Epistemic Dimensions of the Ethics of De-platforming in Higher Education

Kirsten Welch

University of St. Thomas

On April 17, 2019, Ryzgard Legutko, a conservative Polish politician and scholar, arrived on the campus of Middlebury College, where later that day he was scheduled to give a lecture on his recent book, *The Demon in Democracy: Totalitarian Temptations in Free Societies*. But, upon his arrival, Legutko was informed that his lecture had been cancelled due to security concerns. One political science professor, however, invited Legutko to speak clandestinely to his class, and, accordingly, Legutko, escorted by a couple of students, snuck in through the back door of the classroom building and presented his talk to a room of about forty students.[1]

The debate about the permissibility of refusing a platform to speakers like Legutko has escalated as the number of such incidents has grown. "No-platforming," as the practice has been dubbed, refers to any strategy by which a speaker is kept from sharing his views. Unfortunately, this term masks the complexity involved in many of the relevant scenarios: it covers situations in which people are intentionally not invited to speak as well as those in which a previously invited speaker's talk is canceled. Eric Schliesser helpfully distinguishes between "passive no-platforming," which demarcates attempts to prevent a person from contributing to a public forum or to speak publicly by simply *not extending* an invitation to the person, and "active no-platforming," which refers to the *removal* of an opportunity for a person to contribute/speak publicly when that opportunity has already been conferred.[2] To restrict the scope of the argument, I limit my discussion here to instances of active no-platforming when a speaker is disinvited from campus, which, for brevity's sake, I will refer to as "de-platforming."

For the most part, reasons given by college and university decision-makers as well as arguments mounted by philosophers regarding the permissibility of de-platforming tend to appeal to considerations of free speech, academic

freedom, safety concerns, and possible emotional/psychological harms to marginalized students.[3] What has received less attention is the *epistemic* dimension of this ethical conundrum.[4] Although the four issues mentioned above are important considerations for determining the ethical status of de-platforming, the distinctively *epistemic* effects of de-platforming (or of failure to de-platform) must also be taken into account since, as I will argue, these epistemic dimensions have significant ethical weight. I consider two types of epistemic concerns that merit attention: first, *generation of* or *exposure to evidence*; and, second, *epistemic corruption*. I suggest that analysis and synthesis of these epistemic concerns can support the ethical *im*permissibility of de-platforming when combined with some plausible claims about the aims of higher education, although these epistemic considerations must also be weighed against other concerns of ethical weight.

DE-PLATFORMING LEGUTKO AT MIDDLEBURY: DETAILS, DEMANDS, AND RESPONSES

Legutko had been invited to the Middlebury campus by the Alexander Hamilton Forum, a conservative student group, but news of Legutko's upcoming talk sparked protest among other groups of Middlebury students due to Legutko's views on homosexuality, feminism, and multiculturalism. Students composed an open letter, which they sent around collecting signatures, addressed to Middlebury's Political Science Department and the Rohatyn Center for Public Affairs (both co-sponsors of the event), outlining complaints against Legutko and expressing the "adamant opposition" of the signees to the lecture:

> By co-sponsoring a speaker who blatantly and proudly expounds homophobic, racist, xenophobic, misogynistic discourse, the RCGA is severely undermining its mission to "build bridges across disciplines and communities." In endorsing Legutko and the rhetoric that he embodies, the RCGA is shutting out large swaths of the Middlebury community, all of whom are engaged, critical, and rigorous thinkers whose energies would be better spent not combating degrading and dehumanizing rhetoric.[5]

Both the political science department and the RCGA refused to withdraw their

sponsorship of Legutko's talk, and Keegan Callanan, the faculty director of the Alexander Hamilton Form, articulated some reasons to refuse the students' demand to cancel the lecture:

> We treat all Middlebury students as independent thinkers with a right to and capacity for free and open inquiry. We are committed to viewpoint diversity and freedom of thought. We believe that through the competition of ideas, each of us can better understand our own deepest convictions and make progress in the pursuit of truth. We believe that Middlebury students deserve to hear a multiplicity of perspectives, including the views of influential scholars with whom we might disagree strongly.[6]

Some students wanted more than the cancellation of the lecture. The Student Government Association (SGA) of Middlebury wrote a letter to the administration demanding the cancellation of the event and the right to vet all future invitations to speakers:

> Any organization or academic department that invites a speaker to campus will be required to fill out a due diligence form created by the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in coordination with the SGA's Institutional Diversity Committee. These questions should be created to determine whether a speaker's beliefs align with Middlebury's community standards, removing the burden of researching speakers from the student body.[7]

 In addition to these written responses, some students had organized a protest focused on a celebration of queer identity, which, according to their statements, they intended to be peaceful. As the event approached, however, and it became clear that the lecture was going to attract a much larger group of students than had been anticipated, Middlebury administration grew nervous. And their concern was not unfounded: two years earlier a student protest sparked by Charles Murray's visit to Middlebury had turned violent, resulting in the injury

of a professor who was escorting Murray. Three hours before the scheduled time of the lecture, Middlebury administration announced that the talk had been cancelled, citing safety concerns as their main rationale: "We canceled the event because we simply did not believe we could respond effectively to potential security and safety risks given the large number of people planning the two events—the lecture and the event the students had planned in response."[8]

Middlebury's de-platforming of Legutko is a helpful case for drawing out the epistemic-ethical dimensions of de-platforming for two main reasons: first, the case shares some salient features with other instances of de-platforming that have occurred in recent years (such as the nature of the objectionable views of Legutko), and, second, it highlights the complexities of the epistemic-ethical dimension of de-platforming. Legutko was de-platformed for holding views on issues about which there is nonnegligible debate as to whether the issues are open or closed.[9] One weakness in the philosophical literature on de-platforming is that many arguments tend to use stock cases of candidates who legitimately warrant de-platforming, either because the speakers are not academically credible themselves or because they proffer views in a manner that is antithetical to the sort of intelligent discussion that should occur in colleges and universities. But these examples simplify our understanding of de-platforming; real situations tend to be much more complex. In a formal email response to the students leaders who authored the open letter mentioned above, Tamar Mayer, Director of the Rohatyn Center for Global Affairs at Middlebury, makes a point similar to this: "Most of us would agree that racist discourses, Holocaust denial, and other malicious fringe theories should be considered outside the pale of the rational, civil debate that the Center and the College seek to promote. The tenets of conservative Catholicism, however, are not, even if some members of our community find the ramifications objectionable."[10] Legutko's views stemmed from his conservative Catholic commitments, and there seems to be a relevant difference between an orthodox Catholic and a Holocaust denier.

Drawing on some of these ideas articulated by stakeholders in the Middlebury case as well as prior philosophical work on the ethics of de-platforming, in what follows, I lay out two considerations that bear on the ethics

of de-platforming that are distinctively epistemic in nature.

GENERATION OF AND EXPOSURE TO EVIDENCE

An important question of epistemology is how individuals and groups considered as knowers can and ought to access and weigh evidence; even the most anti-evidentialist of epistemologists will admit that in our daily lives we unavoidably encounter tremendous amounts of evidence for and against a variety of claims and that we develop habits and strategies to cope with this evidence. Because encounters with evidence can matter for what people think, and, therefore, for what people do, *generation* or *suppression* of evidence carries ethical weight in situations when de-platforming is under consideration.[11]

It is clear that allowing a speech in which the speaker takes a stance toward a position deemed problematic can generate—or at least expose people to—first-order evidence in support of the controversial claim. First-order evidence provides *direct* evidence for or against a claim in the form of reasons, arguments, etc. So, if Legutko had been invited to speak about the reasons for his views against the morality of gay marriage, his talk would have served to distribute first-order evidence for that view. Often, though—as was the case for Legutko—controversial speakers are invited to speak on a topic about which they are experts and that is unrelated to their objectionable views. Considerations of exposure to first-order evidence, then, will be highly relevant only in situations when a problematic speaker is explicitly defending his objectionable viewpoint in his talk.

This sort of first-order evidence is not the only sort of evidence that can be generated by providing a platform for problematic speakers. As Neil Levy argues, an invitation to a problematic speaker can generate *higher-order* evidence for whatever claims or views are held to be objectionable because college and universities (whether purposely or inadvertently) *confer credibility* on such speakers and their views when they allow these speakers a platform.[12] Levy suggests that this higher-order evidence is generated both by the fact that the particular speaker in question was selected from among a range of other possible speakers—therefore indicating the credibility of the speaker in relationship to that

of others—and the prestige of the inviting institution. The more prestigious the institution, the more credibility is generated for the speaker. Applied to the Middlebury case, these two aspects of the generation of higher-order evidence confer credibility on Legutko's views insofar as there are other scholars who could have spoken about critiques of democratic liberalism and insofar as Middlebury is a respected institution of higher education.

It is important that this generation of higher-order evidence is completely independent of any presentation of first-order evidence for objectionable views; failing to de-platform a problematic speaker can generate higher-order evidence for his problematic views *even if* the speaker's talk (as was the case with Legutko's) has nothing whatsoever to do with the views in question. In fact, failing to de-platform a problematic speaker could generate higher-order evidence for problematic views even if the speaker *did not in fact* hold those views—all that matters is that he is *perceived* as holding those views and, therefore, that the college or university is perceived as tacitly endorsing (or at least tolerating) those views.

So far, then, it seems that considerations of evidence generation/suppression support the permissibility of de-platforming some speakers in at least some circumstances. Put differently, concerns about the distribution of misinformation—whether that distribution occurs directly at a first-order level or indirectly at a higher-order level—seem to support some kind of epistemic obligation to de-platform problematic speakers.[13] But, as I will argue here, concerns about the generation/suppression of evidence both at the first-order and higher-order level can provide reason for the *im*permissibility of de-platforming as well. Consider first the possible first-order evidence that could be generated or highlighted if a problematic speaker is allowed to give his lecture. Given the controversial nature of the topic, it is highly plausible to think that the speaker will not give his lecture without the occurrence of significant questioning, push-back, and protest. Significantly, this push-back tends to occur *regardless* of the topic on which the speaker is actually presenting. The result, then, is that students and others can be exposed to first-order evidence *against* the problematic views of the speaker both when they are also exposed to first-order evidence *for* the views

of the speaker (i.e., when the speaker presents explicitly on the controversial issue) and also when they are not exposed to this first-order evidence (i.e., when the speaker does not discuss whatever topic is considered to be objectionable.) Given that students will often be exposed to first-order evidence against the views of the problematic speaker, it seems that considerations of first-order evidence do not support the permissibility of de-platforming. Of course, the details of a particular situation in question will matter significantly for this issue, and some empirical work on the ways arguments and evidence are distributed in de-platforming scenarios would be extremely helpful for decision-makers trying to take this issue into account.

What about higher-order evidence? Even if first-order evidence against the controversial views of the speaker is highlighted as a result of his lecture, this does not negate the possible effects that generation of higher-order evidence through the conference of credibility might have. I suggest, though, that de-platforming a problematic speaker itself can generate other sorts of higher-order evidence in favor of worrisome views about the purpose and the appropriate climate of colleges and universities. One frequent objection to de-platforming is that de-platforming violates free speech and/or academic freedom. Institutions of higher education, so the argument goes, are supposed to be in the business of promoting free speech and/or academic freedom. De-platforming problematic speakers violates free speech/academic freedom. So, it is impermissible for institutions of higher education to de-platform problematic speakers. I take no stand on the merits of this argument here; my concern is with the epistemological ramifications of the argument *when it is taken to be sound*. Even if it is not sound, the act of de-platforming problematic speakers could be taken as higher-order evidence *against* the value of free speech and/or academic freedom by those who give credence to this argument. This is unintentional generation of higher-order evidence that occurs as the result of mistakes on the part of those interpreting the meaning of the events, but it is generation of higher-order evidence nonetheless. This should be worrisome for those who, like Keegan Callanan, see the college or university as a place for "independent thinkers with a right to and capacity for free and open inquiry."[14]

And, since higher-order evidence produced as a result of allowing a problematic speaker to present his lecture often is also produced unintentionally, those who wish to use the possible generation of higher-order evidence as a reason in favor of de-platforming cannot dismiss the higher-order evidence possibly produced by that same de-platforming on the grounds that it is an unfortunate but unavoidable consequence of the decision.

In the Middlebury case, it is possible that some higher-order evidence is produced for Legutko's controversial stances on homosexuality, feminism, and multiculturalism in virtue of the credibility that was conferred on him by being invited to speak at a well-respected institution of higher education. But, on the other hand, it also is possible that de-platforming Legutko would have lent credibility to those who champion restrictions on free speech and/or academic freedom. Clearly there are empirical questions that need to be answered to determine how these considerations actually weigh against each other, but normative commitments regarding the proper purposes of colleges and universities and the importance of those purposes relative to each other are foundational to any evaluation. On the one hand, colleges and universities are places of research, knowledge production, and knowledge distribution; in this capacity, colleges and universities have at least a *prima facie* duty to be responsible in their roles of producers and distributors of evidence. This aim of higher education speaks in favor of de-platforming in light of considerations of first and higher-order evidence generation. On the other hand, colleges and universities, if they are to maintain their position as places where knowledge is authentically pursued, must defend a commitment to free speech and/or academic freedom. This aim of higher education supports the impermissibility of de-platforming speakers such as Legutko.

Epistemic Corruption

Epistemic character deals with the formation of virtues and vices that are distinctively *epistemic* or *intellectual* in nature; some examples of such virtues are intellectual humility, open-mindedness, curiosity, and intellectual courage. Ian James Kidd draws attention to the ways in which educational systems can and often do foster epistemic vice rather than virtue in students and others that

participate in these systems. Kidd defines an epistemically corrupting educational system as follows:

> An educational system is epistemically corrupting insofar as it tends to create conditions that are conducive to the development and exercise of epistemic vice(s) by agents whose formation and agency is shaped by those conditions.[15]

Given this definition, an educational system can be corrupting in two main ways: it can *reinforce* existing epistemic vices or it can encourage the *development* of new epistemic vices. The process of epistemic corruption itself, as Kidd observes, is incredibly complex and depends upon many different factors—personal, structural, contextual, etc.—that make up the educational system as a whole.[16] Whether or not a given feature of a system is epistemically corrupting will depend not only on the makeup of that particular feature but also on the other facets of the system related to it.

Worries about epistemic corruption can be leveraged to support both the permissibility and impermissibility of de-platforming. First, who are the corruptor(s) and corruptee(s) in this case? Starting with the corruptee(s), the obvious candidates here are the students at Middlebury, including those who protested Legutko, those who actively fought against the protestors, and those who were indifferent to the situation. In addition, because of the well-publicized nature of this case, epistemically corrupting influences might have reached beyond the campus boundaries, affecting those who read or heard about the case.[17] Finally, the de-platforming seems to have raised concerns about the corruption of some aspects of the mission or role of college as represented in the Student Government Association's call for a committee to vet speakers based on whether their "beliefs align with Middlebury's community standards," ostensibly a call that prioritizes conformity and like-mindedness over the formation of a like-hearted community dedicated to inquiry.[18]

The corruptors in this situation are perhaps a bit trickier to identify since the case highlights the way in which corruptors and corruptees can easily overlap; the students acting as agents of epistemic corruption by demanding

the disinvitation of Legutko were *also* being subjected to further corruption. Other corruptors include whatever administrative structures made possible the inability to respond differently to the situation. Both of these are *indirect* corruptors, however; the *direct* corruptor is the de-platforming itself.

Second, what epistemic vices are potentially being cultivated in this scenario? Perhaps most obvious is a certain kind of *closed-mindedness*, since the students were unwilling to consider the possibility that there might have been some aspects of Legutko's views worthy of attention.[19] Another possible candidate is *epistemic arrogance*: in this case, students failed to demonstrate intellectual humility insofar as they did not recognize their own epistemic limitations, failing to admit that they might have misunderstood Legutko's position.[20] Maybe another candidate might be something like *epistemic fearfulness*; rather than exhibiting epistemic courage in the face of challenging and uncomfortable views, students instead sought to dismiss those views by presenting them as evil and "hateful."[21] And, finally, the students certainly exhibited a *lack of intellectual charity* in their interpretation of Legutko's viewpoints.[22]

Third, what exactly is it about de-platforming practices that lead to the epistemic vices discussed above? As Kidd points out, epistemologists cannot answer this question alone; addressing it adequately must involve a synthesis of research in psychology, education, sociology, etc. into particular features of de-platforming that lead to epistemic corruption.[23] It seems plausible to think that, whereas one-off instances of de-platforming might not exert much of a corrupting influence on students, policies that make de-platforming easy or treat it as the default approach to dealing with problematic speakers (such as the policy demanded by Middlebury's SGA) might create conditions that are much more powerful in their corruptive influence.

Finally, what conditions must already be in place for de-platforming to be epistemically corrupting? It seems that one such condition is an educational environment within which people are not trained to interact productively with controversial beliefs and in which structures that promote respectful exchange and encourage people to interpret others charitably fail to exist. Identifying these structures might help provide ways to articulate ameliorative measures.

Perhaps one such measure might be providing spaces into which students can voluntary come for the express purpose of trying to understand how another person could hold an opposing view without thereby being evil or hateful.[24] An undeveloped capacity to interpret others charitably or to engage seriously with them, then, might be a precondition for the epistemic corruption that can occur through de-platforming.

An objection, though, stems from the complexity inherent in situations of epistemic corruption. As Kidd observes, educational systems or practices that are corrupting for some students might not be for others; in fact, it might even be the case that completely opposed educational systems or practices might be corrupting for different groups of students. This possibility is worrisome when applied to de-platforming, since it might be the case that *failure* to no-platform or de-platform problematic speakers is also epistemically corrupting for certain students, albeit in different ways.[25] For example, perhaps allowing problematic speakers who make students feel marginalized or demeaned contributes to the development of the vices of epistemic timidity or servility in students.[26]

This is a significant objection, but it is one that might, perhaps, serve to clarify the many different considerations operative when de-platforming becomes a live option. One such consideration is the extent to which students who feel marginalized or demeaned by the presence of a speaker are representing the views or speech of that speaker accurately. In the Middlebury case, it is not obvious that, even given Legutko's questioning of the moral status of same-sex marriage, he ought to be labeled as "homophobic" or as guilty of hate speech. The fact that the potential development of vices such as epistemic timidity is supported by an uncharitable or inaccurate interpretation of the speaker's position might give us reason to assign greater weight to the epistemic corruption that could result from de-platforming the speaker. On the other hand, if a speaker clearly has impermissibly crossed some lines with respect to the content or manner of his speech, the epistemic corruption resulting from inviting him to speak might take precedence. These epistemic dimensions yield important and complex ethical considerations that influence the impermissibility of de-platforming and that must be considered in context and in relation to the aims of higher education.

CONCLUSION

De-platforming is an issue of real significance in higher education that seems unlikely to go away anytime soon. I have drawn attention to the way in which three kinds of epistemic considerations—generation of and exposure to evidence, epistemic injustice, and epistemic corruption—carry ethical weight in de-platforming scenarios especially as these considerations are related to some of the aims of higher education. These epistemic considerations can function to support the impermissibility of de-platforming problematic speakers. Although these epistemically-based concerns are not the only ones of significance in the debate around permissibility, their implications for the educational environment within the boundaries of college and university campuses and for broader realms of discussion and formation make them considerations that ought to be taken seriously in discussions and decision-making about de-platforming, and especially in the creation of policies regulating these actions. My hope is that, at the very least, the considerations raised in this paper highlight the tremendous complexity that surrounds de-platforming scenarios.[27] Attempts to find a "silver bullet" answer to this sort of ethical dilemma are unlikely to succeed, and there is no substitute for the exercise of wisdom and prudence on the part of decision-makers at colleges and universities.

REFERENCES

1 Details on the cancellation according to Middlebury's campus newspaper can be found at https://middleburycampus.com/44323/news/college-braces-for-right-wing-speaker-accused-of-homophobia/ and https://middleburyca-mpus.com/44374/news/more-details-on-legutko-lecture-cancellation/. One of the most thorough reports of the incident can be found in the Chronicle of Higher Education. See Katherine Mangan, "Controversial Speaker, His Event Cancelled by Middlebury College, Finds an Audience in a Campus Seminar," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (April 19, 2019), retrieved from https://www-chronicle-com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/article/Controversial-Speaker-His/246152;

 For another presentation of the case that conveys a fairly neutral tone, see also Scott Jaschik, "Another Speaker Unable to Appear at Middlebury," *Inside Higher Ed* (April 18, 2019), https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2019/04/18/middlebury-calls-lecture-conservative-polish-leader-amid-threats-protests. For a version of the case that seems sympathetic to Legutko, see Alex Griswold, "Middlebury College Cancels Conservative Philosopher's Lecture on Totalitarianism," *The Washington Free Beacon* (April 17, 2019), https://freebeacon.com/politics/middlebury-college-cancels-conservative-philosophers-lecture-on-totalitarianism/. For Legutko's own account of the incident, see Ryszard Legutko, "The Demon in Middlebury," *First Things* August/September (2019): 9-12.

2 See: Eric Schliesser, "On No-Platforming," *Digressions & Impressions* (blog). December 10, 2019, https://digressionsnimpressions.typepad.com/digressionsimpressions/2019/06/on-no-platforming.html.

3 For a thorough discussion of free speech as a consideration in de-platforming scenarios, see Sigal R. Ben-Porath, *Free Speech on Campus* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017); Robert Mark Simpson and Amia Srinivasan, "No-Platforming," in *Academic Freedom*, ed. Jennifer Lackey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 186-209; Jeremy Fantl, "On Inviting Problematic Speakers to Campus," in *The Limitations of the Open Mind*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 177-202.

4 There are several important recent exceptions to this claim, see Neil Levy, "No-Platforming and Higher-Order Evidence, or Anti-Anti-No-platforming," *Journal of the American Philosophical Association* 5, no. 4 (2019): 1-16, https://doi.org/10.1017/apa.2019.29; Rebecca Taylor and Ashley Floyd Kuntz, "Navigating Campus Controversies: Seeking Truth, Respecting Speech, and Cultivating Intellectual Fairness in Higher Education," *Harvard Educational Review* 89, no. 1 (2019): 30-53. Rebecca Taylor's analysis of Charles Murray's 2017 visit to Middlebury College is especially salient: Rebecca Taylor, "Taking Seriously Campus Debates Surrounding Invited Speakers: Open-Mindedness and the Ethics of Inquiry in Higher Education," *Teachers College Record* 126, no. 3 (2024): 86-109. My project here responds to and expands upon the considerations these authors raise. https://doi.org/10.17763/1943-5045-89.1.30

5 "Open Letter to POLSCI and RCGA regarding Ryszard Legutko" on *Beyond the Green: Collective of Middlebury Voices* (blog). April 15, 2019.

https://beyondthegreenmidd.wordpress.com/2019/04/15/open-letter-to-polsci-and-rcga-regarding-ryszard-legutko/.

6 Keegan Callanan to Middlebury Students April 15, 2019. http://sites.middlebury.edu/hamilton/files/2019/04/An-Open-Letter-to-Students-on-the-Legutko-Talk-April-15-2019.pdf.

7 This excerpt from the SGA's letter is quoted in Ryszard Legutko, "The Demon in Middlebury," *First Things* August/September (2019): 12.

8 This quote is from an email sent out by Sarah Ray, Head of Media Relations at Middlebury, cited in Will Degravio, Riley Board, and James Finn, "More Details on Legutko Lecture Cancellation; Professor Promises to Re-invite," *The Middlebury Campus* (April 18, 2019), https://middleburycampus.com/44374/news/more-details-on-legutko-lecture-cancellation/.

9 Robert Simpson and Amia Srinivasan, "No-Platforming," in *Academic Freedom*, ed. Jennifer Lackey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 198-204, https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198791508.003.0011.

10 Mayer's response is available online: Tamar Mayer, "Statement about the Upcoming Lecture by Mr. Ryszard, Legutko," (April 16, 2019), https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ADiZMDcpcL-Vl0dwMmn3q2OpkUd0n2Z9F-nZrUz5VYuk/edit?tab=t.0

11 Allan Buchanan, "Education and Social Moral Epistemology," in *The Aims of Higher Education*, ed. Harry Brighouse and Michael MacPherson (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2015), https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226259512.003.0006.

12 Neil Levy, "No-Platforming and Higher-Order Evidence, or Anti-Anti-No-platforming," *Journal of the American Philosophical Association* 5, no 4 (2019).

13 See Boyd Millar, "Epistemic Obligations and Free Speech," *Analytic Philosophy*

65, no. 2 (2022): 203-222, https://doi.org/10.1111/phib.12279.

14 Keegan Callanan, Letter to Middlebury Students, (April 15, 2019), https://bpb-us-e2.wpmucdn.com/sites.middlebury.edu/dist/f/4664/files/2019/04/An-Open-Letter-to-Students-on-the-Legutko-Talk-April-15-2019.pdf.

15 Ian James Kidd, "Epistemic Corruption and Education," *Episteme* 16, no. 2 (2019): 224, https://doi.org/10.1017/epi.2018.3.

16 Kidd, "Epistemic Corruption," 224.

17 For a similar point, see Levy, "No-Platforming and Higher-Order Evidence," 10-12.

18 Alan Jacobs distinguishes between communities that are like-minded and those that are like-hearted, arguing that, whereas extremely like-minded communities often corrupt their members through pressure to conform to an "inner ring," like-hearted communities are brought together through a desire to inquire and pursue truth, creating the conditions for what Jacobs calls "genuine membership." See Alan Jacobs, *How to Think: A Survival Guide for a World at Odds* (New York: Currency, 2017), 51-70.

19 Heather Battaly, "Closed-Mindedness and Dogmatism," *Episteme* 15, no. 3 (2018): 261-282, https://doi.org/10.1017/epi.2018.22.

20 Whitcomb et al., suggest that intellectual humility is most fundamentally a matter of "owning" one's intellectual limitations. See Whitcomb et al., "Intellectual Humility: Owning Our Limitations," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 94, no. 3 (2017): 509-39, https://doi.org/10.1111/phpr.12228.

21 Ian James Kidd, "Epistemic Courage and the Harms of Epistemic Life," in *The Routledge Handbook to Virtue Epistemology*, ed. Heather Battaly (New York: Routledge, 2018), 244-255, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315712550-21.

22 This is somewhat related to Taylor and Kuntz's notion of "intellectual fairness." See Taylor and Kuntz, "Navigating Campus Controversies."

23 Kidd, "Epistemic Corruption and Education," 227.

24 Rachel Wahl provides a qualitative case study of one such space for discus-

sion. See Rachel Wahl, "Dispelling the Burden of Agency: Receptive Learning During Political Crisis," *Educational Theory* 68, no. 4-5 (2018): 403-26, https://doi.org/10.1111/edth.12330.

25 Biddle, Kidd, and Leuschner's discuss the corruption that they think might occur through giving undue attention to arguments that deny climate change. They suggest that this might result in the cultivation of the vice of epistemic timidity in climate scientists. See Justin B. Biddle, Ian James Kidd, and Anna Leuschner, "Epistemic Corruption and Manufactured Doubt: The Case of Climate Science," *Public Affairs Quarterly* 31, no. 3 (2017): 165-87, https://doi.org/10.2307/44732791.

26 Alessandra Tanesini, "Intellectual Servility and Timidity," *Journal of Philosophical Research* 43 (2018): 21-41, https://doi.org/10.5840/jpr201872120.

27 For more on the epistemic dilemma underlying decisions about de-platforming, see Uwe Peters and Nikolaj Nottelmann, "Weighing the Costs: The Epistemic Dilemma of No-Platforming," *Synthese* 199 (2021): 7231-7253, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-021-03111-w.