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A cartography of philosophy's engagement with society

Diana Hicks¹ & J. Britt Holbrook²

¹School of Public Policy, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA

²Department of Humanities, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Newark, NJ

dhicks@gatech.edu

Abstract

Should philosophy help address the problems of non-philosophers or should it be something isolated both from other disciplines and from the lay public? This question became more than academic for philosophers working in UK universities with the introduction of societal impact assessment in the national research evaluation exercise, the REF. Every university department put together a submission describing its broader impact in case narratives, and these were graded. Philosophers were required to participate.

The resulting narratives are publicly available and provide a unique resource permitting a more comprehensive, empirically based consideration of philosophy's influence outside the academy than has hitherto been possible. This paper takes advantage of this data to develop a cartography of the ways in which philosophers engage society in their work. We identify five approaches: dissemination, engagement, provocations, living philosophy, and philosophy of X. We compare these along the six dimensions proposed by Frodeman and Briggie to characterize the ideal field philosopher. We conclude that there are multiple ways of being a field philosopher, which vary in their emphasis. This pluralism bodes well for the expansion of philosophy's societal influence, since there are routes available to suit different preferences.

Keywords: philosophy, public value, REF, impact case narratives

Philosophy recovers itself when it ceases to be a device for dealing with the problems of philosophers and becomes a method, cultivated by philosophers, for dealing with the problems of men.

– John Dewey

Think of organic chemistry; I recognize its importance, but I am not curious about it, nor do I see why the layman should care about much of what concerns me in philosophy.

– W.V.O. Quine

Two of the most prominent philosophers of the 20th century, John Dewey and Willard Van Orman Quine, took opposing positions on the proper relations between philosophy and the wider world. Though this issue has not been of great concern to philosophers over the years since Dewey and Quine offered their thoughts, Robert Frodeman and Adam Briggie recently entered the fray with the most sustained criticism to date of philosophy's lack of broader societal engagement: *Socrates Tenured* (where we found the Quine and Dewey quotations). Frodeman and Briggie (2016) suggest that these two quotes "represent not just two different attitudes, but two different models for how (and where and with whom) to conduct philosophical thinking" (17). Dewey suggests, at least, that philosophy ought to be done to help address the problems of non-philosophers. For Dewey, then, philosophy "recovers itself" – is philosophy as it should be – when it attempts to address societal problems. For Quine, philosophy clearly ought to be conceived as something isolated both from other disciplines and from the lay public. Where Dewey thought philosophy should address the public and *its* problems, Quine thought philosophy should address its *own* problems, the chemists theirs, the dentists theirs, and so on. Where the Deweyian philosopher engages with the public, the Quinean philosopher sits in an armchair by the fire or around a seminar table with other philosophers.

Frodeman and Briggie (2016) aim to convince philosophers to take the question of philosophy's broader contributions seriously, which is to say as itself a philosophical question. Their concern is both pragmatic and existential:

The STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering, and math) can make arguments concerning their contributions to health care, technological advance, economic growth and the like. But this isn't the case with philosophy and the humanities. (22)

Soon enough, they warn, society will come to the philosophers and ask us to account for our activities. What, pray tell, is the value of philosophy?

This question has long been an uncomfortable one. A 1986 satirical British novel about the commercialization of universities focused on the philosophy department, presumably because it was most difficult to envisage commercialization in philosophy. The fictional Vice Chancellor took the position that:

Philosophy has got to earn its keep, just like any other subject. The days of the ivory tower were over long ago. It's not all that difficult to adjust to the real world. Your colleagues in other departments have shown what can be done with a bit of ingenuity. (Parkin 1986, p. 17)

In response, the philosophy dean opened the "Mind and Body Shop" in the red light district.

This debate, such as it is, has become more than academic for philosophers working in UK universities. UK universities are subject to periodic national evaluations of research quality, which for the first time in 2014 incorporated assessment of the broader societal impact of research. This exercise, the Research Excellence Framework (REF), helps allocate core university funding. Every university department put together case study narratives describing broader societal impacts, and these were reviewed by disciplinary panels that awarded a grade.

When assessment of impact was introduced in the REF consultation process in 2009, philosophers (and many others) were generally unhappy. Philosopher James Ladyman started a petition to the UK government to "allocate funds for academic research solely on the basis of academic excellence and not on the basis of 'impact' or the

judgments of ‘users’” (Smith 2010). Despite the petition, the impact assessment went ahead, and philosophers submitted cases, leading one to wonder: when actually faced with the existential crisis Frodeman and Briggie theorized, and Parkin satirized, how did philosophers respond?

The REF case study narratives allow us to examine this question. They are publicly available and provide a unique resource permitting a more comprehensive, empirically based consideration of philosophy’s influence outside the academy than has hitherto been possible. This paper takes advantage of the REF narratives to develop a cartography of philosophers engaging with society in their work. Examining the cases, we identified five strategies:

1. Dissemination
2. Engagement
3. Provocation
4. Living philosophy
5. Philosophy of X

In what follows, we describe each strategy and offer examples. We apply Frodeman and Briggie’s (2016) framework to each strategy to assess its fit with the characteristics of the field philosopher as well as the merits of the field philosophy framework as a description of philosophers’ public engagement. The point is to determine both the extent to which their framework might be useful in understanding philosophers’ public engagement and the extent to which the case studies might suggest modifications to that framework. In the conclusion, we offer an overall account of the relationship between our categories and the framework. The analysis also benefits from being contextualized by comparison with cases in a patenting field, inorganic chemistry, and a medical field, dentistry, which permits identification of unexpected alignments between their activities and those in philosophy. This is possible because in the REF data we see non-patented impacts in inorganic chemistry and advances in dentistry beyond clinical interventions that bear some similarities to the philosophy cases.

Literature review

Consideration of the public value of philosophy is fraught with angst for philosophers. Philosophy clearly has value, as it has always been a part of Western society. However, with universities being more numerous and larger than ever before, there are many more philosophers active today, at least professionally, than in past centuries. With the need to support more people has come the requirement to justify the resources, particularly as budgets have tightened in recent decades. The response to external pressure involves consideration of the value of philosophy, particularly its public value. The resulting discussion evidences concern with both internal and external factors. That is, that engagement with the public is good philosophy (Dewey, internal) and that such engagement is forced upon us by outside forces because good philosophy has nothing to do with public engagement (Quine, external). This conversation takes somewhat different turns in Europe and the United States.

In the English language material accessible to the authors, Europeans work to justify all of humanities research to governments (Benneworth, 2015; Hazelkorn, 2015). This conversation often takes place in an evaluative context and focuses on how comparatively difficult it is to see impact from humanities scholarship, the inadequacy of methods used to evaluate impacts, the non-linearity of the process of achieving broader impacts and the centrality of informal interaction in this process (Reale et al., 2017; Molas-Gallart, 2015; Olmos-Peñuela, 2013). Belfiore identifies this as a response to “clearly legitimate demands that a liberal and democratic society properly makes of its university researchers to be at the beating heart of our contemporary public sphere” (Belfiore, 2015, p. 100). Such concerns are particularly acute in the UK, which has seen hard core economics rhetoric inappropriately used to justify arts and humanities (Bate, 2011; Belfiore, 2015; Bulaitis, 2017; Watermeyer, 2014) as well as national assessment of achievements beyond the academy in the REF exercise in 2014.

Many European authors reference a survey of UK academics about their knowledge exchange activities that juxtaposed arts and humanities against other disciplines and established a comparable rate of interaction between arts and humanities scholars and public sector organizations (Abreu et al., 2009; Hughes et al, 2011, cited in: Watermeyer, 2014; Benneworth 2015; Molas-Gallart, 2015; Olmos-Peñuela et al., 2015; Gulbrandsen & Aanstad, 2015). Labor intensive case study evaluations provide another source of evidence. Though limited in scope, Molas-Gallart concludes that many evaluations have established that arts and humanities researchers work as curators of

museums and exhibitions and contribute to historical theater and film productions (Molas-Gallart, 2015). Thus, beyond first principles, it has been established that humanities researchers engage with non-commercial parts of society quite extensively, in particular with museums and theaters. Comparable information, specific to philosophy, is so far lacking.

In the United States, threatened closure of philosophy departments prompted arguments for the public value of philosophy (Burroughs, 2018; McIntyre, 2011). Here, philosophers argue that shedding "esoteric engagement with topics irrelevant to the affairs of contemporary culture" (Sassower, 2018) benefits philosophy but worry that university incentives and processes present obstacles to a more engaged philosophy (Frodeman & Briggie, 2016; Burroughs, 2018). Various philosophical initiatives seek to overcome the obstacles and foster broader engagement: the American Philosophical Association (APA) Committee on Public Philosophy; Public Philosophy Network (PPN); Society of Philosophers in America (SOPHIA); Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC); the Consortium for Socially Relevant Philosophy of/in Science and Engineering (SRPoiSE); Society for Philosophy of Science in Practice (SPSP); the Center for Public Philosophy at UC Santa Cruz; the Philosophy in the Public Interest program at Northern Arizona University; or Sewanee's Community Engaged Learning Program, directed by philosophy professor James F. Peterman. The existence of these initiatives provides evidence that some philosophers highly value public engagement as legitimate philosophical work.

Yet, as with the broader humanities, arguments for the public value of philosophy tend to be supported by principled reasoning with limited use of empirical evidence. Often adduced are lists of three or four famous philosophers whose own work is held up as an exemplar of public engagement (Frodeman & Briggie, 2016, p. 47; Burroughs, 2018; Benneworth, 2015; Davey, 2011; Watermeyer, 2014). This great man approach establishes that it has been possible for charismatic, intelligent, wise and connected philosophers to influence societal change over long periods of time. And although their work inspired many to do work with broader impact – followers of Arendt in moral debates, Foucault in medicine and psychiatry and Habermas in politics for example¹ – the work of great men and women themselves offers limited guidance to the vast number of philosophers toiling in modern universities.

Such anecdotes provide, we believe, too impoverished an impression of the public value of current philosophy. In this paper we take the American perspective that public engagement has intrinsic value as good philosophy and seek to advance understanding of the public value of philosophy with broad based evidence of good practice. We use material produced in the European evaluative context – case study narratives from all UK philosophy departments. The requirement that all departments follow the same guidelines to produce case narratives of broader impact provides a unique opportunity to transcend the limits of anecdotes about a few famous people. The narratives we use were so broadly based, covering all UK university philosophy departments, and so focused on broader impact that we believe we can make a start on producing the "cartography of impact(s)" called for by Watermeyer (2014).

Theoretical Framework

Those advocating philosophy's public engagement have sought to characterize what that activity might look like. Meagher (2013), in something approaching a manifesto for public philosophy, proposed five characteristics of public philosophy, namely that public philosophy should be:

- *Transformative – both philosophy and its public(s) should be transformed through their interactions with each other*
- *Not understood as "experts" – work should be "co-built in dialogue with various public constituents", posing questions, not providing answers*
- *Collaborative and interdisciplinary*
- *Committed to assessing the work and being accountable to public partners*
- *Inclusive and representative of various publics – intellectual and demographic diversity is required.*

¹ We are grateful to an anonymous reviewer for this point.

Frodeman and Briggle acknowledge fellow travelers as those pursuing philosophy in Mode 2. They characterize the four branches of Mode 2 philosophy as:

- *Popular – philosophical cafes, blogs, podcasts*
- *Pedagogical – teaching in schools or prisons, incorporating public engagement into college classes*
- *Interdisciplinary collaboration within the academy*
- *Transdisciplinary approaches engaging stakeholders outside of the academy such as policymakers*

(Frodeman & Briggle, 2016, pp. 75-76)

These frameworks share certain elements, most notably interdisciplinarity and interaction with those outside the academy. However, the most detailed exposition of what engaged philosophy might look like, and the one most suited for empirical exploration, comes from Frodeman and Briggle's expansion on the three characteristics of the field philosopher laid out previously in Frodeman et al. 2012. Frodeman and Briggle (2016) suggest that there are, in fact, six "definitive characteristics" of the field philosopher:

- *Goal: help excavate, articulate, discuss, and assess the philosophical dimensions of real-world policy problems.*
- *Approach: pursue case-based research at the meso-level that begins with problems as defined and contested by the stakeholders involved.*
- *Audience: the primary audience consists of non-disciplinary stakeholders faced with a live problem. Knowledge is produced in the context of use.*
- *Method: rather than a method, we speak of rules of thumb, a pluralistic and context-sensitive approach with a bottom-up orientation.*
- *Evaluation: context-sensitive standards for rigor, and non-disciplinary metrics for assessing success, which in the first instance is defined by one's audience.*
- *Institutional placement: field philosophy resides on the margins of existing institutions, shuttling between the academy and the larger world; but also seeks to institutionalize itself both within academia and different communities of practice. (124)*

Although Frodeman and Briggle are quite partial to the field philosopher, their argument is avowedly pluralistic. The point is not to train all philosophers to become field philosophers (Deweyians on steroids), but rather, aligned with the American programmatic approach, to open a space for the sorts of goals, approaches, and audiences that field philosophers seek to achieve and engage. Since the field philosopher represents the type of philosophy most likely to have broader societal impacts, and since the REF assesses the impact of academic researchers and their research on society, we might expect to see field philosophy exemplified in REF case studies. To determine whether this expectation is realized, we analyze the REF case studies in philosophy to ascertain their alignment with the six characteristics of field philosophy. We also test Frodeman and Briggle's claim that the STEM disciplines can make "arguments" for their societal impacts, while philosophy cannot, by comparing the philosophy cases to cases from inorganic chemistry and dentistry.

Methods

The strength of the REF case studies is their breadth; all fields were required to submit cases. This enables a comprehensive overview across scholarship including fields whose outreach is normally invisible, such as philosophy. All departments were required to submit at least two case studies, roughly one for every 6 to 8 staff. (HEFCE, 2011, p. 28). Narratives were 1,350 words or less describing impacts that occurred between 2008 and 2013 from research conducted in the 20 years prior. 6,975 impact case studies were submitted and reviewed by 36 disciplinary panels, which also included non-academic research users as reviewers. The cases are publicly available in a searchable database (impact.ref.ac.uk/CaseStudies). Our discussion is based on our reading of 58 philosophy cases found by selecting Unit of Assessment 'Philosophy', and within that 'research area philosophy'. Below, we reference cases by number, for example 3585 or 44195. These are the numbers assigned to cases in the case database. To see a case, go to the case website and follow the case selection instructions above. In

downloaded results the files will be named using these case numbers. Alternatively, substitute a case number for “XXXX” in this URL: impact.ref.ac.uk/CaseStudies/CaseStudy.aspx?Id=XXXX .

Many exercises assessing societal impact from research fall into the trap of seeing only impact on the economy (Frodeman 2017). The REF did not do this, instead defining impact broadly as: “an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia” (HEFCE, 2011, p. 26). The humanities panel customized their definition to include: civil society, cultural life, economic prosperity, education, policy making, public discourse, and public services. This provided room for almost any influence outside academia to be submitted, reducing worry that the efforts of humanists would not be valued. Nevertheless, cases had to be based on scholarship produced with the past 20 years, which may be too short a time span for the kind of large scale societal change that some argue should be credited to the humanities (Benneworth, 2015). Furthermore, influence based on a lifetime oeuvre was also not eligible for submission, unfairly excluding cases according to some senior people. It may also have been impossible to capture some types of impact in this format, which required evidence to substantiate claims. If so, the exercise and our data would capture less than the full public value of philosophy.

It is also possible to question the narratives as highly stylized because rigidly controlled, or as painting idealized pictures. Certainly, attitudes to the cases as evidence are tainted by the unhappiness of UK academics with the surrounding policy assumptions and discussion. However, we require of the cases only that they not be fictional, and the requirement that they be evidenced suggests they likely are not. The standardization across cases created by writing under the same set of rules and incentives reduces variability creating an unusually large number of comparable narratives that serve our purposes well.

Nevertheless, the constraints under which they were produced somewhat hamper use of the case narratives to understand how academics influence the outside world. Case studies were limited to 750 words to describe the nature and extent of impact and its relation to underpinning research (HEFCE, 2011, p. 53). Primarily concerned to establish *that* impact had happened, case studies meticulously document each and every activity outside the scholarly world that can be associated with the research result being put forward as having had impact. However, words are not wasted describing in detail *how* those activities came about. So, for example, participation in writing a policy white paper would be mentioned, but preceding chance meetings, follow up conversations, negotiations, etc. that led to the invitation to participate in the activity are undocumented (cf. Holbrook 2017). This characteristic of REF cases has frustrated others using the cases as data sources to study patterns of impact (Meagher & Martin 2017, p.22; Greenhalgh & Fahy 2015, p.1). So for example, ‘productive interactions’ is a central concept in the literature on impact of social science and humanities research, but it cannot be examined using these case studies (Spaapen and Van Drooge, 2011; Mollas-Gallart and Tang, 2011). Similarly, the cases do not always mention where the idea for the question originated, though this is an important element in the field philosophy framework.

The first step in our analysis was to read the 58 philosophy cases. In our first reading we looked for common themes in similarities between cases. We set up a preliminary list of categories in mind mapping software to help organize the cases under headings that captured our sense of similarities in approach as well as differences between groups of cases. After this, we iterated between the mind map and the cases to refine the categories seeking to condense them into a small number while devising labels that accurately captured the essence of similarities within groups and differences between groups. The result is a grouping of cases into what we identified as the most natural types, identifying five main strategies each with at least two or three cases. Although typologies such as this are often derived from theory, ours was not. Rather, our theoretical framework, the six dimensions of field philosophy, is used here as a guide for systematic interrogation of the empirically derived map. In addition, we use the variation across the categories to probe the robustness of the field philosophy concept.

In what follows, we interrogate the cases looking for evidence of activity along five of the six dimensions of field philosophy put forth by Frodeman and Briggie: goal, approach, audience, institutional placement and method. The sixth dimension, evaluation, we exclude because each case was put forward for evaluation by non-scholarly criteria in the REF and therefore meets this criterion of field philosophy by definition. We looked for evidence of the first

dimension – *goal* – in attention to problems that originate outside philosophy's theoretical framework. Frodeman and Briggie qualify problems as being policy problems, but we do not limit problems to policy problems, broadening the scope. To find evidence of the second dimension – *approach* – we look for evidence that problems were defined by stakeholders, often actual problems, often policy related, facing outside organizations. Intended *audience* outside philosophy is identified by presenting to non-academics or publishing outside the philosophical literature. *Institutional placement* for the field philosopher involves shuttling between the academy and the larger world. By definition every case involves a university academic. Therefore, evidence of shuttling would be mentions of working outside the university, for example consulting or policy making committee work. The difference between this and working at Frodeman and Briggie's meso-level (*approach*) appears to be that of working on organizationally defined problems as an academic or working for an outside organization.

Method is a more problematic dimension. Frodeman and Briggie speak of using social science methods. Here, we simply look for publication in philosophy journals and take that as evidence that traditional philosophical methods were used. This means that publishing inside and publishing outside the philosophical literature are taken to mean somewhat different things, method and audience respectively. A case can exhibit either one or both. Neither is not a possibility because the rules of the REF specify that a case be based on published research and that the publications be referenced.

The focus on journal articles raises the question of the position of books. Journal articles are more clearly disciplinary and reviewed as such, therefore they are easier to use as a marker of disciplinarity. Books are important in philosophy publishing, but may well be aimed at a broader than disciplinary audience, therefore are more difficult to use as markers of disciplinarity (Clemens et al., 1995). We consider books on a case by case basis in our discussion of method.

In what follows, we characterize each of the five strategies we identified along the five dimensions of Frodeman and Briggie's definition of a field philosopher. Along the way, we note where the fit between the theory and cases is particularly strong or somewhat weak. We begin with dissemination.

Dissemination to the public

The first strategy was to go about one's scholarship as usual, i.e. examining big questions "in which any thinking person must take an interest" (44195) and give lots of talks to which the public were invited. In this way a case was built that thinking people, the intelligentsia, were engaged. Beyond a university's public lecture series, philosophy café, or lifelong learning day, some were able to land a spot in Oxford's Continuing Education program. A variation on this theme was to lecture in local schools (12157). British philosophers also benefit from media aimed at the intelligentsia. BBC4's history of ideas program *In our Time* averages 2 million listeners (Wikipedia), providing any case involving an appearance with a high number of people engaged (36405, 44195). The Philosophy Bites podcast also made frequent appearance in philosophy cases, and download numbers provided a measure of engagement. Public lectures and media appearances can be supplemented with writing for the enlightenment literature, that is for periodicals directed at the non-scholarly audience, for example the *Times Literary Supplement* (44195) or the *New York Times* opinion section (4872, 36405). Several cases were built on lectures to school teachers (27169, 35315).

How does "a determined campaign of public engagement" (44195) based entirely on public lectures, intelligentsia media, and enlightenment literature align with Frodeman and Briggie's ideal field philosopher? We assess five dimensions on which field philosophers differ from their more traditional colleagues: goal, approach, audience, method and institutional placement. The goals and institutional location of the determined campaigner remained the same as those of their non-campaigning colleagues. Nor did the approach or method differ from those of non-campaigning fellow philosophers, based on the assumption that thinking people must be interested in what philosophers do. The cases referenced many erudite books and philosophy journals as sources for the research. The audience was extended by inviting in outsiders, not because the philosopher addressed their problems, but because they surely would like to engage with the interesting questions asked by the philosopher. The intention to reach a nonacademic audience was signaled by the public dissemination activity, thus the metric offered for evaluation was size of audience reached.

This approach to engagement is not uncommon. However, more engaged colleagues tend to view public lecturing as "deficient where impact is courted as something ancillary or as an afterthought to the research process." (Watermeyer, 2014 p. 367). Unsurprisingly, alignment with the tenets of field philosophy was minimal.

Engagement

In contrast, one case was notable for its commitment to conversation with the public. The University of Aberdeen's NIP Public programme sought to propagate the benefits of its collaborative discussion, hosting guided discussions of philosophical issues in HM Prison Aberdeen, in a charity helping homeless and unemployed youth, in a Philosophy Café, and in schools. In each case the groups were involved in collaborative discussion, where views were put forward, revised and sharpened in the light of friendly criticism in order to reach a deeper understanding of genuinely puzzling issues. Engaging the public in conversation is an approach Frodeman and Briggie acknowledged under the heading of Mode 2 philosophy (Frodeman and Briggie, 2016, p. 75).

The element of engagement was deepened in a second, pedagogical, case in which philosophers at Cardiff University developed a booklet to be used in A-level (high school) philosophy classes in response to a problem identified by teachers during an outreach consultation.

They had reported that while independent critical engagement is strongly emphasised in the A-level Philosophy marking criteria, the available teaching materials do not foster this skill. The booklet contains essays summarising research papers from three members of the Unit that represent opposing views of Nietzsche's critique of morality. Through questions and puzzles, students are able to compare the claims and take up critical positions. The booklet has contributed a new type of educational material for developing critical thinking in A-level Philosophy and has been used in the UK and overseas. (3585)

The booklet was developed through close discussion with two A-level teachers, one of whom had originally proposed it.

A third example of engagement exemplified the transdisciplinary approach in which people outside the academy, such as policymakers are the primary audience. This work explored 'best interests decision-making':

The principle of beneficence has long been recognized as a fundamental principle of medical ethics. The primary aim of medicine is to benefit patients; doctors and other care-providers must therefore act in the best interests of care-recipients. However, as soon as one moves beyond this intuitive and universally agreed principle, problems arise both in theory and in practice. In 2005, a new Court of Protection for adjudication of disputes over best interests decisions taken on behalf of care-recipients was established. The Essex Autonomy Project (EAP) has studied the philosophical, ethical, and legal problems that arise in the cases that have been brought before the Court of Protection. Three problems in particular have loomed large in recent legal controversies:

1 To what extent can or should the assessment of the best interest of P (the care-recipient) take into account the interests of family, care-providers, etc.?

2 When and under what circumstances does best interests decision-making amount to an objectionably paternalistic intervention in the autonomy rights of P?

3 Is best interests decision-making ever permissible, or is it always an inadmissible restriction of P's autonomy? (43992)

The EAP engaged practitioners in roundtables, produced technical reports mounted on their website and worked with public organizations and officials to inform professional and public discussion of the law of best interests. The EAP influenced the development of public policy guidelines for implementing legal requirements and played a role in the reform of existing regulatory frameworks (43992).

A fourth example of engagement coupled philosophical analysis of the concepts underlying debates on religious discrimination, and participatory research involving stakeholders employing these concepts - religious and legal practitioners and policy makers. The result was a book entitled: *The Right to Wear Religious Symbols* (7831).

Notable in these cases was the conversation with practitioners at the beginning and throughout the projects. Such conversation began with problems defined by the stakeholders and so exemplified the approach of Frodeman and Briggles' field philosopher. The goal in these cases was to excavate, articulate and discuss philosophical dimensions of real-world policy problems – teaching critical thinking in one case and dealing with disputes in the Court of Protection in another. The audience for the work was non-disciplinary stakeholders faced with a live problem – teachers and students, the judicial system and religious practitioners. The method in the teaching case combined traditional and field methods. The three philosophical works used were all published in traditional philosophical journals or books. After their publication they were re-presented as high school teaching material through work which certainly aligns with the field philosopher's context-sensitive, bottom-up approach. The method in the judicial case was less clear. The references to the research in this case were one chapter in the *International Yearbook of German Idealism*, which is traditional philosophy, three less traditional working papers and a paper in the *British Medical Journal*. The religious discrimination case developed a monograph that contained seemingly interdisciplinary detailed analysis of government statements. So, evidence of traditional philosophical method was limited. The dissemination was certainly non-traditional, involving roundtables and technical reports. Non-philosopher audiences were addressed in each case, indicated by broad usage of the teaching material in classrooms and influence on guidelines for implementing legal requirements and reform of regulatory frameworks. In these cases, institutional placement remained the same: the philosophers were located in philosophy departments. Overall, the cases showed a strong alignment with Frodeman and Briggles' characteristics of the field philosopher, exemplifying the approach they advocate.

Provocation

The third approach shared by several successful philosophy cases was to engage in provocation. For example, Oxford University's Julian Savulescu has advanced ethical arguments in favor of sports doping and human genetic enhancement, i.e. "designer babies" (4872). He coined the term "procreative beneficence" and argued that all forms of enhancing human beings are not just morally permissible but morally obligatory. The provocative nature of this stance was confirmed by the polling conducted before and after public debates held by Intelligence Squared Debates. On both designer babies and sports doping, a majority of the audience was against Savulescu's view both before and after the debate, though after the debate the majority against was smaller than before. In this case, enlightenment literature and media coverage such as a *New York Times* opinion piece, a *New Scientist* article, coverage in *Wired* and *The Huffington Post* all resulted in extensive online debates in the comments. This online commenting demonstrated active public engagement with the ideas. The case influenced public policy with a workshop organized for the Norwegian Directorate of Health as well being cited by the U.S. Presidential Commission for the Study of Bioethical Issues. Public lectures in this case included programs at the Said Business School in Oxford organized for State Farm Insurance Company and for SABMiller, a workshop led by Richard Branson on Necker Island, and two lectures at the World Economic Forum in Davos in 2009.

Another provocation was issued by Nick Bostrom, of Oxford University, who in 2003 published an argument that took what had been a Cartesian thought experiment and, using conceptual and empirical considerations, showed that we are almost certainly living in a computer simulation (3701). Subsequent work has refined and developed the idea in response to counterarguments by philosophers and in debate with the public. The work inspired a play that ran in both New York and Paris as well as two novels and an attempt by a physicist to provide an empirical test. Websites were established to track the argument, including a wiki to which readers contributed their essays that had been accessed 200,000 times as of 2013. There was extensive media coverage both in the popular press and popular science and philosophy press (i.e. *Philosophy Bites* podcast, *Philosophy Magazine*) some of which provoked lively debates in online comment forums.

These cases illustrate a third type of alignment with field philosophy that focuses on the real world, though from a somewhat exotic perspective. The problems were not defined by stakeholders, nor are they clearly problems central to philosophy. Nevertheless, the topics resonated with a non-academic audience because of their controversial, counter-intuitive claims about aspects of everyday life, and were likely developed with a broader

audience in mind. The method appears to be traditional in that the work was published in traditional journals. The references to underpinning research in the Savulescu case included one paper in *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, three in ethics journals and an edited book, and three authored books on the topic of human enhancement. The references to the research underpinning Bostrom's case included two papers in *Philosophical Quarterly* and two papers in *Analysis* as well as less traditional resources – a website and *New Scientist*. Savulescu's work on "procreative beneficence" was widely cited in the biomedical ethics literature, and Bostrom's core paper: *Are we living in a computer simulation?* was widely cited outside philosophy, garnering as many cites from engineering and scientific journals as from philosophy journals. This hints at the interdisciplinary influence achieved by both cases. Of course, the case narratives detailed copious evidence of impact outside the academy. Both Savulescu and Bostrom are professors at Oxford and so do not reside on the margins of existing institutions. Nevertheless, their work has taken them out of the academic environment, with Savulescu lecturing at Davos and Bostrom involved in a play and with websites. Overall, the provocations read like traditional philosophy in innovative application, and so perhaps less aligned with field philosophy than the engagers but more aligned than the disseminators.

Successful provocations demonstrably engaged the public. Press coverage widened beyond enlightenment or science media to popular media. Lively commenting and debate in online forums provided evidence that a philosopher had engaged the interest of non-specialists. Online forums enabling public debate of ideas have only recently become available but seem to be of particular value to philosophers.² The link between traditional publication venues and provocations also suggested that Frodeman and Briggles' tendency to associate disciplinary publication with lack of interest in broader audiences may need rethinking. Provocative topics treated with traditional philosophical methods can engage other audiences, especially if the philosophers follow up by engaging further. These cases suggest that one can publish first in disciplinary journals and go on to engage the broader public.

Living philosophy

The fourth approach shared by several philosophy cases was to leverage one's own life. In these cases, a person's scholarly work was related to their life outside academia, creating a natural link to broader engagement. In the first example, Toby Ord of Oxford University investigated consequentialism, arguing that long-term commitments, not individual acts, should be assessed with this framework. Furthermore, "he discovered powerful and compelling new arguments why those of us who enjoy a certain basic quality of life should give a significant proportion of our income to poor people in developing countries. . . . This led him to the idea of setting an achievable public standard of giving away 10% of one's income." Such a standard, "creates a fixed allowance within which to live, free of the guilt and self-censure that accompanies a life that is a constant and frequently unsuccessful struggle to avoid luxuries. It is more intuitive in the sense that it chimes better with our pre-theoretical convictions about how we should live." In subsequent work he "came to acknowledge a significant moral imperative to donate to the most effective organisations, which led him to investigate the cost-effectiveness of various interventions" (8843).

In 2009, coincident with HEFCE's consultation process for devising the impact assessment, Ord pledged to donate 10% of his income to charity, or £1 million over his lifetime (Allen 2009). He also founded the organization Giving What We Can dedicated to fighting poverty in the developing world. "Its members pledge to give at least 10% of their income to aid and to direct their giving to the organisations that have a demonstrated ability to use their incomes most efficiently. [As of 2013] The most significant evidence [of impact] is the amount of money pledged by the 326 members of this organisation: over US \$130,000,000" (8843).

A second example of this approach is Labour Councillor and Professor Beverley Clack's work, which included reflections on religion as a form of ethics and providing intellectual support for an ethical socialist vision as part of the Labour Party think tank, Labour Left (15866). A third example is the work of Rai Gaita of King's College London,

² Analogously, Meagher and Martin found in their examination of mathematics REF cases that software distribution was an emerging method for mathematicians to distribute their work more broadly (Meagher & Martine 2017).

whose distinctive conception of good and evil were brought “to bear on a range of central and abiding moral questions” in a narrative form. In particular, his biography of his father was made into a film. Both the book and film were well received in Australia (41288).

These cases were distinguished by the variety of means by which philosophers have integrated their scholarly work and their non-academic lives to the benefit of both: Ord established a non-profit; Clack worked for a political party; Gaita produced a biography which became a film. They exemplified the field philosopher’s differing institutional placement by shuttling between the academy and larger world, a characteristic of field philosophy less evident in the other cases. Clack’s book, *The Philosophy of Religion*, suggested traditional philosophical inquiry. In other cases, the method used appeared to be non-traditional in that no philosophy journals were referenced as sources for the research. The Ord case referenced a website but no philosophy journals. The Gaita book was a biography. The cases also differed in that Ord and Raita offered money as a metric. Like the provocation cases, the choice of problem did not seem to be defined by stakeholders, rather the philosopher, as a member of society, chose a problem with practical import to themselves. This approach enabled the work to reach a wide audience and influence broader society.

Philosophy of X, where X is something relevant outside academe

The fifth approach leverages scholarship focused on areas of broader interest, such as philosophy of information technology, food, health or art. For example, Luciano Floridi’s work on the philosophy of information has led to consulting for Capgemini, Google and the European Commission (44492). E.J. Lowe’s arguments for a four-category ontology has influenced designers of information systems (11832). Peter Millican’s examination of issues that arise from the power of computation to mimic important intellectual feats led him to develop a program to perform stylistic analysis and comparison of texts to identify authors, useful in cases of disputed authorship (19240).

In food, Barry C. Smith’s work on the philosophy of wine, in particular his argument for the objectivity of taste, involved consulting for large drinks firms, public lectures at wine industry conferences, contributions to popular books on wine, press coverage, an experiment at a high-end restaurant, and contributions to a film and app produced by a drinks firm (18036).

In the health arena, Daniel Hutto and Shaun Gallagher at the University of Hertfordshire have developed the Embodied and Narrative Practices framework for understanding how we relate to others without resorting to a theory of the mind. Their work has been used to improve diagnosis and treatment of schizophrenia and autism spectrum disorders in the UK (44491).

Working on the scope and limits of responsibility, Bennett Foddy and Julian Savulescu, Oxford, have argued that, contrary to the commonsense view, an addictive desire is simply a very strong appetitive desire, on par with hunger or thirst; thus, the autonomy of drug addicts is not compromised, nor is addiction a disease (3702). Addictive desires tend to be socially unacceptable for one reason or another, but that is the most that can be said. Concerned with effective treatment, Hanna Pickard furthers this work by establishing the basis for encouraging people to take responsibility for their actions without blaming them, which is detrimental to treating them. This work has led to training for prison staff in responsibility without blame, to public lectures for a forensic psychotherapy workshop, prison officers, the House of Lords and videogame developers. The work has been cited in World Health Organization treatment guidelines. The work has also stimulated engagement on blogs and in discussion threads.

Philosophical work on art has similar potential to engage with society. Matthew Kieran at University of Leeds has developed a virtue approach to artistic appreciation and creativity – putting character at the center of understanding human engagement with the arts (6401). He has run workshops at the Tate, International Miami – Basel art fair, Crunch Art Festival, Hay on Wye, National Centre for Craft and Design, the Henry Moore Institute and the Leeds City Art Gallery. In addition to philosophy and popular media coverage, he helped Channel 4 develop its Hidden Talent program, in which Kieran worked with a factory worker who had left school at 15 and never been in an art gallery to develop his art appreciation skills. The program reached an audience of almost 2 million viewers.

In a second example, a philosopher at Warwick, Diarmuid Costello and an art historian at Essex, Margaret Iversen, collaborated to overcome the limits inherent in the isolation of art historical and philosophical debates over aesthetics of photography. They argued that contemporary photography is art in every sense of the term. This sparked public debate about the status of photography as an art. Public lectures included events for art theorists, curators, critics and photographic artists as well as an oversubscribed public conference at the Tate Modern. Costello was also invited to curate an exhibition at the Warwick Arts Centre (7434).

Philosophy of X often generates invitations to work outside the university. Professor John Broome's work on the ethics of climate change produced an invitation to serve as Lead Author for Working Group III of the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (4873). Work at the University of Leeds on professional ethics led to an invitation from the Royal Academy of Engineering to develop its *Guide to Ethics in Engineering Practice* and funding from the Institute of Chartered Accountants for a project on *Promoting Integrity in Organizations* (6402). Work on the philosophy of neuroscience prompted an invitation to join the Church of Scotland's Society, Religion and Technology working group and request for advice on issues surrounding the importance of neuroscience for free will and moral responsibility (24029).

The 'philosophy of X' approach enables a philosopher to engage with industry (information, wine), service providers (health) or cultural institutions (art) in the area of interest. It presents as Frodeman and Briggles' "new Republic of Letters" in which society's problems have philosophical aspects philosophers could and should address. Frodeman and Briggles (2016) write: "The dynamism of this modern-day Republic of Letters stands in stark contrast to the inward-looking conservatism of contemporary academics. This new Republic of Letters offers philosophizing on the fly, in response to a variety of game changers that have deeply philosophical elements – issues like climate change, artificial intelligence, globalization, new forms of media, and the potential remaking of the human genome."

By engaging with X, the philosopher is by definition engaged with real world problems – perceptions of the taste of wine, addiction, art appreciation. The case narratives do not provide enough information to determine how the problems were chosen, and whether stakeholders were involved. The audience clearly included those in the field – wine industry, art critics, information scientists, psychiatrists. Often, the mechanism of engagement included early press coverage and public lectures. In each case the research was published in a mix of philosophical books and journals and field books and journals - *Alan Turing His Work and Impact*, *Art History*, *Proceedings of the Wine Active Compounds Conference*, *Behavioural and Brain Sciences*, *Nature*. The method thus seems to meet both standards of philosophy and to offer something to the field. Outcomes were sufficient to create compelling impact narratives – experiment at a restaurant, use by psychiatrists, citation in treatment guidelines, and a television program. The philosophers were also shuttling between the academy and the larger world – consulting for the wine industry, training prison staff, teaching in art galleries, curating exhibitions. Engaging with institutions in the area of interest provided a kind of multiplier effect, extending the reach of philosophers across a broader slice of the public than could be reached by public lectures or internet forum engagement alone.

Of course, these categories are not entirely mutually exclusive. The provocations of Savulescu over sports doping and designer babies are in the realm of health, and Savulescu's position on addiction is somewhat provocative. Similarly, Bostrom's idea that we are living in a simulation could be classified as provocative philosophy of information technology.

Comparison with field philosophy

We can contextualize these findings by assessing their fit with theory, or the normative characterization of field philosophy proposed by Frodeman and Briggles (2016). Table 1 summarizes the discussion of the five broader impact strategies in philosophy revealed in this analysis of REF cases.

Table 1 – Impact strategies in philosophy and field philosopher characteristics*

	Goal	Approach	Audience	Method	Institutional placement
Dissemination	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
Engagement	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✗
Provocation	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓
Living philosophy	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓✓
Philosophy of X	✓	?	✓	✓	✓

* Excepting evaluation which did not vary across cases as all were submitted as examples of broader societal impact

The Engagement strategy very much resembles the approach of the field philosopher presented by Frodeman and Briggle (2016). In particular, beginning by engaging others to identify and address their problems is the approach recommended to the field philosopher. This approach encompasses three dimensions: goal, approach and audience. In contrast, Dissemination to the Public seems not to engage with the public's problems. Provocation and Living Philosophy seem to be more oriented around making connections with non-philosophers, without necessarily beginning with the non-philosophers and their problems. The Philosophy of X approach exemplifies the proposed "new Republic of Letters" or as Frodeman and Briggle frame it "philosophizing on the fly." The Living Philosophy type is uniquely strong in the dimension of shuttling between the academy and the larger world.

Assessment of the method used by each type was more problematic. In essence we took publishing in disciplinary philosophy journals as a sign that philosophical work as traditionally defined took place. Using this criterion, the dissemination and provocation cases showed evidence of traditional philosophical journal articles and so philosophical work meeting traditional disciplinary standards. The other three types tended not to reference papers in philosophy journals. Instead books or papers in interdisciplinary journals were referenced as sources of the work, suggesting a more eclectic methodological approach more in line with Frodeman and Briggle's analysis of field philosophy.

Of course, our study has limitations. The philosophy impact case studies we examined were constrained by the REF, which leaves open the possibility that there are other options for philosophers to engage with society that could not be submitted under REF rules. In addition, information about how the cases were scored by the REF panels is unavailable. It would be fascinating to see whether the panel of judges preferred particular types of impact from philosophy. Unfortunately, we were unable to do so here.

Beyond the two cultures

The work of philosophers in engaging with society can be more broadly contextualized by comparing it with impacts reported in two very different fields - dentistry and inorganic chemistry. 21 cases in research area dentistry were read. Inorganic chemistry cases were found by selecting Unit of Assessment Chemistry and within that research area inorganic chemistry, yielding 29 cases. We found that philosophers are not alone in their cultural impact; scientists also make efforts to disseminate their work more broadly. There is not much mystery involved when inorganic chemistry or dentistry submit examples of impact. One assumes that over the 20 years in question at least 1 in 5 inorganic chemists managed to discover something useful to industry, patent it and either license it to a big firm or start a firm. Indeed, most cases read like that. Similarly, in dentistry, somebody develops something, patents it and licenses it to the likes of Colgate or Procter and Gamble. Alternatively, dentists might develop a new treatment recommended in the treatment guidelines issued by professional organizations and they would train dentists in the new technique through professional education programs. These pathways to impact are very well established in the sciences. Therefore, assessment of research impact may seem reasonable to inorganic chemists or dentists.

The tradition of two cultures implies that pathways to impact will be entirely different, or absent, in the humanities. However, the connections with clinical trials, treatment guidelines and professional education seen in many dental cases, were also visible here in the philosophy of health cases. Engagement with science was also visible in the philosophy of neuroscience and philosophy of information technology cases, suggesting that one way that humanists can engage society is through engagement with science and technology.

In addition, the types of engagement observed in philosophy are not entirely absent in dentistry or inorganic chemistry, which fielded cases based on public dissemination and on producing cultural products, i.e. museum exhibits. In chemistry, coincident with HEFCE's consultations about the design of the REF, the School of Chemistry at the University of Nottingham began outreach activities to stimulate public interest in chemistry, motivated in part by a philosopher-like desire to "enable the public to debate scientific issues of societal importance" (31280). The school started a YouTube channel that has garnered 47.5 million views and won a Royal Society of Chemistry prize for education. They have developed public exhibits, including one entitled "Wonder in Carbon Land" to communicate the School's work in nanotubes. Public lectures at the Royal Society Summer Exhibition also played a role in their outreach efforts. Similarly, the Department of Chemistry at University College London has engaged in outreach, emphasizing work in schools but also involving work with the BBC, public lectures at science festivals and online videos (35405). Chemists at Oxford working on the chemistry of natural products extracted from plants have collaborated with the University's Botanic Garden on multiple outreach exhibits, events and lectures (18144). Similarly, Greenhalgh and Fahy's analysis of public health and primary care cases found a few reporting promotion of vigorous public debate and inspiring production of cultural artifacts (Greenhalgh and Fahy 2015, Table 2). These non-standard stories provide evidence that scientists also value the cultural engagement that provides philosophers with their main opportunities for societal influence.

The work of engaging society transcends traditional categories. Routes more commonly associated with medical science are pursued by philosophers of health. Philosophers engage with science and technology, and scientists engage with the public in the same way philosophers do. Scientists also create cultural objects in museum exhibits. These examples illustrate the poverty of a two cultures framing of societal engagement.

Conclusion

The philosophy cases submitted to the UK REF impact evaluation exercise in 2014 suggested five broad approaches to philosophy that engage broader society. We labeled these: Dissemination, Engagement, Provocation, Living Philosophy and Philosophy of X. The strategies varied in their characteristics, and Frodeman and Briggles' field philosophy framework provided dimensions that teased out these differences. In turn, the analysis revealed departures from Frodeman and Briggles' normative account of field philosophy. If Frodeman and Briggles have succeeded in providing the definitive characteristics of the field philosopher, they have not fully captured all the ways that philosophers can engage society. The pluralism exhibited here bodes well for the expansion of philosophy's influence, as there are many routes available to suit different approaches. Indeed, there are no doubt other ways for philosophy to influence society yet to be revealed, as our work cannot claim to have uncovered them all.

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