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Thinking

Thinking
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THINKING IN STORIES

By Gareth Matthews

Time for the White Egret
by Natalie Savage Carlson,
illustrated by Charles Robinson.
New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1978.

Suppose there were someone or something, S, such that

1. S can be relied on to take care of all my problems, if I just wait long enough;
2. whenever I am busy, there is no S;
3. if I go away and come back, S is sure to have passed while I was gone;
4. S always passes quickly when I get interested in something;
5. in an emergency, there is no S;
6. anyone who occupies my attention to no good purpose, wastes.

What could S be?

It's time, of course — that wonderfully elusive "stuff," or dimension, or pseudo-dimension, or whatever it is.

"What, then, is time?" Augustine asks in Book XI of the *Confessions.* "I know well enough what it is," he goes on, "provided nobody asks me; but if I am asked what it is and try to explain, I am baffled."

Part, though not all, of what we need to have to be able to handle Augustine's question is a good grasp of the many curious idioms in which we talk about time. *Time for the White Egret* helps us to tighten our grip on those idioms and to reflect on their surprising and wonderful variety.

In the story the white egret needs to have a cow stir up some insects for him to eat; but all the cows in the field are already paired off with other egrets and

he is left out. The brown cow under the sweetgum tree feels sorry for him and tells him that time will take care of his problems. Encouraged, the white egret goes in search of the alleged benefactor, time. He thinks of time, we are told, as "some bog, strong creature like the farmer or the hump-backed brahma bull."

On being told that time sometimes passes fast and sometimes slowly, the white egret hopes to catch time in a slow phase. Mischioevously the brown cow encourages him in his search for time with the baffling assurance that searching will make time pass faster.

The hound dog barks out that he "has no time" for the white egret. The deer, refusing to help in the egret's search, snorts, "A dog is chasing me, so there is no time." But the alligator is helpful.

"I have time now," announces the alligator. Thinking he has at last found time, the white egret is thoroughly delighted. But delight soon turns to frustration and the alligator turns him aside with the complaint, "You've wasted too much of my time already."

The blue heron, who refuses to help, tells the egret, "I wish I had time, but I'm busy fishing." Later on the heron adds, mysteriously, "Not this time, another time."
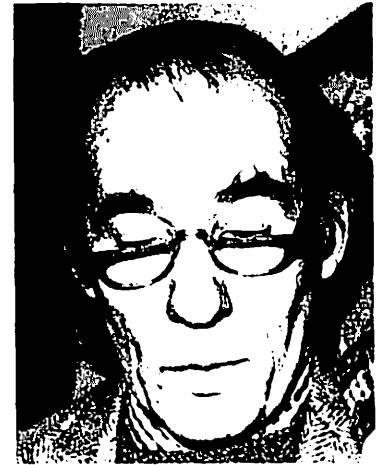
Returning to the brown cow, the white egret is told, "Time passed while you were gone." But the brown cow has found the egret, if not time, then at least a little calf to stir up insects for him. To the egret's complaint that the calf is so little, the brown cow replies, "Time will take care of that."

The author of *Time for the White Egret* does nothing to sort out the idioms in which we talk of time. But only the most unreflective reader can read this story without at least beginning that task. A truly reflective reader, goaded, perhaps by a respectful parent or teacher, might even be encouraged by the story to begin the daunting task of developing a metaphysical theory of time. Though the task is daunting, the rewards are immediate.

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Literature for Children?

by Michael Ende

Perhaps you will be surprised if I tell you here and now that—if I am honest—I do not approve of the fact that there is an independent form of literature for children. This seems to contradict the idea and the name of the prize which I am honored to receive. Let me explain in some detail.

It is generally assumed that literature for children and young people is produced out of an increasing interest of modern society in children and their needs. At least this is the reason presented in relevant reports on this issue. Personally, I think that this is a euphemism, or rather, that it is only the pleasant side of the coin, the other side of which is of quite a different nature.

If the world of grown-ups were habitable for the child as well as for the grown-up (as indeed it should be), there would be no necessity to create a sort of "wild-life reservation" in which children can indulge their animistic and anthropomorphic drives, in which they have the possibility (at least for some time) to imagine the world as being populated by strange and wonderful creatures, by elves and dwarfs—until the very moment at which they are brutally expelled out of this paradise, that is, when they are considered to be mature enough to face reality and to be introduced to the so-called "objective facts". Then the child learns that there is no "good old moon" who "sails so quietly through the clouds of the evening sky"[1] and gives you company while it shines down on you. The child finds that the moon is nothing but an impersonal lump of cinders and dust that is held on its orbit by mere laws of mechanics.

And there is no "dear sun" who "smiles upon the child out of the skies"[1] but instead there is a gas-ball which hurls unimaginable amounts of energy for no reason at all into empty space, all

the effect of continuous nuclear reaction.

To put it in a nutshell, the child learns that everything which has made the world look dear and reliable so far, has been nothing but a fat lie. There is no Santa Claus, no stork that brings the babies, no Easter rabbit. Children find that someone has made fools of them. As this basic breach of confidence usually happens unnoticed, it is not regarded as a serious problem. Often it is the children themselves who claim proudly that they do not believe in childish fairy-tales any longer. What remains is subconscious, but all the deeper-rooted, mistrust. The attitude of children towards the world of the grown-up becomes negative and even hostile. They try to create a world of their own.

It is this striving for independence which many writers of children's books make use of in order to satisfy the desires of their readers. In these books, the grown-up usually plays the role of the fool or of the stupid tyrant.

It becomes even more absurd when children are encouraged—often by some of the more progressive friends of the children—to create their own way of living, their anti-order and, of course, even a literature of their own. As if children were a separate species, that had no wish to communicate with man! But really, children *do* want to live together with the grown-ups in one world, they *do* want to share and be at home in that world.

All attempts to separate children from the world of the grown-up must be regarded as signs of resignation and disappointment. The division of literature into two classes, one for the grown-up and one for the child is, in my opinion, a serious symptom. The fact that this division has never been questioned or doubted does not make it less critical. Indeed, there is no topic within human experience, the basic idea of which would not be interesting or understandable for children.

It depends, however, on the way in which one speaks about it, from the heart—or just from the mind. I am thinking of the Artus Saga, for example, or of the biblical stories, which were never intended as children's literature— any more than Gulliver's Travels or Don Quixote or the so-call folk tales.

Yet I must ask myself if a story such as the Odyssey (if it were just written), could be published today at all if not under the excuse that it is a book for children. We find an abundance of giants, elves, queens of the winds and other fantastic creatures. The so-called grown-up of today, who has his mind barred with a poor idea of reality, considers such creatures and stories as "unreal", as "fantastic", even as "escapist", or whatever other depreciative words one could find.

On the other hand, what the adult regards as useless for himself is able to find, in his eyes, a certain right of existence in the world of the child, and there, in a patronizing manner, he places it. Maybe he nibbles at it secretly from time to time, when his bleak, grown-up world strikes him as being too desolate and dull, but only if no one can see it; otherwise he feels ashamed of it.

I do not want to speak about educational questions. I do not believe that significant children's books have ever been written out of educational considerations. The interventions of educators in this area of literature—and there have been quite a few recently—have, in my opinion, never been very successful. The criteria for a good children's book are neither of an educational nor a sociological nor a political nature, but they are exactly the same as in any other belletristic literature: they are determined by considerations of artistry. Perhaps it will be found that not everything which is good from the point of view of artistry should be presented to children. Frankly, I would not be afraid of that. If something is really well-written, it always comes from an integrity of heart, mind and senses, and hence speaks accordingly to the integrity of people. Therefore it is right and even relevant for society, and in a far deeper sense than many of those who think superficially about this topic may be able to realize. The question is, of course, if everything which is claimed to be art really is art. But "this is another story and shall be told another time".[2]

Let us return to the thought from which I started: when was it that the creation of a separate world for children (and hence a creation of a separate form of literature just for children) first became necessary?

In other countries, insofar as they have not already been influenced by Europe or America, children and grown-ups still share a common world. It was much the same in ancient Europe. When and why did this world fall into two parts?

The beginning of children's literature can be found in the first decades of the 19th century. But even if one goes further back than that by taking a broader view of children's literature, one does not get back further than to the beginning of modern times. There were times when modern intellectualism (the pride of the white race) began to take the place of the old intellectualism of Europe in every respect. In its different forms of appearance—"objective" natural science with its impact on industry and technology one the one side, and the humanities, which were losing themselves more and more in abstract theory, on the other side—modern intellectualism began to do away enthusiastically with all remaining "anthropomorphic" ideas, that is, with all ideas related to man. The world, along with its ideas, became inhuman.

From then on the cosmos was nothing but an impersonal machinery working according to a limited number of physical laws. Our planetary system, an unimportant small cloud of dust in the corner of the cosmos, one day had by chance spun out of a gigantic cloud of hydrogen, and would go on spinning until the day came when, due to extreme heat or cold, it would die. In the graveyard silence which remained in the cosmos, the whole history of man, including cultures, religions, fighting and suffering, was to be nothing but a tiny, hardly observable intermission within an incomprehensible sequence of gigantic but equally meaningless processes.

You will surely remember Goethe's remark: a mangy dog which circles 'round a stinking carcass is a pleasant sight compared to the conception of the world according to Kant and Laplace. From then on, and even today, man on earth has been seen as the accidental product of biochemical circumstances and his ego, his consciousness, including all his illusions of freedom, responsibility, love, creative strength, humor and

human dignity, are in reality nothing but the product of automatic, electro-chemical processes in the brain and the nervous system.

It is astonishing, however, that those who detect these "facts" always exclude their own thinking. They declare the "facts" to be the "objective truth," as if they were standing on the famous "point of Archimedes". If they did not do so, of course, they would soon end up in a logical jungle of the most grotesque kind, where they would have to be consistent and admit that, according to their own theory, their theory was nothing but the result of automatically working electro-chemical processes in their brains. Then they would have to face the necessity of explaining why electro-chemical processes are able to recognize and designate themselves.

From all sides, credulous people assure me that they have long ago begun to overcome materialism. To be honest, this is not the impression I have. On the contrary, as we can see from the popular and famous book, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity,* by the American psychologist and recipient of the Nobel Prize, B. F. Skinner, science is now on the point of doing away with the last remains of anthropomorphism which are still to be found within science: where it deals with man himself.

But even man, we learn there, has really nothing in common with man. What we held to be the essence and nature of man, namely his freedom and his dignity, turn out to be nothing but naive and unscientific superstition.

To sum up: after man has *thought* himself into the state of being an alien element within this world, he now makes himself disappear out of it in order to create a new, horrifying, connection between himself as an object and other objects. As he is an indisputable part of this in-human world, he has to do away with his human parts. For those who are serious and consistent in this view of life, there is no man as man. Unsurprisingly, some young people who try to live according to this "truth" have no scruples about planting bombs and shooting in every direction.

Inasmuch as man has developed to his lofty status precisely through this process of natural selection, what I would

like to know is how, with this view, one could argue that the stronger does not necessarily have the right to live without showing any considerations for the weaker?

Why should it not be possible, I ask myself, to experiment with so-called "unworthy life," as was done in the concentration camps—experiments which could be of great significance to science and hence to the progress of mankind? Why should the problem of overpopulation not be solved by dropping some "clean" atom bombs? Of course there would be the need to find out by "scientifically objective

methods" who has to die and who shall survive. Such a decision would have to be made by an international group of experts, a gathering of people who are capable of the really "value-free" thought.

All of us accept this development, because we are more or less intimidated. The sacred cow of our days is natural science and technology to whom the slightest offence is a sacrilege. Here rather than in all that is sacred, to demolish which entails no risk of loss of dignity to those who want to make themselves known and gain honor—here lies the real taboo of our century.

On the contrary, those who again and

again repeat the rebellions of their great-grandfathers with the ferocity of those who demolish existing values—they are the ones who receive the rewards all over again. Everyone knows today that this is fashionable. And who would not like to be fashionable?

Again and again I hear and read that modern man does not believe in authorities. But I believe that we live in a century where people believe in authorities to a degree such as has never before been the case in the entire history of man. The sentence starting with "Science has found out . . ." is sufficient to arouse awe and readiness to be-

lieve and to silence any kind of impertinent objection. Any of the words which leave the mouths of these mysterious insiders in white coats is accepted without question on our knees, as it were—and goes into the papers uncontradicted.

Only other insiders are allowed to contradict. And all this, even if the effects of this so-called "value-free" form of science increasingly demolishes not only the inner but the outer world as well. I do not want to talk about the widely known ecological problem. But if the data of Professor Max Thurkauf is correct, then, at this very moment, all over our planet, there are 400,000 scientists occupied in the development and

production of destructive weapons. The result of this respectable research is the famous "40-times-overkill," which is the possibility of killing all life not merely once but forty times. In searching for a counterweight against this monstrosity, we find that the entire scientific potential is not able to revive even one of these species of butterflies which were exterminated by the chemical industry.

But this, so I am told, is no argument against the value-free form of science; it is rather a wrong application of a principle which itself is good and right. Where to find the yardstick for a *correct* application remains somewhat unclear in a system of so-called value-free ideas. It seems to me that it will take some time before the point is reached where we will have to accept the fact that death was lingering in this kind of thinking from the very beginning; that right at the beginning, something went wrong; that to divide the world into one "objective" and one "subjective" world is nothing but the result of human consciousness and can therefore be overcome by man; that so-called "facts" are always determined by the way one asks for them. For example, if one looks for the soul in the body with a scalpel, as Virchow did, one comes to the conclusion that there is no such thing.

No one, not even the "most fantastic believer in the church of science" as Robert M. Pirsig calls these people, can really *live* with this idea of the world. I myself can hardly imagine a mother—even if she were an extreme believer in science—telling her child: "The fact that I love you and you love me is in reality nothing but some electro-chemical processes in our brains. With suitable wires one could switch that on and off."

While such monstrosities are accepted without any objection, as "objective scientific facts", no one likes to draw these horrifying consequences. When it does happen here and there, people are terrified. Especially when children are concerned, everyone ought to know that this kind of doctrine is nothing but a murder of the soul, that with this conception of the world a child is bound to starve, to freeze to death, to suffocate in his heart.And yet, you will not be able to find a school in which this doctrine is not

taught—or, at least, not presented—in this way. According to Paul Feyerabend in his book, *Against Method,* parents have the option of deciding whether their child is to be instructed in the Catholic or Protestant religion, or if it is not to be instructed in religion at all, yet they have no choice when it comes to scientific subjects. The church of science claims orthodoxy, and this claim is universal, pitiless and exclusive.

What we *live* with are yardsticks of a quite different kind: values which stem from quite different views of the world. But these are rarely considered today; sometimes they are even denied. Schizophrenia, which is the result of this contradiction, has become such a common phenomenon that it is now considered to be the normal state of man. Even worse, it is demanded that what people think is to be separated from their moral behavior.

I think, however, that a world which is uninhabitable for children cannot be inhabitable for grown-ups either. It goes without saying that I consider it neither as desirable nor as possible to return to the old forms of thinking, where the conception of the world was related to the idea of man. What I consider as desirable—or rather, as a precondition of survival—is that we find adequate ways to feel at home again in this world, that we start again to measure the world with our human measure, because we have no other measure at our disposal, that we transform intellectualism, which is unable to produce values out of itself, into a way of thinking which includes reality and hence can be experienced, so that we may achieve a human way of thinking again.

For this reason I believe that poetry is a basic need for our lives, as basic as food and drink. Of course, poetry cannot achieve this change on its own, but it can point in the direction towards which a change has to take place. What else is poetry, if not the creative ability of man to see and recognize himself in the world and the world in himself? All poetry is "anthropomorphic" in character; otherwise it stops being poetry. And therefore all poetry has something in common with the child. I would say poetry is the ever-childlike aspect of man.

stand the world and to become a part of it, is poetry. It is not only poems or books or art in general that I refer to, but different ways of life and explanations of the world which can be experienced and understood. Perhaps some day even grown-ups will be grown-up enough to learn about the truth from poetry. Perhaps there will be a new and quite different form of natural science which finds true facts with which man not only can live, but which even reveal his human nature to him. Let me put it like this, in the words of the poet Novalis:[3]

> *One day, when neither numbers nor figures*
> *are the key to all creatures,*
> *when those who sing or kiss*
> *know more than the most learned scientists,*
> *when the world returns to the free life*
> *and goes back into the world,*
> *when light and shadow*
> *are again held in pure clarity,*
> *and when the ever-returning stories*
> *   of the world*
> *can be discerned in poems and fairy tales,*
> *then all this inverted nature will take flight,*
> *just because of a single, secret word.*

And then there will no longer be any necessity to have a separate form of literature for children. Children and grown-ups will be able, each in their own ways, to share one and the same world. This is the purpose which I want to achieve as a writer.

I want to thank you for your encouragement and support for the "long search" which I have been undertaking, together with my little hero, Atreju—encouragement and support which you have shown by awarding me this prize.

(Translated from the German by Jutta Schutte and Barbara Bruning.)

FOOTNOTES

[1] quotations from a children's song
[2] quotation from "Die Unendliche Geschichte" by Michael Ende
[3] Wenn nicht mehr Zahlen und Figuren
Sinc Schlussel aller Kreaturen,
Wenn die, so singen oder kussen,
Mehr als die Tiefgelehrten wissen,
Wenn sich die Welt ins freie Leben
Und in die Welt wird zuruckbegeben,
Wenn dann sich wieder Licht und Schatten
Zu echter Klarheit werden gatten,
Und man in Marchen und Gedichten
Erkennt die ewigen Weltgeschichten,
Dann fliegt vor einem geheimen Wort
Das ganze verkehrte Wesen fort.

A Way to Philosophy

Eva Brann

The Enterprise

At the present time the word philos-
ophy is used to name a discipline
which is one among many and which
has, as do the others, formulated results,
pre-set problems and articulable
methods. I think no one would question
that philosophy so understood can be
taught.

But there is also an old, original
meaning which I would like to recall.
The word philosophy literally means *the
love of wisdom*. I would like to avoid here
the burden of argument entailed by this
recollection, which is: To show that
there is such a passion and such an ob-
ject for it. Instead, I want to take the
word in a way which is at once practical
and appropriate to schools: As the desire
to reflect while learning, as a wish to
look behind, beyond, beneath the mat-
ter in hand; or, concisely and negative-
ly, as an aversion to being unaware of
one's ground. Note that I am not in-
tending to describe curiosity (the avidity
for novelties) or critique (the project of
evaluating whatever has been proposed.)

So interpreted, it goes without saying
that philosophy is the kind of shadow en-
terprise, suffused over and hardly separ-
able from other undertakings, which is
not directly teachable. But philosophy
can perhaps be *elicited*. I shall, then, pose
myself the project of setting out the
sketch of a somewhat practical plan for
eliciting philosophy in institutions of
learning. I shall depend for the formula-
tions of this project at least in part on my
own experience in the program at St.
John's College in Annapolis.

Now the question whether the at-
tempt to elicit philosophy should be
made at all is a prime consideration
within a philosophical setting. But it is
one which no convert to the cause would
consent to discuss before that setting had
come into being, especially if the answer
is meant to have a practical conse-
quence, for instance that of abandoning
the undertaking. Therefore the begin-
ning must be abrupt. Unless a favorable
setting has already been established, the
most practical procedure is, without
publishing any plans or premises, reso-
lutely to subvert some class to the enter-
prise. Almost any class is suitable, as
long as it is not one in which students
were promised instruction directed
toward competence immediately con-
nected with their livelihood. Most stu-
dents have enough of a philosophical
propensity so that, though they may be
surprised at this use of their scheduled
time, they will not be offended.

The Texts

The problem now becomes: What to
do in this class? The way I have for-
mulated the enterprise might suggest
that a fresh and thoughtful spirit would
engender philosophy on any subject
matter and that no special matter is
needed. This must be true in principle,
for philosophical learning is at bottom
nothing but live learning. But it fails to
practice, for very mundane reasons.
When people meet regularly at schedul-
ed times, they will not often be able to
find a good beginning unless they have a
prepared matter in common. Further-
more, in view of the mediocrity of our
intellect it is practically indispensable to

*"A teacher should not
talk too much, and if
that proves impossible,
at least not
dogmatically."*

have a guide in the effort of reflection.
Some help is therefore needed to prevent
the occasion from being casual and the
conversation, which is its object, from
turning in tedious circles. That help is to
be found in good texts.

One particular misgiving concerning
the use of texts deserves consideration.
It is patent that the study of books,
which means the appropriation of the
opinion of others, respectable though
they may be, is in several ways seriously
at odds with the enterprise of reflection,
the attempt to think for and upon one-
self. But again this question, which con-
cerns the relation of learning to tradi-
tion, is profitably raised only within the
tradition, which is to say within a setting
in which thought and study have some
sort of *de facto* compatibility. The partici-
pants in this enterprise must first "take
up and read", then question the value of
reading.

It follows that the texts which are in-
tended to be the instigators of thought
and guides into otherwise inaccessible
depths should be such that students will
be compelled (perhaps after an initial
period of aversion) to give them respect
and even to input superiority of intellect
and imagination to their authors.

There is one apparently obvious crite-
rion for choosing such texts which will
not, in fact, turn out to work very well,
namely that of "primary" against "se-
condary", The reason is that most
books, whether written in a spirit of
critique or, more rarely, of approval,
are about previous books and therefore
in an important sense commentaries.
So, for instance, one might argue that
Northanger Abbey is a commentary on *The*

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" . . . the asking of good questions are of three kinds . . . The first will be addressed to the student: What do you mean?; the second to the text: What does it mean?; and the third to the beings in question: What, how, why are they?"

Mysteries of Udolpho, or, seriously, that Galileo's *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems is a commentary on Aristotle's On the Heavens,* a book which is in fact almost a participant in the conversation.

There is, however, a criterion which is more usable because it is less external: The texts should be original, in the double sense of being the result of the author's own thought and of presenting the pursuit of a matter to its very origins. Texts of this underivative sort usually reveal themselves by the manner of their composition long before the student has gone very far in penetrating them: they are so subtly and artfully woven that the reader sees inexhaustibly many avenues to their meaning without losing faith that there *is* a meaning.

But by and large it must be an act of trust, of perfectly reasonable trust, in the opinions of literate mankind to find and establish a working list of such texts. That is to say, the teacher will begin by looking to that very accessible corpus of books of secular reputation often referred to as "the tradition". This does not mean that there might not be good texts that are practically unknown (for instance a colleague's unpublished work), but only that their existence is less likely and their discovery very difficult.

Texts of the sort described differ from textbooks and other derivative works in one way essential to the enterprise. They most further the inquiry while least obtruding themselves upon it. They do this because, contrary to most textbooks, they do not present themselves as covering a pre-determined field or treating a pre-set problem. Good texts rarely prejudge the first questions concerning the division of knowledge, but come before the students simply as reputable writings. And because they do not take their subject matter as given, because they so often begin by distinguishing their realm of inquiry and justifying that distinction, they further original inquiry— this is only one of several ways in which the tradition proves to be the best antidote to indoctrination. To give examples: Is Newton's work called the *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy* a work of "mathematics", of "philosophy", of "physics", or of "theology"? Is *War and Peace* a work of "literature" or of "history"? The cause of reflection requires that these questions should be allowed to arise, and with them the inquiry into the meaning of these words.

Now on the very hypothesis underlying our choice, which is that the authors chosen know how to begin their work and how to secure the reader's understanding (or to put it another way, that they are truly elementary), the order in which the books are read should not be of the essence. There are, to be sure, two naturally given serial orders even in the absence of any classification by subject matter, namely those determined by the order of their publication, taken either forwards or backwards.

If the readings are to begin with contemporary authors, the teacher will first face the difficulty of choosing a text, because of the recent proliferation of printed matter and because of the absence of an established and perhaps even of a nascent tradition of mutually responsive books of high quality. In this situation it makes a certain sense to ask the students whether they think they know some appropriate book with which to begin. The discussion of this book is then very apt to consist of penetrating the shield of its seeming familiarity, in order to reveal the assumptions on which the work rests. Students may well find that these premises, whether idly inherited or knowingly appropriated by the author, seem astonishingly uncongenial to them. The enterprise may then turn into that of following the spoor of these assumptions backward to their sources. In those frequent cases where a modern book takes the stance of resistance or liberation, these sources will often be found in those very earlier teachings which are being denied; such books carry on the tradition in the mode of deeply engaged contradiction. An example: among the truly admirable modern texts is one—not long ago there were always some students who knew it— by Camus, called "On Absurd Reasoning", which begins with the words: "There is but one truly serious philosophical problem and that is suicide." The work itself ensures that the reader will wonder how much absorption and rejection of tradition goes into the asking of this purportedly "primordial" question, and from this wonder immediately follows the back-tracking I have outlined. In Camus' case it can surely only end with the very beginnings of the philosophic tradition.

If, on the other hand, the order of reading begins with early texts, students will at first feel a probably salutary shock at the brusquely remote unfamiliarity of their utterances and concerns. Here the teacher will do most by displaying an uncompromising expectation that these works will be treated as if they were close to us. Sometimes it will help to show how their forbiddingly simple and staid language is peculiarly adequate to spirited and subtle depth. Sometimes it will help to draw attention to an apparent contradiction. For example, to students who first read Homer, he seems so remote that they respond by disorientated talk about "the Greeks" and "their gods", an opaque and indifferent lot. Here the teacher might draw attention to the tale of Ares and Aphrodite caught up in unwillingly public and prolonged embrace by the net of the lame husband, and ask why *human* affairs of this sort are always treated gravely and delicately, and only the gods' affairs hilariously and scurrilously. The discussion concerning the gods then often becomes perhaps no less inconclusive, but far more charged with human significance.

All in all, the natural forward order may be preferable, always allowing for enlightening exceptions. This order of study is best not only because it soonest convinces students that the books which penetrate most deeply into human affairs are often also most refractory to off-hand assimilation, but mainly because it carries with it the fewest, or at least the plainest, assumptions. The chief of these is the simple one that in order to understand an author in his own terms the best thing is to have read some of the very books he himself had studied before he composed his own.

The Teacher

In a setting in which it cannot be the teacher's task to impart knowledge (not to speak of "information"), what will he do? His work is clearly that of a solicitous guide, and it seems to me to have two chief aspects.

The teacher must first of all have and creditably display trust in the enterprise. It must be clear that he is not a wraith wandering unwillingly far from the realms of action, power, competence or wealth, but in some moderate and therefore reliably continuous way a lover of learning. This character alone can give him the authority to institute and continue the proceedings I am describing.

The second aspect complements the first. The teacher will have to accumulate a fund of discoveries, even a modest treasury of revelations, with which to back his trust and to mediate between difficult texts and willing students.

In brief: The teacher must be a learner-in-chief (so to speak), who has learned, is learning and will learn alongside as well as somewhat ahead of his students. Indeed it must always be somewhat ambiguous whom a teacher is ultimately serving, himself or them. This observation has special force in view of the horrid dangers facing the studentless scholar, chief of which is that of producing a stream of answers to which there are no questions.

This kind of teaching cannot help but raise a difficulty for the teacher as a member of the scholarly profession. Just as philosophy as a way is frequently at odds with philosophy as an established subject, so learning and learnedness, inquiry and research are often mutually exclusive. I think a teacher of the sort I am describing had best forego all plans for rising in his profession, merely maintaining himself within it by meeting its reasonable requirements. Nonetheless a teacher must write, and write to be read by his students and his friends and his friends' friends. For it is not only necessary to the teacher to articulate and circulate his thoughts and discoveries and to have a project which will carry intellectual satisfactions analogous to those of productive craftsmanship. It is also vital to the enterprise that the repudiation of exclusive competence, which is, after all, intended to promote greater thoroughness at the roots, should not degenerate into evanescent dilettantism.

Furthermore, it seems to me especially important for that teaching which rouses and guides a common inquiry that a teacher should articulate his thoughts. For once students have persuaded themselves that the search is serious and has a desirable object, the time will certainly come when they will round on the senior member to ask, "Now what do *you* think?" And again, that response is best and leaves the inquiry most alive, which is most straightforward. And that is for the teacher to say with candor and clarity what he does think, whether he has a "theory" to offer or a reasonable formulation of doubts and difficulties. But that he has, or is about to have, one or the other is a precondition of presuming to teach at all. For a defensible view of matters is the proof that anyone has completed some small part of his studies. Furthermore, just as questioning cannot be empty, so listening cannot be a lax or superior leaning-back. For the teacher must be intent on grasping the thought intended in the student's words and must listen—contrary, I believe, to current wisdom—to the student's reasonable speech, and not to the student himself. This means that the teacher must, except at some felicitous moments, assiduously suppress most observations concerning the origins, upbringing, sex, mood and capacities of members of the class. I think I know from experience that students would rather have their thoughts attentively opposed than their persons indiscriminately cherished.

It would be an error, I think, to accept or dismiss this way as "Socratic". Socrates is displayed in the Platonic dialogues as being only ironically a philosopher, if a philosopher is one who loves wisdom as he lacks it; in comparison to those about him he is shown as a man already wise who asks questions in the light of very high, perhaps complete knowledge. Furthermore his conversation is appropriate to the true leisure of a free life rather than to the simulated leisure of a school. The way I am proposing—not a method, only a mode—is much less demanding and exceptional. It requires of the teacher only a certain readiness of disposition and a moderate keenness of intellect.

One first and last requirement: A teacher should not talk too much, and if that proves impossible, at least not dogmatically.

The Students

The central figures in the teacher's effort are the students and they are, happily, I think, the given of the enterprise; they are to be taken as they come, provided only that they can, in a narrow sense, read, write, and do algebra—and that they have come to school by their own desire.

In particular, it is no drawback to the class if some members are rather simple-minded, perhaps even apparently dense. There is often a positive profit to the class in invincible, and therefore incorruptible, intellectual innocence. Let me give an example, not untypical, from life.

> "*The teacher must be a learner-in-chief (so to speak), who has learned, is learning and will learn alongside as well as somewhat ahead of his students.*"

A class has just completed a discussion of a corollary to Newton's laws of motion which implies the notion of the center of gravity of a system of bodies as that point at which the combined masses of its bodies can be considered to be located. A certain student, who does not have a reputation for cleverness to maintain, asks: Why then, if a bullet passes to the right and another to the left of me such that this point where both masses can be considered to be located passes right through my heart, don't I drop dead?—a question more easily ridiculed than answered, and in this instance the beginning of a worthwhile discussion concerning the objects of mathematical physics.

A certain necessary homogeneity should then arise in the class from the common desire to learn, which means through self-selection, rather than by selection directed towards great similarity of preparation or even ability. So also the variety requisite to the conversation may come rather from the students' own natures than from any deliberate composition by age, sex, social class or race. In a classroom those differences of view which emerge among people (who might be externally quite similar) as a consequence of their different inner natures as a rule turn out to be, if more subtle, yet more deep-lying and persistent than those which stem from grossly apparent distinctions like sex and race. Nonetheless, that way is ever best which least prejudices the matter, and so a mixed group is very desirable, provided it can be gotten without yielding to the destructive strain of external pressure.

Now as candor is a teacher's obligation with respect to the intellect, so guile seems to me to be often required where pedagogy is concerned. So for instance with very young students a teacher must cultivate a sort of clear-eyed obtuseness, by which their personal animosities are resolutely misinterpreted as differences of opinion, obstreperousness as high-spiritedness, obtuseness as valuable simplicity. And, of course, it helps if a teacher knows how to ''look sadly when he means merrily'', to use a phrase describing the irony of Thomas More, a great teacher.

But the chief occasion for a certain suppleness is that which is at the heart of

this kind of teaching: the asking of good questions. Such questions will be most often of three kinds, all implicated with each other. The first will be addressed to the student: What do you mean?; the second to the text: What does it mean?; and the third to the beings in question: What, how, why are they? It goes without saying that questions well-asked are not merely disguised directives or solicitations of certain responses, though most students see that in order to ask well a teacher must have ''something in

mind.'' Consequently they see that it is a just response for them to turn on a question and after exposing it as a premise to substitute a truer question of their own.

It it does not matter so very much where students come from, it matters very much on what terms and whether they stay. There are many students, sometimes the finest, who wholly approve and respect the enterprise and are yet drawn away from it, not so often into other university studies as into ''real life.'' In part they are simply possessed by a young, spirited and entirely sympa-

thetic desire for adventure, for which the cure is to go and seek it, and come back the wiser. Unfortunately for everyone's peace of mind, this natural desire is often propounded in the language of ''experiences,'' which are thought of as being a kind of vividly immediate counter-education, in competition with the remote book-learning of schools. Similarly, the restless but perfectly sound thirst for deeds is often represented as an opposition between ''abstract'' theory, absorbing as it may be, and ac-

tion which is considered urgent and obligatory.

It is not very likely that arguments will overcome such a disposition to leave, or listlessly to remain. Not only is it too much aided and abetted by current opinion, but the arguments themselves are difficult to make. Some will be based on untransferable experience with the ''realness'' of life and the ''abstractness'' of theory, or on notoriously unpersuasive prudential considerations. The better arguments will be too intricate for the immediate purpose, for they will consist of carefully demon-

strating that these oppositions rest on assumptions which students themselves find unacceptable, and that the results of acting in accordance with them are often self-defeating. Nonetheless, these arguments ought to be patiently made, first for future reference, so that students may have them at hand when the time comes, and second, to convince them of the teacher's conviction. For the rest, it seems best to urge students not to go without completing the work in hand, and then to wish them well.

What *is* both feasible and important is to see that the enterprise is in no way compromised by this centrifugal disposition which the world fosters. Reflective learning should be accepted as an overwhelmingly absorbing way of life. It is in spirit compatible both with the hard and involuntary work that many students must do to support themselves and with voluntary service; it ought to be graced with frequent entertainment and invigorated by regular sports, and it certainly should have action as one end—true action which prevails. But I can imagine no practical project con-

ceived as part of this undertaking which would be anything but a camouflaged diversion. Students should study, first and last.

The Issues

In a setting which is intended to be such that nothing human is alien to it, students will naturally air their current preoccupations.

These "issues," pervasive and almost mandatory concerns, seem to me quite distinct from the perennial human questions such as: What is human, what is

good, what is world, what is being? It is with respect to these passing issues that students differ, if they differ at all, from decade to decade. It would be a work of supererogation to detail once again what these preoccupations currently are, so I will refer only to those aspects which have a special bearing on the enterprise under discussion.

To begin with, there is a sort of obligatory doubt, a disposition to use the forms of inquiry as modes of attack, and to transform the asking of questions into "questioning" (the positive complement to which is "creativity"). This

riotous Cartesianism has for its chief object commonly accepted goods, which are for this purpose denominated "values." The chief datum, replacing nature and the political community, is "the system" or "society," which pose "problems" but resists necessary change.

To question values, become creative, fight the system, solve social problems and produce social change are the perfectly honest concerns which students bring to school out of the world. They are, unfortunately, singularly inept for radical inquiry.

This judgment is, at least to begin with, quite separate from questions of acquiescence or resistance to our condition. To be sure, students are quick to see and to point out to each other that the true questions "What is it?" or "Why do you think so?" have a preserving character in so far as they intend to honor the matter in question with attention. Furthermore, the trusting use of texts means that the possibility of authority is imputed to something out of the past. But neither of these factors is unequivocally either conservative or subversive. In fact, the enterprise carries with it no particular political persuasion except perhaps the admittedly powerful one that thought must precede action.

What is amiss is rather that these issues so put forth are overwhelmingly fraught with unrecognized academic presuppositions. To use an ugly word, the views of many students, often of the brightest, are extremely "theoreticized." Their genuine and justified passions are expressed, or rather dissipated, in a vocabulary assumed uncritically, mostly from the disciplines of psychology and sociology. It would be an enormous propaedeutic labor to distinguish the student's own naive intentions from the current conventions which envelop them.

Of course, it could be done. The group might, for instance, read Durkheim's *Rules of Sociological Method,* and then consider his principle that "the determining cause of a social fact should be sought among the social facts preceding it and not among the states of individual consciousness." A discussion of "cause," hence of "system" would

follow. Newton's laws of motion might be studied in order to make available the notion of the interactions in a system of bodies. The question of the assumption of mechanical models into the study of men will then be raised. Some students will now grow outraged at the very concept of "society"; others will point out ineluctable facts which make the concept plausible. Some will want to take refuge from the mechanical constraints of social "behavior" in their 'creativity'. They will be asked to consider the text: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" and asked whether they mean to undertake similar projects. Some will own that they do. It is a fascinating, but also a chaotic and infinite undertaking, this critique of "opi-

thing which is antecedent and external to the desire to know oneself and the world: the ability to read. I mean the ability to read in the widest sense, namely the possession of tools for interpreting those texts of words, symbols and even things which bear on these matters. This ability to read is fostered by the arts traditionally called liberal, which are the "instruments and rudiments" of philosophy.

The reason for the name and the established number of these conditions for gratifying the desire to know are almost totally lost to students studying at the so-called liberal arts colleges. It therefore makes sense to take some opportunity to read with them sections of works which deal directly and familiarly with the

postponed to graduate school, partly on principle and partly from sheer lack of time. These are the studies which can never be elementary without intellectual shoddiness. I mean the disciplines which are by their very nature sophisticated, since their existence depends on the formation of complex and precarious concepts and the accumulation of large bodies of special methods and results. The paradigmatic study of this sort is the discipline of history (as opposed to what Hegel calls "original history," and "inquiry" written down in the spirit of an eyewitness for general edification and enjoyment; he names Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon as examples.) Certainly no one who has ever grappled with the recovery and interpretation of the past can think of history as a viable beginning study.

But in most schools it is very unlikely that the professors of such studies will often give way to, and wait on the acquisition of, the first arts. At the same time a teacher simply cannot count on students to possess them. Therefore another expedient, however insufficient, must be found, in order that the group may have some practice in common.

One way would be to take up the relevant arts in short illustrative exercises as the texts under discussion direct. Here are some examples, mere indications, of what has sometimes worked.

When reading the *Phaedrus,* the Platonic dialogue implicating love and rhetoric, it might be possible to stop a week over a Shakespearean sonnet and, perhaps, the *Gettysburg Address,* to look at them minutely and keenly as collections of words, grammatical structures, rhetorical efforts, works of music. Everyone, most of all the teacher, will consult manuals and reference books and with the aid of these meticulously prepare exercises, which might include making metric analyses, parsing particularly opalescent sentences, revealing and naming implied and patent logical relations. The object will be both to practice the art of dealing with language and to confirm admiration for works which are at once inimitable and exemplary.

Or, when, as it must, the time has come to study the *Critique of Pure Reason* (or at least the *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*) where Kant asks and

". . . the enterprise of philosophy must have a world in which to flourish, a world which is stable even if it is small, and the fellowship of teachers is the foundation of that world . . . and it is only sensible that the leaders in learning should regularly and formally become co-students."

nion," as Socrates calls such received thought.

Happily we are still in possession of a more originally common language and experience. A teacher may worry about the fate of such human experience in view of so much vicarious "exposure" and "experiencing" and about the possibility of much intensity in view of so much easy access. Nonetheless, the best thing is to assume that love and life go on much as they always have, and to impute to students those ardent, wholehearted and natural modes which have common names but often lead to recondite discourse.

It is therefore best to eschew current issues as guides for inquiry, though I think no one would be altogether plausible in doing it who was not also an avid teacher of the modern scene and a fascinated reader of contemporary works.

The Arts

If the inquiry cannot usually be guided by the current problems brought to it from the outside, it yet requires some-

roots, parts and uses of the free arts, such as Hugo of St. Victor's *Didascalicon* and John of Salisbury's *Metalogicon.* But it is far more immediately important that their terms, observances, rules and methods should be made explicit and used as much as possible, even while the philosophical enterprise is going on. Uneasy though this simultaneous combination of exercise and reflection may be, one can certainly not count on students becoming versed in these arts at any other time.

The best and most satisfying way for students to acquire these arts is, in my experience, for them to devote a definite part of their three or four years at college to a programmatic study of the trivium (the outer and inner form of speech), and the quadrivium (mathematics and its application to things in motion).

Here it is necessary to point out that if such a program is undertaken, a kind of university study which usually constitutes the bulk of a students' courses will be reserved for special study groups or

answers the question, "How is pure mathematics possible?", that would be a good moment to study together the definitions, postulates and common notions given in the first book of Euclid's *Elements* and perhaps to go on to follow the elementary consequences of that denial of Euclid's parallel postulate which is presented in Lobachevsky's *Theory of Parallels.*

So also there will be numerous textual occasions for studying the rudiments of the apprehension of "nature" as having numerable dimensions and the bases of the geometric representation of sensible qualities and the elements of the mathematics of motion, in short, the foundations of mathematical physics.

The effects of such sporadic exercises will be small but not negligible, for students will become somewhat better readers first of books and then of themselves and the world. If none of us has much hope of becoming master of the arts, the next best thing is surely to be a responsible amateur.

It is important to make it quickly clear to students that while pursuing the free arts they will perforce, for lack of time, have to neglect the productive or fine arts except as serious recreations; while engaged in liberal learning they will not directly learn to write poetry, paint pictures or play the flute. And, having chosen to put self-formation before self-expression, they must be ready to relinquish the expectation (odd in any case) of having their spontaneity fostered. The liberal arts are first and last skills of understanding.

The Community

It is of the essence that this enterprise should be uncompromisingly represented as being in some central respect for its own sake. There are two aspects to this claim.

First, it is *the* axiom of inquiry and is simply tantamount to the proposition that there *is* philosophy, the love of reflective learning, and free or self-determined, inquiry which serves no external end.

But the claim is, secondly, also a shrewd representation to make to students. The older wisdom was, and the current wisdom is, that the axiom is idle and that schooling should be immediately related to success in worldly

matters—in the past to training for a profession, in the present to the production of social change or services.* The views coincide in discounting the life of learning. But students with spirit have never been much enchanted with the previous view, and are now ready to doubt the current one. This is partly because they cannot find a course of study which offers both convincing deliberations concerning ends and reliable methods for effecting them, perhaps because such an undertaking is impossible. Therefore the ancient, scandalous claim again has a chance to engage at least the fascinated resistance of students.

And yet the program I have described *will* have palpably practical effects. I am not now referring to the more remote though eventually evident influence of a reflective education on the practical judgment of citizens, but to a very immediate result: A community comes into being. People who undertake such a program of learning together become friends—not, as a rule, intimates, because their purpose is to look not to each other but rather to a common enterprise —yet nevertheless serious and steady companions.

The sturdiness of this natural outcome depends on this: that it should be cherished without being directly intended. Accordingly students should feel it right ot think and talk together as they sit in their rooms, as they walk to their class, as they eat and as they play. So also students should be encouraged to study together and to help each other with paradigms, problems and other preparation. It goes without saying that the best students will have a private pride in their freely acknowledged reputation for excellence, but it is also obvious that that nasty ranking which goes with competitiveness is entirely out of place here.

In exactly the same vein teachers will find themselves consorting with and caring for students, always (with such very rare exceptions as may prove justified in the outcome) keeping that decent distance which makes such friendship possible. The limits, however, of such relations are strictly set (and this is an evidently insuperable, but ever-chafing difficulty) by the time needed for institu-

tional occasions, preparation, study, private life, recuperation—and one more activity.

This activity is the fostering of the community of teachers, an absolutely essential project if the way described here is to be anything more than just another episode in the institution. For, first, the enterprise of philosophy must have a world in which to flourish, a world which is stable even if it is small, and the fellowship of teachers is the foundation of that world. And second, it is only sensible that the leaders in learning should regularly and formally become co-students.

Practically, this can be done through study-groups which propose for themselves a difficult but elementary matter to be studied, not under expert direction, not for research and results, not toward professional advancement, but for the sake of the naievest possible reflection.

It is not hard to find suitable texts which present a matter from the beginning but with depth. Here is a merest sampling of proven works: a chorus from Sophocles' *Antigone,* the twelfth book of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* on the source of motion and *energeia,* and with it Leibniz's first *Essay on Dynamics* in which the dimensions of the modern term "energy" are originally established, a Donne song, Vico's *On the Study Methods of Our Time* which sets forth the original terms of our unhappy division of learning into the "sciences" and the "humanities." A group which has many such studies in common becomes mildly invincible.

And finally, not only must the leaders in this enterprise learn with and from each other in this way, but they must allow themselves to be seen to do it. For to be seen learning is, I think, as close as anyone can come to teaching philosophy.

In the eighties the older view again prevails.

> "For to be seen learning is, I think, as close as anyone can come to teaching philosophy."

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This article has been reprinted from Metaphilosophy, Vol. 11, No. 2, April, 1980, with the permission of that journal and of the author. Although its principal concern has to do with college philosophy teachers, the ethical responsibilities it refers to would seem to be applicable equally to elementary and secondary school teachers of philosophy.

The Ethical and Social Responsibilities of Philosophy Teachers

Elias Baumgarten

Philosophy teachers have become increasingly concerned with professional ethics, particularly medical, legal, and business ethics. However, they have not given similar attention to the ethical issues associated with their own profession, though important moral issues do arise in the teaching of philosophy. A major reason for this is that philosophy teaching has not even been recognized to exist as a profession. Much has been written about the professional responsibilities of philosophers, but I would like to present a case for recognizing the *teaching* of philosophy as a distinct professional activity, one with its own purposes and obligations. Moreover, I will claim that philosophy teachers, as distinct from philosophers, have a special public responsibility to communicate philosophical ideas to their fellow citizens and to help them formulate reasoned positions for themselves. Finally, I will defend a neutral, non-advocacy role for the philosophy teacher as part of a caring, professional relationship with students.[1]

I

Professional ethics applies only to professions, so it is necessary first to consider what is required for an activity to be considered professional. In her article, "Philosophy as a Profession", Alison Jaggar includes among the elements of professionalism the requirements of expert knowledge and a period of training, social importance, and the maintenance of standards by those who are already established.[2] On these grounds medicine is unquestionably a profession, and it will be helpful for us to use it as a model in order to see how moral assessment of a profession may take place.

When we discuss medical ethics, we still find applicable the Socratic dictum that no craft or profession should seek its own advantage but should benefit those who are subject to it.[3] We employ this principle when we condemn a physician who uses an experimental technique without the patient's consent, when a more reliable treatment is available. Such a doctor's actions are unprofessional and immoral, and this is so regardless of the very real benefits that might accrue from the experiment, not only for the doctor's research but possibly for many more patients than just the one presently under treatment. Nor does our condemnation imply that medical research is an inappropriate role for physicians. We might easily concede that research, inlcuding research that requires human experimentation, complements physicians' therapeutic work and enhances their value to their patients. We blame such doctors because, in their role as doctors, their primary responsibility is to their patients, not to the community of medical researchers or even to future victims of disease in general.

The ethical case against the freely-experimenting doctor is persuasive because we recognize that "medicine" actually encompasses more than one profession: there is the activity of the researcher who is committed to scientific investigation, and there is also the work of the physician whose project is to use medical knowledge to treat particular patients who have particular diseases. Though one person may assume both roles, the clinical practice of medicine is a distinct profession with its own imperatives.

My contention is that, in important respects, the philosophy teacher's role parallels that of the physician. Whereas the medical researcher and the philosopher are engaged in inquiry that does not, in principle at least, require any other person, the activities of the physician and the philosophy teacher conceptually require the presence, respectively, of patients and students. Moreover, the Socratic imperative addressed to professions generally, that they benefit those "subject to them," applies in both instances, and I think a consideration of this principle will help to define the distinctive responsibilities of the philosophy teacher.

The Socratic precept emphasizes that professional activity exists in a social context and that professionals have obligations towards at least some segment of the community. Applying this maxim to our profession, we can say that the teaching of philosophy should benefit *students*. We encounter most of our students in our classrooms, but we also act as teachers, communicating with students, when we participate in community forums or offer commentaries for the mass media. So I would include among the "students" whom our profession should benefit all those who do not share our professional training in philosophy, and we are teaching when we communicate with this audience. By way of contrast, we may learn from our colleagues, but we are not, in a professional context, their students; and when we publish our own work for our peers to read, we are not acting in the role of philosophy teachers. On this view, then, philosophy teaching necessarily relates to the larger public in a way that professional philosophizing does not. I would like to discuss that public responsibility and then consider an implication that this view of philosophy teaching has for a classroom practice.

II

Philosophers often wish to see philosophy exert a greater influence in the world but are uncertain how to bring this about. In including all lay people among the philosophy teacher's potential students, I am accepting the Socratic notion that philosophy can improve ordinary citizens. But it is a mistake to think that the expert skills of research, analysis, and argumentation held by the professional philosopher are sufficient for this essentially different task. The communication of philosophy to the public does require these skills to a high degree, but it requires other capacities as well, and many even outstanding philosophers are not concerned to develop them. Those of us employed in universities who wish also to meet the social responsibilities of teaching will need to develop professional skills beyond those generally recognized in the scholarly community.

Academic philosophers do express concern over philosophy's weak impact, but their failure to recognize the distinctive purposes and responsibilities of teaching is the cause of much difficulty. Philosophy professors are particularly uncertain whether their authority qualifies them to provide others with answers to the world's great questions. They sense that those who do philosophical research have a special responsibility either to propose solutions to ethical and political problems or to offer answers that will provide some respite from the anguish that people suffer when they confront life's mysteries. Edward Regis, for example, regrets that "philosophy has all but abdicated its proper role of

provider to man of objective values and a conceptual framework by which he can make some sense of existence".[4] But others, like Alison Jaggar, object to the idea that philosophers should assume the role of moral authorities, fearing that others would then be discouraged "from taking seriously their own ability to engage in what should be the central project of every human life, deciding how [to] live". Jaggar claims, moreover, that "to accept one's philosophy on the authority of another is the ultimate form of alienation".[5]

Viewed in these terms, one might cynically conclude that there is no way that philosophers can improve lay citizens: either philosophers deprive citizens of their freedom to make their own decisions or they abandon the masses to all the fads and irrational whims to which untrained minds are thought to be susceptible.

This view may not be far off the mark. For philosophers to communicate with the public, their role as creative philosophers may be impossible. If the activity of the philosopher is to pursue the truth using all the knowledge and analytic skills one has, then it is unreasonable to expect this activity to be shared, without being compromised, in an under-graduate classroom, a Rotary Club hall, or a local underground newspaper. To concede that philosophers cannot philosophize with lay people is only to grant what is accepted in every other field of learning, that one with no training cannot evaluate the work of a professional who, by definition, has expert knowledge and has undergone an extensive period of preparation. If our concern, then, is to see the benefits of philosophy extended to our students in universities and in the general population, we must recognize the futility of urging contemporary philosophers to present their insights in language that everyone can understand. Nor can the gulf between the professional philosopher and the ordinary citizen be bridged by insisting that philosophers "return to a concern for enduring human issues" (though some surely do need that admonition.) Our romantic conception of the past notwithstanding, Aristotle and Descartes did not philosophize with the masses any more than Quine does.

Their work and that of Kant, Hegel, Husserl, and Ryle *does* discuss critical human problems, but it is still inaccessible to most people who lack previous philosophical training, just as even the finest and most "relevant" scientific research cannot be understood without the requisite background.

It is the project, not of the philosopher *qua* philosopher, but of the philosophy teacher (who may also be a philosopher) to communicate the ideas of the great works undiminished and to show how they may be interpreted, analyzed, and criticized in relation to areas of universal human concern. Exposed directly to a philosophical text, most citizens will react as they might to an article in a medical journal; namely, with indifference, incomprehension, or uncritical acceptance. In none of these cases has the audience engaged in philosophical activity. Even if philosophers *could* provide people with "a conceptual framework by which [they] can make some sense of existence," they would not be offering them philosophy, but only a creed or a doctrine. But when philosophy *teachers* communicate the work of

the great philosophers, their central goal should not be to exhort or persuade but to help others develop the ability to formulate reasoned positions of their own, either as a guide to action or as a response to wonder. Their skills will include the ability to formulate provocative questions, to perceive and explain the philosophical underpinnings of popular opinions, and to listen sensitively in order to discern the guiding concerns and the presuppositions of students. The activity of teaching, then is distinguishable both from political advocacy and from philosophical inquiry itself. When philosophy teachers are acting *qua* teachers, their arguments may happen to alter the convictions of others or may lead to insights for themselves, but these should never be their central objectives.

The work of philosophy teachers is thus a form of service to others, and it is open to ethical assessment according to the degree to which it benefits students, "those who are subject to it". I have claimed that these students should include persons outside as well as within the university and that the teacher serves as an intermediary who conveys

the professional and often technical work of philosophers to unprofessional citizens. On this view it is precisely because philosophy is a profession that the profession of philosophy teaching is needed.

However, this formulation presents us with a dilemma: the practice of philosophy requires training and expertise, yet it is of universal importance and should not be reserved for only the elite few who are so trained. It is noteworthy that democratic government confronts a similar difficulty: only a few people are ever truly well informed, yet everyone is thought entitled to participate in deciding complex issues of monumental importance. Plato, for one, considered the incapacity of the masses for knowledge to be an insurmountable problem of democracy. He did not shrink from recommending a society containing what Jaggar calls "the ultimate form of alienation," that of accepting one's philosophy on the authority of another. But an ideal of a free and democratic society is to overcome this form of alienation and to allow all persons the dignity of choosing their own beliefs. A philosophy teacher who respects that dignity but who also values reasoned over random opinion has a special role to play in helping democracy approach its ideal. Making everyone a professional philosopher is not possible, of course. But neither would it be desirable, because philosophers are usually specialized in their research and not always concerned or able to connect their work explicitly either to the work of others who have different specialties or to urgent personal and political issues. Philosophy teachers must draw these connections and attempt to interest as many people as possible in philosophical reflection.

Though philosophy teachers cannot offer others a creed to live by, they do have a unique role to play in helping people confront personal issues of the most fundamental kind. Everyone faces the fundamental choice of either developing the ability to interpret his or her own adult experience or of being enslaved to the interpretations of others. And there is no lack of ideologues vying for each person's acquiescence: advertisers, politicians, editorialists, popular psychologists, the clergy, and even musi-

cians, painters, and architects all present partial or total world views for our acceptance—blatantly or subtlely, manipulatively or sincerely, consciously or unconsciously. The proper role of the philosophy teacher *qua* philosophy teacher is not to join the competition but to help uncover hidden assumptions and to explore implications, in order that others may draw more reasoned conclusions themselves. In doing so, the teaching of philosophy will "benefit those subject to it" both by respecting the dignity of individuals in the free ordering of their lives and by promoting more rational and democratic decision-making in society.

III

The philosophy teacher, as conceived here, is not an advocate of particular substantive positions, and this has important implications for classroom practice. In addressing these issues, I have in mind the actual situation that we face in colleges today, where the relationship of teacher to student includes grading and other forms of evaluation that will affect students' prospects for success in a competitive society. It may be that another kind of university in another kind of society would allow a more humane teacher-student relationship and a more desirable conception of academic ethics. But my defense of a non-advocacy role for philosophy teachers takes as a given context within which we now work.

A strong criticism that is often made of this conception of teaching philosophy is that neutrality on a teacher's part leads to relativism and cynicism. Students and ordinary citizens, it is argued, have a right to expect those trained in philosophy to come to some conclusions, but if all they do is point up arguments and assumptions, then people will come to believe that all argument is rationalization and that no opinion is better than another.[6]

My answer is two-fold. First, the position of neutrality is recommended not for the philosopher, but for the philosophy teacher, and this represents a significant distinction between the two activities. Philosophers do take positions and argue for them, but, as I have indicated, this has not made works like Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* instructive to the average person. My argument is

only that there needs to be a profession specifically devoted to conveying the content and spirit of philosophical inquiry to non-professionals without any overt or hidden partisan agenda. Without such a profession, the ideas of philosophers may get transmitted, by journalists and popular writers for example, but often with gross distortions.[7]

Second, the solution to cynicism that is envisioned by the critic of neutrality, having people directly confront the opinions of philosophy teachers, is workable only if those people are isolated from any opposing views. The student of philosophy who ventures beyond his or her first professor and is exposed to reasoned argument for opposing positions may be more likely than ever to conclude that any belief can be equally well supported with reasons, especially if each professor claims to have knowledge of the correctness of his or her position.

For a philosophy teacher to present all available arguments but no personal conclusions is only to convey the disappointing truth, that there is no absolute certainty on enduring philosophical questions worthy of discussion. To explore this claim in detail is, of course, far beyond the scope of this paper. But we know that rational arguments can be used to support opposing positions when each starts from different premises, and philosophy teachers may be doing well to unveil a previously hidden presupposition, even when they are unable to demonstrate its truth or falsity. The most contrived and least honest position a philosophy teacher could take would be to attempt to counter students' skepticism of reason by claiming that rational argument has absolutely resolved particular philosophical questions. Philosophical inquiry is, of course, futile if reason has no efficacy, but it is also foreclosed if the truth has already been found and is not open to further question. There may be certain "ultimate presuppositions" which reason is powerless to affirm or deny, and a recognition of this possibility by students may be a healthy antidote to the intemperate self-assurance that can develop in one who first becomes acquainted with the powers or argument. (Ironically, this is often a self-assurance in the truth of relativism itself.)

Moreover, the philosophy teacher should not acquiesce in the common belief that philosophy is to be deemed worthwhile only if it provides demonstrable solutions to theoretic problems. Beyond whatever clarification it may provide, rational inquiry and philosophical questioning are, like the arts, forms of creative human expression, and the teacher who is able to help others satisfy their natural sense of wonder is benefitting them just as a teacher of dance or creative writing improves the powers of personal expression in those whom he or she instructs. Being unable to display the "absolutely beautiful" dance or poem (whatever that would mean) is not likely to result either in student cynicism or in the conviction that one work of art must be as beautiful as any other. The disappointment that is experienced by many students of philosophy may be traceable to the exaggerated claims often made on its behalf, and the philosophy teacher who feels compelled to assuage that disappointment with final solutions would do well to heed Bertrand Russell:

> Philosophy is to be studied, not for the sake of any definite answers to its questions, since no definite answers can, as a rule, be known to be true, but rather for the sake of the questions themselves.[8]

The neutral philosophy teacher is also criticized for adopting a contrived and even cowardly and inhumane attitude towards students. Hugh Wilder contrasts the neutral attitude of "liberal tolerance" which emphasizes the students' process of reasoning with a "caring, humane relationship" wherein a teacher will be concerned that students reach particular conclusions, will consequently argue for the truth of particular positions, and will finally give a lower grade to the student paper that opposes those positions. Liberal tolerance, he writes,

> is a cover for cowardice because it encourages teachers to not deal with students as whole people. As professional teachers, we are often urged to deal only with parts of our students— the parts learning philosophy. We are cautioned against entering into full human relationships with students, with the admonition that to do so

would be unprofessional. Refusing to care about what my students believe —being tolerant of all substantive beliefs—is part of this attitude of alienated and cowardly professionalism.[9]

This criticism, like that of Alison Jaggar, ties professionalism to alienation. But whereas Jaggar claims that the height of alienation occurs when philosophers pose as moral authorities, Wilder implies that our relationship to students is most alienated when we conceal our presumably authoritative conclusions from them and when we do not care enough to try to persuade them to the beliefs we hold to be true.

Teaching philosophy is, I agree, an act of caring, but I am uncomfortable with the notion that I best express my concern for students by trying to secure their agreement with my own philosophical positions. Focusing now on classroom practice, I would like to suggest two reasons for opposing this method of teaching. The first reflects my conception of philosophy; the second my defense of a professional relationship between teachers and students.

First, the history of philosophy is one of disagreement, and divergent views will be represented in any good philosophy course. If an ethics teacher is an advocate of utilitarianism but nonetheless includes Kant on the course's reading list, primary attention will be devoted to exposing the weaknesses of formalist theory and showing the way in which its criticisms of utilitarianism can be successfully met. Now if a student, exposed to Kant's own arguments, finds them more persuasive than either the professor's or Mill's, then the student cannot be judged to have performed excellently in the course: according to Wilder's thinking, the student's arguments lead to a false conclusion and therefore cannot be as strong as a well-reasoned paper that defends utilitarianism. This must be true even if the student's work is judged to be on the same philosophical level as Kant's. Were he a member of the class, Kant himself could not earn an "A" (or be judged an excellent philosopher) unless he changed his mind. This is an absurd position because it is rarely possible to trace what a professor judges to be a false conclusion in the work of a

great philosopher to some obvious flaw in reasoning for which even an undergraduate student may be criticized. And what of the student who, though as yet unable to see the power of the professor's utilitarian arguments, nonetheless sincerely accepts their authority and uses them to dispute Kant in a course taught by a committed formalist? The student, downgraded again for "plainly faulty reasoning," will be a leading candidate for alienation, not only from both professors but from his or her own capacities for rational judgment.

What many find unsettling about teaching without advocacy is its implicit assertion of a class difference between teachers and students. The teacher is seen as saying, "Since I cannot expect you to understand ethical theory as fully as Kant or Mill or I do, it's okay for you to believe whomever you choose, as long as you have some good reasons. If I gave you my opinion and my reasons, you wouldn't fully understand them anyway." Implied here is the idea that teachers must, as a result of their authoritative position, withhold some part of themselves from their students, must withhold what philosophy teachers presumably regard as a most important part, their convictions on enduring issues. This refusal to be full persons in relation to students is, I take it, what threatens to make the relationship alienated. But the alternative of posing as an authority can, as Jaggar maintains, also cause alienation, now as a result of asserting rather than withholding one's superior degree of knowledge. On these terms, the only way of avoiding the dilemma would be for a teacher to deny being superior in *any* respect and to relate fully to students as peers.

The source of the dilemma is, I think, a confusion about the meaning of such concepts as professionalism, superiority, and alienation. To overcome it, I would like to offer three considerations in defense of a professional teacher-student relationship.

First, the entire conduct of teachers in relation to students should be guided by what will be most conducive to the students' learning of philosophy. As a classroom method, to share one's own convictions may be to give more of oneself

but is not, for that reason, more effective teaching. The superior knowledge of philosophy teachers is part of what makes them professionals, and this status does affect—and even restrict—their relationship with students. In a professional relationship one does not give one's whole self; for example, one tries not to express impatience (even if one feels it) with a slow learner, or irritation with a student whose manner one finds displeasing, or condescension for a student's poor reasoning. Furthermore, a professional relationship is not fully reciprocal: teachers should try to frame their comments in a way that will best help students to learn; students need not be so concerned to enlighten their professors and may appropriately experiment with arguments purely for the sake of their own self-edification. Teaching does offer many opportunities for self-disclosure, and in more advanced courses—as students become more able to argue philosophically—even the advocacy of particular positions (especially unpopular ones) may become increasingly effective and appropriate. But the purpose of doing this should never be persuasion or self-expression. Thus, in their professional activity teachers are, it is true, withholding a part of themselves, but this does not make their relationship with students uncaring or inhumane. Professional activity should "benefit those who are subject to it," and philosophy teachers should present those arguments (as well as teach those works and assign those papers) that will be most helpful to students in the *specific* way that philosophy teachers are trained to help them.

This leads to the second consideration in favor of professionalism. By a student's presence in my course, I may infer only that he or she has elected a professional relationship with me. I have no unilateral right to assume that students want a "full human relationship" or want even to know my opinions, let alone that they can benefit from hearing them. To avoid alienation, a relationship need not be equal in all respects, nor need it be "full"—very few if any human relationships meet these criteria —but it does, I think, need to be based on mutual consent with respect to its range and depth.

Finally, having a professional relationship with students does not preclude a wider human relationship as well. If the restrictions I have proposed in the name of professionalism implied that I could not simultaneously have other kinds of relationships when both the student and I freely chose them, then I would agree that we would be paying too heavy a price to be professional. The best teachers are probably those who genuinely like the company of many of their students and who enjoy discussion with them that is unrestrained by the conventions appropriate to a classroom. No doubt some of our warmest friendships may even develop from these associations. But this does not mean that the freedom that befits a friendship should be our model for classroom behavior; unlike our friends, our students are not obliged to indulge our intellectual prejudices or our personal idiosyncrasies.

When we consider the professional ethics of teaching, too often we think only of prohibitions that are designed to prevent the exploitation of students. Like physicians, philosophy teachers should, of course, "first, do no harm." But I have tried to indicate that our professional obligations include a larger positive dimension as well. In a world where the proverbial marketplace of ideas—and not infrequently even the university catalogue—is crowded with sophistry, propaganda, and hyperbole, there is special reason to value a profession that is solely committed to enlarging the power and influence of reasoned discourse and imaginative questioning.

NOTES

[1]My concern in this paper is the teaching of introductory and other students who do not intend to become professional philosophers. My remarks do not apply to graduate education in philosophy.

[2]Alison Jaggar, "Philosophy as a Profession", *Metaphilosophy*, Volume 6 (January, 1975), p. 100.

[3]*The Republic of Plato*, trans. Francis MacDonald Cornford, Oxford University Press (London, 1941), p. 23.

[4]Edward Regis, Jr., "The Layman and the Abdication of Philosophers", *Metaphilosophy*, Volume 6 (January, 1975), p. 123.

[5]Jaggar, p. 112.

[6]This argument is made by Hugh T. Wilder, "Tolerance and Teaching Philosophy", *Metaphilosophy*, Vol. 9, nos. 3 and 4, July/October 1978, pp. 320-321.

[7]In an article in the *Wall Street Journal* several years ago, Clare Boothe Luce traced the actions of the radical SLA to the philosophy of existentialism; and in his recent bestseller Wayne Dyer appears to invoke the authority of John Stuart Mill in support of his claim, "Nothing is more important than anything else." *Your Erroneous Zones*, Avon Books (New York, 1976), p. 156.

[8]Bertrand Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, (New York, 1959), p. 161.

[9]Wilder, p. 322.

Thinking, The Journal of Philosophy for Children, Volume 5, Number 2.

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Managing Philosophical Discussions

by Judy A. Kyle

Did we manage it that time? Did that discussion really count as a philosophical one—a discussion which is cumulative, which builds, and in which definite progress is made?[1] These are questions I wrestle with regularly as I work with three classes of fifth and sixth graders at Edinburgh School in Montreal. Some discussions are clearly better than others, but are they truly philosophical? Are the children learning to see them as such? Sometimes it can be hard to tell.

While struggling both to increase the incidence of truly pholosophical discussions and to heighten the children's awareness of the special and demanding qualities of such discussions, I have come to realize that the success of the enterprise is not wholly dependent on the 'art' of the teacher. Indeed there are many factors which can sabotage the best teacher's efforts. And that is why we. must consider 'managing' philosophical discussions in a quite different sense: we must consider devising 'management strategies.'

A year and a half of doing philosophy with my pilot group has yielded a number of management strategies which grow out of the children's own critical reflections on the quality of their discussions—strategies which clearly help. I offer them here not so much in the belief that they represent any particular ideal

for they may or may not suit other classroom settings. Rather I hope, with this description, to encourage others to identify and share what has worked best in their experience.

* * *

One piece of classroom management equipment which as been very valuable in philosophy sessions is a deck of name cards. The name of each participant is written on a small index card. (Usually the children insist that there be a card with the teacher's name on it as well and visitors, who are always invited to participate, have been known to have cards made for them, too.) These cards have as many uses as can be invented for them and their appeal is the game-like quality they lend to the activity at hand. The biggest advantage, however, is fairness. The cards do not play favorites and time permitting, everyone can have a turn in random order. The children like the cards because of this fairness and often it is they who suggest their use.

One of the important principles in philosophical activities is that oral participation should be voluntary. The name cards not only respect this principle, they make the most of it. It is extremely important to respect the children's right to remain silent during oral activity and one way of doing this with the cards is to establish early the acceptability of saying "Pass" if one's name

comes up and one chooses to refrain from contributing. No explanation is necessary and after a while the children come to understand that it is indeed a legal and acceptable move.

There is an important distinction to be made here however, for there may be two quite different reasons for remaining silent. Group dynamics can be such that there may be children who have something important to say, who recognize that, and who *want* to participate. But to do so would require 'jumping in' and sometimes quite forcefully because of the element of competition which can prevail among vocal enthusiasts. *That's* the hard part: some may be bursting with a particular insight but the social skill of asserting themselves in the required way may at that moment be out of reach. So they choose not to participate and they lose the opportunity to benefit from other minds endorsing or contributing to their ideas. The name cards can serve these children particularly well for very often they are children who are perfectly willing to speak when addressed. With the cards, the necessity to initiate is removed and they can choose to contribute or not on the basis of whether they have something to say rather than have it be a matter of daring.

The important function of these cards in some activities is to encourage the children to join in making participation easy, fun and fair.

* * *

Philosophical discussions can also be positively affected by managing the physical arrangement of the class. The best arrangement we have found so far is the one we call "Big Square." The children sit at their desks which are arranged in as small a square as possible with everyone facing center. We tried sitting in a circle on the floor in the interest of informality but the children were uncomfortable there. The floor is hard, they had to change positions often, and their tendency to fidget with each other interfered with the progress of discussion. Sitting on chairs without desks was better but it took precious time to separate chairs from desks and to move desks out of the way. Moving desks and chairs into the square also takes time, but it is much easier and the

children can learn to do it very efficiently. In this arrangement the teacher sits in the square with the children as do any visitors.

The advantages of this arrangement are that people can see each other, they are comfortable and they have a surface for *Harry*[2] or for writing should that be appropriate. Also, fidgeters may fidget without interfering with the proceedings. People often think better when they have something in their hands and this arrangement makes provision for that tendency. The disadvantages are that if the group is large, the children are far from each other. There is also a degree of formality in the rigidity of the shape and the fact that they are behind physicial barriers. However, in practice these potentially negative aspects are more often offset by the advantages. This may be because whether written or oral, philosophy is essentially a mental activity. Seeing each other's faces is important as is comfort and freedom from distraction.

* * *

Large-group discussions are treated as *the* vehicle for learning what it is to think philosophically and we have had to develop a number of strategies to ensure maximum productivity. We begin each chapter of *Harry* with shared reading followed by a listing of the ideas of in-

terest to the children and these are recorded on very large, lined chart paper so they can be saved. The formulation of each entry is carefully considered by everyone in order to express precisely and concisely the idea suggested. During these 'discussions' I am able to model different dialogue 'moves' and to encourage constructive discussion practices. Also important, however, is the *visual* recording of the results of our deliberations.

This became particularly evident in the first conceptual discussion we had on the distinction between discovery and invention. Once we got to the area of overlap between these two concepts, the inevitable occurred: the discussion became circular. As long as the points made existed only in mid-air, dependent for their existence on our memories, the tendency was towards increasing muddle rather than clarity. What was needed was a way to represent *visually* the points made and so began our extended use of chart paper.

One of the advantages of writing things down is that it can force an issue. Commitment to an idea is necessary before something is written and this demands precision of expression. Some degree of consensus is also required and that implies a community effort which can result in clearer thinking. The chart

provides a visual trace of the progress of the discussion thus reinforcing the no-tion of a philosophical discussion as one that builds and has direction. The main advantage to this procedure is that it takes time. It is all too easy to spend time sorting out a fine point or choosing the best words — time that would be better spent chasing thoughts orally. This just means, however, that it is a strategy to be used judiciously. It must always enhance the discussion and must not be allowed to inhibit it.

* * *

Frustrations are common in a programme such as this and dealing with them can involve important philosophical activity. From the outset we took time periodically to discuss discussions. It was a time for the children to vent their frustrations and to make suggestions. When they did, it was as if they were fine-tuning their instrument.

Three more charts grew out of these sessions. On one we collected what we called "Discussion 'Moves.'" These were listed in quotation marks and were things which people could actually say in discussions in order to better understand the ideas of others. Some examples were: "What are you driving at?", "What if . . .", and "Can you give an example of what you mean?" They found many of these by listening to me as I would make a point of using them whenever engaging a child in dialogue. The second chart was called "Discussion Guidelines" and included recommended behaviour which would help the discussion to be productive. Thus: "Listen to the speaker while you keep track of your idea," "Only repeat an idea for a purpose," and "Criticize ideas constructively." Many were obvious, others were far from obvious, and all were meaningful to the children for they were derived from their own experience.

The third chart evolved only after several months and at a point when some people considered it to be unfair that I had special privileges in discussions. If the objective to have the students talk as much as possible to each other, then why did I not just let them get on with it? Why indeed? When I responded that my purpose was either to teach them something diretly or to model for them, they readily

acknowledged that role. However, they still maintained that I stepped on their territory more than I should.

After some reflection, I decided to show them their comments were taken seriously. Pointing out that leading a discussion involved some additional skills, I invited people to volunteer to learn how to be a discussion leader. All we needed to do was to develop a third chart titled, "Leader Guidelines." These included guidelines specific to discussion leaders such as: "Try to boost the discussion," "Explore other people's ideas rather than expressing your own," and "Encourage as many people as possible to speak." Again they learned by identifying elements of my behaviour *as* leader.

That was how we began having Student-led Discussions ("SLDs") which we used as five to ten-minute warmups. Only one question would be discussed and it was usually of a hypothetical nature. Many children volunteered and they soon experienced the trickiness of being in a leadership position. (The fact that they were leading their peers made it all the more difficult for them.) We all learned a lot from these episodes and they became such an important part of the programme that the children felt cheated if we didn't have one every session. At times I wondered if they weren't *too* successful because after some pretty good sessions, some felt so confident that it was as if they felt they had nothing more to learn when in fact we had only just begun.

* * *

One of the frustrations that has plagued us from the beginning is that of being unable to find a comfortable procedure which would permit everyone who wanted to contribute to do so and in an appropriate order. As the children learn to discuss effectively, traditional teacher-pupil exchanges become less appropriate resulting in problems such as how to decide who should be next to speak and how to have the students talk with each other without always having to go through the teacher. There is also the concurrent problem of the distraction to themselves and others caused by enthusiastic hand-wavers. Once hands are up, to what extent are their owners

merely waiting their turn and not listening carefully to the discussion? It is when they become impatient that this problem can become intolerable.

Here is a strategy we devised when helps that situation. Someone in the group becomes name recorder and sits to the right of the discussion leader. As the discussion begins, hands go up and the recorder jots down each person's name in order, signaling silently to would-be speakers who can relax and pay attention to the discussion knowing their turns will come. First-time speakers have priority, but otherwise people can contribute as often as they

wish, time permitting. The result can be magic. With practice it can become like an auction where hand signals are very subtle.

It is a procedure which helps enormously and its chief advantage is its invisibility. Again children who benefit most are those who might refrain from having to jump into a lively discussion. This way, by merely raising a finger they can see that in time their contributions will be solicited. They can still change their minds when their turns come, so it is relatively safe and encouraging.

It helps but it is not perfect of course. As it is a predetermined list, it can lend

an artificial quality to the discussion and prevent it from having the flow of a dialogue. Occasionally the more vocal children become impatient with such controls so every now and then we have 'open' discussions in which the procedure doesn't apply. What happens then can be quite interesting. When a free-for-all breaks out, the children become impatient with each other and they soon see the point of the controls. At such tiems they will sometimes instinctively respect the rules or they will request that others do so simply because it is a better way. However, when that doesn't happen, the discussion can degenerate while they vent their frustrations instead. Then too they are usually quite happy to return to the more controlled format.

* * *

In order to develop the students' ability to engage in dialogue and also to counter-act the tendency for discussions to be a linear succession of independent opinions, a special dialogue procedure was devised. It applies especially in Student-led Discussions but teachers can also model it when engaging children in dialogue. First the leader puts a question to the group and invites response. The first person to respond expresses an idea and then the leader is expected to follow up using one of the 'moves' from the Discussion 'Moves' collection. The purpose is to encourage the children to speak to each other and to explore each other's ideas rather than merely to go from one to another to another on the assumption that each idea is well expressed and understood. The respondent then has the right to reply before the leader seeks the thoughts of another contributor. During the course of the discussion, if someone identifies and comments on the ideas of a previous contributor, then the latter has an immediate right to reply and a dialogue can ensue between these two.

Although this procedure can work very well, it too can feel contrived and the children sometimes react to that with frustration. At first the leader is expected to engage in dialogue with *each* participant. Often he will not know what to say in response to a contributor and this experience can provide valuable insight into what it is to engage in

dialogue. Later though, the children learn to distinguish between the kinds of responses which lend themselves to dialogue and others which do not. They can then be the judge and the discussion loosens up, speeds up and becomes more productive and satisfying.

* * *

Small-group discussions are a variation in format and can offer advantages. The children's desks face each other in groups of six or eight forming 'tables.' Then, using the namecards as place cards, the children are seated at the tables at random. A chosen leader may then use the cards to see that everyone has a fair chance to participate. Usually the children have an exercise from the manual to work on and the idea is to discuss, to try and reach some consensus, and to record responses and thoughts. Small-group discussion activities are therefore highly structured while providing the children with a lot of opportunity to discuss freely.

One important advantage of this format is that the children have maximum opportunity to participate and some will contribute to small-group discussions when they won't in large-group ones. Another advantage is that these discussions can provide opportunities to practice some of the guidelines and procedures which they have collected in large-group activities. And since they are not under the direct supervision of an authority figure, the children have a sense of freedom in these discussions.

For the teacher (who can't be at every table) however, small-group discussions can be frustrating. Although it is clear that the children are engaged in lively conversation and usually on the topic, it is not at all clear what they are learning from the experience. There is a distinct possibility that what they are having is 'just' a discussion—not necessarily a philosophical one. Without the immediate presence of the teacher, they find it all too easy to disregard the very guidelines which they themselves have formulated and which they observe well in large-group discussions. Designated leaders are tolerated but not always respected and the 'natural' leaders find it difficult to resist dominating. Also, children who are characteristically uncooperative tend to take advantage of these distantly supervised groups.

Interestingly, the pilot group's reaction to small vs. large-group discussions changed over time. At first they much preferred small groups precisely because they could participate easily and often. Later, however, as large-group discussions became more productive, the children preferred those. It seemed to be a function of what they felt they got out of the discussion and that, I like to think, may be a rough measure of the success of the strategies and the degree to which a given discussion 'managed' to be philosophical.

* * *

To describe these strategies one after another and to call them 'management' strategies is perhaps to invite protest for there can be something inherently disagreeable about the very notion of a 'managed' discussion. (One might even wonder if it isn't a contradiction in terms.) Our experience has been that these measures help much more than they hinder. The children contribute to their formulation and, despite their sometimes frequent frustration, they take great delight in seeing them work. Although these particular strategies may or may not work for others, they do work for us because they are ours. They grow out of our experience together and we adjust and refine them as we go along. It is constructive, creative and often a highly philosophical process and it is this process—more than any specific strategy—which is recommended.

NOTES

[1]Matthew Lipman, Ann Margaret Sharp, and Frederick S. Oscanyan, *Philosophy in the Classroom* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980) p. 104.
[2]Lipman, Matthew, *Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery*, Upper Montclair, N.J.: IAPC, 1974.

Reflections
childhood . . . education . . . philosophy . . .

Knowledge and capital

The accumulation of intellectual achievements, which gives a disproportionate and rapidly growing advantage to those who are favoured by it, also has its analogy in the accumulation of money capital. The structure of monetary relationships, the way in which money yields returns and profits, is such that, beyond a certain amount, money multiplies without a corresponding effort on the part of the owner. This corresponds to the structure of knowledge in the cultural world which requires, beyond a certain point, decreasing self-acquisition on the part of the individual, because the cognitive content is increasingly offered in a condensed and, beyond a certain level, concentrated form. The highest stages of education require less effort for every step further than the lower stages, and yet at the same time produce greater results. Just as the objectivity of money permits 'work' that is ultimately relatively independent of personal energies and the accumulating returns lead automatically to more accumulation in growing proportions, so the objectification of knowledge, the separation of the results of intelligence from its process, causes these results to accumulate in the form of concentrated abstractions, so that, if only one stands high enough, they may be picked like fruits that have ripened without any effort on our part.

—from Georg Simmel, *The Philosophy of Money* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978) trans. by David Frisby, p. 442.

On not thinking for oneself

Enlightenment is man's release from his self-incurred tutelage. Tutelage is man's inability to make use of his understanding without direction from another. This tutelage is self-incurred when its cause lies not in lack of reason but in lack of resolution and courage to use it without direction from another. *Sapere aude!* "Have courage to use your own reason!"—that is the motto of enlightenment . . . It is so easy not to be of age. If I have a book which understands for me, a pastor who has a conscience for me, a physician who decides my diet, and so forth, I need not trouble myself. I need not think, if I can only pay—others will readily undertake the irksome work for me.

That the step to competence is held to be very dangerous by the far greater portion of mankind (and by the entire fair sex)—quite apart from its being arduous—is seen to by those guardians who have so kindly assumed superintendence over them. After the guardians have first made their domestic cattle dumb and have made sure that these placid creatures will not dare take a single step without the harness of the cart to which they are confined, the guardians then show them the danger which threatens if they try to go alone. Actually, however, this danger is not so great, for by falling a few times they would finally learn to walk alone. But an example of this failure makes them timid and ordinarily frightens them away from all further trials.

—from Immanuel Kant, "What is Enlightenment?"

Another voice in the wilderness

Learning programming may have beneficial effects. To program, one must be able to analyze a problem into small steps. It requires a sort of analytic thinking. Unfortunately, the nature of the steps is dictated by the programming language the student is learning.

For example, you want your programs to run as quickly as possible. This means they should have as few steps as possible. In S-BASIC (the version of BASIC I use, which, is close to Pascal), there are various sorts of commands (FOR . . . NEXT, REPEAT . . . UNTIL, WHILE . . . UNTIL) one could use. You will decide which one to use by analyzing your program in light of the options S-BASIC offers.

While this requires a desirable rigor of thought, it would be more useful for students to learn to analyze problems into terms other than those set by their programs. If we want students to learn analytic thinking, logic would be a better course to require than computer programming, for in logic they will discover the distinctions drawn by careful thought uninfluenced by the practical demand of having a machine respond properly.

Let them take philosophy where they will learn how to think in ways that respond to the needs of the time and of the subject matter, rather than learning how to analyze all problems into a series of computer commands.

A programming language in some ways is truly a language. I find myself at times thinking in S-BASIC. Perhaps it will be argued that it is beneficial for students to learn a new language. I agree. Let it be Latin. Let it be one that makes them more literate. That, after all, is the true goal of a liberal education.

—David Weinberger, "Computer literacy is not literacy," Fall 1983 Survey of Education, *New York Times*.

Reflections
childhood . . . education . . . philosophy . . .

The classroom as a philosophic laboratory

We do not develop a mind by giving it more facts but by helping it to judge relevance. It is relevance which tells us which meanings belong with which, and in what configurations, for a valid interpretation. The way to strengthen the sense of relevance is by exercising it with simpler problems rather than by adding elaborations.

There is room here for sad misunderstandings. 'Simple problems' are not necessarily easy or vacuous or lacking in interest. Since the days in which *The Shorter Catechism* was believed to be good reading for children, the pendulum has swung far—farther in America than in England—and it is a sound complaint now that children's school books, in the United States at least, have recently been far too multifarious and trivial in content. They have been made so in the interests of quantity and rapidity of perusal, which pays the publisher and has been thought to promote 'good reading habits.' But the habits were merely optical and a mind which meets no problems worthy of it does not learn how to handle them when they come. The effects of this underloaded early reading are often perceptible throughout life. There is a widespread belief that if anything is 'hard reading' that must be the author's fault. Competition between magazines and a general harping on the obvious favour this illusion.

The content of all reading to which classroom time is given should be, at all stages, as hard as the readers can handle. 'If the book is easy it should be burnt for it cannot be educative,' as Whitehead put it. But there are all sorts of ways of being hard. Which of them, graded aright, would be fruitful? . . .

. . . The field for such experimentation is, of course, the classroom, which has not yet, in spite of Plato, received due recognition as the philosophic laboratory. It is the place of places in which to investigate not merely the individual pecularities of misunderstanding but the general laws of comprehension, which are those of self-ordering and growth. What conceivings are dependent upon what former conceptions; which ideas (or more integral forms) prevent which, obstruct which, destroy which; which are most readily mistaken for which, to the distortion of the growing fabric; these are among the questions such an investigation must seek to approach. Answers to them will rightly be seen to be far off—as far as modern physics from Democritus, perhaps—but these inquiries would be cumulative in effect as no others have been. For any advance in them is an improvement in the instrument of inquiry.

—I.A. Richards, in "Responsibilities in the Teaching of English," *Speculative Instruments* (London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1955).

Third-grade ruminations

You know those terrible arithmetic problems about how many peaches some people buy, and so forth? Well, here's one we *like*, made up by a third-grader who was asked to think up a problem similar to the ones in his book: "My father is forty-four years old. My dog is eight. If my dog was a human being, he would be fifty-six years old. How old would my father be if he was a dog? How old would my father plus my dog be if they were both human beings?"

—From "Talk of the Town", *The New Yorker*, © 1957.

On childhood things

For many years I carried with me a rusty metal shoehorn I was so ashamed of that when I stayed in a hotel I'd hide it so the maid wouldn't see it. It was the only thing that had been with me since childhood. One day in Venice I forgot where I had hidden it, or rather forgot the shoehorn itself, and I never had the courage to inquire about it. In all probability it is sleeping today at the bottom of the lagoon. Still, I feel remorse, and when they tell me that a cosmonaut has circled the globe six, ten, or sixty times, I think the greatest discovery would be the one that would bring me back my old rusty shoehorn. I know perfectly well that if the shoehorn were to reappear on my table I would feel more terror than joy. Consciously or not, I rid myself of it. I must therefore accept the assistance of chance and continue to live without that magic, silent, rusty Oliphant, as I must confess that I have dared to replace it with a red plastic model which I now set out in plain view and could lose without regret.

—Eugenio Montale, in *The Second Life of Art: Selected Essays*

Is effective schooling possible?

No less than a lot of other people, I long believed four things about schools: society is niggardly in support of schools; schools are changeable institutions; schools can be more interesting places than they are; and schooling can be a vehicle for social change. I have had to change my mind. I had to change my mind and conclude that money is a distracting issue; that schools are changeable within very narrow limits; that schools cannot be interesting places; and that whatever changes occur, for good or for bad, will derive from changes in the world view of the larger society.

—Seymour B. Sarason, in *Schooling In America*, (Free Press, 1983).

Reflections
childhood ... education ... philosophy ...

The enlightenment of the later Piaget

Piaget was directly involved in only the last few years of his life in investigating ways of accelerating cognitive development. Prior to that recent research (See J.M. Tanner and B. Inhelder, eds., *Discussions on Child Development,* Vol. 1, Tavistock, 1971) however he referred to an interesting side-effect of his investigations into children's thinking. Children who were set thinking about the problems and situations and stories that were a part of his probing the nature of their understanding of their world, often moved from one step or stage of thinking ability to the next higher one. Piaget was to argue later (See B. Inhelder, H. Sinclair, M. Bovet, *Learning and the Development of Cognition,* Routledge, 1974) that it was as much the way the items of their thoughtfulness were chosen and the clinical method itself, that caused this surprising change, as anything else. As can be seen from the earlier section of this paper on Piaget it was probing rather than testing; looking for responses and reactions rather than for the child's knowledge of particular answers; reinforcing honest, frank responses and genuinely enquiring about their views rather than asking what they thought was the correct view, that characterised the clinical method. It was this style of enquiry that accelerated cognitive development, or to put it into the context of this section, it was enquiry into children's views of relationships and inter-relationships that became a strikingly effective teaching method in Piaget's research.

—A. H. McNaughton, "Cognitive Development, Political Understanding and Political Literacy," *Brit. J. Ed. Stud.,* Vol. XXX, No. 3, Oct. 1982, p. 274.

Self-controlled conduct

There are inhibitions and coordinations that entirely escape consciousness. There are, in the next place, modes of self-control which seem quite instinctive. Next, a man can be his own training-master and thus control his self-control. When this point is reached much or all the training may be conducted in imagination. When a man trains himself, thus controlling control, he must have some moral rule in view, however special and irrational it may be. But next he may undertake to improve this rule; that is, to exercise a control over his control of control. To do this he must have in view something higher than an irrational rule. He must have some sort of moral principle. This, in turn, may be controlled by reference to an esthetic ideal of what is fine. There are certainly more grades than I have enumerated. Perhaps their number is indefinite. The brutes are certainly capable of more than one grade of control; but it seems to me that our superiority to them is more due to our greater number of grades of self-control than it is to our versatility.

—C.S. Peirce, *Collected Papers,* Vol. V, p. 533.

Encouraging children to reason ethically

Children have first to be brought up on good general principles so they form good dispositions and reactions. Then, as they are able, they can be introduced to the critical thinking by which they can determine for themselves which are the good principles by which to live. When these general principles conflict, this same critical thinking will enable them to sort out the conflicts. It may even lead them to change the attitudes in which they were brought up.

—R.M. Hare, quoted in *The London Sunday Times,* Dec. 27, 1981.

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An Appeal for Total Intellectual Openness

Roni Aviram

I

Having been a participant in the IAPC conference which took place in the summer of 1983 I was left with a double impression: Firstly, the IAPC program is very valuable and has a huge potential. Secondly, as things are now, this value and potential are practically expressed only to a limited extent.

One reason for this limitation is that the IAPC staff avoids engaging in discussions concerning their basic presuppositions. (Another reason—the implementation of the program only within the existing school system—is a possible consequence of this avoidance; I elaborate on it in another paper of mine.)

In this paper I will try to emphasize: (1) the existence of these presuppositions; (2) their epistemological status as possible, but not necessary, assumptions; (3) the need to apply to them the critical method which characterizes the program.

II

The IAPC program has at least four different presuppositions on four different levels. On the epistemological level, it is based on what may be called Empirical Rationalism, *i.e.*, the belief that reason, guided by the basic laws of logic and supported by empirical evidence, can advance towards truth. On the ethical level, it is based on Humanism, *i.e.*, the attitude according to which the respect for the dignity of any human being should be the basic moral value. On the political level, it is based on a democratic attitude, *i.e.*, the belief that Democracy is the best political arrangement from a humanistic point of view. On the educational level, it is based on the belief in compulsory, universal, free schooling as the best way to ensure the development of most individuals.

These four presuppositions are expressed tacitly and explicitly both within the different stories and manuals on which the program is based, and in the IAPC staff's talks about the program (including the book, *Philosophy in the Classroom,* written by Profs. Lipman and Sharp.) It is not my intention to expound a textual analysis in order to support the claim about the major role these

presuppositions play in the IAPC ideology, but I believe that the IAPC staff will not deny their adherence to them.

As things are, the four presuppositions are essential to the Liberal ideology as developed in the U.S. since the thirties (although they were presented by many Progressives even before.) Therefore one can claim that the IAPC ideology is basically a classical Liberal ideology.

The fact of their being part of the traditional Liberal legacy does not accord these presuppositions any evident rational justification. The simple truth is that these presuppositions, like any other metaphysical (in the sense of "the most basic") beliefs, lack any rationally evident justification. The process of adopting them, when it is done consciously, is what James called "a leap in the dark." (This is a very strong claim which I cannot defend here; it has been done many times in the past by philosophers as different from each other as Socrates, Fichte, James, Popper and Kuhn.)

None of these presuppositions is logically necessary. For any one of them, one can point to alternatives which are (at least *prima facie*) as rationally justifiable (or unjustifiable) as these presuppositions. To quote only a few prominent examples: on the epistemological level, Relativism or Dogmatic Rationalism; on the ethical level, the *Übermensch* morality or Social Darwinism; on the political level, Plato's or any other elitist attitude; on the educational level, Illich's or Bowles' and Gintis', or any other radical attitude.

Furthermore, there is no logically necessary connection among these four presuppositions. One can adopt any one of them (or, at least, some variations of any one of them) together with assumptions contradicting the other three, or some portion of them.

III

Upon returning from the IAPC conference, my impression was that the IAPC staff members refrain from any discussion which might consciously clarify the role of these presuppositions within the IAPC ideology. Furthermore, they do not deem it necessary to engage in a critical evaluation of these presuppositions or part of them.

I would like to suggest that such discussion and evaluation are essential for the full development of the program's potential. I say it without any reference to my personal attitude towards these presuppositions. (I wholly accept the second and third ones, partially accept the first one, and tend to reject the last one.) The discussion and evaluation are necessary and essential, even, and especially, for those who wholehartedly accept all four assumptions.

They are necessary, first of all, from the point of view of intellectual consistency and honesty. If the program adheres to these ideals of rational criticism and intellectual openness, there is nothing which can exempt the basic assumptions of the program itself from criticism and allow the people who teach it to avoid facing skeptical questions concerning their own ideology.

Beyond this point of intellectual honesty, not encouraging such openness will curtail, to a large extent, the program's spirit and message. Without a total intellectual openness the program's character will be changed from a program whose purpose is the teaching of philosophy to a program of initiation into a certain combination of philosophical attitudes.

Such an abstention from total openness will also have devastating effects on the teacher-training process. I believe that the main obstacle to the preparation of good philosophy teachers (at all levels) is the humane and natural attitude to stick with the good old beliefs. The law of intellectual inertia is the chief enemy of fruitful philosophical teaching. One cannot train good philosophy teachers unless one has succeeded in breaking their intellectual inertia. To achieve this goal, one should start with the most basic beliefs. It is not an accident that the history of Western philosophy started with Socrates, who acted exactly in this way. Scratching the surface may leave the trainee's intellectual comfort unhurt, but will never suffice to turn them into tolerant and stimulating philosophy teachers.

Because of the three above reasons, I appeal to the IAPC staff to commence, in their seminars, talks, and papers, a double process of consciousness-raising with regard to their basic beliefs and the

critical evaluation of them. Furthermore, I suggest that this process will become an essential and central part of the teachers' training program.

IV

Certainly, such a process has its dangers and problems. Some of them can be expressed by the following questions:

1. Can children of all ages be exposed to a totally open critical discussion? Couldn't they be emotionally and intellectually harmed by total criticism?

I tend to answer this question negatively. I believe that children, because they are not used to any specific conceptual paradigm, are much more comfortable than adults with total criticism.

2. Are all teachers capable of total intellectual openness?

I believe that the answer is: "No!" and that those who are not capable should not become philosophy teachers.

3. Can we take the risk of opening everything to critical discussion? Do we want the children (or even the teachers) to doubt basic rationalistic, humanistic and democratic assumptions, and thus endanger their dominancy in our society? Shouldn't we follow the example of Plato, who allowed only a few to be exposed to the total criticism of the dialectical method, and even then, at a late age, after a very long and intensive training in the "positive" direction?

I do not know the answer to this question. I am sure that it is an extremely important question which should be explicitly and courageously faced by the IAPC staff, whatever may be the feeling of uneasiness it arouses. Limiting the range of criticism is a bad thing; but limiting it unconsciously and without explicit justification is much worse.

V

This paper is an appeal for total intellectual openness within the IAPC discussions about its program and (to the greater possible extent) within the program itself. I do not try to defend most of the claims made here, and certainly not to answer seriously the problems they evoke. It is my hope that the paper will stimulate reaction which will start a process of consciousness-raising by the IAPC people with regard to their own basic assumptions. Undoubtedly, such a process will be very beneficial to the message, spirit and effects of the program.

A Review of District 24's Philosophy for Children Program

John Iorio
Mark Weinstein
John Martin

District 24, Queens was awarded an NEH grant to pilot the Philosophy for Children program during the 1981-1982 school year. The authors present an overview of the project with an empirical evaluation of its results. Research and analysis indicate that the program is effective in generating creative thought processes in elementary school pupils. At the same time, the program fosters teacher awareness of instructional strategies that motivate and develop inquiry skills which enable students to better maximize their potential for critical thinking.

During the 1981-1982 school year, District 24, Queens, was awarded a National Endowment of the Humanities grant to pilot the Philosophy for Children program in eight of its elementary

schools. Philosophy for Children as developed by Professor Matthew Lipman, Director of the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC), is a critical thinking skills program that has been used for the past ten years in elementary and middle schools throughout the United States and elsewhere.[1] District 24's choice of the IAPC program was based, in part, on the extensive research literature pointing to the success of Philosophy for Children in developing children's thinking skills while enhancing mental maturity and creativity.[2] Available research points to the program's success in developing faculty skills, especially in those areas related to teacher's awareness of pupil's intellectual development and conceptual growth. Through its innovative design, Philosophy for Children provides a systematic skills program based on a sequential curriculum. The curriculum uses classroom discussion as its central methodological element and leads to significant improvement in student skills and teacher attitude through a carefully developed teacher training program. Professor Lipman's program seems to satisfy the important requirement that a sequential program used as a "theory of instruction should specify the most effective sequence in which to present the materials to be learned."[3] A number of skills developed in the Philosophy for Children program used in District 24 are listed in Appendix A.

Among the many attractive features that prompted District 24 to pilot the Philosophy for Children Program in New York City is the philosophic approach that seems to result in an increase in reasoning ability, creativity, personal and interpersonal growth, an increase of 'contextual awareness' and the development of ethical understanding. The intellectualist underpinning of the philosophical approach has been clearly presented by Evans[4] in terms of six objectives: (1) *Children must attain a commitment to impartiality and objectivity.* That is, a student should not give undue weight to any particular person on interest, *unless* there are relevant reasons for doing so. Naturally, this must include the viewpoints of the child himself. (2) *Children must attain a commitment to con-*

sidering only relevant criteria. Of course, Philosophy for Children must, therefore, include the development of a sense of relevance. (3) *Children must attain a commitment to consistency.* Children must become aware of the inconsistencies in their own arguments as well as in the arguments of others; and consistency must be learned as a standard in the name of which arguments are perfected. (4) *Children must be comprehensive in their thinking.* There should be a minimum of artificial distinction between thought and action, school and home and so on. Critical thinking is to be taught as a value that is used throughout life. (5) *Children must be committed to respecting each person in the discussion as a possible source of valuable information, relevant consideration, or persuasive arguments.* That is, pupils should be helped to guard against prejudice and peer pressure in evaluating arguments. (6) *Children must be committed to the search for reasons, defensible reasons, as the basis upon which to make their decisions and determine their behavior.* Philosophy for Children sees as its goal the minimizing of caprice and thoughtless emotionalism in the making of decisions by children.

Objectives

Since Philosophy for Children was relatively new in New York City, we took as one of our objectives to measure and compare the gains in reasoning skills of the range of classes found in District 24. These included heterogeneous, homogeneous (grade level), I.G.C. and Special Education classes. A criterion-referenced reasoning test, Questioning Test #4 (Q4), developed by the Educational Testing Service of New Jersey (ETS) was used for this purpose. Q4 is based on some twenty definable thinking skills, including syllogism, induction, detecting assumptions and ambiguity, evaluating reasons, casual analysis, part-whole relations, among other things. The questions also include less formal issues, such as the use of authority in reasoning, stereotyping, and jumping to conclusions. (The Q4 was a developmental version of the recently published New Jersey Test of Reasoning Skills.)

At the same time a measure of teacher awareness of children's reasoning ability exhibited in classroom discussion was used to compare the growth in teaching

attitudes and response to pupil's behavior. The Child Description Checklist (CDC) also developed by ETS and used conjointly with the Q4 was employed for this purpose. CDC is a list of 14 traits associated with classroom discussion. (Appendix B) How does the teacher perceive the individual students? Does the teacher see, during the classroom discussions, those elements that constitute pupils' ability to function rationally? That is, is the teacher sensitive towards those behaviors that must be reinforced if the pupils are to develop effective group discussions techniques: a community of inquiry?

In addition to the above, the effectiveness of the target teachers in-service training and teaching were to be measured by a survey taken at the end of the program that requested that program participants estimate the creativity fostered in the development of student projects and follow-up activities including value clarification skills and improved interpersonal relationships.

Selection of Teachers

Twelve of the district's teachers were chosen for the project. Their acceptance into the program was made upon the recommendation of their principals. Likewise, the principals' commitment to the program was a factor in teacher selection. The principals were asked to consider the following criteria in making their selections:

The teacher should:

1. have a personal commitment to scholarship and self-improvement.
2. already appreciate the "Art of Questioning" as a major teaching strategy.
3. be more interested in dialogue and discussion than memorization of facts.
4. have the ability to be able to model an endless quest for meaning by communicating a passion for excellence in thinking, excellence in conduct—values that students may glimpse in the process of philosophical dialogue.
5. have the temperament and personality to avoid indoctrination of ideas by willing to act as a facilitator in helping children learn appropriate *ways* that a person should think, not *what* he should think.

to model themselves as facilitators in helping children discover appropriate processes of thought.

Classroom Procedure

All IAPC programs function in similar ways. The core of the programs is a children's novel, especially written for classroom use. Children read the novels, a chapter at a time, aloud, in class. The teacher then elicits those concepts that are of the most interest to the pupils through a variety of questioning techniques.[6] (Appendix C) Discussions of these topics are then developed and structured by the teacher, using discussion plans and exercises, furnished by the elaborate teacher's manuals that accompany the novels.[7]

A community of inquiry begins to fashion itself within the class setting, as the children are guided to an understanding of the importance of supporting their views with convincing reasons. As they explore problems cooperatively they begin to appreciate a variety of points of view. The value of reasoning logically becomes more apparent as they examine the different ideas that discussion evokes. High interest is sustained in that the programs deal with such themes as friendship, family, truth, personal identity and rights.

Course Content

Two programs were taught alternatively in the teacher workshop sessions so teachers were prepared to teach both *Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery*, the basic novel for fifth and sixth graders, and *Pixie*, the novel used in grades three and four. In this study the *Harry* Program was taught in nine classrooms: seven in Grade 5, one in Grade 4 and one HC-30 class. The *Pixie* Program was taught in three classes: one in Grade 3 and two Grade 4 classes.

The *Harry* novel offers a model of dialogue—both of children with one another and of children with adults. The story is set in a classroom of children who begin to understand the basics of logical reasoning when Harry, who is not paying attention in class, says that a comet is a planet because he remembers hearing that comets revolve around the sun just as planets do. The events that follow in the classroom and outside of school are an idealization of the ways that children might find themselves

6. have respect for children's opinions and be willing to learn from them.

In-Service Training

The Philosophy for Children program required that the teachers meet once a week for 2½ hour workshops for thirty weeks during the project period—September 1981 to June 1982. IAPC was able to obtain, for each teacher, six free graduate credits from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. The workshops were conducted by a specially trained Philosophy Ph.D. as workshop director who, in addition, modelled at least six lessons for every teacher with their classes. He spent at least equal time observing and counseling teachers in their classroom strategies and performance.

The workshops basically are structured by the workshop director to replicate for the teacher the necessary strategies needed to guide philosophical discussion. The teachers are trained to lead philosophical discussions and are

taught, through the example of the philosopher who trains them, to become aware and to reinforce the basic techniques of rational analysis.[5] They read and discuss with the workshop director the same materials that are used in their classrooms. His role is that of a facilitator—a position they assume with their children.

One final statement before leaving this section. The author of this proposal had, two years prior to receiving the NEH grant, introduced the program into his school without the teacher training component. It soon became apparent to him, that although the program's materials and strategies were exemplary and taught by a superior teacher, the lack of success being achieved was due to the missing in-service component. It is now his opinion that the teacher training component is absolutely necessary in developing teacher understanding of the ethical and logical implications of the program; and, equally important, how

thinking and acting. The story is a teaching model: non-authoritarian, and anti-indoctrinating. It respects the value of inquiry and reasoning, encourages the development of alternative modes of thought and imagination, and suggests how children are able to learn from one another.

Philosophical Inquiry, the manual for *Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery,* identifies the leading philosophical ideas of each chapter of the novel and provides for their classroom implementation by offering a variety of exercises and activities for each idea. In this way, the philosophical content of the novel is put into practice through discussion plans and activities that promote the formation in the classroom of a community of inquiry such as is modelled already in the novel.[8]

In order to help students develop facility in handling class and family relationships, as well as rules, reasons and excuses, the *Pixie* course concentrates upon strengthening the awareness of relationships (logical, social, familial, aesthetic, causal, part-whole, mathematical, etc.) as well as the competence in dealing with such relationships. This is done by means of a wealth of exercises in literal and figurative comparisons, leading to the construction of ratios, similes, metaphors, and analogies. Skills in analogical reasoning can be employed in writing exercises, and in generally enhancing students' sense of proportion. This curricula is accompanied by a teacher's manual, *Looking for Meaning.*

Testing

All classes, both target and comparison, were pretested in October, 1981, with both the Q4 and the CDC. Posttests were administered in late May, 1982. Test results were tabulated by volunteer parents, under the close supervision of the workshop director, independent of the teachers involved.

Demographics

The sample consisted of 724 third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade pupils in I.G.C. homogeneous, heterogeneous, and Special Education classes. The 349 boys and 375 girls were categorized according to their apparent command of spoken English and reading ability. There were 353 above grade, 203 on grade, and 168 below grade readers in the sample.

Table 1

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN EACH GROUP

	TARGET		COMPARISON		
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
Spec. Ed.	5	4	6	3	18
Grade 3	18	9	14	23	64
Grade 4	39	61	43	50	193
Grade 5	119	114	105	111	449
TOTALS	369		355		724

District 24 has large numbers of native English speakers from many ethnic groups. It also has many recent immigrants from Europe, Asia, and the Western Hemisphere. Given prior studies, it seems reasonable to assume that white English speakers form a language pool distinct from Black English speakers.[9] We therefore, asked all participating teachers to categorize their students according to apparent language competence. We used six categories: White, English-Speaking; Non-White, English-Speaking; Hispanic; Asian; White (Non-Hispanic); Non-English-Speaking; and Other.

TABLE 2

ETHNICITY OF TARGET AND COMPARISON GROUPS BY GRADE

	SPECIAL ED.		GRADE 3		GRADE 4		GRADE 5		
	Target	Compar.	Target	Compar.	Target	Compar.	Target	Compar.	TOTAL
WHITE ENGLISH-SPEAKING	9	4	24	31	43	43	137	101	392
NON—WHITE ENGLISH-SPEAKING	0	1	2	1	25	16	39	57	141
HISPANIC	0	4	1	5	1	8	8	13	36
WHITE (Non-Hispanic) NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING	0	0	0	0	9	2	18	4	33
OTHER	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	6
TOTALS	9	9	27	37	100	93	233	216	724

Reading ability is an obvious candidate for consideration as a plausible factor related to success in critical thinking, especially given that the test administered required that the students read each question and choice of answers.[10] Rather than use the absolute reading level of the participating pupils, we distinguished between students reading on, above, or below grade-level. Although such an analysis might be less informative than the absolute grade-equivalent scores it presents a picture of the abilities of the participants that is more easily grasped.

TABLE 3

READING LEVEL OF TARGET AND COMPARISON GROUPS BY GRADE

	SPECIAL ED.		GRADE 3		GRADE 4		GRADE 5		
	Target	Compar.	Target	Compar.	Target	Compar.	Target	Compar.	TOTAL
BELOW GRADE LEVEL	6	9	5	1	15	29	54	49	168
ON GRADE	3	0	6	0	33	35	37	89	203
ABOVE GRADE	0	0	16	36	52	29	142	78	353
TOTALS	9	9	27	37	100	93	233	216	724

There is a tendency to suppose that a critical thinking skills program would work most effectively with brighter students.[11] There is also reason to assume that with a discussion based program, heterogeneously grouped classes would tend to do less well due to the possibly inhibiting effect of the brighter, and presumably more verbal students, on those who feel less secure about exposing their ideas to the criticism of their peers.[12] For this reason, we examined class exponent as a potentially significant variable.

TABLE 4

CLASS CATEGORY OF TARGET AND COMPARISON GROUPS BY GRADE

| | SPECIAL ED. | | GRADE 3 | | GRADE 4 | | GRADE 5 | | |
	Target	Compar.	Target	Compar.	Target	Compar.	Target	Compar.	TOTAL
GIFTED	0	0	0	0	36	33	36	37	142
HOMOG.	0	0	27	37	0	0	99	93	256
HETERO.	9	9	0	0	64	60	98	86	326
TOTALS	9	9	27	37	100	93	233	216	724

Results

The data was analyzed by the teacher trainer in association with a statistical consultant who had no prior association with Philosophy for Children. Both of the analysts monitored the coding of raw data prior to statistical analysis. Analysis of data was done at the Teachers College, Columbia University, computer facility using standard software for statistical analysis: SPSS (Nie 1795). Needless to say, we were gratified to discover that Philosophy for Children showed an increase in critical thinking at the highest possible level of statistical significance.

Table 5 summarized the data of the mean scores and standard deviations on the Q4 pretest and posttest for the target group. The value of t (16.82) was significant beyond the .001 level of confidence. Thus, it would seem that the 5.7 point increase in average score was a significant gain.

Table 5

MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF TARGET Q4 PRETEST AND POSTTEST SCORES

Variable	Number of cases	Mean	Standard Deviation
Q4PRE	336	29.81	7.24
Q4POST	336	35.51	8.39

$t = 16.82; p < .001$

An analysis of variance was performed on the Q4 posttest comparing target and comparison groups. It was found that there was a significant improveent in target group scores beyond the .001 level of confidence. The target group as a whole showed an extremely significant increase in skills as compared with the comparison group. In order to show this increase, while taking into account the lack of parity between target and comparison group, we performed analysis of covariance, holding, in turn, a number of significant variables constant.

The most obvious candidate for a variable to be held constant is the initial test scores (Q4PRE). The F's reported indicate significant differences between Q4 Posttest scores of target and comparison groups at the highest possible level. ($p < .001$)

One of the more intuitively significant disparities between target and comparison was the level of reading ability as reported by the teachers. We therefore probed the significance of this seemingly crucial factor by analyzing the relationship between target and comparison group, holding both reading and Q4PRE constant. The significant difference between the two groups under these rigorous constraints was once again, at the highest level of significance. ($p < .001$).

Given the results described it seems clear that Philosophy for Children generates generalizable skills that result in improvements in critical thinking. A careful analysis of the classes using *Pixie* as opposed to *Harry* showed that success in the Q4 is not tied to a particular text nor is it closely tied to classroom operations that mimic the demands incorporated into the test. Rather, it is an instrument, general in respect of the specifics of the curriculum, that, insofar as it enumerates crucial cognitive skills, stands as an objective index of the critical thinking skills of the children who experience the program.

The centrality of the skills included in the Q4 is supported by the test results of the comparison group. A t-test of the comparison group's growth over the year showed an increase in scores beyond the .001 level of significance. This points to the fact that skills measured by the Q4 show a meaningful increase during the course of the ordinary school year. The target group, of course, showed an increase that was significantly better than that achieved by the comparison group.

The Philosophy for Children Program has as one of its goals the development of teachers who are sensitive to the rational behavior of their pupuls. A key factor in the theoretic basis for Philosophy for Children is the teachers' ability to recognize and reinforce cognitively appropriate behavior during the discussions constituting the classroom procedures that define curriculum. The Child Description Checklist (CDC), the test instrument designed to measure teacher awareness, enumerates 14 skills that are rated on a 5-point scale. These skills include: using logical reasons to support beliefs, participating critically and creatively in group discussions, and willingness to see other points of view.

All teachers participating in the District 24 experiment completed rating sheets for each pupil at the beginning and end of the school year. The CDCs, when completed, are taken to be subjective decriptions by the teacher of the students' cognitive behavior. Our analysis of the CDCs construes them as an index of the teachers' awareness of those factors crucial to intellectual growth. One of the more satisfying results of this study is the enormous increase in the target teachers' perceptiveness and presumably support, of these vital skills. The target teachers showed a significance increase ($p < .001$) in the ratings of their students over the year.

We contrasted the performance of target teachers in evaluating their students' cognitive skills with that of comparison group teachers through an analysis of variance holding the original estimation of student skills (CDPRE) constant. We reason that target teachers, due to enthusiasm generated by being members of an experimental population, may have been more favorable disposed to their pupils at the beginning of the school year. The analysis of covariance showed that this was not the case. Even with the pre-test score for the CDC held constant, there was a maximally significant difference between the teachers in the target and teachers in the comparison group. ($p < .001$).

Any experiment with many interrelated factors presents a confusing array of variables with seeming causal relevance. By estimating the contribution of the independent variables, multiple regression can predict the variation of the dependent variable to the extent

that the dependent variable is "explained" by the independent variables.

A multiple regression analysis was performed based on the final test results and the growth in scores over the year. We used as independent variables obvious measures of student competence including, reading level, language competence (ethnicity) and class exponent. We include the CDC scores as objective variables since they are an index of student behavior.

It is intuitively obvious that prior intellectual achievement as measured by, especially, reading, language competence, and class exponent should have

a strong effect on the ability of children to perform well on the critical thinking test. Naturally, the Philosophy for Children Program would be of limited educational utility if its effect was limited to those members of the population that had the strongest intellectual competence. The most satisfying result is the relative weights of these factors in relation to the increment of gain over the year as opposed to the final test score achieved.

Table 6

SUMMARY TABLE OF THE
REGRESSION ANALYSIS
OF Q4POST WITH OBJECTIVE
FACTORS AS INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Dependent variable: Q4POST

Variable	R	R square
RDNG	0.591	0.349
CDPOST	0.657	0.431
CLSSCAT	0.668	0.447
ETHNIC	0.679	0.462
GRADE	0.682	0.465
BOOK	0.682	0.466

Table 7

SUMMARY TABLE OF THE
REGRESSION ANALYSIS
OF Q4DIFF WITH OBJECTIVE
FACTORS AS INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Variable	R	R square
CDPOST	0.273	0.074
GRADE	0.354	0.125
CLSSCAT	0.393	0.154
BOOK	0.416	0.173
CDPRE	0.432	0.186
ETHNIC	0.434	0.188
RDNG	0.434	0.188

For the final test results the single most important variable is reading level predicting 35% of the outcome and with a correlation of 59%. Reading level, however, drops to the bottom of the list, as the least significant variable for the test difference over the year adding less than 1% to the predictability with a correlation of only 14%. Language competency (ethnicity) moved down from 4th place to 6th place and drops from a correlation of 19% with final scores to only 6% with difference over time. Class exponent maintained its third position as an independent variable but falls from a 41% correlation with final test scores to a 19% correlation with test difference over the year.

It seems to us that the multiple regression points to the broad utility of the Philosophy for Children program in developing thinking skills. As might have been expected, brighter students achieved the highest test scores but most importantly, students grew over the year in a manner relatively independent of previous cognitive abilities. Philosophy

for Children permits all students to develop and refine educationally crucial skills.

We also examined a number of subjective factors that can be construed as being of some influence in determining success and improvement in the teaching of thinking skills to elementary school pupils. Since Philosophy for Children includes as one of its goals an increase in the sensitivity of program teachers to their pupils' intellectually significant behavior, we include CD scores as well as more subjective evaluations in the following regression analyses.

Table 8

SUMMARY TABLE OF THE
REGRESSION ANALYSIS
OF Q4POST WITH SUBJECTIVE
FACTORS AS INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Dependent variable: Q4POST

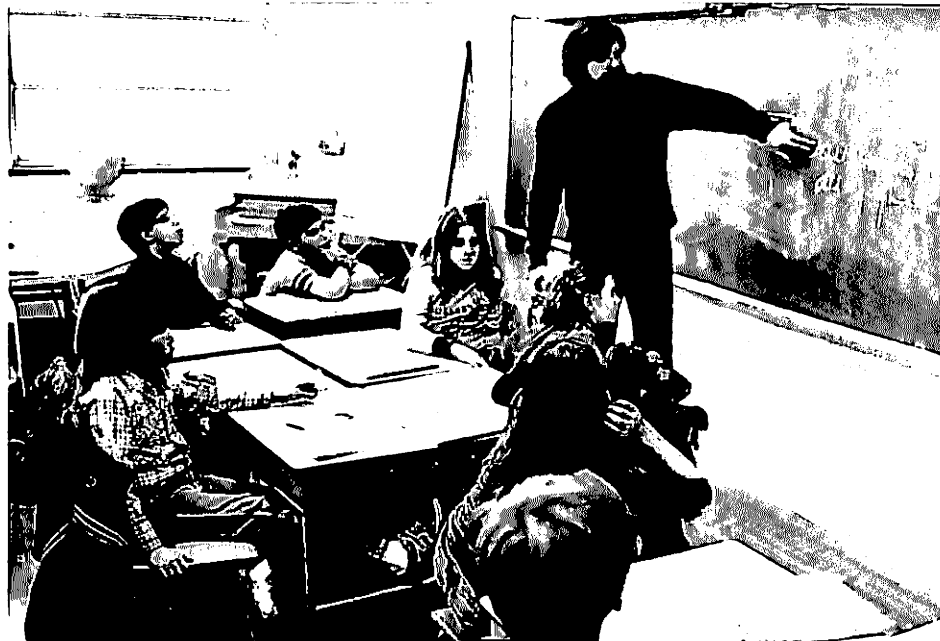| Variable	R	R square
CDPOST	0.543	0.295
TCHREVL	0.556	0.309
CDPRE	0.560	0.313
PROGEVAL	0.562	0.315

Table 9

SUMMARY TABLE OF THE
REGRESSION ANALYSIS
OF Q4DIFF WITH SUBJECTIVE
FACTORS AS INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Dependent variable: Q4DIFF

Variable	R	R square
CDPOST	0.273	0.074
TCHREVL	0.314	0.098
PROGEVAL	0.360	0.129
CDDIFF	0.363	0.132

When contrasted with other purely subjective variables, the teachers' end of year evaluation of their pupils is most strongly predictive of the children's abilities as measured by Q4POST (.30). Teachers were not as adept at predicting those pupils who would grow during the year (.07), although CDPOST is the largest predictor of Q4DIFF among the subjective variables. The evaluation of the teachers' performance by the program director is the second most effective predictor of both dependent variables. Notice the slight negative correlation of the teachers' evaluation of the program (PROGEVAL) with the measures of student success. Workshop teachers, although capable of generating a significant increase in student skills, were not thoughtless advocates of the program, but retained an even-handed and professional skepticism towards a strikingly innovative and idiosyncratic pedagogical offering. Notice that teachers' initial evaluation of student abilities as measured by CDPRE drops

out of the list of variables predictive of their growth over the year. The increase in teachers' appreciation of student ability (CDDIF) is, however, correlated with growth.

Conclusions

Given the results mentioned a number of conclusions seem warranted. First, Philosophy for Children has a significant effect on raising pupils' level of critical thinking, where critical thinking is measured by a test that includes the performance of abstract inferences and the evaluation of arguments. Second, critical thinking skills are generalized from a basis in classroom discussion and text readings that are not specifically tailored to the cognitive skills tested. Third, the population which manifested a significant growth of thinking skills, over time, was not limited to any particular level of reading achievement, nor was it limited to any particular mode of class organization. Further, these skills can be significantly developed as early as the third grade. Last, the increase in skills is greater than would have occurred had Philosophy for Children not been incorporated into the curriculum. In fact, the difference in growth of the target and comparison groups was found to be highly significant under extremely rigorous assumptions. The target group achieved a significant additional increment of growth as contrasted with the comparison group under the assumption that there was complete parity between the groups in terms of pretest scores and reading levels.

Similar conclusions can be drawn regarding the ability of teachers to observe adequate cognitive behavior in their classrooms. A perusal of the behaviors measured by the Child Description Checklist points to the fact that Philosophy for Children sensitizes teachers to be aware of educationally useful pupil traits, most of which are independent of skills specific to Philosophy for Children. The teachers' awareness of these traits and their presumed reinforcement of correlative behavior, is among the variables identified as causally relevant to both intellectual ability as measured by final scores and growth over time.

The inclusion of the subjectively rele-

vant factors in our analysis permits us to draw some conclusions as to the effectiveness of Philosophy for Children as a training program for teachers. The trainer furnished by the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children was able to judge those teachers who were competent to achieve program ends and presumably, was able to reinforce those procedures and attitudes most effective in achieving these ends. In addition, Philosophy for Children does not require teachers whose judgment of the program is biased through a thoughtlessly positive attitude toward the program. That is, teachers who implemented the program properly had classes that performed well despite whatever doubts they may have had about the effectiveness of the teacher training workshop or the IAPC curriculum.

In sum, Philosophy for Children furnishes an effective vehicle for teacher training that not only increases children's ability to reason critically but does so by affecting both the pupil, and the teacher's awareness of the effect of the program on the pupil. That is to say, Philosophy for Children develops a teaching staff aware and sensitive to the intellectual strivings of children and in doing so furnishes a mechanism and a forum within which these strivings can be made to bear fruit.

Teacher Comments

A survey of teachers' attitudes, experiences and future plans was administered to program participants during the program year. The following statements summarize the teachers' commentaries as to their evaluations of the program.

1. New admissions and discharges were insignificant in number and had no effect on the continuity of instruction.
2. The program was usually taught an average of two, forty-five minute periods a week.
3. The majority of teachers completed half of the novels throughout the year. Their preference in completing recommended manual exercises was the chief factor in time spent on a unit. It was everyone's opinion that the completion of the novels should take two years. *Pixie* should be studied in Grade 3 and finished

in Grade 4. Likewise, *Harry* should begin in Grade 5 and finished in Grade 6.
4. Eleven teachers expressed a desire to teach the program again next year. One teacher reserved a commitment depending upon the reading levels of her next year's class.[13]
5. Seven of the teachers reported observable gains in all of the objectives of the six philosophic-intellectual approaches of the program. Four could not claim any gains in "comprehensiveness of thinking;; and one could not see any tangible evidence of "consistency."
6. Some of the student projects and activities completed in connection with the program were brainstorming, role-playing, research projects on mythological creatures, art posters of "imaginary animals," poetry about subjects addressed in the program, illustrating imaginary islands, writing mental images, drawing mental images, writing impressions of the Museum of Philosophy visit, debates, daily journals of philosophic topics, interviews, collaborative social studies and science projects that require value considerations and interpersonal relating.
7. The teachers felt that the program should be sequentially developed through the grades, *i.e.,* K-9.
8. Eleven of the twelve teachers were of the opinion that the in-service training they received was necessary in order to teach the course. They found the project director's modelling most necessary and helpful in order to learn how to conduct the open-ended types of discussion that the program demands.
9. Although they felt capable of teaching the course next year without further in-service training, the majority of teachers expressed a desire for a two or three day "refresher" workshop.
10. The teachers' main concerns with teaching primary children (K-2) were not with the programs' courses of study for these grades. They were primarily concerned with they lack of experience in the instruction at this level, *per se.*

APPENDIX A

Thinking skills developed in the Philosophy for Children program include:

1. Formulating concepts precisely
2. Making appropriate generalizations
3. Formulating cause-effect relationships
4. Drawing inferences from statements
5. Using syllogisms
6. Translating sentences into standard form
7. Using ordinal and relational logic
8. Recognizing contradictions
9. Using conditional statements
10. Formulating questions
11. Identifying underlying assumptions
12. Grasping part-whole connections
13. Recognizing ambiguity
14. Recognizing vagueness
15. Developing a sense of relevance
16. Understanding means-ends relationships
17. Recognizing informal fallacies
18. Giving reasons
19. Using context
20. Making distinctions
21. Working with analogies
22. Discovering alternatives
23. Constructing hypotheses
24. Analyzing values
25. Constructing definitions
26. Identifying and using criteria
27. Finding instances of abstract concepts
28. Taking differences of perspective into account.

APPENDIX B

A Sample of Child Description Checklist Items:

1 Participates actively in group discussions.

2 Supports beliefs with logical reasons.

6 Appears to understand other children's viewpoints, even when not agreeing with them.

8 Works earnestly; doesn't take it lightly.

11 Stays with a job until it's finished.

13 Wants to know more about things that are presented in class.

APPENDIX C

The series of questions below are those that teachers in the Philosophy for Children

program are encouraged to ask as they engage children in philosophical dialogue. Any teacher may ask these kinds of questions to elicit responses that require thought and analysis. As children become better at discussing a subject philosophically, they are likely to answer many of the questions before they are asked.

The trainers in the IAPC program encourage teachers to make an effort to appear wondering and curious themselves as they ask the questions and to respond positively to students' remarks. They also try to relate the subject matter to the children's own experiences, and they coax the students to move the dialogue gradually to a more general or universal level. Teachers are trained to avoid manipulating the situation to foster their own point of view.

These questions can be applied to any subject matter and will give you a sense of the form a philosophical dialogue may take. Of course every questions doesn't fit into every discussion. Following each question is a brief explanation of what the question is trying to elicit in a student's response.

1. *Why?* Requests an explanation for the basis of a student's response.

2. *If that is so, what follows?* Asks students to elaborate, extrapolate, draw a valid inference—hypothetical or casual.

3. *Aren't you assuming that . . . ?* Asks for explanation of premises upon which a statement or argument might be based.

4. *How do you know that?* Calls for more information, a source of information or for a student to explain his or her line of reasoning.

5. *Is the point you are making that . . . ?* Requests confirmation of the teacher's clarification, focusing on the main point of a student's response.

6. *Can I summarize your point as . . . ?* Asks for student confirmation of the teacher's restatement or condensation of his or her statement.

7. *Is what you mean to say that . . . ?* A rephrasing that requires the students to interpret their statements and be certain of their meaning.

8. *What is your reason for saying that?* A request for a rationale that offers criteria for making a certain judgment, and a justification of that rationale.

9. *Doesn't what you say presuppose that . . . ?* The teacher points out assumptions that might be hidden in a student's argument or point, requiring the student to explain the validity of his or her assumptions.

10. *What do you mean when using this word?* A request for precise meaning and contextual usage.

11. *Is it possible that . . . ?* The teacher offers other possibilities and points out possible contradictions and inconsistencies in the student's argument.

12. *Are there other ways of looking at it?* A call for alternative perspectives, conditions. A check on objectivity and partiality.

13. *How else could we view this matter?* Gives students a chance to be creative. Stresses flexibility and open-endedness.

NOTES

1 See BIBLIOGRAPHY of Philosophy for Children for a number of descriptions of successful implementations of the IAPC program. The same issue includes a list of recent adoptions of the Philosophy for Children program throughout the United States. *Thinking 2* (1982) 39-43.

The best introduction to the theory and techniques of Philosophy for Children is found in: Matthew Lipman, Ann Margaret Sharp, Frederick S. Oscanyan, *Philosophy in the Classroom* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980).

2 A number of studies of IAPC programs have been published. For documentation of this research, contact or write to IAPC, Montclair State College, Upper Montclair, N.J. 07043.

3 Jerome S. Bruner, *Toward a Theory of Instruction* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1966) p. 41.

4 Clyde Evans, "Philosophy with Children: Some Experiences and Some Reflections," in Terrel Ward Bynum and Matthew Lipman, eds., *Philosophy for Children* (Oxford, England: Metaphilosophy Foundation, Inc., 1976), pp. 58-61.

5 Mark L. Weinstein, "Working for the IAPC," *Analytic Thinking 2* (1982) r-8.

6 APPENDIX D has been taken verbatim from an article written by James Alvino, "Philosophy for Children," *Teacher* 6 (March 1980) 55. For a further look at the program's questioning techniques, refer to Chapter 7: Lipman, *op. cit.*

7 *Language and Meaning: Instructional Manual to Accompany Pixie,* (Upper Montclair, N.J.: IAPC, 1981).

Ann M. Sharp and Frederick S. Oscanyan, *Philosophical Inquiry: Instructional Manual to Accompany Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery,* 2 ed., (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980).

8 Lipman, *op. cit.* p. 52.

9 M. Auer, D. Lahr and R. Docter, "Social and Institutional Factors in Reading Achievement in Elementary Schools," *Educational Research Quarterly* 3 (Spring 1978) 3-18.

20 Grace Malicky and Dennis Shienbeim, "Inferencing Behavior in Good and Poor Readers," *Reading Improvement* 18 (Winter 1981).

11 Dolly Cinquino, "An Evaluation of a Philosophy Program with Fifth and Sixth Grade Academically Talented Students," *Thinking* 2 (1981) 79-83.

12 S.T. Rosenholtz and B. Wilson, "The Effect of Classroom Structure on Shared Perceptions of Ability," *American Educational Research Journal,* 17 (Spring 1980) 75-82.

13 Eight of the twelve teachers are teaching the Philosophy for Children program during the 1982-1983 School Year in five of the district's schools and in eleven classes: Grade 3—(1) *Pixie;* Grade 4—(1) *Pixie;* (2) *Harry;* Grade 5—(4) *Harry;* Grade 6—(1) *Harry;* HC-30—(1) *Harry;* (1) *Pixie.* Two schools are using a departmentalized arrangement in order to extend the program.

Transcript Regarding Fairness from the Gomer Co. Jr. School, Gosport, England

Jack Huntington

EXERCISE: What is fairness?

Children as well as adults are concerned about *fairness*. Everyone agrees that people should be treated *fairly,* but what is *fairness?* We agree that we should abide by the rules of "fair play", but what *are* the rules of "fair play"?

This is an opportunity for you to discuss the notion of *fairness.* Here is a story you might use for this:

A teacher comes into her classroom one day with a large bag of candy. She explains that the candy is a gift to the class, and she has been told she must distribute it *fairly.*

"Now," she says, "what is fair? Would the fairest thing be for me to give the most to those who deserve the most? Who deserves the most? Surely it must be the biggest and strongest ones in the class who deserve the most, for they probably do most things best."

But the teacher is greeted by a loud outcry from the class. "What you propose is most unfair," they tell her. "Just because this one is better at arithmetic or that one at baseball or still another at dancing, you still shouldn't treat us all differently. It wouldn't be fair to give some members of the class, say, five pieces of candy, while others might get one piece or none at all. Each of us is a person, and in this respect we're all equal. *So treat us as equals and give each of us the same amount of candy.*"

"Ah," the teacher answers, "I'm glad you've explained to me how you feel about this. So, although people are very different from one another in many respects, fairness consists in treating them all equally."

"That's right!" the pupils answer, "fairness is equal treatment!"

But before the teacher has a chance to distribute the candy, the phone rings, and she's called down to the office. When she gets back some minutes later, she finds that the children have all been fighting over the candy. And now each of the biggest and strongest children has a great handful of candy, while the remainder have varying amounts, and the smallest children have only one each.

The teacher demands order, and the class becomes very quiet. Obviously she's very disturbed about what the children have just done. But she's determined to be *fair,* and fairness, they have all agreed, is *equal treatment.* So she tells the children, "You taught me what fairness is. Each of you must give back one piece of candy."

This is where the story ends. Now—discuss what you think *fairness* is.

Jack Huntington received his bachelor's degree from Columbia College last spring, and had earlier attended a Philosophy for Children workshop. Upon receipt of a Thomas J. Watson scholarship, which was given him in support of his project to experiment with the teaching of philosophy to British schoolchildren, he began teaching in the Hampshire Gomer Co. Jr. School, in Gosport, England. Later, he continued his experimental teaching in the Manchester area, at the Abraham Moss High School, Curmpsall.

As the following notes of his indicate, he is well aware of his lack of teaching experience, but his perseverance was rewarded recently by a visit from a London Sunday Times reporter who responded to the session enthusiastically.

His notes are given here as an introduction to the truncated transcript, along with the exercise which the Gosport students were discussing.

[This videotape] is the result of a spontaneous decision by the Headteacher of Gomer to record a session, unannounced ahead of time either to me or the children. Surprisingly, the setting up of the equipment, and the presence of the Headteacher, as you can tell, does not disturb the conversation. The children are quite focused and keen on the discussion. Unfortunately, the tape abruptly ends because the Headteacher accidentally "pulled a plug," which she did not discover until later.

When I saw the video, I realized instantly what a useful tool it is for learning. I could see shere improvement in my teaching is needed, for instance, while doing the transcription, I became painfully aware of my use of the word "okay," and moreover, how, when speaking, we rarely construct well-formed sentences to communicate our thoughts. Further, this tape reveals a degree of teacher dominance in the discussion which ideally the curriculum tries to move away from. The aim, I know, is more towards student-student dialogue. It is a credit, I think, to the students who either respond directly to other students' comments, or refer back to them.

The tape also makes possible a review of the arguments put forth in the discussion. In doing so, a broad range of thinking skills employed by the children can be examined. For example, this particular discussion finds children: classifying and categorizing; constructing hypotheses; discovering alternatives; giving reasons; defining terms; and grasping whole-part and part-whole connections, to name just a few thinking skills. Near the end of the video a student makes an analogy between the unfair

reprimand given to Fran by Mrs. Halsey and the present situation being discussed where a child is punished even if he did't "go into the scramble to get all the sweets." According to the student, the situations are analogous: "it's not really fair."

When I reviewed the tape, I noticed also many comments students made that I did not pursue and should have. For instance, a student suggests (and the class agrees) that the teacher should have taken the sweets back from the children and then "just given them out equally again." But another student responds that some people could have eaten some candies " . . . and those candies are gone." This may sound humorous, but is it not a reasonable objection to the hypothesis made by the student about what the teacher should do?

The idea that the teacher should punish the students is raised by the children themselves. It is unfortunate that the tape ends where it does, because the latter half of the discussion explores the problem of responsibility. The last comment by a student on the tape suggests that the teacher should punish those students found with the most sweets. He reasons: "Those who were the toughest fighting . . . they got the most." But another student objects and suggests alternatively that a very small child could have fought quite a lot, but because of his size, he did not get much candy. He too should be punished, argued this student. Then, students returned to the idea that witnesses, and their credibility, would be crucial in deciding who was guilty. Many students felt that the teacher should keep the sweets and use peer pressure to produce the guilty children. However, no one solution could be agreed on by the children and the session ended with the children forming small groups to discuss the matter further.

Teacher: . . . So now you must each give me back one piece of candy . . . Is that fair?

Students: No.

Student: . . . and the children have different amounts. And the weakest would only get one. So that means when they each must give one back they won't have any . . . but the strongest people would have some.

Teacher: Okay, because the strongest people got a lot more. Okay, let's just collect a lot of ideas . . . and then we will try to start discussing them . . . what do you think, Shaun?

Student: Well, I felt the same as Nicola. It's not fair because . . . say we have a fight . . . and that happened. Then it wouldn't be fair . . . say to all the girls if that happened [Oh, thank you] . . . then we would have a lot more sweets than them.

Teacher: Okay, okay. Does everyone agree then that it probably isn't fair . . . does everyone agree then that it probably isn't fair . . . that the most sweets should go to the strongest and the biggest in the class? Do you think that's a good reason for them to get the most?

Students: No.

Teacher: Okay, who else has a suggestion?

Student: Like, ummm, someone who is picking from the sweets. Some might not get any at t'all. But umm, say the big ones they would probably have a lot. And ummm, some might even ——give one back.

Teacher: Okay. Okay. Who wants to respond to his comment or add something?

Student: Well, umm, what the teacher said about equal rights. She's giving them equal rights because they all have to give the same amount back. But she should have taken them all back and then given them out equally.

Students: Yeah. Yeah.

Teacher: Okay. First of all, who thinks about the def . . . she says the definition of fairness is equal treatment. That even though people may be different in many respects, fairness means treating everyone equally. Do you think that's a good definition?

Student: Yeah. Yeah.

Teacher: Okay, now what does she ask them all to do?

Student: To give back one piece of candy.

Teacher: Right . . . now is that fair? She is treating them all equally?

Students: Yes. No.

Teacher: But then some have . . . but Rachel just said some have more than others. It is an interesting problem.

Student: Yeah, but . . . when she says . . . umm . . . that the toughest should have more, they shouldn't because . . . because they are . . . bigger people . . . they are only people . . . [in other words . . .] . . . I'm a people too.

Teacher: So the toughest . . . the strongest . . . that isn't a good reason why they should have more than other people.

Student: They shouldn't have more.

Teacher: Okay. Okay. Let's add to that . . .

Student: Yeah, but they might be tough . . . but they might not be good at their school work. So that the weakest might be good at their school work . . .

Teacher: Okay.

Student: But . . . I don't know because . . . 'cause she says that you got to treat them equally . . . well, she was fair. But then again, she wasn't.

Teacher: Okay, first of all, how does she treat them equally?

Student: Because she said give back one piece of candy each . . . that's . . . that's fair. But then again, think twice and you find that some people end up with no sweets.

Teacher: Right, because it was an unfair amount in the beginning . . . Do you think then . . . so . . . okay, let's get a few more ideas and then I'll say something . . . Alistair?

Student: I think that the teacher should have taken them all back and then, just given them out equally again.

Students: Yeah.

Teacher: Equally. Okay. Do most people agree with what Alistair says?

Students: Yeah.

Student: But some people could have eaten some . . . and those candies are gone.

Student: . . . or taken a bite out of it.

Teacher: . . . could have eaten some. Okay, so we are pretty much agreed that being the biggest or the strongest probably isn't a good reason why you should have more candy, more sweets, than another person.

Student: If they hadn't had a scramble of it, they probably wouldn't have got smothered all over the floor, and they would have got as much as they would in the first place.

Teacher: What do you think if I left a bag of sweets here and left. Do you think that you could distribute it fairly?

Students: mmm . . . no.

Teacher: Think about it. I'm not saying just children. Sometimes adults have problems. A group of adults . . . it may not be just sweets. It could be a lot of money, it could be anything. It happens in life. It happens with many things.

Students: Adults may not eat as much sweets as children do.

Teacher: Okay. Adults may not have a problem with sweets. But they may have a problem with other things. Money, or a certain type of food . . . Rachel?

Student: Uh, what Rachel said about schoolwork. About their being good at schoolwork . . . about the doing stuff . . . mmm . . . that doesn't really "go." Because if they're good at schoolwork, they shouldn't get more because . . . you know . . . because they should be treated the same whatever they do—good work or bad.

Teacher: Okay, very good. Let's collect some of our ideas. What you just said, what Richard said a few minutes ago, and what you said. We decided that probably being the biggest and the strongest isn't a good reason why you should get more candy than another person. But certainly . . . is being the smartest . . . is that a good reason why you should get more candy?

Students: No.

Teacher: Nicola?

Student: No, because we all have our own different standards at which we can work up to . . . mmm . . . somebody may not be very good at maths and they may be brilliant at English or something like that . . . but . . . mmm . . . so you don't really know . . . what people . . . because everybody has something they're good at . . . you don't really know what people are the best at certain things . . . certain areas of school work because everybody has some things they're good at . . .

Teacher: . . . has some strengths and weaknesses.

Student: Basically humans are the same. Everyone should have an equal right to exactly the same. So what if you're just a bit stronger than someone or a bit brighter? So what? You're still human, and all humans should have the same things.

Teacher: So what you think is that humans should be treated with equal treatment. That's what fairness means. Okay. Does every one agree with that, or want to comment on that . . . Mark?

Student: We are gathering more information than we have in that paragraph there.

Teacher: Okay, explain.

Student: Okay, we are using . . . gathering more information . . . like maths . . . it doesn't talk about maths it just talks about fairness here.

Teacher: Right, right. But she wonders if she should give it to the biggest—and the strongest or maybe we should give it to the most intelligent . . . Now, we've all decided, that's probably not being very fair. Is it? . . . Shaun?

Student: They have that big fight . . . um . . . and the toughest got the most . . . I think that the smallest ones shouldn't give any back and the biggest should give some. More than . . . quite a bit back . . .

Student: Yeah, but the biggest are bound to win.

Student: And then she could share them out fairly.

Teacher: Okay, so they should . . .

Student: . . . If they were fair they put 4 back so thy all have just one and they could go from there.*

Teacher: Okay. What do you think?

Student: . . .If, when Nicola says about standards . . . I mean it's true because Richard is . . . um . . . brainy . . . and in a way . . . .and Nicola is good at everything, but I'm good at some things and I'm still slow. But we're . . . we're . . . some . . . everybody in a way is all good at some things. It doesn't mean they are good at everything. So they shouldn't just get the most.

Teacher: Okay. So fairness means everyone should be treated equally. What would you do then if you are the teacher and you've just returned to the class. Someone suggested what they would do, but I would like to get more views . . . Simon, what do you think?

Student: I'd . . . umm . . . take all the sweets back and then . . . just go from there. You know, start giving them out fairly again.

Teacher: Would you give them back to the students fairly . . . meaning the same number of sweets . . .

Student: Yeah. The same amount each.

Teacher: Who else has a suggestion?

Student: Well, I would collect them all back, but I wouldn't give them as much because they have been fighting.

Teacher: Ah, so you suggest punishment. That's something new. Discipline. Should the children be punished?

Student: Well, I agree with Graham, because they should be punished if they've been fighting . . .

Teacher: All right. Graham and Richard think that maybe they should be punished . . . should the children be punished?

Student: If someone wasn't in the room with the sweets anyway, how do they know that the kids who didn't get any sweets weren't in the scramble anyway?

Teacher: How do we know who is responsible. Very good. is that important? What he just said, is that important to see who is responsible?

Student: Is that what you said about the teacher blaming you for something you hadn't done? Like . . . um . . . look at the situation if you didn't go into the scramble and get all the sweets and you get the punishment. It's not really fair.

Teacher: So it's not fair that you should get punished with the whole class if you just sit there. Let's say Alistair just sat there and the whole class went and fought for the sweets . . . that probably wouldn't be fair to Alistair then would it? . . . Okay . . . that's a very good idea.

Student: Like, what I would do is take them all back and if someone . . . if there was anybody who walked past . . . see what they said and see if anybody admits to that. And if they do they should say whether . . . who . . . if they saw anybody who wasn't in the fight—tell them . . . because they could be told . . . if they tell lies, then you can't really tell about that.

Teacher: Hard to find out what the truth is, you probably want witnesses, don't you? Pretty important. Who else hasn't spoken for a little while and wants to say something? Shaun, what do you think?

Student: I would have taken all the sweets back and . . . just given them to people who hadn't got that many . . . more than the other kids had . . . because they who were the toughest fighting . . . they got the most.

Teacher: So you think now you should give . . . if you were the teacher . . .

Book Review...

The Gift of Conversation
Talking with Children
by Ronald F. Reed
Arden Press, Denver Colo.
$ 6.95 paper, $11.95 cloth, 123 pages

Philosophy is thinking what the known demands of us—what responsive attitude it exacts. It is an idea of what is possible, not a record of accomplished fact.
John Dewey
Democracy and Education

For a thought to change the world, it must first change the life of the man who carries it. It must become an example.
Albert Camus
Notebook V, September 1945-April 1948

The relationship between and among children, parents and ideas is a special one. Children are alive with a sense of wonder about themselves and the world. Parents play a vital or a de-vitalizing role in the development of this sense of wonder. Professor Reed provides some of the tools to help parents better understand their children's thinking and to aid in the child's understanding of the world. Though he presents nothing which is new or startling, yet it is a book which had not been written and desperately needed to be written.

Dr. Reed's work is addressed primarily to parents and from the point of view of a parent, and educator and a philosopher. Reed develops the process for talking with children; what seems to be missing is the content for a conversation with children. Although Reed gives parents permission to discuss any topic which the child or the parent wishes to discuss, the examples used in the book are only philosophic in the most general way, and no attention is given to assist parents who might want to bring up philosophic issues with their children.

The lack of philosophic content is particularly unfortunate because of Reed's wealth of knowledge and material on these subjects. In addition to his almost daily work with Philosophy for Children materials, Professor Reed has written some of his own material to aid or more correctly to stimulate kindergarten, first and second grade children to "do" philosophy. *Rebecca* is an interesting method for bringing out philosophic discussion. To the extent that Reed's own material

and the materials of IAPC are workable with students in a classroom situation, they are with little modification workable with our own children. These materials could be the springboard for hours of fruitful conversation between parent and child.

Additionally, examples or instances of philosophizing could have also been developed in Reed's paradigm conversations. As Maxime Greene states in *Teacher as Stranger*, "We philosophize when, for some reason, we are aroused to wonder about how events and experiences are interpreted and should be interpreted. We philosophize when we can no longer tolerate the split and fragmentations in our pictures of the world, when we desire some kind of wholeness and integration, some coherence which is our own" (Greene, 1973, pp. 10-12). The world of parent/child interaction is filled with splits in both shared and individual pictures of the world. The example of the father's discussion of the baseball coach was an example of this type of conversation (pp. 62-65). One can only wish that there would have been more such conversation and that even more could have been developed in terms of explaining the conversation and its implications for a continuing dialogue about the world.

Talking with Children leaves us wishing for more. We are left with a tacit sense of the power of the method Reed develops in the book, and the hope that more of it will be developed in future works.

To further explore the strengths and weaknesses of *Talking with Children*, four

components will be analyzed: style, content, theme and voice. It is the way in which the first three components blend together and support each other, which gives the book its strength and vitality. If there is a weakness of the book, it lies in a sometimes confused voice.

The style of *Talking with Children* is both chatty and philosophical. In the preface of the book, Reed gives credit to Professor Lipman's influence. Although I am sure that Reed's style is not a copy of Lipman's, the pedogogy of Philosophy for Children appears to have had an impact on the style of *Talking with Children*. The chatty and philosophical tone is consistent with the style of Philosophy for Children. New ideas are always introduced from a common ground, the reader is not threatened by the knowledge of the author. The reader, therefore, finds him/herself open to what Professor Reed has to say. This does not imply that arguments or doubts are closed off; in fact, again and again, we are invited to look at information other than the main argument, to think for ourselves, and to disagree. At the same time, we are open to Reed's arguments because of this non-threatening quality. Additionally, his presentation is philosophical. The book begins with a justification or rationale, then proceeds to an articulation and clarification of assumptions ("Some Characteristics of Children"). These assumptions are consequently used for the basis of rule-building. The rest of the book uses the assumptions and the rules to present an approach to a variety of conversations with children. Five types of conversations are presented, each builds on the relationship between children and adults, and the rules of talking with children. These model talks, which are not transcriptions of actual conversations, but constructed dialogues designed to show a point, are filled with lively give-and-take exchanges. They provide the necessary context to give meaning to

the theory. The strength of the book can be stated by paraphrasing the old saw: There is nothing so practical as a good theory. Dr. Reed's book is a good theoretical work because it is very practical.

The bulk of the book is developed within the context of kinds of talk and problems which might prevent effective communication. These sections are filled with practical advice and rich in examples of what Dr. Reed calls "paradigm talks."

The five types of conversations presented by Dr. Reed are: talking for information; talking for discovery; talking to share feelings; talking to pass the time; and talking for specific action. The organization of the material tells the readers in a subtle way that if they wish to be effective in talking for specific action, such "action" conversation had better not be the only types of conversation they have with their children. Additionally, the order and emphasis of the topics is consistent with Dr. Reed's goal,

which is to help parents improve the quality of their conversations with their children, which is not the same as "getting the kids to behave."

What makes this book such a pleasure to read is the constant unswerving theme of "with children." Conversation in Professor Reed's eyes and ears is between children and adults. This is shown by the thoughfulness with which he considers children and their words, and is best represented by what he calls "a light touch". A light touch is a special sense of humor—it is what Abraham Maslow calls "an unhostile sense of humor." Ron Reed is neither intimidated by children nor is he overly impressed—he is respectful. His assumptions about the characteristics of children—that children are inexperienced, that children are usually motivated by short-term goals and that children are usually at a disadvantage in dealing with adults, to list three of eight characteristics, clearly shows this respectful at-

titude. In "Some Rules of the Game," rules 12, 13, and 14 highlight Professor Reed's orientation: know when to stop, use language that is appropriate to the child and do not talk down to the child. This section of the book clearly shows Reed as an involved parent and educator.

In the last sections of the book, one gets a bit confused as to whether the philosopher (logician), the teacher, or the parent is in control of the text. At the beginning of this review, a suggestion was made that one of the strengths of the book lies in its being written from the point of view of a parent, an educator and philosopher. This works well throughout most of the book in that all three points of view blend together and support one another. Later in the book there are some shifts in voice. One of the most obvious shifts, or perhaps jumps is a better word, comes in the section called "Assuming the Cause." It is not clear in this section whether we as parents should avoid what in the "traditional logic text . . . goes under the name of *post hoc, ego proper hoc,*" or if we should help our children to notice this type of reasoning in their conversation. Although both points are important, the context of the *post hoc* argument is not developed. It stands out as a logician talking about logic and not a parent/teacher/philosopher talking about how to improve talk between parents and children. The educational reformer/teacher leaps out several times in the chapter "Talking and Schools" but most often the voice is clear and directed to parents, children and talking.

The two quotes at the beginning of the review were intended to provide a standard by which to judge this work. Though the criteria are demanding, *i.e.,* living by our ideas and looking to what is possible, *Talking with Children* makes a major step in the right direction. In summary, the old aphorism "A half a loaf is better than no loaf at all," is especially true if the half we receive is rich in nutrients and sweet to the taste. We are left at the end of this work hungering for more from Professor Reed, but savoring the flavor with much to chew.

—*Richard E. Morehouse*
Viterbo College

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Institute for the Advancement of Logic and Cognitive Studies invites submission of papers for presentation at its first Annual Conference. The theme of this year's conference is "Heuristics in Mathematics and Science Education," however, papers on any area of instruction in logic and pre-college philosophy will be considered. Papers should be 12-15 pages in length (3 copies). Papers will be selected through a process of blind refereeing.
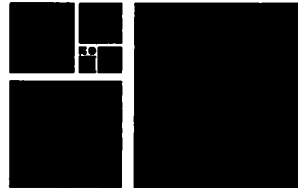
Proposals for symposia and workshops are also invited. Proposals should be 3-5 pages in length and should be accompanied by biographical data on each presenter.

It is the intention of the Institute to publish selected papers in a biennial proceedings. Deadline for all submissions is March 31, 1984. The conference will be held in Houston July 12-14, 1984.

For further information, and to submit papers, write: P.A. Wagner, Co-Director, Institute for Logic and Cognitive Studies, University of Houston-Clear Lake, Houston, TX 77058.

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