Speech beyond Toleration: On Carlyle and Moral Controversialism Now

HELEN SMALL

Contemporary conflicts over the acceptable limits of free speech in our political and academic spheres heighten the need for a critical account of how norms of public debate should relate to the expressive styles and dispositions that give argument much of its edge and its point. The distinction between "ethos" and "character" that has been the focus of much recent work within critical theory is one helpful way of articulating these interrelated components of argumentative practice: "ethos", Amanda Anderson reminds us in *The Way We Argue Now* (2006) is largely a matter of "the ambient social conditions and norms that guide practice"; "character" has more to do with "the inculcation – and reflective cultivation – of values in the form of habits, dispositions, styles".[1] The task undertaken by Anderson, more than a decade ago now, was to persuade practitioners of literary criticism and of political theory that their fields of practice possess, and to a considerable extent share, "norms and values", and that their ability to defend their treatment of literature and politics as dimensions of "lived experience" involves lucid articulation of those norms. Not a few respondents to Anderson have worried that the regulative ideal she was looking to reaffirm and refit for purpose risked appearing, as Stefan Collini put it, "discursively thin": admirably attentive to the ethical and affective content of debate, but at the price of admitting sufficient variation and intensity in the critical "<u>mode[s]</u> of argument" recommended.[2] It is a measure of the influence of her work, but also of how far cultures of public argument in America and Britain have altered of late, that literary criticism and political thought today seem less in need of persuasion that they <u>have</u> normative ethical dimensions than of clear differentiation between norms that are indispensable, and may require shoring up in the face of opposition, and norms that are contingent or relatively loose (perhaps flexible) agreements.

This essay takes a historical approach to a pressing current problem: how to read and respond to the argumentative practices of the moral and political controversialist in a context where it is vividly clear that some of the norms that frame and regulate "free speech" are contested by the controversialist. Thanks to Anderson and others, we have rich critical vocabularies for describing the complex ethos of modern liberalism as it has developed across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (its doubts and negativities as well as its optimism; its creative utopianism as well as its prosaic rationalism).[3] Controversialism presents, I would suggest, a murkier case. This is in part because those who flagrantly violate free speech norms are often perceived as temperamentally contrarian or narcissistic or just incompetent (or some combination): a pre-emptive reading of individual "character" prevents consideration of shared, or potentially shared, "ethos". By way of probing the relationship between normative and anti-normative thinking about free speech, this essay returns to one of the most notorious literary and political controversialists of the nineteenth century. I argue that Thomas Carlyle's deliberate offences against progressive sentiment in the mid nineteenth century provide a helpful historical basis from which to consider similar challenges today to norms of public argument. Not the least challenge, I will suggest, is the current perception, somewhat anticipated by Carlyle, that constraints on what counts as acceptable public speech may damage rather than assist cultures of argument, tending, indeed, to make the articulation of opinions and beliefs thin and anemic, unfit to express full-hearted moral and political convictions or to engage in the aggression of realpolitik.

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On both sides of the Atlantic, and across much of Europe, the norms governing what may and may not be said under the broad aegis of "freedom of speech", have (it might seem, suddenly) ceased to command the level of formal and informal agreement that has for

decades been a working assumption of our public spheres. Many of those norms, especially the more proceduralist protections on equality and diversity within Western societies, are quite recent (unknown, for example, to the era of Burke, Paine and Wollstonecraft, for whom arguments around liberty were often fiercely ad hominem – and ad feminam). The apparent fragility of norms of politeness and respect in the political sphere right now, of late is not just an effect of recent changes at the top of politics, though what is said at that level can have exemplary force (a US President who tweets an unevidenced accusation in the small hours against the last holder of his office: "How low has President Obama gone … Bad (or sick) guy!"; a UK Foreign Secretary reportedly dismissing as "bollocks" the claim that "freedom of movement is a founding EU principle").[4] On a longer analysis, the emergence of web-based news and social media that are not, and cannot be, regulated as traditional newspaper press and broadcast media were largely regulated and self-regulating, has been eroding the authority of speech norms for a decade.[5]

The media are not the message. On a very long view, Thucydides understood the challenge of securing standards for political discussion and Julius Caesar would, one imagines, have been quick to grasp the efficacy of Twitter. But there is an obvious threat from new and comparatively unrestricted communication platforms to the conventions that defined acceptable free speech in the late twentieth century. As of 2016, we inhabit political landscapes, on both sides of the Atlantic, characterized (in the words of Mark Thompson[6]) by "a kind of super-compressed, high impact political language—questionable in substance" but in the hands of adept practitioners "emotionally pitch-perfect".[7] The result is a peculiar polarisation in the interpretation of free speech, evidenced in America by Breitbart and Safe-Space, in the UK by Britain First[8] and No Platform: on the one hand an aggressive flouting of the standards for public debate; on the other, excessive demands for institutional protections.

Much of the current hostility to “liberalism” (in the American progressive-egalitarian, broadly “leftist” sense, increasingly evident also in the UK) stems from the perception that the normative assumptions by which twentieth- and early twenty-first-century institutions have sought to secure the values of tolerance, diversity, equality, have lost contact with the original and defining liberal-intellectual insistence that participants in open debate be willing to listen to those who do not share their values or priorities. In endorsing public protections, some of them enforceable by law, on what can be said and how it can be said, modern democratic societies have on this analysis put themselves in breach of that principle and fostered a public sphere that has claimed to listen to all comers but plainly not given them equality of standing. In a climate of reaction against dampened or restricted self-expression, strong opinions can appear more authentic for no better reason than that they violate soft norms (and sometimes hard laws)[9] about what ought to be said and how it may be said.

If the values that have defined free speech over much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are to survive, Timothy Garton Ash and others argue, its advocates will have to regain contact with the strenuous openness that underpinned the most influential philosophical formulations in the nineteenth century.[10] Not least, tolerance may have to express itself in fewer restrictions against offence. These are arguments that take us back to the philosophical core of nineteenth-century thinking about liberty of expression. John Stuart Mill was more demanding than is sometimes recalled in his insistence that “free discussion” (233 and passim) means giving a hearing to opinions beyond the pale even of a capacious tolerance: “The best government has no more title to [constrain freedom of speech] than the worst. […]. If all mankind minus one, were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind.”[11] What Mill requires of good government he requires also of the individual: “In the case of any person whose judgment is

really deserving of confidence, how has it become so? […] Because it has been his practice to listen to all that could be said against him" (41). The first risk of constraining free speech is the falsification of the avowed commitment to liberty itself; the risk of failing to constrain it is that one opens a door on views that may prove not only testing but toxic.

Violation of established norms of public discussion provides fertile but unstable material for satire. Here, for example, is Rod Liddle, in The Spectator for 11 March 2017:

> It was International Women's Day on Wednesday of last week. The Guardian had enjoined its readers to send in reports of what they had done to advance the struggle, or how they had been in some way oppressed by men—perhaps raped, or talked to as if they were stupid, or looked at a little coldly when they squirted breast milk over fellow diners at The Ivy. I tried to think of something I had done for the cause but came up short, sad to say.
>
> So instead I tried to show solidarity by spending a substantial amount of International Women's Day looking at a photograph of Emma Watson's tits. The actress is a radical feminist campaigner and has even been given some kind of role at the United Nations to advance the cause of female liberation across the globe. Presumably as part of this drive to stop men regarding women as sex objects, Emma got her tits out for *Vanity Fair*.
>
> I have to say, I heartily approve. They seemed to me attractive and exquisitely English breasts [*&c*.][12]

Parodying progressive feminist concern back to itself as old-fashioned self-titillation, Liddle (not for the first time) taps into the political slipperiness of a conscious illiberalism now widely in evidence—primarily, but not exclusively, on the political right. (I prefer the description "conscious illiberalism" to "radical liberalism", The Spectator's historic self-description,[13] since the nature, and the extent, of the "radicalism" must be in question.) Conscious illiberalism involves a deliberate testing of the limits of political tolerance by exposing it to an order of challenge that violates the current consensus, or presumed current consensus, on admissible speech. In that vein, Liddle's response to International Women's Day says less about the condition of feminism today (beyond a strong hint that "the cause" may not be well-served by a celebrity-struck media) than about the condition of a modern "free" press, where the calculated offence provoked by his lingering over the sight of Emma

Watson's "tits" is guaranteed to hit a higher point on the public outrage barometer than her baring of them. This is high-risk humour: a casual grammatical running together of "the struggle" (the dated locution puts his commitment immediately in doubt) with an undiscriminated list of offenses against women (a naughty parataxis of rape, casual disrespect, and the up-market diners' moue against implausibly misfired breast milk), hinting provocatively at the idea that demonstrated commitment to "the cause" on 8 March 2017 may be not much more than self-promotional display.

"What I Did on International Women's Day" is a piece of leftist-progressivist-baiting in a magazine that is a historic institution of the genre, and that was not always as closely allied to political conservatism as it has been in recent years. Liddle has a critical point. Viewed from one direction Modern Western societies are freer than they were forty years ago (taking one's top off no longer looks like much of a political act, especially when it is tastefully done in Vanity Fair); but from another perspective the extent of public tolerance, not least to satire itself, is open to question. Christopher Hitchens, who may stand as the presiding spirit of positive liberty as it crosses the bounds of left-liberal consensus, asks us to think of laughter as "the unfailing symptom of intelligence".[14] That is almost certainly too self-serving, but it will appeal to anyone who sees danger in constraining the style and tenor as well as the content of "opinion". The joke, for those who find Liddle funny, is still on the putative feminist without a sense of humour; but it is also on Vanity Fair, on International Women's Day, on the UN, and (in a strenuously generous reading) The Spectator itself, for having—apparently—not much to evidence in the way of progress. (It would not be hard to do better, but the dig at the "liberal media' rather depends on not trying.)

Freedoms of speech that violate agreed norms of expression may be anti-normative in the sense that they are consciously rule-breaking but not rule-denying: acknowledging that certain norms command wide adherence, but testing their strength and latitude (humour is

one occasion for testing the weight of the rule). They may also be anti-normative in a deeper sense, denying the value of norms others consider settled. The impulse in that case may be merely contrarian; it may reflect alternative values; in the most problematic cases it emanates from denial of the existence of norms (Mill considered such cases very rare). The political/critical challenge, of course, lies in telling the difference. In any of these cases, violation of the conventional terms of engagement gains much of whatever political traction it finds from the "authenticity" associated with refusing to play by the rules. Authenticity (it follows) may itself may be a more or less calculated effect: Thompson rightly allows for a spectrum, from the manipulative "anti-rhetorician" (say, Silvio Berlusconi) through to the purely intuitive (in which category he places Donald J. Trump).[15]

The proponent of "positive liberty" who sets out to test the bounds of current tolerance is more likely than the intuitive speaker to have exemplary models in view. Liddle, at an earlier point in the current assault on "liberalism", engages in a helpful piece of literary self-credentialing:

> Now that post-Marxian vacuous liberalism is over, it is surely about time that we revived the vigorous writings of Thomas Carlyle and made him fashionable once again. He is too little read and admired these days, perhaps partly on account of his arguably controversial treatise "Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question" (1849) — which, while well intentioned, may nonetheless these days ruffle one or two feathers on our university campuses, or within the BBC. But there was of course a lot more to Thomas Carlyle than simply a benign, if misguided, wish to abolish slavery while keeping a few blacks on as indentured house servants. He was very astringent on celebrity culture, economics, the French revolution and, perhaps most importantly, prisons.[16]

If one is looking to model speech that, as a matter of principle, over-steps the conventional boundaries on free speech, Carlyle has as good a claim as anyone to exemplarity. But where Mill has remained philosophically influential—still the most articulately exacting and urgent exponent of the ground rules for free public discussion in a democracy—Carlyle's tenure in the culture has been less secure. In part a casualty of his own excesses (he is "a rhetorician

out of <u>necessity</u>," observed Nietzsche, his sharpest reader: "he requires noise"[17]), he looks stylistically more alien at this historic distance than Mill, whose clean rationality ("insulting clarity", to Nietzsche[18]) has survived better.

That Carlyle is enjoying something of a revival at present[19] has much to do with recognition (variously motivated) of how far the arch-antagonist of normative moral and political assumptions in the nineteenth century shared Mill's basic precepts—above all the understanding that "habit is the deepest law of human nature [...] our supreme strength; if also, in certain circumstances, our miserablest weakness".[20] A core aim of Carlyle's "modern Gnosticism",[21] as of Mill's liberalism, was to dislodge habit and make his reader aware of the ways in which narrow upbringing, limited experience, insufficient familiarity with differences of custom and language, blinker us to (for Mill) a wider range of perspectives, (for Carlyle) higher truths. But where Mill looks to persuade an intelligent reader point by point, logically, through careful accumulation of evidence, Carlyle wants to take a "besom of destruction" to logic. His ideal audience is not critical but "ardent" and "boundlessly tolerant".[22] Even Nietzsche himself cannot represent as effectively the literary history of the rhetorical affront calculated to stretch settled habits of thought, since Nietzsche's challenge was to morality itself, and Carlyle remains, finally, a moralist of a very taxing sort. Nietzsche rightly recognized in him a significant but incomplete challenge both to substantive beliefs (equality, humanitarianism, and so on) and to norms of expression.

Taking the satirist at his provocative word, then, this essay goes back to Carlyle to elaborate the ethical counter-exemplarity of the moral controversialist: the rhetorical gambit of making a bad example of oneself and thereby calling out a blinkered illiberalism identified as residing within a culture ostensibly committed to free speech. I focus on the essay that led Mill himself to sever his long friendship with Carlyle and draw a line in the political sand

beyond which tolerance should not be asked to go—the essay so disgraceful that even Liddle does not risk endorsing it, though he flirts with its notoriety.[23]

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The "Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question" (1849), first published in the Tory magazine Fraser's, and retitled and revised to inflammatory effect as a separate pamphlet, "The Nigger Question" (1853),[24] goes out of its way to offend. Like Liddle's more recent homages to Carlylean "astringency" in public discussion, it anticipates a readership that will react strongly, regardless of party-political affiliation, against its violations of commonly settled views on public morality and achieved political progress. Implicitly. it reserves a space for that rarer reader, the one tolerant or intelligent enough not to rush to hostile judgement (deep-cover flattery is crucial to the tone of address). Rejecting the assumption that the public moralist models right thinking, the public immoralist breaks the common framework, "absconding" from normal reporting (as Carlyle has it in the framing conceit of the essay) to undertake a more "speculative" line of inquiry (348).

To that end, Carlyle conceals himself (as so often) behind a series of frame narrators who offer the flimsiest of disguises to his own authority—a putative editor, who has "accepted the article, at a cheap market rate" from Dr. Phelin McQuirk, its putative author … or rather from McQuirk's landlady. Left in the red when her tenant absconds, she wants what profit she can extract from the typescript on his desk. The editor agrees to "give it publicity", "without, in the least, committing ourselves": its views, he suspects, "are pretty much in a "minority of one" (348). The bad example thus warns us away from itself, refusing (or pretending to refuse) the profit on its own misbehaviour: "you shall hear what I have to say on the matter", M'Quirk warns, and "probably you will not in the least like it" (349). One of John Stuart Mill's lesser objections to Carlyle was that the charade of concealment is very thin.[25] It looks like what it (partly) is: a hackneyed literary gambit to ward off naïve, crude, or

potentially litigious objectors – though its amplification of the business of mediation also prevents (one may question how securely) a "regress into solipsism".[26]

In addressing "the Rights of Negroes" (349), Carlyle selects a subject that can be a gauge of progressive morality more generally: on it can be hung "innumerable other rights, duties, expectations, wrongs and disappointments, much argued of, by logic and by grape-shot, in these emancipated epochs of the human mind!" (348). The indisputable racism of much of the rhetoric ("a few black persons rendered extreme "free" indeed. Sitting yonder with their beautiful muzzles up to the ears in pumpkins" [350], calling "Higher wages, massa; higher" [352] *&c.*) is of a piece with much of Carlyle's private writing about race. It sounds casual, but in this context it is instrumental: a linguistic weapon against the self-congratulatory posturing of a generation of philanthropists and politicians still living off the moral derivatives of the Slavery Abolition Act (1833). The rhetorical gambit is clear enough: if antiracism has become a signature expression of progressive achievement and liberal tolerance, racism, it might follow, can be made a signature goad of opposition to the progressivists' self-complacency.

Both the first and second titles, and the deployment of the rhetoric of negritude throughout, decline to participate in the work of cultural specification that, on a standard affirmation of antiracism, would require Carlyle to distinguish the many forms of blackness under his eye: the former slaves of British Jamaica, the indentured workers of Dutch Java, the African "war-captives" (381) brought in as cheap labour to replace West Indian slaves, black Haitians currently embroiled in civil war, the free negro populations of most Northern and some Southern American states, the still-enslaved African-Americans of many remaining states in the South. The revised title of 1853 of course ups the ante. Modern lexicographers remark on the passage of the word "nigger" in recent decades from being a "contemptuous term in dictionaries […] treated similarly to ethnic and religious slurs" to "taboo" status,[27]

but mid-nineteenth-century commentators were aware of its pejorative connotations and polite liberal discourse tended to shy away from it. [28] (Indicatively the word is more extensively employed in the private correspondence of Victorian men and women of letters than in their public writings—fictional representation being a case apart).

Decoupled, insofar as it can be, from its racist delivery, the “Occasional Discourse” is a series of “astringencies” directed against three targets: philanthropic sentimentalism; political economy, famously disparaged here as “the Dismal Science” (354); and, a broader target than either, the mismatch between the rhetoric of progress adopted by contemporary politicians and their present political failings. The essay has some substantive political points to make. First: that the end of slavery in Jamaica, expensive as it was to the British state (the compensation package to slave owners cost £20m), was not accompanied by the necessary investment in restructuring the local sugar industry that would have prevented the need for sugar subsidy at the cost of “our own English labourers”.[29] Cheap political capital is still being extracted from the end of British slavery sixteen years on, Carlyle observes. Witness Prime Minister John Russell’s recent reassurance to Parliament that the end of slavery has been a good thing for the former slave populations of Jamaica (349): the historic achievement of abolition gives cover to a persistent failure to redress the grievances of those colonists now complaining of wage inflation and lack of co-operation from the local administration. Progressivist back-patting over abolition is also distracting attention from other pressing problems of the day: Chartism, Irish republicanism, parliamentary allocation of funds across the several colonial administrations.

On the subject of race, Carlyle’s strongest anti-progressivist thrust is that the Whig/Liberal government’s current policy towards Jamaica rests on a sinister hypocrisy: the importation of African forced labour (financed by loans) to make good a labour deficit in the wake of emancipation. His racism, however, grossly distorts his description of the

characterological consequences said to have followed from emancipation and from efforts by the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to block “wage-slavery” by plantation owners extending exploitative apprenticeships beyond the 12-year period of permitted post-abolition dependency.[30] The political illiberalism stems largely from the view Carlyle takes of the value of work; the racism from his unwillingness to place the same value on the labour of West Indian blacks as he gives to white British labour. In all cases, he rates work much higher than liberty. No human being, in his view, is free in anything other than a trivial sense: I am free to read this book instead of that, to befriend this person and not that; I am not free, except at the margins, to be (for example) prosperous, or socially high or low placed, or loved, or even healthy, by my own efforts. The collapse of the ancient clarifying distinctions between the powerful and their dependents is a constant source of regret to him. “The old Feudal circumstances never can return,” he laments to a friend in 1860, “nor anything practically like them (however much wanted, and indeed at last indispensable) till people have quite laid aside immense quantities of stuff (especially [a]bout “liberty” &c &c) whh they now babble of, with one accord.”[31] The Jamaican labour problem (a fantasy, Mill tells us, based on an account of a strike that Carlyle has read in a Blue Book, “copied from the wildest prophecies of the slavery party before emancipation” [89]) results from the former West Indian slave now finding it too easy to provide for himself and therefore falling into extreme indolence, while the white man who “himself cannot work” must import African indentured labour to keep the estates going.

Carlyle does not appeal to “nature” as the source of such discriminations. Like Mill (up to a point), he holds that character can be assisted or corrupted by circumstance: the Jamaican former slave and the Irish pauper, persistently twinned in the “Occasional Discourse”, are said to be idle and immoral not because it is in their nature to be idle and immoral but because (unlike the “heroic” European colonists to whom Carlyle gives the sole

credit of making Jamaica fertile) they have been prevented from doing what it is every man's divinely-ordained purpose to do: work to the best of his ability. (Women's labour does not interest him.) The problem with imported African labour to the Caribbean is that it lowers the local price of labour, further disincentivising the West Indian worker who sees others working at lower wages than it is worth his while selling his own labour for. This is, in essence, an earlier articulation of current hostilities to the effects of a globalized labour market—though Carlyle is not suggesting protectionism as a solution. His answer comes in the form of a plea to Heaven, rather than any economic recommendations:

> The idle Black man in the West Indies […] will again […], if it please Heaven, have the right (actually the first "right of man" for an indolent person) to be compelled to work as he was fit, and to do the Maker's will who had constructed him with such and such capabilities and prefigurements of capability. And I incessantly pray Heaven, all men, the whitest alike and the blackest, the richest and the poorest, in other regions of the world, had attained precisely the same right, the divine right of being compelled (if "permitted" will not answer) to do what work they are appointed for, and not to go idle another minute, in a life which is so short (357)

"Oh Lord, our Maker", in short, "deliver us from the iniquity of idleness." "Why not at once say", Mill will retort, "that, by "some wise means," every thing should be made right in the world?" (90)

The provocation of the "Occasional Discourse" to contemporary Victorian public discourse lies less in its arguments, most of which were commonly made from both the conservative and liberal benches of parliament,[32] than in the excessive rhetorical appetite with which it draws its cartoon of the work-averse Jamacian negro, "Quashee",[33] now living, as a later American stereotype would have it, "the life of Riley". "Our beautiful Black darlings are at last happy", McQuirk, rejoices sarcastically, "with little labour except to the teeth [i.e. feasting on the ready supply of pumpkins], which, surely, in those excellent horse-jaws of theirs, will not fail!" (350). The illustration goes well beyond the passing image that facilitates satire (breast feeding at the Ivy, as it were), and is almost entirely supererogatory to the critique of political economics. "Mere racism does not yield so pungent a

phantasmagoria", Harold Bloom suggests: we see here Carlyle's "demi-Gnosticism at its worst", reimagining time's generative seed-bed as Shakespeare's "devouring time, Kronos chewing us up as so many pumpkins".[34] Maybe so, but the projection of fantasy functions along more than one axis in a way is surely calculated. The most striking aspects of the stereotype are animalistic (standard, if aggravated, racist caricature), but Carlyle also taps into the data-driven geographic-comparativist languages of the emerging political sciences: "our interesting Black population,—equalling almost in number of heads one of the Ridings of Yorkshire, and in worth (in quantity of intellect, faculty, docility, energy, and available human valour and value), perhaps one of the streets of Seven Dials [the impoverished Irish-immigrant quarter abutting Covent Garden …]" (350). In such high-risk satire, the offended liberal reader may see a tipping point from the cartoonist's artful elaboration of his picture to excessive investment in its derogatory wit and its intellectual bite. Carlyle, indeed, rebuked himself at the end of his life: "I have given far too much in to [it]—sniggering at things".[35]

Mill's response, sent to Fraser's within days of Carlyle's essay appearing,[36] was characteristically lucid, uncharacteristically fierce. Coming from a man often now castigated for not going far enough in his criticisms of British imperialism,[37] it is a reminder of how pungently critical Mill was of the illiberal assumptions about race on which British foreign and domestic policy operated.[38] He is tolerant insofar as he acknowledges the "Occasional Discourse" as a significant contribution to a public debate, angrily intolerant of the gross abuses of fact, unwarranted interpretations of evidence, and baseless assertions he identifies in Carlyle's essay. Mill treats the racism as secondary but substantive and (given the scope for emboldening anti-abolitionists in the American South) dangerous. (Carlyle would, indeed, insert into the 1853 pamphlet edition an address to "Senator Hickory Buckskin" in which he explicitly advocates the retention of slavery in the South, made "fair" by a "proper code of

law" that, as a precaution against revolt, would set a price at which slaves might buy their freedom.[39])

As Mill decodes Carlyle, he is a reactionary of a grossly misleading sort: the "Occasional Discourse" peddles "the old law of the strongest" rhetorically repackaged as a "great ethical doctrine" (92). He is culpably uninterested in evidencing his claims (when he does look to sources he is conveniently without scepticism[40]). He deals, Mill points out, in stirring appeals to the duty of work, the beauty of European heroism, the wisdom of established power, all backed by "divine" authority—a word Mill consistently loads with sarcasm ("If "the gods" will this, it is the first duty of human beings to resist such gods" [87]). On the duty of work Mill is especially caustic:

> this "gospel of work" […] to my mind, as justly deserves the name of a cant as any of those which he has opposed. […] There is nothing laudable in work for work's sake. To work voluntarily for a worthy object is laudable; but what constitutes a worthy object? On this matter, the oracle of which your contributor is the prophet has never yet been prevailed on to declare itself. He revolves in an eternal circle round the idea of work, as if turning up the earth, or driving a shuttle or a quill, were ends in themselves, and the ends of human existence. (90)

This is a scathing attack not only on the "Occasional Discourse" but on an extensive body of Carlylean writing, by 1849, in which the duty of work had been a constant theme. The contentlessness of that duty here stands exposed—the more starkly because Mill makes no special provision for the writer's labour (Carlyle's included) as having any greater (or less) merit or virtue than that of the farm labourer or road digger or factory hand. Whatever its sphere, work only acquires dignity from the value of its object, Mill counters.

Mill's main point of attack on Carlyle's text (after he has dealt with its self-serving theology) concerns the misrepresentation of what liberalism has and has not achieved by 1849. The abolition of slavery was not the outcome of "philanthropic sentiment":

> It depended no more on humane feelings than any cause which so irresistibly appealed to them must necessarily do. Its first victories were gained while the lash yet ruled uncontested in the barrack-yard and the rod in schools, and while men were still hanged by dozens for stealing to the value of forty shillings. It triumphed because it

> was the cause of justice; and, in the estimation of the great majority of its supporters, of religion. Its originators and leaders were persons of a stern sense of moral obligation, who, in the spirit of the religion of their time, seldom spoke much of benevolence and philanthropy, but often of duty, crime, and sin. (671)

Nothing so flattering to the national self-image as humanitarian compassion gears this corrective account of recent history: it is a hard-headed view of a belated stirring by "men" (Mill does not even call them "good men") to rectify an "iniquity" so extreme that the British treatment of the Irish makes for a bad comparison. In this fine-tuned analysis of historical circumstances, "civilizational self-accusation", as Bruce Robbins has recently denominated it,[41] requires an understanding of comparative scale of injustice: unless we can discriminate between a colonial political and economic system enforcing by law the extraction of wealth through enslavement of an entire racial group, and a union where "beggary" is the result of successive failures of political "skill" in dealing with the long legacies of colonization, we have (Mill suggests) no basis on which to say where there has been progress, nor how much injustice remains to be rectified in the world. "Is our cholera comparable to the old pestilence—our hospitals to the old lazar-houses—our workhouses to the hanging of vagrants?", he asks (94). If there is a danger in seeming to underrate the importance of Britain's exploitation of the Irish, it is a danger he is prepared to run.[42]

Robbins (who does not, on this occasion, have Mill particularly in view) makes the need for a historically informed critique of progress and its failures immediately political to today's academy when he asks "specialists in nineteenth-century British literature" to consider the implications of the temptation now to a presentist politics of the academy at the expense of a discriminating period consciousness. It is, he suggests, a flaw of recent comparative work on "world literature" and of the very long-duree perspectives taken by ecological criticism, for example, that they have not yet found themselves able or willing enough to attend to historical events that disrupt the overarching assumption of cultural

equality in the present. `narratives of "civilizational self-accusation", whereby individual writers name the disasters for which their own political cultures should take responsibility, are, he suggests, one (important) marker of the capacity for a critical articulation of the unevenness of history. Literary work that deprives itself of the period specific and comparative view, he argues, risks losing the capacity to make moral judgements about political actions and events that are a vital responsibility of political criticism: in too much recent work empire's history of violence drops out, as if "distaste for violent rupture at the level of periodization is duplicated in a distaste for violence as social content". What we are left with is "a projection onto the past of globalization's smug, all-cultures-are-equal case, a case which does not harp on inequalities of economic and political power".

Geoffrey Hartman memorably described Carlyle's deployment of language as "a form of terrorism".[43] With Robbins in view, one might consider it the extreme idiom of cultural self-accusation. But the political smugness Carlyle has in his sights is (unsurprisingly) not of a cultural-egalitarian globalist kind – rather, an internal British smugness about the nation's supposed achievements in bringing its colonial system up to the moral mark. The political affront he offers is on the surface presentist in its thrust: stop paying attention to the historic injustice of slavery in Jamaica, he argues; start looking at the consequences today of preferential treatment given to black labourers (or as he would have it, non-labourers) abroad over white labourers in Britain. Self-congratulatory public moralism, of Victorian as much as 21st-century designation, finds a rebuff in an affronting articulation of the ongoing inequalities of experience. But Mill's response is far more historically robust: if self-accusation is to be morally persuasive, it had better be accurate in the story it tells about past and current actions and their motives. "Every age has its faults," he acknowledges, "and is indebted to those who point them out. … [But w]e must beware […] of mistaking its virtues for faults, […] Your contributor thinks that the age has too much humanity, is too anxious to

abolish pain. I affirm, on the contrary, that it has too little humanity […] and I point to any day's police reports as the proof. I am not now accusing the brutal portion of the population, but the humane portion; if they were humane enough, they would have contrived long ago to prevent these daily atrocities" (94).

The question, as ever when Mill is read in company with Carlyle, must be whether the liberal philosopher's point-by-point exacting rationality, impressive as he is in correcting his opponent's errors, and challenging his moral principles, and looking to dampen the emotional appeal of his rhetorical extremism, can be a sufficient rebuttal to the stylistic and emotional excitement Carlyle creates when he oversteps the normal bounds of political debate in the periodical press. The classic demurral is that, though Mill's criticisms are "decisive in their own terms", they make little or no impact on a Carlylean perspective from which "enthusiasm for human justice" is a "weak-kneed, self-deluded evasion of the facts of a power-governed universe."[44] It is a criticism that looks forward to Nietzsche as the fuller expression of a "transvaluation of all values" that Carlyle's prose partly anticipates[45]—crediting the earlier writer with (no small thing) the power to place the argument elsewhere, to elude a framework of liberal debate that, though it would not close him down entirely, seeks to rein him back into the fold of progressivism. Publishing Mill's response, the editor of Fraser's encouraged the magazine's readers to view the critique in that light: "If all the meetings at Exeter Hall be not presided over by strictly impartial chairmen, they ought to be. We shall set an example to our pious brethren in this respect, by giving publicity to the following letter. Our readers have now both sides of the question before them, and can form their own opinions upon it".[46]

This is all well and Millian, but Carlyle's goading sarcasms, vehement exhortations, stylistic excesses make for a kind of rhetoric that (as Hartman's metaphor implies) does not aim at participation in argument. Pointing beyond itself to a higher authority, it demands a

hearing but does not look to persuade—indeed, expects not to persuade. Carlyle was content to create a strongly antipathetic reaction. At first self-protectively dismissive of the “little dud of a thing” he had written, he was pleased when it provoked a response: “The Saint-Howard people [Evangelical philanthropists of the John Howard type] are in a terrible tempest here about the Niggers; chaunting mournful “Ichabods!” over me. Which is all right.”[47] The reaction against The “Occasional Discourse” went well beyond self-defensive anger from the philanthropic community: the essay gave “universal offence”, as Carlyle’s friend and first biographer, J. A. Froude admitted. Admirers on all sides “drew back, and “walked no more with him”.[48] Carlyle, who had expected intelligent friends to be exceptions, professed bafflement when some (Mill chief among them) were not.[49] Even twenty years later, George Meredith could recall the “Occasional Discourse” as a moment of singularly repugnant excess in Victorian public moralism: “his method of applying his sermon to his “nigger” is intolerable.—Spiritual light he has to illuminate a nation. Of practical little or none, and he beats his own brains out with emphasis.”[50]

Carlyle’s “Occasional Discourse” offers, in other words, a quite different form of exemplarity from the kind Thomas Keenan has in mind when he writes of the important moral work done by monitory examples, or as he puts it “the bad example”. Keenan’s subject is the exemplarity of fable: the sheep deceived by the wolf in sheep’s clothing; Peter, who cried wolf—didactic cases of immorality or imprudence or plain stupidity that get their due comeuppance. These are, Keenan suggests, the best kinds of moral example because, more than any good example that is set before us to encourage emulation, these tutelary cases call forth “imitation, interiorization, and identification”.[51] “What would we humans do […] without our regular inoculation?” Keenan asks. “Responsibility”, as Nietzsche saw, “begins in” such bad examples. The classic Nietzschean object-lesson is, he reminds us, the fable of the lambs and the great birds-of-prey in the Genealogy of Morals.[52] As Nietzsche revises the

original fabula, it ceases to be a didactic device modelling good/prudent/wise behaviour and becomes a means to decoding the operation of morality as it takes hold in the language.

> "That lambs dislike great birds of prey does not seem strange: only it provides no ground for reproaching these birds of prey for bearing off little lambs. And if the lambs say among themselves: "these birds of prey are evil; and whoever is as little as possible like a bird of prey, but rather its opposite, a lamb—would he not be good?" … the birds of prey might view it a little ironically (spöttisch) and perhaps say: "we don't dislike them at all, these good little lambs; we even love them: nothing is more tasty than a tender lamb".[53]

Nietzsche goes on: "only thanks to the seduction of language, […] which understands and misunderstands all effects as conditioned by something that causes effects, by a 'subject'," do the birds appear to have made a moral decision about how to treat the lambs. "Language", Keenan comments, "makes action without a subject impossible, allowing what Nietzsche calls "popular morality" to "separate strength from expressions of strength, as if there were a neutral substratum behind the strong man, which was free to express strength or not to do so" (135). In the Nietzschean account, there is no moral agency in the case: the greater strength of the one animal over the other is a fact, and it is the work of the Nietzschean philosopher/critic to expose the error of morality and affirm the nobility of strength.

Carlyle cannot do away with "the false "substratum" of moral freedom altogether. He wants ("needs", Nietzsche says) to retain an anchoring belief that morality has a metaphysical source. His prose accordingly models a less clear-cut form of misbehaviour—a violation of norms of free speech that anticipates Nietzsche in its affronting sarcasms and ironies at the expense of conventional morality and its flagrant breaches of discursive norms, but (unlike Nietzsche) appeals to a divinity. In that light, the frame narrators perform a service beyond self-interested screening from blame: they model a deferral of authority that looks comic in the frame but operates quite seriously to moor the moral controversialism of the writing that follows. For all its hyper-literacy and its dazzling rhetorical energies, Carlyle's is a prose that,

indeed, must deny or reject its own power and accept the consequences of its own absconsion from some, not all, normal moral agreements.

Historically, the “Occasional Discourse” stands alongside (and midway between) Swift’s “Modest Proposal” and Nietzsche’s Ecce Home: a perplexing, if not quite paradoxical thing—”exemplary writing” whose mode of relating rules to action is more “internal” than external.[54] Nietzsche’s own reaction to reading Carlyle via the laudatory account found in Froude’s 1882 biography (it is unclear whether he had read Carlyle at first hand) singles out Carlyle’s anti-scepticism as having particular diagnostic significance: “The craving for a strong faith is no proof of a strong faith, but quite the contrary. If one has such a faith, then one can afford the beautiful luxury of skepticism”.[55] In other words, if Carlyle had felt able to risk some scepticism towards his own values and assertions, the metaphysical infrastructure of his rhetoric would have been less shaky—but the result a lot less interesting to Nietzsche himself. This is, of course, a criticism born of closely-felt kinship (Nietzsche says as much).[56] The proximity is no less significant given that Nietzsche is so caustic about Carlyle in Twilight of the Idols (1888).[57] Carlyle emerges from the brief reflection on Froude’s Life as barely worthy of applause (which is to say, much better than most): a man not up to the task that Nietzsche sets for himself of asserting his own will toward a thoroughgoing atheistic scepticism. Restrained by a “naïve” “Romantic” yearning after a strong faith, restrained also by an outmoded code of “honour”, Carlyle is a shouty attitudinizer.[58]

There is, perhaps, no better example of the Nietzschean view that antagonism is the sincerest form of flattery than the younger man’s insistence on Carlyle’s systemic limitations: the “dyspeptic philosopher” delivers “pessimism as coughed-up lunch” (192). When Nietzsche writes of himself that he has cultivated a style “with as much substance as possible at its base, a cold malice against ‘beautiful words’ as well as ‘beautiful feelings’” (224) he might be describing a rhetoric that has learned from Carlyle’s strengths while eradicating as

far as possible his dyspeptic weakness. The Nietzschean "great sceptic" needs no doctor: he thrives without "regulative guidelines" and scorns the "weak-willed person's failure to thrive." Late Nietzschean style foregrounds "concision and compression", as Julian Young notes: the outrageously stylish epigram is a form of compacted heterodoxy. "You do not get hold of things that are open to question any more" (Nietzsche praises himself in Ecce Homo), "you get hold of decisions".[59]

It would be easy to mistake what Carlyle does in the "Occasional Discourse"—and what some of the more strategic testers of free speech norms today are doing—as just a more demanding version of the kind of internal challenge to which Millian liberalism promised to expose itself (a line of response that would provide some reassurance to the liberal worried that the price of democracy may be that noise will sometimes trump reason). The challenge Carlyle poses is deeper, and politically salient again. Looking to stir up conviction rather than to join in argument, he speaks over the heads of a limitedly-tolerant "liberal" readership to a "boundlessly tolerant" audience that will forgive his peculiarities and respond to his ardour rather than his arguments (though he eschews the role of demagogue). In doing so he creates a discursive situation in which his audience is asked at once to discount much of what is said in favour of how authentically it is said; and yet asks them also to understand that there is a deeper purpose to his speech (a confrontation with the reality of power) that requires all of us to possess the strength of our own convictions.

In Bleak Liberalism (2016), Amanda Anderson, making a persuasive case for a return to "character" as a term that can "hel[p] us think through the ethical and existential dimensions of intellectual and political positions", observes that ascriptions of character "often signal moments where the lived aspects of theory are making their force felt".[60] The controversialist possesses, almost by definition, a strong public character, the ethical component of which is not always as apparent. In the Carlylean case, the ethos modelled has

two primary aspects. One can expect to find fairly wide agreement; the other has consistently failed to do so. That part of his argument which has to do with resetting the default modes of public argument has, I argue, a serious point: it asks an ostensibly liberal public sphere to take seriously the high valuation it places on freedom of speech, and to extend that value to styles of speech – admitting powerful speech, impassioned speech, extravagant speech as part of a broad palate of public debate. The content he chooses to endow with rhetorical power is another matter: rightly reviled, as to its racial politics, and (as a consequence) largely unheard in the astute criticisms it has to make about the selectivity of his culture's progressivist credentials. A better reading than the standard account of Mill v. Carlyle as a confrontation of liberal principle with reactionary offence, I am suggesting, would allow for recognition on both sides that, at stake here, more than their friendship, was the dominant ethos of public debate, and the degree and kind of influence to be wielded in it by liberal political theory.

Right at the start of their friendship, Carlyle warned Mill that "I set little store by this so celebrated virtue of Tolerance".[61] It is worth recalling the context. Carlyle was writing in fulsome praise of a review Mill had just published of Alison's *Europe during the French Revolution*, welcoming what he saw as a new willingness in the democratic theorist and utilitarian to go beyond colourless reasoning and strike a more full-hearted and "decided" tone:

> it is a really decided little utterance, with a quiet emphasis, a conscious incontrovertibility, which (heretic that I am) I rejoice to see growing in you. Such a feeling, such a mode of writing seems to me, in these days especially, the only fruitful one: emphasis in uttering, what is it but the natural result of entireness in believing, the first condition of all worth in words to be spoken, and quite especially precious in a despicable sceptical, "supposing," weathercock, foundationless era such as ours."

Being Carlyle, he did not stop there: "Give me, above and before all things, a man that has legs to stand on: keep far from me, were it possible, the innumerable decrepit culs-de-jutte [cripples] that can stand, that can move nowhere, but only beg permission of all bystanders to

move whithersoever they are shoved!" "Tolerance", he writes, is a virtue he has scarcely ever seen in action—only, "often enough, and with ever-increasing dislike, Indifferentism parading itself in the stolen garments" (445). It is a characteristic display of Carlylean "bad exemplarity" in private rather than public mode—going a metaphor too far in search of the gut response he associates with integrity of belief. Whether it be laughter or revulsion does not, perhaps, matter to him, so long as there is a powerfully felt response.

The confrontation between Carlyle and Mill over "The Negro Question" in 1849-50 may be seen as a further, sharper, and far more public giving-of-notice, sixteen years on, that Carlyle posed a forceful challenge to Mill's liberalism—one that indeed compelled Mill to decide how tolerant or otherwise the character of his public speech should be. Nietzsche famously tells us that "noble hospitality means keeping a room free for the unwanted guest" (TI 25)—a radical challenge that has attracted many recent critics in the wake of rereadings of Nietzsche by Levinas and Derrida.[62] But Mill does not ask us to be as generous as many of these advocates of critical hospitality (especially those in the Levinasian mold) would have us be. He gives Carlyle a hearing, admits his significance in the debate, but he does not ask us to make him welcome in our public discourse. He has learned from Carlyle (and would feed the knowledge into On Liberty) that liberalism, when severely goaded, must remain committed to evidence-based, sceptical reasoning, but it had better not be anemic. The last line of Mill's response to "The Negro Question," after which his personal interactions with Carlyle were almost nil, puts aside the "studied moderation of language" On Liberty would call for as, in principle, where feasible, the standard to which liberal debate should hold itself—a recommendation that would substantially and increasingly shape liberalism thereafter, not always to its advantage. He quotes an unnamed writer, with a more vivid idiom of abuse than he himself might have comfortably mustered: Carlyle "has made himself an instrument of what an able writer in the Inquirer justly calls 'a true work of the devil'" (95). Borrowed

though it is, it is the note of full-hearted, angry conviction Carlyle himself wanted to hear more of in public debate, not least from Mill himself.

This essay takes up and extends an argument begun in "The Liberal University and Its Enemies", a lecture delivered at the University of St Andrews, 3 February 2017 to mark the 150th Anniversary of John Stuart Mill's Inaugural Address as Rector of St Andrews (publication forthcoming).

[1] (Princeton: Princeton UP), 3n.

[2] "'What, Ultimately, For?' The Elusive Goal of Cultural Criticism", Raritan 33/2 (2013), 4-26 (12). See also Bruce Robbins, "On Amanda Anderson's The Way We Argue Now", Criticism 48/2 (2006), 265-71.

[3] See Bleak Liberalism (Chicago: The U of Chicago Press, 2016); and Elaine Hadley, Living Liberalism: Practical Citizenship in Mid-Victorian Britain (Chicago: The U of Chicago Press, 2010).

[4] @realDonaldTrump, 4:02 AM, 4 Mar 2017; "Britain Probably Leaving the EU Customs Union Says Boris Johnson", The Guardian 15 November 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/nov/15/britain-probably-leaving-eu-customs-union-says-boris-johnson

[5] Mark Thompson, "Trump, Brexit, and the Broken Language of Politics", lecture delivered at Hertford College, University of Oxford, 17 March 2017, https://www.hertford.ox.ac.uk/mark-thompson-trump-brexit-and-the-broken-language-of-politics accessed 23 March 2017.

[6] Chief Executive of the New York Times, former Chief Executive of the BBC.

[7] Thompson, "Trump, Brexit, and the Broken Language of Politics".

[8] This far-right British-nationalist fringe party has more than 1.6m members on Facebook—more than the membership of the Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties combined. Figures from James Ball, Special Correspondent with Buzzfeed, interviewed on "The Long View of Targeted Fake News", BBC Radio 4, 21 March 2017. http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08jb6rt

[9] See Timothy Garton Ash, Free Speech: Ten Principles for a Connected World (London: Atlantic Books, 2016), 83-6 on this distinction.

[10] Free Speech, esp. 223-24 on liberalism's need to be "more thick-skinned"; also Thompson, "Trump, Brexit, and the Broken Language of Politics", and Enough Said: What's Gone Wrong with the Language of Politics (London: Bodley Head, 2016).

[11] On Liberty, Essays on Politics and Society, Part I, in The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, editor of the text John M. Robson, 33 vols (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963-91) [hereafter CW], XVIII, 229.

[12] Rod Liddle, "What I did on International Women's Day", https://www.spectator.co.uk/2017/03/what-i-did-on-international-womens-day/#, accessed 22 March 2017.

[13] Robert Blake, "A History of the Spectator", The Spectator 22 September 1978, p. 30; http://archive.spectator.co.uk/article/23rd-september-1978/30/a-history-of-the-spectator accessed 24 March 2017. Cf. "liberal illiberalism", a term used by some recent writers on international politics to denote the adoption of illiberal policies in defence of a self-described liberal state. Michael C. Deusch, "America's Liberal Illiberalism: The Ideological Origins of Overreaction in U.S. Foreign Policy", International Security 32/3 (2007/8), 7-43.

[14] "Why Women Aren't Funny", Vanity Fair January 2007, http://www.vanityfair.com/culture/2007/01/hitchens200701

[15] "Trump, Brexit, and the Broken Language of Politics".
[16] Rod Liddle, "Prisons should be nicer places? Nonsense", The Spectator 26 November 2016, https://www.spectator.co.uk/2016/11/the-spectator-has-gone-soft-prisons-should-be-much-nastier-places/ accessed 24 March 2017.
[17] Twilight of the Idols, in The Portable Nietzsche, selected and translated, with an Introduction, prefaces and notes by Walter Kaufmann (London: Penguin, 1971), 521. I have preferred the pithiness of this translation, at this point, to the now more standard text: The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings, ed. Aaron Ridley and Judith Norman, tr. Judith Norman, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy (Cambridge: CUP, 2005), 198.
[18] Twilight of the Idols, tr. Norman, 192.
[19] See esp. Eliza Tamarkin, "Why Forgive Carlyle?", Representations 134 (Spring 2016), 64-92; Ranjan Ghosh, Transcultural Poetics and the Concept of the Poet: From Philip Sidney to T. S. Eliot (London: Routledge, 2016); Paul Kerry and Marylu Hill (eds), Thomas Carlyle Resartus: Reappraising Carlyle's Contribution to the Philosophy of History, Political Theory, and Cultural Criticism (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 2010); Porscha Fermanis and John Regan, Rethinking British Romantic History (Oxford: OUP, 2014); http://www.torch.ox.ac.uk/cfp-recovering-hidden-carlyle; and Duke University's ongoing digitisation project, The Carlyle Letters Online. http://carlyleletters.dukeupress.edu.
[20] Carlyle, Past and Present, The Works of Thomas Carlyle, Centenary Edition (hereafter CE), 30 vols, (London: Chapman and Hall Ltd, 1899), X, 12**;** and, for discussion, Ghosh, Transcultural Poetics, 2-3.
[21] G. B. Tennyson, Sartor Called Resartus: The Genesis, Structure, and Style of Carlyle's First Major Work (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1965), 286.
[22] L to Ralph Waldo Emerson, 29 May 1839, *CL*, XI, 119-121 (120).
[23] Once a staple text of Victorian period teaching, this essay is (on an informal survey) strikingly absent from most current teaching curricula. Indicatively, it is excluded from the Norton Anthology of English Literature and from Norton Topics Online; also from James Eli Adams, A History of Victorian Literature (Oxford: John Wiley and Sons, 2012). Victorian Literature: An Anthology, ed. Victor Shea and William Whitla (Oxford: John Wiley and Sons, 2015) includes only a short extract (148-9), and it receives the briefest of mentions in Kate Flint (ed.), The Cambridge History of Victorian Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2012), 101.
[24] [Thomas Carlyle], "Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question", Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country XL (December 1849), 670-9; rpt in CE XXIX, Critical and Miscellaneous Essays IV, 348-83 [hereafter "OD"].
[25] Mill in effect outs Carlyle as the writer of the essay when he observes that "This pet theory of your contributor about work, we all know well enough, though some persons might not be prepared for so bold an application of it." [J. S. Mill], "The Negro Question", Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country XLI (January 1850), 25-31; rpt in CW XXI, 85-95 (90).
[26] Geoffrey Hartman, Criticism in the Wilderness: The Study of Literature Today, 2nd edn (New Haven: Yale UP, 2007), 48.
[27] Sidney I. Landau, Dictionaries: The Art and Craft of Lexicography, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001), 234-7.
[28] See Randall Kennedy, Nigger: The Strange Career of a Troublesome Word (New York: Vintage, 2002).
[29] "[W]hile the sugar-crops rot round [the Jamaicans] uncut, because labour cannot be hired, so cheap are the pumpkins;—and at home, we are but required to rasp from the breakfast-loaves of our own English laborers, some slight "differential sugar-duties," and lend a poor

half-million or a few poor millions now and then, to keep that beautiful state of matters going on" (350).
[30] Jenna M. Gibbs, Performing the Temple of Liberty: Slavery, Theatre, and Popular Culture in London and Philadelphia, 1760-1850 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2014), 216. The BFASS was also instrumental in exposing local abuses of law, including the burning of black settlements. See http://cruel.org/econthought/texts/carlyle/negroquest.html.
[31] L to C. A. Ward 24 September 1860, *CL* 36: 262-264.
[32] For the internal liberal critique see, for example, [Henry George Grey], 3rd Earl Grey, The Colonial Policy of Lord John Russell's Administration, 2 vols (London: Richard Bentley, 1853), 166-95.
[33] "A British racial slur equivalent to the word 'nigger'." Susan Meyer, Imperialism at Home: Race and Victorian Women's Fiction (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1996), 47.
[34] Essayists and Prophets, Bloom's Literary Criticism 20th Anniversary Edition (Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2005), 93. Bloom points us, suggestively, to the young Teufelsdrockh in Sartor Resartus, thwarted in his search for meaningful work: "Me, however, as a Son of Time, unhappier than some others, was Time threatening to eat quite prematurely". Sartor Resartus, CE II, 104.
[35] Quoted in Ian M. Campbell, "David Masson and Thomas Carlyle", Studies in Scottish Literature 40/1 (2014), 134-45 (141).
[36] See L to John William Parker, 21 January 1850, returning a cheque sent in payment for the essay: "I regarded your insertion of an attack on an article which had appeared in Fraser, as a favour done to me rather than the opposite, & think it quite unfair that I should be paid for it." Additional Letters of John Stuart Mill, CW XXXII, 80.
[37] See esp. Uday Mehta, Liberalism and Empire: A Study in Nineteenth-Century British Liberal Thought (Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1999), and David Theo Goldberg, "Liberalism's Limits: Carlyle and Mill on "The Negro Question", Nineteenth-Century Contexts 22/2 (2002), 203-16.
[38] For a nuanced view, see Lauren M. E. Goodlad, The Victorian Geopolitical Aesthetic: Realism, Sovereignty, and Transnational Experience (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2015), esp. Ch. 2.
[39] See F. S. J. Ledgister, "Racist Rantings: Travelers' Tales, and a Creole Counterblast: Thomas Carlyle, John Stuart Mill, J. A. Froude, and J. J. Thomas on British Rule in the West Indies", in Kerry and Hill (eds), Thomas Carlyle Resartus, 106-32 (110).
[40] Mill: "Because he reads in some blue-book of a strike for wages in Demerara, such as he may read of any day in Manchester, he draws a picture of negro inactivity, copied from the wildest prophecies of the slavery party before emancipation" ("NQ", 89).
[41] "On the Non-Representation of Atrocity", b2o [boundary2 online] 7 October 2016, http://www.boundary2.org/2016/10/bruce-robbins-on-the-non-representation-of-atrocity/ accessed 24 March 2017.
[42] The critique of historical indiscriminateness is, it is worth noting, is in tune with Mill's internal critique of utilitarianism's tendency to synchronic indiscriminateness—anticipating a recent observation by Francis Ferguson that "the progressivist narrative" is "not merely historically indefensible" (as Bernard Williams claims); it is as "philosophically unproductive" as "the most flat-footed utilitarian[ism …]. For the utilitarian assessment of more and less, it substitutes a before and after." "What Should I Do and What Was I Thinking?: Philosophical Examples and the Uses of the Literary", boundary 2 "Dossier: The Philosophical Example" 40/2 (2013), 9-23 (14).
[43] Criticism in the Wilderness, 150. Cf. John P. Farrell, Revolution as Tragedy: The Dilemma of the Moderate from Scott to Arnold (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1980), 187-245. Farrell reads Carlyle rather as a thwarted extremist, for who heroic radicalism is the "gravest" of his many

masks (203). Only occasionally, he argues, does “sheer exasperation excee[d] his capacity for the sense of tragedy”.
[44] Stefan Collini, Introduction to Mill, CW XXI, xxi. And see Small, “Liberal University and Its Enemies”.
[45] Collini, Introduction, xxi.
[46] “The Negro Question”, Fraser’s Magazine, 25.
[47] L to Margaret A. Carlyle, 1 Dec 1849 (“The dud of a thing is come out in *Fraser*”) and L to John A. Carlyle, 14 Dec 1849; in The Collected Letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle, Duke-Edinburgh edn, ed. Clyde de L. Ryals, Kenneth J. Fielding et al. (Duke, NC: Duke UP, 1995), 299, 310-12 (311).
[48] II, 26. For a telling account of Froude’s response to Jamaica when he visited in1887, forearmed with Carlylean prejudices, see Ledgister, “Racist Rantings”, 113-18.
[49] See Tamarkin, “Why Forgive Carlyle?”, for an ethical reading of the reaction against Carlyle as (in some cases) the first prompt to an enlarged conception of forgiveness.
[50] George Meredith, L to Frederick A. Maxse, 2 Jan 1870, in Letters of George Meredith, ed. C. L. C line, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), I, 442-3 (443). “Philosophy, while rendering its dues to a man like Carlyle, and acknowledging itself inferior in activity, despises his hideous blustering impatience in the presence of progressive facts.”
[51] “Fables of Responsibility”, in Unruly Examples: On the Rhetoric of Exemplarity, ed. Alexander Gelley (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1995), 121-41 (121).
[52] “Fables of Responsibility”, 135.
[53] The Genealogy of Morals, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1969), 44-5.
[54] Ridley, Introduction to : Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings, xxiii: ““In the exemplary figure” the relation of rules to action is “altogether internal: he does as he does because it is in his nature to do so”.
[55] Twilight of the Idols, tr. Kaufmann, 521.
[56] That Carlyle and Nietzsche stand in a near relation to one another is well known. See esp. Eric Bentley, A Century of Hero-Worship: A Study of the Idea of Heroism in Carlyle and Nietzsche (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957); Albert J. LaValley, Carlyle and the Idea of the Modern: Studies in Carlyle’s Prophetic Literature and Its Relation to Blake, Nietzsche, Marx and Others (New Haven: Yale UP, 1968); Jeremy Tambling, “Carlyle through Nietzsche: Reading Sartor Resartus”, Modern Language Review 102/2 (2007), 326-40; William Meakins, “Nietzsche, Carlyle, and Perfectionism”, Journal of Nietzsche Studies 45/3 (2014), 258-78.
[57] The other direct references to Carlyle in the late works (The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo) are gestural not palpable hits: “that knowing and involuntary counterfeiter” (101), “Carlylism … a need of the weak” for “some unconditional yes or no” (54).
[58] One may intuit that part of the reason for Nietzsche’s antagonism was that Froude had sought to establish Carlyle himself as an exemplary figure—”an example of integrity & simplicity to all English men of letters”, as he put it in a private letter to Martin Tupper: “We sorely need an example of this kind, for our profession tends to vanity and is not a wholesome one.” Froude to Martin Tupper, 3 December 1882, quoted by John Clubbe, Editor’s Introduction to Froude”s Life of Carlyle (Columbus, OH: Ohio State UP, 1979), 31.
[59] Friedrich Nietzsche: A Philosophical Biography (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010), 498; quoting Ecce Homo, 137.
[60] (Chicago: U of Chicago Press), 21.
[61] 24 September 1833; CL, 444-50 (445).
[62] See, for example, Michael Naas, ““Alors, qui êtes-vous?”: Jacques Derrida and the Question of Hospitality”, Substance 34/1 (2005), 6-17; Martin Hagglund and Derek Attridge,

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"Ethics, Hospitality and Radical Atheism: A Dialogue", Wadham College, Oxford, 2010 https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/ethics-hospitality-and-radical-atheism-dialogue; Michael Marais, "Coming into Being: J. M. Coetzee's Slow Man and the Aesthetic of Hospitality", Contemporary Literature 50/2 (2009), 273-98.