

Logic, Morality, and Politics

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In the foregoing we have discussed several examples of negative requirements . . . by which certain common forms of language—methods of expression and of inference—would be excluded. Our attitude to requirements of this kind is given a general formulation in the *Principle of Tolerance: It is not our business to set up prohibitions, but to arrive at conventions. . . . In logic there are no morals*. Everyone is at liberty to build up his own logic, i.e., his own form of language, as he wishes. (Carnap, 1937: p. 52)

This essay is an elaboration of my earlier essay, “Trump, Truth, and Logic” (Hanna, 2026). Here, I explore the positive, self-conscious, and principled function of logic for rationally guiding thought and intentional action, especially in *moral* and *political* contexts.

As essential background to this logico-moral and logico-political exploration, I’m presupposing the moral and political doctrine of *broadly Kantian dignitarianism* (Hanna, 2018, 2023a, 2023b). Broadly Kantian dignitarianism is a universalist moral and political theory that ascribes absolute, non-denumerably infinite, intrinsic, and objective value or worth—aka *dignity*—to all *human real persons*, who are inherently capable of *autonomy* and *free agency*. Broadly Kantian dignitarianism asserts that everyone ought always and everywhere to treat everyone, including themselves, with sufficient respect for their human dignity, which means (i) *universal anti-oppression*, i.e., never treating anyone, including yourself, either as a mere means or a mere thing, and (ii) *universal benevolence or kindness*, i.e., always trying to promote the satisfaction of everyone’s true human needs, including your own (for a similar view, see also Boehm, 2025). The very ideas of “universal human equality” and “universal human rights” presuppose the truth and rightness of broadly Kantian dignitarianism; and the very idea that “crimes against humanity”—including systematically persecuting people on the basis of their religious beliefs, ethnicity, race, sex or gender, “disappearing” people, genocide, murder, rape, slavery, torture, and so-on—are all absolutely immoral and heinously wrong, indeed evil, *also* presupposes broadly Kantian dignitarianism. Moreover, if we also feel the need of an argument from moral or political authority, then we can cite Frederick Douglass as one of the most morally and politically important proponents of broadly Kantian dignitarianism (Bromell, 2021; Hanna, 2023b).

What is logic? Once upon a time, in a faraway land, I published a book on the philosophy of logic, *Rationality and Logic* (Hanna, 2006a), and then later capsulized and updated that material in *Cognition, Content, and the A Priori* (Hanna, 2015: ch. 5). In those books, I asserted that logic is the a priori formal science of the universal principles or

laws of *truth-preservation* via the relation of *logical consequence* (aka *logical entailment*) between the *premises* and *conclusion* of any argument, a relation according to which there's no possible set of circumstances (or: no possible world) in which all the premises are true and the conclusion false. Now, every such argument is a *valid* argument; and necessarily, if all the premises of a valid argument are true, then the conclusion must also be true, which is a *sound* argument. Moreover, *logical consistency* is when one or more propositions that can be jointly true, relative to an "interpretation" whereby meaning and truth are assigned to every member of a set of statements, hence when no statements in that set are inconsistent with themselves or with one another. By contrast, *logical contradiction* is either when a proposition violates a logical law and is necessarily false, or when two or more propositions cannot be either jointly true or jointly false. Finally, *logical deduction* is any argument that unfolds strictly according to the relation of logical consequence.

Any formal science that generally models itself on logic as defined under that definition can be called a "logic," even if this formal science is either not strictly a priori, or does not generate strictly universal principles or laws, or does not operate strictly according to the relation of logical consequence. By *classical logical systems* I mean formal systems representing logical consequence and valid inference that are (i) *bivalent*, by which I meant that (ia) there are two and only two truth values, true and false, (ib) every sentence has a truth-value (i.e., there are no truth-value *gaps*), (ic) no sentence has more than one truth-value (i.e., there no truth-value *gluts*, and (id) if a sentence isn't true then it's false, and conversely (i.e., there are no *extra* truth-values) (ii) contain the sentential logic of simple truth-functions ("not," "or," "and," "if... then," and "if and only if"), (iii) contain names of individuals and monadic (one-place) and polyadic (many-place) predicates, including identity, (iv) contain first-order quantification ("all" and "some") over individuals and/or second-order quantification over relations, including identity, and (v) contain universal principles of non-contradiction (no sentences are both true and false) and excluded middle (every sentence is either true or false, and there are no extra truth-values). Such systems are consistent (no contradictions, and there's at least one interpretation in which all statements are true), sound (all the provable statements are true), and complete (all the true statements are provable).

Kurt Gödel famously or notoriously showed that every classical logical system, plus the Peano axioms for arithmetic, contains undecidable, unprovable statements and is consistent if and only if it's incomplete (the first incompleteness theorem), and also that no such system can demonstrate its own consistency or contain its own truth-definition (the second incompleteness theorem) (Gödel, 1931/1967). Therefore, mathematical logic is inherently incomplete, and mathematics cannot be explanatorily reduced to logic. Moreover, whereas, after A.N. Whitehead's and Bertrand Russell's *Principia Mathematica*

(Whitehead and Russell, 1910/1962), it was generally assumed by philosophers and mathematical logicians that there must be *One True Logic*, it actually turned out that there are not only *conservative extensions* of classical logical systems, that add one or more new principles or laws to classical logic, for example, classical modal logic, while remaining consistent, sound, and complete, but also *deviants* of classical logical systems, that reject one or more of the principles or laws of classical logic, for example, (i) *intuitionist logic*, which rejects the universal law of excluded middle and contains some sentences that are neither true nor false, either because they have some *other* value, or have a *range* of such values, aka *three-valued logic*, or *many-valued logic*, or because they have *no* truth-value, aka *truth-value gaps*, and (ii) *dialetheic logic*, which rejects the universal law of non-contradiction and contains some provable sentences, aka theorems, that are both true and also false, aka *truth-value gluts*.

So, it seems, not only isn't there One True Logic, but also there's an unrestricted multiplicity of logics, and that *anything goes*: this is known as *the pluralism problem* (see, e.g., Hanna, 2006a: ch. 2). Nevertheless, whether complete or incomplete, and no matter how deviant, necessarily, *all* of these logical systems preserve at least a minimal version of the principle of non-contradiction: *not every statement is both true and false* (Hanna, 2006a; see also Putnam, 1983). Therefore, in my opinion, there must be a *universal proto-logic*, containing the minimal principle of non-contradiction and all the other logical notions presupposed and implied by this principle, which *isn't* The One True logic, but that's *also* used procedurally in order to construct every other logic, *and* furthermore it's (i) a priori by virtue of being innately specified in the cognitive and practical capacities of all actual and possible rational human animals (i.e., it's *transcendental*) and (ii) non-instrumentally and unconditionally normatively grounded in human dignity (i.e., it's *categorically normative*) (Hanna, 2006a: chs. 4-7, 2015: ch. 5, 2018, 2023a, 2023b).

Leaving aside the problems of incompleteness and pluralism, however, the deepest and hardest philosophical problem about logic is what's called *The Logocentric Predicament*: in order to explain or justify logic, logic must be presupposed and used, hence any explanation or justification of logic is circular, and therefore logic is rationally inexplicable and unjustified (Hanna, 2006a: ch. 3; Hanna, 2024: section 16.2.2). The Logocentric Predicament is closely related to what's called *the problem of justifying deduction* (see, e.g., Dummett, 1973/1978; and Haack, 1976), which unfolds as follows. It seems that there are only two relevant options for rationally justifying logical deduction: either (i) a *deductive* justification, or (ii) a *non-deductive* justification, for example, an *inductive* justification. But an inductive justification is too weak, and a deductive justification is circular and more generally falls into The Logocentric Predicament. This isn't the place to argue for an adequate, definitive solution to The Logocentric Predicament; but one promising possibility is that although the universal proto-logic is

indeed presupposed and used in the justification and explanation of every other logic, whether classical or deviant, it's *neither* circular in any *vicious* way, *nor* unjustified, *nor* inexplicable, *precisely because* it's (i) transcendental and (ii) categorically normative (Hanna, 2006a: ch. 3).

Correspondingly, one of the core theses of *Rationality and Logic* is that rational human thinkers are rationally capable of constructing any "alternative" or "deviant" logic whatsoever, *provided that* the constructed logic obeys one simple principle, the minimal law of non-contradiction, which, as we saw above, says that not every statement is both true and false. Violations of the minimal law of non-contradiction yield a logical phenomenon called *explosion*, which is universal inconsistency, or *logical nihilism*.

Before getting down to logical nihilism itself, however, I want to pursue a little further the parallel between logical cognitivism on the one hand, and Kant's logic and ethics on the other, as a way of elaborating the thesis that logic is intrinsically categorically normative. In a seminal essay, "Morality as a System of Hypothetical Imperatives," Philippa Foot directly and vigorously challenged all forms of Kantian ethics (Foot, 1978b). Here Foot argues that Kant's categorical imperative is an overly rigid, overly abstract, and ultimately empty bit of formalism: since it provides no motivation for following it, the categorical imperative fails to yield genuinely action-guiding principles. Universal prescriptivism of any sort fails. Only a system of hypothetical imperatives, that is, a system of practical commands or prescriptive rules based explicitly on natural or empirical facts about particular human needs and aims given under particular sociohistorical conditions, can genuinely guide action.

Morality, says Foot, is more akin to rules of etiquette than it is to a system of categorical prescriptions (Foot, 1978b: p. 164). Rules of etiquette are codes of conduct for highly localized and relatively unimportant human practices. The only difference between etiquette and morality is the extent to which members of the broader human community have achieved a certain wide solidarity or shared caring about the relevant practices. So morality is nothing but "optimally well-entrenched" or "globalized" etiquette, that is, etiquette that has established itself across all significant human practices, in the sense that all or most of the members of the human community have explicitly or tacitly adopted its otherwise merely local aims as "common aims" (Foot, 1978b: p. 170). Given these common aims, and *only* given these common aims, a set of hypothetical, conditioned, or instrumental moral prescriptions follow.

A precise analogue of Foot's complaint against Kantian ethics can be found in the *conventionalist* theory of logic. According to logical conventionalism, one can (whether individually or socially) create and adopt any logical system one likes by stipulating a

certain set of logical axioms or postulates, and also the rules of formation, transformation, and interpretation. And it is a central feature of logical conventionalism that what motivates the formal system's creation and adoption is not itself cognitive or theoretical: indeed, it is essentially noncognitive or interest-driven, hence voluntaristic or at least pragmatic. This view is nicely encapsulated in Rudolf Carnap's famous declaration in section 17 of *The Logical Syntax of Language*, as per the epigraph of this essay:

In the foregoing we have discussed several examples of negative requirements . . . by which certain common forms of language—methods of expression and of inference—would be excluded. Our attitude to requirements of this kind is given a general formulation in the *Principle of Tolerance*: *It is not our business to set up prohibitions, but to arrive at conventions. . . . In logic there are no morals*. Everyone is at liberty to build up his own logic, i.e., his own form of language, as he wishes. (Carnap, 1937: p. 52)

The very idea of an intrinsically categorically normative logic is undermined, Carnap thinks, by the existence of nonclassical logics. We must be radically open to the unlimited possibilities for creating alternative logics and to the diverse human motivations for modifying and challenging classical logic. In other words, for Carnap, “anything goes,”¹ at least where logic is concerned.

But there is an obvious way in which Carnap's conventionalism fails. In order to give a conventionalist definition of logical truth, conventionalism must presuppose and use preconventionalized logic. Here, of course, we are back at Quine's influential argument to the effect that conventionalism is inextricably caught up in the logocentric predicament (Hanna, 2006a: section 3.2). The crucial point, however, is that Foot's conventionalist conception of morality suffers from an analogous problem. If morality is to be interestingly different from mere etiquette, that is, if one is to crank up a local system of hypothetical imperatives into a truly global system that applies even to *prospective* and *possible* members of our community, then one must presuppose and use the very idea of a categorical imperative. For in terms of its syntactic or semantic structure, a “globalized” hypothetical imperative is nothing but a *relativized* categorical imperative. That is, a globalized hypothetical imperative to do *A* is nothing but a categorical imperative (“Everyone ought to do *A*”) containing within its scope a material antecedent condition which is an arbitrarily chosen set of *human interest postulates*, call that set “ Γ ”:

Everyone ought (If Γ , then to do *A*).

¹ The *Logische Syntax der Sprache* was published in late 1934; Cole Porter's *Anything Goes* first opened at the Alvin Theatre in New York on 21 November, 1934. Chalk one up for the *Zeitgeist*.

Similarly, a hypothetically or relatively logically necessary sentence H is nothing but a relativized logical necessity. That is, H is nothing but the consequent of a logically necessary material conditional containing within its scope an antecedent material condition which is an arbitrarily chosen set of theoretical postulates (for example, meaning postulates, scientific laws, etc.), call it " Δ ":

Logically necessarily ($\Delta \rightarrow H$).

Here is the moral of the story. Just as you cannot rationally escape from pre-conventionalized logic by making logic conventional at the level of your object language (since pre-conventionalized logic inevitably returns to haunt you in your metalanguage), so too you cannot rationally escape from categorical imperatives by making morality hypothetical or conventional at the level of first-order ethics (since categorical, pre-conventionalized morality inevitably returns to haunt you in your metaethics). And in a long footnote added to "Morality as System of Hypothetical Imperatives" in 1977, Foot as much as admits this:

Kant's thought seems to be that universal rules are universally valid in that they are inescapable, that no one can contract out of morality, and above all that no one can say that as he does not happen to care about the ends of morality, morality does not apply to him. This thought about inescapability is very important, and we should pause to consider it. It is perhaps Kant's most compelling argument against the hypothetical imperative, and the one that may make Kantians of us all. (Foot, 1978b: p. 171)

And the same point goes, I hasten to add, for logic. To say that logic is intrinsically categorically normative is simply to say that logic is rationally humanly inescapable, or at least to say that *the universal protologic* is rationally humanly inescapable (see Hanna, 2006a: ch. 3, 2015: ch. 5).

In any case, Foot seriously but instructively misinterprets Kantian ethics, as Onora O'Neill has shown (O'Neill, 1975, 1989). It is a mistake to think of Kant's categorical imperative as a superstrong first-order principle for action (or what Kant calls a "maxim"), that is, as an all-purpose practical decision procedure or algorithm. On the contrary, the categorical imperative is a second-order procedural principle applying universally to maxims. Negatively described, the categorical imperative is a filter for screening out bad maxims; positively described, it is a constructive protocol for correctly generating maxims, given the multifarious array of concrete input-materials to practical reasoning, including beliefs, desires, habits, personal situation, sociohistorical context, and so on. Thus the categorical imperative says, roughly:

Act *only* according to those maxims that every rational human being could adopt and that remain consistent with our innate rational capacity for constructing and acting upon maxims.

This version of Kantian ethics is what O'Neill, extending and modifying the work of John Rawls, aptly calls "Kantian constructivism in ethics" (O'Neill, 1989: ch. 11; see also Rawls, 1980, 1989; Hill, 1989). The crucial point is that we cannot say in advance of actual practical reasoning processes just *which* maxims will turn out to be permissible or obligatory and action-guiding, but only that they *must* have an underlying format or structure that is determined by the categorical imperative.

Where this line of argument is heading should be fairly obvious. Just as a constructivist Kantian ethics can get around both the objections and the internal problems of moral conventionalism, so too my broadly Kantian cognitivist constructivist conception of logic can get around both the objections and the internal problems of logical conventionalism. And O'Neill even supplies us with a good map of the conceptual terrain I want to occupy:

The Categorical Imperative is the supreme principle of reasoning not because it is an algorithm either for thought or for action, but because it is an indispensable strategy for disciplining thinking or action in ways that are not contingent on specific and variable circumstances. The Categorical Imperative is a fundamental strategy, not an algorithm; it is the fundamental strategy not just of morality but *of all activity that counts as reasoned*. The supreme principle of reason is merely the principle of thinking and acting on principles that can (not "do") hold for all. (O'Neill, 1989: pp. 58-59)

O'Neill is saying that the basis for the construction of any rational scheme of principles, whether that scheme is to be thought-guiding (logic) or intentional action-guiding (morality), is the categorical imperative. As applied to intentional action, the categorical imperative says that any first-order action-guiding principle must be universalizable, nonexploitative, and so on. But as the logical cognitivist would put it, as applied to thought, the categorical imperative says that every reasoning process must conform to the universal protologic:

Think *only* according to those processes of reasoning that satisfy the universal protologic.

Thus, according to logical cognitivism, following the principles and concepts of the universal protologic is not only required by human reasoning, it is also a *strict duty* for all human reasoning.

In this way, to say that “logic is a system of categorical imperatives for reasoning” is just to say that *the universal protologic is intrinsically categorically normative for human reasoning*. Here’s an explicit argument for this thesis.

(1) Something is normative if and only if it can be cited as a reason for human belief or intentional action, or is intrinsic to some reason for human belief or intentional action. (From the definition of the concept of normativity in Hanna, 2006a: section 7.1)

(2) Every inferential justification of human belief or intentional action involves the logical entailment of some sentence describing a belief (call it a “belief-report”) or an intentional action (call it an “action-report”) by premises that describe reasons for that belief or action (call them “belief-premises” or “action-premises” respectively). (Premise.)

(3) The logical entailment of a belief-report or action-report by belief-premises or action-premises, as understood by a rational human agent, involves some concept of logical consequence in the agent’s logic of thought. (From (2), and Hanna, 2006a: chs. 4–5.)

(4) The universal protologic enters intrinsically into every logical system insofar as it is both constructively and epistemically presupposed by every logical system. (From Hanna, 2006a: ch. 2, 2015: ch. 5.)

(5) So the universal protologic enters intrinsically into every inferential justification of human belief or intentional action. (From (2)–(4).)

(6) So the universal protologic is intrinsically normative. (From (1) and (5).)

(7) The intrinsic normativity of the universal protologic is not instrumental, or based on human interests, because the protologic is not dependent on *any* contingent facts, including human interests. (From Hanna, 2006a: chs. 1–2, 2015: ch. 5.)

(8) Therefore, the universal protologic is intrinsically categorically normative. (From (6) and (7).)

(9) The universal protologic enters intrinsically into all human reasoning, because (9i) the protologic is used and presupposed in the construction, self-analysis, and self-evaluation of each rational human cognizer’s own logic of thought, and (9ii)

each rational human cognizer's logic of thought constitutes her processes of reasoning. (From Hanna, 2006a: chs. 2–5, 2015: ch. 5.)

(10) Therefore, the universal protologic is intrinsically categorically normative for human reasoning. (From (8) and (9).)

As I have indicated in steps (1), (3), (4), (7), and (9), this argument relies on some claims for which I have argued elsewhere, and that I need not defend again here. The only step that needs independent support is step (2). Here, the rationale is that if I am inferentially to justify a belief of mine or an intentional action of mine then obviously I must offer reasons for that belief or intentional action, and just as obviously the premises describing those reasons must *logically entail*, under some version of logical consequence or entailment, a conclusion describing my belief or my intentional action. How *else* could I inferentially justify a belief or intentional action of mine? Inferential justification, or the inferential giving of sufficient reasons for some human belief or intentional action (and this captures the very pith and marrow of a rational “because”) is obviously inherently *logical* precisely because it is *inferential*.

Note that the version of logical consequence or entailment by virtue of which my belief-premises or action-premises entail my belief-report or action-report need not always be *classical* consequence or entailment (that is, the sort of consequence or entailment we find in elementary logic), but instead can in principle be any sort of classical or nonclassical consequence or entailment. My idea is not that any *particular* classical or nonclassical logic supplies categorical imperatives for all human reasoning. Instead, my idea is that any logical system we use in any sort of reasoning more or less implicitly, but always intrinsically, invokes the principles of the universal protologic as categorical imperatives for that reasoning.

Now back to logical nihilism. Ever since Trump's first election as US President in 2016, and especially in view of his decisive popular-vote and Electoral College victory in the 2024 US Presidential election, it has become self-evident that he is self-consciously operating with a highly deviant, highly devious, and highly sophisticated logic that is in fact in violation of the minimal law of non-contradiction, and therefore a version of logical nihilism. I call Trump's nihilistic logic, *the logic of mindfuck*. The logic of mindfuck has two basic principles.

First, *the principle of alt-facts*: you can assert or deny (or assert *and* deny) any statement whatsoever, in any context, as desired. These assertions or denials are called “alternative facts” or “alt-facts” (CNN/Conway, 2017). According to Harry Frankfurt, *bullshit* is speech that systematically manifests a blatant disregard for truth, alongside a

pretended concern for truth (Frankfurt, 1988b). Therefore, by virtue of the principle of alt-facts, basically everything Trump asserts is *bullshit*. More generally, the purpose of the principle of alt-facts is to mess with the mind of anyone who cares about truth, and therefore sharply disagrees with Trump — whom he then calls “creators of FAKE NEWS.”

Second, *the principle of unrestricted entailment*: you can infer any and every statement from any and every other statement, as desired. So, by virtue of the principle of unrestricted entailment, Trump is not merely a *truth-hater* but also a *logical nihilist*. The purpose of the principle of unrestricted entailment is to mess with the mind of anyone who cares about logic and (minimal) consistency, and therefore sharply disagrees with Trump—whom he then calls “COMMUNISTS” or “LIARS” or “TERRORISTS.”

The most elegant method for becoming a logical nihilist like Trump is, in effect, to marry Carnap to Nietzsche. This is not such an odd coupling as it may seem to be at first glance. We need only to note again how logically promiscuous Carnap’s “Principle of Tolerance” is:

[T]he *Principle of Tolerance*: It is not our business to set up prohibitions, but to arrive at conventions. . . . In logic there are no morals. Everyone is at liberty to build up his own logic, i.e., his own form of language, as he wishes. (Carnap, 1937: p. 52)

To get to neo-Nietzschean skepticism about logic, then, we need only start with Carnap’s Principle of Tolerance and extend it a little by introducing Nietzsche’s attack on what he calls the “will to truth”:

The will to truth which will still tempt us to many a venture, that famous truthfulness of which all philosophers so far have spoken with respect—what questions has this will to truth not laid before us! What strange, wicked, questionable questions! . . . *Who* is it really that puts such questions to us? *What* in us really wants “truth”? . . . We asked about the *value* of this will. Suppose we want truth: *why not rather* untruth? and uncertainty? even ignorance? (Nietzsche, 1966: p. 9)

From here, it is only a short step indeed to the conclusion that every logic whatsoever, whether classical or nonclassical, is (i) nothing but a product of “will to power,” and is (ii) merely “socially constructed,” not objectively real. This, in turn, is just to say that every logic is nothing but a product of natural, non-rational forces that more generally drive human action, and that the existence and specific character of any logic depends entirely on implicit or explicit communal agreements and contractual relations.

The crucial point here is that the Carnapian–Nietzschean or neo-Nietzschean skeptic becomes a logic skeptic not by explicitly doubting logic, but instead by simply *opting out* of the social construct that constitutes the will to truth: that is, by deciding to liberate herself from logic, and by undertaking to live a form of human life that expresses a total lack of concern for logic. Moreover, the neo-Nietzschean logical skeptic is a mirror-reflection of the Nietzschean *antimoralist* skeptic:

This problem of pity and of the morality of pity . . . seems at first to be something merely detached, an isolated question mark; but whoever sticks with it and *learns* to ask questions here will experience what I experienced—a tremendous new prospect opens up for him, a new possibility comes over him like a vertigo, every kind of mistrust, suspicion, fear leaps up, his belief in morality, in all morality, falters—finally a new demand becomes audible. Let us articulate this *new demand*: we need a *critique* of moral values, *the value of these values themselves must be first called in question*—and for that there is needed a knowledge of the conditions and circumstances in which they grew, under which they evolved and changed . . . , a knowledge of a kind that has never yet existed or even been desired. (Nietzsche, 1967: p. 20)

The Nietzschean antimoralist skeptic must in turn be sharply distinguished from classical moral skeptics. Classical moral skeptics, it seems, are of three basic kinds: (i) prototyrrants like Plato’s Thrasymachus in the *Republic*, who claims that might, or the advantage of the stronger over the weaker, is right, (ii) perverse immoralists like Milton’s notorious “bad boy” in *Paradise Lost*, Satan, who says:

Farewell remorse! All good to me is lost;
Evil, be thou my good. (Milton, 1953: bk. 4, l. 108),

and (iii) punctilious egoistic hedonists like Hume’s “sensible knave” in the second *Enquiry*, who claims that what is right is whatever he himself wants and can manage to get away with, provided that he “observes the general rule, and takes advantage of all the exceptions” (Hume, 1777/1975: section 9, part II, p. 283). In each case, the classical moral skeptic challenges some or another classical notion of morality by proposing to establish as morally right something that is morally *wrong* according to the classical moralist. By sharp contrast, however, the Nietzschean antimoralist skeptic rejects what Bernard Williams aptly dubs the “special ethical system” or “peculiar institution”—note the allusion to John C. Calhoun’s famous or notorious characterization of the social institution of slavery—*of morality itself* (Williams, 1985) by “revaluating” all practical values and thereby “going beyond good and evil” (Foot, 1978c; Geuss, 1997). Similarly, the post-modern or neo-Nietzschean logic skeptic completely rejects the special scientific system or “peculiar institution” *of logic itself*, by “revaluating” all theoretical values, and “going beyond truth and untruth.”

Thus, a neo-Nietzschean logic skeptic cannot be put off merely by indicating one's deep commitment to the very idea of logic, just as a Nietzschean antimoralist skeptic cannot be put off merely by repeating one's deep commitment to the very idea of a moral "ought." The Nietzschean antimoralist skeptic asks: why must she be moral, if the very idea of a moral "ought" is nothing but a product of the will to power and thus socially constructed, and if the peculiar institution of morality leads to something the Nietzschean finds deeply unpalatable, for example, the "slave morality" of Christianity? So too the neo-Nietzschean logic skeptic asks: why must she be logical, if the very idea of logical truth or consequence is nothing but a product of the will to power and thus socially constructed, and if the peculiar institution of logic is directly aligned with powerful cultural institutions of political tyranny, economic exploitation, sexual chauvinism, racial prejudice, and human oppression more generally? Logic is therefore, to use Andrea Nye's label, "insane," and to liberate ourselves from logic is to attack these forces at their very sources (Nye, 1990: pp. 170-171; see also Falmagne and Hass, 2002).

Philosophers of logic have so far either simply ignored this form of logic skepticism or dismissed it as ludicrous,² just as the casual reader of *Through the Looking Glass* might regard the White Queen as ludicrous. But I think that this is a serious mistake. As Foot, Raymond Geuss, and Williams have stressed (Foot, 1978c, Geuss, 1997; Williams, 1985), the precisely analogous case of Nietzschean antimoralist skepticism is a serious worry that is surprisingly resistant to refutation and cannot be philosophically ignored. Similarly, although it may admittedly be somewhat of a stretch for Nye to attempt to link the *Begriffsschrift* with *Mein Kampf*, this is in fact no more odd *in principle* than Plato's Ring of Gyges thought experiment in the *Republic*, Descartes's Evil Demon hypothesis in the *Meditations*, or Nietzsche's myth of eternal recurrence. And in any case, the general thrust of the neo-Nietzschean worry about logic depends solely on premises that are also accepted by some highly respectable contemporary cognitive scientists—see, for example, (Hanna, 2006a: ch. 5).

So, assuming that we should take this extreme form of logic skepticism seriously, how can we respond? Remember that once we have granted the premises that are also accepted by some highly respectable contemporary cognitive scientists, then the neo-Nietzschean skeptic makes no explicit assertions that might be targets for a self-refutation strategy, but instead *only expresses a radically strong antilogical attitude*.

² For example, Susan Haack writes: "Needless to say, my reaction to Nye's conclusion—'Logic in its final perfection is insane'—is . . . , well, needless to say"; see (Haack, 1996: p. xv). I take it that this means that Nye's conclusion is ludicrous. I will argue later that Nye's conclusion is in almost a literal sense "insane," but far from being ludicrous.

What we need to do, I think, is explore the consequences of rejecting logic in this way. Let us try to imagine a community of fully logic-liberated people. Here is Frege's characteristically vigorous response to the possibility of such a community:

[W]hat if beings were found whose laws of thought flatly contradicted ours and therefore frequently led to contrary results even in practice? . . . I should say: we have here a hitherto unknown type of madness. (Frege, 1964: p. 14)

This, I think, is essentially the right line of response. Taking the neo-Nietzschean hypothesis seriously, it would follow that both the social-psychological and individual psychological profiles of the logical nihilists would be pathological by *any* criterion of the meaningful use of the term "pathological." Inconsistency and fallacy would be endemic, and entrenched among them. Neither truth nor truthfulness would mean anything to them, or untruth or untruthfulness for that matter. They could not have beliefs, but instead only unreflective attitudes. They could not give reasons for anything, hence could not justify anything, hence would be without cognitive or practical norms of any kind. Without cognitive or practical norms, their emotional and volitional states would be without internal constraint or structure and utterly *wanton*, without any reasons for caring one way or the other about their direct or first-order desires or preferences (Frankfurt, 1988c).

In fact, *the self-induced condition of the logical nihilist would be equivalent to removing or permanently disabling her logic faculty, which in turn would undermine her metaphysical and moral personhood and her dignity alike.* In this way, the logical nihilist would lack any constructive or epistemic access to the universal protologic, and so would be without a properly functioning capacity of rational cognition or thought, and also without a properly functioning capacity for normative self-reflection or intentional action, and thus would become a *postperson*. Now, to be sure, there is nothing in itself wrong with being a protorational, nonrational, or subrational animal. All of us started out as protorational human animals, and it is a sobering thought that many of us will also involuntarily become nonrational or subrational human animals before this Big Parade is over. But there is something deeply incoherent, sad, and truly awful about a rational animal's deliberately deciding—that is, rationally choosing—to become a nonrational or subrational animal. Indeed, it is the ultimate self-stultifying act. If someone we deeply respected were to suffer a catastrophic accident and be permanently reduced to the cognitive and emotional level of a happy human infant or cat, we would regard this as a great misfortune, even despite the newfound contentment. But if someone we deeply respected were to *choose* this fate, we would regard this not merely as a great misfortune but also as profoundly perverse and entirely tragic.

So it is the logic-liberated people, *not* the logicians, who are in this sense “insane.” By endorsing the antilogical life, the postmodern or neo-Nietzschean logic skeptic intentionally commits cognitive and emotional suicide. One does not need to be a Kantian moralist to see that this is psychologically and morally self-destructive, and thus provides an effective pragmatic refutation of this extreme brand of logic skepticism.

Where does this leave us? If one were a *broadly Kantian logical cognitivist*, as per my view in *Rationality and Logic* (Hanna, 2006a: esp. chs. 1-4), then she could point out that our being essentially logical animals is fully consistent with our self-consciously and vigorously opposing moral and political coercion, tyranny, economic exploitation, sexual chauvinism, racial prejudice, and human oppression more generally. In fact, it is hard to see how anyone could manage to pursue a progressive political agenda *without* being a logical animal. For logic, in the protean guise of the logic faculty and its innately contained protologic, is at the very basis of human rationality, hence at the very basis of all justifications of human belief and intentional action, hence at the very basis of our moral animality as well. But this is not to say that rational humans are always, or even usually, equal to the fundamental rational task of cognitively constructing decisively sufficient reasons for their beliefs and actions. The human logical and moral animal must also learn to make allowances for, and to live with, the consequences for rationality of its animality.

As rational human animals, we’re not only *rationally* obligated, but also *morally* and *politically* obligated to care about logic (Hanna, 2006b). Therefore, as rational human animals, we’re not only rationally but also morally obligated to identify, criticize, and reject Logical Trumpism and Trump’s logic of mindfuck. And this is *particularly* morally and politically important and indeed urgent now that Trump, his Republican myrmidons, and his ICE Gestapo goon squads (Berger, 2026), have all been politically enabled by a substantial democratic majority until at least the mid-term elections, and possibly until 2028.

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