Peirce's Prejudices against Hispanics and the Ethical Scope of His Philosophy

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IN TWO LETTERS concerning the Spanish-American War of 1898, Charles Sanders Peirce openly expresses some egregious prejudices against several groups of people, including Hispanics—people of at least partly Spanish origin in the Iberian Peninsula or the Americas (L 254 and L 339; reprint, translation to Spanish, and commentary in Nubiola and Zalamea 76–81[1]). In an undated letter to his cousin Henry Cabot Lodge, a Massachusetts politician, Peirce writes regarding the war: "I don't believe the Spaniards will make a good fight; for as I have studied them in Spain, the whole people has been corrupted with the centuries of cruelty, injustice and rapine they have indulged in, and have little real manhood left" (L 254; reprint in Nubiola and Zalamea 77). In the same letter, Peirce characterizes Cubans favorably, but only by disparaging almost everyone else: "As for the Cubans, they have passed through the refining furnace of adversity, and those of them that inhabited Key West, refugees mainly, the winter I was there, were far better than the Negroes, the Bahama people, or the Americans, there" (L 254; reprint in Nubiola and Zalamea 77). Presumably the United Statesians were not New Englanders of Peirce's educated elite. Furthermore, in a letter dated 7 May 1898, to his brother James Mills Peirce, Peirce writes: "I am entirely in favor of the war. Two years ago I thought the United States instead of recognizing Cuba, for which there was no justification, ought to have intervened in the name of civilization. Besides, I have always thought we wanted Cuba, and what I have seen of the Cubans makes me think them very superior to the Spaniards of Spain" (L 339; reprint in Nubiola and Zalamea 79). As it turns out, Peirce thinks well of the Cubans, but only insofar as they are worthy of the United States's imperialist, allegedly civilizing, tutelage. In the letter, Peirce goes on to say that even if no formal proof can be produced that the Spaniards in Cuba blew up the *USS*

Maine, he thinks it is clear that the Spaniards did it and that the United States did well to go to war because of the explosion, even if the sabotage was not formally declared the cause of the war. He concludes: "Besides that, I think it is a very fortunate thing to have a war with Spain; for we could not go on forever without a war. It might have been Germany, with which we must probably fight sooner or later; certainly we must if we are not prepared for it. Now nothing could wake us up but an actual war" (L 339; reprint in Nubiola and Zalamea 79).

Should Peirce's prejudices matter in terms of his *own* philosophy? I claim that they do matter and that Peirce's prejudicial statements should be scrutinized and criticized in terms of his own philosophy. I have anticipated some reasons in my review of Jaime Nubiola and Fernando Zalamea's *Peirce y el mundo hispánico* (see Campos, Rev. of *Peirce*), but here I aim to elaborate and deepen them. I will argue that the philosophical upshot goes far beyond a dispute about these particular views. What is at stake is the systematic interpretation and application of the ethical scope of his philosophy—that is, of his agapism, sentimentalism, and critical common-sensism in integral relation to his theory of inquiry and his account of the normative sciences of aesthetics, ethics, and logic.

In my review, I generally agreed with Nubiola's own critical emphasis on assessing the articulation between responsible philosophy and life (Nubiola and Zalamea 17), and I noted Nubiola's interest in exploring the ways in which Peirce's biography relates to his philosophy. In this regard, though, I found that Nubiola assesses Peirce fairly and positively when the latter's life and thought, in relation to Spain, merits praise as scientist and philosopher, but fails to criticize Peirce thoroughly, on the grounds of Peirce's *own* philosophy, when the New Englander displays his cultural prejudices in commenting on Hispanic character and culture. I then offered at least two important reasons why the criticism is philosophically important from a Peircean standpoint.

First, Peirce failed to live up to his own logic of inquiry. In fact, Peirce's imperialist bravado clouded his logical judgment. Even though no formal proof of the Spaniards' blowing up the *USS Maine* existed, Peirce found it safe to hypothesize their responsibility and to go to war because of this hypothesis. He was the same philosopher, however, who developed a logic of abduction in which one of the criteria for selecting among tentative hypotheses is the cost of testing them (CP 5:600; n.d.).[2] But the material and human cost of war is high. Peirce's reasoning here indeed appears to be "bellicose flippancy" at best, as Nubiola calls it (Nubiola and Zalamea 76), and prejudiced, imperialistic warmongering at worst.

Second, Peirce fails to live up to his sentimentalism and critical common-sensism. Beyond a philosophy of scientific inquiry, Peirce developed a thorough philosophical system to understand human experience in its interrelated affective, active, and cognitive dimensions. For Peirce, philosophy and life, thought and action, are informed by what Lara Trout aptly calls affectivity—the dimension of human living experienced in natural and social environments that encompasses Peircean feeling, emotion, sentiment, instinct, doubt, belief, and habit, among other affective elements (Trout, *Politics*). Trout develops this notion to show how, according to Peirce, the processes of cognition and habit-formation of human beings are influenced by the social and political habits of their communities, often in ways that the individual cannot identify unless a critical process takes place. Thus, Peirce's method of criticism of habit formation at the affective level, including his critical common-sensism, can be effectively deployed to identify and change deleterious habits. Trout herself concentrates on the case of how members of socially privileged groups can, from an early age, uncritically internalize exclusionary, prejudicial habits prevalent in their social contexts. Following Trout, then, Peirce's prejudices against Hispanics can be understood as affective habits internalized from his socio-cultural context. He lets these views operate as practical guides for action while failing to identify, criticize, and modify these habits, *in spite of* his philosophy.

I have had the honor of receiving two responses, in lectures and in print, to my book review. I will discuss them briefly in order to prepare a more thorough elaboration of the two aforementioned critical points. Nubiola himself, after summarizing my criticisms, observes that it is not easy to answer my charges since they "could be anachronically extended also to Peirce's occasional sexist and racist expressions or his opposition to the abolition of slavery" ("Charles Peirce" 15). He then seems to explain that he chose to be silent so that Peirce's anti-Hispanic views revealed their own objectionable nature: "The striking point to me is that passing silently over those obvious prejudices is just the European style, while Campos epitomizes the American style of candid explicitness with his reproach to me for not having criticized Peirce in terms of his own philosophy. European elegance is totally opposite to the open American style. Perhaps my comment tonight is an attempt to find a middle way" (Nubiola, "Charles Peirce" 15). Setting Nubiola's cultural stereotypes aside, I would like to suggest that open criticism is not a matter of undue anachronism. It does not suffice to say that Peirce was a man of his time. There were better men and women. Just to mention two men who, like

Peirce, were educated among the elite in their respective place and time, recall Henry David Thoreau's opposition to slavery or witness José Martí's denial that there should be animosity between peoples on the alleged basis of race. Even though he lived as a Cuban in the midst of explicit United Statesian imperialist ambition to control his native land, Martí wrote:

> There can be no racial animosity, because there are no races. The theorist and feeble thinkers string together and warm over the bookshelves races which the well-disposed observer and the fair-minded traveler vainly seek in the justice of Nature where man's universal identity springs forth from triumphant love and the turbulent hunger for life. The soul, equal and eternal, emanates from bodies of different shapes and colors. Whoever foments and spreads antagonism and hatred between the races, sins against humanity. But as nations take shape among other different nations, there is a condensation of vital and individual characteristics of thought and habit, expansion and conquest, vanity and greed which could . . . be turned into a serious threat for the weak and isolated neighboring countries, declared by the strong country to be inferior and perishable. The thought is father to the deed. (238)

This was written in 1891, almost eight years before Peirce's letters disparaging peoples and promoting a war for the control of Cuba.

Not only were there better men and women, however. More importantly for us, Peirce's own philosophy *already* provided the tools to criticize prejudiced dispositions such as his own. In fact, they already provided a philosophical method to criticize as well the undeniable prejudices that Nubiola points out when he writes that "the anti-Hispanic trend in the American culture has its counterpart in the anti-Americanism that has been a dominant and leading factor—and which is still active today—in Hispanic culture throughout the twentieth century, both in Spain and in the Hispanic countries of Central and South America" ("Charles Peirce" 15). Peirce's philosophy would have provided ways to arrive at Martí's position from a Spanish American perspective, namely that

> one must not attribute, through a provincial antipathy, a fatal and inborn wickedness to the continent's fair-skinned nation simply because it does not speak our language, nor see the world as we see it, nor resemble us in political defects, so different from ours, nor favorably regard the excitable, dark-skinned people, or look charitably, from its still uncertain eminence, upon those less favored by history, who climb the road of republicanism by heroic stages. The self-evident facts of the problem should not be

> obscured, because the problem can be resolved, for the peace of centuries to come, by appropriate study, and by tacit and immediate union in the continental spirit. (Martí 238)

The issue is not to point philosophical and ethical fingers at each other across the Río Bravo (or Rio Grande) and the Caribbean Sea; the issue is the thorough understanding and living out of Peirce's own philosophy. And his philosophy *already* demanded a more intimate coordination of thought and life. This is the point, and in this sense, I tend to agree with Nubiola when he affirms:

> It has often been said that the central problem of Hispanic philosophy in the twentieth century has been that of the connection between thought and life. In very general terms this is also the central theme of American pragmatism. Or, rather, pragmatism is a response from scientific and life experience to the typical problem of modern Cartesianism concerning the rift between rational thought and creative vitality. ("Charles Peirce" 16)

The elaboration of my critical points below, then, does not aim at further controversy with Nubiola but at a careful examination of the scope of Peirce's philosophy in understanding and criticizing prejudicial and socially deleterious habits.

To this end, I will also consider briefly Bernardo Canteñs's reply to my review. He attributes to me, in order to refute it, a claim I did not make, namely, that Peirce's prejudicial views are "philosophically relevant since [they contradict] many . . . chief precepts of his *scientific* philosophy" (17; emphasis added). I never reduced Peirce's philosophy to a *scientific* one; in fact, one of my main points in the review, as it will be in this paper, is that his philosophy is far more than a narrowly conceived scientific philosophy. But Canteñs misattribution and misinterpretation already heralds his main point. According to him, "Peirce maintained the Aristotelian distinction between theoretical and practical knowledge and the different methods of reasoning that accompanied each" (17). He cites or alludes to passages from the 1898 *Cambridge Conferences*, which will be discussed below. In one passage, Peirce condemns the Hellenic tendency to mingle philosophy and practice, and Canteñs concludes that it "perspicuously illustrates [the] division between theory and practice" (17). He does not ponder whether the only alternative to mingling theory and practice is to *divide* them sharply, thus breaching *continuity* in the division. Alluding to Peirce's refusal to treat matters of vital importance in the lectures, Canteñs again concludes that "Peirce insisted that

things of vital importance are not relevant to theoretical reason or science, drawing a sharp line between practical and theoretical reasoning" (17). Canteñs thus finds strong divisions and *sharp* lines of demarcation where, I will claim, Peirce did not draw them.[3] I would even claim that Peirce's synechism requires a different presumption. Nevertheless, Canteñs appeals to *his* sharp distinction to conclude:

> If we treat [Peirce's claims about the Spaniards and Spanish culture] as claims that pertain to the practical affairs of life, then Campos's criticism that Peirce's prejudiced views toward Spanish culture contradict his own philosophy is false. I believe this is the way we should interpret Peirce's claims, since I hardly believe that he meant them as serious theoretical, scientific propositions. Nevertheless, it is still the case that we may criticize Peirce for his prejudiced views about Hispanic culture, but we cannot, as Campos suggests, criticize him for contradicting his own philosophy. (17)

Not only does Canteñs ignore my appeal to critical common-sensism and sentimentalism, but he also seems to be completely unaware that in denying the continuous link between theory and practice, he is contradicting Nubiola's central thesis, namely, that Peirce's philosophy—like Hispanic and pragmatist philosophy—aimed at an intimate coordination of thought and life. Moreover, his reading of Peirce's view on the relation of theory and practice is too narrow, as it ignores alternative interpretations, and it seriously impoverishes the full scope of Peirce's philosophical thought and its relevance. A more comprehensive reading requires, first, a more discerning and synechistic interpretation of the relation between theory and practice. Second, it is required that we think carefully and systematically about the relationship between Peirce's theory of inquiry, sentimentalism, and critical common-sensism. I elaborate these two issues in the next two sections.

I. Peirce on the Relation between Theory and Practice

In the first 1898 *Cambridge Conferences* lecture, "Philosophy and the Conduct of Life," Peirce does begin with a description of what he considers to be the aims and character of Hellenic philosophy. He claims that the "Greeks expected philosophy to affect life,—not by any slow process of percolation of forms, as *we* may expect—but forthwith in the person and soul of the philosopher himself rendering him different from ordinary men in his views of right conduct" (RLT 106).[4] But he believes Aristotle to have been guided by different aims and a different philosophical outlook. Then he proclaims:

> This theoretical science was for [Aristotle] one thing, animated by one spirit and having knowledge of theory as its ultimate end and aim. Aesthetic studies were of a radically different kind; while Morals, and all that relates to the conduct of life, formed a *third* department of intellectual activity, radically foreign in its nature and idea, from both the other two. Now Gentlemen, it behooves me, at the outset of this course, to confess to you that in this respect I stand before you an Aristotelian and a scientific man, condemning with the whole strength of conviction the Hellenic tendency to mingle Philosophy and Practice. (RLT 107)

Peirce thus rejects mingling philosophy and practice in the Hellenic style. But what is the alternative to mingling philosophical theory and practice? Canteñs wants to sever them, disrupting continuity. However, I think Peirce has a different alternative in mind. Continuing, he writes:

> There are sciences, of course, many of whose results are almost immediately applicable to human life, such as physiology and chemistry. *But the truly scientific investigator completely loses sight of the utility of what he is about*. . . . [I]n physiology and chemistry, the man whose brain is occupied with utilities, though he will not do much for science, may do a great deal for human life. But in philosophy, touching as it does upon matters which are, and ought to be, sacred to us, the investigator who does not stand aloof from all intent to make practical applications, will not only obstruct the advance of the pure science, but what is infinitely worse, he will endanger his own moral integrity and that of his readers. (RLT 107; emphasis added)

Peirce's warning is that scientific or philosophical theorizing should not be constrained or guided by practical utility. The aim of theorizing is knowledge of truth—presumably, given his overall work, fallible knowledge of the truth as well as we can approximate it. He reaffirms this warning when he admonishes "how exceedingly desirable, not to say indispensable it is, for the successful march of discovery in philosophy and in science generally, that practical utilities, whether low or high, should be put out of sight by the investigator" (RLT 113). It is in this sense that an earnest inquirer into the truth cannot serve two masters, "*theory* and *practice*" (RLT 113).

The warning, in sum, is that concern with practical utility should not block the road of theoretical inquiry. Such inquiry is worthwhile in its own right, regardless of its utility. In contemporary terms, we might say that research in mathematics or physics ought not to be constrained by and circumscribed to applications in engineering, or research in biology by applications to biotechnology, or research in logic by applications to computer

programming, or research in ethics by applications to contemporary issues in business or medicine.

Peirce's warning *is not*, however, that theory may not influence practice when such an influence may be appropriate. Peirce in fact explicitly does admit the possibility that philosophical principles may ultimately influence religion and ethics as guides of conduct: "I do not say that Philosophical science should not ultimately influence Religion and Morality; I only say that it should be allowed to do so only with secular slowness and the most conservative caution" (RLT 108). Conservative caution is not prohibition. It is possible, then, for philosophical theory to provide, or at least critically examine, principled guides to conduct.[5]

Moreover, the warning *is not* that the logical methods of inquiry that scientists and philosophers deploy in their theoretical endeavors may not have some applicability in practical affairs. To the contrary, these methods of inquiry, which stem from the three general patterns of all reasoning—abduction, deduction, and induction—are common to scientific theory and practice. This is quite explicit in the fourth 1898 *Cambridge Conferences*, entitled "The First Rule of Logic" (RLT 165–80). In that lecture, once again, the main difference between scientific theory and practice is articulated in terms of their aims or ends—science pursues truth regardless of its utility for vitally important matters (RLT 176–78). For this reason, scientific theory and practice require different attitudes toward facts—for theory, facts are vehicles conducting inquiry toward truth in the long run, whereas for practice, facts "are the obstacles it has to turn, the enemy of which it is determined to get the better" (RLT 177). I interpret that we must get the better of facts in our physical, biological, social, political, and cultural environments in order to survive and grow—that is, as a practical matter of living well. However, the *same* logical methods of inquiry serve both scientific theory and practice, according to Peirce in "The First Rule of Logic." In particular, both science and practice require, at the outset of inquiry, retroductions or abductions, even if hypotheses that serve the aims of theory may not serve the aims of practice and vice versa. In science, we do not strictly "believe" hypotheses in the sense of being unwilling to revise them in the face of evidence; we only hold them to be true fallibilistically, for the time being, and for theoretical reasons. In practice, in contrast, we believe our hypotheses in the sense of being willing to act upon them (RLT 177). One reason is that environing contexts demand, for survival and growth, the logical fixation of belief and action consequent with that belief. In Peirce's words, "practice requires something to go upon, and it will be no consolation to it to know that it is on the path to objective

truth,—the actual truth it must have, or when it cannot attain certainty must at least have high probability, that is must know that though a few of its ventures may fail the bulk of them will succeed" (RLT 177).

Indeed, contrary to those who would deny, on allegedly Peircean grounds, the cogency *in practice* of logical methods of inquiry, Peirce affirms that practice relies more urgently and decisively on effective inductions than *scientific* theory does:

> As practice apprehends it, the conclusion [of ongoing inquiry] no longer rests upon mere retroduction, it is inductively supported. For a large sample has now been drawn from the entire collection of occasions in which the theory comes into comparison with fact, and an overwhelming proportion, in fact all the cases that have presented themselves, have been found to bear out the theory. And so, says Practice, I can safely presume that so it will be with the great bulk of the cases in which I shall go upon the theory, especially as they will closely resemble those which have been well tried. In other words there is now reason to believe in the theory, for belief is the willingness to risk a great deal upon a proposition. (RLT 177)

There is no severance but continuity of theory and practice here. In fact, when a theory has been long-standing and well-confirmed, it affords grounds for action given our practical—not our purely scientific—aims. In other words, our scientific and our practical attitudes toward a theory that resulted from an original retroduction are different because the aims of science and practice are different. Importantly, the latter requires logically settled belief for the sake of intelligent action, notwithstanding the previously emphasized role of sentiment in practice. However, the same methods of inquiry are cogent to both science and practice.

Clearly, Peirce in 1898 still struggled with the articulation of the relation between theory and practice. As Douglas Anderson writes of Peirce's 1877 "The Fixation of Belief," one could say of the 1898 *Cambridge Conferences* that Peirce was still "grasping for the continuity between theory and practice that he later sought to develop in 'A Neglected Argument for the Reality of God,'" in 1908 (Anderson, *Strands* 85). Peirce is grasping, even struggling, to articulate a *relation* between theory and practice, not to sever them completely. In the wider scope of Peirce's comprehensive work, I think it is most reasonable to interpret theory and practice as being in continuous relation with each other, even if distinguishable in their aims. Anderson, for instance, has argued for this continuity in terms of the relationship between science and religion (Anderson, "Peirce's God"; Anderson, "Peirce's Com-

mon Sense"). In turn, I adduce the case of mathematics. From a Peircean standpoint, practical problems act as enabling conditions for the possibility of mathematical theorizing—or investigation of the necessary consequences of pure hypotheses—while mathematical theorizing develops knowledge of potentially practical usefulness without being constrained by such practical ends (Campos, "Imagination" 139). Or consider Peirce's application of mathematical diagrammatic reasoning to ethical deliberation in his 1903 essay "What Makes a Reasoning Sound?" (EP2 242–57).[6] Our ethical deliberations deploy methods analogous to those of mathematical reasoning. We create diagrammatic representations of hypothetical situations and try to anticipate the consequences of transformations of the situation by experimenting upon the diagram. In this process, the mathematical ability to hold a hypothetical situation clearly in mind while inwardly experimenting upon it is crucial to ethical reasoning. Thus logical methodology serves practical ethical deliberation. I stand by my claim, then, that Peirce's logic of inquiry, with its principles of good reasoning, should have prevented him from supporting a war on the basis of an extremely fallible abductive inference, especially when taking into consideration the practical cost of acting on that hypothesis. Peirce's very logic of abduction demanded prudence.

An analogous position may be articulated by considering the relationship between reason and instinct in "Philosophy and the Conduct of Life." Peirce argues that "in practical affairs, in matters of Vital Importance, it is very easy to exaggerate the importance of ratiocination" (RLT 110). This is because there are three types of reasoning, but only one applies directly to matters of vital importance. Deduction only ascertains the necessary consequences of our hypotheses but provides to us no new information. Induction depends upon probabilities and only applies in situations where there is an endless multitude of insignificant risks, as with an insurance company. Abduction, however, follows *il lume naturale* or the light of reason, and "it is really an appeal to instinct. Thus, Reason, for all the frills [it] customarily wears, in vital crises, comes down upon its marrow bones to beg the succour of instinct" (RLT 111). This is why Peirce affirms: "It is the instincts, the sentiments, that make the substance of the soul. Cognition is only its surface, its locus of contact with what is external to it" (RLT 110).

However, this does not lead Peirce to sever reason from instinct, to divide them, or to draw sharp lines of demarcation between them or their provinces. Their relationship is one of continuity and intimate coordination: "Reason, then, appeals to sentiment in the last resort. Sentiment on its side feels itself to be the man. That is my appeal to philosophical sentimentalism" (RLT 111).

Notice that it is a *philosophical* sentimentalism. Elsewhere he defines sentimentalism as "the doctrine that great respect should be paid to the natural judgments of the sensible heart" (CP 6:292; 1893). It is philosophical because it is reflexive and demands coordination with reason to guide ethical deliberation. This philosophical sentimentalism prevents Peirce, in fact, from imposing discontinuities, based on inflexible theoretical principles, upon continuity in nature and experience, including intellectual and moral experience: "Sentimentalism implies Conservatism; and it is of the essence of conservatism to refuse to push any practical principle to its extreme limits,—including the principle of conservatism itself. We do not say that sentiment is never to be influenced by reason, nor that under no circumstances would we advocate radical reforms" (RLT 111).

Wisdom, in fact, consists in keeping reason and instinct in a carefully pondered relationship and to give them appropriate weight in different contexts. For Peirce, theoretical reasons should not rashly overrun moral sentiments, while instinct *alone* should not determine scientific opinion (RLT 111–12). We must observe, however, that scientific inquiry must appeal to abductive instinct in its ampliative, creative stages. We must also observe that Peirce developed critical common-sensism so that deleterious moral sentiments would not guide our actions unchecked by our critical, reflexive reason. Thus, as discerning readers, we must be temperate in our interpretation of Peirce's statement that "pure theoretical knowledge, or science, has nothing to say concerning practical matters, and nothing even applicable at all to vital crises. Theory is applicable to minor practical affairs; but matters of vital importance must be left to sentiment, that is, to instinct" (RLT 112). These are matters of emphasis, even strong emphasis, but not of strict severance or division of reason and sentiment and their provinces, theory and practice.

Wisdom, the highest original aim of philosophy, requires that we do coordinate and integrate reason and instinct, theory and practice. In this sense, it is worth quoting at length Peirce's conclusion to his lecture:

> Here we are in this workaday world, little creatures, mere cells in a social organism itself a poor and little thing enough, and we must look to see what little and definite task circumstances have set before our little strength to do. The performance of that task will require us to draw upon all our powers, reason included. And in the doing of it we should chiefly depend not upon that department of the soul which is most superficial and fallible,—I mean our reason,—but upon that de-

> partment that is deep and sure,—which is instinct. Instinct is capable of development and growth,—though by a movement which is slow in the proportion in which it is vital; and this development takes place upon lines which are altogether parallel to those of reasoning. And just as reasoning springs from experience, so the development of sentiment arises from the soul's Inward and Outward Experiences. <such as meditation, on the one hand, and adversity on the other> Not only is it of the same nature as the development of cognition; but it chiefly takes place through the instrumentality of cognition. The soul's deepest parts can only be reached through its surface. In this way the eternal forms, that mathematics and philosophy and the other sciences make us acquainted with will by slow percolation gradually reach the very core of one's being, and will come to influence our lives; and this they will do, not because they involve truths of merely vital importance, but because they [are] ideal and eternal verities. (RLT 121)

Linking this passage to Peirce's overall thought, it is reasonable to interpret that *our* contribution to the very growth of the highest, most general ideal—the *summum bonum* or concrete reasonableness—requires the coordination and integration of reason and sentiment, of theory and practice, in light of reflective and active experience.

I stand by my claim, then, that Peirce's philosophical sentimentalism, complemented by critical common-sensism and complementing his logic of inquiry, should have prevented him from supporting a war on the basis of an extremely fallible abductive inference, especially when considering that deep-seated prejudices functioning at the level of unconscious sentiment guided his abductive process of hypothesis-making. Next I want to turn precisely to the relationship between Peirce's logic of inquiry, sentimentalism, and critical common-sensism, as it pertains to our identification, criticism, and reflective transformation of socio-cultural prejudices. In this regard, I will leave consideration of Peirce's specific prejudices to the side, focusing instead on a larger issue.[7] Namely, it is our very understanding of the ethical scope of Peirce's philosophy that is at stake. Philosophical sentimentalism, agapism, and critical common-sensism are intricate parts of his philosophical system, especially his philosophical method. Without them, we end up with a scientism free to act even on the basis of unchecked prejudices. I will argue that, according to Peirce's own philosophy, the growth of concrete reasonableness in our very concrete ethical and sociopolitical lives requires a thorough, earnest, and coordinated deployment of logical inquiry, philosophical sentimentalism, agapism, and critical common-sensism.

II. Logic of Inquiry, Agapism, and Critical Common-Sensism

In her book *The Politics of Survival*, Lara Trout provides a reasonable articulation of how Peirce's method of science, agapism, and critical common-sensism may work in a coordinated way to identify, criticize, and transform socially pernicious prejudices, and thus to promote the growth of loving reasonableness in very concrete social and political contexts. In the course of studying racism and sexism as specific forms of social injustice, Trout develops a general interpretation of Peirce's philosophy that may be deployed fruitfully in inquiries into other forms of sociopolitical injustice and, I suggest, into the workings of prejudicial habits in diverse cultural contexts.[8]

The starting point of her argument is the recognition that human beings begin life as children—uniquely embodied beings immersed in a social, cultural, political, and natural environing reality—and that they can internalize habits and beliefs non-consciously—that is, without conscious awareness—before they are able to criticize them. Without criticism of their own habits and their sources, people in hegemonic groups may tend to understand their own privileges as social norms (Trout, *Politics* 4–6). In order to substantiate this view, Trout offers a proactive reading of Peirce's texts that foregrounds post-Darwinian embodiment themes and compatibilities with social criticism in his work. Her definition of "affectivity" in fact highlights the post-Darwinian aspects of Peirce's philosophy:

> By "affectivity" I mean the on-going body-minded communication between the human organism and its individual, social, and external environments, for the promotion of survival and growth. This communication is shaped by biological, individual, semiotic, social, and other factors. My treatment of Peircean affectivity includes feelings, emotion, instinct, interest, sympathy, and agapic love, as well as belief, doubt, and habit. (*Politics* 9)

This definition involves Peirce's understanding of the human person as an animal organism and the corresponding view of cognition and habit-taking as embodied and therefore affective.

Trout begins to lay the theoretical groundwork for her analysis of the sources and ways of functioning of non-conscious prejudices by stating Peirce's view of the human individual: "Peirce viewed the individual human organism as a body-minded, social animal who interacts semiotically with the world outside of her" (*Politics* 25). She proceeds to describe the process of habit-taking, which is one of the processes that promotes organic survival and growth, in affective terms: "Human habit-taking is an affective venture,

whereby individuals and groups communicate with their various environments in order to successfully cope and grow, without undue interruptions from environmental factors outside their control" (*Politics* 27). Habit-taking is thus an embodied process—it is a way in which body-minded human organisms transact with their environments.

Trout investigates how our habits may be shaped socially by introducing two concepts, namely, "socio-political secondness" (*Politics* 57–60) and "socialized instinctive beliefs" (*Politics* 63–68). She defines "social secondness" as "socially dictated environmental resistance," that is, resistance due to "social conventions that are largely outside of one's control" (*Politics* 58). This definition appeals to the category of experience that involves reaction and resistance, and that is usually associated with physical or biological environmental resistance but need not be circumscribed that way, even for Peirce. She then defines "socio-political secondness" as "social secondness that is not encountered equally by all members of society . . . [but rather] involves constraint that is directed at non-hegemonic groups. It includes prejudice and discrimination based on factors such as economic class, race, sex, sexuality, and so on" (*Politics* 58).

This concept of "socio-political secondness" extends the range of application of Peirce's philosophy to social and political problems related to systematic, societal prejudice based on race, sex, sexual orientation, economic class, and so on. When people of a specific ethnic or economic background are denied opportunities for education or employment due to social norms or even systematic policies, they are experiencing "socio-political secondness." Peirce's philosophy provides the conceptual architectonic to be able to analyze in detail how such resistances arise and operate. In turn, understanding those ways of operating is necessary in order to be able to eliminate such resistances with the help of conscious self-control and critical common-sensism.

The importance of self-control and critical common-sensism to constrain and guide the operation of socially generated habits is evident from Trout's treatment of the second theme mentioned above, namely, "socialized instinctive beliefs." She expounds Peirce's use of the term "instinct," which "can be broadly construed to reflect both in-born habits, as well as socialized ones" (*Politics* 63). Instincts are belief-habits that may be either naturally inborn or socially acquired, especially in childhood. Trout shows how a discussion of socialized belief-habits is implicit in Peirce's discussion of the method of authority in "The Fixation of Belief." Trout extrapolates socio-politically to "include in the category of 'socialized instinctive beliefs' ideas about race, sex, and other socio-political classifications. Socialized instinctive beliefs are

included in one's common-sense or background beliefs" (*Politics* 65). As a result,

> [i]nstinctive beliefs not only take on common-sense certainty, they also often function non-consciously, that is, without one's conscious awareness. . . . At the same time, instinctive beliefs—at least in some cases—can be raised to conscious attention and scrutiny, which is an exercise of self-control undertaken by Critical Common-sensists. (*Politics* 65–66)

This is why critical common-sensism, which brings logical self-control to bear on background instinctive beliefs, is crucial for the detection and elimination of pernicious social habits of prejudice and exclusion.

In terms of the method of science, Trout points out some potential problems for its application that Peirce leaves unaddressed in the "Illustrations of the Logic of Science" series. Trout explains how Peirce does not address the problem of how background "common-sensical" beliefs can operate non-consciously to influence and bias the application of the method of science for settling communal belief (*Politics* 129). This leads to what Trout calls the "application problem" of the method of science (*Politics* 146–49). When exclusionary, prejudicial, growth-inhibiting belief-habits are internalized non-consciously by members of the community in positions of power, such beliefs become part of their internalized common sense. As a result, even when people consciously pursue the method of science, they may discount or disregard, for the articulation of reality, the testimony or experience of oppressed people in the community. These prejudicial belief-habits, therefore, may thwart the application of the method of science, since crucial data—testimonies and experiences—are ignored. This is one way in which white scientists, for example, could lend scientific credence to "craniology" (*Politics* 147–49).

In the "Illustrations," Peirce only hints at, but does not develop, the solution to the application problem. The solution is twofold. First, it involves the model of agapic evolution, and especially, the agapic sympathy that individual community members offer to each other, in order to validate and respond to the testimony and unjust experiences of oppressed people. Second, the solution involves the active work of critical common-sensism to detect, criticize, and transform growth-inhibiting and exclusionary habits. For brevity, I will refer mostly to the second aspect of the solution.

Regarding the first aspect of the solution, Trout develops the idea that individual experience (via association by contiguity) and creativity (via association by resemblance) are a potential source of insight, novelty, and growth for the community; therefore, agapic love is the ideal that the community should

pursue in its relationship to its individual members—especially insightful, creative ones who may resist communal habits and who may belong to non-hegemonic groups. I observe, then, that for our purposes, the pragmatic meaning of agapism includes the deliberate, sympathetic pursuit of this ideal of inclusion of all individuals into the community, with fair consideration of their perspectives for the scientific fixation of belief. Moreover, the tendency to act out of agapic love may both foster and be fostered by the self-controlled cultivation of sympathetic sentiment. However, Trout continues, applying the agapic ideal in actual communities can be undermined by the functioning of non-conscious exclusionary background beliefs (*Politics* 174–228).

The critical evaluation of common sense, therefore, is crucial to overcome the threat of non-conscious exclusionary beliefs. Thus, Trout moves to defend the following thesis:

> Critical Common-sensism (CCS) is an epistemological doctrine that calls for a critical examination of the common-sense beliefs that underwrite human cognition. It is thus uniquely suited to address social critical concerns about discriminatory beliefs that can become ingrained within one's background beliefs without her or his awareness. The self-controlled scrutiny of background/common-sense beliefs called for by Critical Common-sensism provides the missing piece in terms of the application problem faced by both the scientific method and the agapic ideal. (*Politics* 229)

Trout is indeed preparing the ground for the ultimate upshot of her entire analysis, which is worth quoting at length:

> [W]hen Critical Common-sensism is ideally applied, it does not leave scientific and agapic ideals behind. Rather the strands of science, agape, and Critical Common-sensism weave into a tapestry of loving reasonableness, where the embrace of diverse perspectives promotes growth in knowledge and self-control. Thus Critical Common-sensism provides those in hegemonic groups with consciousness-raising tools that can help them address their blind spots towards discrimination faced by those in non-hegemonic groups. Scientific method and agape provide the epistemological and loving motivation to put this awareness into practice by resisting exclusionary instinctive beliefs despite how strong their influence can be. (*Politics* 229–230)

The core of the argument is the following. Critical common-sensism, when working in unison with the method of science for the fixation of beliefs and with agapic love in human transaction, promotes the growth of the

summum bonum, namely, loving reasonableness. In particular, the rigorous application of critical common-sensism for the identification and eradication of discriminatory, prejudicial instinctive beliefs solves the application problem that threatens both science as the guide to knowledge and truth and agapic sympathy as the guide to human transaction.

Recall that the problem consists in the threat that non-conscious prejudicial beliefs pose to the application of the method of science and the functioning of agapic sympathy in human communities. Critical common-sensism—through its tools of logical analysis, experience, experimentation in imagination, and testimony—addresses the problem by identifying and eradicating such threatening discriminatory biases. In order to do its work, critical common-sensism requires the cultivation of legitimate, critical doubt. This doubt is to be distinguished from Cartesian paper-doubt by the fact that it not only identifies dubitable belief-habits but also works consciously to transform or eliminate them *as embodied, affective habits*. That is, while paper-doubting is to act as if beliefs were merely contents of a mind separated from the body and is therefore to delude oneself by thinking that merely to doubt a belief-habit is enough to eliminate its effective influence over one's actions, critical common-sensist doubting acknowledges that belief-habits are embodied and affective and that therefore especial critical effort is necessary to change or eliminate them.

In the kinds of sociopolitical contexts that Trout analyzes, critical common-sensist doubt takes the form of the "non-hegemonic hypothesis" to the effect that (a) when an oppressed individual or group claims that they are experiencing discrimination, their testimony and experiences ought to be a matter of agapic concern, and (b) their claims deserve investigation by the communal application of the method of science. The cultivation of this form of doubt requires self-control. The cultivation of this "non-hegemonic hypothesis," as supported by Peirce's entire system of philosophy, is our main starting point for redressing some prevalent, though often non-conscious, forms of social injustice.

Trout concludes in fallibilistic spirit, acknowledging further work to be done and reaffirming her deliberate choice of a developmental *telos*, namely, Peirce's ideal of "giving a hand toward rendering the world more reasonable" (*Politics* 283). Overall, the upshot of Trout's analysis is that the coordinated, mutually supportive relationship between the method of science, agapic love, and critical common-sensism provides the way to overcome forms of social injustice that are brought about by non-conscious, hegemonic, prejudicial belief-habits in a community. Her analysis provides a model to extend the

application of Peirce's philosophy to understand many forms in social injustice in a variety of cultural and historical contexts.

The development of Peirce's philosophy in the direction of social criticism, which clearly challenges the establishment in Peirce scholarship, not surprisingly has and will be met with objections. David Dilworth, in his review of Trout's book, poses such objections. Many of them are politically motivated reactions to Trout's progressive politics of inclusiveness. Dilworth's background commitment is his assertion that "Classical Pragmatism has written the perduring epistemological script of and for American exceptionalism" (527). Given this commitment, Dilworth must brand as a co-option of Peirce's philosophy (524) any pragmatist criticism that challenges the notion of United Statesian exceptionalism. Trout, for example, implicitly challenges the dubious notion that the United States is exceptional by pointing out in intelligent detail and philosophical sophistication the operations of ongoing social injustice, underwritten by non-conscious prejudice, in contemporary US society. There is nothing admirably exceptional about perduring prejudice and injustice. Thus Dilworth reacts by insinuating that Trout promotes the "demagoguery of entitlement" and envisions some "form of authoritarian control" to transform "persons and property" (536). This sophism, akin to those commonly heard from pundits in contemporary cable news channels, misrepresents Trout's Peircean stance that promotes democratic dialogue guided by the method of science, inclusive agapism, and critical common-sensism so that *all* voices are heard and pondered in the democratic formation of opinion without authoritative control. Some of Dilworth's complaints, however, are philosophical objections that purport to be grounded in Peirce's system. A consideration of these objections will take us right to the heart of the matter under discussion in this article.

Dilworth alleges that Trout proposes "a concept of 'everyday science' or 'communal science' in lieu of Peirce's concept of 'real science'" (524). Moreover, Trout's "politicized 'consensus theory' collides head-on with Peirce's objective idealism—his sense of truth and reality that is independent of you, me, or any group or epoch of social persons" (524). This is a conjoined pair of familiar objections in disguise, namely, that theory and practice are sharply divided by Peirce, and that his conception of science only pertains to the search for truth in fields such as mathematics, scientific philosophy, and the natural sciences, but not to any kind of social inquiry into justice. Dilworth thus claims:

> Peirce's Pragmatism, phenomenologically, logically, and metaphysically underwritten as Thought in Thirdness as an active force in the universe, does not bottom out in the Secondness of 'making a difference'

> in any local consensus arena. He thus keenly insisted on the difference between theoretical work pursued for its own sake (such as sustained mathematical, logical, and scientific reasoning) and 'vital and important questions' (considerations of which he eloquently assigned to natural sentiment and instinct). (526)

Dilworth here is reading both Trout and Peirce too narrowly. Regarding Trout, she does not substitute everyday science for real science. She rather argues that the method of science, with its logic of inquiry, applies both to theoretical scientific concerns *and* to practical communal investigations into the effective reality of justice in society.[9] Moreover, the application of the method of science may be hampered by the non-conscious prejudicial habits of inquirers, both in theoretical and practical inquiry.[10] Thus, inclusive agapism and critical common-sensism must aid logical inquiry, whether theoretical or practical. Regarding Peirce, I argued above that he does not sever theory and practice, assigning theory exclusively to reason and practice exclusively to instinct. While theorizing must not be constrained by practical utility, for Peirce, theory and practice are differentiable but integrated aspects of our continuous inquiring endeavors. Wisdom, in turn, consists in coordinating, integrating, and giving due weight to reason and instinct according to context.

As for the categories, Dilworth thinks that they operate within a cosmological process evolving toward the growth of concrete reasonableness that does not "bottom out" in the insignificant concerns of local human communities and their problems. In other words, prejudice and injustice in our social worlds are too insignificant for the mighty progress of the cosmos. Thus he insists: "For [Peirce] the heuristic Thirdness of Thought consisted in its ever amplifying *esse in futuro* toward an ideal of 'concrete reasonableness' in the evolutionary universe that does not 'cash out' in any version of social security or expediency" (526). It is true that the guiding, evolving *telos* of concrete reasonableness is general and is not exhausted by any one particular actualization of it, say, in creative mathematical hypotheses, fine works of art, true scientific theories, or just societies. But here Dilworth offers another sophism—false particularization—by claiming that Trout is arguing for some particular version of social security. Her ethical point is more general: agapic sympathy and critical common-sensism ought to complement the method of science in order for inquiry into justice to lead to loving reasonableness in society, whatever particular form that may take in terms of policies or institutions. Moreover, though the ideal is general and cannot be exhaustively embodied by any one particular instance, it must be actualized in some ways for it to

be concrete and effective. The categories are universal and thus present in all particulars. If we accept their universality, they are also at work in particular social relations. Trout helps us to understand, from a Peircean standpoint, that in contemporary society, there is a very real and effective socio-political secondness undergirded, at least in part, by socially acquired, non-conscious prejudice—the very sort of non-conscious prejudice that led Peirce to support war on the basis of an untested hypothesis.

Against this, reasonable ideals, such as justice, must not only develop and grow in our theories but in the very concreteness of our everyday social lives. In the 1905 essay "What Pragmatism Is," Peirce himself explicitly included justice, alongside truth, among the general ideals that constitute the *summum bonum* toward which our self-controlled actions concretely and reasonably strive:

> Not only may generals be real, but they may also be *physically efficient*. . . . [T]he ideas "justice" and "truth" are, notwithstanding the iniquity of the world, the mightiest forces that move it. . . . [T]he pragmaticist does not make the *summum bonum* to consist in action, but makes it to consist in that process of evolution whereby the existent comes more and more to embody those generals which were just now said to be *destined*, which is what we strive to express in calling them *reasonable*. In its higher stages, evolution takes place more and more largely through self-control, and this gives the pragmaticist a sort of justification for making the rational purport [of concepts] to be general. (EP2 343–44)

The arrogant dismissal of marginalized voices or the support of destructive wars driven by cultural and ethnic prejudices concretely disrupt any progress we might make toward understanding *and* actualizing justice. This is a failure in rational self-control, in earnest inquiry, and in agapistic sympathy toward those who may suffer the consequences of injustice in their very lives. It is an ethical failure in terms of the full scope of Peirce's philosophy.

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It has been one hundred years since Peirce's death, several more since he developed his logic of inquiry, philosophical sentimentalism, critical common-sensism, theory of cognition, logical and phenomenological theory of the categories, and cosmology with its strands of tychism, synechism, and agapism. The ideas that he helped us to discover, interpret, and develop have been percolating now for a long time into our communal scholarly inquiries and our individual minds as students of his philosophy. I propose that Peircean efforts to understand not only theoretical questions but questions of

ethical conduct in relation to reason, sentiment, and the logic of inquiry, and questions regarding the very practical operations of prejudice and injustice in concrete social and cultural contexts, are a manifestation and consequence of that percolation of ideas. These efforts are small, fallible, but important steps toward the actualization of concrete reasonableness, even in our quotidian workaday world.

NOTES

1. Following standard practice in Peirce scholarship, letters are numbered according to Robin, *Annotated Catalogue*.

2. Following standard practice in Peirce scholarship, references to Peirce, *Collected Papers*, are abbreviated CP followed by volume and paragraph number and date of drafting or publication.

3. Canteñs is not alone in this regard, as other scholars have read Peirce hastily on this issue. A notable case is Cheryl Misak's. In the first edition of *Truth and the End of Inquiry*, she initially attributed the sharp distinction to Peirce. However, she did not accept it as philosophically satisfactory, and she has reconsidered her interpretation to argue that the sharp distinction between theory and practice does not hold for Peirce himself (*Truth* 169–93).

4. Following standard practice in Peirce scholarship, references to Peirce, *Reasoning*, will be abbreviated RLT.

5. According to her reconsidered view, Cheryl Misak also does not think that theory and practice are severed by Peirce. Rather, what Peirce "was getting at when he made these remarks [about science versus vitally important matters] is that the scientist must keep his eye on the fallible nature of belief" (*Truth* 175). Thus she attempts to develop a position according to which once "we understand what Peirce means by 'instinct', 'experience', and 'commonsense' and once we understand their roles in what he calls scientific inquiry, we can see that vital matters are indeed matters for scientific inquiry" (*Truth* 175). I agree. However, Misak tends to equate instinct with "gut reaction" (*Truth* 170, 174) and mere feeling (*Truth* 177) before coming to characterize instincts as inherited or acquired habits that make up our stock of commonsense, background beliefs (*Truth* 177–78). As a result, in order to defend *her own* cognitivist position about moral beliefs—the view that such beliefs fall primarily under the purview of truth, knowledge, and inquiry (*Truth* 170)—she has to belabor a way to downplay the primary role of sentiment and instinct in practical, including ethical, matters. She tips the balance too strongly in favor of reason to oversee sentiment and instinct. For a rejoinder germane to this discussion, see Aaron Massecar ("Trouble"), who shows how Misak's ethics are unduly or overly cognitivist for Peirce and provides an alternative way to link theory and practice even in Peirce's controversial 1898 lecture "Philosophy and the Conduct of Life." For Massecar, Peirce's warning is that "philosophy, understood as metaphysical speculation relying on logic, should have no part to play in ethical deliberation, which involves sentiment and instinct" ("Trouble"). However, Peirce does allow that reason, even theoretical reason, may guide us to the formation of intelligent habits for practical survival and growth in our organic and social environments ("Trouble"). Massecar sketches a view that in many ways is compatible with Lara Trout's more fully developed position. As I hope to show in the next section,

Trout (*Politics*) provides an insightful way of understanding the relationship between moral belief, habit, affectivity—including sentiment and instinct—and scientific inquiry in Peirce's thought.

6. Following standard practice in Peirce scholarship, references to Peirce, *Essential*, Vols. 1–2, will be abbreviated EP1 and EP2 respectively.

7. Regarding Peirce's intellectual biography, one could claim that in 1898, he had not yet fully developed his critical common-sensism, even if he had already articulated his sentimentalism and agapism. See, for instance, his series of articles known collectively as "The *Monist* Metaphysical Series" of 1891–1893 (EP1 285–371).

8. The following account of Trout's argument summarizes a more complete discussion in Campos, Rev. of *The Politics of Survival*.

9. In placing theoretical and practical beliefs under the scope of the method of science, Trout's position is akin to Misak's reconsidered position (*Truth* 169–93). In a complementary statement of this view, Misak writes that "what Peirce calls 'science' is extremely broad. Any inquiry that aims at getting a belief which would forever stand up to experience and argument abides by the method of science. . . . Peirce thought that metaphysics (when it is well-conducted) and mathematics are aspirants to truth. And so is moral deliberation" ("C. S. Peirce on Vital Matters" 154). I emphasize Trout and Misak's agreement on the applicability of the method of science to moral deliberation; the issue of truth in mathematics deserves closer scrutiny elsewhere.

10. Dilworth conveniently ignores Trout's careful reading of Peirce's theory of *human* cognition (*Politics* 69–127). She shows that according to Peirce, human beings do acquire organically intellectual habits or concepts that function non-consciously. Dilworth must ignore this in order to discredit the view, inconvenient for his political stance, that persons might have non-conscious background prejudices. Trout shows, for instance, that even well-meaning people may naïvely believe "racism" to be eradicated from contemporary US society and thereby unintentionally allow prejudicial habits to operate and have actual consequences in the lives of oppressed or discriminated peoples. For this reason, people in hegemonic groups ought to be sympathetically open to the testimony of people who face oppression or discrimination (Trout, "'Colorblindness'"; Trout, *Politics*). Thus, the prejudiced beliefs may be non-conscious, but they are not "incognizable" as Dilworth claims (526)—rather, prejudiced non-conscious beliefs can be known by their consequences in people's conduct as reported by the testimony of those affected by such conduct.

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