10. Proverbs & Science:  
A Natural Experiment in the Eyre Controversy

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Slaves, we are told, like slavery. And if this be meant to apply only to individual instances, we are ready to admit it to be true. But if it be meant to assert that such is the case universally, or even generally, we feel bound, before we can give our assent to the proposition, to make a few inquiries. What is the meaning of the countless advertisements, offering rewards for the apprehension of runaway slaves, to be recognised by marks sufficient to prove the ‘happy’ state they left, and which they were too dull or too ungrateful to appreciate?

(Alicia Hill, Richard Whately and Samuel Hinds 1852, 248-49)
Whately has been long recognized as one of the most careful admirers of Bernard Mandeville, e.g., Kaye (1924, 2:443) and Mandeville is one of the founding exponents of revealed preference. 

Classical Economics & Universal Experience

When Adam Smith defended proverbial wisdom as summarizing universal experience, he made an epistemological claim. What we know most securely are those propositions upon which the majority have ruled. We appeal to common experience and set the outliers aside for further consideration.

The particular proverbial wisdom which concerns us here is that all humans are akin. The assumption of human homogeneity is made operational in what modern economists know as the revealed preference approach.

Two years after the Carlyle-Mill exchange, one of Smith’s gifted disciples, Richard Whately, explained how we must distinguish the voices of the pro-slavery theorists from the choices of the slaves themselves. Further, he argued, it is not sufficient to pick one particular individual as the basis of judgment. We must look at the majority of choices and because free and bound are all alike, we can bring our experience as free people to understand their experience:

... we are told on every side that slaves are the happiest people in the world. ... Slaves, we are told, like slavery. And if this be meant to apply only to individual instances, we are ready to admit it to be true. But if it be meant to assert that such is the case universally, or even generally, we feel bound, before we can give our assent to the proposition, to make a few inquiries. What is the meaning of the countless advertisements, offering rewards for the apprehension of runaway slaves, to be recognised by marks sufficient to prove the ‘happy’ state they left, and which they were too dull or too ungrateful to appreciate? (Alicia Hill, Richard Whately

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As the American Civil War raged, J. E. Cairnes made the related point:

No African has ever voluntarily emigrated to the shores of the New World (1862, p. 99)

Each choice is an anecdote. What economists call a revealed preference approach, when aggregated, allows comparative institutional analysis by median of anecdotal evidence. What we have called the median of anecdotal evidence [MAE] can be employed as an alternative to the model of theorists when one suspects that the theorists' model is selectively specified, or worse.

But the theorists were not silenced by proverbs. We start with the theory that “All Negroes are unintelligent.” A counter-example (an anecdote) is produced. The result?

We have seen that the anthropologist James Hunt maintained that such anecdotes did not constitute “evidence”:

The exhibitions of cases of intelligent Negroes in the saloons of the fashionable world by so-called ‘philanthropists,’ have frequently been nothing but mere impostures. In nearly every case in which the history of these cases has been investigated, it has been found that these so-called Negroes are the offspring of European and African parents.” Hunt (1863, p. 16)

“What are you to believe, your eyes or me?” When Groucho Marx, flagrante delicto, said this, it was a joke. But Hunt’s “mixed race” immunization strategy was not and as such

\[\text{\textsuperscript{2}}\] As an additional example, consider Krugman’s remarks concerning trade theory: “Listen to the Gentiles. What I mean by this rule is ‘Pay attention to what intelligent people are saying, even if they do not have your customs or speak your analytical language. ... When I began my rethinking of international trade, there was already a sizeable literature criticizing conventional trade theory. ... Yet all this intelligent commentary was ignored by mainstream trade theorists–after all, their critics often seemed to have an
has been much discussed (Young 1995, Levy 2001).

When William Craft challenged Hunt it was on the basis of Biblical proverbs about the equality of all people, at which Hunt snarled. (Craft 1863; Hunt 1863a). Race was not the only equality he rejected; Hunt, notoriously, separated himself from the Ethnology Society because it allowed the participation of women (Young 1995).³

**Humor & “Cannibalism in Jamaica”: A Natural Experiment**

How do those who make decisions on the basis of proverbs compare with those who make decisions on the basis of “science” when the modeler’s selection criteria are biased? The impact of proverb and “science” can be tested by means of a natural experiment produced by the allegation of cannibalism in the events in Jamaica in November 1865 known as the Gov. Eyre controversy. We consider the two humor magazines of the period – Punch and Fun – both racist (by 21st century standards), but one (Punch) much influenced by the “science” of anthropology and the other immune to the “science” but still embracing proverbial wisdom.

Perhaps because of its horrific nature, this episode has not been widely discussed. It consists of the allegation of cannibalism in Jamaica when the initial news of the Eyre
massacres reached England. We compare the treatment in two literary magazines – the respectable Punch, and its underwashed rival, Fun. Punch was much influenced by the “science” of anthropology, exemplified by James Hunt, which held that black and white were species apart. Fun held to the Bible-based proverb that Africans were man and brother. What is worthy of note is which magazine printed the cannibalism stories, and which did not: the respectable and “scientific” Punch did; while the disreputable Fun did not.

Suppose the cannibalism anecdote were true. What do we make of this? If blacks are a separate species and we know almost nothing about them, then this anecdote is the regression line! If, by contrast, blacks are man and brother, then we know a good deal about them. We know, in particular, that starvation cannibalism happens in fairly predictable circumstances.\(^4\) Mainly, though, we know that since we don’t eat other people without something extreme occurring, other people don’t either. Thus, even if true, this anecdote is an outlier, like the happy slave whose potential existence Whately acknowledges. What is important about this from our perspective, is a darker point: what if an “expert” were allowed to violate our egalitarian principle with respect to anecdotes? What if the theorist – with a claim to “scientific” knowledge – were allowed to choose and

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\(^4\)Turner and Turner (1999, p. 459): “Hermann Helmuth (1973) prepared a brief but comprehensive, worldwide ethnographic review of cannibalistic motivations, in the hope of explaining prehistoric cannibalism. He ignored emergency cannibalism on the grounds that anyone starving could eat human flesh out of simple necessity, without any ideological, cultural, or behavioral motivation.” Turner and Turner (1999, pp. 460-461) are at pains to consider whether their evidence of cannibalism can be explained on starvation grounds.
present the anecdote as “truth”? This is precisely what happened as cannibalism stories were given the stamp of “scientific” truth by the Anthropological Society.

The “scientific racists” of the Anthropological Review associated with James Hunt defined themselves in terms of their subject matter, the “Cannibal Club.” Here is what scholars tell us about those associated with the Anthropological Review:

These men, outsiders to respectable social and scientific circles, scorned Victorian values and beliefs and engaged the society in provocative discussions of controversial issues, at times in violation of the standards of good taste and decent behavior. Raigner (1978, pp. 65-6).

There was no ignoring the ‘Cannibal Club,’ as Hunt’s rival dining élite dubbed itself. By the end of the Civil War they were a wretched power in literary London. Theirs was a phenomenal rise, with the notorious specialist in Arab erotica, Richard Burton aboard. They revelled in their repugnance. A savage’s skeleton hanging in the window announced their rooms. Inside, meetings were brought to order with a negro’s-head mace, and in an unsavoury reaction to the prudery of the age (and to the Ladies’ nights at the Ethnological) their erotic excursions verged on the pornographic. They explored phallic symbols and sexual taboos with a freedom unknown elsewhere. Desmond (1990, p. 343).

Hunt has been the subject of intensive study in recent years. Nonetheless, for the most part scholars have tended to view Hunt and his group as isolated from respectable opinion. Such was not the case, if we take “respectable” as contemporary accounts would have it. In fact, Punch was very much taken by Hunt and the Anthropological Society. Discussions of the goings-on at the Anthropological Society were a regular feature of Punch. Rather more interesting than another perfectly dreadful pun is Punch’s assent to James Hunt’s notorious Negro’s Place in Nature (Hunt 1864) that comes in the following
At the Anthropological Society's meeting recently a paper was read on the subject of the Negro's place in Nature; its argument, which seemed generally accepted by the philosophers present, tending to place him a little above the monkeys and very much below white men. In proof that too much importance is not to be attached to the structural analogies between SAMBO and JOCKO, the Morning Post observes that:

"Our most eminent comparative anatomist, it is well known, once classed as a indubitable specimen of the negro type of skull, the cranium of a Scotch sergeant who was killed at Waterloo."

Yes; but may not that Scotch sergeant have been a Sergeant BLACKIE? (12 December, 1863, p. 243).

Here is a report on the meeting of the Ethnological Society, the group from which Hunt broke, entitled “Professors in a Passion”:

Let dogs delight to quarrel over their bones; but Members of the Ethnological Society, do not fall out over yours. Cannot skulls be discussed by philosophers without the interchange of abuse? You should not let such angry passions rise as you did one evening last week at a meeting of your learned Association, when a Paper was read by Dr. Donovan “On Empirical and Scientific Physiognomy”...

Mr. Punch is a decided phrenologist, because he has himself such a fine forehead. He believes that when an antiphrenologist is a violent antiphrenologist, it is simply because that antiphrenologist has a bad one. (4 June, 1864, p. 238).

The following note, “Ethnoloists and Phrenologists”, puts forward the interesting doctrine that the evidence for a system of belief can be judged only by those who profess the system. In particular, proposition $\alpha$ with respect to group A cannot be judged by those who merely know something about group A and proposition $\alpha$, but who have not studied the subject in detail. Once again we find that the ordinary observer of the situation is said
to be incorrect, and the scientific theorist is correct:\footnote{Not surprisingly, perhaps, Punch goes both ways on this: ridiculing (as it does here) those with knowledge of the situation and holding up the evaluation by “scientists” as exemplary; or poking fun at “scientists” whose theory blinds them to the detailed and exemplary knowledge supposedly possessed by ordinary folks.}

At a meeting of the Ethnological Society the other day, a report of a Government Commission on certain Indian tribes inhabiting the region between Vancouver’s Island and the Rocky Mountains having been read, a discussion took place on the particulars comprising in it, and amongst them, on a practice peculiar to a tribe of savages bearing the suggested name of Cowitchans, of flattening the heads of their children by artificial pressure in infancy ... Without believing in the details of phrenology, and only supposing that the human brains have something to do with the human mind, most people would be inclined to share Dr. Donovan’s opinion, that the effect of flattening the heads of the Indian children must have been that of the diminishing their intellectual faculties. But:--

“Colonel Hawkins, who was one of the Commissioners when appealed to by the Chairman on the subject, said they had observed no differences in the intellectual capacities of the Indians with the compressed heads.”

This is the sort of answer which any physiologist, let alone phrenologist, may always expect to get to any question apparently asked with a view to obtain a confirmation of an opinion, from any such referee as an officer in the military or civil service who has never studied the subject it relates to. .... (15 July, 1865 p. 20).

Then at a meeting of the British Association in September, 1865, Punch finds cannibalism amusing:

Cannibalism
Professor Rawlinson gave us to understand that he shouldn’t like to be a cannibal. He didn’t know any cannibals personally. (I had a joke about being acquainted with an “Eton boy,” but couldn’t get it ready in time.)

Mr. Crawfurds said that there had been Scotch cannibals and Irish cannibals. He insisted that cannibalism was merely a manner of taste. For his part--

Mr. Blanks asked why the subject hadn’t been stuck to?

The President observed that it had been stuck to.

Mr. Dash, F.R.S., said he hadn’t heard anyone define cannibalism. (I hate
Dr. Camps replied that if Mr. Dash had only listened, instead of trying to make Professor Kenneth M’Kenzie laugh, by playing Punch and Judy dolls with his pocket handkerchief, he would have heard something very much to his advantage.

I rose and commenced my Mathematical Paper.

The President said it hadn’t much to do with Cannibalism.

I explained that that was the fun of it.

The President said I couldn’t read it.

I said I could. ...

The President explained that the sitting was over, and that my papers wold be “taken.”

I protested against their being taken, and proposed that we should play at cannibals.

The Meeting hastily adjourned. (23 September, 1865, p. 114).  

The mirth vanishes as Punch’s first statement on the just breaking Eyre Controversy contains the hideous report that the Jamaicans were eating the brains of whites as a prelude to an attack on egalitarians.  

To make certain that this point was not missed the report is titled “Last Case of Colour-Blindness”:

There has been fearful business in Jamaica. Blacks rioted, were fired upon, and the riot became madness. The blacks slew many whites, and the massacre was attended by incidents too revolting to be described in pages usually devoted to pleasantness. It must, however, be stated that a young clergyman was hewn in pieces,

6The subject provided numerous opportunities for humor early in the 1860s: “A palling Self-Cannibalism” reports that the missing MASTER JONES, was found, “very much disfigured, in a confectioner’s shop, where he had spent a considerable portion of the day over eating himself. No reason has yet been assigned for the rash act.” (14 January, 1863, p. 70). “An isolated fact is no proof. It is questionable evidence. But what if that particular fact did prove cannibalism? Of itself it would establish nothing more than the existence of a pre-historic SAWNEY BEAN, no ancestor, necessarily, of M R. CLAY. At present cannibalism is unknown in the Land of cakes. Horse has been eaten by some Frenchmen; but no Scotch Sabbatarian has as yet dined off donkey.” (31 December, 1864, p. 265).

7Semmel (1962, p. 26) seems to locate the first response of Punch in the December 23, 1865 poem “Two Sides to the Question” attacking Exeter Hall’s proverbial approach to matters of equality: “Then lay your suit of sables by/Black predilections smother, And listen to the white-man’s cry– /’A m not I man and brother?” (23 December, 1865, p. 248.)
and the blacks enacted hideous orgies, devouring the brains of their victims. A terrible vengeance descended upon the savages, and shot, sheet, and cord came into stern use. A great slaughter was made.

All this is painful to tell, but it must be told, because it is right to show the spirit in which the story is treated by those who claim to be exponents of the feelings of people of England, but who by a perverse instinct set themselves, on all occasions, in opposition to those feelings. Those who found excuses for the Indian mutineers, those who advocate peace at any price, and hold honour not worth counting, are now loud in behalf of the Jamaica blacks. Nothing is said for a small white population, eight times outnumbered by the negroes, and suddenly confronted by the foulest horrors of savage warfare. Nothing is said of its natural terror for its wives and little children. All we hear is a howl about the severity exercised on the poor dear blacks.

The Reverend Dr. Burns is a shining light among the advocates of the blacks. We dare say that he is a good man, at all events he uses many words out of the good Book. He addresses a long letter to Mr. Bright’s organ, and thus begins:—

“I have read with feelings of indescribable horror the details of the late sanguinary doings in Jamaica. I am sure, as those deeds are unfounded, and the whole truth shall be published in this country, that an unparalleled feeling of intensified indignation will be produced. I enter upon no justification of the riots or of rebellion on the part of the misguided coloured people, but I do protest in the name of our common humanity against the precipitate destruction to which so many of our fellow creatures have been devoted.”

This Christian minister reserves, it will be seen, his justification of riots or rebellion, that he may at once relieve his mind by abusing those who defended themselves against raging savages. He has not a word of regret for his brother Christian minister who was chopped to pieces by the blacks. ... he means a protest against the whites who fought for their lives, wives, and babies. Mr. Bright’s organ, of course, echoes this minister, and at a safe distance from anything blacker than its own misused ink, ridicules the terrors of white men who found themselves surrounded by a furious crowd, notoriously inflamed by belief—evidently not discouraged by certain religious teachers—that the negroes were the victims of tyranny. (2 December, 1865, p. 216). [Emphasis added]

The point ought not to be missed that Punch concludes from Dr. Burn’s silence on cannibalism not that cannibalism did not happen but that Dr. Burns is pro-cannibal. We have seen this doctrine practiced in a less terrible context above.
On the same page the identity of black and Irish interests is asserted with a squib titled “Ultra Irish Fenianism”:

We understand that in the Fenian “circles” addresses of condolence and sympathy are in course of being got up for presentation to the insurgent negroes in Jamaica who have been hanged. (2 December, 1865, p. 216).

We have seen in Chapter 2 above, that this identity was reinforced by Punch’s visual images.

Punch’s next major statement on Eyre – “Wait and Hear” – is once again aimed at egalitarians who were asking questions about the legality of hanging people without benefit of a trial. In its inimitable manner Punch insinuates that the cause of the difficulties is egalitarianism which denies “white supremacy.” Punch contrasts its “respectable” position with that of Bright’s periodical, Morning Star: “Again, Mr. Punch, in the interest of the respectable portion of the community, protests against the way in which Mr. Bright’s organ and Mr. Bright’s parasites are treating the Jamaica business.” (16 December, 1865).

Punch seems to have shortly recognized once again that cannibalism is a laughing matter as we see from a report labeled “Scientific” where the “science” is anthropology:

At the last meeting of the Anthropological Society there was a delightful discussion of Cannibalism. Mr Carter Blake fired up over the subject to such an extent, and several members, noticing the presence of the “devouring element” in his speech, felt slightly uncomfortable. The learned Secretary, we need hardly inform our readers, has not suggested Cannibalism as an alternative if the cattle disease continues. We have heard of a gentleman, not a hundred yards from Charing Cross being “eaten up with pride,” but, with the unchristian old woman,
let us hope, it isn’t true. (23 December, 1865, p. 253.)

What of the anthropologists themselves on cannibalism? Punch’s weekly publication schedule gave it an enormously rapid response advantage relative to those who published only in quarterly periodicals. However, beginning in January 1866 and lasting through October 1866, Hunt published The Popular Magazine of Anthropology. This seems to have been prompted by events in Jamaica: we find no evidence that it was planned when the 1865 Anthropological Review was printed. One article – “The Baptists and the Jamaica Massacre” – was announced as reprinted from the “Church Times” of 25 November, 1865. Here is how it begins:

Verily there are times and seasons for begging as well as for most other of the annoyances of life. But that this particular time should be chosen to send round little girls furnished with filthy cards embellished with smudged engravings of the declarations of “the gospel” to a lot of wooly-headed, thick lipped monsters of ugliness, and asking for money for dissenting missions to the West Indies, almost passes belief. (1866, p. 20)

And here we find the cannibalism story, brains and all, with the added attraction of gunpowder, rum and a Baptist chapel:

... the nation will not permit even a small white population like that of Jamaica to be left at the mercy of the bloodthirsty black ruffians, of whom Mr. Radcliffe well says “we have been petting panthers,” and whose celebration of their massacre consisted in the withdrawal to a Baptist chapel and the drinking of the brains of their victims mixed with gunpowder and rum! (1866, p. 23).

The advertising section of the Anthropological Review announced the provisional publication of journals without hinting at a Popular Magazine. Raigner (1978) discusses the various Hunt enterprises.
To answer the question of whether such reports were taken seriously, we have the testimony of John Addington Symonds of a dinner party of 8 December, 1865 in which Tennyson and Gladstone discussed the Eyre controversy. We read “tiger” as “man-eater”:

The conversation continued. They were talking about the Jamaica business. Gladstone bearing hard on Eyre, Tennyson excusing any cruelty in the case of putting down a savage mob. Gladstone had been reading official papers on the business all the morning, and just after I had entered said with an expression of intense gravity, “And that evidence wrung from a poor black boy with a revolver at his head!” ...

Tennyson did not argue. He kept asserting various prejudices and convictions. “We are too tender to savages; we are more tender to a black than to ourselves.” “Niggers are tigers, niggers are tigers,” ... Symonds (1893, p. 32).

The cannibalism allegation advanced in Punch and in the Popular Magazine of Anthropology seems to have served the same purpose for which W. Arens describes for allegations of medieval cannibalism:

Less well known today is the function of the cannibalism theme, which played an important part of the medieval definition of malevolence. Surprisingly, this trait was believed to characterize the behavior of witches, satanists, heretics and at times the Jews. ... The concordance between colonial Africa and the European Middle Ages is striking because the same symbols of homicide and cannibalism are used in the attempt to conceive of the ultimate in human depravity. Arens (1979, p. 95).

To destroy a man you first call him a cannibal? A nd then a tiger?

Man, Brother and Fun

The difference between Punch and Fun is wonderfully explained by Gilbert’s recent biographer, Jane Stedman, as she describes the self-declared “Fun gang”:

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9We have seen Carlyle’s passage on Irish cannibalism (Carlyle 1850, pp. 54-55) above, Chapter 8.
Most of them lacked money; one or two needed soap. Some drank too much, and some died too early. To Punch, the Fun gang and their cheeky paper seemed racketty and coarse. The well-established, increasingly complacent Mr. Punch prided himself on taking ‘the gentlemanly view of things’ ... Stedman (1996, p. 14).

When we consider Punch in the context of its competitor we discover that it had a surprisingly sudden squeamishness to cannibalism when it came to the English. We know this because in autumn 1865 Punch’s editor, Mark Lemon, famously rejected W. S. Gilbert’s “Yarn of the Nancy Bell” which was then published in Fun on 3 March, 1866.\(^{11}\)

This is how Gilbert later described the episode:

> It may interest some to know that the first of the series, “The Yarn of the Nancy Bell” was originally offered to “Punch” – to which I was, at that time, an occasional contributor. It was, however, declined by the then Editor, on the ground that it was “too cannibalistic for his readers’ tastes.” Gilbert (1970, p. 324).

The oddity of the Punch rejection has been pointed out because (first) this marked the end of Gilbert’s contributions to Punch and (second) on 11 March 1865 Punch had published a poem which included the following lines: “We were talking of eating the skipper/With winegar, mustard, and pipper.” Ellis in Gilbert (1970, p. 324). Does the Eyre Controversy motivate this change in attitude toward indigenous, even light-hearted, cannibalism?

> If as noted above all cannibalism is motivated by starvation then there are no

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\(^{10}\)The “autumn 1865” date is given in Stedman (1996, p. 14). The definitive edition of the Bab Ballads produced with great care by Ellis (Gilbert 1970) offers nothing more precise.

\(^{11}\)The reprinted “Yarn” is titled “Yarn of the Nancy Bell” a variation of no obvious consequence. We note below the substantial changes between the original publication in Fun and the later reprinting.
“cannibalistic societies.” The hypothesis that suggests itself is that a publication rejecting a poem about starvation cannibalism among the English, but publishing allegations about cannibalism in Jamaica, would be a statement in opposition to human homogeneity.

As Gilbert’s “Nancy Bell” was published in the very same volume as the Fun writings on the Eyre controversy – New Series II, which ran from 16 September 1865 through 10 March 1866 – we set out the Fun position (positions?) on Eyre. Before the Jamaica events, of course, Fun had opinions on race and slavery. What strikes one immediately in the first volume is the play on the anti-slavery slogan “man and brother” given visual form by the Wedgewood cameo. Here are the instances in Fun.

Under the title “Gentle Gorilla–Wither Away” the following letter is quoted.

“This animal was perfectly tame, docile, and tractable,—far more so, indeed, than many negro children of the same age. ...”

The editor then responds:

You observe, sir, she was more tractable than many children, though being the father of seventeen, that does not so much surprise me; and she walked with her keeper like a faithful dog or a domestic cat. The last statement suggests to me the question, did she walk upon her hind legs only, or upon all four? This is, did she walk erect like a man and a brother,— I should say a gorilless and a sister ... (12 October 1861, p. 39).

Expecting perhaps the identification of misbehaving negro children with the gorilla, the editor’s identification of the behavior of his unruly children with African children catches one by surprise. In a cartoon of 16 November 1861 (p. 86) a “Cotton Lord” with hands upraised is asking a black man on a bale of cotton “Am I not a man and a brother?” The
poem “Freedom of Opinion” printed 30 November 1861 starts this way:

I am a Yankee–yes, sir-ee!
I’d scorn the fact to smother,
I’d have each nation to be free,
And every man a brother
..... (30 November 1861, p. 104).

Fun seems fairly balanced in its abuse of the contending parties in the debates over slavery. A complicated satire of Thomas Carlyle, “Blondinism”, appears in the first volume on 15 February 1862 (p. 215). The second volume has a satire of Froude apologizing for Judge Jeffreys (p. 89), one on Harriet Martineau (p. 94) and another on Charles Kingsley (p. 243). In the third volume J. S. Mill is noted (p. 28), Harriet Martineau has now become a man (p. 59), Fun is horrified by the threat of the Union general in New Orleans to turn white women over to the black population if the white men do not behave (p. 64) and has two satires of Harriet Beecher Stowe (p. 164 and p. 183) who of course explained what happened when black women were turned over to their white masters.

We believe that the reading of plural positions on Eyre is a distinct possibility. The first three statements are found in the column “Town Talk” with the fourth statement in an official statement signed by Fun.

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12 The piece opens “B L O N D I N ! Blondinism! For what Man finds to do–and does it–is an Ism. A Man, mind you, not a Monkey” It closes with “Then Awful Chattering. Then Scratching of Crass Heads. And breaking of them too! Lamed Misery, Sprawling Despair. S Q U A S H !”.

13 Gordon Tullock tells us that Fun completely misunderstands the threat. As prostitution was segregated, treating white women as prostitutes carries no connotation of interracial sexuality.

14 This theme common to Martineau and Stowe is discussed in Levy (2001).
Here is the first shrill statement of 25 November 1865 which begins the column “Town Talk”:

And what will Exeter Hall think of its favourite nigger after the spectacle presented in Jamaica? The black has much of the wild beast in him it would seem, and neither slavery nor liberty can root it out of him. The Emancipation party in America will do well to pause in their career of mistaken humanity. They must educate SAMBO, and well too, before they turn him loose on the defenceless South, or they will be answerable for a recurrence of the same atrocities which make our blood curdle in the news from Jamaica. (25 November 1866, p. 102).

The savage cartoon on page 105 of a murdering black and his white female victims is titled “The Black Question. (Scene:– Jamaica). “Am I a man and a brother?”

By 9 December 1865 “Town Talk” had recovered his manners and attacked those who defended the Jamaicans as being more concerned with distant people than those nearby.15 This paragraph is the third of seven:

EXETER HALL is up in arms on the Jamaica question, and is arguing that the blacks are no worse than the dangerous classes of London. All the more shame to those who neglect the souls perishing round them, and prefer the éclat of missions and the glory of their names in the subscription lists! (9 December 1865, p. 122)

Next week Governor Eyre is named in the fourth paragraph. He is not defended but his attackers are attacked:

If the men, who have been studiously belying GOVERNOR EYRE in his absence, possessed a spark of honour or manliness, they would blush to read the

15 The linguistic claim put forward by Ellis in Gilbert (1970, p. 19): “… ‘niggers’ (the word commonly used in mid-Victorian times, quite often with no pejorative sense) …” might be checked by noticing how “nigger” quickly becomes “black” and then “negro” in the Fun passages. The issue comes up when one asks why Carlyle’s 1849 Fraser’s “Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question” acquired the coarser title when separately published in 1853. The contributors to the Eyre Defense Fund – Carlyle, Ruskin, Kingsley, Tennyson, Dickens – all use “nigger” but the Anti-Slavery Reporter does not.
bold letter of that vilified man's brave sister. But, having stabbed a man in the back, they cannot be expected to have much respect for a woman. There are certain men who are so deeply convinced that the negro is whiter than the white man, that they will sacrifice everything—from truth upwards—to their theory. But they must not feel aggrieved if their support of the negro through right and wrong earns for their conduct the title of black-guardly. (16 December 1865, p. 132).  

In that same 16 December issue a Fun editorial—“In the Matter of Fair Play”—was published as “Being a letter to a member of the Society of Friends”:

MY DEAR JABEZ, – You are an excellent fellow. You are always ready to devote a large proportion of the Mammon of Unrighteousness that you have acquired by judicious dealings in the flour trade, to philanthropic purposes. ... You have pretty little societies for promoting universal peace, and for abolishing slavery. They never do any practically good; the most efficient emancipationist being General Grant ...  

But, my dear JABEZ, you have your little faults, and one of them is a passionate preference for the negroes over whites. The African is, I am informed, a man and a brother; I am not particularly proud of the relationship myself, but, physiologically, I dare say you are right. To shoot my black connexion, to hang him or to flog him, is a disagreeable task, but it is one from which I should not shrink if he attempted to murder myself, and MRS. FUN, and our charming babes. In such a cause, Sir, I would even hang MR. CHAMEROVZOW or yourself.  

...  

I don't discuss politics in these columns, and I have my own opinion as to the wisdom of some of GOVERNOR EYRE's proceedings ... (16 December 1866, p. 138). [Emphasis added.]

The editorial continues, attacking an article in Bright's Morning Star that had attacked Eyre and his defenders.

While there is no doubt that Fun’s “Town Talk” columnist is racist there is no whiff of the allegation of cannibalism. Moreover, just as the editor made no distinction

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16Fun’s editor is known for never blotting a pun.
between misbehaving African children and his own, the editorial position affirms, reluctantly, the fundamental humanity of blacks. And although the cartoon of 25 November is of a murderer, he is, for all that, human. Compare the Punch cartoon of 3 March 1866 on the Irish.

Thus, publishing Gilbert’s poem of English cannibalism and not publishing the Jamaica cannibalism allegations is a position on the Eyre controversy, one that contrasts with that of the more respectable and more scientific Punch. That more “respectable” implies more hierarchicalist is something which needs to be recalled when one reflects upon the relationship between the “respectable” Punch and the “disrespectable” anthropologists. But Fun too wrote on the Hunt crew in its fourth volume 1 August, 1863 issue (p. 199) with what seems rather less reverence than Punch’s report. We reproduce the article.

The Anthropo-Fog-Ical Society.
(By our Special Reporter.)*

EVER-ESTEEMED FUN,—The Anthropophagi, or whatever they call themselves, met on the evening appointed, and M R. GREKE and CAPTAIN SPANT were there; and so was M. D U C'HAILLU, who who [sic] was reported as just returned from Baboon, or the Gabon, or some other oon, – it might have been Racoon. There were some capital speeches made, but as they did not interest me much, I didn’t take any notes. I remember, however, that some one—I think he calls himself PROFESSOR OWEN, and he was g-own it rather fast—said that man was clearly derived from the gorilla, because each of us has a n-ape to his neck. Then

*17[Note in original.] *Out of deference to our talented contemporary, the Saturday Review, which has lately pronounced that amateurs always do things much better than professionals, we appointed the member of our staff who knows least about science to attend this meeting.—Ed.
somebody else said that the traces of the monkey origin were most clearly
discernible in novelists, because everybody saw their tales-at least, I think that was
the argument. A nother gentleman followed, who was not very intelligible, at all
events, to me, and who said something about a “heap of scamps of majors” in
people’s heads-I suppose he meant girls’ heads.

Speke and Shant, or Greke and Gant, or whatever their names were, had,
it appeared discovered the source of the Nile, which, if I remember right, is called
the White Nile, on account of the niggers on its banks. The two gentleman gave us
a long description of these blacks, but as they didn’t seem to me particularly
different from other blacks, I will not burden you with details.

I’m thinking of joining the society. It is a great lark. You are expected to
bring a friend, and it is desirable that he should be rather ugly, and the more like a
monkey the better. I shall be very happy to pass you in any night to hear the
proceedings. I did not hear the end of them myself, for, finding the business flag, I
went into a neighbouring hostelry, where, I regret to say, I inadvertently lit my
pipe with the few brief notes I had taken. I shall feel obliged by an immediate
remittance, as I am desirous of exploring the source of the an-‘ighly spoken of ale in
this neighbourhood.-Yours, etc.,

The Ape and Artichoke, July 16th, 1863. G. O’Reilla

The line of argument of the apish Other has been inverted so that someone who calls
himself an ape reports on the proceedings. If Africans are apish then so too are we all.

Models & Anecdotes: In Conclusion

Two conclusions follow from our argument above. First, we have shown the
desirable properties of MAE. Political economists arguing against the Carlylian “theory”
that an enslaved blackman was a happy blackman, called explicitly for evidence to suggest
this was true in the majority of cases. A nother, more recent, application of the MAE
argument has occurred in the context of institutional change. During the illusionary
period in which it was widely believed among economists that Soviet economies were
growing considerably more rapidly than market economics (Levy 1993), it was a matter of
common knowledge which way ordinary people chose to migrate. Such systematically
organized anecdotes can give ordinary people sufficient information to confront the vanity
of the philosopher who tells them to trust in what they cannot understand.

We have also seen examples where the vanity of the philosopher takes on dark
properties – when the philosopher, cloaked in the garb of irrefutable science and
unconstrained by choice of a median, chooses the anecdote that suits and presents it as
truth, with disastrous results. But the general point should not be lost as we reflect on
cannibalism and the many “stories” that are told in similar contexts: the problem with the
cannibalism case is not only the horrible nature of the anecdote which serves to
dehumanize the subject; the case also reveals that the theorist who chooses to ignore the
revealed evidence of the M A E, is an analytical hierarchicalist.

We began by suggesting that this analytical hierarchicalism was used in the
nineteenth century to immunize “science” from evaluation by ordinary people. We close
with a reminder that analytical hierarchicalists insisted that theirs was a method which
only experts could master. Ordinary people, they held, were incapable of abstraction from
surface phenomena. The mathematician, J. R. Mozley, made this point in his review of
Mill’s various works, in the Quarterly Review of 1872:

Now be it observed that the very notion of equality involves the abstraction of all
sensuous elements from our cognition. It follows, that in all mathematical science
every sensuous element has to be excluded, or, as Mr. Mill would put it, ‘thrown
into the shade.’ Let it be considered how vast a degree of abstraction this is, and
how many are incapable of it. (1872, p. 100).
Earlier in the review, we learn who, in particular, cannot abstract: “Beasts, and even the lower races of mankind” (p. 99). It is surely no surprise that a major scientific finding of Hunt and his allies in the Anthropological Society, was that African negroes were (overly) emotional and incapable of controlling those emotions. Four years later the attendance of women at the scientific societies became an issue, and the argument was made that women, being overly emotional, were unequipped for scientific pursuits. Reporting on these discussions, the Pall Mall Gazette wrote: “the natural philosophers have been frightened out of their wits by the ladies who flock to the Section of ‘Economic Science and Statistics’ and who insist on reading papers and starting discussions which are not only not scientific but which savour of the singular antipathy to science for its own sake common to all the feminine movements of the day” (22 August 1878, p. 1).