realized, and my resultant satisfaction or relief tracks the normative expectation's being met. If, instead, she does *not* abide by the norm, then my resultant disappointment tracks the thwarted normative hope, and my resultant resentment tracks the violated normative expectation. The reactive attitudes track normative expectation and normative hope in this way because Martin maintains that there is a *conceptual* connection between normative expectation, entitlement, resentment, and satisfaction; and that there is a *conceptual* connection between normative hope, disappointment, and gratitude.

But problems with Martin's account of normative hope become clear in considering the kinds of cases in which she supposes we adopt a two-fold attitude of normative hope and normative expectation: cases in which, because of external and/or internal challenges that the person faces, we must hope (rather than predictively expect) that they will adhere to the norm. Martin states: "to invest hope in a person is to relate some norm to her *aspirationally*, to hold it up to her as something with which she has decisive reason to comply, while acknowledging the challenges she faces, externally or internally" (140, emphasis added). We hope in these cases because we believe that a

person's compliance with a norm is possible but not certain given the existence of challenges to compliance; and we feel gratitude following compliance because we see that the person overcame such challenges and did what we judged she should. For example, Martin says that a person might feel entitlement (and so normatively expect) that a passerby will help him struggling with his shopping bags, and resentment if the passerby does not offer help; but he will also feel gratitude if the passerby *does* help because he realizes that our selfish culture makes acts of generosity challenging. She also argues that we feel grateful when the "vicious" or "morally corrupt" do the right thing because we realize that their damaged moral characters make it difficult for them to do what morality requires.

Although I agree with Martin that there is a kind of normative hope whereby we place hope in people to behave in certain ways, normative expectation and normative hope don't neatly track the predictive and reactive attitudes in the way that Martin suggests. In the case of moral hopes that are about people living up to our *moral* expectations,[23] we do feel entitled to our hopes being realized, and we do not always feel gratitude when they are in fact realized. This is because we place our hopes in people to behave in ways that we believe morality requires even if we do not judge that they face special external or internal challenges to doing so: we hope that people (and groups and institutions) will respect our rights and freedoms, we hope that wrongdoers will be brought to justice and that they will apologize and correct their behaviour for the future, and so on. Hoping in these cases is just a way of acknowledging that others' compliance with moral norms is up to them.

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[23] I take moral expectations to be a species of normative expectation: expectations we have of other people to act in accordance with distinctly moral norms.

I suggest that the feeling of entitlement that accompanies moral hope comes from the desire part of the hope's being supported by moral reasons. When we place hope in other people (and groups and institutions) to meet our moral expectations, hope and (moral) expectation *interact* in ways that complicate the predictive and reactive attitudes that follow their being met, unmet, realized, or disappointed. We often do not (and in many cases, we should not) feel gratitude when our moral hopes are realized. For example, it is entirely unclear that a woman would or should feel grateful that a man who was aggressively pursuing her at a party realized her hope that he would not take advantage of her. She would feel relieved, and perhaps lucky that her experience was unlike those of many other women. To say that the man faced external and internal challenges in this case (for example, was socialized in a patriarchal society that tolerates such treatment of women, was under the influence of alcohol, and so on) and so should be the object of gratitude, gives the man far too much moral credit for merely refraining from perpetrating a serious moral wrong; and appeals to such challenges in cases in which men do take advantage of women function as an excuse for the behaviour when an excuse is not warranted.

It is noteworthy in the above examples that the potential wrongdoer was a man and the potential victim a woman, and that gender oppression and sexual violence against women are in the background of this example. Martin does not make use of such cases in her analysis of normative hope and gratitude. But attending to these social and political dimensions of the example helps us to see how social features of agents' identities and the existence of broader systems of privilege and oppression are relevant to understanding what emotional responses are common and justified in certain contexts, including the reactive

attitudes of resentment, disappointment, and gratitude. More specifically, attending to the social identities of hopeful parties is necessary to understand whether gratitude does and should follow the realization of their moral hopes when relations of power, privilege, and oppression are at issue. As Claudia Card (1988) points out, the powerful and privileged have historically felt as though the powerless should feel grateful for their care.

Reflection on such cases of normative hope in broader social and political contexts demonstrates that gratitude following the realization of moral hopes in cases like this one should be resisted. One current example is the systemic injustice of police violence toward black people in America, and the ways in which white demands for black gratitude have functioned to maintain the oppression of blacks. Brittney Cooper (2015) identifies this issue in her discussion of the case of Sandra Bland: the case of a black woman in the United States who committed suicide in jail. Bland was pulled over for a minor traffic violation and was subject to a white police officer's unjustified use of excessive force on her, leading to her arrest. Cooper states:

> Black people, of every station, live everyday just one police encounter from the grave. Looking back over my encounters with police, it's truly a wonder that I'm still in the land of the living.
>
> Am I supposed to be grateful for that? Are we supposed to be grateful each and every time the police don't kill us?
>
> There is a way that white people in particular treat Black people, as though we should be grateful to them — grateful for jobs in their institutions, grateful to live in their neighborhoods, grateful that they aren't as racist as their parents and

grandparents, grateful that they pay us any attention, grateful that they acknowledge

our humanity (on the rare occasions when they do), grateful that they don't use

their formidable power to take our lives.

When we refuse gratitude, they enact every violence — they take our jobs, our

homes, refuse us respect, and kill us. And then they demand that we be gracious in

the face of it.

Black gratitude is the prerequisite for white folks to treat us like human beings.

Cooper's discussion of white people's demand for black gratitude is illuminating.

The question, "are we supposed to be grateful each and every time the police don't kill us?"

challenges Martin's claim that gratitude naturally and appropriately tracks the realization of

a normative hope. Cooper might hope that a particular police officer she encounters will

not use excessive force on her, and her hope may be realized. But she would likely feel

relieved and lucky, not grateful, if this were to happen. And her relief would be justified.

There is no sense in which a police officer's doing exactly what he should—that is,

refraining from using unjustified excessive force on black people—should give rise to

gratitude. Cooper's hope that the officer will refrain from using excessive force on her is

just a way of acknowledging that the officer's compliance with moral norms is up to him.

Thus, while Martin is right that normative hope is a kind of hope we place in

others to comply with certain norms, it is not always aspirational. When hopes to behave

in supererogatory ways are placed in others, individuals might rightly feel gratitude when

their hopes are met and disappointment when they are not. But when normative hopes to

behave in morally obligatory ways are placed in others, individuals tend to feel relief when their hopes are realized and anger when they are not. Normative hope, on my view, can best be understood as a form of hope that agents place in others, including people, groups, and institutions, to abide by norms they endorse.

7. Hope, Expectation, and Trust

The phenomenon of placing hope in others to abide by one's moral expectations raises the question of how hope is different from moral *trust*, inasmuch as both hope and trust are ways of relating to other agents based in how we believe they should behave. Sometimes, we not only hope that others will behave in certain ways, but trust that they will do so. Importantly, too, our investments of hope and trust in others are not limited to interpersonal relationships; we invest hope and trust in other people with whom we are not in interpersonal relationships, as well as groups and institutions, based on the social, political, and economic positions we occupy in relation to these agents. For example, black people's distrust of police officers and institutions has become a well-known, well-documented response to police violence against people of colour in the United States, Canada, and elsewhere in the world. At the same time, people who voice distrust of police have also expressed the hope that the relationship between the police and citizens of colour will improve, the hope that those who have been subjected to unjustified violence at the hands of police (and their families) will be treated justly, the hope that the criminal justice system will do right by black victims of police brutality, and other related hopes. I want to understand the relationship between trust and hope in these sorts of cases and how both

are threatened by persistent experiences of systemic injustices under oppression. I begin by clarifying the relationship between hope, expectation, and trust to demonstrate their interrelated roles in such contexts, turning first to Walker's (2006) account of the relationship between these concepts defended in her *Moral Repair*.

Walker's understanding of hope is similar to my own. Hope, according to Walker, is an emotional attitude that "engage[s] our desire and agency so that in hoping, the world is, in some respect that one cares about, construed as open to the outcome one favors" (45). She defines "normative expectation" consistently with Martin: as expectations we have of others to act in ways that we judge they should. When we normatively expect people to behave in certain ways, we also hold them responsible for doing so.

So far, I am in agreement with Walker; but I disagree with how she thinks that these concepts are related, and how she understands trust. Walker argues that trust goes beyond hope because it requires that we rely on each other and ourselves to be "responsive to moral standards that are presumably shared" (66). And because trust hinges on the presumption of shared moral commitments, it is, for Walker, essential to morality. But that we continue to hold on to our normative expectations even when we doubt that others will meet them suggests that trust does not always involve confidence. Walker states: "normative expectations do embody trust, but that trust itself can be either more confident, when one relies on compliance one believes is somewhat or very likely, or more hopeful, when one relies on compliance that is possible but more uncertain" (69). *Hopeful trust*, then, is "reliance on someone to behave responsibly where that outcome is seen as not much more than possible, or at least very uncertain, but is still one's reliance on

someone else doing what he or she should" (82). On Walker's view, hopeful trust is essential to normative expectations. She explains: "to lose the capacity for hopeful trust is to lose one's grip on morality, for then we can only take up the demanding attitude of normative expectation – the attitude of holding others responsible – toward those whose compliance we have reason to confidently expect" (70).

I disagree with Walker that, without hopeful trust, one can only take the demanding attitude of normative expectation toward people whose compliance is likely. I think that Lisa Tessman (2009) is right in arguing that losing hope and trust is not a threat to morality, and that it does not always seem warranted for hope to accompany normative expectations. Fortunately, we also do not need hope or trust to have normative expectations, in both moral and non-moral contexts. I might, for example, normatively expect you to use traditional teaching methods in your courses because I judge that requiring students to study, take exams, and write formal essays are important elements of a philosophy education. I might normatively expect this of you because I judge that you have reasons to comply with professional norms I endorse. But my holding the normative expectation that you will use traditional teaching methods in your courses certainly does not require that I trust or hope you will do so. If the evidence before me suggests that you prefer non-traditional teaching methods, such as requiring students to write blog posts or to create podcasts, I might lack trust and hope that you will abide by the norm I endorse. But with or without trust and hope, I might hold this normative expectation all the same.

And since *moral* expectations are about what one judges that morality requires, not whether individuals will in fact act in accordance with what morality requires, it is possible

to continue to hold moral expectations of others even when one is confident that they will not meet one's moral expectations, and even when one does not presume that the moral standards to which one is committed are shared. I might retain the moral expectation that you to support women's reproductive rights even if I have lost all hope (or never had hope) that you would support women's rights to decide the fate of their own bodies. Doing so is not to lose one's grip on morality, but to stubbornly insist on the demands of morality in the absence of hope, trust, and predictive expectation that others will comply.

But Walker is right that trust is stronger than hope in requiring more of those in whom we trust in moral contexts. In trust, we evaluate the motivation of the person trusted as good in some way: we presume that the person can be counted on to meet one's moral expectations based on relevant features of his character. In cases where we trust strangers, we often adopt a stance of default trust; in the absence of evidence that the stranger is not trustworthy,[24] we give him the benefit of the doubt. As McGeer (2008) puts it, trust is "an attitude that we take towards the character of their [the trusted person's] agency" (242). In contrast, it is possible to hope that a person whom one evaluates as being *un*trustworthy will do the right thing. Perhaps, one might hope, she will act well in spite of herself.

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[24] Evidence that a person is not trustworthy is not limited to evidence about a person's individual character traits, past actions, and moral beliefs and commitments. It may also include things like gender, race, and the person's profession. Women, for example, may approach men on the street at night with default distrust. Although a woman may not know the passerby personally, the fact that women are disproportionately vulnerable to victimization by men is sufficient evidence for women to approach men on the street late at night with default distrust. This distrust might manifest in behaviour such as keeping one's distance and having one's cell phone in hand. See also Meena Krishnamurthy, "(White) Tyranny and The Democratic Value of Distrust" in *The Monist* 94, 8 (2015): 1-15, discussed below, for discussion of the default distrust of blacks in America toward white police officers.

But Walker's argument that trust involves the presumption of "shared moral standards" is not strong enough for trust. Meena Krishnamurthy's (2015) discussion of Martin Luther King Jr.'s distrust of white moderates from his "Letter from Birmingham Jail" is helpful in seeing problems with Walker's account. Krishnamurthy points out that King did not trust white moderates even though they, too, believed in racial equality. King distrusted white moderates because, though he believed that they shared the moral standard of racial equality, they could not be counted on to act to promote racial equality.

Individuals might have any number of reasons for not acting on standards that they endorse, such as weakness of will, self-interest, or fear. But in trusting people to do something, we necessarily trust them to follow through. In cases of moral trust,[25] we judge that something about another person's character makes it such that he or she will not just support a shared moral standard through adopting the relevant moral beliefs, but that he or she will also act in accordance with that standard—and, even, that he or she is willing to make reasonable sacrifices to do so (to one's reputation, to one's relationships, and so on).

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[25] Just as there are cases of non-moral hope, so too there are cases of non-moral trust. We trust librarians to be able to track down books we need and pilots to competently fly airplanes. As Greg Scherkoske (2012) points out, there is even a kind of intellectual trust that involves "reliance on one's own or another's opinions, as well as the faculties and practices that generate and sustain those opinions." See Scherkoske, *Integrity and the Virtues of Reason: Leading a Convincing Life* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), 125. I use the language of "moral expectation," "moral hope," and "moral trust" to signify my interest in a specific set of cases: cases where expecting, hoping, and trusting others is bound up with moral assessments.

I think that Carolyn McLeod's (2000) view of trust as involving a presumption of

the trusted person's moral integrity[26] to act on shared moral standards can more accurately

make sense of these cases.[27] McLeod draws upon Calhoun (1995) to argue that moral

integrity involves consistently acting in accordance with what one judges to be the morally

right thing to do. On this picture of trust, King did not trust white moderates precisely

because he had evidence to suggest that they lacked moral integrity: when they found

themselves in a context requiring them to act on their belief in racial equality, they did not

do so. But King still may have hoped that the white moderates would act to promote racial

equality. This is because it is possible to hope that others will live up to one's moral

expectations in the absence of trust that they will do so. Thus, as Annette Baier (2010)

suggests, "hope… outruns trust, but trust is firmer" (221). While hope and trust can both

be placed in others, they are not equivalent.

8. Concluding Thoughts

This chapter aimed to offer a conception of the nature of hope to lay a foundation

for the discussion that follows. There is, admittedly, much more to be said about what

hope is, the politics of hope, the phenomenon of placing hope in others, and the

relationship between hope and related concepts such as expectation, gratitude, and trust.

My purpose has been, ultimately, to show that attending explicitly to the relevance of

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[26] I take "moral integrity" to be an expression of integrity with respect to one's moral and political convictions. I do not mean to suggest that moral integrity is a *kind* of integrity, or that all integrity is moral. For a defense of why integrity should not be "moralized" in this way, see Greg Scherkoske (2012).

[27] I qualify this claim because trust in other sorts of relations, such as trust amongst a sport's team members or trust in one's dog, will likely look different.

where we are situated within systems of privilege and oppression can enable a richer understanding of the nature of hope. A feminist relational approach to hope enables us to see the ways in which the absence of hope is influenced by individuals' social, political, and economic locations. Such a framework encourages us to see where we are situated in the world in relation to others, the opportunities we have and lack, and the desires we form and those that we must depend upon others to help us fulfill. By attending explicitly to the relevance of features of social difference that have unjustly resulted in privilege for some at the expense of others—gender, race, class, and so on—philosophers of hope will be equipped with new insights for exploring how, and in what ways, hope can be beneficial or detrimental to our efforts to live well, and to our efforts in building a more just world.

Chapter Three: The Value of Hope

1. Introduction

This chapter shifts focus from the nature of hope to its value. Part of the importance of inquiring into the nature of hope in contexts of oppression is to help us understand when (or whether) hope can be valuable to moral and political struggles. We often praise people for being "strong" and maintaining hope in the face of adversity, urging those who retreat under difficult circumstances to lift themselves up and continue on with hope. But we also worry about people who are too hopeful in the face of terrible odds, those who spend too much time and energy reaching for outcomes that they will never obtain. Such people, we think, are setting themselves up for disappointment. Hope is often said to be rational, irrational, well-placed, overblown, true, or false. But it is an open question as to what kind of evaluation is best suited to explain the value and risks of hope.

Philosophers have typically been focused on the question of what makes hope rational or irrational, weighing epistemic and practical considerations against one another to yield an overall judgment about the rationality of hope for the individual who bears it. In section 2, I present a problem for determining the value of hope for members of oppressed social groups: given what we know from the existing literature on the rationality of hope, it seems that hope is practically rational for members of oppressed groups in resisting oppression, yet hope itself is threatened by oppression.

In section 3, I critically engage with literature in moral psychology to explain how I understand the value and risks of hope. I first demonstrate the ways in which both practical and epistemic reasons are important to evaluating hope. But I point out that there

are further evaluative questions we can ask about hope, such as whether the hope is a fitting response to the situation in question: that is, whether it represents its object in a plausible way and whether it is experienced to a reasonable degree. I then demonstrate the benefits of evaluating hope for fittingness in practice by pointing out ways in which in moral agents might more accurately communicate their normative judgments to one another about their own and others' hopes.

In section 4, I demonstrate the value and risks of hope in fraught social and political contexts, attending to the range of ways in which hope can be evaluated: for epistemic and practical rationality, for fittingness, and for moral justification. I argue that the most important evaluative question is a moral one: if a hope is not morally justified— that is, if the hoped-for outcome is one the bringing about of which would constitute a morally bad state of affairs—then it ought to be given up.

In section 5, I argue that evaluating hope can be best cast in terms of whether the person is, as McGeer (2004) puts it, "hoping well," and I demonstrate how a framework of hoping well applies to hope in contexts of oppression. Hope itself might be a good thing for agents to cultivate and sustain in resisting oppression, but individuals can "hope well" and "hope badly." I also argue that McGeer is mistaken in suggesting that what she calls "wishful hope," that is, a kind of hope whereby one passively awaits rather than actively works toward the fulfillment of one's desires, is necessarily a kind of hoping badly. The critique of McGeer I advance arises from considering the ways in which social features of individuals' identities affect the forms of agency they can and do engage in hope.

2. Oppression and The Rationality of Hope

The argument that oppression is a threat to hope is disheartening in light of existing literature on the benefits of hope to psychological and emotional wellbeing. Hope is often a pleasurable emotion to experience, contributing something positive to our lives even if its object is out of our reach; as Bovens says (1999), it "provides for the pleasures of anticipation and respite in trying times" (680).[28] Hope is also thought to be practically rational because it promises to "lift us out of the panics and depressions to which we are naturally prey and to give us firm direction and control," preventing us from falling into despair and uncertainty (Pettit 2004, 160). It helps us to remain resilient to setbacks and failures that might otherwise lead us down a destructive path.

But not all of us are capable of sustaining hope in the face of barriers that make failure seem certain. When more and more evidence suggests that our hopes are not likely to be realized (and when we are epistemically rational in our beliefs about the evidence[29]), many of us lose hope that our desires will be fulfilled despite whatever practical reasons we might have for sustaining hope. And if it is true that hope is beneficial to individuals' wellbeing, then many members of oppressed groups' wellbeing may be harmed by their loss of hope, and their diminished capacities for hope.

But hope is thought to be practically rational in another way as well; namely, by motivating individuals to engage in activities that will contribute to the likelihood that

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[28] The notion that being hopeful has psychological benefits is supported by empirical psychology. See, for example, and Richard Lazarus, "Hope: A Vital Coping Resource Against Despair" in *Social Research* 66, 2 (1999): 653-78.

[29] Because hope involves a *belief*, namely, a belief in the possibility (but not certainty) that a desired outcome will occur, hope can be evaluated for epistemic rationality. See below.

their hopes will be realized. As Walker agues, hope "will press us to actions that further the likelihood of our attainment of what we hope for and will strengthen those attitudes and patterns of attention that fortify our sense that the object of hope is attainable" (2006, 46). Bovens (1999) similarly suggests that the presence of hope itself can help to realize the hoped-for outcome because it "arouses a certain zeal" and can enable people to explore alternative ways of bringing the outcome about (671). For example, if I have the hope for gender equality, I may be motivated to lend my support to feminist political initiatives which may, in turn, positively affect the likelihood of improved conditions for women.

Losing hope may thus make it more difficult for members of oppressed groups to engage in activities that will increase the likelihood that their hopes will be realized—activities that are already made difficult by the social, political, and economic conditions in which they exist. If victims of racial violence lose hope that their political efforts will ever bring about the end of racial violence, they may disengage from their efforts and resign themselves to living under the threat of racial violence. Without hope, members of oppressed groups must look elsewhere for inspiration to continue on in their moral and political struggles—if they are motivated to continue on at all.

Hope thus seems to be practically rational for members of oppressed groups to cultivate in resisting oppression and, at the same time, is something that is itself threatened by oppression. So we might ask: how can individuals resist losing hope under oppressive conditions, and sustain it for practical reasons—that is, as a tool to resist their own oppression? This question is, I think, important; and it flows naturally from commonsense understandings and philosophical literature on the value of hope. But I want to question

the notion that hope really is practically rational for members of oppressed groups in resisting their own oppression. The question arises once we consider the relationship between practical rationality and epistemic rationality in evaluating hope and, building from these considerations, a fuller range of evaluative questions we can ask about hope.

3. Evaluative Questions about Hope

Since hope involves belief—namely, the belief in the possibility (but not certainty) that a desired outcome will obtain—the belief part of hope can be evaluated for epistemic rationality. If one believes in the possibility of a desired outcome that is logically impossible, then there is reason to give up one's belief and thus hopes that are based on it. It is self-evident that one cannot rationally hope, for example, to become a married bachelor; the realization of this hope is logically impossible (Chignell 2013). Hope can also be irrational if the probability assigned to the desired outcome is clearly wrong. Andrew Chignell (2013) identifies this kind of irrational hope as "false hope," or hope that is "based on overestimation or ignorance of the relevant probability" (201).[30] For example, if I hope that the rain will stop by noon and a reliable weather forecast calls for pouring rain, then if my hope involves the belief that there is a 95 percent chance that it will be realized, my hope is false; it overestimates the probability that the rain will stop given the evidence.

Importantly, it is *not* the case that hopes that are unlikely to be realized are necessarily epistemically irrational. Recall Bess's hope from *Cancer Research*. Bess strongly desired that the experimental drug from the clinical trial in which she enrolled would cure

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[30] Chignell's description of "false hope" is clearly more restricted than ordinary uses of the term.

her, and she believed (accurately) that there was a one percent chance that the drug would cure her. Bess's hope is epistemically rational because her probability estimate is justified given the evidence available to her. Had Bess believed (inaccurately) that there was a 60 percent chance the experimental drug would cure her, her belief (and thus the hope based in her belief) would be epistemically irrational. But Bess, in *Cancer Research*, did not make this mistake. She strongly hoped while, at the same time, maintained her rational belief about the probability that the experimental drug would cure her.

Martin (2014) argues that many share the intuition that Bess's hope is rational not only epistemically, but *practically*: in how Bess's hope supports her rational self-interest. Martin defends an account of the overall rationality of hope according to which practical rationality dominates. On her view, the belief component of hope—that is, the belief that an outcome is possible but not certain—is governed by theoretical norms (that is, "truth-approximation"). This means that, as we have seen, part of what justifies hope is whether one's probability assignment is justified given the available evidence. But Martin argues that the desire part of hope is governed by practical reason: whether engaging in the thoughts, activities, feelings, and modes of perception constitutive of hope will promote one's rational self-interest (that is, "rational-ends promotion"). On Martin's view, practical rationality "dominates." As she explains:

> The practical dominates because, although hope is beholden to considerations of truth-approximation via its constituent probability estimate, what determines whether it is correct for the hopeful person to then see that probability in a licensing way is whether it promotes her rational ends to do so. With this license in

hand, the hopeful person is then free to treat her desire for the hoped-for outcome and the outcome's desirable features as reasons to engage in fantasies about the outcome, build the outcome into her plans, and feel positive anticipation about it. She is free to do so in the sense that her hope is successful as the kind of state it is, so long as it promotes her rational ends to do these things. (37)

Martin's account allows for rational hopes that are highly unlikely to be realized. But many of us will want to insist that something has gone wrong when we form and maintain hopes for outcomes that are highly unlikely to be realized, such as when Bess strongly hopes for a miracle cure despite there being a mere one percent chance that her hope will be realized. I think that what is missing from Martin's account, and what explains this intuition (which Martin will, admittedly, not share), is that rationality does not exhaust the evaluative dimensions of hope. As I argued in Chapter Two, hope involves not only belief and desire, but *perception*: a way of seeing the possible-but-uncertain desired outcome as encouraging to varying degrees. So, we might ask: is it rational for Bess to see the one percent probability of a miracle cure as encouraging?

Or, more accurately (some might say), is it "fitting" for agents to perceive, or represent, the one percent probability of a miracle cure as encouraging? Following D'Arms and Jacobson (2000), an emotion is fitting to the extent that it correctly represents its object (66); and an emotion can be evaluated for fittingness in terms of both its *shape* and its *size* (73). An emotion's shape is fitting if the object really does have the evaluative features the emotion represents it as having. So hope might be fitting in terms of its shape

if the desired outcome (in *Cancer Research*, the miracle cure) is a real possibility the obtaining of which would be good for the person given her preferences. It seems that both Bess's and Alan's hopes are fitting in terms of their shape. But emotions, including hope, might be overblown or experienced too strongly; when this happens, the emotion is not fitting in terms of its size. And the difference between Bess's and Alan's hopes lies in their size: Bess sees the one percent probability as much more encouraging than Alan sees it; she is thus much more hopeful than Alan. So whose emotion is more fitting: Alan's or Bess's?

It is fittingness (in terms of size) where we can, I think, rightly criticize Bess's hope over Alan's. Bess's hope is overblown given the evidence before her; she sees one percent as far more encouraging than the evidence warrants. It is more fitting for Alan to represent the one percent probably of a miracle cure as "mostly discouraging, only slightly encouraging," than it is for Bess to represent it as "strongly encouraging." It would be even less fitting if Bess were to strongly hope in the face of a 0.0001 percent chance of a miracle cure, and we might also criticize Alan if he had no hope at all given his desire and the fact that there is, after all, some chance it will be fulfilled (however slight). I suspect that the intuition that Bess's hope is not rational is more accurately characterized by the claim that Bess's hope is not fitting; we just don't use "fittingness" language in everyday speech.[31]

As D'Arms and Jacobson also point out, the claim that an emotion is fitting is distinct from the claim that it is morally correct, the claim that the agent has prudential or practical reasons for feeling the emotion, and, finally, the "all things considered" claim

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[31] Although D'Arms and Jacobson mention hope as one of the emotions that their account of the fittingness of emotions is meant to capture, they do not give their own view about how hope might be evaluated for fittingness. I take it that my description of the fittingness of hope is a plausible interpretation of how to apply their view.

about what one should ultimately feel in the context in question. So it is possible to endorse the above evaluation of the fittingness of Bess's and Alan's hopes, while agreeing with Martin that Bess (for practical reasons) should continue hoping in just the way she is. So what then, does the addition of fittingness, do for us?

I think recognizing the range of evaluative questions we can ask about hope (as well as other emotions) is helping in terms of *framing* and *checking*. If a family member or physician in conversation with Bess frames the all things considered judgment about Bess's hope by saying something like, "look, Bess, because there is only a one percent chance of a miracle cure, you are far more hopeful about the drug's curing you than the situation warrants. But it's clear that your hope keeps you going: it is helping you to enjoy time with your loved ones, and it obviously contributes to your improved mood. So, you might want to keep up that hope. Just be careful that it doesn't lead to wishful thinking, okay?" The all things considered normative judgment communicated in this detailed way is framed to caution Bess about her hope, encouraging her to "keep her hope in check" while, for practical reasons, permitting her to live on with it.

Why does Bess need to be cautioned about her hope? Even though Bess's hope is (epistemically and practically) rational, the fact that she sees the chance of a miracle cure as more encouraging than the situation warrants can *lead* to (epistemic and practical) irrationality. Recall that the way we see and interpret the world around us, by way of our emotions, affects how we feel. The sense of comfort, assurance, anticipation, and/or other hopeful feelings Bess experiences may cause her to become epistemically irrational, feeling (with the resultant belief) that she *will* in fact be cured. Bess might then change her

behaviour, engaging in hopeful activities that are detrimental to her rational self-interest and thus rendering hope practically irrational, too. Bess might, for example, refuse to talk about her wishes for a funeral and she might refuse to choose a family member to serve as a surrogate decision-maker for "when the time comes."

It is not possible to understand these risks of hope without engaging in the full range of evaluative questions we can ask about hope, and their inter-related roles in determining overall normative judgments about the value of specific hopes in context. I now turn to the question of how such an evaluative framework applies to the social and political cases in which I am primarily interested.

4. Evaluating Hope in Social and Political Contexts

Recognizing the full range of evaluative questions we can ask about hope—not only questions about practical and epistemic rationality, but also fittingness (and, as we will see, moral justification)—is particularly important in fraught social and political contexts in which the question of whether, and how much, to hope arises for moral agents. Should moral agents hope for improved race relations? Gender equality? The elimination of all forms of oppression? We seem to have the pre-theoretical intuition that not hoping for these outcomes is a moral failure. At the same time, evidence seems to count against the probability that these hopes will be realized; they are hopes for outcomes the realization of which seems far out of reach, if not nearly impossible. If I truly believe that that the elimination of all forms of oppression is possible, and if I maintain this hope, am I rational or justified in my hope?

Derrick Bell (1992) calls attention to the dangers of hope with respect to racial justice in America. In the context of civil rights policy, he argues: "The worship of equality rules as having absolute power benefits whites by preserving a benevolent but fictional self-image, and such worship benefits blacks by preserving hope. But I think we've arrived at a place in history where the harms of such worship outweigh the benefits" (101). Bell, as I understand him, is suggesting that hope itself might be beneficial to hopers' psychological and emotional wellbeing, but it is not necessarily beneficial (and is sometimes destructive) to the realization of their hopes for racial justice. Indeed, the very fact that being hopeful about the effectiveness of formal equality in America in contributing to racial justice is beneficial to individuals' psychological and emotional wellbeing can result in a dangerous illusion of comfort (that is, a hopeful feeling) in a system that is failing. Ben-Ze'ev (2001) similarly suggests that "hope may have negative moral value if the hope for a better future makes us ignore present evils" (488). Hope can also become epistemically irrational because, as Goldie (2004) puts it, emotions can "distort perception and reason so that the world seems to us other than it really is... the emotions skew the epistemic landscape" (92).

More recently, and in a similar vein, Martell Teasley and David Ikard (2010) explore the ways in which the rhetoric of hope in politics can give rise to hopes that are detrimental to one's moral and political aims. They suggest that the hope that many American citizens placed in Obama, and the hope that his election was the beginning of a "postracial era" in the country, had the effect of masking the worsening economic conditions for Black and Hispanics/Latino/as at the time (420). As Michael Dawson (2012) points out, Obama's election made people hopeful that Americans were now living

in a post-racial society in which "one's life chances were no longer significantly determined by race and neither were the basic contours of politics and society" (670). They were, given the evidence, *too* hopeful about what Obama's election signified for racial justice. And this hopeful vision about race relations in America can distract from the hard realities of racism. It may lead us away from serious inquiry into the relationship between racism and problems such as poverty, housing and employment discrimination, and poor health outcomes that disproportionately affect people of colour.[32]

Thus hope's benefits to individuals' wellbeing—practical benefits that result from the misperception of the situation as far more encouraging than it in fact is—often *influence* the epistemic rationality of hope. More specifically, the sense of comfort that hope provides can cause us to see the world as tilting in our favour when the evidence available to us suggests otherwise.[33] When hope's benefits to our wellbeing causes us to become epistemically irrational in this way, the two senses in which hope can be practically rational diverge: hope is practically rational in the sense that it provides hopeful agents with psychological and emotional wellbeing and, at the same time, it is practically irrational in the sense that it does not contribute to the likelihood that their hopes will be realized.

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[32] As Andre Willis recently remarked, "the USA has just experienced two terms of a Black President who was one of the brightest of lights in the American political firmament. The facts will show, however, that when Barack Obama walks out of the White House in January of 2017 black child poverty will be worse than when he took office." See Willis, "Notes Toward a Dissident Theo-Politics" in *Political Theology* (2017): 3. Willis cites black child poverty, despite Obama's time as president, as one factor that demonstrates the extent to which "the democratic promise of Obama supposedly represented has left a long shadow on American political and social hopes" (3).

[33] For a similar argument with respect to trust, see Philip Pettit, "The Cunning of Trust" in *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 24, 3 (1995): 202-225.

Evaluating hope in fraught social and political contexts is especially complicated, and I am inclined to say that hopes that are detrimental to moral and political progress should be given up (because they misconstrue the evidence) despite their benefits to individuals' wellbeing. But many of the ends for which such hopes aim are states of affairs that are, importantly, morally good—and this fact ought to count in their favour. For moral reasons, it is good to desire and thus hope for morally good states of affairs to obtain. Moral reasons also count against the formation of desires for morally bad states of affairs to obtain and thus the formation of hopes based on them. For example, whatever one might want to say about the rationality of the hope for white dominance and the suffering of innocent people, hopes for these outcomes are appropriate subjects of moral criticism. One should not, on moral grounds, have the desire for white dominance and one should not, on moral grounds, have the desire for the pain and suffering of innocent others.

The question of whether the hope is morally justified also dominates. If a hope is ruled out on moral grounds, then whatever evidence there is to suggest the hope might be realized, and however productive having that hope is for the agent (that is, however practically rational it might be to have the hope), the hope should be given up.[34] And when a hope aims at a morally good state of affairs, even if it is not rational, the desire part of the hope's being supported by moral reasons counts in favour of its preservation. For example, although the hope that oppression will be lifted in one's lifetime is not rational because oppression is so entrenched in our world that hoping for that outcome misconstrues the evidence and may enable either inaction or misdirected agency, the end for which this

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[34] There is surprisingly little discussion of moral constraints on hope in the philosophical literature.

hope aims is a morally good state of affairs, providing reason to hold on to it. On my view, it is permissible to revise (rather than give up) the hope. I can, for example, rationally hope that oppression will someday end (just not in my life time), and because the elimination of gender oppression would constitute a morally good state of affairs, preserving the hope that oppression will someday end is rationally and morally permissible.

5. Hoping Well

McGeer's (2004) language of "hoping well" captures the kind of account I want to defend. McGeer begins from the position that hope itself is always valuable, and suggests that the relevant question is whether the person is hoping well or badly. Such a view has the advantage of explaining why "having hope" in horrendous social, economic, and political conditions is a good thing while at the same time offering a framework for criticizing specific hopes. As McGeer suggests, hoping well requires "being responsive to real world constraints on formulating and pursuing our hopes" (118). So people who go about the world maintaining hopes that will never be realized cannot be said to "hope well," even if their having hope is practically rational and morally good.

But this does not mean that they should resist cultivating hope, or give up hope altogether. According to McGeer, it is "characteristic of those who hope well to resolutely shift their target of hope when the world proves adamantine with respect to some hoped-for end" (109). The moral agent who hoped that Obama's election signified the beginning of a "post-racial society" in America needed not give up her hope for racial equality. But she would be hoping much better if she had hoped that the Obama administration would make progress toward racial equality down a stretch of road along which there is still a very

long way to go. The agent's revised hope is more *fitting*; it is more fitting to represent the probability of the Obama administration's making progress toward racial equality as encouraging and to feel hopeful about progress than it is to represent the probability of living in a post-racial society as encouraging and to feel hopeful about this possibility.[35]

This way of evaluating hope helps to preserve hope's practical benefits to individuals' wellbeing while, at the same time, encourages only those hopes that are beneficial to the realization of one's ultimate (morally justified) hopes. But I want to raise an objection to McGeer's understanding of what it means to "hope well" that arises from focusing on the relevance of power, privilege, and oppression to theorizing hope. McGeer argues that hoping well involves "neither depending too much on external powers for bringing one's hopes about nor ignoring the critical role others play in supporting (or thwarting) one's hopeful efforts" (123). What McGeer calls "wishful hope," on the other hand, is hope that involves a failure "to take on the full responsibilities of agency and hence to remain overreliant on external powers to realize [their] hopes" (110). In wishful hope, individuals passively await, rather than work towards, the realization of their desires. McGeer argues that wishful hope is a kind of "hoping badly."

McGeer thinks that parents who indulge their children make them prone to wishful hope, and that such people grow up with "a sense of their own centrality in the universe" that leads them to focus on what they desire rather than what they need to do to fulfill their desires. But beyond problematic parenting techniques, there is a drastically different source of wishful hope. Many people are vulnerable to wishful hope not because

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[35] As Greg Scherkoske so aptly put it in commenting on an earlier draft, the trick to hoping well is "that one's reach just exceeds one's grasp."

they are used to getting what they want without effort, but because they are incapable or feel incapable of engaging their own agency in ways that will affect the hoped-for outcome. Individuals' social, political, and economic circumstances all combine to affect how much time, effort, and resources (if any) they have to contribute their agency to fulfilling their desires. A single black mother from a low socio-economic background working multiple jobs to feed her three children may have no time, energy, or resources to contribute to struggles against gender and racial injustice that may increase (however slightly) the likelihood that her hopes for gender and racial equality will be realized.

McGeer's notion of wishful hope helps to make sense of situations in which individuals may for good reasons believe that there is nothing they can do but hope that things will get better, but we should disagree with McGeer that wishful hope is necessarily a kind of "hoping badly." Faced with the options of continuing to hope for an outcome that one cannot do much to affect versus abandoning the hope altogether, siding with hope does not necessarily count against its justification. It seems perfectly reasonable to hope for racial equality even if one cannot do much (if anything) to affect that outcome.[36]

This example also shows that members of oppressed groups are forced to rely on the agency of members of privileged groups to realize many of their hopes, a dynamic that results in yet another danger of hope. And because members of oppressed groups often lack the power, resources, time, and energy to engage in activities that will increase the likelihood that their hopes will be realized, individuals and institutions in positions of

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[36] I do agree with McGeer that individuals can wishfully hope badly, such as when they do less than they can (and should) to affect change. Those with the power, resources, time, and energy to affect change but who nevertheless sit in the sidelines wishfully hoping that things will be okay or get better are not hoping well.

power can exploit the wishful hopes of individuals living under oppressive conditions. Politicians, for example, can market themselves as symbols of hope for improved conditions to gain the support of those in powerless positions. When people place their wishful hopes in individuals and institutions in positions of power, and buy into the hopeful messages that powerful agents promise, doing so can reinforce power structures that maintain oppressive patterns.

6. Concluding Thoughts

There is much work to be done in evaluating hope as we move from the personal and interpersonal to the political. I offer these reflections not to settle the score on how (and for what) people should hope, but to enrich our understanding of how hope can be evaluated: for epistemic and practical rationality, fittingness, and morally justification. I have not focused much on the all things considered question of whether one should (if at all) hope. Answering it is, on my view, necessarily a contextual matter, only really to be determined in considering concrete cases. And though I have tried to shed light on how we might evaluate hope in fraught social and political contexts, doing so is especially complicated. It requires attending explicitly to dimensions of power, privilege, and oppression. But this discussion is a starting point for moving beyond the tendency to focus only on the rationality of hope toward a fuller range of evaluative questions we can ask about the emotion; and it moves us closer to an understanding of how hope can be valuable, risky, and dangerous for human agents living in an unjust social world.

Chapter Four: Hope and Moral Anger

1. Introduction

I have situated this dissertation around the nature and value of hope in our moral and political lives and how our various positions within inter-related systems of oppression affect how we hope. I now turn to the relationship between hope and moral anger: an emotion that has been widely defended as justified and useful in responding to moral wrongdoing, injustice, and oppression. This chapter marks a shift away from the common tendency to focus on attitudes, emotions, and virtues in isolation. Philosophers of hope, for example, have been interested in hope's essential nature, its evaluative content, and how it is connected to agency. But people tend to respond to events and circumstances with multiple mental states that all combine to contribute to their experiences, judgments, and actions, not with only one attitude or emotion at a time. So, in investigating hope, I think that there is much to be learned from considering the relationship between hope and other attitudes, emotions, and feelings. The main idea behind this chapter is that moving beyond the focus on hope itself toward an understanding of the relationship between hope and other mental phenomena enables greater understanding of the nature and value of hope. And since anger is commonly felt and frequently defended in contexts of oppression, an analysis of the relationship between hope and anger is particularly apt for our purposes.

In section 2, I clarify what I take anger to be, and I orient the discussion around moral anger. On my view, moral anger is an umbrella term that encompasses a range of emotional responses such as resentment, indignation, bitterness, and rage. What all of these emotional responses have in common is that they involve the perception that a moral

wrong has occurred, or is continuing. There are, of course, other manifestations of anger that are about perceived norm violations (not distinctly moral violations). As Walker (2006) argues, people can resent things like modes of dress, norms of address, and other perceived norm violations that are not about distinctly moral wrongs. We can add the widespread experience of "road rage," anger upon accidentally hitting oneself on an object and experiencing pain, anger resulting from not winning a fair game, and so on. But I am most interested in anger as it is connected to moral and political life, so I will focus on anger in response to perceived moral wrongs.[37] I proceed by drawing upon recent philosophical literature on resentment as a moral emotion (the most commonly discussed form of anger in the literature). I move beyond the common focus on resentment in interpersonal relationships toward a conception of resentment that can make sense of resentments arising in social and political contexts.

In section 3, I address the question of how anger can be evaluated. I begin with approaches to evaluating anger that focus on whether it is as a rational or irrational response to some context. I show that, sometimes, anger seems to be practically rational even though it is not morally justified. I then argue, consistently with the argument about evaluating hope in the previous chapter, that evaluating anger should begin with moral assessments—that is, whether there are good moral reasons for anger—before engaging in the question of whether it is a rational or irrational response. On my view, anger is morally

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[37] I actually think that, in what we might call cases of "non-moral anger," we (perhaps irrationally) *moralize* the events about which we are angry. For example, we experience traffic on the road and hitting every red light as *unfair*, even if we rationally know that we have no good reason to respond in such a way. But since traffic, red lights, accidental pain, and losing chess are facts of life outside of the bounds of what morality governs, we can understand anger in response to them as non-moral anger.

justified when it responds to a legitimate moral wrong (not just a perceived one), and morally unjustified when it fails to track a legitimate moral wrong. Drawing upon D'Arms and Jacobson (2000), I show that questions of moral justification and fittingness converge in the case of moral anger, given its nature as a distinctly moral emotion. I then consider and demonstrate the importance of secondary evaluative questions, including the questions of whether the anger is rational, fitting in terms of its size, and whether it is directed toward the right object (or objects).

In section 4, I explore the moral, epistemic, and political value of anger. While it is widely recognized that anger can be harmful and destructive, many philosophers have defended anger for its productive role in our moral and political lives. Anger can be morally valuable in communicating self-respect and respect for other moral beings, epistemically valuable in bearing witness to important truths, and politically useful in motivating moral agents to act, individually or collectively, against oppression.

Drawing upon the understanding of the nature and value of anger established in the previous sections, I argue in section 5 that there is an important relationship between hope and anger. In Chapter Two, I argued that normative hope and normative expectation are more intricately connected than Martin's (2014) view allows. More specifically, when we invest hope in others to live up to our normative expectations, the normative hope and normative expectation interact in such a way that we feel anger when our moral hopes are not realized, and we do not and should not feel gratitude when they are realized. In this section, I build upon the understanding of the relationship between hope and expectation

defended in Chapter Two to show that anger often[38] responds to a thwarted hope: we hope that others will live up to our moral expectations, and when they fail to do so, anger tends to ensue. Moreover, when individuals respond to perceived moral wrongs with anger, they communicate that an injustice has occurred or is continuing, and they invite wrongdoers and other members of the moral community to acknowledge and address the harm caused by the moral wrong. I argue that anger often embodies hope; and commonly, it embodies the hopes for what Walker (2006) calls "moral repair."

2. Anger as a Response to Moral Wrongs

I understand anger as an umbrella term that encompasses different emotional manifestations of anger such as resentment, indignation, bitterness, and rage. What these forms of anger all have in common is that they are negative emotional reactions involving the perception that a moral wrong has occurred, or is continuing. Anger is, in other words, about violations of moral expectations: those expectations we have of one another to live up to moral norms. (Again, I am leaving aside non-moral cases of resentment, indignation, bitterness, and rage.) But how anger manifests in various contexts does not always take the same character; the form that anger takes can depend on the individual's standing in relation to the perceived wrong (as in resentment vs. indignation), the intensity of the anger (as in rage vs. low grade resentment), and how anger is coloured by other emotions.

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[38] I qualify this claim because we get angry when people do not live up to our moral expectations even when we did not have hope that they would do so. I explore this type of anger response in Chapter Five.

Discussion of anger in the philosophical literature has typically been focused on resentment as a moral emotion, and what it means to make the emotional transition from resentment to forgiveness. Philosophers' interest in the connection between resentment, interpersonal relationships, and moral judgments can be traced back to Bishop Joseph Butler's sermons on the emotion. Butler was specifically interested in reconciling what he saw as the moral value of resentment with the Christian imperative to love one's enemies. In his sermon "Upon Resentment and Forgiveness of Injuries," Butler argued that resentment is not inherently or always sinful; rather, it is a natural human passion whose end is justice. The emotion is, on his view, "a weapon put into our hands by nature, against injury, injustice and cruelty" (Butler 1827, Sermon VIII).

Many philosophers have followed Butler in understanding resentment as a form of anger that responds to a perceived moral wrong done to oneself—that is, a form of personal anger (Murphy and Hampton 1988; Hieronymi 2001; Solomon 2007; Strawson 2008). This characterization stands in contrast to other forms of anger such as indignation, or a kind of third-person anger in response to moral wrongs done to others. The distinction between resentment and indignation is not clean, since we take things more or less personally as a matter of degree. But it captures the fact that we feel anger differently depending upon our unique relation to the perceived wrong. For example, when I read about the unjust conditions facing refugees across the world, I feel quite indignant; but I do not feel, as refugees might, resentful about what I have learned. My anger manifests as a "spectator emotion" in Paul Woodruff's sense of the term: an emotion that is not about

me, but other people (Woodruff 2014). We become resentful when we take a perceived wrong personally, and indignant when we perceive the wrong as one done to others.

To clarify, spectator emotions "do not call for detachment, and they do not even call for less intense degrees of engagement. The mark of spectator emotions is that they engage the subject less directly (not less intensely) than nonspectator emotions" (Woodruff 2014, 71). So I might care very much about the refugee crisis, consider it a social justice issue about which I ought to do something, find myself intensely angry upon reading the news, and yet my anger is still experienced as indignation (not resentment). The closer I become to the refugee crisis (for example, if a friend or family member is a refugee, if I meet refugees in my own community, and so on) the more I might be able to empathize with their plight and feel more on the side of resentment than indignation in my anger. My anger might evolve from the perception that others (generally) have been wronged, to the perception that others *close to me* have been wronged, becoming more personal in the way that resentment is. But I am not a refugee, and so my anger is still not *about* me.[39]

Not only is resentment experienced differently than indignation, the distinction between resentment and indignation is also often appealed to in order to explain why some individuals have the appropriate standing to feel resentment in response to certain moral wrongs, while others do not. And I think that this is an important distinction to make. Whereas you would have the appropriate standing to feel resentment if you were the victim of violence, I have the appropriate standing to feel indignation. If I perceive the wrong as

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[39] But as I have argued elsewhere, one does feel resentment in response to moral wrongs done to others in certain cases: when a close loved one is wronged (for example, when a family member is sexually assaulted), one is *also* wronged, inasmuch as the direct victim is part of oneself in such a way that a wrong done to them is a wrong done to oneself. See Stockdale, "Collective Resentment" in *Social Theory and Practice* 39, 3 (2013): 509.

one done to me and take the wrong personally, I have made a mistake. The main idea captured by the distinction is that we are all positioned differently in relation to moral wrongs that occur, and our anger responses should reflect these differential positions.

But when we consider more deeply angers that arise in social and political contexts, the distinction between resentment and indignation becomes even more difficult to track. Resentment is often about the existence of systemic social and political injustices that target entire social groups, as well as injustices done to members of a social group to which one belongs. For example, indigenous women might resent colonialism, sexism, racism, and poverty (that is, they might resent these systems of oppression themselves); and they might also feel resentful about particular instances of violence toward other indigenous women that reflect those systemic injustices. As T.M. Scanlon (2008) argues, actions (such as acts of violence) carry meaning: they carry significance for the wrongdoer and for others.[40] The significance of an act of violence toward an indigenous woman does not only carry significance for the individual victim; it also carries significance for other indigenous women who, too, are disproportionately subjected to the threat or experience of violence in Canada and who understand the fact that the widespread violence against them is a challenge to their moral worth. All women, in some sense, can be resentful about violence against women—*including* indigenous women. But indigenous women's resentment in

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[40] Pamela Hieronymi similarly notes that "an event can make a claim when it is authored, that is, when it is an action. An action carries meaning by revealing the evaluations of its author. The event could not make a claim or carry meaning (positive or negative) if its perpetrator were not capable of making moral statements with his actions." See Hieronymi, "Articulating an Uncompromising Forgiveness" in *Philosophical and Phenomenological Research* LXII, 3 (2001): 546-547.

response to the violence that specifically targets indigenous women will manifest differently than, for example, white women's resentment. It will be more *personal*.

Philosophers have begun to notice that the moral wrongs we take personally—that is, moral wrongs about which we feel resentment—stretch far beyond injustices done directly to us by other individuals. Alice MacLachlan (2010) argues that we experience resentment not only about direct moral injuries done to ourselves by some identifiable moral agent, but also social and economic circumstances. For example, individuals sometimes experience resentment about such things as having a difficult or unrewarding job. They also sometimes resent the culmination of events and social practices, such as practices that marginalize women in a patriarchal society. As MacLachlan points out, even though there may be no individual wrongdoer who can be identified as responsible for bringing about circumstances, events, and practices, we can nevertheless resent them.

Walker (2006) argues that the object of resentment is also not always an individual wrongdoer; it is sometimes the broader moral community, or those who do not stand by the victim against the perceived wrong. Thomas Brudholm (2008) draws upon testimony from the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission to argue that resentment sometimes responds to calls for forgiveness (not just the original injustice). He explores the ways in which political leaders seeking to repair social and political relationships communicate the expectation for victims to forgive perpetrators of mass atrocities, and how reconciliation politics aim to shape people's emotional lives. Brudholm points out that individuals sometimes respond to calls for forgiveness with further resentment toward political leaders for pressuring them to forgive.

I agree that the traditional philosophical account of resentment is too narrow to capture experiences of resentment in social and political contexts, and I have suggested a further revision to philosophical understandings of resentment. To capture the range of moral wrongs that we can (reasonably) take personally, we need to pay attention to individuals' social identities, and the socially and politically relevant groups to which they belong. Since persons are, as I argued in Chapter Two, socially constituted beings whose social identities and relationships (both interpersonal and political) shape who they are, an account of resentment as "personal anger" must be able to accommodate this fact. Since such things as gender, race, class, ability status, and so on are part of our identities, then when we perceive injustices done to members of social groups to which we belong based on these features, we do and can very reasonably take those injustices personally.

In particular, when we become angry about an injustice done to a member (or members) of a social group to which we belong, we experience what I call "collective resentment." We experience resentment in this context not because we are the direct victim of the perceived injustice, but because the injustice was done to the person at least in part because of their membership in the social group to which we belong. For example, when another woman is subjected to sexual violence, I respond with collective resentment in virtue of my status as a woman. I experience resentment not because I was the direct victim of sexual violence (I was not), but because the instance of sexual violence represents a threat the all women as members of a social group who are disproportionately subjected to sexual violence in a patriarchal society (Stockdale 2013). I am resentful because I, too, am a woman who is harmed by that threat; and my resentment calls attention to the

systemic injustice of gender oppression that this particular instance of sexual violence reflects. Thus, when I feel resentful about instances of sexual violence against women, I experience collective resentment: "resentment that is felt and expressed by individuals in response to a perceived threat to a collective to which they belong" (Stockdale 2013, 507).

Collective resentment thus makes sense of resentments that individuals take personally even if they were not themselves victims of the injustice to which their resentment responds. In doing so, it calls attention to the existence of broader systemic injustices that particular moral injuries reflect. For example, it makes sense of indigenous peoples' resentment in response to injustices done to other indigenous peoples within the broader context of ongoing colonialism, women's resentment in response to injustices done to other women in the broader context of gender oppression, and so on.

But some scholars have noted that anger does not always respond to identifiable instances of perceived moral wrongdoing; it is sometimes a character trait or disposition. Lisa Tessman (2005) draws attention to the reality that members of oppressed groups live under conditions in which anger may be a useful disposition for individuals engaged in political resistance to cultivate. She defends the notion that anger is a "burdened virtue," that is, a disposition that, though it is burdensome for the agent to bear, is a means to the end of liberation and eventual flourishing. In order words, anger is one example of a virtue that is "unlinked" from flourishing but is nevertheless necessitated by the future possibility of a world in which flourishing for all people is possible (Tessman 2005, 108).

Macalester Bell (2009) also defends a conception of anger as a virtue. She points out that Tessman locates the value of anger as a virtue in its instrumental value (that is, to

bringing about a future in which all human beings can flourish), and thus implies that anger's being a virtue depends on the success of the anger in securing flourishing and not the character of the agent. To locate the value of anger within the agent's character and not whether the anger fulfills its function, Bell draws upon Thomas Hurka's and Robert Adams' approaches to virtue theory according to which a virtuous person is someone who both loves what is good, and hates what is evil. Bell argues that what makes a character trait a virtue is not its instrumental value in bringing about flourishing, but "that loving good and hating evil is itself non-instrumentally valuable" (Bell 2009, 177).

I do not take a stand on whether Tessman's or Bell's conception of anger as a virtue is more plausible (like in the case of hope, I am interested in anger as an emotion more so than anger as a character trait), but both discussions of anger as a virtue raise important questions about the value of anger. While they disagree about what exactly makes anger a virtue, Tessman's claim that anger may be useful in political resistance and Bell's claim that anger is valuable to individuals' moral characters because it reflects their "love of the good" suggest that anger plays an important role in our moral and political lives.

I want to show that anger can have moral, epistemic, and political value. In arguing that anger can be valuable, I am not suggesting that the emotion lacks any negative effects. As Tessman suggests, even when anger is instrumentally valuable in political resistance, it is "burdened." Anger can be psychologically and physically costly, it can prevent us from enjoying goods in life and maintaining healthy and satisfying relationships, it can interfere with one's ability to make sound decisions, and it can lead us to engage in harmful behaviours to ourselves and to others. But emotions are often valuable and harmful at the

same time: contributing to our wellbeing yet distorting our thinking (as hope sometimes does), attuning us to what we have done wrong yet preventing us from moving forward constructively (as guilt sometimes does), or alerting us to a potential threat yet preventing us from enjoying what might be worth the risk (as in fear).

I want to focus on the value of anger while at the same time being mindful of the harms and risks of the emotion. Before doing so, I turn to the question of how anger can be evaluated. Since it can only be morally justified anger that can be said to be valuable to morality, we need an evaluative framework for sorting through morally justified and unjustified instances of anger.

3. Evaluating Anger

Like hope, many approaches to evaluating anger focus on assessments of rationality. In his last book, *True to our Feelings: What Our Emotions Are Really Telling Us*, Robert C. Solomon (2007) argues that anger can be a rational or irrational response, and that we are even irrational when we fail to get angry in certain cases. Solomon mostly focuses on the practical rationality of anger: the question of whether "it fits into a person's longer-term interests" (26). Anger, he argues, is a strategy; that is, it is a way of emotionally engaging with the world to "serves one's ultimate ends" (26). But evaluating anger for practical rationality is not the only relevant evaluative question we might ask about the emotion. As Solomon states: "We get angry at someone, about something. The important question, accordingly, is whether the anger is rightly aimed, whether it has picked out the right object (the offender), and whether the anger is warranted by the situation" (25).

Solomon's description of how anger can be evaluated is similar to the one I gave about hope in Chapter Three. Anger, like hope, can be evaluated for practical rationality as well as fittingness (whether there really is something about which to be angry and whether the anger is experienced to a reasonable degree). Anger, unlike hope, does not necessarily involve a belief beyond perception in the way that hope does; hope involves a belief in the probability (but not certainty) that a desired outcome will obtain plus a perception of the possible-but-not-certain desired outcome as encouraging to varying degrees. Anger involves the perception that a moral wrong has occurred; but since the emotion is about something that is known rather than uncertain, we can't evaluate anger for epistemic rationality in the same way in which we can evaluate the belief element of hope for epistemic rationality. This, I take it, is the difference in the evaluate questions we can ask about the two emotions. Both emotions are also subject to moral evaluations and all things considered normative judgments: like hope, we can ask whether anger is morally justified and whether a person should ultimately be angry in the way that she is.

Acknowledging the full range of evaluative questions we can ask about anger is helpful in considering complex social and political cases of anger, when, for example, rationality counts in favour of anger but moral justification and fittingness do not. For example, white men sometimes express resentment about the discourse of "white male privilege" because they perceive the use of the term as an injustice done to them. It is, in at least one sense, practically rational for white men to experience resentment in this case; doing so works to maintain their privilege at the expense of others. But it is neither morally justified nor fitting for white men to experience resentment about the discourse of "white

male privilege." It is not fitting because the anger represents the object of anger—the discourse of white male privilege—as unjust, when it is not *in fact* unjust.

In the case of anger, the fittingness of the emotion (in terms of its shape, or whether the emotion represents the object correctly) and moral justification for the emotion converge. This is because, as D'Arms and Jacobson (2000) argue, the shape of anger is moral; anger, like other moral emotions such as guilt, "represents [its] objects in the light of such moral concepts as desert, fault, and responsibility" (87). Thus even D'Arms and Jacobson, in arguing that many philosophers commit a moralistic fallacy in evaluating emotions—that is, by conflating the fittingness of emotions with whether the emotion is morally right to feel—agree that anger is a distinctly moral emotion whose fittingness is determined in part by moral considerations. So the clearest way to explain why white men should not feel resentment in this context is to note that it is not morally justified; white men perceive the discourse about sexism and racism as an injustice done to them when, in fact, it is not an injustice done to them. And their resentment is morally unjustified and unfitting despite its being instrumental to their aims.[41]

When anger is morally justified and so is not ruled out on moral grounds, anger can then be evaluated for fittingness in terms of its size (whether the anger is experienced

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[41] In her discussion of the rationality of anger, Martha C. Nussbaum (2016) notes that she refuses to call anger justified because she thinks that anger necessarily involves a wish that the wrongdoer suffers and this wish is normatively problematic. She opts, instead, for the language of "well-grounded" in evaluating anger that responds to legitimate instances of moral wrongdoing. By this, Nussbaum means that "everything but that one part of anger's cognitive content is well-established." See Nussbaum, *Anger and Forgiveness: Resentment, Generosity, Justice* (New York: Oxford University Press), 35. I reject Nussbaum's characterization of anger in my discussion in section 5 below, and provide reasons for thinking that anger does not necessarily involve a wish (or, as I argue, the hope) that the wrongdoer suffers. The language of "morally justified" is thus not problematic on my understanding of the emotion.

to a reasonable degree) and whether the anger picks out the right agent (or agents) responsible for bringing about the wrong. Viewing these questions as secondary is helpful in avoiding the dismissal of individuals' morally justified anger just because they have expressed it too forcefully, or because they have directed the anger at the wrong agent or agents. bell hooks (1995), for example, explores the morally justified rage of African Americans (that is, a form of intense anger), and how that rage can lead to problematic actions. As hooks (1995) argues, the rage of African Americans is "not pathological. It is an appropriate response to injustice. However, if not processed constructively, it can lead to pathological behavior" (26). For example, living under white supremacy, alongside other forms of oppression, can engender uncontrollable rage that may turn into violence. On my view, it is most important first to register the fact that the rage of African Americans in this context is morally justified before engaging in evaluative questions about whether the rage is experienced to a reasonable degree or channeled in morally and politically productive ways. Doing so focuses, rightly, on the wrong or injustice to which the anger responds before turning attention toward the rationality of the angry person.

But as Walker (2006) argues about evaluating resentment, "to assess whether the resenter's position is unreasonable in its demand, intensity, or relentlessness, even when it is reasonable in the fact of its moral accusation and objection, remains necessary" (138). Tessman (2005) points out that this evaluative question is complicated in contexts of serious systemic injustice because the conditions themselves are so severe; and as such, "there may be no moderate state that allows one to be angry all the times one ought to be" (120-1). Tessman acknowledges that, even when the context in question seems to require

"an awesome level of anger," individuals (and she is focusing on politically resistant individuals) might do better to aim at moderation for practical reasons (121). Thus evaluating whether anger is fitting in terms of whether it is experienced to a reasonable degree is sometimes overridden by practical considerations: the costs of living with extreme levels of anger to the agent's wellbeing and relationships, and to her ultimate goals.

As mentioned above, anger can also go wrong by hitting the wrong target. In social and political contexts where anger does not respond to a direct moral injury by an identifiable moral agent, it is easy for anger to miss its mark: to mistakenly identify an agent or agents as morally responsible for bringing about the injustice. Tessman (2005) draws upon Audre Lorde (1984) to discuss the ways in which black women sometimes get angry with one another instead of those responsible for the sexism and racism they experience, and how their misdirected anger results from internalized oppression; in particular, the internalization of self-hate toward oneself and others who are like oneself.

Tessman (2005) also points out that because many moral agents are members of both privileged and oppressed groups, where social features of their identities intersect in ways that inform their experiences, it can be difficult to direct one's anger at the right agent(s). She discusses the example of black nationalists' anger at white people, and how it can manifest in misogynistic ways that sadistically target white women. We can also imagine, for example, a poor white man's anger about his social, economic, and political circumstances. He might direct his anger toward people of colour and women whom he judges to "free ride" off of equity policies that make it appear easier for them to earn or advance in employment positions, as well as immigrants whom he judges to be "stealing all

of the jobs." Evaluating poor white men's anger requires attending to their economic

disadvantage in a society in which economic resources are unjustly distributed, as well as

their race and gender privilege in a racist and sexist society.

It is, on my view, morally justified for poor white men to feel anger about their

unjust economic circumstances. But these poor white men's angers can be easily

misdirected, and incorrectly locate the source of their disadvantage as moral progress for

people of colour, women, immigrants, and members of other disadvantaged groups. In

societies in which citizens and politicians continue to deny the existence of oppression, it is

especially easy to see how anger can go wrong. Given the influence of broader social,

political, and economic pressures on individuals' emotional experiences and expressions,

the question of who is to blame for misdirected anger is not straightforward. It is, I think,

similar to the question of who is to blame for false moral and other beliefs that are

influenced by social, political, and economic structures (for example, belief in the moral

superiority of one's culture; belief that climate change is not real or not serious). The

complicated question of blame is beyond my scope here, but it is important that in calling

attention to inappropriately felt or misdirected emotions, beliefs, attitudes, and so on, one

must at the same time be mindful of the ways in which such emotions, beliefs, attitudes,

and so on are influenced by the circumstances in which they exist without appealing to

such circumstances as an excuse for individual culpability.[42]

Thus on my view, we should evaluate anger primarily by asking whether it is

morally justified or unjustified given the context in question; that is, whether it tracks a

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[42] For discussion of this issue, see Cheshire Calhoun, "Responsibility and Reproach" in
Ethics 99, 2 (1989): 389-406.

legitimate moral wrong out there in the world. But there are other important secondary

questions as well, such as whether the anger is experienced to a reasonable degree given the

context in question and whether the anger is directed toward the right objects.

I now turn to the question of anger's value in moral and political life.

4. Anger's Value: Moral, Epistemic, Political

Morally justified anger—that is, anger that responds to a legitimate moral wrong

(and not just a perceived one)—is morally, epistemically, and politically valuable. The claim

that anger is valuable can seem in tension with widespread consensus that anger can be

harmful to individuals' wellbeing, can be destructive to relationships, and can motivate

aggressive or other problematic behaviours. As I mentioned above, I do not deny these

harms and risks. The claim that anger has moral, epistemic, and political value does not

entail that the emotion is "all good." But despite the harms and risks of anger, the emotion

can play an important role in our lives.

Many philosophers have noticed, for example, that resentment demonstrates the

value of respect. Jeffrie G. Murphy (1988) argues that resentment is essentially bound up

with self-respect, and that individuals who fail to resent moral injuries directed toward

them can be said to lack self-respect, or have failed to express it. As he states: "not to have

what Peter Strawson calls the 'reactive attitude' of resentment when our rights are violated

is to convey—emotionally—either that we do not think we have rights or that we do not take

our rights very seriously" (17). In exploring women's anger, Marilyn Frye similarly states:

"Anger implies a claim to domain—a claim that one is a being whose purposes and activities

require and create a web of objects, spaces, attitudes and interests that is worthy of respect, and that the topic of this anger is a matter rightly within that web" (Frye 1983, 87). Consistently with Frye, Glen Sean Coulthard (2014) defends indigenous Canadians' resentment on the grounds that it signifies indigenous Canadians' "purging" of the inferiority complex that many of them have internalized as colonized subjects, prompting indigenous Canadians to "affirm the worth of their own traditions, of their own civilizations" (167-8).[43] Elizabeth Spelman (1989) identifies women's anger toward men as an "act of insubordination": a response that signifies one's equality with men and the right to judge them for their morally blameworthy conduct (266). As all of these views make clear, when we respond to perceived moral wrongs done to us or to members of a social group to which we belong, we demonstrate the moral value of respect.

Beyond the value of anger in reflecting self-respect and a commitment to the moral values we endorse, anger also has epistemic value. Many scholars have appealed to anger as something that should be "listened to" because it is an emotion that reveals important insights about our experiences in the world. bell hooks (1995) speaks of her rage (that is, a form of intense anger) as a catalyst for developing "critical consciousness, to come to full decolonized self-actualization" (16). And she speaks of some black people's absence of rage as connected to their "experience of the world as infinitely less hostile to blackness than it

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[43] Coulthard (2014), too, affirms the risks of anger while, at the same time, defending the emotion's value. He points out that, "individual and collective expressions of anticolonial anger and resentment can be destructive and harmful to relationships; but these emotional forces are rarely, if ever, as destructive and violent as the colonial relationship they critically call into question." See Coulthard, "Seeing Red: Reconciliation and Resentment" in Red Skin, *White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), 177.

actually is" (hooks 1995, 17). There is, hooks seems to be arguing, a kind of epistemic error in failing to respond to injustice with anger.

Lorde (1984) helps us connect the epistemic value of anger to its political value. She argues that the anger of women is "loaded with information and energy" (127), and when women listen to one another's anger, they can come to understand the cause of their anger as threats and experiences of injustice under gender oppression. Lorde states: "every woman has a well-stocked arsenal of anger potentially useful against those oppressions, personal and institutional, which brought that anger into being. Focused with precision it can become a powerful source of energy serving progress and change" (127). This is true even if women's experiences of gender oppression are different because of the ways in which other features of their identities such as race, class, sexuality, ability status, ethnicity, and so on all interact to affect how gender oppression factors into their lives. Anger, according to Lorde, brings women together in a common struggle against sexism. Similarly, hooks argues that "sharing rage connects those of us who are older and more experienced with younger black and non-black folks who are seeking ways to be self-actualized, self-determined, who are eager to participate in anti-racist struggles" (20). She links rage directly to courageous action, and argues that it is an essential component of resistance and struggle (hooks 1995, 16).[44]

Sonali Chakravarti (2014) has taken up these key feminist insights to defend the notion that expressions of anger in witness testimonies as part of truth and reconciliation

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[44] Even Nussbaum, who believes that anger is inherently normatively problematic, admits that anger can be politically useful in motivating struggles against injustice. See Martha Nussbaum, *Anger and Forgiveness: Resentment, Generosity, Justice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 39.

commissions should be listened to. She explores and critiques the approach taken by the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission in responding to individuals' anger about their experiences of injustice under apartheid. Chakravarti argues that such expressions of anger were often met with "ambivalence and confusion," with the Commission seeing "individual expressions of anger and despair only as mental health problems to be gotten over" (59, 75). She argues, instead, in favour of an approach to testimonies that acknowledge and listen to anger since doing so can uncover politically important information about citizens' experiences that might be otherwise unavailable.

Many feminists have been inspired by reading Lorde, hooks, and other feminist thinkers who offer optimistic readings of the value of members of oppressed groups' anger. There is often, it seems, something hopeful about anger: when it is morally justified and properly directed, the emotion provides insights into what will make the world better in the future; it can energize and spring people to positive action against injustice in pursuit of the achievement of their moral and political goals; and it can guide listeners toward actions that can lead to reconciliation, constructing positive relations, and social and political change. But the relationship between anger and hope has not, to my knowledge, been explicitly explored in the philosophical literature. I want to make the case that there is an important relationship between hope and anger.

5. The Relationship Between Hope and Anger

There is increasing literature on the relationship between the emotions and how they interact in the social science and psychological literature (Halperin et al 2011; Jasper 2014). But philosophers tend to remain focused on one emotion at a time: investigating the

emotion's nature, trying to understand its evaluative content, and considering its effects on individuals' wellbeing and agency. But understanding individuals' experiences of and responses to injustice requires attending to the ways in which emotions, attitudes, and feelings such as anger, hope, determination, courage, stubbornness, frustration, and so on all interact to determine how they think, feel, and act. This section contributes to this project by offering an analysis of the relationship between hope and anger.[45]

In Chapter Two, I argued that when we invest our hope in other people, groups, and institutions to live up to our moral expectations (that is, those expectations we have of one another to abide by moral norms), we tend to experience anger when they fail to do so. Thus anger responds in part to thwarted hopes. When I invest hope in other people to live up to my moral expectation for respectful treatment, and when a person fails to treat me with respect, my hope for respectful treatment has been thwarted and anger often ensues. Note, however, that even though my hope was thwarted my moral expectation for respect remains intact: I continue to morally expect respectful treatment from others (including the wrongdoers) even when they have failed to treat me with respect in the past, and even when I may no longer have much hope that they will treat me with respect in the future.

Beyond the moral expectations that we have of one another to abide by moral norms (such as the norm of respectful treatment), we also have the moral expectation that

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[45] There is some psychological literature that explores the relationship between hope and anger. In his discussion of children's anger in response to separation from their parents, John Bowlby argues that children's anger responses are sometimes "the anger of hope," as when they express anger to their parents with the hope that their parents will not leave or neglect them again, and "the anger of despair," as when children experience repeated separations and become "lost and desperate." See Bowlby, "Anger, Anxiety, and Attachment" in *Attachment and Loss Volume II: Separation Anger and Anxiety* (Basic Books, 1974), 246. See also Averill, Catlin, and Chon's *Rules of Hope* (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1990).

when moral wrongs occur, they will be acknowledged and addressed. Following Strawson (2008), Walker (2006) points out that anger is a way of holding others responsible, "bidding them to recognize the existence or the possibility of a kind of relationship, the kind in which parties are responsible to each other" (134). Its "aim" is to activate protecting, reassuring, or defensive responses from others who are called upon to affirm that the victim is within the scope of that community's protective responsibilities (135).

Thus anger, many philosophers have argued, has a communicative function: it sends a message to wrongdoers and, sometimes, to the moral community at large. Colleen Macnamara's (2015) discussion of the communicative nature of the reactive attitudes more generally is helpful in illustrating how anger can be understood as communicative. She argues that what makes reactive attitudes, such as anger, communicative in nature is that they have representational content that function to evoke uptake in a recipient. This is true even when we do not outwardly express our anger where, in such cases, anger has failed to fulfill its communicative function. As Macnamara says:

> Reactive attitudes that remain buried in our hearts do not fulfill this function [of evoking uptake from a recipient]. This, though, is of little consequence because the fact that an item does not fulfill its function does not obviate the fact that it has said function. A hammer gathering dust on the workbench has the function of pounding nails; just so, the resentment that remains buried in one's heart has the function of eliciting uptake of its representational content. (562)

Anger thus has a communicative function even when it is not outwardly expressed. And, even when it is not expressed, it can even have and succeed in fulfilling other functions—such as when resentment informs the resentful person about what her environment is like, and influences how she responds (Macnamara 2015).

I want to suggest that the communicative function of moral anger is, in some sense, *hopeful*: that anger, which involves the perception that a moral wrong has occurred or is continuing, embodies hope with respect to what will happen now.[46] Aristotle, apparently, thought that there was a relationship between the two emotions. As Nussbaum (2016) explains, Aristotle "emphasizes that the forward movement characteristic of anger is pleasant, and that anger is in that sense constructive and linked to hope. The imagined payback is seen as somehow assuaging the pain or making good the damage" (21).

Nussbaum (2016) has recently defended an Aristotelian account of anger according to which anger always involves a "payback wish"; that is, a wish that the wrongdoer suffers. As she says, "the idea of payback or retribution—in some form, however subtle—is a conceptual part of anger" (15). Anger's payback wish manifests in one of two ways: as (1) the mistaken assumption that the wrongdoer's suffering will restore or at least contribute to restoring some sense of "cosmic balance" in the universe; or as (2) the idea that the perceived wrong has damaged one's status, and that the wrongdoer's suffering will lift one's status back up through "down-ranking" the status of the wrongdoer. However harsh or subtle—from the desire that the wrongdoer suffers physical injury, to unhappiness, to social

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[46] It is also possible to explore the ways in which offering an apology, displaying remorse, and making efforts toward repair embodies a hope for forgiveness. Doing this work is beyond my scope here.

unpopularity, and so on—anger involves a wish that the wrongdoer suffers in some way. It "involves, conceptually, a wish for things to go badly, somehow, for the offender, in a way that is envisaged, somehow, however vaguely, as a payback for the offense. They get what they deserve" (Nussbaum 2016, 23).

It seems that what Nussbaum really means in arguing that anger involves a wish for payback is that anger involves the *hope* for payback, at least in most cases. Nussbaum does not explore the distinction between a wish and a hope, but it is important for my purposes here: hope involves the belief in the possibility (but not certainty) that a desired outcome will obtain, whereas we can wish for desired outcomes that are outside the realm of possibilities.[47] I can wish, for example, that the Holocaust had not happened; but I cannot hope that it did not happen. I cannot hope that the Holocaust had not happened because I understand that my backward-looking desire cannot be fulfilled.

Nussbaum is right that certain wishes are sometimes tied to our anger responses; we might wish, for example, that a now-deceased wrongdoer had suffered more than he actually did before his death. We can't hope for this outcome because we acknowledge that the wrongdoer's having suffered more than he did is outside the realm of possibilities. But most of the possible "wish for payback" outcomes Nussbaum thinks are conceptually part of anger are ones for which the angry person hopes. When the wrongdoer is still alive, we see that the desire that he or she suffers is within the realm of possibilities: that the wrongdoer suffers physical injury, psychological unhappiness, or social unpopularity, and so on—all of these outcomes are ones for which the angry person might hope. Nussbaum

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[47] For an in-depth discussion of the distinction between a wish and a hope, see J.M.O Whatley, "Wishing and Hoping" in *Analysis* 18, 6 (1958): 121-31.

even slides between the language of wishing and hoping in describing anger. She argues that the philosophical tradition understands anger as "a retaliatory and hopeful outward movement that seeks the pain of the offender because of and as a way of assuaging or compensating for one's own pain" (24). Nussbaum sees her position as in agreement with "many first-rate thinkers" on anger, including Aristotle, the Stoics, Joseph Butler, Adam Smith, and psychologists Richard Lazarus and James Averill (22).

I am troubled by the understanding of anger as a negative emotional response to perceived moral wrongs that necessarily involves a wish for payback, nor do I see this understanding as the standard or consensus in the literature. Notice that, on Nussbaum's view, the object of anger is the wrongdoer. But as Walker (2006), Brudholm (2008), MacLachlan (2010) and I (2013) argue, anger is not always directed toward a wrongdoer. We can resent social and political circumstances (without knowing or thinking about who caused them), the moral community at large, the criminal justice system, and so on. Once we notice that anger can be directed toward agents and things that stretch far beyond an individual wrongdoer who is directly responsible for inflicting a moral injury, it seems implausible that anger always involves a wish that a wrongdoer suffers. Take, for example, my anger about ongoing gender oppression. If Nussbaum is right that my anger about gender oppression involves a wish for payback, would this wish for payback involve a wish that all men who are perpetrators of or complicit in gender oppression suffer? What about women and people of other genders who are complicit in gender oppression, or my own complicity in gender oppression? When we get angry about such things as systems of oppression, it is unclear who (if anyone) we hope will suffer.

Instead, women's anger about gender oppression seems to involve the perception that gender oppression is a serious social injustice combined, very often, with the hope that gender oppression will someday end. Women's anger about gender oppression may involve particular hopes, such as the hope that wrongdoers are brought to justice. I might get angry, for example, when I hear about an instance of sexual violence; and my anger response might involve the hope that the moral community will stand up for the victim of sexual violence and that the criminal justice system will adequately deal with the case. It might even involve the hope that the wrongdoer suffers, but not necessarily so. And even when it does, women's anger about gender oppression cannot be reduced to the individual episodes, or manifestations, of their anger. As Sara Ahmed (2004) argues in the case of women's anger about their oppression:

> If anger is a form of 'against-ness', then it is precisely about the impossibility of moving beyond the history of injuries to a pure or innocent position. Anger does not necessarily require an investment in revenge, which is one form of reaction to what one is against. Being against something is dependent on how one reads what one is against (for example, whether violence against women is read as dependent on male psychology or on structures of power). The question becomes: What form of action is possible given that reading? (174-175)

Ahmed's description of anger captures the fact that the hope and/or actions bound up with one's anger response will depend upon the context in question, and will not necessarily be ones of revenge. Nussbaum's narrow conception of anger, as involving a wish

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(or hope) for payback, misses the widespread variation in anger responses. But I do think

that we can preserve the relationship between anger and hope that her account begins to

capture. In getting angry, we communicate new hopes: the hope that justice will be done,

the hope that the moral community will help to prevent similar wrongs from occurring in

the future, and, encompassing all of these hopes, the hope that repair will come.

Nussbaum (2016) attempts to isolate this forward-looking response to moral

wrongdoing, which does not necessarily involve a wish (or hope) for payback, as something

that does not count as genuine anger. She defends an account of what she calls Transition-

Anger; that is, a transitional form of anger that begins the shift away from "the terrain of

anger toward more productive-forward looking thoughts, asking what can actually be done

to increase personal or social welfare" (6). On Nussbaum's view:

> In a sane and not excessively anxious and status-focused person, anger's idea of
>
> retribution or payback is a brief dream or cloud, soon dispelled by saner thoughts of
>
> personal and social welfare. So anger (if we understand it to involve a wish for
>
> retributive suffering) quickly puts itself out of business, in that even the residual focus
>
> on punishing the offender is soon seen as part of a set of projects for improving both
>
> offenders and society—and the emotion that has this goal is not so easy to see as anger.
>
> *It looks more like compassionate hope.* (31, emphasis added)

And again, drawing upon Aristotle:

> When someone looks to the future with 'decent hope'—by which Aristotle seems to
>
> mean the hope characteristic of a decent or fair-minded person (not, therefore, a

hope of riding roughshod over others), he is less vulnerable to payback wishes—or

to competitive anxiety. (54)

Nussbaum is right that angry people often "cool down," moderating their anger upon

reflection and considering constructive ways of moving forward. But is this necessarily a

shift away from anger? I'm not convinced that it is, and Nussbaum herself seems unsure.

She asks: "Is Transition-Anger a species of anger? I really don't care how we answer this

question" (Nussbaum 2016, 36). But I think that we should care, inasmuch as we are trying

to understand the nature of anger and the various ways it manifests in our lives. If what

Nussbaum calls "Transition-Anger" is in fact a legitimate form of anger, then anger does

not necessarily include a payback wish (or hope); only some forms of anger do. This seems

to me quite plausible, and coheres with my own understanding of anger.

So we should reject the notion that anger always involves a payback wish (or hope)

while acknowledging that anger does sometimes manifest in this way. The understanding

of anger, as embodying a kind of hope more generally, also extends to social and political

contexts in more plausible ways than Nussbaum's view can account for. Chakravarti (2014)

points out that "feminist proponents of the role of anger in the process of consciousness

raising have hoped for, among other things, the uptake of better legal policy with respect to

sexism as well as the acceptance of anger as legitimate" (130). She thus links the epistemic

value of anger in consciousness raising to the hope for improved legal policies and

acknowledgement on the part of others that anger can be legitimate. And there are many

examples of anger responses in social and political contexts that fit this analysis. For

example, in expressing collective resentment about the widespread cases of missing and murdered indigenous women in Canada, indigenous women participate in consciousness-raising about the systemic injustices that they face (including sexism, racism, colonialism, and poverty).[48] Indigenous women's resentment aims to prompt a national reparative response from Canadians so that the crisis will be addressed, and in resenting, indigenous women may hope that social justice efforts will be pursued. They know that their own agency, both individual and collective, is insufficient to dismantle the inter-related systems of oppression that so often leads to violence against them and death. So indigenous women may hope that individuals with the authority, economic resources, and political power will take interest in, fund, and carry out an effective national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women, and to allocate resources and implement services to address the unjust conditions in which many indigenous women exist.

But the hopes embodied in our anger responses—including those in social and political contexts—are admittedly not always for acknowledgement and repair. Sometimes, they are vindictive; thus Nussbaum's view of anger as involving the wish (or hope) that wrongdoers suffer make sense of some anger responses. Brudholm's (2008) discussion of a quotation by Peter Maass, a witness to a massacre of civilians in Sarajevo, illustrates a drastic example of this type of anger response. Maass explains:

> My first thought was for the commander who gave the order to attack. I hope he burns in the hottest corner of hell. My second thought was for the soldiers who loaded the breeches and fired the guns. I hope their sleep is forever punctuated by

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[48] For a defense of indigenous women's resentment and rage in resistance to oppression, see Rachel Flowers, "Refusal to Forgive: Indigenous women's love and rage" in *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, & Society* 4, 2 (2015): 32-49.

the screams of children and the cries of their mothers. (Maass 1996, 189 quoted in Brudholm 2008, 1)

Maass's revengeful hopes are understandable given what he witnessed, and they raise interesting questions about whether the vindictive hopes embodied in anger responses to mass atrocities can be instances of "hoping well." If revengeful thoughts and actions are always morally wrong, then Maas's hopes will not be morally justified; and if the realization of Maas's revengeful hopes would not lead to his increased wellbeing or improved social and political conditions, his hopes may not be practically rational. I leave open the question of how Maas's revengeful hopes should be evaluated (doing so requires discussion of whether revenge is necessarily, or always, unjustified), but highlight this example to help show that the hopes embodied in our anger responses can be directed toward a wide range of outcomes, some of which might be worthy to pursue and others not. In anger, we might hope that wrongdoers will be brought to justice, that others will stand in solidarity with oneself against injustice, that the moral community will not tolerate such injustices in the future, that wrongdoers' lives will be ruined, and so on. In this way, anger can be understood as an emotion that embodies hope.

6. Concluding Thoughts

I have argued in this chapter that there is an important relationship between hope and anger. But while philosophers have long been interested in how individuals can move from resentment to forgiveness—for example, when a reparative response is given and

individuals acquire moral reasons to forgive—less attention has been paid to what happens to anger when its hopeful communicative function, in evoking uptake from a recipient, fails. And this happens most often to members of oppressed groups. As Macalester Bell (2009) notes, members of oppressed groups "will likely experience greater and greater alienation from the wider community and their anger will remain, in some sense, incomplete" (172). I want to understand what happens to anger when it is "incomplete": when our anger remains a part of our emotional lives when it has not been met with a reparative response. By articulating the relationship between hope and anger, this chapter opens up space for exploring this phenomenon. I now argue that when anger is not met with uptake and efforts toward repair, the loss of hope that accompanies anger results in the emotion of moral bitterness.

Chapter Five: Losing Hope, Becoming Embittered

1. Introduction

The accusation of bitterness implicitly acknowledges that a great many people have never been granted the social goods likely to lead to the luxury of cultivating sympathetic emotional lives. Bitterness does not always involve gender as one of salient determinants of who is most likely to be accused. The angry disadvantaged of a society—visible minorities, aboriginals, the working class, the disabled, the ill, the divorced, and the old—are all targets of this critique.

– Sue Campbell

Feminist philosophers have increasingly recognized that it is individuals at the margins of society who are most likely to be accused of bitterness. To call someone "bitter" is an accusation because it is assumed that the person is not merely angry, but still angry, and that the point of the anger has expired. The accusation implies that it is time to move on and let go. This understanding of bitterness as an inherently inappropriate and destructive emotion stands in contrast to other forms of anger that have earned much attention and, as I showed in the above chapter, moral praise in the philosophical literature. Resentment, especially, is commonly praised when it demonstrates self-respect and an appreciation for morality.

Discussions of bitterness are far less common, and have taken place most frequently by feminist philosophers who have noticed the tendency to categorize socially and politically disadvantaged individuals as bitter and not just angry. In her widely cited 1991

article entitled "What's Wrong with Bitterness?", Lynne McFall defends the view that bitterness is sometimes rationally appropriate and morally justified. Moral bitterness, on her view, is a refusal to forgive and forget injustices that have disappointed one's important hopes. This article paved the way for Sue Campbell's discussion of bitterness in her influential 1994 article "Being Dismissed: The Politics of Emotional Expression" which explores the ways in which the accusation of bitterness is used politically as a form of silencing and emotional dismissal. Following Campbell, philosophers such as Susan Babbitt (1997), Diana Tietjens Meyers (2004), Sylvia Burrow (2005), Margaret Urban Walker (2006), and Kathryn Norlock (2009) have built upon McFall's account to continue discussions of the significance of bitterness to feminist philosophy.[49]

But while there is much to be learned from McFall's discussion of bitterness, there are significant problems with her view that have gone largely unnoticed. The purpose of this chapter is to expose these problems, and to offer an alternative account of the nature and evaluative content of bitterness that more accurately traces the character and effects of the emotion, as well as its moral, epistemic, and political value.

In section 2, I explore James Baldwin's (1955) testimony of his father's and his own bitterness to motivate moral inquiry into the emotion. I then consider McFall's account of bitterness as an attempt to capture experiences like Baldwin's. Drawing upon Campbell, I show that McFall's framework for evaluating instances of bitterness unintentionally renders the bitterness of members of oppressed groups rationally inappropriate and morally unjustified. But while Campbell takes this consequence to suggest that we should block

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[49] One recent non-feminist contribution to understanding bitterness is Thomas Burdholm's (2008) *Resentment's Virtue*. See, especially, p. 26-30, 44-6, 135, 155-8. He, too, cites Lynne McFall.

accusations of bitterness for political reasons, I suggest that the consequence reflects a broader problem with McFall's understanding of bitterness. I show that bitterness is not, as McFall suggests, primarily about the disappointment of important hopes, but violations of moral expectations: those expectations we have of one another to abide by moral norms. But hope is still important to understanding bitterness. I argue that bitterness is paradigmatically[50] a form of unresolved anger involving a loss of hope that a perceived injustice or other moral wrong, one that violated or that continues to violate one's moral expectations, will be sufficiently acknowledged and addressed.

In section 3, I show that delving deeper into the experience of bitterness reveals that the emotion is sometimes an understandable and morally justified response to injustice. I engage with feminist philosophers' concerns about evaluating bitterness and suggest that it is both possible and important to engage in the normative project of evaluating whether bitterness in certain cases is morally justified or unjustified. I argue that bitterness is morally justified when it responds to a legitimate moral wrong that has been left inadequately addressed, and when there are good reasons for the agent to have lost hope that repair will come. I orient the discussion around moral bitterness in response to social and political injustices under oppression.

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[50] Might one be "born into bitterness," or never had hope at all? I take it that this is a real possibility given the horrific conditions in which some people are born, conditions in which hope might never be fostered, cultivated, or supported. But I think that, more common, is the experience of having hope and then losing it: of starting out as hopeful (perhaps even naïve as in the case of hopeful children), coming to learn about and see more clearly the extent of oppression and other forms of injustice in the world, then losing the hope that one had before. So I understand moral bitterness as, paradigmatically, a form of *unresolved* anger involving a *loss* of hope even though it might also manifest for some people as a form of learned, hopeless anger about one's self, one's family, and one's future.

But the claim that bitterness can be morally justified may give us pause in light of the inherent harms and risks of the emotion. Bitterness is thought to be psychologically and emotionally painful to bear, and it can negatively interfere with our relationships and behaviour. (A quick google search reveals some striking anonymous quotes about bitterness: "bitterness is a small crack in the windshield of your relationships," "bitterness and love can't live together in the same heart," and "bitterness has no place in a marriage" are just a few.) I do not deny that bitterness can be harmful to the agent who bears it, and they might have good practical reasons for working to overcome the emotion for themselves and their relationships. But I argue in section 4 that focusing only on the harms and risks of morally justified bitterness can distract from its positive moral, epistemic, and political value; namely, its role as a "moral reminder" about a past or persistent injustice, indicating that there is still moral and sometimes political work left to do.

In section 5, I consider the effects of bitterness on individuals' agency. I show that, though bitterness involves a loss of hope, it does not necessarily lead to despair and inaction. I draw upon Lisa Tessman (2009) and Derrick Bell (1992) to argue that people who are embittered may still be motivated to persist in their moral and political struggles even when they have lost hope that their effort will be successful. I show that Bell, as a scholar and activist, exemplifies the moral agent who persists in one's moral and political struggles in the absence of hope that one's efforts will be successful.

2. What is Bitterness?

Bitterness is an emotion that can manifest in a wide range of contexts. One can be bitter about such things as being diagnosed with a terminal illness or the loss of a loved one due to an accident. Like other forms of anger, bitterness is not always an emotion that manifests in response to perceived moral failures on the part of others. For example, we feel both resentment and bitterness at times when we experience some aspect of our lives as unfair, whether someone or something is morally responsible for the unfairness or not. But I want to understand bitterness as a moral emotion, that is, an emotional response to perceived actions, omissions, practices, and policies that are within the power of human moral agents. I am particularly interested in instances of bitterness that respond to social and political injustices targeting members of whole social groups.

James Baldwin's (1955) testimony of his father's and his own experience of bitterness from his "Notes of a Native Son" illuminates exactly the kind of bitterness that I want to understand. In recounting his father's life and death, Baldwin writes:

> He had lived and died in an intolerable bitterness of spirit and it frightened me, as we drove him to the graveyard through those unquiet, ruined streets, to see how powerful and overflowing this bitterness could be and to realize that this bitterness was now mine.
>
> When he died I had been away from home for a little over a year. In that year I had had time to become aware of the meaning of all my father's bitter warnings... I had discovered the weight of white people in the world. I saw that this had been for my

ancestors and now would be for me an awful thing to live with and that the

bitterness which had helped to kill my father could also kill me. (90)

Baldwin's bitterness evolved from his lived experience under racial oppression. While

living and working in New Jersey, he came to understand the bitter messages his father

communicated to him about white people. Through the culmination of daily experiences

of injustice—being denied service at restaurants, bars, bowling alleys, being refused places to

live, getting fired, and so on—racism began to its toll. Baldwin became embittered.

Baldwin was well-aware of the harms of bitterness to his father's and his own

psychological and emotional wellbeing, relationships, and behaviour. He describes, for

example, walking down the street and feeling as though everyone was against him, walking

toward him, and white. Baldwin says: "I wanted to do something to crush these white faces,

which were crushing me" (97). As he walked, he came across a restaurant that he knew

would not serve blacks, angrily entered, and took a seat. When the server approached him,

he remembers hating her "for her white face, and for her great, astounded, white eyes"

(98). And when the server explained that the restaurant "did not serve Negroes," Baldwin

picked up the mug full of water on the table and hurled it at the woman. He was forced to

run from the restaurant, and describes a realization he made:

I could not get over two facts, both equally difficult for the imagination to grasp,

and one was that I could have been murdered. But the other was that I had been

ready to commit murder. I saw nothing very clearly but I did see this: that my life,

my real life, was in danger, and not from anything other people might do but from the hatred I carried in my own heart. (99)

Baldwin understood that, for his own good, he had to overcome the negative emotions with which he lived. He concludes his essay by reflecting on the lessons he had learned about bitterness, about hate, and about what he saw as necessary going forward. Baldwin does not advocate hope as an alternative to negative emotions, but "acceptance, totally without rancor, of life as it is, and men as they are" (115). He also defends the practice of struggling against injustice "free of hatred and despair" (115).

Baldwin is, on my view, probably right that living without bitterness is a better state of affairs than bearing it. But it does not follow from the recognition that bitterness is undesirable that the emotion lacks value, even for the agent who bears it. Part of what makes "Notes of a Native Son" so incredibly insightful is the way in which bitterness taints the narrative, shedding darkness on what it is like to live under racial oppression. Bitterness is, in this narrative, part of Baldwin's moral perception: it focuses his attention on the bleak realities of persistent racism that blacks in America face.

McFall (1991) takes up the challenge of developing an account of bitterness as a moral emotion to make sense of experiences like Baldwin's. She defines bitterness as a refusal to forgive and forget injustices[51] that have disappointed one's important hopes. To be bitter, on her view, is "to recite one's angry litany of loss, long past the time others may care to listen" (146). Bitterness can be either active, manifesting in vocal and vengeful

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[51] By using the language of "injustice" I take McFall to be *orienting* her discussion of bitterness around injustice rather than suggesting that moral bitterness can only be about injustice (and not moral wrongdoing more generally).

forms, or passive, experienced more as deep sorrow. It can also be partial and object-directed, as when it is about losing one's job due to discrimination, or characteristic of a person, as when bitterness results from a pattern of discrimination and ends up encompassing how one perceives important aspects of one's life.

McFall argues that bitterness can be rationally appropriate and morally justified[52] when it responds to avoidable moral harms brought about by human agency. Although I wish to keep the question of what bitterness is separate from the question of what (if anything) makes bitterness rational or justified, McFall's account of how instances of bitterness can be rationally and morally evaluated reveals much about her understanding of the nature of the emotion, and where she goes astray. So these two questions necessarily overlap: on McFall's view, since bitterness is about the disappointment of hopes, the question of what makes bitterness rationally appropriate and morally justified is a question about whether the hope disappointed was a legitimate one.

McFall argues that hopes that are extremely unlikely to be realized (either statistically or specific to the case in question) cannot be legitimate, where "extreme unlikelihood" of a hope's being realized is relative to individuals. To use McFall's example: while the hope to escape may be legitimate for an escape artist in certain challenging situations, my hope to escape may be illegitimate if it is highly unlikely that I will succeed. Her argument is that we cannot rationally hope for things that cannot possibly or that are highly unlikely to obtain.

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[52] She does not clearly separate these two ways of evaluating bitterness (that is, for "rationality" and for "moral justifiability").

McFall adds a further condition: legitimate hopes are ones that have "been raised by one person in another through an explicit statement of intention" (149). Though she does not say much about this second condition, McFall provides an example of sexual betrayal that clarifies how the two conditions work together in practice. She argues that, in the case of sexual betrayal, the moral harm done is the disappointment of the hope for sexual fidelity. So in considering whether an instance of bitterness in response to sexual betrayal is appropriate, we ask whether the hope of fidelity is a legitimate hope in that instance. McFall argues that:

> On the assumption that sexual fidelity is possible... and assuming one's lover is not exceptionally gifted in respect of waywardness, and one's vows or other communications contained an explicit statement of intention to be 'true', the lover who was betrayed had her legitimate, important hope of fidelity disappointed, and so partial, passive bitterness is justified. (150)

There is, it seems, something required on the part of those in whom we invest hopes for our hopes to be "legitimate" (or rational) on McFall's view. I cannot, according to McFall, rationally hope that a romantic partner will remain sexually faithful to me unless my partner has either expressed or implied his or her intention to remain sexually faithful. Importantly, too, McFall's example suggests that what we know about the likelihood of a hope's being realized and, where relevant, the person's intentions to realize the hope matter. If the information available to me suggests that it is likely that my partner will remain sexually faithful, then even if it is in fact unlikely that my partner will remain

sexually faithful (for example, because she has convincingly lied), my hope is legitimate, and thus bitterness based in it is rationally appropriate and morally justified.

It is a striking consequence of McFall's view that it renders the bitterness of members of oppressed groups rationally inappropriate and morally unjustified. If the relevant question in assessing bitterness is whether the hope it is based in is legitimate (and if we accept McFall's account of how to evaluate hope), then the bitterness of individuals who belong to privileged groups will be more justified than the bitterness of members of oppressed groups, since these differential positions come to bear on the opportunities and entitlements that we have. Campbell (1994), calling attention to this concern, asks: "What can a woman of Color in america legitimately hope for?" (52). She quotes Audre Lorde (1983) who points out that the anger of women of color responds to being silenced, unchosen, hated, and having their perceived "lack of humanness" taken for granted. Since these women know that many of their important hopes are not likely to be realized, their bitterness resulting from their losses of hope would be rationally inappropriate and morally unjustified on McFall's account. Her view unintentionally rules out the possibility of morally justified bitterness for exactly those individuals who we tend to think have good reasons for having the emotion, if anyone does.[53]

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[53] It is also not a consequence that all philosophers who cite McFall notice. For example, Kathryn Norlock suggests that, in the case of two South African women's bitterness in response to a white police officer's murder of their husbands, we should *extend* McFall's argument to characterize their bitterness as appropriate since, otherwise, we would be letting the officer "off the moral hook." See Norlock, *Forgiveness from a Feminist Perspective* (Lanham: Lexington Books 2009), 89. But McFall's account cannot be extended to track our moral evaluation of this case because the women's hopes were not likely to be realized; and it is the likelihood of realization that makes a hope legitimate and thus the bitterness based in it rational and justified on McFall's view.

It is important to note that, even if McFall's view is incorrect, her error in understanding has not interfered with feminist philosophers' use of her essay as inspiration for uncovering important insights about the emotion. As Campbell (1994) made clear, the label "bitterness" is used politically to silence and dismiss disadvantaged members of society, functioning to shift the focus away from unjust social and political circumstances toward individuals' supposed pathological emotional states. But I worry that, while current feminist insights point to a political danger of using the term "bitterness," they do not help to understand why bitterness comes about, the experience of moral bitterness, and its effects on the characters of individuals who bear it. Bitterness is, after all, not just a political charge but also a felt emotion;[54] and it is an emotion that has been noted by some members of oppressed groups, like Baldwin, as one consequence of their experiences living under oppressive conditions. Bitterness, in these cases, manifests as what Alison M. Jaggar calls an "outlaw emotion," contributing to the experiences and perceptions of members of oppressed groups who find themselves resisting, emotionally, the unjust conditions in which they exist (Jaggar 1989, 166). Correcting our understanding of bitterness is important for having an accurate understanding of some members of oppressed groups' experiences as well as how it is harmful and/or helpful to their moral perception and agency.

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[54] Meyers (2004) similarly points out that, while charges of what she calls "rancorous emotional attitudes" including hypersensitivity, paranoia, anger, and bitterness are often fabricated for political purposes, sometimes ascriptions of these emotional attitudes are warranted. She states: "Despite an element of hyperbole embedded in this ascriptions, they are not always distortions arising from patriarchal conventions of interpretation" (147). See Diana Tietjens Meyers, "Emotion and Heterodox Moral Perception: An Essay in Moral Social Psychology" in *Being Yourself: Essays on Identity, Action, and Social Life* (Rowman & Littlefield 2004), 137-157.

Fortunately, the problem that the bitterness of members of oppressed groups will get counted as rationally inappropriate and morally unjustified is a consequence for McFall's understanding of the nature and evaluative content of bitterness, not a problem inherent in the emotion. One way to proceed would be to accept McFall's understanding of the nature of bitterness, reject her account of how hope can be evaluated, and provide a new evaluative framework for hope so that the hopes of members of oppressed groups will get categorized as legitimate. The bitterness of members of oppressed groups based in those hopes would then be rationally appropriate and morally justified. The framework I offered in Chapter Three might be of help: I argued that evaluating hope requires attending to a wide range of questions including whether the hope is (epistemically and practically) rational, whether it is fitting, whether it is morally justified, and the overall question of whether the person should continue to hope. But I think that there are deeper problems with McFall's understanding of the nature of bitterness, so that is not the route I take in this chapter. Instead, I want to show that McFall's account does not accurately represent the relevance of hope to bitterness and offer a new understanding of the nature and evaluative content of the emotion. Doing so will help us to see the importance of theorizing the phenomenon of losing hope to moral, social, and political life.

Let us return to the case of sexual betrayal in which McFall argues that the harm done is the disappointment of one's hope for sexual fidelity. Notice, though, that when I enter into an exclusive romantic relationship, I don't merely hope for sexual fidelity; I *expect* it. Similarly, I don't merely hope for justice and equality; I have a moral expectation that others will act in accordance with the demands of justice and equality. That these are

moral expectations, not merely hopes, can be seen in how we respond when others act contrary to sexual fidelity, justice, and equality. If my partner in an exclusive romantic relationship cheats, I may become resentful; my resentment expresses my perception that I have been wronged, not just that my partner has disappointed my hope that he or she would be sexually faithful.

This alternative description better explains how bitterness is connected to anger. Campbell points out that an expression of bitterness was at one time "intended anger," where the recounting of injury and the failure of others to listen combine to form the emotion. Walker (2006) argues that, "without at least the acknowledgement by others of serious wrong and the need for repair, or without a clear demonstration of concern for suffering and loss of victims, victims and the families of victims fall prey to bitterness and despair" (108). Anger is thus often prior to (but also part of) bitterness; we become angry about a perceived moral wrong or the existence of injustice, and when it is not met with an appropriate response, bitterness ensues.[55]

Walker also points out that, in bitterness, "one insists on what is right but with a sense of futility and alienation" (108). 'Futility' in this sentence is important. Bitterness in the psychological literature has been described as a mixture of anger and hopelessness. For example, Hansjörg Znoj (2011) explains that, "bitterness or embitterment can be seen as the product of a personal story of perceived injustice. The emotional quality is characterized by resignation (hopelessness) and anger" (10). Beate Schrank and Astrid

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[55] I tend to think of the classic angry response as something like, "I can't *believe* she would do that! As if she thinks she can treat me that way!", whereas the bitter response is something like "Of course she behaved horribly. What else did you think might happen? She has shown her true colours..."

Grant Hay (2011) similarly point out that the psychological impact of the perceived injustice involves dimensions of hopelessness about goals, relationships, one's sense of control, and expectations about the future. This is unsurprising. If bitterness responds to a perceived moral wrong in which those who we think have wronged others and us fail to make amends, we may lose hope that they will ever acknowledge and address the perceived wrong and meet our moral expectations in the future.[56]

The connection between moral expectation and hope is complex. Legitimate moral expectations are fixed by moral reasons in the sense that, even when it is extremely unlikely that they will be met, moral expectations continue to make demands on moral agents. For example, individuals who experience persistent injustice may lose hope that the injustice will ever end, while the legitimacy of their moral expectation for justice and the further moral expectation that the injustice will be addressed are unaffected by the likelihood of those expectations being met.[57] In bitterness, we begin to lose hope that others will act in accordance with the moral expectations we continue to endorse.

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[56] This is seen in cases of bitterness that do not respond to perceived injustices brought about by human agency as well. I may become angry toward God or the universe at large when I am diagnosed with a terminal illness because I perceive that others get to live long and happy lives while I suffer as unfair. I may lose hope that a miracle will remove the illness or that doctors will find a cure in my lifetime, and this may result in bitterness about my situation.

[57] Babbitt (1997) calls attention to the fact that the bitterness of members of oppressed groups is often responding to an absence of something to which they are morally entitled. She argues that the hopes of members of oppressed groups should be considered 'rational' in the sense that they aim at ends that are morally appropriate (for example, self-respect, dignity, and autonomy) even though they were not likely to be realized. See Babbitt, "Personal Integrity, Politics, and Moral Imagination" in *A Question of Values: New Canadian Perspectives in Ethics and Political Philosophy* edited by Samantha Brennan, Tracy Issacs, and Michael Milde (Amsterdam: Rodopi Press, 1997), 124. I follow Campbell in de-centering questions about rationality in evaluating moral emotions consistently with arguments made about hope and anger in previous chapters. See below.

The present analysis suggests that feminist philosophers' current understanding of bitterness falls short in significant ways. Bitterness is not primarily about the disappointment of important hopes, but violations of moral expectations. It is typically a residual emotion we experience when a perceived wrong has not been put to rest through reconciliation or repair. Bitterness involves anger, but it is, to varying degrees, *hopeless* anger. In bitterness, we remain committed to the moral expectations others have violated, and at the same time, begin to lose hope that they will attend to the harms about which we're angry and abide by our moral expectations in the future.

Consequently, to call individuals bitter as moral condemnation when the emotion is responding to perceptions of moral wrongdoing is to silence individuals who may be expressing legitimate moral expectations. This is consistent with Campbell's (1994) insight that calling someone bitter shifts attention away from interpreters' failures to listen and act toward the individual's emotional states such that the charge of bitterness itself becomes a reason or excuse for not listening. She argues that we are "better off in blocking the criticism than internalizing this description of our attitude and trying to defend our bitterness" for this reason (52). But the question of whether one has political reasons for resisting being called "bitter" is separate from the question of whether one's bitterness is a justified emotional response to one's circumstances. Moreover, when one comes to recognize that one bears the emotion, being able to identify that it is justified and resist the charge of "craziness" that accompanies the charge of bitterness may even be the most empowering possibility available in non-ideal circumstances.

There is also an increasing political danger of the expression of bitterness in social and political contexts. One only needs to pay a visit to men's rights activism websites, browse the #WhiteLivesMatter twitter hashtag, or read the comments sections of news articles to see that members of privileged groups who feel threatened by social change bear their own bitterness. So although members of oppressed groups may be more likely to be called bitter as a form of silencing and emotional dismissal, they are not the only ones who experience and express the emotion. To understand bitterness in fraught social and political contexts, we need an evaluative framework for understanding people's reasons for becoming embittered, and whether their bitterness is justified.[58]

3. Evaluating Bitterness

I'll begin with Campbell's (1994) concerns about evaluating bitterness. She states:

My concern, phrased in a general way, is that calculating rationality may put responsibility on the individual for her attitudes or actions without offering ways of assessing that individual's situation against the political options of others. If, as I believe to be the case, assessments of rationality are connected most deeply to questions of intelligible agency, what is not within my power to affect may not provide a rational ground for my actions or responses. (51)

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[58] There are complexities that I do not explore, such as the question of who has the appropriate standing to evaluate others' emotions. This question reminds us that individuals do not have epistemic access to all of the relevant experiences, perspectives, and interests that contribute to others' emotional responses, especially when others' experiences, perspectives, etc. are fundamentally different from their own. This is, I think, an important question; but is one that can only be asked in considering concrete cases in which we know who those moral agents are.

This passage suggests two concerns: that evaluating bitterness for rational appropriateness involves focusing on the rationality of the person accused of bitterness while failing to attend to the importance of the person's political situation in comparison to others, and that talk of rationality may not make sense in this context because bitterness seems unconnected to what the person is capable of doing and affecting.

Sylvia Burrow (2005), quoting this passage, responds to Campbell's second concern. She argues that we can assess the emotions by noticing that "rationality" in this context is a function of the appropriateness of a response to some situation. Burrow thus disagrees with Campbell that questions about rationality are restricted to questions about intelligible agency, and points out that it is the very nature of some emotions that they respond to events over which individuals do not have control. But as I argued in Chapters Three and Four, there are many evaluative questions we can ask about the emotions: not just whether an emotion is rational or irrational, but whether it is fitting, whether it is morally justified, and the all things considered question of whether a person should bear the emotion (and in the way that they do). In evaluating emotions when they are connected to our moral judgments, the most important question is one of moral justification: whether there are good moral reasons for the emotional response.

But Burrow also notes her hesitation with doing any kind of evaluative work when it comes to the emotion of bitterness. She states:

> If we are in the company of persons we consider capable of giving uptake to our emotions, it would be legitimate to expect them to do so. We might wish to add a

moral force to this expectation as well, and claim that others should give uptake to

legitimate instances of bitterness. But I hesitate to take this approach, because we

cannot always expect others to care about our losses of hope or, in fact, any other

feature of our lives. (30)

Burrow's hesitation reflects her agreement with McFall that bitterness is about the

disappointment of our important hopes: if we can't expect others to care about our "losses

of hope," then there may not be grounds for demanding the emotional uptake that

bitterness seeks. But I have argued that bitterness responds primarily to perceived

violations of moral expectations, not disappointed hopes. If this is right, then when there is

in fact a moral wrong that has not been adequately addressed (not just a perceived one),

the justification for the emotion's demand for uptake is already there: moral failure calls

for apologies, reconciliation, and repair, where the appropriate response depends on the

context in question. There are moral grounds for the uptake that bitterness seeks.

In response to Campbell's first concern, I suggest that evaluating bitterness can also

help to call attention to the person's political situation rather than dismiss or distract from

it. When bitterness responds to a perceived injustice that remains insufficiently addressed,

then bitterness *calls attention to the perceived injustice*. It expresses that the injustice, if there is

one, has not received a sufficient reparative response. So considering the question of

whether some instance of bitterness is morally justified consists almost exclusively in asking

whether there is some injustice that requires attention and action. It is a way of engaging

with the moral reasons behind the person's emotional experience, reasons that, in social

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and political contexts, express how she construes her political circumstances against those of others.

It does seem, then, that bitterness can be evaluated as a morally justified or unjustified response to perceived wrongs and that doing this evaluative work can call attention to rather than ignore or dismiss the existence of unjust social and political conditions. But we have seen that McFall's account of how we should evaluate instances of bitterness problematically depends upon assessing the legitimacy of individuals' hopes. So we need an alternative evaluative framework.

I suggest that bitterness can be evaluated similarly to anger. As I argued in Chapter Four, however practically rational anger might be for agents to bear, if the anger is not morally justified, it ought to be given up. Anger is morally justified (and fitting) when a there really is a moral wrong to which it is responding. Since bitterness is a form of anger, the same is true: there must actually be a moral wrong for the emotion to be morally justified. I might be resentful about being punished for a serious crime and become embittered about my sentencing. But if I committed the crime and I have no good reason to think that the decided punishment was unfair, then my resentment and resultant bitterness about the sentencing and others' failures to affirm that I was treated unjustly

would be morally unjustified (and unfitting).[59] Resentment and bitterness are unjustified because no moral wrong was done.[60]

To take another example, white men might experience resentment when they hear the concept of "white male privilege" because they perceive it as an unjust attack on their identities, and they may become embittered when others fail to affirm that the use of the term constitutes an injustice done to them, and when progress toward gender and racial equality continues. But since these individuals' bitterness is responding to a discourse that is advancing justified moral and political aims—that is, the elimination of injustice—their bitterness is morally unjustified. It is not responding to a legitimate moral wrong.

Importantly, by evaluating the bitterness of members of privileged groups, such as white men's bitterness in response to the discourse of white male privilege, another way in which bitterness is used politically becomes apparent. Sometimes, members of privileged groups express bitterness to articulate moral progress as unacknowledged injustices done to them, which in turn, helps to keep members of oppressed groups in their place. Bitter expressions such as "that policy is sexist against men" and "blaming white people for that is racist" are ways in which the moral language used by members of privileged groups works to maintain their privilege at the expense of others. Their bitterness is, in at least one sense, practically rational: it serves to protect individuals' privileged positions. But the most

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[59] Recall that in the case of moral anger, evaluations of moral justification and fittingness converge.

[60] Cases of bitterness that are not clearly brought about by moral agency can be evaluated similarly. For example, a person's bitterness about being diagnosed with a terminal illness may be considered justified in terms of fittingness because the bitterness responds to what really is a (cosmically) unfair situation. On the other hand, a person's bitterness about losing a sport's game when all players were abiding by the rules of the game is not fitting, since a necessary effect of one team's winning is that the other loses; and this does not constitute an injustice or unfairness of any kind.

important question in evaluating bitterness is a moral one: that is, whether the bitterness is responding to a legitimate injustice that has not been adequately addressed. It is clear that white men's bitterness in response to discourse about sexism and racism is morally unjustified despite its being instrumental to their aims.[61]

But what makes bitterness, rather than another form of anger such as resentment, a fitting response? For bitterness to be fitting, there must be good reasons for the agent to have lost hope that the harms will be adequately addressed. In bitterness, we perceive an event or situation not only as wrong or unjust, but also as without much hope for repair. Bitterness, then, is not a fitting response when sufficient efforts toward repair have been made, or when there are good reasons for the agent to hope that repair will come. When wrongdoers apologize and display remorse, and when the moral community responds with acknowledgement and efforts toward repair, the moral expectation that moral harms will be acknowledged and addressed has been met; there is, as a result, good reason to regain hope that the same violation will not be repeated. In these cases, there may be no moral work left to do but for the victim, if she chooses, to forgive. What constitutes a sufficient response (and who needs to give it) is necessarily contextual, and depends upon the nature of the wrong, who is responsible, the harm caused to individuals and groups, the social and cultural context in which the injustice occurred, among other things. But what seems

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[61] There are further important questions about what hearers ought, if anything, to do about morally unjustified expressions of bitterness and who is best suited to respond.

important for many agents[62] in moving from bitterness (or resentment) to forgiveness is that the past event or present situation is acknowledged as moral wrongdoing and that steps are taken toward repair.[63]

But bitterness, even morally justified, perfectly fitting bitterness, can become infectious and affect the ways in which individuals perceive objects, people, and events such that they come to see the negative in everything. In a political context, women's bitterness about gender oppression may cause them to distrust men whom they have good reasons to believe are trustworthy allies. I think that bitterness in this sort of case is justified but misdirected; as I argued in Chapter Four, anger is sometimes itself morally justified even when it is expressed at the wrong things. This does not mean that the individual who is bitter should embrace and sustain the emotion despite its harmful effects. Emotions are also sometimes understandable and justifiable responses to one's

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[62] Some agents might even forgive in the absence of efforts toward repair. Cheshire Calhoun explores this possibility in her "Changing One's Heart" in *Ethics* 103, 1 (1992): 76-96. She defends what she calls "aspirational forgiveness," that is, forgiveness of culpable wrongdoing for which there remain moral reasons for resentment. In aspirational forgiveness, we do not excuse or justify the wrongdoer's behaviour, but strive to make biographical sense of why the wrongdoer (as a morally flawed human being, like all of us) behaved immorally. We do not let go of the judgment that the wrongdoer is culpable, in aspirational forgiveness, but we do stop resentfully demanding emotional uptake and repair. So bitterness is not the only emotional response to a loss of hope for repair. But it is, nevertheless, a real (morally justified) response that deserves moral attention.
[63] What constitutes an adequate response to justified bitterness that is not brought about by human agency will be different. If I am bitter about being diagnosed with a terminal illness, other human agents are not at fault for this harm and cannot be expected to apologize and display remorse for its occurrence. But my family members and close friends can be expected to listen sympathetically and acknowledge that my situation really *is* unfair. Their doing so will not instill my hope that the illness will be lifted, but it will validate my trust in them as people who respect me as someone undeserving of this fate, and as people who care about my wellbeing.

circumstances even if they are undesirable to bear, and even if (for practical reasons) one should work to overcome the emotion.

The possibility of evaluating instances of bitterness does, however, become complicated with the passing of time. Just like anger sometimes evolves into bitterness, so too can bitterness evolve. As we live on, our emotional lives are affected by new experiences that may enhance, distort, or diminish how we think and feel about moral wrongs done to us. For example, the passing of time in conjunction with new morally good experiences such as improved social and political conditions might make possible the rebuilding of hope even when forgiveness for the original injustice might not be possible. If the same wrong is not done to me again, and if I see improvements in my moral community in how it responds to cases like mine, I might have good reasons to be hopeful that the wrong will not be repeated.

Martin Luther King, Jr., (2001), in describing his encounters with some white folks at Morehouse College who were committed to racial justice, describes the diminishing of his resentment that accompanied meeting white people whom he learned he could count on to stand by his moral and political aims. King explains:

> The wholesome relations we had at the Intercollegiate Council convinced me that we had many white persons as allies, particularly among the younger generation. I had been ready to resent the whole white race, but as I got to see more white people, my resentment was softened, and a spirit of cooperation took its place. (14)

The same diminishing can happen with bitterness. Even when injustice persists and sufficient efforts toward repair have not been taken, positive encounters with others who endorse and abide by our moral expectations can reasonably instill our hope that moral and political change will come. On the other hand, the passing of time in conjunction with new, morally bad experiences such as worse social and political conditions may exacerbate bitterness. If similar injustices are repeated or systemic injustice continues, I may lose even more hope that perpetrators, those complicit in injustice, and my moral community will ever affirm my claims to moral entitlement. My exacerbated, morally justified bitterness may be fitting as I acquire more reasons to be bitter even if the emotion's severity would not have been fitting before.

These possibilities show that it is possible to do some evaluative work in understanding bitterness as it changes, distorts, diminishes or exacerbates over time; but they also show just how messy the emotions can be and become. The natural diminishing of bitterness further complicates our evaluations. Sometimes, bitterness does not diminish as an understandable response to new experiences, but because time has distanced us so far from the event that it no longer bears as much meaning in our lives. The idea that "time heals all wounds" sometimes resonates with our experiences; how we perceive, interpret, and attach meaning to events may change as we live on.[64] I see the changing nature of our emotional experiences and expressions as an inevitable challenge for evaluating bitterness,

[64] Walker (2006), drawing upon Jean Améry's *At the Mind's Limits: Contemplations By a Survivor on Auschwitz and Its Realities*, discusses this point as well. She states: "Time… might 'heal' wounds of wrongdoing for societies as a whole and for a new generation by allowing the vividness of horrors to wane. Even wronged individuals who have not been shattered beyond healing may sometimes find it possible to 'let it go.' Time… can cause a shared social concern that wrong must be addressed to fade." See Walker, *Moral Repair: Reconstructing Relations after Wrongdoing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 141.

but it is a challenge that is shared with all of the emotions insofar as they depend upon our continued interactions with the world.

4. The Value of Moral Bitterness: Moral, Epistemic, Political

In this section, I address a further and pressing challenge for a defense of moral bitterness. First, and as acknowledged above, even if people are morally justified in their bitterness, we often urge them to overcome the emotion because it is psychologically and emotionally painful to bear (that is, for their own wellbeing and for the moral reason of self-respect). Second, we worry that bitterness will lead to epistemic irrationality, such as when bitterness about a particular person's wrongful action leads one to make negative inferences about people more generally when such inferences are unwarranted. Third, we tend to think that adopting other attitudes and traits would be more effective in one's political struggles. These apparent moral, epistemic, and political problems with bitterness can be taken together as an objection that bitterness is not a valuable emotion even if it is a morally justified response. While not denying these risks, I want to argue that morally justified bitterness is valuable; and, like other forms of anger, it is valuable for moral, epistemic, and political reasons. These three ways in which bitterness is valuable cannot be

easily pulled apart from one another, but work together in earning bitterness an important

(even if regrettable and undesirable) role in our lives.[65]

Bitterness can, I think, be best understood as a kind of "moral reminder" that

marks a past event or present situation as a context in which moral wrongdoing occurred,

or is continuing. As McFall (1991) suggests, bitterness is valuable because it "bears witness"

to important moral truths (155). For example, individuals not directly or personally

connected to injustices more easily forget that they have occurred. Or, because of their

privileged social locations, they are unable to see the injustice as injustice, and dismiss it. In

bitterness, individuals remind other people and the moral community at large of violations

that stand in its past and present as unfinished moral business, violations that continue to

require attention and action. The emotion refuses to allow injustice to be forgotten and

communicates that repairing or constructing good moral and political relations will not

take place until harms are adequately addressed.

Here, I think, is where Campbell's insights as to how the charge of bitterness is

used politically to silence and dismiss connect with her more recent work on memory. She

anticipates this connection in her "Being Dismissed" in claiming that, "the accusation of

bitterness not only refuses to grant authority to judgements of wrongdoing but also refuses

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[65] I am not interested here in the all things considered question of whether a person should
be embittered. An overall normative judgment about whether an agent should (all things
considered) have any emotion ought, on my view, only be answered in considering
concrete cases in which we know who the moral agents involved, and what the particular
circumstances in which they find themselves, are. Moreover, objections to bitterness do not
often target an overall normative judgment that some person *should be embittered*; it is rare
that we hear anyone say this. The objection to bitterness is most often voiced as an
objection to the notion that bitterness has any value at all; that's why "you're so bitter"
sounds like, and is meant to be, a normative and not merely descriptive claim about the
person's emotional state. *That* objection is the view my arguments target.

to grant authority to what counts for others as significant memory" (Campbell 1994, 53). In a chapter entitled "Remembering for the Future" from her 2014 book *Our Faithfulness to the Past*, Campbell explains that one of the aims of the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission is for non-indigenous Canadians to come to remember the past in ways that stop suppressing and ignoring the history and legacy of the Residential Schools (Campbell 2014, 136). She points out that non-indigenous Canadians have "collectively refused" to hear the memory of indigenous Canadians. One way to refuse to listen is to call indigenous Canadians bitter as moral condemnation, demanding that they move on from the past. As Campbell notes, years before, in "Being Dismissed": "The accusation of bitterness may further undermine the struggle for group memory by failing again to provide the uptake that leaves the recounting of incidents established as public record" (Campbell 1994, 53). In the Canadian context, Campbell suggests that renewing their relationships with indigenous Canadians requires that settlers keep the history and legacy of the Residential Schools alive in their memories. Through memory activities such as honouring, witnessing, testifying to the past and offering apologies, settler Canadians can begin to reconstruct their connections to the past and reshape their present relationships for the future.

In political contexts, remembering is crucial to responding to the morally justified bitterness of members of historically disadvantaged groups. The emotion does not call upon privileged members of society to undo the past, but to listen to the accounts of those affected by historical and ongoing injustices and to act in ways that will not repeat the injustices in the future.[66] If, for example, non-indigenous Canadians respond to the anger

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[66] As Walker (2006) argues, "repair is in the history we make and make sure is told," and this is an intergenerational process (144).

and bitterness of indigenous Canadians not with silencing and dismissal, but with listening and openness to re-remembering their collective history from a perspective that acknowledges the fact of injustice, and if wrongdoers commit to abiding by shared moral expectations from now on, forgiveness might become possible. Understanding bitterness as a moral reminder makes sense of the fact that it is the responsibility of others to listen and to act: perpetrators, the moral community, and institutions that continue to support colonial practices and policies. This is important moral and political work even if bitterness is ill equipped in motivating indigenous Canadians to engage in active protest against colonialism and other forms of oppression.

Another insightful illustration of bitterness as a moral reminder can be found in Ta-Nehisi Coates' (2015) groundbreaking book *Between the World and Me*. Coates, in writing to his son, urges him to remember the dark realities of slavery: that black people were "born into chains" for over 250 years, and that many blacks never experienced life as free people. Coates states:

> You must struggle to truly remember this past in all its nuance, error, and humanity. You must resist the common urge toward the comforting narrative of divine law, toward fairy tales that imply some irreplaceable justice. The enslaved were not bricks in your road, and their lives were not chapters in your redemptive history... Enslavement was not destined to end, and it is wrong to claim our present circumstance—no matter how improved—as the redemption for the lives of people who never asked for the posthumous, untouchable glory of dying for their children... (71)

I read Coates as urging his son to resist interpreting history in a hopeful way, of opting for hope for its benefits to one's wellbeing ("comfort") at the expense of truth. Elsewhere, Coates describes hope as "an overrated force in human history" (*The Atlantic* 2015). And, importantly, I also read Coates's *Between the World and Me* as deeply embittered; indeed, he is taking inspiration from James Baldwin to shed light on the dark realities that Blacks in America face. Coates's bitter narrative is an important moral reminder of what racial injustice looked like in the past, and what it looks like today.

But while Coates's book has been met with widespread praise, it has also been met with criticism. In an article entitled "The Toxic World-View of Ta-Nehisi Coates," Rich Lowry (2015) questions the extent to which Coates's descriptions of race relations map on to the truth. In addition to the language of "toxic," Lowry describes Coates's narrative as "profoundly silly at times"; and he suggests that Coates reads racism into some of the examples he provides (Lowry 2015). For example, he argues that Coates's narrative of a white woman's pushing his child—an event that Coates perceived as racist, which led to his anger and then conflict with the woman—is an instance where Coates misinterpreted the event as racist, and suggests that it is plausible that the white woman was simply a "jerk" and that race had nothing to do with the incident. Lowry (2015) reminds us that "white people are rude to other white people all the time, especially in New York City." Coates, according to Lowry, erases distinctions and rejects complexities in his writing, leading to an inaccurate view of race and racism in America.

Lowry's claims, and his use of the language of toxicity, can be interpreted as objections to the notion that bitterness can be epistemically valuable. Instead of enabling

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the people who bear it to grasp the truth, bitterness about racism infects the ways in which people see others, causing them to "read into" white people's actions as racist when such assumptions are mistaken. But it is important to note, here, that Lowry is white and that he is not best positioned to interpret what is really going on in interactions involving race. Scholars of race and feminist theory have shown persuasively that members of privileged groups occupy positions of epistemic disadvantage from which they are unable to see or refuse to recognize the existence of oppression in many contexts.

Coates even anticipates the kind of critique that Lowry makes in *Between the World and Me*. He states: "Part of what I know is that there is the burden of living among Dreamers, and there is the extra burden of your country telling you that the Dream is just, noble, and real, and you are crazy for seeing the corruption and smelling the sulfur" (106). The claim that Coates's worldview is "toxic" sounds much like the critique of "craziness" that often accompanies the charge of bitterness, and is yet another example of the ways in which language can be used politically (toxic, crazy, bitter) to silence and dismiss oppressed individuals' experiences and perceptions.

But even if one accepts the epistemic value of bitterness, and the epistemic value of living without hope in the face of bad odds more generally, one might worry that living with bitterness is counterproductive because it leads to despair. Rich Lowry criticizes Coates's book as "nihilistic because there is no positive program to leaven the despair and the call for perpetual struggle" (*Politico* 2015). I do not read Coates as living in despair—that

is, in the complete absence of hope[67]—but he does call for perpetual struggle. Struggle is necessary because injustice persists, even if one is without hope that the necessity of struggle will ever end. I think that Coates can be read as inspiring not nihilism, despair, or defeat, but—as Baldwin advocated—perpetual struggle despite the importance of accepting that injustice is, in Baldwin's terms, "commonplace." It is a kind of struggle in the absence of hope that one's efforts will amount to radical change.

5. Loss of Hope and Agency

But what does it look like for a moral agent to continue on in her moral and political struggles in the absence of hope that her efforts will be (fully) successful? The loss of hope that perpetrators of moral harms and persistent injustice will ever acknowledge and address our moral claims may involve, at the same time, a loss of hope that one's own agency will make a difference to those struggles. This apparent deficiency is particularly worrisome for cases of social and political injustice that are alive and well today. If, for example, individuals who belong to groups that are subjected to racism have become embittered, they may no longer believe that their own agency in fighting racism will be

[67] Evidence that Coates may not have lost all hope entirely can be found elsewhere. For example, Coates (2015) says of white supremacy: "The point is not that White supremacy won't ever diminish, nor that it won't ever change form. The point is that it will always be with us in some form, and the best one can reasonably hope for is that it will shrink in impact." See Ta-Nehisi Coates (2015), "Hope and the Historian" in *The Atlantic* Dec. 10 http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/12/hope-and-the-historian/419961/ Coates may be deeply pessimistic and bitter, but his hope for shrinking injustice (rather than its elimination) shows that he is not living in complete despair. Coates can be read as "hoping well" as McGeer understands the term: he sees that certain hopes related to racial justice are far out of reach, and has shifted his hopes so that their objects are ones for which he can reasonably hope.

effective. There seems to be no point in continuing to demand that perpetrators of and those complicit in oppression acknowledge their attitudes and actions as wrong and change their ways when they have shown, time and time again, that they will not do so. Without hope, one might worry, moral motivation is lost.

I want to argue that bitterness is consistent with moral motivation and positive action. Tessman (2009) offers insights into the possibility through her work on pessimism, which she understands similarly to how I understand bitterness as involving a loss of hope. Tessman argues that individuals living under oppressive conditions who have become pessimistic about their circumstances can still find ways to go on politically. The reason is that some pessimists sustain other virtues that enable them to actively resist oppression even when they know that their moral and political aims will likely not be achieved. Pessimists' self-respect, integrity, and their "sense of a 'claim' on the sort of flourishing that is unattainable under conditions of oppression" guard against the concern that they will give up on their morally praiseworthy ends (Tessman 2009, 14-5). Tessman draws upon Derrick Bell's testimony of his interaction with Biona MacDonald, a black civil rights activist, to illustrate what struggling against oppression in the absence of hope looks like. Bell explains:

> I realized that Mrs. MacDonald didn't say she risked everything because she hoped or expected to win out over the whites who, as she well knew, held all the economic and political power, and the guns as well. Rather, she recognized that—powerless as she was—she had and intended to use courage and determination as a weapon to, in her words, "harass white folks". (Bell 1992, xi-xii)

This example suggests that pessimism is consistent with other moral values and traits that motivate individuals to act against injustice even in the absence of hope that the injustice will end. Tessman and Bell nicely attend to the complexity of moral characters and how questions about motivation cannot be answered without considering the various beliefs, traits, values, and emotions of individuals that motivate or deter them from action only when taken together. Similarly, by focusing solely on the risk that bitterness can lead to despair and inaction, it is easy to miss seeing the ways in which bitterness can be deeply connected to our moral convictions and other moral values and traits. If I *believe* that I, someone else, or certain social groups have been wronged, if I have the *courage* to stand up for what I think is right, and if I am *determined* to do so even in the face of dismissal, resistance, and penalties, I may be motivated to continue in my struggles against oppression even when I have lost hope that my efforts will be successful.

In fact, Bell himself exemplifies the moral agent who was motivated to continue on in his struggles against racial injustice with bitterness and in the absence of hope that his efforts would be successful.[68] Bell made a number of important contributions to legal theory and critical race theory throughout his scholarly career; but the one I want to focus on is his "racial realism" thesis, defended in his 1992 *Faces at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism* (from which the quote about Biona MacDonald above is a part), and a

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[68] Bell (1992) identifies himself as embittered in a number of places throughout his writings. In his description of a fictional encounter with a bitter and pessimistic Black taxi driver, Bell says: "Your bitterness mirrors my own when I think about all the school systems I helped desegregate back in the 1960s, sure that I was guaranteeing thousands of black children a quality, desegregated education. It took a long time to recognize that the school officials—when they finally complied with desegregation court orders—were creating separate educational programs for black children within schools that were integrated in name only..." (18-19). Bell also describes himself as bitter in the second sentence of "White Superiority in America: Its Legacy, Its Economic Costs" (Delgado and Stegancic 2005, 27).

1992 article entitled "Racial Realism" in the *Connecticut Law Review*. In *Faces at the Bottom of the Well*, Bell states the thesis in the following way:

> I want to set forth this proposition, which will be easier to reject than refute: Black people will never gain full equality in this country. Even those herculean efforts we hail as successful will produce no more than temporary "peaks of progress," short-lived victories that slide into irrelevance as racial patterns adapt in ways that maintain white dominance. This is a hard-to-accept fact that all history verifies. We must acknowledge it, not as a sign of submission, but as an act of ultimate defiance. (12, emphasis in the original)

The very same quotation appears in the 1992 "Racial Realism" article, but the last sentence is different. It reads:

> We must acknowledge it [the permanence of racism] and move on to adopt policies based in what I call: 'Racial Realism.' This mind-set or philosophy requires us to acknowledge the permanence of our subordinate status. That acknowledgement enables us to avoid despair, and frees us to imagine and implement racial strategies that can bring fulfillment and even triumph. (373-374)

I come back to the connection Bell makes between avoiding despair, fulfillment, and triumph in Chapter Six. But what is important for the purpose of this chapter is that, although Bell is clearly without hope for racial justice in America, he nevertheless believes in the necessity of struggle and the importance of people of colour's stubborn resistance of

their own oppression. The value of lacking hope in this context arises from the epistemic problems with having hope identified in Chapter Three: namely, that certain hopes—such as the hope that one is living in a "post-racial society"—distract from the kinds of actions and policies that are necessary for progress to occur.

Moreover, Bell believed in the necessity of struggle not only without hope that his efforts would be successful, but also with the fear that such efforts would make things worse. As Bell says in "Racial Realism":

> While implementing Racial Realism we must simultaneously acknowledge that our actions are not likely to lead to transcendent change and, despite our best efforts, may be of more help to the system we despise than to the victims of that system we are trying to help.[69] (378)

Bell's racial realism thesis combined with how he lived his everyday life demonstrates what it looks like to be motivated in one's moral and political struggles in the absence of hope that one's efforts will be successful. Even with his lack of hope and pessimism, Bell was a political activist who, throughout his lifetime, demonstrated an active commitment to racial justice despite believing that racial injustice is permanent. For example, Bell resigned from his position as Dean of Oregon Law in protest of the school's

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[69] For example, Bell acknowledged after the fact that his protest against Harvard Law School's decision to not hire a woman of colour may have ultimately been harmful. Bell had not consulted with the candidate in advance, and the "publicity and backlash" that ensued because of his protest may have cost her the position (see George Taylor, "Racism as Original Sin: Derrick Bell and Reinhold Niebuhr's Theology" in *The Derrick Bell Reader*, ed. Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic 2005), 442.

decision to not hire an Asian American female professor[70] (Delgado and Stegancic 2005, 10). As a visiting professor at Stanford Law School, Bell encouraged students to protest the racist actions and decisions of Stanford law faculty[71], actions and decisions for which the dean (Dean Ely) eventually apologized but did so by urging Bell to forget (12). Bell responded not by letting the instance of racism slide, but by publishing a lengthy column calling out Stanford's racism in "The Price and Pain of Racial Remedies" in the *Stanford Lawyer* and mailing letters detailing what had happened to deans in law schools across the nation. He did so in an attempt to urge them to discuss the matter at faculty meetings so as to avoid similar cases in the future (12). In another case, during his time at Harvard, Bell—persuaded by women students of colour's arguments that black men and white women could not understand women of colour's unique experiences in the law profession—assisted a group of students in urging Harvard Law to hire its first woman professor of colour. When Harvard failed to hire a black woman from a top school in 1989-1990, Bell took an unpaid leave of absence in protest and refused to return "until Harvard Law School hired its first woman of color" (13).

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[70] The school had ranked the Asian American woman as third in over 100 candidates for a teaching position, but when the top two candidates declined, the search committee re-opened the search instead of hiring the Asian American woman (10).
[71] Bell was teaching constitutional law with an emphasis on the ways in which the "Framers" of the Constitution "were men of wealth, with investments in land, slaves, manufacturing, and shipping" and that the document was thus constructed to serve their interests (11). Students complained to faculty that Bell was teaching them constitutional law "in a strange and unconventional way" (11); and when two other faculty allowed Bell's students to sit in on their classes instead, attendance in Bell's class diminished. Faculty also invited Bell to speak on race as part of a lecture series with the aim of remedying Bell's perceived weaknesses as a professor—without consulting Bell. Black students argued that the series was racist and protested in solidarity with Bell.

Bell's acceptance of the permanence of racism coupled with his continued struggles against racial injustice demonstrate that bitterness, and a loss of hope more generally, is compatible with moral motivation and positive political action. But we might wonder, further, whether bitterness and a loss of hope for racial justice (or other forms of injustice) is compatible with hope. I think that, in many contexts, hope is consistent with bitterness and a loss of hope for outcomes that are far out of our reach. The emotion is not global in the way that a bitter disposition would be, a disposition that would taint individuals' perceptions of all people and events in the world. It is consistent with finding and cultivating new hopes, such as the hope that oneself alongside other members of oppressed groups and those standing in solidarity will make short-lived progress or, at least, prevent injustice from getting worse.

6. Concluding Thoughts

I have argued that bitterness is a kind of unresolved anger that ruminates about a moral wrong without much hope for acknowledgement and repair. Correcting our understanding of bitterness as a moral emotion invites an important shift in our evaluative language: it is not individuals' responsibility to defend the rationality of their disappointed hopes to show that their bitterness is justified. Bitterness can be *morally* justified, particularly when there are good moral reasons for the emotional response. And though it may ultimately be better for moral agents who bear bitterness to challenge and overcome it for their wellbeing and relationships, focusing on the harmfulness of the emotion and individuals' personal responsibilities who bear it can distract from the individual and

collective responsibilities of others. When bitterness is caused by unresolved social and political injustices, the emotion serves as a moral reminder that there is still moral and often political work left to do in the difficult process of moral repair.

But while bitterness is valuable in this way, the emotion can still have detrimental effects on agency: becoming embittered and losing hope can affect whether one is motivated to act in pursuit of one's moral and political goals. Sometimes, when people lose hope that their anger will receive uptake and that injustices will be addressed, they resign to the unjust conditions in which they live. This is, indeed, a risk of becoming embittered and losing hope; but it is not a necessary consequence. I have shown that, beyond hope, other traits and attitudes such as integrity, courage, and determination can provide powerful sources of motivation that enable individuals to act against injustice in the absence of hope that their efforts will be successful. And bitterness, in orienting our attention toward those injustices and toward the people, groups, and institutions in whom there are good reasons to have lost hope, can help to direct individual and collective efforts in pursuing the most effective strategies in struggle.

Chapter Six: Hope, Faith, and Solidarity

1. Introduction

The previous chapter charted the value of bitterness, and losing hope more generally, to moral and political struggles. It revealed that losing hope—particularly, the hope we invest in individuals and institutions in positions of power—can inspire creative ways of advancing moral and political ends. We can see this creative thinking in social movements of various kinds: The Women's Liberation Movement, the Civil Rights Movement, Idle No More, Occupy Wall Street, Black Lives Matter, and many other movements that have arisen in response to various forms of injustice and oppression. Marches, flash mobs, boycotts, and highway blockings are just a few examples of collective actions undertaken by people who are committed to building a more just world.

These actions are, in some ways, evidence that certain hopes have been lost: if there was hope that individuals and institutions would fulfill their moral responsibilities in addressing past injustices and improving social, political, and economic conditions, then there would be no need for social movements bringing people together in resistance and struggle. But as we have seen, the hopes we invest in others to do their part to ensure that justice is done are not easily sustained. We (justifiably) lose hope in politicians, governments, the criminal justice system, the health care system, corporations, and fellow citizens when our moral expectations are repeatedly violated, and when injustice and oppression continue. One response is to join in solidarity with others and resist.

In the previous chapter, we began to see what resistance without hope might look like. Derrick Bell, for instance, believed that racism is permanent and thus he had no hope

for racial equality—yet Bell spent his life and career struggling against racism. Bell teaches us that hope for racial equality is not necessary to be motivated to join in solidarity with others against racial injustice and oppression. But one important fact about Bell that I have not yet mentioned is that he had religious faith. Bell says of himself that "in hard times, my Christian faith provides reassurance that is unseen but no less real. It never fails to give me the fortitude I need when opposing injustice" (Bell 2002, 76).

It would be a mistake to ignore the role of faith in Bell's life and the lives of so many others who are remarkably capable of continuing to fight for what they believe is morally right and just, with or without hope that their efforts will be successful. Many prominent activists have appealed to faith as fundamental to their pursuits (often in relation to hope), yet the question of how hope and faith come to bear on moral motivation in social and political contexts remains underexplored in the philosophical literature.[72] This chapter aims to fill this gap by developing an analysis of hope, faith, and solidarity in struggles against injustice and oppression.

I begin by introducing faith into the discussion in section 2. I distinguish between three forms of faith—religious faith, faith in humanity, and moral faith—any or all of which help to support us in our moral and political struggles in the face of insurmountable barriers and dwindling possibilities. Motivated by faith (sometimes, but not always, with hope for the ends for which they are striving) and sustained by other traits and attitudes such as courage and determination, people come together in what I call moral-political solidarity: that is, solidarity based in a shared moral vision carried out through political

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[72] One exception is Michele M. Moody-Adams' "Moral Progress and Human Agency" in *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 20 (2017): 153-168. She, too, notes that hope, faith (and courage) have received little attention in contemporary moral and political thought (155).

action. In section 3, I consider Sally Scholz's claim (2008) that hope is necessary for solidarity in political contexts, and point out ambiguities in her articulation of this requirement. I argue that the most plausible interpretation of the claim that hope is necessary for solidarity is that people find hope through solidarity. Whereas faith helps to bring people together in solidarity, solidarity gives rise to a renewal or strengthening of hope when hope might otherwise be lost. I argue that this hope, the hope of solidarity, is a kind of collective hope.

In section 4, I sketch an account of collective hope to make sense of the hope that emerges through moral-political solidarity. Hope is collective when the hoped-for outcome is for a group or groups; the hope is shared with at least some others; the perception of the possibility of attaining the hoped-for end as encouraging (and corresponding hopeful feelings) is a result of, or at least strengthened by, the collective; and the hopeful party acknowledges the insufficiency of collective (rather than individual) agency in bringing about the hoped-for outcome. In section 5, I argue that the collective hope of solidarity is sometimes a utopian hope, the realization of which would radically transform society such that a moral ideal, the object of hope, is obtained. I argue that when the collective hope of solidarity is morally justified, whether one is hoping in solidarity for only small victories or whether one's hopes for small victories are part of a utopian hope for justice, the collective hope of solidarity is a way in which moral agents hope well.

2. Faith

In Chapter Five, I suggested that traits and attitudes such as courage, integrity, and determination provide powerful sources of motivation for individuals to continue on in their moral and political struggles in the absence of hope that their efforts will be successful. But there is a further question about how people sustain and exercise these traits without hope, and in the face of seemingly insurmountable barriers and dwindling possibilities. I want to suggest that faith is an important piece of this puzzle. Faith has at least two inter-related roles in struggle: first, it helps us to remain resilient to setbacks and failures, protecting other attitudes and traits that make up who we are and how we respond to the world around us. Faith can help us to remain courageous and determined even when our hopes are threatened, disappointed, or lost. Second, faith can serve as a bedrock for hope. In other words, turning to faith helps people see reasons for hope.

Faith is a remarkably complex phenomenon, earning attention in the philosophy of religion and epistemology. Like trust, faith is typically regarded as stronger than hope in the sense that faith embodies more confidence than standard cases of hope about that in which, or about which, one has faith (Martin 2014, 90). But unlike standard cases of trust, faith is "not normally subject to definitive proof or refutation by any specifiable finite set of experiences" (Adams 1995, 86). We often (rightly, I think) remark that trust must be earned; people, groups, and institutions earn our trust by providing us evidence that they are trustworthy. But we don't commonly talk of earning faith in the same way. Faith in the Christian God, for example, is not earned by God proving His existence and worthiness; and asking God to prove Himself prior to cultivating faith in Him does not even make

sense. Such a demand seems contrary to the very nature of what it means to have faith in the Christian God. In faith, we remain confident—despite or beyond the evidence available to us—about that in which, or about which, we have faith.

There are really two kinds of faith in the above description, and understanding them will be helpful in locating the role of faith in moral and political life. First, there is faith that God exists, or what Robert Audi (2008) calls *propositional* faith; second, there is faith in God, or *attitudinal* faith (92). The notion of propositional faith captures the common thought that since faith embodies more confidence than hope, when faith that p is lost, we can still hope that p. For example, women might lose faith that gender oppression will someday end before losing hope that gender oppression will someday end. It makes sense, in other words, to say that "I no longer have faith that gender oppression will end, but I still have some hope."

But this description does not fully capture experiences of faith and hope, since it is possible for women to lose hope that gender oppression will end while holding on to faith. The faith they sustain is not faith that gender oppression will end; the relevant kind of faith sustained does not share the same object as hope. It is faith in someone or something—that is, it is attitudinal faith. Even if one has lost hope that gender oppression will end, one's faith in God permits her to find meaning in the state of affairs; perhaps, if one acts morally in this world, one will find oneself in the Kingdom of Ends where there is no oppression or injustice of any kind. Attitudinal faith, on my view, is a form of confidence we invest in someone or something that goes beyond the evidence available.

And as I demonstrate below, attitudinal faith can take the form of religious faith, moral faith, and/or faith in humanity.

As we will see, faith can be an alternative to despair when all hope is lost or out of reach. Throughout this dissertation, I have demonstrated the ways in which members of oppressed groups can find it difficult to cultivate and sustain hope for their own lives, for the lives of their loved ones, and for improved social, political, and economic conditions more generally. Oppression is a threat to hope because many of us find it difficult to sustain hope in the face of what seems like inevitable failure—that is, because of the evidence before us—despite whatever practical reasons we might have for sustaining hope. But since faith, as many philosophers and theologians have argued, goes beyond the evidence, it can propel us forward in our moral and political struggles in desperate circumstances and in the face of dreadful odds before us. For example, sustaining faith in humanity in the face of war, genocide of various kinds, human trafficking, poverty, and torture may prevent a human rights advocate from despairing of humanity and giving up her advocacy work even if she has lost all hope that these moral horrors will end in her life time. The advocate's faith in humanity goes beyond the evidence, and is in many ways contrary to the evidence, available to her.

Part of why it seems that faith of this kind is typically more resilient to evidence than hope is that faith is more deeply intertwined with our identities, contributing powerfully to how we experience and interpret the world around us, how we understand our places in the world, and the meaning of our lives. It is important to note that faith is typically but not always or necessarily resilient to evidence. There are cases in which people

lose faith because of the evidence, such as when people come to identify as atheists after important new experiences—grappling with the problem of evil in a philosophy classroom, or learning about scientific theories that are not easily reconciled with their religions. I became an atheist after taking a world religions course in high school and learning about the diversity of (many seemingly reasonable) religions. I began to lose faith in God, but importantly, this loss of faith did not come lightly. Because of the role of religious faith in defining who I was and how I understood my place in the world and the trajectory of my life, it took me about a year of reflection before identifying as an atheist. My religious faith was resilient to the evidence before me precisely because it was part of who I was, even if my religious faith ultimately lost out to new experiences.

Faith can thus be distinguished from hope in a few important ways. (1) It is typically, though not necessarily or always, resilient to evidence about that in which one has faith, and (2) it is more intimately connected with our identities than is hope. I want to understand three forms of faith—religious faith, faith in humanity, and moral faith—any or all of which can support and sustain people in struggle. As we will see, each of these forms of faith have helped real moral agents remain resilient to setbacks, failures, and shrinking possibilities; and they have served as a bedrock for the creation, renewal, and restoration of hope when hope might have otherwise been lost. Faith is, in other words, part of the story of what brings people together in solidarity against injustice and oppression. Exploring it will help us to better understand hope in these contexts, related phenomena such as resilience and trust, and their interrelated roles in collective action.

a. Religious Faith

Have you ever taken a hard look at those pictures from the sit-ins in the '60s, a hard, serious look? Have you ever looked at the faces? The faces are neither angry, nor sad, nor joyous. They betray almost no emotion. They look out past their tormentors, past us, and focus on something way beyond anything known to me. I think they are fastened to their god, a god whom I cannot know and in whom I do not believe. But, god or not, the armor is all over them, and it is real.

- Ta-Nehisi Coates

In this passage from *Between the World and Me*, Coates identifies the powerful role of religious faith in struggles against racial oppression. The activists' armor, in the photos Coates is referring to, is blacks' resilience to injustices under the severe conditions of oppression in which they live. Coates suspects that these blacks' resilience flows from their faith in God, and there are testimonies of activists that support this reading. In many of his writings, Martin Luther King Jr. describes times at which he found strength to go on through his religious faith. In recounting whites' resistance to the Montgomery Bus Boycott, King noted that he "began to have doubts about the ability of the Negro community to continue the struggle" (King 2001, 73). After yet another racist incident involving a phone call threat, King recounts being "ready to give up" (77). He tells us:

With my head in my hands, I bowed over the kitchen table and prayed aloud. The words I spoke to God that midnight are still vivid in my memory. 'Lord, I'm down here trying to do what's right. I think I'm right. I am here taking a stand for what I

believe is right. But Lord, I must confess that I'm weak now, I'm faltering. I'm

losing my courage. Now, I am afraid. (77)

King then recalls hearing an inner voice speaking to him: "Martin Luther, stand up for

righteousness. Stand up for justice. Stand up for truth. And lo, I will be with you. Even

until the end of the world" (78). King interpreted the voice as Jesus urging him to continue

on in his struggle, and in that moment, King regained strength: "almost at once my fears

began to go. My uncertainty disappeared. I was ready to face anything" (78).

Not every reader will believe that Jesus was in fact talking to King in that moment,

or that there really is a God that hears our prayers. It is, however, undeniable that King's

religious faith is what gave him the inspiration, assurance, and strength he needed to find

the courage to continue fighting for justice—in this moment, and in many others like it.

Without religious faith, King may have lost his strength, courage, and determination in his

pursuit of a better world for his people. Religious faith was King's armor, much like the

armor of religious faith that Coates reads into blacks in their collective actions against

racial segregation. The armor of religious faith protects the moral psychologies of

individuals who bear it: their courage, determination, integrity, and ultimately their ability

to go on. Without faith in God, it might not be possible to sustain these other traits.

Because of the ways in which religious faith enables resilience and protects people's

moral psychologies in trying times, it is also a bedrock for hope: something that people can

turn to for assurance, comfort, and inspiration when they need it the most. And through

such faith, people can find reasons for hope. This is how I read the story of Plenty Coups

(his Crow name was Alaxchiiaahush, or "Many Achievements") who was chief of the Crow

nation in the 19th century (Lear 2006, 20). Plenty Coups led the nomadic hunting tribe in what is now Montana and Wyoming at a time when the threat of white settler colonialism was exacerbated by intertribal warfare between the Crow, Sioux, Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Blackfeet people. The Crow had lost thousands due to death by war, disease, and malnutrition; and with the arrival of white European settlers, they became increasingly reliant on knives, hatchets, tools, and guns for survival (Lear 2006, 23). In his 2006 book *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation*, Jonathan Lear explores the threat to cultural devastation that the Crow endured during this time: beyond the real threat of genocide, and even if the Crow were to survive, their ways of life were coming to an end. As the Crow were forced to move on to reservations, they were no longer capable of participating in traditional Crow ways of life: they could not count coups or plant coup-sticks (activities that were the hallmarks of Crow courage)[73], they could not hunt buffalo, they could not participate in the Sun Dance[74]; and they were ultimately forced to transform their culture if it were to survive (Lear 2006).

Lear argues that Plenty Coups confronted the cultural devastation of the Crow people with "radical hope." He tells us: "What makes... hope radical is that it is directed toward a future goodness that transcends the current ability to understand what it is. Radical hope anticipates a good for which those who have the hope as yet lack the

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[73] "Counting coups" was a term used to describe a number of courageous actions on the part of Crow warriors: striking an armed enemy with one's coup-stick, taking the enemy's weapons will he is still alive, stealing a horse from the enemy's camp, and so on (Lear 2006, 19). Planting a coup stick was a practice whereby a Crow warrior would plant a coup stick in the ground, marking a boundary between the tribes that the enemy ought not to cross and signaling that he would not retreat or leave the stick but would fight to protect his people (13-14).
[74] The Sun Dance is a prayer for revenge in the context of battle (Lear 2006, 36).

appropriate concepts with which to understand it" (103). What I want to focus on is what motivated Plenty Coups' hope, setting aside the question of whether, in confronting the future with radical hope, Plenty Coups was hoping well.

Lear explains that Plenty Coups' radical hope was inspired by a dream-vision at the age of nine. Dream-visions, according to the Crow, reveal in enigmatic ways "an order in the universe... typically hidden from conscious life" (67). Plenty Coups prayed to God, Ah-badt-dadt-deah, and had a dream-vision in which buffalo were replaced by cows and Plenty Coups was urged to listen and learn from others. The dream was interpreted by Yellow Bear, a wise Crow man, to mean that white settler colonizers would take over the country, that Plenty Coups was the one who was tasked with listening and learning from them, and that the Crow must ally with the white men if they were to survive (Lear 2006, 72-3).

Lear suggests that Plenty Coups might have realized, in part due to the content of his dream, that traditional Crow ways of life were coming to end and that there was nothing the Crow could do to change that reality (Lear 2006). Though Lear does not interpret this realization as a loss of hope, I think it is clearly a loss of hope. The Crow people, because of the evidence before them, no longer perceived the possibility of preserving traditional Crow ways of life, an outcome that they very much desired, as encouraging. But despite this loss of hope, Plenty Coups had faith in Ah-badt-dadt-deah and in his dream-vision. If Lear's description of Plenty Coups' moral psychology is accurate, religious faith in Ah-badt-dadt-deah played a distinctive role in the formation of

his radical hope for the Crow's collective future.[75] Without the dream-vision, Plenty Coups may not have found reasons to hope that survival and flourishing was possible for his people. Introducing religious faith into the discussion about Plenty Coups' radical hope helps us to understand what led to the formation of hope.

These are just a few examples that demonstrate the powerful ways in which religious faith can help to support people in desperate circumstances, enabling them to continue striving for what they believe is morally right and just in a world that so often disappoints our hopes. There are, of course, risks that come with having religious faith quite like (and perhaps stronger in some cases than) the risks of hope. In offering agents comfort and assurance in the face of desperate circumstances, religious faith might make agents prone to wishfully hoping badly: if God has a *plan*, I can take comfort in my faith that things will be okay, that whatever happens does so "for a reason," and that those who suffer in this world will be at peace in the next. It is because of these risks that Marx declared religion to be "the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of the heartless world and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people" (Marx 1970, 131). Faith, like hope, can lead to epistemic irrationality. But despite this risk, religious faith is beneficial for many in struggling against oppression; and my primary interest here is the positive role of faith in moral agents' lives.

But not all of us have religious faith to sustain us; some people cannot turn to a god for inspiration, assurance, comfort, or hope. If atheists need faith, they must find it in something else; and often, people do testify to having a kind of faith—faith in humanity—as

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[75] As Lear reminds us throughout the book, we cannot in fact know whether Plenty Coups really did experience a kind of radical hope for the Crow people; we can only suspect what he might have plausibly thought and felt from what we know about his life.

what keeps them going. With or without religious faith, faith in humanity does seem to contribute to positive action.

b. *Faith in Humanity*

There is very little discussion of the phenomenon of faith in humanity in the philosophical literature. One notable exception is Ryan Preston-Roedder's account of faith in humanity as a moral virtue. According to Preston-Roedder, people who have faith in humanity have faith in people's *decency*. Preston-Roedder argues that faith in humanity is not "a vague sense that 'people are generally pretty good,'" or that "people are capable of living together in peace, given favorable conditions" (666). It is faith in the decency of those people with which one comes into contact in one's own life, or the particular people about whom one is deliberating. It is a disposition to evaluate others' actions, intentions, or characters by giving them the benefit of the doubt, trusting that they will act decently or at least that right action is attainable for them in the face of evidence to the contrary (Preston-Roedder 2013, 666). And those with the moral virtue of faith in humanity do not only judge that people do or can live "morally decent lives"; they are also committed to that possibility, demonstrating this commitment through their own actions. For example, people who have faith in humanity actively encourage people to act well, and they act in ways that sets a good example for others (668).

Preston-Roedder turns to Mohandas Gandhi as an example of someone who possessed the moral virtue of faith in humanity. Throughout Gandhi's campaign for the civil rights of Indian immigrants in South Africa, he and other activists used non-violent

resistance in an attempt to convince white South Africans of the fact of injustice, demonstrating faith in white South Africans' ability to recognize and ultimately end their oppression (Preston-Roedder 2013, 672). Preston-Roedder points out that Gandhi also demonstrated faith in the Indians who joined him in his campaign: faith in their ability to endure the consequences of their activism including insults, imprisonment, injury, and the possibility of death, and to succeed in their pursuits.

Faith in humanity is thus another form of faith that protects our moral characters in challenging times and contributes to moral motivation. I would add, contrary to Preston-Roedder, that it is quite possible to have faith in humanity generally: to have a vague sense that people (at least most people) are basically good. Allowing for the possibility of a more general faith in humanity makes sense of the way that faith in humanity is often an orientation or stance that people take toward all of humankind, not just particular people. It is a backdrop attitude of confidence in the decency of humanity despite evidence to the contrary. And faith in humanity—either in particular people (in Preston-Roedder's sense, or in humankind as a collective)—can serve as a bedrock for hope similarly to religious faith. If one remains confident that right action is attainable for people beyond the evidence available to them, and in the face of evidence to the contrary, then faith in humanity might help people to see reasons for hoping that—despite the evidence we have right now—the goodness of humanity will ultimately win out.

Faith in humanity, as well as religious faith, are closely related to moral faith, the third kind of faith I want to explore. But moral faith is importantly different. As I argue below, it is possible to have moral faith without either faith in humanity or religious faith;

and even a very minimal kind of moral faith can prevent people from falling into despair. Indeed, as I argue, some moral faith is required if we are to make sense of moral motivation to engage in struggle, especially struggle in the absence of hope that one's efforts (and even collective efforts) will be successful.

c. *Moral Faith*

Robert Merrihew Adams provides an account of moral faith in his well-known 1995 article by the same name. Adams argues that "moral faith is a stance in relation to goodness and duty, and in relation to possibilities of human action, thought, and feeling and their larger context in human life" (Adams 1995, 76). Faith in the possibilities of human action, thought, and feeling sounds much like faith in humanity described in the section above; but Adams' understanding of moral faith as a stance in relation to goodness and duty is distinct. Adams argues that such faith can take many forms. For example, he argues that we can have moral faith that our moral convictions are true (that is, propositional faith), since we know that we live in a world in which there is more than one reasonable moral perspective to take, and there is a sense in which "we could be wrong" (77). We also have moral faith that living a moral life is "good for the world," (that is, another kind of propositional faith) or if not, we at least have faith that living a moral life is intrinsically valuable (80).

Both Bell and Coates have propositional moral faith of this kind. In the epilogue "Beyond Despair" to his *Faces at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism*, Bell defends a kind of hope (what I call the collective hope of solidarity in section 5) that

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emerges from faith in the oppressed combined with moral faith in the intrinsic value of living a morally good life. Bell reminds us that slaves and freed blacks knew that there was no escape or way out of their racial oppression given the "social consensus that they were 'a brutish sort of people'" (Bell 1992, 197). Despite this knowledge, blacks engaged themselves "to carve out a humanity. To defy the murder of self-hood. Their lives were brutally shackled, certainly—but not without meaning despite being imprisoned" (Bell 1992, 198, emphasis removed). Bell defends the struggle against racial oppression, despite his belief in the permanence of racism, because there is meaning in the struggle itself. Drawing upon psychiatrist Irwin Yalcom's definition of meaningfulness as "a by-product of engagement and commitment," Bell argues that slaves made something out of nothing— with imagination, will, strength, humility, and courage (Bell 1992, 198). Continued action, for Bell, is both futile and necessary; and he means *morally* necessary, because of the "unalterable conviction that something must be done" (Bell 1992, 199).

Coates cites Bell as inspiration in articulating his own defense of the intrinsic value of living a moral life of struggle against racial injustice and oppression, though Coates does not have religious faith or hope. Coates, in rejecting a narrative of moral progress, says:

> Perhaps struggle is all we have because the god of history is an atheist, and nothing about his world is meant to be. So you must wake up every morning knowing that no promise is unbreakable, least of all the promise of waking up at all. This is not despair. These are preferences of the universe itself: verbs over nouns, actions over states, struggle over hope. (71)

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There are many instances throughout *Between the World and Me* where Coates describes the intrinsic value of living a moral life of struggle, and he emphasizes that struggle assures not victory but "an honorable and sane life" (Coates 2015, 96-7). The moral life is itself worthwhile, despite whatever effects it has in making the world a better place. This is a manifestation of moral faith, a faith that seems to help Coates from falling into despair. And this minimal kind of moral faith, faith that one's moral convictions are right and faith in the intrinsic value of living a moral life of struggle, seems necessary to make sense of struggle without hope. If I have lost all confidence that the hopeless ends for which I am striving are worthwhile to pursue at all, I have reached the point of despair.

Moral faith can also manifest as faith that the moral ends to which we are striving will someday be attained (a faith that, arguably, neither Bell nor Coates had). Adams credits Kant for his articulation of moral faith in the actual attainability of moral good (Adams 1995, 83). Annette Baier, inspired by Kant, explores the potential for a kind of secular moral faith, where such faith is "in the human community and its evolving procedures—in the prospects for many-handed cognitive ambitions and moral hopes" (Baier 1980, 293). People with such secular moral faith have faith in the attainability of just society despite the profound injustice of the actual society in which we live. Unlike those who have religious faith, such people with secular faith do not believe that they will someday be a part of the Kingdom of Ends, either on earth or in the afterlife.

Moral faith, along with religious faith and faith in humanity, thus contributes in powerful ways to the lives of many who are committed to building a better world. Faith, as we have seen, helps us to continue striving for what we believe is right and just in a world

that so often fails to meet our moral expectations and realize our hopes. It prevents us from falling into despair even when hope is lost or out of our reach—sometimes serving as a bedrock for the renewal, restoration, and strengthening of hope. Turning to God, feeling pulled by the intrinsic importance and meaningfulness of morality, and sustaining confidence in the goodness of humanity despite all of the bad in the world are strategies, or natural ways, in which we resist despair. And in resisting despair, people can continue pursuing social justice in desperate circumstances, and in the face of very real barriers to success. Faith is thus part of the story of what brings people together in solidarity against injustice and oppression.

3. Solidarity and New Hope

So far, I have been mostly talking about the faith and hope of individuals and the inter-related roles of faith and hope in moral motivation. But in thinking about faith and hope in response to social and political injustices under oppression, it is important to attend to groups and how identifying with a group or forming a group based on shared experiences, identities, or commitments changes how people think, feel, and act. In this section, I identify a distinctive kind of hope that emerges when individuals come together and form a collective: a hope in which individuals, as members of the collective, can share.

There is emerging interest in the concept of solidarity in philosophical literature—most notably in moral, social, and political philosophy, and in bioethics. In an increasingly complex and global world, philosophers have begun to recognize that the concepts and commitments most familiar to us—such as individual rights and autonomy—are incapable

of generating adequate moral guidelines for how we should live (Sherwin 2012). In shifting focus away from the individual towards the collective, the concept of solidarity challenges us to think not just about how I should live and act, but how we should live and act together. Thus solidarity, some philosophers have argued, holds promise for helping us to understand our individual and collective moral obligations in addressing threats that target whole social groups—indeed, in the case of global threats such as climate change, the whole planet—and to build a better world (Kolers 2014; Jennings and Dawson 2015; Doan and Sherwin 2016; Sherwin and Stockdale 2017).

Philosophers have distinguished between many different kinds of solidarity including feminist solidarity, black solidarity, and other kinds of race-based solidarity (Mohanty 2003; Shelby 2005; Blum 2007). I want to focus on what I call *moral-political solidarity*, namely, solidarity based in a shared moral vision carried out through political action. Within moral-political solidarity, there will certainly be what Scholz (2008) refers to as social solidarity: solidarity based on common experiences and identities, such as women's common experience of sexism in a patriarchal society. There is thus room for solidarity amongst women, race-based solidarity, and other forms of experience or identity-based solidarity within the broader moral-political solidarity. But it is not only members of an oppressed group who share a moral vision for the elimination of the relevant form of oppression, and who undertake political actions to eliminate it. People from many different backgrounds join in solidarity against sexism, racism, colonialism, and other forms of oppression. I want to understand solidarity that brings people together across difference, united not always by shared experiences or identities but by their sense of what

has to be done together in the name of morality and justice. I want to suggest that moral-political solidarity, which is sometimes but not always identity-based solidarity, can give rise to collective hope.

Sally Scholz (2008) explores the role of hope in solidarity in her *Political Solidarity*, arguing quite strongly that "hope is the only necessary feeling for political solidarity" (Scholz 2008, 81). She says:

> Political solidarity is primarily a movement of social change. Members strive to bring about liberation, create conditions free from oppression, and struggle for justice. These formative goals direct the substantive goals or concrete projects they undertake. Hope means that they believe the future can be better than the present. The moral sentiment of hope motivates activity within solidarity because it fosters the desire for the final ends or goals (substantive and formative) of political solidarity. (81-2)

It is not exactly clear what Scholz means in arguing that hope is necessary to solidarity. Is hope necessary for individuals to be motivated to join in solidarity? That is, do each and every one of us require hope in order to be motivated to join a solidarity movement? This cannot be right. The formative goal of solidarity against racial injustice and oppression is the elimination of racial injustice and oppression, yet we have seen that it is possible to be in solidarity against racial injustice without hope that one's efforts (or even collective efforts) will ever realize the goal. Or, does Scholz mean that solidarity only survives if there is hope? She says that "hope keeps the movement alive, for without it there would be no

reason to act collectively... Hope reconfirms our commitment to one another and to our purpose" (82). And again:

> Hope is a necessary moral sentiment within political solidarity because each individual shares the belief that together they can create change. Hope helps to drive the movement and lays the groundwork for other sentiments to develop within the collective action and solidary group. (82)

Scholz seems to be placing too much of the motivational work on hope. As I have argued, people are motivated by many other traits and attitudes—anger (not necessarily with hope), righteousness, and determination, to name a few—to act with others against injustice and oppression. What is more plausible, I think, is that solidarity tends to create or restore hope for the outcomes toward which individuals are striving together. Hope is, in other words, *produced* by solidarity; and such hope, I will argue in section 4, is collective.

The hope of solidarity begins with the recognition that there exist other people who are committed to standing by oneself against injustice and oppression. There are many examples of this kind of hope that come from testimony of members of oppressed groups and those standing with them in solidarity against various kinds of injustices. Rita Wong, Canadian writer and environmental activist, recounts finding hope through participating in the Healing Walk in Alberta's Tar Sands. She says:

> On my own, I think I would have shrunk down into despair or numbed myself because I felt incapable of addressing the huge, overwhelming scale of the destruction. Yet, on this walk, the sick feeling co-exists with a quietly hopeful one, invoked by the efforts of my co-walkers, as well as the many people we know who

cannot make the journey to Fort McMurray, the epicentre of tar sands extraction in Northern Alberta, but who ask us to carry their wishes and prayers for the healing of the land with us. (Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2013, 103)

Wong's testimony of the "overwhelming scale of destruction" captures the threat to hope that indigenous and other environmental activists face as they challenge powerful institutions to fight for indigenous lands and waters, and for the health of the whole planet. But Wong's testimony also embodies a renewed hope that arose through solidarity. Wong found hope in the recognition that her co-walkers share her moral vision for a healthy planet on which indigenous lands and waters are protected from environmental damage, and that, they too, are ready to stand with her in opposition to the people and institutions standing in the way of this shared vision.

In previous chapters, I argued that there is an important relationship between hope and the emotion of moral anger; and many people who join with others in solidarity to fight for what they believe is right connect hope to anger in their lived experiences. For example, Honorary Witness Patsy George, who spoke in solidarity with indigenous Canadians to the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission, testified to her rage combined with a powerful hope inspired by indigenous women:

Women have always been the beacon of hope for me. Mothers and grandmothers in the lives of our children, and in the survival of our communities, must be recognized and supported. The justified rage we all feel and share today must be turned into instruments of transformation of our hearts and souls, clearing the ground for respect, love, honesty, humility, wisdom and truth. We owe it to those

who suffered, and we owe it to the children of today and tomorrow. May this day and the days ahead bring us peace and justice. (Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2013, 12)

Over 6000 witnesses shared their testimonies as part of the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission, most of whom survived living in the residential schools themselves (Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2013). Patsy George was not one of those survivors, but as a social worker and activist who has spent her life advocating on behalf of members of oppressed groups both locally and internationally, most notably indigenous peoples and women, George was included as an honorary witness to voice her own thoughts in solidarity with indigenous Canadians. Through learning from indigenous women, and seeing their contributions to justice for indigenous peoples despite the profound violence with which the live, George found hope. Similarly, Patrisse Cullors, one of the founders of the Black Lives Matter movement, explained that Black Lives Matter seeks to "provide hope and inspiration for collective action to build collective power to achieve collective transformation, rooted in grief and rage but pointed towards vision and dreams" (Solnit 2016, xiv). It is thus important to understand the relationship between hope and other emotions such as anger and grief in making sense of people's lived experiences under oppression, and what motivates them to struggle against it.

I think that these instances of hope are examples of hoping well: they are ways of "discovering some new way of relating to others, specifically a way that recognizes the interdependence of the self and other in generating the best confidence for keeping hope alive" (McGeer 2004, 122). But the hope of solidarity is dependent on there being a group

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of at least some people who come together with a shared moral vision and who are committed to striving toward it; it is, in other words, a kind of collective hope.

4. The Collective Hope of Solidarity

What exactly does it mean for hope to be collective?[76] Hope, as I argued in Chapter Two, is an emotion involving the desire for an outcome, the belief in the possibility (but not certainty) that the desired outcome will obtain, a perception of the desired outcome as encouraging to varying degrees, and corresponding feelings of hopefulness. Hope also involves an explicit or implicit acknowledgement that one's own agency is insufficient to bring about the desired outcome. Hope, on my view, becomes collective when:

(1) The hoped-for outcome is for a group or groups.

(2) The hope is shared by at least some others.

(3) The perception of the possible-but-not-certain desired outcome as encouraging, and corresponding hopeful feelings, result from (or are strengthened) by the formation of the collective.

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[76] There is empirical literature that explores the notion of collective hope in solidarity movements. See, for example, Sasha Courville and Nicola Piper, "Harnessing Hope through NGO Activism" in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 592 (2004): 39-61. Courville and Piper define hope solely in terms of desire, though they make similar claims to the ones I make here about the relationship between hope, solidarity, and collective action.

(4) The explicit or implicit acknowledgement of one's agency in bringing about the

hoped-for outcome is an acknowledgement of the insufficiency of collective

agency.[77]

My understanding of collective hope is slightly different from one that McGeer

offers at the end of her article, "The Art of Good Hope." As McGeer says:

> Collective hope refers to hope individuals have in common with others as hope for
>
> the community of which they are a part. While it builds on individual or private
>
> hopes, shared hopes become collective when individuals see themselves as hoping
>
> and so acting in concert for ends that they communally endorse. (125)

The idea that collective hope is hope that individuals have in common with others captures

condition (2), but McGeer's qualification that the hopeful parties constitute a community

for which their hopes are about is too strict. We can share in collective hopes for

communities of which we are not a part, such as when I hope for the end of food

insecurity in Somalia.[78] We should also be careful that we do not build collective action

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[77] This description of collective hope accommodates a wide range of collective hopes, including those of white supremacy and nationalist movements as well as other morally unjustified hopes. Just as it is possible to have genuine, morally unjustified individual hopes such as the hope for an innocent person's suffering, so too one can share in genuine, morally unjustified collective hopes such as the hope to eliminate all people of a race or religion from one's country. But consistent with arguments I made in Chapter Three, and as I address in section 5 of this chapter below, agents who share in morally unjustified hopes are not hoping well.

[78] There were roughly six million people in need of urgent food assistance in Somalia at the time of writing. See Ben Quinn, "'Where is the help?': black tea and dark despair as Somalia edges closer to famine" in *The Guardian* 10 March 2017 https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/mar/10/somalia-edges-closer-to-famine-where-is-the-help-black-tea-dark-despair?CMP=share_btn_tw.

into collective hope, since it is possible to share in collective hope for outcomes that one in no way helps to advance through one's own actions. For example, a bed-ridden cancer patient might find himself with a sense of hope for racial justice while watching Black Lives Matter activists on television march the streets of Baltimore determined and courageous in their collective struggle against racial oppression—even if he is unable to act in concert with the Black Lives Matter movement in any way.

Yet, the collective hope in which the bed-ridden patient shares—what I want to call the hope of solidarity—does depend on action: the coordinated political actions of black people and those standing in solidarity with them in the collective struggle against racial oppression. In other words, the hope the patient felt in that moment was formed from his witnessing solidarity, in seeing a collective of individuals with a shared moral vision form and act together. Solidarity can thus give rise to collective hope.

Rebecca Solnit captures the emergence of the collective hope of solidarity in her *Hope in the Dark*. She says:

> In these moments of rupture [that is, in solidarity movements], people find themselves members of a "we" that did not until then exist, at least not as an entity with agency and identity and potency; new possibilities suddenly emerge, or that old dream of a just society reemerges—and—at least for a little while—shines. (xxv)

Solnit's quote captures the fact that solidarity strengthens hope by increasing the likelihood that the hoped-for outcome will be realized, enabling people to see the possibility of success as much more encouraging than they otherwise could. But solidarity can also strengthen

hope through restoring and strengthening individuals' faith in humanity. Witnessing a solidarity movement is often a much-needed reminder that there really are people, many people in fact, who have not given up on the requirements of morality and justice.

But what are people who share in the collective hope of solidarity hoping *for*? Sometimes, people are hoping ambitiously for racial and gender equality, the end of colonialism, or the elimination of all forms of oppression. Or, at least, these outcomes are what they are *ultimately* hoping for, as they form more modest hopes instrumental to their ambitious hopes' realization: preventing a pipeline from being built that will cause damages to indigenous lands, waters, and health, for example. They might even be hoping for these outcomes as part of a broader hope for justice. Other people think that the more modest outcomes for which we hope are all we can (justifiably) hope for—that there is no linear moral progress the end of which will be a state of moral perfection, so all we can do is hope for small victories that will improve the world for the better, however slightly, and for however long. I think that both ways of hoping in solidarity are ways of hoping well.

5. Hoping Well for Justice

When we hope for racial justice, the elimination of gender oppression, and a world in which all people have the same wealth and resources as one another, we are hoping for outcomes that contribute to our broader, collective project of achieving *justice* as a moral ideal: a state of utopia or moral perfection in which there would be no more moral work left to do but to maintain the state that we have reached, and to not allow humanity to regress back into moral imperfection. The *utopian* hope for justice is thus a hope whose

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realization would radically transform society such that the moral ideal of justice, the object of hope, is obtained.

I have been focusing on examples throughout this chapter that are morally justified collective hopes that would count as instrumental to the utopian hope for justice such as the hopes to eliminate racism, gender oppression, colonialism, and poverty. But it is important to acknowledge that individuals' perceptions of justice—in what, exactly, justice would consist—are profoundly varied. Many people share in the collective hopes for morally unjustified states of affairs that they truly believe count as instrumental to the utopian hope for justice: the hope, for example, that America will be made "great again," where "greatness" refers to a history of colonialism, racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and other forms of social oppression. The arguments I made in Chapter Three about evaluating hope apply here too. Individuals cannot hope well for justice unless their perceptions of what counts as justice and injustice are correct; and though I do not propose to have all of the answers about what counts as justice and injustice, we can safely rule out hopes for states of affairs the obtaining of which would reinforce oppression as morally forbidden hopes. I want to focus, in what follows, on hopes that *are* morally justified: specifically, I want to focus on different approaches to hoping for justice where what the hopeful agents consider to be justice and injustice does not clearly miss the mark.

As Bovens (1999) aptly puts it, it is "notoriously difficult to make sense of utopian hopes" (674, footnote 4). The difficulty is that, for some people, the utopian hope for justice functions as a guiding ideal that directs our more modest hopes, but it is itself *not really a hope*. In other words, some agents appeal to the moral ideal of "justice" to form

hopes the realization of which would constitute progress toward the ideal, whether they believe that we will ever reach it or not. For example, we might hope to prevent a pipeline from being built that will be detrimental to indigenous lands, waters, and health; and the hope to prevent the pipeline from being built is instrumental to the broader hope for environmental justice. The hope for environmental justice is, then, instrumental to the hope *for justice*. But not everyone who has the first hope has the second; and not everyone who has the first and second hopes has the third. It is possible to hope to prevent a pipeline from being built because one cares about environmental justice, while having *no* hope that environmental justice, and (by implication) justice, will ever be attained.

But some people really do form the utopian hope for justice: desiring justice, believing that justice is possible but not certain, seeing the possibility of justice as encouraging (perhaps pointing to moral improvements and advancements toward the ideal), and feeling hopeful about the possibility of attaining justice in the future. Their hopes to prevent a pipeline from being built are instrumental to their hopes for environmental justice and justice more broadly, a utopian hope they *really are* pursuing as an end that they judge might someday be attained. The cynics among us might endorse the former way of hoping, but reject the idea that the utopian hope for justice can be rational or fitting: the moral ideal is *nowhere* within reach, and hoping for it is a delusional distraction away from the concrete, real-world actions we need to take to mitigate oppression and other forms of injustice in the here and now.

I actually do think that the utopian hope for justice is defensible. In Chapter Three, I argued that, when hope aims at a morally good state of affairs, there are moral

reasons for preserving the hope. So although the hope that oppression will be eliminated in one's lifetime is not rational because oppression is so entrenched in our world that hoping for that outcome misconstrues the evidence available and may enable either inaction or misdirected agency, the end for which this hope aims is a morally good state of affairs. On my view, it is permissible to revise (rather than give up) the hope because of this fact. I can, for example, rationally hope that oppression will *someday* be eliminated (just not in my life time), and because the elimination of oppression would constitute a morally good state of affairs, preserving the hope that oppression will someday end is rationally and morally permissible.

The revised hope, the hope that oppression will someday end, might then be instrumental to the hope for justice; and we can run the same argument to show how the hope for justice is rationally and morally permissible. Interestingly, too, it is difficult to criticize the hope for justice in terms of fittingness. It is certainly fitting to see justice as desirable and the possibility that justice will someday be attained as encouraging, given the vagueness of the "someday" represented in the hope. It even seems fitting to be strongly hopeful about the possibility that all forms of oppression will be lifted and justice "will someday prevail." When we have this hope, the "someday" referred to is so far into the future that it is barely even foreseeable—a faint, abstract future that is indeterminate. The utopian hope for justice is vague, open, and inarticulate; and this is precisely what makes criticizing it so difficult. It reaches for a moral ideal that we have never seen obtained before, and as such, the hope for justice is often bound up with faith: religious faith, faith in humanity, and/or moral faith. In hoping that all forms of oppression will be lifted and

justice "will someday prevail," one might have faith in humanity and appeal to one's faith that people will continue fighting for the end of oppression *however long it takes* as justification for continuing to hope. Since faith is a kind of confidence that goes beyond the evidence available to us, pointing to facts about the world won't shake the agent who faithfully hopes for justice.

One might faithfully hope well by recognizing that one's utopian hope is not (right now) within reach, and thus form instrumental hopes toward the moral ideal that are more clearly in view. The hopeful agent might, in other words, shift the target of the utopian not-yet-graspable hope to more concrete, realistic outcomes the obtaining of which would make progress toward the moral ideal. For example, one might hope for gender equality as part of one's hope for justice by forming the less ambitious hopes for equal pay for equal work, improvements to the criminal justice system in handling cases of sexual violence against women, an effective national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women (as in Canada at the time of writing), and for support of women's reproductive rights.[79]

Notice, though, that it is possible to hope for these more modest outcomes without hoping for the moral ideal; and this way of hoping is an instance of hoping well, too.

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[79] There is, admittedly, room for disagreement and uncertainty about what changes and actions will, in fact, constitute progress toward justice. One might share in the collective hope of solidarity for climate justice as part of one's broader hope for justice and join the "March for Science": a solidarity group that "champions robustly funded and publicly communicated science as a pillar of human freedom and prosperity," and "upholds the common good and for political leaders and policy makers to enact evidence based policies in the public interest" (March for Science 2017). But one might worry that the "March for Science" is detrimental to the hope for justice since science itself is fraught with moral, social, and political issues, often reinforcing economic inequality. Hoping and acting for justice in the face of deeply embedded, overlapping, and multi-faceted oppressions requires sorting out conflicting positions and uncertainties about what one (if anything) ought morally to do from one's own position within the collective.

Scholar and activist Rebecca Solnit defends hoping only for small victories. As she says: "This is Earth. It will never be heaven. There will always be cruelty, always be violence, always be destruction.... We cannot eliminate all devastation for all time, but we can reduce it, outlaw it, undermine its sources and foundations: these are victories. A better world, yes; a perfect world, never" (Solnit 2016, 78). So one might justifiably be swept up in the hope of solidarity for many concrete, real-world outcomes to which one is passionately committed for their own sake and in the hope for a better world, without judging that the realization of these hopes would also be a step closer to some utopian goal in our not-year-foreseeable collective future.

Kathryn Norlock defends this approach to hope and struggle in a working paper, "Perpetual Struggle: Pessimism, Evils, and Hopeless Situations." She accepts, as Solnit does, that evil and suffering will never be eliminated and argues that "there is no reason to believe that the future will be one in which evils cease to be" (Norlock, 7). Although human beings are capable of changing for the better, their ability to do so is outmatched by the seriousness of the problems facing humanity (7). We are also *essentially* imperfect, according to Norlock; so the utopian hope for justice, which require us to believe that moral perfection is possible, is not justified. It entails a mistaken understanding of what it means to be human.

But this pessimistic, unhopeful stance toward the future is nevertheless compatible with forming and pursuing more modest hopes, hopes that are even guided by the moral ideal Norlock believes is impossible to attain. We can, she points out, engage in efforts aimed at constructing just institutions even if "our efforts may be inadequate, or undone,

or not sustained after we die" (13). And Norlock rejects the charge that she is advocating for a Sisyphean existence, for moral agents to continue rolling a ball up a hill only to have it topple back down, over and over, for eternity. On Norlock's view, there is no hill; and "directional metaphors" are bound up with our wishful thinking that moral progress has an endpoint that we can reach if we continue on in our moral struggles (14). We ought to, instead, just *do our best*, reveling in other goods of life including activism, recreation, and loving relationships as we navigate the necessarily imperfect world we share (15).

I share Norlock's pessimistic, unhopeful stance toward the future. I suspect many others will share this perspective, unable to see the possibility of obtaining a utopian ideal of justice in the future as encouraging, even slightly, and unable to feel hopeful about the prospect of justice in the future. And like Norlock, such people might not feel pulled by the need to hope for justice as a utopian ideal; they might be motivated to pursue justice by pursing the elimination of *in*justice. I think that this is one way of hoping well for justice. But I want to make room for utopian hopers: those who really do believe in moral progress and who continue to hope we might someday succeed in living in a just world. Utopian hope only survives, and makes sense, in combination with faith: religious faith, faith in humanity, and/or moral faith—faith that *supports* hope in the face of evil, and suffering, and evidence that neither will end. For example, we might have faith in humanity that supports our belief in humanity's ultimate "goodness" in the Rawlsian sense of the term. To say that human nature is good, according to Rawls, "is to say that citizens who grow up under reasonable and just institutions… will affirm those institutions and act to make sure their social world endures" (Rawls 1999, 7). And reflection on the contingency of historical

evils and in the goodness of human nature demonstrates that "we must not allow these great evils of the past and present to undermine our hope for the future" (22).

Rawls thus believes that a future just society is a realistic possibility for which we can reasonably hope. And in arguing that a just society "could and may exist" (Rawls 1999, 7), Rawls notices that justice is *physically* possible (that is, consistent with the natural order of how human beings are and how they might be) as well as possible for *our* future world—a world in which historical and current injustices continue to affect us (Howard forthcoming, 5). Inspired by Kant, Rawls's hope for justice rests on *faith* that goes beyond what we see in the world right now, faith that vindicates the hope for justice.

Rawls uses the language of "reasonable hope" which, as Dana Howard (forthcoming) points out, is meant to accommodate the ethical importance of hoping for justice. Howard interprets Rawls as arguing that reasonable people are required to maintain the hope for a just future, since doing so guards against feelings of futility and diminished moral motivation. As I have been arguing throughout this dissertation, the claim that hope is *required* for moral motivation is too strong; people can be motivated to continue on in their moral and political struggles without hope that their efforts will be successful. As Solnit and Norlock teach us, people can also hope well for justice by hoping for small victories that will diminish harm and improve people's lives in the here and now—even if they have no hope in the attainability of justice as a moral ideal.

Whereas Rawls thinks his way of engaging morally and politically (in theory and practice) is correct, I see both Rawls and Norlock as taking two different but equally permissible stances toward the future. On my view, as long as the pessimistic agent who

hopes only for small victories does not lose her commitment and motivation to continue on in struggle, she is justified in forming and pursuing her modest hopes while remaining hopeless about the possibility of achieving the moral ideal of justice. And as long as the agent who faithfully hopes that the utopian ideal of justice "will someday prevail" has, as Rawls does, rational beliefs about the magnitude and severity of evil, suffering, and injustice in the world right now, she is justified in her ambitious hope. What is important is that the *object* of hope, or the guiding ideal—that is, the elimination of all forms of oppression and injustice—structures and guides individual and collective action; and that we do not lose sight of where we have been, how things are now, and where we need to go.

6. Concluding Thoughts

This chapter has explored the relationship between hope, faith, and solidarity in collective struggles against oppression. Or, at least, it has scratched the surface of the relationship between three very complex phenomena that work together in motivating moral agents to pursue a more just world. Even when all hope might be lost, faith often steps in to prevent us from falling into despair. Faith in God, faith in other human beings, and faith that one's moral agency is not "all for nothing" (that it is, at the very least, intrinsically valuable to act morally in the world)—all of these forms of faith can sustain us in struggle. They also serve as a bedrock for the renewal, restoration, or strengthening of hope when hope might otherwise be lost.

Sustained by their faith, people often come together in what I have called moral-political solidarity: solidarity based in a shared moral vision carried out through political action. Sometimes, moral-political solidarity is identity-based, bringing together people with

common experiences of oppression such as black solidarity and women's solidarity. But other times, those in solidarity against some form of oppression or another stretch beyond the oppressed, uniting people together from diverse backgrounds who share a moral vision for change. I have argued that a form of collective hope, the hope of solidarity, emerges when people with shared experiences or commitments come together in political action. And whether those who share in the collective hope of solidarity are hoping for a small victory that they judge might be short-lived, or whether they are, ultimately, hoping in pursuit of a more ambitious utopian ideal, sharing in collective hope is a way of *hoping well*.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

I want to conclude by reflecting on what I hope to have accomplished in this dissertation, and where I see possibilities for philosophers to take the discussion further. I have aimed to advance our understanding of the nature and value of hope, paying close attention to the ways in which hope operates under conditions of oppression: sexism, racism, colonialism, ableism, and so on. I have argued that hope is an emotion involving the belief in the possibility but not certainty that a desired outcome will obtain, a perception of the possible-but-not-certain desired outcome as encouraging to varying degrees, and corresponding hopeful feelings. The understanding of hope I have provided begins to capture the ways in which hope can be passive and conflicted, rational but unfitting, and an emotion that manifests quite differently in our various lives.

Hope is, as many philosophers have argued, something that nearly all human beings share as we navigate our vulnerabilities and the hardships of life. But I have emphasized the need to move beyond this tendency to focus on commonality and universal human experiences in theorizing hope toward a focus on human *difference*: differences not only in our personalities and experiences, but also our social, economic, and political locations in relation to one another. Attending explicitly to the ways in which dimensions of power, privilege, and oppression come to bear on experiences of hope helps to uncover new insights about the nature and value of the emotion. Hope is often used by individuals and institutions in positions of power to influence human behaviour; it is promised, manufactured, sold, and bought into in political, corporate, and health care contexts. Exploring more deeply how the language of hope is coopted by privileged members of

society in ways that keep members of oppressed groups in their place is crucial if we are to adequately understand the risks of hope in moral, social, and political life. This dissertation is thus a starting point for a broader, and much needed, ethics and politics of hope. With a better understanding of what hope is like, one that attends explicitly to hope's moral, social, and political dimensions, we are better positioned to take up this task.

Attending explicitly to features of social difference, and the ways in which power, privilege, and oppression affect experiences of hope has also enriched our understanding of *normative* hope: the hope we invest in others to abide by norms we endorse. On Martin's view, which introduces the notion of normative hope into the philosophical literature, the reactive attitude that tracks the realization of normative hope is gratitude and the reactive attitude that tracks the thwarting of a normative hope is disappointment. Cases in which members of oppressed groups place their normative hopes in privileged people teach us that gratitude does not (and should not) track normative hope in all cases; and anger, not merely disappointment, can track (and justifiably track) the thwarting of normative hope. Normative hope is not aspirational, as Martin suggests. It does not imply beliefs about "special" challenges to agents' compliance with norms. Normative hope is a form of hope we place in others to abide by norms we endorse, acknowledging that compliance with norms is ultimately up to others. And in moving from the interpersonal to the political, it will be important to extend the discussion further, developing an account of normative hope that can make sense of the hopes we invest not only in other human agents, but also the hopes we invest in social groups and institutions to live up to norms we endorse.

I have also addressed difficulties in sorting through the value and risks of hope that arise from theorizing hope alongside privilege and oppression. Though hope might be good for members of oppressed groups to cultivate in resisting their oppression for practical reasons, hope is itself threatened by oppression (and hope can even be used as a tool of oppression). Evaluating hope by attending only to (epistemic and practical) rationality is insufficient to make sense of why and how hope can be valuable and risky to individuals and communities, especially in fraught social and political contexts in which power dimensions come into play. I have argued that, beyond rationality, there are other important evaluative questions we can ask about hope that are helpful for understanding hope's value in these contexts, as well as the value of hope more generally.

I have argued that hope can be evaluated not only for whether it is epistemically and/or practically rational, but also for fittingness and moral justification. There is, most importantly, a moral constraint on hope: if a hope is not morally justified (or at least not ruled out on moral grounds), then it ought to be given up. Morally justified hopes can also be fitting or unfitting; and, as I have argued, there are sometimes good practical reasons for sustaining strong hope when the strength of one's hope is not fitting given the probability that it will be realized (as in the case of cancer patients' hopes for a cure). Other times, the (moral and practical) risks of hope override its practical benefits to individual wellbeing, such as when individuals' strong moral and political hopes enable them to turn away from pressing, real-world problems. And in thinking about the value of hope in such contexts, it is crucial to attend to the role of individuals and institutions in positions of power in helping to bring about, shape, and encourage the hopes of individuals in less powerful

positions. My aim has been to bring to light some of the problems and questions of importance in moving beyond evaluating the rationality of individuals' hopes toward an understanding of the value and risks of hope more generally in an unjust social world.

But I have shown that we cannot adequately understand the hopes individuals form in contexts of oppression without considering the relationship between hope and moral anger: an emotion that many have advocated as rational and justified in response to moral wrongdoing, injustice, and oppression. I have argued that the relationship between anger and hope is complex. On the one hand, anger often responds to thwarted hopes: we invest our hopes in other people, groups, and institutions to live up to the demands of morality and justice; and when they fail to do so, anger ensues. But anger also tends to embody, or is accompanied by, the formation of new hopes: the hope that wrongdoers apologize and display remorse, the hope that the criminal justice system does right by victims, the hope that one's situation will improve moving forward, and so on. In disagreement with Nussbaum (2016), anger does not always or necessarily involve a wish (or hope) for payback, but a broad range of outcomes for which angry people might hope. The hopes embodied in anger responses are all part of the more general hope for repair. It might be worth exploring further whether vindictive hopes can be justified.

But as we have seen, the anger of members of oppressed groups is not often met with what philosophers have called "emotional uptake" and the hopes embodied in their anger responses tend to remain unrealized. In these cases, anger sometimes evolves into the emotion of moral bitterness. Moral bitterness, on my view, is paradigmatically a form of anger involving a loss of hope that a perceived injustice or other moral wrong will be

sufficiently acknowledged and addressed. There is a further and interesting question of whether individuals can be "born into bitterness," that is, whether they can *learn* to be hopelessly angry without first experiencing anger alongside hope for a better life and world.

Despite its reputation as an inherently inappropriate and destructive emotion, I have argued that bitterness is sometimes a justified emotional response. Bitterness is morally justified and fitting when it tracks a real injustice or other moral wrong (not just a perceived one), and when the perception of the wrong as unacknowledged and insufficiently addressed is correct. In other words, when there are good reasons for the agent to have *lost hope* for repair. And although bitterness involves a loss of hope, it does not necessarily lead to despair and inaction. Sometimes, moral agents are motivated to continue on in their moral and political struggles in the absence of hope that their efforts will be successful. We can see losses of hope and continued resistance in the lives of activists like Derrick Bell and Ta-Nehisi Coates, and in the many social movements that have arisen in response to persistent, collective, wide-reaching moral failures.

I have tried to make sense of continued struggle and the absence of hope by introducing faith into the discussion. Faith is a form of confidence in which, or about which, one has faith that goes beyond the evidence available. Faith in God (religious faith), in other human beings or humanity at large (faith in humanity), and faith in one's moral convictions and the intrinsic value of morality (moral faith) are ways in which people resist despair. Faith enables resilience to the conditions in which people find themselves, and it can serve as a bedrock for the renewal or strengthening of hope when all hope seems lost

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or out of reach. Faith is part of the story of what brings people together in solidarity against injustice and oppression.

Sustained by faith and other emotions, attitudes, and traits that remain motivating elements of individuals' psychologies despite their losses of hope, individuals come together in what I call moral-political solidarity: that is, solidarity based in a shared moral vision carried out through political action. Through moral-political solidarity, a new form of hope emerges—the collective hope of solidarity. Hope is collective when the desired outcome is for a group (or groups), when it is shared by at least some others, when the hopeful agent perceives the possible-but-not-certain desired outcome as encouraging in part because of the formation of the collective, and when the agency needed to bring about the hoped-for outcome is collective agency. The collective hope of solidarity arises through witnessing, or participating, in collective action. And whether one is ultimately hoping for a utopian ideal of justice, or whether one is hoping more modestly for small victories that might fade away as injustices under oppressive conditions take new shapes and forms, hoping in solidarity by resisting the powerful people and institutions that stand in the way of social justice is a way of *hoping well* for justice.

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