

TOWARD A CONSISTENT PRAXIS

The Challenge of Self-Reference in Dotson's Culture of Praxis as a Meta-Standard

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Abstract The institutional culture of academic philosophy is deeply exclusionary. By prioritising “traditional” ways of disciplinary engagement, it excludes diverse practitioners and their perspectives. Kristie Dotson challenges this exclusion by proposing that academic philosophy should adopt the Culture of Praxis, a framework that prioritises diverse philosophical traditions and methods. In this paper, I examine Dotson's claim that the Culture of Praxis should function as a meta-standard – a guiding principle for determining the philosophical legitimacy of some work. I argue that Dotson's formulation is self-contradictory, as it imposes a universal standard while simultaneously advocating for pluralism. To resolve this tension, I explore two alternative readings: distinguishing between first- and second-order claims and interpreting Dotson's proposal as a political rather than philosophical claim. Since such exclusionary practices are not unique to philosophy, the paper contributes to the ongoing debates on diversity in academia. The issues of epistemic authority and legitimacy resonate across the humanities and social sciences. By critically engaging with Dotson's work, this paper encourages the reader to rethink inclusivity in academic disciplines more broadly.

Keywords: Diversity, academic philosophy, Culture of Justification, Culture of Praxis, meta-standard, self-reference

I. Introduction

Philosophy, as a discipline, loves to pride itself on rigorous inquiry, critical examination, and outstanding argumentation. While this might be true, philosophy is also incredibly short-sighted, particularly regarding its diversity. A recent analysis of PhD graduates in philosophy from 2017 to 2019 revealed that 85% were White and 70% were men¹ (Schwitzgebel et al., 2021). Despite some progress in the past two decades toward racial and ethnic diversity within philosophy, Hispanic, Native American, and Black individuals continue to be significantly underrepresented. The same holds for gender diversity. Although more women are majoring in philosophy at the undergraduate level, women remain underrepresented across all levels, especially in permanent faculty positions (Schwitzgebel et al., 2021). Apart from the lack of diversity of people, there is also a lack of diversity in philosophical content. A topical blog post by Jay Garfield and Bryan Van Norden (2016) outlined a well-known problem: philosophy departments primarily teach Western European canons and are reluctant to include other non-Western traditions as equal contributors². Garfield and Van Norden argue that this Eurocentrism limits the scope of philosophical inquiry, depriving the discipline of valuable insights from Chinese, Indian, Islamic and other non-Western traditions. The persistent imbalance in both the people and philosophical content suggests that philosophy's ideals of careful examination may not extend to its own institutional culture. Broadening the field's perspectives is essential as it will strengthen the discipline's ability to engage with a wider array of ideas and arguments.

Given the growing interest in diversity within philosophy, various authors have examined how the discipline marginalises minorities, explored the underlying reasons for this marginalisation, and shared their personal experiences within the field (see, e.g., Haslanger, 2008; Antony, 2022; and Gines, 2011, accordingly). One of the influential papers written on the topic includes Kristie Dotson's (2012a) article *How Is This Paper Philosophy?* In it, Dotson claims that professional philosophy is a poor environment for diverse practitioners because it adheres to the Culture of Justification. This concept refers to norms within academic philosophy that prioritise certain types of arguments and methods of disciplinary engagement, often favouring established mainstream traditions. Dotson suggests that the situation can be rectified if professional philosophy adopts the Culture of Praxis that encourages engagement with diverse philosophical canons. In her exchange with Priest (2012), Dotson (2012b) further argues that the Culture of

¹ Data is relevant for the US context.

² The idea of the article later developed into a book. See Van Norden, 2017.

Praxis should be understood as a meta-standard, i.e. a standard for standards. However, it is unclear whether the proposed meta-standard can be applied to itself. Thus, the present essay focuses on this ambiguity, investigating the validity of framing the Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard.

I will argue that the formulation of the Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard is self-contradictory. Due to the inadequacy of the formulation, I propose that the Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard should be either further refined to avoid contradiction or rejected altogether. Alternatively, I suggest two other ways to read Dotson's proposal. I should note that I fully support Dotson's and many other scholars' efforts to bring greater diversity to the philosophy field, an issue of significant personal interest to me. Therefore, my argument is not an objection to making the discipline more inclusive. Rather, this paper is a call for a more precise formulation of arguments and solutions regarding the diversity problem.

In Section I, I outline the key distinctions between Dotson's concepts, the Culture of Justification and the Culture of Praxis. I also elaborate on the claims that she is making about these concepts. Section II focuses on Dotson's claim that the Culture of Praxis should be understood as a meta-standard and the implications of that claim. Section III demonstrates that formulating the Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard is self-contradictory. I use the logic of the self-refutation argument to show the inconsistencies within Dotson's account. Lastly, in Section IV, I propose two alternative ways of viewing Dotson's proposal about the Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard that would avoid the self-reference problem.

2. Culture of Justification vs Culture of Praxis

In her analysis of the landscape of professional philosophy, Dotson (2012a) claims that the environment is both unattractive and inadequate for diverse practitioners. She highlights the pervasive influence of the Culture of Justification as a significant cause of this issue. The current field of academic philosophy, she claims, is set up in such a way that it embodies the Culture of Justification. According to Dotson (2012a), the Culture of Justification refers to an environment which ascribes the most importance to justifying one's ideas and projects, i.e. making them congruent with the dominant accepted norms of a given discipline. Culture, in this context, refers to a shared set of values and norms that are held within a discipline and that shape its knowledge. In the Culture of Justification, these norms determine what is recognised as a valid and valuable contribution to the discipline. Therefore, in such an environment, Dotson argues, a paper acquires a positive epistemic status by demonstrating its alignment with these shared norms,

thereby satisfying the discipline's demand for legitimation.

Positive epistemic status, here, is assigned based on the degree to which a work can justify itself as “properly philosophical” by meeting the established criteria (Dotson, 2012a, p. 9). This process requires authors to shape their work around prevailing theoretical and methodological frameworks. Such a dynamic, according to Dotson (2012a), privileges historically recognised philosophical approaches and marginalises perspectives that fall outside these boundaries. As a result, non-traditional methodologies and topics – for example, those grounded in specific cultural, racial, or gendered experiences – are frequently rendered peripheral, struggling or even failing to receive positive epistemic status. Amy Olberding (2015) further noted that such an institutional culture creates a double bind for diverse practitioners. On the one hand, when their contributions align with established norms, they risk being seen as redundant, not adding anything innovative to the discipline of philosophy. On the other hand, when their work deviates from the established norms, it is often dismissed as insufficiently philosophical or even non-philosophical at all.

The essence of the Culture of Justification is reflected in the title of Dotson's paper *How Is This Paper Philosophy?* This question is a manifestation of the so-called “exercises of legitimation” prevalent in the Culture of Justification (Dotson, 2012a, p. 7). The question becomes a framework through which a philosophical work is evaluated and challenges one to prove that their paper or project is congruent with the prevailing disciplinary norms. The problem, I should note, lies not in the question itself, but in the pattern of asking such a question routinely. By implicitly demanding that contributors provide proof that their work aligns with established standards, the Culture of Justification further preserves and reproduces the Western, analytical, and often male-oriented norms that have historically dominated the field. Moreover, Dotson (2012a) notes that the Culture of Justification manifests in the discipline by assuming that these norms are “commonly held” and “univocally relevant” (p.8). As a result, the exclusions perpetuated by the Culture of Justification often go unnoticed, as the prevailing norms remain largely unspoken, implicitly assumed, and widely accepted.

Let us consider an example. Suppose a scholar presents their research based on Indigenous philosophy, which emphasises the value of oral tradition, experiential knowledge, and relational understanding rather than abstract, analytical reasoning. In the Culture of Justification, such an approach might be questioned or even rejected, not for its philosophical insights but because it does not meet the so-called standard of “rigorous” philosophical engagement. In the case of philosophy, “good” and “proper” engagement will often emphasise rationality, individualism, and analytic clarity in the argumentation. The Culture of Justification expects

any scholarly paper to exhibit an initial alignment with such traditional methods of disciplinary inquiry. Thus, the Culture of Justification might be seen when non-traditional or marginalised perspectives – such as feminist, queer, or Indigenous philosophy – are subjected to higher scrutiny or dismissed because they do not align with dominant methods of philosophical argumentation.

Given that the Culture of Justification constrains philosophy's diversity in both practitioners and content, Dotson (2012a) proposes that the situation can be rectified by adopting the Culture of Praxis. Such a culture emphasises contributions to philosophical inquiry that are practical, diverse, and relevant to lived human experiences. Rather than valuing adherence to dominant established norms, this approach seeks to foster an environment where multiple canons, methodologies, and interpretations are valued for their relevance to specific social, cultural, or contextual circumstances. Dotson (2012a) outlines two main components of the Culture of Praxis: (1) it focuses on real-world issues pertinent to various communities, recognising that different populations have distinct priorities and concerns, and (2) it recognises multiple philosophical canons and methods of academic validation. We can categorise the first component as pragmatic, and the second component as pluralistic. The pragmatic component emphasises that philosophical inquiry should not only address abstract or historically significant problems but also investigate new and emerging problems and discussions (Dotson, 2012a). More importantly, the pragmatic component outlines the relevance of actively engaging with issues arising from diverse lived human experiences, i.e. real-world concerns and challenges that resonate with individuals across different social and cultural contexts. The pluralistic component ensures a variety of intellectual traditions and contributions that might deviate from dominant paradigms. Dotson (2012a) highlights that this component fosters an environment where incongruence with prevailing norms encourages novel investigations rather than results in exclusion.

Interestingly, Dotson (2012a) notes that the Culture of Praxis would still include some form of legitimising practices but they would function differently. Justification according to dominant norms would not be present. Instead, in the Culture of Praxis, philosophical validation would be based on multiple, smaller, and reflexive canons and the meaningfulness of contribution to a community. By reframing validation to focus on the relevance of contributions, the Culture of Praxis aims to create a space for philosophical engagement that accommodates a wider array of voices and perspectives, making philosophy more responsive to the complexities of contemporary social and cultural life. In this model, diverse philosophy practitioners could flourish without needing to justify themselves against rigid standards. To circle back to the example above, in the Culture of Praxis, a

paper based on oral tradition, experiential knowledge, and relational understanding would not be dismissed. Rather, a scholar would be encouraged to present the work on their own terms, based on its relevance to lived experiences and specific cultural and academic context. Thus, the work would be appreciated as it is without the need to be translated into Western theoretical language.

The Culture of Justification and the Culture of Praxis represent two contrasting approaches within professional philosophy. The Culture of Justification emphasises adherence to established, implicitly assumed norms, placing a high value on proving that one's work aligns with those dominant frameworks. In contrast, the Culture of Praxis prioritises contributions that address real-world issues that are relevant to diverse cultural and social contexts. The Culture of praxis values philosophical work based on the unique insights it brings to understanding human experience. In the next section, I further elaborate on the Culture of Praxis but focus on its formulation and implications as a meta-standard.

3. Culture of Praxis as a Meta-Standard

Dotson's paper (2012a) has sparked a significant discussion on the nature of academic philosophy. Here, I want to focus on her exchange with Priest (2012). In his paper, Priest suggests some clarifications of Dotson's claims and proceeds to disagree with some comments she makes about him; however, I will not focus on those. Instead, I want to analyse Dotson's (2012b) reply to Priest. In it, we encounter what I would describe as a refined version of the Culture of Praxis. Dotson (2012b) proposes that the Culture of Praxis should be understood as "a set of values that could act as a *meta-standard*, i.e. at the level of standards for philosophical engagement themselves [emphasis added]" (p. 13). There are some comments to be made about how to interpret this formulation, how it differs from the one presented in the initial³ paper, and what implications the Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard would have.

I think the formulation of the Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard can be clarified by investigating the following statement made by Dotson (2012b), "a standard for a given practice functions very differently than a set of values aimed at orienting those standards" (p. 10). She makes this claim while defining the point of divergence between Priest and herself. Dotson (2012b) later adds, "I propose a set of values that can orient the creation and application of standards for philosophical engagement" (p. 12). In these passages, Dotson draws an important

³ By saying "initial paper" I refer to Dotson's article *How Is This Paper Philosophy?* (2012a).

distinction between defining what qualifies as philosophy and orienting how we think about philosophical standards. Defining a standard for philosophical practice involves setting explicit criteria that specify what counts as philosophy. For example, we can talk about defining philosophy as a critique, as problem-solving or as the pursuit of the Truth⁴. On each of these accounts, a certain work acquires a positive philosophical status given it meets the standard of presenting critique, proposing a solution for a problem, or bringing the discussion closer to the Truth (whatever that means) accordingly. In contrast, orienting how we think about philosophical standards involves specifying the standard for criteria which is used to judge what counts as philosophy. For instance, a standard can promote theoretical and abstract approaches to philosophical engagement. In this case, the criteria of “pursuing the Truth” would be seen as proper and good, according to the set standard⁵. Dotson, as we can see, suggests that the Culture of Praxis should be understood as the standard for criteria or meta-standard. The two components it includes are, essentially, a set of values that orient the production of criteria for deciding what can be considered philosophy.

There is one note I want to make before going into the implications of the Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard. Particularly, I want to outline where the two components should manifest. In the initial paper, Dotson (2012a) does not give a clear definition of what the Culture of Praxis is. By analogy with her explanation of the Culture of Justification, I think we can rightfully deduce that the Culture of Praxis is a set of norms and values held within a discipline. The two components that Dotson introduces, a pragmatic and a pluralistic one, in my interpretation, are the values of the Culture of Praxis. This aspect of describing the Culture of Praxis stays the same in Dotson’s reply to Priest (2012b). However, between the two papers, there is a difference in her explanation of where the two components manifest. If you read the initial paper closely, you might notice that these two components are not to be manifested in the same way. After her “Comparative Exercise”, towards the end of the paper, Dotson states, “This second component of a culture of praxis is *not* a feature of philosophical theories themselves, *unlike* the first component. It is a component that should manifest in disciplinary environments for professional philosophy themselves [emphasis added]” (Dotson, 2012a, p. 26). This suggests that the pragmatist component should manifest in philosophical theories, while the pluralist component should manifest in a disciplinary environment. The second paper, on the other hand, claims that both components should manifest in “standards for philosophical engagement” (Dot-

⁴ This is not an exhaustive list.

⁵ Note, that I take the concept of the Truth to be very abstract.

son, 2012b, p. 13). So, there is an inconsistency in Dotson's description of components. In the initial paper, it seems, the pragmatist component should serve as a standard for defining what counts as philosophy, rather than a value that orients such standards. Since I focus on Dotson's formulation of the Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard, and as long as that formulation was presented later, I take it that both components are implied to manifest in standards for philosophical engagement, rather than philosophical theories or disciplinary environment⁶. This, I assume, is a part of refining the formulation of the Culture of Praxis.

Taking the presented interpretation of the Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard, let us look at the implications if we were to use it in the field of professional philosophy. Dotson (2012b) notes that in this case, it is appropriate to question whether a certain standard (1) places value on live matters (a pragmatic component) and (2) recognises different philosophical canons and ways of validation (a pluralistic component). First of all, from my interpretation, once we have put these components on the same "level", we create a contradiction. If a standard values criteria that ascribe most importance only to live matters, then it is not pluralistic. If, on the other hand, a standard recognises different philosophical canons, which would include valuing purely theoretical philosophical engagement, then it would not be pragmatic. Therefore, the two components seem to contradict each other; if we adopt one, it appears incompatible with the other. Note that in the initial paper, the pragmatic aspect was applied to philosophical theories, while the pluralistic one was applied to the disciplinary environment. As long as they were described as manifesting in different areas, there was no contradiction. However, since I adopted the refined version of the Culture of Praxis, the contradiction persists. This contradiction will emerge again further in the argument.

4. Self-Referential Trap

So far, we have been investigating how the two components of the Culture of Praxis relate to each other and how they shape the standards of philosophical engagement. Let me briefly recap what we have established up to this point. To improve diversity in professional philosophy, we should adopt the Culture of Praxis. The Culture of Praxis, in this context, refers to the set of shared values that acts as a meta-standard. This meta-standard should be applied to other standards

⁶ Moreover, it is unclear whether manifestation in standards for disciplinary engagement and manifestation in disciplinary environments are the same. To me, it seems like it is; but trying to tease out the similarities and differences here is irrelevant to the main argument.

for philosophical engagement, i.e. it should determine the validity of other philosophical standards. The values of the meta-standard include (1) the pragmatic component and (2) the pluralistic component. The pragmatic component emphasises placing value on live matters, while the pluralistic component highlights recognising different philosophical canons and ways of validation. These two components should manifest in standards for philosophical engagement. In the following, I investigate the integrity of the Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard.

To be valid, the call to adopt the Culture of Praxis must itself align with the very standards set by that culture. This means that the Culture of Praxis, as a standard, should (1) place value on live matters and (2) recognise different philosophical canons. If the Culture of Praxis satisfies the standards invoked by itself, then it is a valid meta-standard, and we should accept it. If, on the other hand, the Culture of Praxis does not satisfy its own standards, it should either be reformulated or rejected. The problem I am about to outline is similar to the issue encountered by the verification principle in logical positivism. The verification principle asserts that a statement is meaningful only if it can be empirically verified or is a tautology (i.e. does not provide any new factual information) (Ogan & Ariche, 2018). However, critics outlined that the positivists' statement faces a *self-referential problem*. The verification principle itself is neither empirically verifiable nor a tautology, which undermines its validity. Similarly, in the case of Culture of Praxis, the principle in question must fulfil its own requirements to avoid self-contradiction. For the verification principle, failing to meet its criterion of empirical verifiability renders it meaningless by its own standards. For the Culture of Praxis, failing to meet the criteria of pragmatic relevance and pluralism would render it an inconsistent standard for philosophical engagement, as it would impose a rigid standard while advocating for diversity.

First, let us check the Culture of Praxis against the pragmatic component, which entails placing value on live matters. In the initial paper, Dotson (2012a) describes this component as placing value “on seeking issues and circumstances *pertinent to our living* [emphasis added]” (p. 17). In the second paper (2012b), she shortens the definition to placing value on “*live matters*” (p.13). Live matters refer to investigations of current, emerging, or historical, long-standing questions and discussions, emphasising the relevance of philosophical inquiry to real-world issues. According to Dotson, the Culture of Praxis seeks to address the need for a more inclusive environment in professional philosophy. The aim is to make the field more accessible and welcoming to diverse practitioners, many of whom feel excluded by the environment of the Culture of Justification. As I have outlined in the introduction, the diversity issue in professional philosophy has been a hot point for discussion over the last two decades. Therefore, the diversification goal

aligns directly with the notion of live matters, as the question of inclusivity and representation in philosophy is not only a current issue but also one that impacts the future development and accessibility of the discipline. By encouraging standards that promote a broader range of contributions and engage with socially and culturally relevant issues, the Culture of Praxis does indeed place value on live matters. Thus, as a meta-standard, it meets its own first criterion.

Second, let us check the Culture of Praxis against the pluralistic component, which entails recognising different philosophical canons and ways of validation. This means that instead of enforcing uniform criteria, the Culture of Praxis should accommodate a range of different approaches, methods, and standards and allow flexibility in their application. In theory, the Culture of Praxis aims to achieve this by promoting inclusivity and encouraging diverse ways of engaging with philosophical issues. However, as a meta-standard, the Culture of Praxis prescribes that all standards within philosophy must align with the two core values, pragmatism and pluralism, thereby enforcing a universal framework. For example, if a philosophical community values abstract theoretical inquiry without direct application to live matters, the Culture of Praxis would still require these approaches to align with its values. Such a situation creates tension. While the Culture of Praxis promotes inclusivity and diversity, it also imposes its own values on the discipline, potentially excluding forms of philosophical inquiry that do not align with its emphasis on relevance to real-world concerns. It does not fully accommodate philosophical perspectives that diverge from its foundational value of live matters. Therefore, the Culture of Praxis fails to meet its own standard of pluralism.

Thus, while the Culture of Praxis meets the first criteria for pragmatism, it does not satisfy the second criteria for pluralism. Formulation of Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard does not fulfil its own requirements and, therefore, is self-contradictory. By establishing itself as a meta-standard, the Culture of Praxis imposes a univocal standard on the very pluralistic principles it seeks to support. It follows that either the Culture of Praxis is not to be held as a meta-standard, or its two components should be reformulated so that the meta-standard meets its own criteria. I want to emphasise that the problem, in my view, specifically arises when the two components are put on the same “level”, in the case of meta-standard, both are applied to standards for philosophical engagement. Before the introduction of the Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard, there was no contradiction or problem of self-reference.

5. Two Alternatives

To resolve the revealed tension and explore ways of upholding the Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard without falling into contradiction, we can consider two alternative readings of Dotson's proposal. These interpretations, in my view, may allow the Culture of Praxis to serve as an orienting framework without conflicting with its own pluralistic aims. In the following, I propose that the issue can be resolved by (1) either distinguishing between first- and second-order claims or (2) interpreting Dotson's proposal as a political claim rather than a philosophical one.

5.1 First- and Second-Order Claims

The self-reference problem arises when a claim about the values for the standards for philosophical engagement does not satisfy its own standards, undermining the claim's validity. In our case, the question arises: how can Dotson justify the claim that we should adopt the Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard without falling into the trap of self-reference? One way Dotson can avoid the potential self-referential problem of her meta-standard is by distinguishing between first-order and second-order claims. First-order claims, in this context, refer to direct assertions about the discipline. For example, the statements about what counts as philosophy or philosophical engagement. Second-order claims, on the other hand, are, in a way, meta-level claims that reflect on first-order claims or the nature of concepts involved in them. For instance, these could be claims about the legitimacy of statements about what counts as philosophy. Dotson could argue that while she supports pluralism at the level of first-order claims (i.e. a variety of philosophical practices and approaches), she maintains a more limited, non-pluralistic stance at the second-order level. That is, while there may be a multitude of diverse practices and content in philosophy, there must be a commitment to certain meta-standards about what constitutes a valid standard for philosophical engagement. So, she could assert that the adoption of the Culture of Praxis does not require pluralism about the very norms that determine what counts as valid philosophy. Instead, the Culture of Praxis could be understood as a framework for evaluating and shaping first-order philosophical practices. This slight refinement to the formulation of the Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard would allow Dotson to uphold the pluralism of philosophical standards without undermining her own claim.

5.2 Philosophical or Political?

Alternatively, Dotson's proposal could avoid the meta-standard formulation issue by positioning the Culture of Praxis as a political, rather than strictly philosoph-

ical, claim. In this context, the Culture of Praxis would be understood not as a metaphysical claim about how to shape standards for philosophical engagement, but rather a normative one that aims to transform the institutional environment of philosophy.

In fact, in the second paper, Dotson (2012b) emphasises that she is dealing with “the institutionalisation of philosophical engagement” (p. 10). Such a claim implies that there are political underpinnings for proposing the Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard. By interpreting Dotson’s proposal within a political framework, we focus more on its ethical appeals. Namely, the Culture of Praxis, as a political statement, calls for the restructuring of philosophical debate and the reorganisation of academic institutions, focusing on their inclusivity and diversity of intellectual contributions and contributors it should embrace and accommodate. The move from philosophical argument to political position would mirror claims in other political contexts. For example, when someone advocates for religious tolerance of diverse religious practices, they are making a political claim rather than a religious one. Similarly, Dotson’s proposal might be interpreted as a call to revisit the social and institutional mechanisms that govern professional philosophy nowadays. The distinction that she draws between Cultures of Justification and Cultures of Praxis emphasises that the current field of philosophy is set up to exclude diverse practitioners. Her thorough analysis of Cultures of Justification reveals how exclusivity is not an inherent property of philosophy but a product of political and historical forces that decide which voices are given authority and credibility. Therefore, by reading the Culture of Praxis as a political statement, we can allow for some inconsistencies within its description and explanation, and instead focus on what such a statement tells us about the potential future directions for institutional change.

6. Conclusion

In this essay, I focused on analysing the validity of formulating the Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard. I started by outlining the difference between the Culture of Justification and the Culture of Praxis. I highlighted that while the Culture of Justification is concerned with aligning philosophical projects with the prevailing norms within a discipline, the Culture of Justification is aimed at promoting philosophical contributions that are practical, diverse, and relevant to lived human experiences. Then, I presented my interpretation of the Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard, based on Dotson’s reply to Priest (2012b). I explained that, thus understood, the Culture of Praxis is supposed to orient the production

of standards for philosophical engagement, i.e. to be a standard for standards. Next, I have outlined a self-referentiality problem of the Culture of Praxis as a meta-standard, akin to the classic problem of positivism. I argued that while the Culture of Praxis meets the first criterion for pragmatism, it does not satisfy the second criterion for pluralism. Therefore, as long as the meta-standard does not fulfil its own requirements, it is self-contradictory. Lastly, I proposed two alternative ways to read Dotson's proposal of the Culture of Praxis that would avoid contradiction. Namely, (1) distinguishing between first- and second-order claims and (2) interpreting the Culture of Praxis as a political statement rather than a philosophical one.

Personally, I find the second way of interpreting Dotson's argument more appealing. Rather than trying to tease out the particulars of her statements, one can embrace the passage behind them. Dotson's proposal is profound and extremely relevant to the current field of professional philosophy. If the discipline of philosophy does not start moving toward greater diversity, the implications of a lack of diversity can be far-reaching. In my view, studying philosophy is about discovering, investigating, and challenging the ideas of other people. When we engage with the ideas and perspectives of others, we might re-evaluate our own assumptions and give rise to novel understandings and arguments. To engage with diverse perspectives and experiences is to broaden one's collection of ideas. Consequently, a lack of diversity in the discipline risks limiting its scope of inquiry. As long as philosophy's central focus is on examining different ideas, confining them to only Western European perspectives is detrimental to the discipline as a whole. Diversifying philosophy is essential since it allows for a deeper understanding of the multifaceted network of experiences, ideas, and arguments within the discipline. To diversify philosophy is to enrich philosophical discussion as a whole.

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