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Credits
INTRODUCTION

ANN MARGARET SHARP

It has been said that there have been two great revolutions in history. The first was the liberation of slaves. The second was the liberation of women. A third revolution which is yet to occur is the liberation of children. All three of these liberating movements are unfinished. There is much work that still needs to be done. Racism still exists; sexism still exists and the liberation of children has only begun. One movement in particular, Philosophy for Children, has been responsible for helping to make children's liberation a real possibility.

With the entry of philosophy into the elementary school curriculum in the last twenty years, we have experienced a new consciousness with regard to children's rights, as well as a growing awareness of the potential of children not only to reason well, but to reason well together about the philosophical dimension of their daily experience, and to bring new concepts of love, freedom and justice into existence. Such abilities are the seeds of genuine liberation.

Philosophy for Children came into existence in 1969. It was an attempt to reconstruct the discipline of philosophy in such a fashion that children could appropriate it for themselves and learn to think for themselves in more and better ways. In 1974, the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children was founded at Montclair State
College with Matthew Lipman as Director and myself as Associate Director. In 1980, Dr. Lipman and I designed a Masters Program in Philosophy for Children as well as a Visiting Scholar program at Montclair State College. By 1983, Centers of Philosophy for Children engaged in teacher education, experimental research, translation and adaptation of the curriculum and development of new curriculum flourished in many countries in the world. Usually, these Centers were based at universities, and many of them were directed by women who had chosen to dedicate themselves to bringing the discipline of philosophy to the children of their country. By 1992, both the number of these Centers and the number of women actively involved in the dissemination of elementary school philosophy had quadrupled.

William James, in an essay, "Great Men and Their Environment," thought that significant changes in history were made by great men whose genius was adapted to the receptivities of the moment and to whom the community responded. This might have been so, for the most part, when he was writing. Today, however, there is much history that is being made by great women who have a vision of what education could be in their countries. These women have been willing to devote their lives to making this vision a reality. And the world community is responding. Philosophy for Children and the elementary classroom community of inquiry are a reality in over forty nations around the world. Many of them exist due to the work of women philosophers.

For the last ten years, my work has involved me in co-directing a minimum of six international conferences a year in which philosophers are prepared to work with teachers and children in Philosophy for Children. In the process, it has become evident that there are many women philosophers who have been affected by the last 20 years of feminist philosophy and, at the same time, are only more determined to bring philosophy to the children of their countries. Many of these women describe themselves as feminist philosophers dedicated to changing the educational structure in their countries. They see philosophy as a discipline that will contribute substantially to bringing about the liberation of the next generation.

Feminist philosophy has been responsible for bringing to our attention the philosophical dimension of diverse topics such as sexist teaching methodology, mothering, career development, home-caring, gender-formation, self-esteem, sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, ecology, and the sexist bias of much language. Many have written on feminine ways of knowing, and have shared feminist perspectives on aesthetics, ethics, metaphysics, language, philosophy and philosophy of science. Feminists have raised questions about many things heretofore taken for granted: the role of gender in scientific inquiry, the possibility of objectivity in education, the role of logic and argumentation in coming to know, the use of rules and principles in ethics. They have called into question dichotomies between reason and emotion, body and mind, and experience and reason. They have written on the politics of reality, conceptions of justice and law, self, religion and education, with particular attention directed to the ethical and political dimension of classroom pedagogy.

And yet, there has not been a strong interest among feminist philosophers in children’s doing philosophy—perhaps because of a backlash against the many hundreds of years during which women have been primarily concerned with the nurturing of children at the expense of their own development or perhaps because of a perceived sexism in the initial curriculum materials in elementary school philosophy originating from the United States. I would have thought that by now numerous feminist philosophers would be involved in curriculum development, development of undergraduate and graduate programs in elementary school philosophy and teacher education. It is a disappointment not to see more women’s names in the literature about children’s right to philosophical inquiry and the contribution philosophy could make in starting with an education that is often sexist and obsessed with information and reforming it into an education focused on the liberation of children, on critical, creative and caring thinking, on the development of personhood within a democratic setting.

In response to a perceived need, I decided in early 1992 to write to the women involved in Philosophy for Children asking if they would like to collaborate on a project that would speak to the issues of feminism and children’s philosophy. I envisioned the authors of the various articles to be women who had as one of their priorities the bringing of philosophy to day-care, elementary and high-school children in their various countries while at the same time dedicated to the education of existing and prospective teachers. Prospective authors were asked to contribute to an anthology of essays speaking to the issues touched on by one or several of the following questions:

1. Do you think the educational system in your country prepared you to think for yourself, develop a career of professional status and become a strong participant in the larger society? If not, what philosophical assumptions pre-
vailed that blocked these outcomes?

2. Describe what it was like for you to grow up in your society. Did you suffer from sexism? If so, how?

3. How do you account for your own professional status today? What happened to most of your female classmates?

4. Do you think female children today in your country are given sufficient opportunities to develop their potential? Has the educational system improved with regard to sexual equality? Have the philosophical assumptions about women's place in society changed?

5. What attracted you to Philosophy for Children?

6. Do you see similarities between children's philosophy and feminist philosophy?

7. What role, if any, do you see children's philosophy playing in the liberation of women in your country?

8. Have you found the Philosophy for Children movement to be less sexist than other philosophical or professional movements? Can you suggest ways in which it can become less sexist?

I encouraged the women philosophers to take up the issues in any way they deemed appropriate. I suggested the use of narrative, dialogues and poetry as well as expository prose. It seemed to me that such an anthology would serve a number of purposes: a supplement to the "factual" data coming out in women studies and global education; a unique anthology within feminist philosophy and a contribution to the growing material on the doing of philosophy by children. I also envisioned the work serving as a text for a graduate course, *Feminism and Philosophy for Children*, that had been proposed for the new Ph.D. program in Philosophy for Children to begin at Ibero-Americana University in 1994. The latter was designed as a degree with an international faculty and student body who had an interest in bringing the tools of philosophy to children.

The response to my request was most gratifying. Scholars from many nations indicated not only their interest but their enthusiasm for such a project that would bring together two of their strongest interests: children's doing philosophy and women's doing philosophy. Many women involved in Philosophy for Children showed a strong interest in the relationship of Philosophy for Children to emerging theoretical issues in both feminist philosophy, environmental philosophy and the critical thinking movement.

Many centers of Philosophy for Children in Eastern Europe, Canada, Russia, Portugal, Spain, Belgium, Mexico, Costa Rica, Italy and Argentina are either directed or co-directed by women. These women have not only experienced sexism, but have grown up in authoritarian societies in which their political freedom was either directly or indirectly suppressed from birth. Each woman has a different and poignant story to tell and yet they all hold some things in common: a desire to bring philosophy to the next generation in their country; a commitment to democracy and a hope for a new system of education that can convert the classroom into a community of philosophical inquiry. They see the classroom community of inquiry with its emphasis on careful deliberation, egalitarianism, respect for persons, tolerance for different points of view and non-sexism as a potentially liberating agent for the next generation of women in their countries. They realize that this liberation is dependent on the philosophical education of teachers, carried out in such a way that both the content and the method of philosophy can be transferred directly to the elementary school classroom. It is for this reason that many of them have focused on teacher education.

There have been a number of women philosophers in Canada, Asia, Africa, Europe, Australia, Latin America and the United States, who have played a central role in the dissemination of Philosophy for Children. Some have published extensively in the field, while others have focused their attention on perfecting teacher education or designing and carrying out experimental research in Philosophy for Children. Others have focused on the design of university courses using the methodology developed by Philosophy for Children to work with in-coming students in need of exploring the various fields of ethics, aesthetics and epistemology. Only recently have some women begun to explore the creation of alternative curricular materials for teaching philosophy to children, while others are turning to fables, proverbs, allegories and parables, as well as other forms of children's literature to help children become conscious of the philosophical dimension of human experience.

One woman is particularly eminent in the history of Philosophy for Children. Catherine Young-Silva, who died on January 9, 1993, was responsible for bringing Philosophy for Children to Brazil. I have dedicated this anthology to her in gratitude for her superb work. Today, there are over 80,000 Brazilian children doing philosophy at the elementary school level due to her efforts. In nine years, she was able to disseminate the Philosophy for Children curriculum to philosophers, teachers and children in almost every
state in the country and to begin an institutionalization program at the university level, which is now taking shape in many Brazilian states, to ensure that future teachers of Brazil will be educated in elementary school philosophy. A woman of great moral imagination and courage, Catherine Young-Silva was able at a crucial period of her life to conjure up an ideal and work creatively and persistently toward the realization of that ideal. In this sense, she is a model for us all. She went about her work not only with intelligence and determination but with a great sense of grace. Catherine was a person who believed in the potential of all children to make a better world if given half a chance. She was well aware of the need for educational reform in the world. In 1984, she had to begin slowly. She returned to Brazil and created a method for educating 40 philosophers per year in the methods of teacher preparation, in the hope that some of these would return to their communities and work with teachers and with children. Her expectations were more than fulfilled. Philosophers found themselves rejuvenated in her presence. She not only helped them experience intellectual and social growth but simultaneously was able to rekindle their love of the tools and concepts of philosophical inquiry as instruments of educational reform. At the same time she supervised the translation and adaptation of the Philosophy for Children curriculum into Portuguese and created a model teacher education program in Philosophy for Children, a program which is recognized for its thoroughness and philosophical integrity. Since 1984, there was not a year that she did not work with teachers and educational administrators trying to show them, rather than tell them, what it was to participate in a community of philosophical inquiry. Without being aggressive or indecisive, never arrogant or all-knowing, she knew how to listen well to the people with whom she worked and to shape her approach to meet their needs. It is only today in Brazil that her work is beginning to bear fruit. There is now a strong interest on the part of the International Catholic Child Bureau in bringing philosophy to the street children in Brazil. Today, Brazil is the home of a National Congress of Philosophy for Children. This philosophical congress meets annually in Santa Catarina and focuses each year on one philosophical theme. In September of 1993, 3000 children, together with 250 teachers from everywhere in Brazil convened in Joinville, Brazil, for three days to discuss the relationship between culture and philosophy. In the past three years, the Congress has focused on issues related to environmental ethics, such as conversation and animal rights. As President of the International Council of Philosophical Inquiry with Children, in the last two years Catherine was able to turn her attention to doing for the world what she has done so well in Brazil.

This anthology represents an introduction to the diverse thoughts, ideals and projects of women leaders in Philosophy for Children, many of whom have been responsible for converting hundreds of elementary school classrooms into philosophical communities of inquiry despite great adversity and hardships. I am hopeful that in a short time the children of these various nations will thank them for the liberating power of elementary school philosophy.

Ann Margaret Sharp, 1994
Opening Philosophy

San MacColl

The idea of opening philosophy might suggest opening a can of worms—which we may hesitate to do; or trying to do it without a key for the tin—which is usually messy and bloody. What I had in mind was not a forced opening up of philosophy, but rather finding an opening within philosophy which would extend it. It is the idea that philosophy might be able to open out from its present tightness, in the way a flower unfurls—gently when its time is right.

In addressing connections between feminism and Philosophy for Children, I want to draw out the potential of Philosophy for Children to extend philosophy in ways which would bring it more in harmony with feminist perspectives. We need to distinguish here two different options for doing philosophy in schools. In France there is a long tradition of the teaching of philosophy for the baccalaureate through classic texts and philosophers. The Philosophy for Children Program has been developed more recently from the work of Matthew Lipman and the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children and the Evolution of Philosophy for Children and the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children and the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children, in particular to explore the revolutionary potential of Philosophy for Children for philosophy.

The revolutionary potential of Philosophy for Children in education has not gone unnoticed (see Sharp, "Women, Children and the Evolution of Philosophy for Children" and Lipman, Thinking in Education, Ch. 15), but the coincidence in the practice of philosophy for children with feminist critiques of philosophy has not to my knowledge received attention.

Let me explain how I come to make this connection beginning with two experiences concerning philosophy. Whilst these are my personal experiences, I am sure that they are widely shared by others with a similar background. One is the tension of being a woman in philosophy; and the other is the excitement of doing Philosophy for Children. For me, the first experience has been slow to surface, and painfully drawn out, over a long philosophical career; whereas the second experience was instantaneous in the recognition of the exciting possibilities on my very first exposure to Philosophy for Children nearly ten years ago. It is through a consideration of these experiences that I want to look at connections between feminism and Philosophy for Children, in particular to explore the potential of fruitful interaction between the practice of Philosophy for Children and philosophy itself.

Philosophy is not unified as a single practice and it is inaccurate to speak about philosophy in general terms as if it were. To do so is to overlook the variety in philosophy that occurs with the European, Eastern or African traditions, or even the divergence within the Anglo-American world such as we find in the American pragmatist tradition. When I talk about philosophy here I mean the dominant tradition which has been upheld in recent Anglo-American academic philosophy, as epitomised by analytic philosophy in Oxbridge this century. Perhaps we need to mark that tradition as capitalized Philosophy, to distinguish it from philosophy as it might develop. This is a device that has been effectively used to mark the tradition of Reason associated with the Man of Reason so as to distinguish it from reason, as we might want to cultivate and do it.

The experience of being a woman in philosophy no doubt varies enormously amongst women: for some, discrimination, sexual harassment or want of encouragement have hindered philosophical careers; for others, their particular philosophical interests, not being 'clubbable', and lack of ambitiousness, have slowed their progress. For me, none of these factors were significant and I had tenure at the age of 25 and a Ph.D. soon after. What I have increasingly come to feel is a discomfort which has had nebulous manifestations (such as an uneasiness) about some philosophical approaches, a sense of futility in some issues, an irritation with certain styles of argument) that I only belatedly recognize as resulting from the tension of being a woman and a philosopher.

To be a woman doing philosophy is, in a certain sense, to be a misfit. Not in the sense that we wear eccentric blue stockings but in the sense that as women, we do not quite fit in the philosopher's hat, or shoes, or however you want to think about it. We are of course perfectly good philosophers and we can wear the philosopher's hat as well as any, but, even if no one else notices it, we are not quite comfortable in it. The reason is that insofar as we fit it we have to stop being women, to tailor ourselves to the costume. This is a feat of degendering not required of the male philosopher, who wears the philosopher's accoutrements with ease because, indeed, they are made for him. Many men, it needs to be said, feel they are cross-dressing when they don the philosopher's costume, as Ron Reed has described it. Insofar as there is a difference, I suppose it is that these men are wearing clothes which they find uncomfortable, whereas women are be
The tension for women in philosophy is reminiscent of the analysis of what it is like to be a woman and a scientist. Keller has shown the inauthenticity a woman must undergo to adopt a traditional scientific view which implicitly requires a male mind investigating female Nature. This is an abstract model which represents a tendency present for all women scientists. It is a model established in the seventeenth century and is explicitly expressed in Bacon's metaphor of the chaste and lawful marriage of Mind and Nature. For a woman to be a scientist sharing in the male pleasure of investigation is reminiscent of the analysis of what it means to be a woman scientist. It is a model established in the years, I have become aware of an undercurrent in myself which raises an obvious issue between feminism and Philosophy for Children. I have to confess that I have often felt, as a feminist philosopher, some disquiet in advocating philosophy in schools, for the following reason: would you wish on young women or small girls a practice of philosophy which you yourself have come to see as deeply imbued with disguised, gendered ideals and associations, which are, if not wrong, at the very least, not appropriate for everyone?

What makes philosophy uncongenial for women is familiar from feminist and other criticisms of Philosophy which I will outline in due course. For the meantime let us just consider that, given an awareness of what is wrong with Philosophy, and particularly the way in which its orientation has tended to be male, masquerading as universal, how could we wholeheartedly recommend it to the young of our sex, or the other sex for that matter? Just because women may have been denied access to Philosophy in the past one way or another, is not necessarily a reason to press for greater access now, if Philosophy is of dubious value for women and girls.

This is a latent conflict between a feminist philosopher's engagement in Philosophy for Children, and her critical view of Philosophy. As I said, my reservations about philosophy are something I have kept in the background and experienced only as a disquiet in relation to Philosophy for Children before without trying to address it. In its most blatant form it raises the question of why we keep doing philosophy at all. This is a question which has raised considerable controversy and I will not pursue it here. Various positions are addressed in three books recently published on feminism and philosophy. Assuming we keep doing philosophy, in the hope of doing it differently, the further troubling consideration is how optimistic we can be of success in disassociating philosophy as we do it from the bad old ways with which philosophy is still primarily identified in many places.

The recognition of other feminist priorities may also be a factor in the lack of feminist engagement in Philosophy for Children. We might take a broader feminist viewpoint which would not rate philosophy a very high priority, after taking account of the most pressing concerns about the oppression of women which still need to be fought in many places with regard to reproduction, health and independence.

To continue our exploration of the experiences with which I began, two lines of inquiry are emerging: an outward looking one of the value of letting philosophy loose in schools, which I have already touched on; and an inward looking one of how the practice of Philosophy for Children can open up our notion of philosophy, and provide new directions and values. I find the inward perspective of considering philosophy in terms of the practice of Philosophy for Children both significant and reassuring in a climate where feminist and other critiques of philosophy have been of fundamental importance but somewhat lacking in explicit alternative directions. Out of the practice of philosophy in schools there immediately comes a positive direction in terms of participation, relatedness and relevance, which, if not 'progress', promises movement in new and worthwhile directions. As Sharp points out, following Freire, the process of giving a voice to those who have traditionally been silenced offers new possibilities.

The liberation and excitement to be found in Philosophy for Children for the kids who are the new participants, is of the utmost importance. Clearly, close attention must be given to feminist criticisms of Philosophy for Children, and its classroom materials to ensure that all...

Kids are catered for. There must be no implicit duplication of the failings of Philosophy with respect to females. But the kids are not the only ones who can benefit from the practice of Philosophy for Children, and in this paper I want to draw attention to the liberation for professional philosophers, and especially those who are women, to experience a way of doing philosophy, of seeing it work and of establishing values, free of some longstanding and deeply rooted difficulties. These include avoiding the more obvious difficulties for women in Philosophy, such as trying to relate to misogynist texts and male oriented issues. Most important is the ideal of philosophical inquiry which is encapsulated in the classroom practice of a community of inquiry. This is what offers a way of meeting major concerns highlighted by feminist critiques of Philosophy, its lack of relevance to our personal experience, social and political concerns, and its inaccessibility due to technical jargon and style. To incorporate in our own philosophical practice what we learn from Philosophy for Children has the potential for opening philosophy.

What's wrong with Philosophy?

It may seem unfair to generalize about what is wrong with Philosophy when one of its virtues is supposed to be the capacity for self-criticism. Yet patently this has been inadequate with regard to women. From a feminist perspective, there is a general problem for women about Philosophy in the way that it has failed them as women. This comes out in its inability to seriously engage with them as women, not individually—plenty of women do Philosophy, but structurally. This is not to say that Philosophy might not change for the better in this respect, but that is a question about which there are varying degrees of optimism (see note 3).

A way of putting the general problem about Philosophy for women is that it is deeply and thoroughly imbued with an implicitly male orientation masked in various ways as abstract, universal or neutral. This orientation infects its ideals, its argumentation, its issues, its methodology and its limitations. It is not only feminists who criticise the state of Philosophy. The moves in radical philosophy, philosophy and public affairs, and philosophy and literature have shared a deep dissatisfaction with Philosophy from within, while others have claimed a terminal crisis for Philosophy. I will restrict myself to critiques most pertinent for feminists.

In outline, feminists have criticized the ideal of objectivity in Philosophy (e.g. Keller, Bordo); the maleness of Reason (e.g. Lloyd); the adversary method (e.g. Moulton); the separation of epistemology and ethics (e.g. Code); the male bias of political theory (e.g. Pateman); the gender implications in moral theory (e.g. Gilligan); the emphasis on the general at the expense of the particular (e.g. Schor). There is not just the bias in what Philosophy deals with, but in what it has, largely, chosen not to discuss, and even to denigrate—the personal, the body, the anecdotal. Great prestige in Philosophy has been accorded to metaphysics, logic, philosophy of mind, philosophy of science, epistemology, philosophy of mind, but what serious consideration has been given in Philosophy to questions of reproduction, mothering sex?

To elaborate on these just a little. The ideal of objectivity involves eliminating any taint of subjectivity; it aspires to neutrality and appears to be sexless. Yet its neutrality masks a masculinity. The character ideal of Reason, which we have inherited and which is so important to Philosophy's self-image, is based on transcendence of the feminine and the exclusion of things like emotion. As a result Reason is not easily attainable in conjunction with characteristically female virtues. In philosophical style the emphasis on combative argument is premised on the virtue of aggressiveness and limited by the taking up of defensive positions. The extent to which philosophical practice has separated questions of the acquisition of knowledge from those of values and responsibility is artificial and unhealthy. It distorts, from a male bias, the kinds and nature of knowledge which are given attention. These criticisms are all directed at the way Philosophy has seen itself, its ideals, its compartmentalisation and its paradigmatic style of argument.

Other feminist criticisms bring out the extent to which the focus of Philosophy on the interests of males has been a serious limitation. To theorize the players in political action as if they could only be men ignores the position of women and seriously restricts the scope of political theory; to consider moral development in terms which are implicitly male is a failure to recognize the moral reasoning of women and the ways in which it might differ; to seek after generality, at the expense of detail and particularity, denigrates much of the achievement of women in aesthetic endeavor. The fact that so many issues of interest and concern to many women in their lives in terms of personal, family and social connections, in terms of their reproductive roles and domestic occupations have not been issues in Philosophy can only be its loss, both in what it does not address, and in the women whose interests it fails to engage.

Feminist critiques of Philosophy can be seen to highlight three major concerns: lack of relevance—to our personal experience, to issues of social and political concern; embeddedness in an alienating male oriented tradition; and inaccessibility due to jargon and style. These are all implicitly addressed by the practice of Philosophy for Children.

The value of Philosophy for Children

The value of Philosophy for Children has often been written about, and it bears repeating. Philosophy for Children aims to produce thoughtful, independent-minded, responsible people. It fosters the capacity for reasoned judgment and enhances self-esteem. It focuses on philosophical inquiry as a tool for kids to better develop themselves, socially, emotionally and cognitively; for the cultivation of respect for others along with confidence in oneself; for co-operation together rather than individual competitiveness. All of which are in keeping with feminist values of self-determination and the balanced development of individuals, alongside the desirability of sharing and of the strength of social ties.

The commonly advocated philosophic virtues, such as independent thought, conceptual clarity and reasoned judgment, are a part of what is prized in Philosophy for Children. The importance attached in philosophy to satisfying our natural curiosity, our wondering and questioning is taken seriously in Philosophy for Children in a way that unfor-
fortunately it is not in most other school education. Critical examination too has a role in Philosophy for Children.

Special mention needs to be made here of the place of critical examination in philosophy. It is a value which has, in well-worn commentary, been seen as the danger of philosophy to corrupt youth, a la Socrates. But this danger, frequently perceived in philosophy, has just as often been taken as its credit? Critical examination is necessary for the development of alternatives. Le Doeuff raises the consideration that “the most lively philosophical attitude possible . . . is in harmony with a certain feminist tradition” because it provides the possibility of at least a minimal form of opposition.10

Over and above what might be thought to be valuable (or of questionable value) in philosophy, such as thinking, clarity, reasoning, questioning, puzzling and critical examination, I want to suggest that there is something more that is operative in the practice of Philosophy for Children. This can be identified positively through the processes involved in Philosophy for Children. The processes are those of the community of inquiry which center around participation, equality, listening, sharing, co-operating and collaborating. In the nature of its functioning a community of inquiry is self-generating and sets its own agenda. It is in this context that the philosophic virtues are developed in philosophy for children and this lends them a different coloring than that they have in the isolation of an individual’s scholarly pursuits in a garret, which will be later subjected to the closest of hostile scrutiny for flaws in the argument.

In the community of inquiry criticism has a positive point in working towards a shared goal. Even so a cautionary note should perhaps be sounded at this point about the problem of vulnerability and the setting of limits in the philosophical discussion of personal experience. This problem is recognized in Philosophy for Children materials and requires sensitive handling according to the needs of children of whatever age. It is something we all experience when working through issues philosophically which bear closely on our own situation or concerns, as participants of feminist philosophy courses will readily attest. The balance between personal sensitivities and the pursuit of an argument is often a matter of delicacy.

There is another crucial enabling factor in the practice of Philosophy for Children, which is the absence of certain features of Philosophy such as its traditional preoccupations, classical texts, and typically abstract universalism. Just as the presence of such features can obstruct the development of feminist interests, so their absence can positively enable it. The male orientation and misogyny of traditional preoccupations and classical texts in Philosophy is a factor of in calculable weight. The development of a philosophical discussion in a community of inquiry will reflect the interests of those participating rather than being imposed from the past, or outside. The accessibility of issues without the hindrance of unwieldy technical terminology is a further advantage which should not be underrated. What is often so refreshing about the philosophizing of little kids is their very own conceptualization of a familiar problem in philosophy. With their own formulation comes a natural relatedness to their own concerns.

This is the way in which I foresee a fruitful potential of Philosophy for Children for opening philosophy. The values of participation, relatedness and relevance mesh well with feminist demands for the recognition of women’s experience, and political action. Without the impediment of the barriers built into the male orientation of the tradition, philosophy can facilitate new ways of pursuing issues.

The potential for opening philosophy through Philosophy for Children

The way in which the practice of Philosophy for Children avoids the worst of Philosophy is largely through its pedagogy of a community of inquiry and its commitment to integrating the practice of philosophy with its substance. Not all the credit for this should go to Philosophy for Children. There are influential precursors from within the pragmatist tradition (e.g. James, Peirce, Dewey) and elsewhere (e.g. Freire). Whatever the history of its antecedents, Philosophy for Children is now in an influential position for opening philosophy.

The community of inquiry is integral to the pedagogical and philosophical ideals which generate it. It is this which makes it congenial to feminism. It fits well with the feminist conception of educating for reproduction as well as production which is admirably advocated by Martin.11 It meets feminist demands for relevance to our personal experience and our social and political circumstances, for addressing our position as women, and for accessibility and a sympathetic style.

A caveat needs to be entered here. Philosophy for Children materials have been produced by professional philosophers and this would lead us to be wary about the way in which the materials are likely to reflect traditional concerns and their shortcomings. This may or may not be balanced by other influences behind Philosophy for Children. Indeed allegations of sexism, foundationalism, analytic bias, etc. are (rightly or wrongly) heard about the novels and the exercises. It is a serious question on which there is some evidence (e.g. Slade “Harryspeak” in this volume). These problems need to be dealt with. Fortunately, however, concern on this score is mitigated by the role of the novels in Philosophy for Children. While the novels are crucial as a stimulus, because of the nature of the community of inquiry, and the fact that the questions, issues and agenda come from the kids themselves, the influence of the novels is both limited and their assumptions can be explicitly questioned. Although they are optional, any sexism in the exercises is cause for grave concern because teachers may be reliant on them, and it is important that they should be relevant for all participants.

The opening of philosophy through the experience of the practice of Philosophy for Children comes from its emphasis on relevance, participation, and accessibility. Through the community of inquiry it can meet objections raised by feminists to Philosophy, and offer an opening for new developments. In conclusion, there is a two way interaction: that philosophy can contribute to kids’ education; and that the practice of Philosophy for Children can also contribute to Philosophy itself, by opening it from within and by educating academic philosophers. I have focussed on the latter with particular attention to the aspirations of feminist philosophers.
Body Knowledge

Sarah Redshaw

This paper will discuss the importance of Philosophy for Children in concretizing reasoning as a bodily experience, not just a mental one. Many feminists have drawn attention to the status of the body in the philosophical tradition and its relation to women. Man has traditionally been associated with the superiority of reason and woman with the inferiority of the body. The emphasis being placed on the body by feminism is based on the need for reasoning to be connected to the world we live in and the meanings we create within it. The intention of Philosophy for Children is to couch reasoning in experience making it compatible with some feminist objectives that are significant for philosophy today, and which reflect social concerns.

The Philosophy for Children curriculum draws on experience—the kinds of experiences children are normally having, the kinds of things they might be thinking about and noticing in their lives. Children are very much aware of and oriented around their bodies. Their experiences are closely connected to and understood in terms of their bodies. Bodies of course, are also culturally significant and so the experiences of children vary according to their bodies and the social significance attached to them. Thus whether a child is male or female, black or white, etc. is significant in their experiences as individuals.

Children enjoy movement and there is some reason to believe that movement is significant in learning. Children's bodies are changing constantly as they move. Descartes stated that bodies in themselves do not think. In post-Cartesian approaches to philosophy of mind it has been considered that thought only follows from the addition of rationality to a body machine. In the contemporary transition from talk of minds to talk of thinking in more physical terms, a leap is made from mind to brain. In both dualistic and physicialistic approaches the phenomenological aspect of experience is lost. This phenomenological understanding, which is central to the self-consciousness required in the development of complex levels of thought, is intimately related to the body.

It seems to be common sense—if we consider where in the body thinking pro-
cesses go on, with or without a notion of mind, soul or whatever, the brain is the obvious place. However, an interesting phenomenon that occurs with the move from mind to brain is that the brain no longer seems to be considered as part of the body. We have the brain as a complex entity in itself, and we have the body, separated along the same line as that which previously existed between mind and body, namely, that the body does not think. The body is thrown aside in favor of the brain, just as it was thrown aside by Cartesian dualism in favor of the body separated from the mind.

Descartes separated the sensation from the idea of the sensation so that for him we only directly experience the idea in the mind and this is a different thing from the sensation itself. Ideas in the mind can be trusted in a way that sensations of the body cannot. The Cartesian legacy that remains with us today even amidst physicalism and materialisms of various sorts, is the indirect quality of knowledge whereby ideas are separate things from the sensations themselves, which is what makes them more certain and worthy of the attention of the serious epistemologist.

What ultimately counts as knowledge is only the indirect idea, but the indirect idea may turn out to be more problematic than its counterpart, the sensation. The confusion that abounds here is, I believe, centered primarily around the distinction between consciousness and self-consciousness. While distinguishing between sensations and the ability to reflect upon them is important, it becomes problematic if it is removed too far from the experience, sensation and responsive feeling on which it is based.

We have sensations constantly, and base our maneuvers in the world on the constant flow of sensations. The idea of the sensation, in the Cartesian sense, often involves a judgment of it which may or may not be appropriate. For example, we experience a tree or a person or whatever and then we attribute certain qualities to it; beautiful, ugly, attractive, worthless, and on and on. The former I attribute to the ability to feel or sense, the latter is a cognitive attribute. The judgments we apply are many and varied and have more to do with what is good for us personally or as white, black, male/female, etc., and with our social and cultural values and our perspective as humans than the thing we are experiencing.

The judgments and cognitive emphasis lead us, I believe, to be less aware of the sensation or feeling and so we end up wondering what that is. It even becomes an alien thing to propose that we feel things and yet I strongly suspect we do it all the time. When I say feeling, rather than meaning that we have an emotion, I mean that we experience through all our senses, our spatial awareness and information processing, in a way that comes together as a sensation.

It is through feeling that we reach out to other things around us. The body tends to be seen as clearly divided off from everything else around it, as having a boundary that ends at the skin in its relation to the rest of the world. And yet our sensations take us beyond our own bodies perpetually, bringing other things into our world and taking us out into the world that surrounds us.

In a similar fashion, again following Descartes, the mind tends to be understood as isolated, separated from all other minds. For Descartes, minds were individual substances, essentially separated from each other, as well as the body. Our thoughts, however, are also moving out into the world and bringing the world to us. The boundaries are not so clear when we consider the nature of our relation to our surroundings.

It is not only thinking that teaches us about the world, our thoughts are intricately bound up with our experiences and a felt sense of everything around us, whether we are touched physically or mentally.

*Elfie* leads children to consider some of these questions and ponder over the difference between when we are awake and when we are asleep and how we know. It helps them to know that sometimes things are not as clear as they might seem. However, it does not direct them into the kind of doubt Descartes
subjected us all to.

Howard Gardner, in his book, *Frames of Mind*, considers bodily kinesthetic intelligence as one of the six forms of multiple intelligences. He notes the separation between the mental and the physical, characteristic of Western thought, and the accompanying idea that "... what we do with our bodies is somehow less privileged, less special than those problem-solving routines carried out chiefly through the use of language, logic, or some other relatively abstract symbolic system."

The history of philosophy is characterized by its dismissal of the body and its separation of all reasoning processes from the functioning of the body as a whole. To one degree or another and in various forms, Western philosophy has removed the body from a serious role in human functioning. The body is concrete; thought has become more abstract in its removal from the body. Now, with the rejection of squishy notions of mind, it would seem to be returning to the body, but not quite.

All the emphasis on thought as a process somehow divorced or abstracted from sensation tends to ignore the importance of the body as a whole and attribute a privileged status to the brain, standing in for the mind as the center of the generation of ideas, a position which it does not deserve. This is not to say that we should not pursue a greater understanding of the functioning of the brain or that its machinations are not extremely complex and significant, rather it is to suggest that we should be wary of attributing too much to it in separation from the body of experience. Philosophy, especially, has a role in relating what is understood from brain research to other aspects of human functioning.

"...we do not even know what a body can do" This restatement by Gilles Deleuze in a proposition from Spinoza's *Ethics* brings out the idea that as thought extends beyond our consciousness of it, the body exceeds what we know of it. Spinoza regards the mind and body as the same thing, which is a difficult position to grasp without reducing thought to the mechanical idea of the body, in the context of Western thought where mind and body have been separated as having distinctly different natures. It does make sense, however, if we consider this framework in phenomenological terms.

For Spinoza the idea in the mind and the sensation of the body are likewise one and the same thing. They are not separate, so that the sensation of the body is thus as direct as the idea in the mind. Sensation could not be merely indirectly known as an idea in the mind, as they are the same. While we can make a distinction between a sensation and ideas about it or reflections upon it, the sensation and the ideas remain connected in the experience of body and mind.

It is then possible to consider the body in a sense that is mechanical, the body as intelligent not simply because it has a complex brain demonstrating thought processes, but as a functioning whole which includes the central processing complexity of the brain. The body itself, as a body of experience, is little understood in terms of its role in imagination, learning, memory, and reasoning.

When we look at how ideas or understandings are actually arrived at, it appears that the body as a whole has a significant part to play, that the body does some of the work of understanding and learning. The senses, also traditionally relegated to the body as machine, when regarded as active processes, can be seen to contribute to the understanding as well. Our bodies meet and interact with other bodies to give us an understanding of the world we move in, in relation to other things. This process tends to be conceived of as a cognitive process where ideas of things are examined in the abstract, detached from bodies.

The result of this is exemplified in Thomas Nagel's "What is it like to be a bat?" where Nagel concludes we cannot know what it is like to be a bat. Knowing is regarded as a purely cognitive process and yet we can transport ourselves through imagination to the world of the bat by the creation of vivid image or description. This kind of imagination is discounted as a real contribution to knowing in any sense. Rather than imagination being the source of the possible error, I would conjecture that it is reasoning in abstraction that is likely to produce a manufactured "knowing" unrelated to the real bat.

This is a bit like Elfie touching her eyes to see if they are open. Doesn't she already know that? Touch reinforces the sensation in a cognitive way. It overlays the idea of being awake on top of the sensation. If it remains in sight of the sensation, the idea draws out another layer of the relation between thought and sensation, that which I am calling self-consciousness.

We understand the senses separately from each other as fairly passive mechanical processes. The eyes by themselves do not see, that seems clear enough. However, the way in which seeing is understood is limited by the emphasis on the eyes as a mechanism and the brain as information processing center. The parts are understood in isolation from each other rather than as a whole in which the parts are not simply able to be taken out like the oil pump or carburetor in a car and known totally in terms of the part they play.

The senses functioning together, whatever senses are present, produce an overall picture, conception or understanding, a gestalt. I am calling this feeling, not to be confused with emotion. No doubt feeling combines a sense of space as well as touch, visual and audible characteristics and taste and odor. All of these contribute to a sense or feeling for things. The imagination is able to draw strongly on these senses in intricate detail and even to associate with other things or other bodies, to such an extent that a very detailed sense of the other is able to be achieved.

This kind of knowing I associate with immediate knowing. Hegel's dull consciousness, which he also considers as predominantly based on feeling. It is immediate in that "thought" is able to reflect upon it but it is not achieved through thinking or reflection. This is the experience that reason is able to examine and evaluate. It is both the basis of knowing and a knowing in itself.

Of course the brain is involved in this whole process, coordinating and feeding information back and forth. However, the body at least provides the basic sensation and to some extent becomes programmed, as in activities occurring at such a
rapid rate that feedback from other systems is not possible. At the same time continual feedback between visual and linguistic and kinesthetic systems allows refinement of motor skills.

"...the operation of the movement system is tremendously complex, calling upon the coordination of a dizzying variety of neural and muscular components in a highly differentiated and integrated fashion... Feedback mechanisms are highly articulated, so that motor movements are subjected to continuous refinement and regulation on the basis of a comparison of the intended goal state and the actual position of the limbs or body parts at a particular moment in time."

The point is, the body in space is significant in our sense of being in the world and in relation to other things, even though the brain would appear to stand at the center of information/sensation processing. In order to understand feeling or sensation in this sense, the brain is an intricate part of the body as a whole, not the source of explanation of all things bodily.

Theorists such as Irigaray and Kristeva have sought to redefine the importance of the body by presenting an immanence of the body in notions of the subject and discourse. Both seek to revalue what has been aligned with woman and negated as inferior. They have theorized the subject in terms of aspects that are traditionally excluded. Irigaray highlights the significance of touch and privileges it as a female pleasure equivalent to what she defines as the male pleasure of looking. The significance of pleasure brings us immediately to the body in the pleasure of looking as well as touch. The body becomes a necessary and integral part of the subject.

Kristeva's semiotic is essentially grounded in the body. It represents the articulation of the body through movement, gesture and rhythm and is pre-symbolic. It is the internal sense of the body, not a cognitive reflection upon it, which is characteristic of judgment in the symbolic sphere. The symbolic or social environment of language and other systems of meaning is essentially built on the semiotic and its material articulation of the body.

The symbolic is lived before it is known in the reflective sense of judgment and this is the foundation on which the individual enters the social environment. The semiotic, aligned by Kristeva with the body, is particular in its articulation, it is individual, and is nevertheless touched by the social world through the mother. The main point is that it is essentially bodily, it is the experience of the world through the body as articulated rather than through language or conceptual systems.

Philosophy itself must eventually come to a recognition that thought is couched in experience, that thought is not the only experience and that reflection on experience does not necessarily require abstraction from experience. Besides revaluing and reinterpreting aspects of human being that have been negatively associated with femininity, philosophy for children has the potential to bring out the concrete basis of thought and the situation of thought within it.

Philosophical inquiries in Philosophy for Children deal with concepts within a context drawing on imagination, associated experience and reflection on these.

Ursula Hegi in her novel Floating in My Mother's Palm beautifully describes the transporting achieved through imagination, to another's world:

"The pastor's sister, Hannelore Beier, was a woman in her thirties with crippled hands. Her fingers overlapped and drew themselves toward her palms, birdlike claws which she refused to hide. When she taught Sunday school, she moved them gracefully, those stiff extensions of herself, weaving the texture of her words into our hearts.

"Her eyes looked tired when she quoted passages from the Bible at length. From her bag she'd bring out old books bound in green or red leather; the lines in her face dissolved and her slight body seemed to grow as she took the words of Goethe and Mann and Rilke from the pages of those books and made them breathe as if they were being written now—for us."

This excerpt describes the extent to which the child (the writer) was able to closely observe, and in a sense enter the world of this woman so alien from her in many ways. It also shows how, like a well acted play, a well read story "comes alive" in the mind, imagination, subjectivity of the reader/hearer. The words transport the hearer to the world of another creature as described in the next paragraph;

"Her favorite writer was Rainer Maria Rilke. One winter morning, in the basement, she read us his poem about the panther in the Jardin des Plantes, Paris and her voice evoked the powerful animal pacing behind the bars of his cage until to him it seemed as though there were a thousand bars and nothing beyond them. Outside it was snowing wet, thick flakes that fastened themselves like cat tracks to the narrow windows of the church hall before they slid off, leaving watery trails on the glass. We pulled our chairs into a circle that included hers and we barely dared to breathe while she read. We knew what it was like to be that panther. We too felt locked into ourselves at times because we wanted to know everything in the world and were beginning to fear that this would never be possible."

"Fraulein Beier copied the poems we liked on lined pages in green ink. Square and awkward, her letters slanted on the left, and when I read them I imagined her stiff fingers setting the tip of the fountain pen against the page, forming those words which opened us to people and places far beyond our town."

As we read Hegi's novel we are taken to the church basement and see the snow falling and melting against the windows, feel the cold, and draw metaphorically closer in the circle with the entranced children. The child is in the cage with the panther, feeling its powerful, pacing shoulders, seeing its view of the bars, even though she knows she is in the church hall with Fraulein Beier. The child also knows how much more there is to know, how little of the world she knows and the handwritten poems evoke for her the labor of the person who so carefully wrote them for her as well as other places and people beyond her own town.

The ability to feel within our own bodies what another thing is like or even what it is like to be that thing is important in many of our daily motor functions as well as our relation to the world. Through keen observation, imitation and re-creation we not only learn to "act gracefully and to apprehend directly the
actions or dynamic abilities of other people or objects”, we also come to understand. In mimicking we are able to take ourselves “through the experiences and feelings of others”, allowing us to participate and understand. This has implications for how we act in the world and ethical implications for how we relate to our surroundings.

The seven novels in the Philosophy for Children curriculum relate to real issues in the lives of everyday children and the adults around them. The philosophical notions are connected to these everyday happenings and indicate the point of logical reasoning and concepts as well as exercising these abilities. Reasoning is alive and can be developed in children in connection with their awareness, it can help to separate the judgments they learn from the adults around them, from the experience of things.

The aim is to develop awareness rather than override it with reasoning. Children are to a great extent aware that there are many things they do not know, they are not often enough affirmed in what they do know. We take for granted things like learning to walk and doing up shoe laces, in the sense that we do not take it to be anything special, however, it is something that every child achieves for themselves. They also learn to speak and draw and make distinctions. These are all things that are worth affirming and helping the child to acknowledge for themselves.

When we teach the child that when they describe the color or shape or size or weight of an object they are making distinctions about the object we are guiding the ability they already have and developing it further in a non-judgmental way. We are not teaching them to make distinctions, we are affirming and enhancing their ability to make distinctions.

The traditional philosopher might want to suggest that they did not know they were making distinctions so they did not have any real knowledge. Knowing that this is called a distinction is not the only knowledge involved. Knowing that we are making distinctions only comes from making distinctions in the first place.

The distinctions we make about the nature of things in the world comes from our experience of them. How do I know that something is hard or soft? I touch it and my fingers are impressed by it or impress upon it. We have a working knowledge of these sorts of things based on many experiences, so that we rarely need to stop and think about it as we go along. The body operates around the sensing and processing of information, just like driving a car. Once we know how to drive, once we have mastered all the movements involved, we no longer have to concentrate on how much pressure we place on the accelerator or brake pedal or where third gear is.

Driving is artificial in that we think about it in a way that we do not think about other things we learn, such as walking or speaking. Deliberate cognitive application to certain kinds of activities is not so important. However, that does not make it any less a commendable skill and one that I can say I know in a real sense.

Have you ever considered the world from the point of view of your feet? Along with the spatial awareness contributed by the body as a whole, the judgment of distance achieved through vision and sense of balance, a tremendous amount of sensing is achieved through our feet as we move around in the world. We do not need to look constantly at where we are placing our feet in order to negotiate anything from the simplest to the most difficult terrain, once we have taken it in for a moment. We walk up steps while talking or looking elsewhere, often successfully, we step over things without even noticing they are there, even tiny children will do this after a bit of practice.

Where is our awareness when we are doing these sorts of things? Is consciousness only awareness of a very deliberate sort—the awareness of the awareness? Can we say that it is knowledge of a significant sort that enables us to do these things? It seems to be the sort of knowledge necessary for building other fine motor skills onto besides being the sort of knowledge we need for basic survival and the ability to operate effectively in the world.

In focused concentration we are witnessing the creation of consciousness, and then we can go further and begin to construct a consciousness of that consciousness—self-consciousness where the object of our focus is not merely ideas but how did I do that, how was I thinking in order to do that, and so on.

Body knowledge is the primary focus, directedness that enables us to achieve a goal, it is necessary and often overlooked as having any kind of importance or relevance to “real” knowledge. We are often more aware of how it can go wrong than of how much we get it right, to what extent it works for us. We cannot build on what we get wrong except by finding out where it went wrong and to do that we need to have some understanding of how we do it when we do it well. The fact that we get it wrong at times is no good reason to dismiss the effectiveness of this kind of knowledge altogether.

Activities are especially important in reinforcing and affirming this kind of knowledge. Asking the children to do something active not only concretizes the concept you are teaching them but also allows them to literally get a sense of what is going on, through their bodies. This is and must be a bodily process in which movement is very important. For some children, moving their bodies is a necessary part of learning to the extent that if they cannot move around, learning may not take place.

Drama, dance, games, art as well as simple exercises like moving round the room quietly to find an object and identify certain of its characteristics, are all ways in which learning can be enhanced in a way that recognizes the role of the body. Drawing on children’s own sense of themselves and their bodies enhances their ability to relate to the world in their particular way and to participate in it in a valuable way through an important human capacity—the understanding.

“... when we pick up an object that we have not lifted before, we draw on muscle memories of lifting objects of similar bulk and density as a natural mode of anticipating what our body will have to perform. Past experiences of lifting are symbolized in a kinesthetic language, which is drawn on directly by the body, without the need for any other symbolic intervention. By the same token, when we see someone sucking a lemon, we are likely to feel a distinct activity in the mouth and throat as if we were tasting...
Reasoning as Dialogical Inquiry: 
A Model for the Liberation of Women

Jen Glaser

"We should live not towards another thinker of whom we wish to know nothing beyond his thinking but, even if the other is a thinker, towards his bodily life over and above his thinking—rather, towards his person, to which to be sure, the activity of thinking belongs.

—Martin Buber (1979, p47)

I remember a story I once read that was written to confront the gender stereotypes that are so deeply embedded in our culture. The story was about 'Baby X'. Baby X was part of a very 'x'pensive 'x'periment... Baby X was to be raised without anyone knowing whether 'it' was a boy or a girl. The aunts and uncles had their noses out of joint as they were unsure what type of presents to buy or what color clothing to knit. Strangers stopped complimenting X as they weren't sure if they should be noting how 'pretty' X was, or how 'clever'—and the teachers at school were concerned as they were unsure what encouragement to give X—should X be encouraged to go outside with the boys and play football, or encouraged to stay inside and play shop with the girls? Was X's math good for a girl? or was X's poetry good for a boy? The story ends with the boys in X's class beginning to play with dolls, and the girls demanding an equal place on the sports teams.

What X had done for the other students, the parents and the teachers, was to model the possibility of things being other than they were. Because X's identity was concealed, the girls had to confront the possibility that perhaps a boy could enjoy playing with dolls, and the boys had to confront the possibility that perhaps a girl could be good at sports. They also had to confront the possibility of treating someone of the opposite sex as an equal, as someone who thought about things in the same 'boyish' or 'girlish' way that they did. X was able to experience life as a person before experiencing it as a gender.

This story has stayed with me because I think it alerts us to a couple of very important truths. It alerts us to the fact that children are, from their earliest

the acid; or when someone cries, we frequently feel a rising lump in our throats 13

Reasoning combined with a sense of the concrete experience of things is invaluable in an ethical understanding. Qualities such as caring or feeling for (qualities largely attributed to women and therefore seen as inferior or insignificant) are underplayed in the goal of real knowledge; however, they are an integral part of it. Our knowledge and reasoning in relation to ourselves and the world depend on these and are greatly enhanced by them.

We know little about what the body can do or how the body as a whole contributes to or is an integral part of reasoning, imagining, and learning. Research in the field of learning, however, is beginning to highlight the bodily processes related to learning. The body is after all, the concrete aspect of thought.

NOTES
3. Section 2, pp.45.
4. Howard Gardner, Frames of Mind, Basic Books, 1985, p.208. The six intelligences are linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic and the personal intelligences. The spatial and personal intelligences also have implications for the role of the body as I am discussing it here.
moments, actively engaged in gender construction, and it also alerts us to the importance of lived experience in education. Children learn through their interaction with others and through reflection on these interactions. In creating an environment which modelled equality between the sexes, the children came not only to see that equality was possible in theory, they came to experience equality within their own lives. I would argue that such experience is an essential prerequisite for change.

The last decade and a half has seen Australia legislate for equal opportunity in the work place and campaign for equal opportunity in the schools, addressing such areas as participation rates, sexism in curriculum materials, learning patterns, classroom dynamics and the organization of schools. The government has mounted massive media campaigns in the hope of persuading girls to widen their choices by taking math and/or science in their final high school years. These strategies will, according to the politicians, enable us to become the 'clever country' after all... yet while these changes have set the stage for the liberation of women, research points to the fact that despite the active campaign the old gender stereotypes are continuing to emerge in our schools and society. (e.g., boys tend to dominate technology and science, while girls dominate the humanities; boys are seen to 'pursue careers' while girls continue to 'follow interests', etc.).

There continues to be a gap between the static 'theory' of equal opportunity and the dynamic 'practice' of gender construction. This gap might be filled if our children, like the children in the story, were provided with a living experience of equality that enabled them to perceive themselves and each other in ways other than according to traditional gender roles.

It is in its potential for bridging this gap between the theory of gender equality and the practice of gender construction that I believe the concept of a 'community of inquiry' becomes so powerful. The community of inquiry offers a model of reasoning that is grounded in lived experience and realtionship. It involves the engagement of self with other through dialogical inquiry. It is a social experience that involves reasoning with others as well as reasoning about products of thought. As a living experience, the dynamics of the dialogue become as much a part of the construction of meaning as do the words the students say. Furthermore, the ethical principles on which such a community is based ensure that the experience is based on equality and mutuality rather than inequality and difference.

Because the primary relationship within such a community is a relationship between persons, the ethical and social aspects of this encounter become central to the very notion of reason itself. Empathy, openness, respect for the integrity of persons, along with aspects of communication such as the role of silence and gesture, become significant features of reasoning as dialogical inquiry. By expanding our concept of reason to encompass aspects of this human encounter the concept of reason is transformed into one which emphasizes the quality of human relationship as well as the interaction between ideas.

One of the defining characteristics of this relationship is that it is egalitarian in nature. This characteristic emerges from the nature of dialogue itself as a meeting between 'self' and 'other'. In the act of dialogue I recognize my own existence as 'an instance' of something more general. Dialogue presupposes the existence of other minds (of other beings in the world) and in so doing is tied to the notion of point of view.

Each of us is the subject of various experiences, and to understand that there are other people in the world as well, one must be able to conceive of experiences of which one is not the subject: experiences that are not present to oneself. To do this it is necessary to have a general conception of subjects of experience and to place oneself under it as an instance. (Nagel, p. 20).

Once we accept this, reasoning well about what is right (or reasonable, or good, etc.), requires us to consider all points of view, including our own, in relation to the paradigms, assumptions and ideas that underlie and inform them. Such reasoning corresponds to Buber's definition of 'technical dialogue' as dialogue "prompted by the need for objective understanding" (Buber, 1979, p. 39)—dialogue in which we are aware of others as "something that is not oneself, but with whom one nevertheless communicates."

Through such communication we are able to recognize the limits imposed by our own subjectivity. My view becomes a view, one view amongst many. Such a relationship is essentially egalitarian in nature because no point of view occupies a privileged position. My view is not more absolute or legitimate simply because it is mine rather than yours. "It is the analogue for minds of a centerless conception of space for physical objects, in which no point has a privileged position." (Nagel, p. 20).

This not only means that the content of what I say should reflect that I am aware of my own subjectivity and take other viewpoints into account, but that the experience of encounter between 'self' and 'other' should also be based on egalitarian principles. That is to say, we, as persons engaged together, will face each other as equals. This is expressed both in the way we relate to each other as persons in general (for instance, through showing each other respect) as well as in the way we acknowledge each other's particularity as the distinct person we each are (for instance, as a person with a specific history and set of life experiences, and as persons of a particular gender).

Given that the ethical (egalitarian) basis of dialogical inquiry emerges from our common identity as persons, and that persons can be either female or male, then the egalitarian nature of the encounter should not be affected by gender difference. Feminine and masculine will be equally valued, and this should be as true for the relationship between individuals who are male and female as it is for the feminine and masculine that is within each of us. This requires that within a community of inquiry those aspects of 'self' that are labelled as 'masculine' or 'feminine' by society—and valued (or devalued) accordingly—will be taken as equally valid in relation to what they can contribute to the inquiry. Gender distinctions will be ones of difference rather than dominance.

Once reasoning (dialogical inquiry) is seen as an encounter between 'self' and 'other', then such an encounter will by its
very nature be contextualized and grounded in the life experience of those taking part. It will be shaped by the contingent aspects of 'self' which uniquely identify the participants as the individuals they are, as well as by those aspects they share in common with each other as persons. Within a classroom community of inquiry this is often seen in the interplay between students' collective exploration of a topic and the examples and associations they draw upon from within their own particular life experiences.

Such a model of reasoning can be seen to answer the call by feminists to develop a conception of reason which "...includes perspectives, participants and specificity.'

Since the Seventeenth Century reason has been understood in dichotomous terms, excluding passions, the body, emotions, nature, faith, dreaming and lived experience (Lloyd). Questioning this binary code of categorization feminists have demonstrated that reasoning is a concept associated with the norms and values of masculinity. Feminist theory is not interested in reversing the value of rationalization but in questioning the very structure of the binary category. Feminist theory seeks to transform and extend the conceptualization of reasoning including concepts like experience, body and history. In taking women's life experiences as a starting point, feminists attempt to develop alternatives to the rigid male concept of reason it seeks. Reason not alienated from life experience. A reason that includes perspectives, participants and specificity. (Gross, p. 190)

The community of inquiry provides an environment in which a number of the traditional gender dualisms break down—where reason and intuition are not necessarily seen in opposition; where emotional responses provide valid material for reflection and can be taken as seriously as logic; where the private self struggles to find expression in the public arena; and the aesthetic sensibility is as relevant as the mathematical (and this is true regardless of whether we feel these dualisms to be culturally or biologically based). Within such a community students draw upon 'feminine' and 'masculine' aspects of thinking as they are appropriate within the context of the discussion. It is not that the distinctions characterized by the dualisms disappear, but their identity as dualisms disappear.

Instead, the alternate modes of thinking experienced by the participants act in counterpoint.

My claim here in regard to the dynamics of dialogue and its effect on traditional gender dualisms brings to mind a yiddish folk story in which a man sets out to capture the West Wind. Taking a jar on a particularly stormy afternoon, he holds it open to the wind and then tightly seals it. Later, when he opens the jar and nothing stirs he cannot understand how the wind has come to escape. Time and time again he tries but to no avail.

Attempting to examine the dynamics of dialogue is a bit like trying to catch the wind. It is the very movement of the dichotomy that does away with the dichotomy between the 'male' and 'female' characteristics of thinking enabling them to act together in counterpoint. The dynamics of the dialogue provide movement along a series of continuums where connections are constantly explored between one's own point of view and that of others, between reason and intuition, between subjective experience and objective standards, between feelings and the intellect, and so on. In so doing the participants are empowered to draw upon different dimensions of thinking as they are appropriate within the context of the discussion and the mode of thinking experienced by the co-inquirers in the group.

Within such a community, differences in thinking not only add a richness to the dialogue but also make demands on each member of the community to treat each other's thoughts seriously and to make a genuine effort to understand points of view that differ from their own. Being so engaged, each person experiences modes of thinking that do not come naturally as their 'preferred' approach. Thus even where traditional gender patterns are already established (e.g., where the girls can be counted on to respond from a nurturing standpoint and the boys to respond in the 'cool light of reason') the onus is on the boys not to treat the girls' response dismissively as 'emotional' and the girls not to dismiss the boys' argument as 'cold and hard.'

Whatever the gender, the logical thinker now seeks to understand the aesthetic, and the person who reasons from particular cases to a general principle is required to think along with another who reasons from general principles to specific instances. This can be an incredibly empowering experience, especially for those who are usually marginalized by their differences within the classroom setting. This includes girls who experience marginalization (overly and covertly) on the basis of gender, as well as those suffering marginalization for other reasons (for their lack of social skills, lack of confidence, cultural background, atypical thinking patterns, etc).

Through such experiences female students are able to develop a concept of themselves as thoughtful and reflective thinkers who are taken seriously by their peers. They come to see themselves as the originators of ideas rather than within their traditional gender role as supporters to male thinking (elaborating on male ideas, adding embellishment and adornment to the male point of view). The effect of the community of inquiry on male students will also be vitally important for the liberation of women. Within such a community male students begin to see women as equal partners in the quest for meaning, learning to respect the personhood of women and to respond to their ideas seriously.

This claim—stated generally as the claim that students' participation in a community of inquiry can affect the very dynamics of gender construction—rests on the transformative power of dialogue. Gadamer refers to this transformative power of dialogue as the "emergent meaning" that is generated through the fusion of our horizons (our individual world views). Through engaging in dialogue with others we expose our own world view (our construction of meaning). We make public the cutting edge at which our universe ends while remaining open to the fact that other world views may have different horizons, and that our end point may be another's beginning.

This is what makes dialogue revelatory. The emergent meaning which develops through this interchange is not a matter of greater objectivity, but of new understanding. Both worlds are altered, both horizons shift. Dialogue is not a matter of expressing one point of view and hearing another, but a transformation
into communion in which neither person remains what they once were. This is not the claim that they simply become more conscious of themselves as they already are—but that they form themselves, their individuality, through their encounters with others.

In the act of listening, students open themselves to what is essentially beyond their own Self. They have presence for each other. They exist in the world with them. They construct common understandings, and through this gain both a better perception of themselves, and an awareness of the possibilities for change. An important characteristic of good reasoning in this situation will be the ability to judge significance—to decide what thread of conversation is worth pursuing, what is significant out of all that has been said. To wait for it, listen for it, and hope to recognize it. In this way reasoning as dialogical inquiry is focused toward the future—toward the potentiality of where the dialogue may yet lead, rather than focused backward, concerned with the retrospective reconstruction of the argument.

The impact of this experience can radically change the way students perceive themselves and their peers and improve the quality of their reasoning. In offering students alternate ways of seeing (e.g., new ideas, different points of view, different modes of thinking) dialogical inquiry can lead them to become more cautious in generalizing from their own particular experience. It can lead students to value the ‘tentative stance’ as one of strength rather than weakness and replace the peer judgment that indecision or non-commitment is a weakness (reflected in such comments as: “Why aren't you game to commit yourself? What are you, a wimp?”) with respect for the other’s independence of thought and judgment. Being tentative comes to reflect an openness to the fact that things may indeed be different than the way they are perceived to be.

The image of dialogical inquiry as entering into communion with others also corresponds to Buber’s notion of encounter in his description of ‘genuine dialogue’. Genuine dialogue is a relationship of direct association and engagement. It involves a ‘turning towards the other’ in which being turns to being in a living mutual relation. Within such a relationship the boundaries between ‘self’ and ‘other’ are dissolved. Buber describes the difference between ‘technical dialogue’ and ‘genuine’ dialogue as the difference between a collection of individuals and a community of persons (Buber, 1979, p. 37).

Encounter is an experience of direct engagement when ‘I’ and ‘You’ lose their subjectivity in an encompassing ‘oneness’. It involves reciprocity, a relationship in which: “I require you to become, becoming ‘T, I say ‘you’ ” (Buber, 1970, p. 62). It is this common humanity and interdependence that enables students to sit in silence and give each other comfort, or to understand the word badly spoken, or not spoken at all.

Lipman and Sharp (Sharp, p.33) refer to this oneness of dialogue, when they point to the fact that children who are engaged in reasoning are often not conscious of themselves as separate subjects of experience. Their consciousness is of themselves as the one community. Sensitivity to this oneness manifests itself whenever students show awareness of such things as the unspoken doubt behind a question, help each other to find words that express an idea, or build upon each other’s idea in a fluid way. Encounter enables students to hear one set of words and understand another—to ask each other, “Is this a relevant example?”, or “Does anyone know what I'm trying to say?” Dialogue moves us beyond our subjectivity not by ‘knowing what it is like to be someone else’, but by joining with them in the experience of mutuality.

Such encounter provides the potential to bridge the dichotomy which exists when gender difference is seen in terms of differentiation and objectification by transforming it into one of direct association and engagement.

**NOTES**

2. For many examples, see: Michelle Stanworth: *Gender and Schooling*
3. Such reasoning can be viewed as a process rather than a product, it is dynamic, involving persons engaged together, rather than a static object of thought (that is, as an argument presented as ‘end product,’ composed in its final form).

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


Male Dominance and the Mastery of Reason

Felicity Haynes

Dear Teacher:

I am a survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no man should witness: Gas chambers built by learned engineers. Infants killed by trained nurses. Women and babies shot and burned by high school and college graduates.

So I am suspicious of education. My request is: Help your students become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmanns. Reading, writing, and arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human.

—author unknown: in Haim Ginott, Teacher and Child

The mastery of reason is a provocative title used by Valerie Walkerdine (1988) to suggest that the production of rationality as “real understanding” is merely an attempt to sustain our present social and political order, particularly male dominance, through a separation of formal operations from “the subjective mode”. She argues that what we view as “natural language” is an historically produced phenomenon, and that codification of language is part of attempts toward rational government, and especially the political necessity of producing a governable nation out of disparate groups. She presents a Lacanian view that “reason’s dream is a fantasy of equality, an attempt to create ‘normal subjects’ while failing to tackle “fundamental oppressions and exploitations”.

She is writing about “child-centered” mathematics, the attempt to teach the child to discover mathematical rules by active discovery, but she does generalize to the current practices of teaching rationality, which seem to apply to those who, like Lipman, wish to have children discover for themselves both the rules of formal logic and the value of abstract reflection. In this paper I want to explore, via epistemology, to what extent, like Lloyd (1984), her feminist politics devalues rationality, the impartial examination of premises and esteem for individuality, and to what extent the teachers of Philosophy for Children can be accused of oppression and exploitation through their promotion of those values.

The shift from overt to covert power

Walkerdine would have us believe that a pedagogy involving children’s discovery of formal operations is not genuinely democratic but renders power dangerously invisible, deeply embedded in classroom discourse. She seeks to persuade us that much education is wrongly driven by a Piagetian or neo-Kantian assumption that children can reason naturally, that the formal operations of maths and logic are something that could be arrived at naturally through discussion and experiment with the physical world. She tries to unpack an alternative epistemology that makes those same rational structures a human production.

She quotes the following from a UK document on the teaching of Mathematics in Primary Schools (1956, p. v, vi):

She cites (Walkerdine, 1988, p. 159) an episode from the mathematics work of a top infant class. The teacher had chosen to take a group of children whom she considered ready for work on place-value. For this teacher, consonant with the current discursive practices in which she is inserted, children are taken to ‘discover the place-value concept’. She gives the children matchsticks to count and group—and represent with numerals in a place-value system—believing that the relations of value between the numerals in that system will be apparent to the children because they will be presented concretely as relations between bundles of ten and single matchsticks. In the dialogue which accompanies the activity with the bundles of matchsticks, the teacher, in a sense, tells the children what they are supposed to be experiencing and discovering. “Even when she is not being didactic, she is providing the children with cues which reveal the properties of place-value which the objects they are manipulating are supposed to supply. This, however, is not part of the teacher’s intention, and the phenomena which our analysis show are rendered invisible by the teacher’s understanding of
the experience as central and by the way we tend to take talk and gesture for granted in interaction" (Walkerdine, p. 169).

The teacher had set the activity up in a particular way and produced a certain reading of what happened. Walkerdine examines the effectiveness of that reading while also producing an alternative, a reading which renders visible aspects of signification which the teacher cannot easily 'see'. She presents an alternative reading of the classroom activities.

One could argue that in maths it is easy to promote activities which present themselves as if the maths were real, as if the bundles had to consist of ten matchsticks. But we are aware of different possible mathematical systems, even a binary one. It's just that we use the decimal one for its functional and historical value. Early Piagetian theory did seem to present the basic principles of logic as different, as universal, beyond any social history. Harry Stottlemeyer's Discovery presents an account of a boy who, true to Piagetian theory, begins to articulate for himself, unguided, the rules of syllogistic knowledge. There is a sense in which Lipman has him discover them rather than invent them, and in which the philosophy teacher encourages children to "test" for themselves to see whether Harry's discovery is 'true'.

It has been claimed (ACER, c.1987), that the Philosophy for Children program is little more than "a natural extension of every child's ability to wonder and to puzzle over ideas, and of every child's need to make sense of his/her world". One reason given for promoting Philosophy for Children in schools is that children do it naturally—they are, it is claimed, born philosophers, and will, given the opportunity to reflect on their actions in the world, be able to discover the rules of syllogistic logic alongside Harry. But the Philosophy for Children program has never claimed that children innately possess a reasoning ability outside discursive structures. It is acknowledged that a teacher is necessary to guide a child towards philosophical thinking. When an eight-year-old opens a classroom philosophy discussion with the question, "If (Elfi) wasn't a real person, how could she think or talk?" the words in the passage they have just read have encouraged the children to "make" connections between personhood and talking that they might never have made spontaneously. The teacher relies upon the Lipman texts to present issues for the children to choose from.

Moreover, the texts do not have heroes, heroines or central points of view. Harry is only one of a number of characters in the text. The advantage of presenting the dramatic text, as Socrates and Sartre found, is that it offers a dialectic of positions without claiming any authority for one position. While direction is more covert than in any direct discourse, the texts cannot be said to be coercive or didactic. The characters present their alternate readings of situations, issues and behavior. The teacher, in encouraging the readers of the text to make connections, is taking on no more responsibility than to give them tools which make it easier to stand aside and reflect on the views presented in the text.

**Teacher manipulation**

Walkerdine's analysis of classroom video tapes showed to what extent the activities, gestures, verbal interactions are organized in the math classroom. There is enough anecdotal evidence to suggest that much time is spent in Philosophy for Children classes "shaping" the children's questions to appropriate form. "Appropriate" could be interpreted as whatever fits the dominant mode of discourse, and in Western society that is often a male-dominated, hierarchical move towards abstraction. Is this manipulative, or is it simply an acknowledgement of current conventions regarding the communicative function of propositional language? To what extent is a teacher needed to persuade children that they should be able to give consistent reasons to justify their actions and reactions and that through reason they can and should become autonomous? To what extent are they being covertly persuaded that they have discovered a universal and "true" logical patterning of their language and assumptions? To what extent are they being illegitimately persuaded by a male-dominated system that mastery of reason will lead to a better life and a better society?

I have seen some Philosophy for Children classes where the teacher, trained in Aristotelian or Kantian philosophy, begins to worry if the discussion does not head towards an explicit discussion of the rules of syllogistic logic, and in panic, hands out the manual exercises with a sigh of relief that he is seen to be teaching the class something. While this might be honest, it would hardly be regarded as liberating for the students. Because it denies the child an active participation in the "uncovering" it is surely more oppressive and exploitative than allowing the child to "find" them, let alone disagree with or discuss them. But it hardly counts as meeting the spirit of a community of inquiry that Philosophy for Children espouses.

It is known that teachers who are trained in philosophy get better results in having their children "think" philosophically, than untrained teachers. They are 'leading' the children, almost directly as Plato led the slave boy to 'discover' Pythagoras' theorem. But they are not imposing a structure on their thought, or allowing them to passively subsume it. "We see a role for logic in helping children sort out and understand their own activities, even to the point of recognizing how some of the things they do can undermine their intentions and actions in other respects. But this is not to conceive of logic as a technique for decision-making, as if one need only feed the data into the mechanism and the right answers will automatically pop out." (Lipman and Sharp, 1978, p. 363). The children are asked for their good reasons for their actions and beliefs, and the teacher is encouraged to listen actively, sensitively. How can we persuade Walkerdine that the "good reasons" are neutral, non-coercive? We have to look more closely at the type of discovery the child makes and what validates it.

Given the wide range of possible reactions to the text by each child, the teacher is responsible for facilitating some discussion that relates the different reactions of individual class members but there are no answers suggested in the text, and the weighting of good and bad characters is less obvious than in Socrates. The children are being asked simply to stand aside and reflect on their initial reactions, to reflect critically and logically with the help of their teacher.
The separation of language and logic

Walkerdine (1988, p. 60) accuses Piaget of assuming that signs, both linguistic and other, represent concepts formed through activity and representation, of leading teachers to assume that there can exist an unmediated relationship between subject and object, between knower and known, between subject and the physical world. More generally, she argues that the "universals are wrong in focus- ing upon the notion of development as a matter of an individual interacting with his/her physical environment, a semantic features approach assuming a linguistic system in which meaning is created in relation to a set of universal features, that is, we have perceptual universals and an object world. When Piaget (1929), for instance, asks children aged 6-11 whether words are strong, he expects different answers at different stages of development because he assumes they begin by confusing a word with its meaning, a sign with the thing signified and only later learn to master and appreciate this important distinction.

But Piaget said, in answer to a question put by Patrick Suppes in Paris in 1965, that children learn formal operations through everyday discourse, that they learn to reason by means of situations they can evoke, or imagine, as well as by means of combinations of terms (quoted from Ennis, in Modgil and Modgil, 1982, p. 126). There is a need to teach them reasoned reflection in order to avoid the relativistic attitude that anything goes, that any reaction counts. Oscanyan (in Lipman and Sharp, 1978, p. 274) details the close connections between even conditional logic and everyday language. There is a relationship between the community of inquiry, the mechanics of dialogue and the emergence and development of philosophical reasoning (McCall, 1988) which allows the maturing child to distance himself or herself from the context of his use of language and manipulate it abstractly with formal operations. Using Walkerdine's methodology of analyzing discourse, we can see that children can originate philosophical discourse, authentic issues, many involving abstract concepts and definitions, and many of which remain unresolved. Sheila Rowbotham (1973, p. 14) describes how in the early 60's:

I acquired an implicit way of thinking which made it impossible for me to see my own situation in terms of social and historical change. Things just happened in and of themselves. I picked up an insistence on direct experience and feeling. All removed ways of thinking appeared to me as necessarily suspect.

Walkerdine's point that mathematical and logical rules are discursively ordered rather than arrived at by a kind of empirical discovery or a natural development is accepted. But she still has to account for the construction and modification of those shared discourses. In our post-modern age, we allow that there is no such thing as knowledge of "the world-as-it-really-is" since we can never be separated from the language and activities of certain groups or communities of human beings. If we accept that knowledge is an historical, linguistic and social activity, and as such always open to self-correction, we have also to accept that with the appearance of new data and new evidence, reason has to be taken into account. And to use this intelligent-ly is to give us a safeguard against power relations, dogma and coercion. "Even this form of reasoning is open to revision within the context of questioning, dialogue and praxis" (Sharp, 1992). The practices of reason arise from shared action in lived-in situations. Somehow we have to account for the construction of reality in our language, even our verbal language. We do have unmediated contact with a physical world, and occasion-ally, albeit rarely, the world presents disconfirming instances to our linguistic structures, and requires us to modify them. We have to take responsibility not only for our construction of math and scientific artifacts, but for human con-structs such as sexuality, madness and rationality. How can the self-corrective mechanisms be made to function in ways to protect the differences between men and women in classroom discussion?

The community of inquiry:

In that oxymoron of child-centered pedagogy, the discipline shifts from visible to invisible, overt to covert regulation. The teacher's role is not to give answers but to lead the children to construct their own reasons for their actions and beliefs. This raises the question of whether all children will naturally come to question and discover for themselves the power of the structures of formal logic so visibly portrayed in Harry or even whether there are some children who will recognize the importance of logical structure naturally and with coaxing by the teacher. We are not simply raising important ques-tions here about the pedagogic role of the teacher in teaching logic, but asking the further question as to whether the formal structures which underlie what currently constitutes good reasoning are necessary and universal, or whether they have been politically engineered to be so by a society dominated by males. There is a maze of empirical questions here—whether the Philosophy for Children program assumes one rather than the other, whether formal logic can be taught through informal dialogue.

A community of inquiry is characteriz-ed by dialogue that is fashioned collaboratively out of the reasoned contribution of all participants. Students, en-couraged by the teacher, learn to object to weak reasoning, build on strong reasoning, follow the inquiry where it leads, draw logical inferences from the remarks of others, collaboratively engage in self-correction where necessary. Does this central criterion of what it is to pro-fer a good reason for one's beliefs or ac-tions not beg the question of power? Who decides what is to count as a good reason? "Power then became the over-throw of the Other in rational argument—the teacher's claim to know.

I submit that such power is essential to the new profession of reasoners and that the fantasy inherent is Reason's dream, an idealized and calculable universe, is part and parcel of the dream of rational government. The dream, therefore, is not just a wild and crazy dream of playing God, but a fantasy invested in current at-tempts to govern through bourgeois democracy" (Walkerdine, p. 214). Well, if we have to accept the emotion of the argument, that is true. The emphasis on rational argument does not require that the final arbiter be the teacher. Often it is not. The children themselves often decide the criteria for good reasons, and thereby give themselves the power. And that is not manipulated by the teacher.
If coercive teacher control power is not acceptable to Walkerdine, nor this “bourgeois democracy”, what alternative are we left with? A Feyerabendian anarchy of anything goes? Any differentiation between possible loci of control in the classroom will leave us with an abstracted structure which destroys the flow. Walkerdine is right to a certain extent that language, especially that of the “experts”, delineates boundaries and borders in an effort to classify, categorize and ultimately to predict and control not only things, but human behavior. The very separation of views of the world into male and female ones carries with it an implication that those are discrepant, mutually exclusive and incommensurable. If we cannot hop back into “the real world” to see if this is so, we have somehow to be able to move into a different structure or level of thinking to do it (See Grimshaw, 1986, ch 3 for a fuller discussion of this). With Marilyn French, women have to somehow get “beyond power”. Does this mean that they have to get beyond language and reason? Or can they reconstruct language so that it no longer embeds the power? And if so, from what vantage point can they do it?

The different voices of reason

In 1982, Carol Gilligan criticized Kohlberg for constructing a logo-centered hierarchy of morality based on Piagetian theory. She was horrified that Piaget had chosen males only for his research into a justice conception of morality—moral judgments of girls and women appeared anomalous and difficult to interpret within his original logical hierarchy, and were therefore excluded. Gilligan had earlier identified (1977, 1982, 1984, 1986, 1988) two different modes of thinking about human relationships, the one centered around separation, the other around caring. The caring she called the female voice, the distanced voice the male one. But the former’s association with women was an empirical association, and she wisely withheld any value judgment as to what should be the case. Moreover, the contrasts between male and female voices were presented to highlight a distinction between two modes of thought and to focus on a problem of interpretation rather than to represent a generalization about either sex (1982, p. 2).

In *In a Different Voice*, she reinstates the value of caring to operate reciprocally with a masculine logic of justice that emphasized separation rather than relation. She claims that to focus on one voice is to suppress the other. In her books there is room for both male and female voices, as long as they listen to each other. The recognition of reciprocality means that formal logic need not be manipulative—it is seen as only one of the many reasoning skills that form part of the community of inquiry. The “government of reason” may be a necessary component of patriarchal rule, but formal logic is only a necessary and not sufficient component of it. While the distinction between male and female was reinforced, men used reason to flee from women—a flight into distance, a mind-body split, priority of cognition over feeling, fear of ambiguity (loss of control), preference for deduction over induction, faith in systems rather than responses, preoccupation with logic to the detriment of aesthetics and so on” (Ruth, 1981, p. 47).

Though Walkerdine does not quote Gilligan or Ruth directly, Gilligan too had spoken of the Piagetian conception of cognitive development conveying “a view of people as living in a timeless world of abstract rules. Within this framework there is no reason for teaching history or languages or writing or for paying attention to art and music. And in fact, the flourishing of Piagetian theory within psychology over the past two decades has coincided with the decline of all these subjects in the secondary school curriculum” (Gilligan, 1988, p. xii).

This is strengthened by her more recent writing which shows that boys often chose the more logical justice strategies but said they preferred care solutions. Considering care solutions to be naive and unworkable may well reflect the dominance of a person’s initial or spontaneous approach, but it is not necessarily the one he or she would deem preferable after more consideration. Michael Polanyi had earlier suggested that there were two conflicting aspects of formalized intelligence, one that depends upon the acquisition of formalized instruments (such as propositional logic) and one that depends upon the “pervasive participation of the knowing person in the act of knowing”. Polanyi considers the latter kind of intelligence to rest on an “art which is essentially inarticulate” (Polanyi, 1958, p. 70). A post-Gilligan concept of rationality will involve keeping the balance, the ratio, between the logic of male separation and the connectedness of female caring.

The “maleness” of logic, the balance of rationality:

Walkerdine does not succeed in drawing these two things together. Her definition of rational argument draws on Jakobson and Halle’s distinction between the syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes of a linguistic system. Linguistic signs are formed by a two-fold process of selection and combination. One of the central features of the logico-mathematical discourse, to Walkerdine, is the production of formal logic, modes of making a case, constructing an argument. This rational argument, for her, requires the reduction of the discourse described in relation to mathematics: everything except the central form of the string, with its empty and metonymic signifiers, is suppressed. An argument therefore has as its component apparently the ultimate in rationality—“power produced through the winning mode of argument; the mastery of its form.” The given utterance (message) is a combination of constituent parts (sentences, words, phonemes, etc.) selected from the repository of all possible constituent component parts of the code. Walkerdine argues that the so-called generalizability and context-free nature of abstracted discourse is achieved through the suppression of the metaphorical axis and therefore at some cost to the subject, since as object of this rational and rationalizing discourse, she/he is non-personal, hence the suppression of what is to her distinctly feminine, the emotional and whole.

“My central point, therefore, is that this so-called natural process of mastery entails considerable and complex suppression. That suppression is both painful and extremely powerful. That power is pleasurable. It is the power of the triumph of reason over emotion, the fictional power over the practices of everyday life. The power afforded by the mastery of this discourse is fictional, but its effects are real and material. That is, when this fictional discourse is inscribed in the ‘government of reason’, the bourgeois and patriarchal rule by science, it is indeed inscribed with domination, the bid for a world freed from clouding emotions. The reasonable
person, in Piaget's terms, is in love with 'ideas', not bodies' (Walkerdine, p. 186).

One of the problems is that this is a peculiarly disembodied concept of "reason." The propositional logic and categorical logic identified in Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery most closely correspond to the formal operation of math which Walkerdine discusses in her book. In Philosophy for Children programs, they are taken only temporarily out of their situational context. The rational skills Lipman wishes to develop cover a much wider range of activities than abstracted logic-defining terms, giving reasons, asking questions, learning to be articulate, developing and analyzing concepts, drawing inferences from one or more premises/assumptions, determining consequences, discovering alternatives, becoming aware of complexity, seeing the grey between the black and white, taking all relevant considerations into account, finding underlying assumptions, exploring possibilities, using analogies, constructing hypotheses and generalizations, analyzing and evaluating value statements, classifying and categorizing, formulating and using criteria.

Logicians have traditionally experienced difficulty in pressing ordinary reasoning into a deductive mold and in accounting for our ability to reach conclusions which are not strictly implicit in premises, and Lipman certainly gives no impression that he sees formal logic as the apogee of reasonable thinking. Indeed, he places more emphasis than most on detecting patterns of similarity and dissimilarity through models, analogies, similes, metaphor and myth than most teachers of philosophy, and of even encouraging questions about the use of formal logic as well as its application to mundane actions. Lisa and Suki both act as antagonists to Harry's attempt to formalize the world, and Lisa's attempt to be consistent in her actions and beliefs, to move to a principled basis for moral actions, is founded as much on empathy and caring as on abstracted principles of equality and justice. Even Piaget in his final books on genetic epistemology repeatedly claimed that formal operations needed to be kept dynamic against the context of concrete operations, acknowledging that they arose through the child's constructed linguistic meaning. In the last years of his life, he modified the framework of operatory logic that he himself had formulated, realizing a meaning is never isolated in its assertion or proposition, but always inserted into a system of meanings, with reciprocal implications, a much more dialectical construction than he had previously allowed. The dialectics of development had their own logic which was a result of discursive inferences rather than of formal deduction. The locus of reason has shifted downward from the simple abstractions of formal operations. Philosophy in schools is not only concerned with logical "truths" but with critical and reflective thinking and ongoing analysis of meaning. Within these broader parameters it is possible to criticize the very "logical truths" that help to structure the analysis of meaning. Because it is a reflective activity, it allows for questioning and modifying of the rules of its own organization. To that extent it can be rigorous and open-ended at the same time.

**Power, math and logic**

There is no "authority" outside the mastery of the form of the discourse itself. This is vital. For it is central to the modern pedagogic practices of "disciplining" and means that regulation can be partly accomplished by rational argument. The teacher's power, then, is invested in that mastery. Challenging the claim to know is thereby central. However, it seems to me that it requires certain key features. First, the learner must recognize, or join in, the illusion of choice or control. Second, the learner must feel secure in making a challenge to authority which is also replete with conflict; she/he must therefore not be afraid, but rather welcome such a challenge. The first and second criteria form a central part of modern discursive practices; the illusion of choice, of security and safety, are key features of what is taken to be correct classroom life. Walkerdine suggests that this still positions females in a subordinate position. They are less prone to challenge, less eager to assert. But as Lipman says, if we do not believe they can reason, they will not reason. The community of inquiry gives them the opportunity to meet the challenge. And the texts offer equal value to the wonder and aesthetics that have for so long constituted the feminine voice. Men will be equally disadvantaged by having to understand that aspect of their lives, to ground their feelings and their imagina-

The positioning of pupil's readings of the practices, the construction of their identities, is profoundly gendered and divided by class and race (see Walkerdine et al., 1985).

While Kant may have believed that mathematics and formal logic were synthetic a priori notions, that is, that they were transcendental, having to exist before conversation and ordinary language could take shape, he also wrote The Critique of Pure Reason to show that abstractions were not sufficient to guarantee knowledge and that judgment was continually necessary to make sense of them. In his famous phrase: "Percepts without concepts are empty; concepts without percepts are blind".

I have argued that the presentation of formal logic in the Lipman program is neither oppressive nor coercive, because it is no longer at the top of a hierarchy of developmental stages of child development. It is true that sometimes the questions in the manual reveal something of Lipman's Aristotelian training, for instance in metaphor and models. But the questions are there to be used when the topics have been raised by the children, chosen by the teacher and they are generally open-ended. Reasoning is an open-ended process. It is claimed neither that Harry invented his rule nor discovered it. Harry is the paradigmatic rational scholar, but he is placed on an equal footing with Suki who is valued for her intuitive understanding of wholes, relationships and meaning. Brian is valued in Pixie despite his unwillingness to articulate. The question of social justice is arrived at in Mark through argumentation, but feelings are also discussed and valued for their motive power—witness Lisa's outburst when she sees a dog being beaten and cries out, "I'm a dog, too!"

To return to our opening questions, it is clear that Walkerdine approaches the question of formal operations with almost paranoid suspicion. If students are covertly persuaded that they have discovered a universal and "true" logical patterning of their language and assumptions, then that is a fault of pedagogy and practice rather than a critique of formal logic or mathematics. If the discussion is genuinely open, then both reason and imagination will combine through language to discuss what the function of logic, mathematics, poetry, literature, propositional truth are. It has
been shown that a more complex, more open view of rationality from a multicultural point of view is possible (see, for instance, Biderman and Scharfstein, 1989) even if it foreshadows possible dissolution of talk about the universality of logic. For the time being, it provides a shaping of experience that best allows for distancing and abstraction, rules to follow to disengage ourselves temporarily for reflection. Kant was right to a certain extent. We cannot carry on debate without temporarily holding onto the rational structures that our language embeds. If we are to change the criteria for what is to count as reasonable dialogue, then it will have to be done piecemeal, gradually, perhaps even subversively. The image von Neurath (1932, p. 206) uses of us having to rebuild the ship at sea while trying to keep afloat in it is persuasive, though he is talking of ordinary language rather than logic.

The class debate that is held by both boys and girls on the value of rationality will be using rational skills to debate the issue—what alternative is there? Even discourse is considered to be reasonable discourse, as long as all voices are heard and considered. In a community of inquiry all voices must be heard. It is through formal operations, an ability to think and reason things out in a logical way that all children, male and female, are freed from dependence on male or female authority and empowered to find solutions for themselves beyond the contextual web. Logic is a necessary but not sufficient condition of rational thought. We want both girls and boys to think for themselves.

Baudrillard has shown how everything that is linear has an end, including history; challenge alone is without end since it is indefinitely reversible. Piaget himself realized that the notion of the force of logic as an end of child development, with all the ambiguity remaining in that of a goal and a finality, was as doomed to failure, as the dogmatic texts of formal logic. Reason insists that logic is constantly applied dialectically, dynamically, that its "truths" are necessary and universal only in hyperreality, a hyperreality which is manipulative. But the Philosophy for Children program does not sit in this hyperreality. It operates in the classroom.

In a book called Man Made Language (2nd ed. Pandora Press: 1990), Dale Spender (1979) provided evidence to show that men controlled language and that it worked in their favor. Men dominated in mixed sex talk and were unwilling to relinquish power. In her introduction, "The perpetuation of patriarchy," she says: "While the power structure of patriarchy remains undisturbed, there is little space and even less credibility granted to the specific experience of women. Males, as the dominant sex, have only a partial view of the world and yet they are in a position to insist that their views and values are the real and only values; and they are in a position to impose their version on other human beings who do not share their experience. This is one of the crucial features of dominance; it is one of the characteristics of patriarchy—women's different experience is outlawed, is seen as unintelligible, unfathomable." She sought to find out how 'men do dominance, how they do oppression,' as if it were something they actively intended.

What she fails to see is that she, too, "does" dominance, in an odd sort of way. She is trying to help us see the world as if it were like the way the feminist writers see it. She does present us with alternative ways of viewing the world, but she has to go further and say what the point of reviewing our world would be, what would justify the breaking out of patterns of thinking and believing, or why hers is a better way than others to constitute power. In her introduction, "The perpetuation of patriarchy," she says:

Language helps form the limits of our reality. It is our means of ordering, classifying and manipulating the world. Through my language and socialization I did learn to see as sensible many arrangements in my society which an outsider would find absurd—it was sensible to give the least educational experience to those who took longer to learn, it was sensible that half the world should be paid for their work while the other half should not. It was sensible to see men as superior: Such lessons cannot be unlearned. It may not be easy to break out of the patterns of thinking and believing into which our society and language have led us, but it is possible. Language is a human product, it is something which human beings have made and which can be modified. We can make the effort to formulate possibilities at the periphery of our cultural conditioning and to reconceptualize our reality; we can generate new meanings—and we can validate them.

We can break out of the patterns of thinking and believing only through reasoned discourse, which goes further than mere presentation of differing views, but does not leave the lived-reality behind. There is a sense in which Walkerdine's critique of abstraction and her apparent belief that female thinking is more contextualized and less bound to abstract rules has been recognized in the shifting of the concept of reason downwards to constitute an ongoing dialectic between abstractions, imagination and perceptions. Reason is not simply the analytic tool of distance from love reality. The conceptual shift has been from one of a hierarchy with logic at the top to a heterarchy where communities with different structures resonate against one another. That sort of reasoned discourse is what the Lipman Philosophy for Children can achieve, when it is taught well in a broad community of inquiry. To teach reason as one tool among many is not to dehumanize. Taught in a reflective community of inquiry which treats all persons with respect, it serves to make our children more human, less suppressed.

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Feminism and Philosophy for Children: The Ethical Dimension

Ann Margaret Sharp

Contemporary feminism is an extraordinarily complex movement. In the late 1960's and early 1970's, many Western feminists saw the problem as women being systematically denied the educational and economic opportunities necessary for them to compete on an equal footing with men. Feminism meant fighting for equal rights in the political and economic arenas. Gradually, however, feminists began to see that it might be unwise for women to emulate roles that had been defined and structured by and for men. Feminist theorists began to emphasize the differences between men and women. Still later, some feminists began to conclude that not only are women different from men, they are better than men. Whereas earlier feminists had insisted the differences between women and men were cultural in origin, some feminists now are taking more of an "essentialist" position, according to which patriarchal culture distorts or conceals the essential femininity that is the birthright of every woman.

Other feminists have been quick to point out the problems with this position. Most argue that what is needed is the transformation of women and men. Feminists, however, may be able to make a contribution that many men cannot because the marginal place of women in the history of patriarchy may have protected them from some of the crippling effects that it has had on so many men. Feminists charge that patriarchal culture is governed not only by the categories of dualism, abstract rationality, rigid autonomy and atomism, but also by the crucial category of androcentrism or patriarchy. Feminists today are calling for...
a new version of selfhood, one that voids isolated egos on the one hand and unconscious being on the other. Recently, Catherine Keller in her *From the Broken Web: Separation, Sexism and Self*, has reinterpreted the approach of depth psychology to individuation (Jung and Neumann) to make it compatible with feminism.

Arguing against those feminists who adopt an “essentialist” position, Keller maintains that women and men are originally relational beings. In early childhood, however, the boy is forced to separate in accordance with misguided patriarchal conceptions of individuation. But none of us is every truly cut off from our relations with the world—the patriarchal quest to total autonomy and independence is an illusion. The task facing women and men today is to develop a nonpatriarchal, nonmatrarchal version of individuation.

We are searching for some path of differentiation in relation. This would permit women to remain faithful to the complex inner and outer connectivity that we may sense as integral to ourselves, while liberating ourselves from the accompanying dependency and self-suppression. It would challenge males to modes of relatedness that require not the sacrifice of their maleness but of their ego rigidities and corollary manipulation of women. But then differentiation—becoming uniquely ourselves—must not be cast in the category of separation. (161)

There is substantial evidence that suggests that women’s judgments are based on a fundamental respect for the webs of relationships that one finds in the contingent order, for the environmental context, for the concrete details of daily life. Women more than men appear to be willing to adopt a passive mode of accepting the diversity of environmental voices and the validity of their realities. Women appear less willing to wrench that context apart or to impose upon it alien abstractions or to use implements that subdue it intellectually or physically. Such an epistemology provides the basis for an ethic that is non-imperilastic, relational, contextual, life-affirming, and focused on the concrete details of daily life. The evidence suggests that women may have developed a more environmentally aware or holistic vision. The historical condition of powerlessness has necessarily meant that women have had to be aware of their environment to survive, for that environment—insofar as it is patriarchal—has continually impinged upon them.

In the domestic sphere, while women historically have been able to carve out a separate space of their own and to sustain cultural traditions, they nevertheless were continually at their husband’s and children’s beck and call. It was assumed that women’s projects could always be interrupted. Perhaps this fact has contributed to women’s sense of personal vulnerability to environmental influence, fostering a sensibility of being bound to chance, to circumstance, of not being totally in control of one’s world. The resulting consciousness was often one of flexibility, of relativity, of contingency.

Historically, women’s experience in the domestic sphere may be analyzed in terms of its three aspects: housekeeping, child rearing and economic production for use. A work that suggests ways in which housework may have contributed to the development of a feminine world view is Kathryn Allen Rabuzzi’s *The Sacred and the Feminine: Toward a Theology of Housework* (1892). Rabuzzi finds that women’s fundamental experience in the home is one of repetition and waiting. Unlike the traditional male experience of linear historical time characterized by endless questing and conquering, the home bound woman experiences time as a stasis—either as perpetual repetition or “eternal return,” ideas that one finds in the philosophical writings of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. The static waiting pattern may be seen as “simply another mode of being.” It may imply a positive sense of rootedness that one finds in some practices of Buddhism.

Rabuzzi suggests that out of this traditional feminine experience what has emerged is a sensibility that is a positive alternative to the masculine mode of dominating, dictating and conquering. This sensibility involves an adaptation to contingency, a kind of stance where one is able to accept things as they come, respond to daily experience, rather that constantly trying to impose one’s will on situations. While both modes if carried to extremes can be destructive, (no one would want most women to become more passive), it is possible that a more feminine perception of reality could provide a suggestion for a new way of perception, a way that makes a place for the preservation and creation of constructive relationships among people and in the world of nature and for “letting things be” at times, rather than always focusing on questing, dominating and conquering nature and experience.

It is the experience of mothering that Sarah Ruddick sees as characteristic of a woman’s moral vision, while it is the experience of friendship that Lorraine Code thinks closer to the mark. Like Rabuzzi, Ruddick, in her book, *Maternal Thinking*, focuses upon the different but positive modes that have emerged from women’s experience of being a mother. She thinks that women, whether they bear children or not, share a propensity for maternal thinking, a commitment to nurturing life and an inherent opposition to its destruction in war. “Maternal thinking,” Ruddick argues, “grows out of maternal practice, which requires responding to the reality of the child, an other who demands preservation and growth.” Because so many of the factors involved in this process are beyond her control, and because she realizes that excessive control may defeat the purpose of the child’s growth, the mother must adopt a guiding attitude, a “holding” attitude, one that “is governed by the priority of keeping over acquiring, or conserving the fragile, of maintaining whatever is at hand and necessary to the child’s life.” Ruddick contrasts this attitude to that of scientific thought in a way analogous to Rabuzzi’s distinction between feminine waiting and masculine questing.

Lorraine Code points to friendship as a paradigm of the new moral vision. Participants in a trusting, mutually sustaining friendship can effect and maintain a balance between separateness and appropriate interdependence. Friends help each other, care for the growth of each other and perceive each other as equal. Friends respect the uniqueness of the other; they do not see the friend as an extension of themselves, but valid in her own right. Friends do not try to manipulate, dominate or impose. They aim to understand and overlook each other’s faults; they are constantly involved in healing one another, in helping each
other carry on in the face of life's onslaughts. Friends not only accept each other as they are, but work together for each other's growth. In a sense, my friend brings the world to me and I to her. To each other's growth. In a sense, my friend person. It is in this sense that the virtue of friendship can serve as a paradigm of a new moral vision. The epistemic potential of friendship, as a locus for knowing other people well and for forming intelligent alliances, attests most plainly to the exemplary character of such relationships. In place of maternal thinking, appeal to friendship's epistemic dimension opens up creative possibilities for achieving sound, morally informed alliances in which friendship is "achieved, not assumed; it is based on affinities and shared experiences but not identical histories" Alice Walker's conception of the "rigours of discernment" that such achievements demand, Hannah Arendt's alignment of friendship with thinking, a considered thoughtfulness, mutual respect—her claim, for example, that "the dialogue of thought can be carried out only among friends" counter notions of women and childhood friendships as trivial and irrational. (Code, What Can She Know, p. 103)

A similar distinction is drawn by Evelyn Fox Keller in her work, "Feminism and Science" (1982). She contrasts Barbara McClintock's attitude with the aggressive manipulation of nature proposed by Francis Bacon. McClintock shows a feminine attitude when she speaks of "letting the material speak to you," or of allowing it to "tell you what to do next." (As Dewey would say such activity is creative; it knows how to let the texture and quality of the situation guide the inquiry). McClintock does not think that scientists should "impose an answer upon their material; rather they should respond to it and retain a respect for it." Keller suggests that feminine behavior in doing research points to a scientific methodology more concerned with the drive to understand and less restrained by the impulse to dominate. One can see the same methodology affirmed in the activity of female animal biologists.

Maternal thinking and friendship are characterized by humility, a humility that arises from a realization that the other is a gift, other than oneself and is someone with whom one must be extremely careful. Control and domination have no role. Listening attentiveness and understanding play important roles. The mother's concern for the child fosters the development of "attentive love," the training to ask, "What are you going through?" The friend's concern is characterized by empathy, benevolence and considerateness. One wants what is best for one's friend. Both friendship and mothering involve a reverential respect for the preciousness and difference of the other to which one accedes an independent validity, on which one does not attempt to impose control.

Recent psychological testing confirms that women exhibit perceptual habits consistent with the above described characteristics. Women tend to see the context of a phenomenon more readily than men, who are more prone to lift a figure out of its context and to "see" it and consider it separately. It was Margaret Fuller who saw this tendency in a positive light. Women, she wrote, "excel not so easily in classification, or recreation, as in an instinctive seizure of causes, and a simple breathing out of what she receives, that has the singleness of life, rather than the selecting and energizing of art." Such a perceptual attitude resists rearranging the context in accordance with an imposed idea; rather it pays attention to the reality that is there. This allows for a more synthetic, holistic vision.

In her book, In a Different Voice (1982), Carol Gilligan selects an episode from Chekov's play, The Cherry Orchard to illustrate the difference she noticed between men's and women's judgments. Lopahin, a capitalist businessman, wants to cut down a cherry orchard in order to build profit-making summer cottages. The owner of the orchard, Madame Ranevskaya, refuses not only because she is attached to the orchard, but because she does not accept Lopahin's imperialistic philosophy that it is human destiny to dominate nature. Gilligan uses the episode to set the stage for her thesis that men's and women's moral reasoning are quite different.

Indeed, the results of several studies she conducted indicate that women's moral reasoning tends to exhibit awareness of "conflicting responsibilities rather than from competing rights." Such a perception requires for its resolution a mode of thinking that is contextual and narrative rather than formal and abstract." (19) Gilligan calls the feminine conception a "morality of responsibility" as opposed to the masculine "morality of rights," which is based upon an "emphasis on separation rather than connection," and on a "consideration of the individual rather than the relationship as primary." Women tend to be concerned with keeping the web of relationships intact. She concludes, "the logic underlying an ethic of care is a psychological logic of relationships, which contrasts with the formal logic of fairness that informs the justice approach." (73)

Nel Noddings in her Caring: a Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education (1984) builds on the work of Gilligan and stresses the necessity for a feminine moral vision characterized by relational thinking, sensitivity, care and contextualism rather than rules, principles and concern with individual autonomy and rights. Noddings believes that the values of care and nurturing traditionally associated with women's mothering should be more broadly disseminated throughout social relations and that all should come to celebrate the embeddedness of all the Earth's peoples in the multiple webs and cycles of life.

There are a number of feminist philosophers who are highly suspicious of an ethics based on the notion of care. They think that anything that reinforces gender differences, or makes any kind of special claim for women is problematic. They repudiate the woman/nature connection asserting that feminism shouldn't do anything that would restimulate traditional ideas about women, e.g., as caretakers. They celebrate the fact that we have finally begun to gain access to male bastions by using political tools of liberalism and the reasoning ability of human beings. The mother of modern feminism, Simone de Beauvoir, before she died, came out against what she called "the new femininity." an enhanced status for traditional feminine values, such as women and her rapport with nature, woman and her maternal instinct, woman and her physical being... Once again, women are being defined in terms of the other, once again they are being made into the second sex... Why should women be more in favor of peace than men? I should think it is a matter of equal concern for both.
Feminine thinkers like de Beauvoir think that the difference in moral reasoning between men and women can be explained by history and differences in life experiences rather than something innate. For such theorists, it is a sexist ploy to define women as beings who are closer to nature than men. Such associations divert women from their struggle for emancipation and channel their energies into subsidiary concerns, such as ecology and peace education concerns that should be in the attention of both men and women. To the extent that women can begin to be raised in a society that values women's ideas and thinking, to the extent that boys can be reared in an environment in which both parents share the task of child-raising and housekeeping, to the extent that both sexes can be raised in an environment that assumes an egalitarianism between the sexes and fosters cooperative intellectual inquiry within a safe, trustful, respectful environment, to that extent, it is reasonable to assume that the differences that characterize male and female moral reasoning might be modified, if not eliminated and that such characteristics might come to be appropriated by both girls and boys when they are deemed constructive and useful. Girls can come to develop an appreciation of formal and informal logic and recognize the limits of each. They can also develop a love for the ideal of justice and truth, as well as personal relationships, just as boys can come to develop a sensitivity for context, a commitment to the importance of creating and discovering meaning in a communal, non-sexist context and an attention to the preservation of all constructive relationships in the world.

Robin Morgan has suggested, in her *The Anatomy of Freedom* (1982), that there is a congruence between the new feminist thought and new physics. Catherine Keller in her *From The Broken Web* (1988), who comes out of a Whiteheadian perspective, agrees. The emergence of a post-Einsteinean feminine morality may also be traced in modern philosophy, particularly in the works of Simone Weil and Iris Murdoch. They suggest that people use such conceptual schemes as the Newtonian paradigm to promote their own feelings of significance. Such paradigms enable one to deny the randomness, the incoherence, the contingency of the world, and thereby enable one to live a life of illusion based on some idea of non-dependence and self-sufficiency. Rather than thinking of oneself in relational terms, as a steward of nature, many human beings tend to think of themselves as “masters of creation,” superior to other non-rational creatures. This superiority is then used as a justification for killing and dominating other creatures and destroying much of nature. Murdoch proposes a redirection of the will and attention: to see what is other than oneself. She thinks that such a redirection can lead to a perception of the good. Rosemary Ruether similarly calls for the development of an “ecological consciousness” an ability to enter into reciprocity with the Other—to acknowledge the validity, the reality, the “Thou-ness” of the other’s being (194-95) In *The Sovereignty of the Good*, Murdoch defines love as the reverential attention to what is not oneself, to what is other to one’s self. “Love is the extremely difficult realization that something other than oneself is real. Love, and so art and morals, is the discovery of reality” Murdoch implies that the view of Newtonian science must give way to a more comprehensive vision that accepts the relatedness of all life and the importance and reality of many dimensions of being beyond the rational. A redirection of attention is needed to focus on the ecology of experience rather than the autonomous individual self. Robin Morgan sees feminist ethics as the key to our survival and transformation, crucial to the continuation of sentient life on this planet. Women perceive the world in terms of relationships and in terms of environmental contexts. Their primary values tend to be a respect for all life. Many feminists think that this ethic ought to become the accepted morality in the modern world.

At the turn of the century, it was Virginia Woolfe in *Three Guineas* who foreshadowed a feminist ethic, a morality that would evolve for both sexes when women had finally entered positions of power and yet were willing to retain a feminine value system. In this way, she thought, the institutions would themselves be changed accordingly. She speaks of four things to remember as one gains power in the dominant society: poverty, chastity, derision and freedom from unreal loyalties. Poverty teaches that one must not amass riches as one becomes successful, but hold just enough to live independently and to fully develop one’s body and one’s mind. But no more. Chastity teaches that “you must always refuse to sell your mind for the sake of money, or commit adultery of the mind. Derision teaches that you must refuse all methods of advertising your own merit and freedom from unreal loyalties means refusing to support what are ultimately fascist causes—chauvinism, nationalism, racism, sexism.” Such is Woolfe’s description of a feminine ethic that is dedicated to the destruction of all hints of fascism in modern society. (Donovan, *Feminist Theory*, p. 189).

**PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN AND FEMINIST ETHICS**

Philosophy for Children with its pedagogy of the community of inquiry assumes much of what we have described above as feminine conceptions of ethics. Committed to the narrative as a form for becoming aware of the philosophical dimension of experience, it stresses relationships not only among ideas and disciplines, but among people. Knowledge itself is assumed to be the result of communal inquiry. Rather than stressing competition among inquirers, children are encouraged to be cooperative, to build on the ideas of each other and to take pride in the accomplishments of the group. Such children tend to see themselves in relationship to the others. All participants in a community of inquiry, whether male or female, are urged to work collaboratively with each other, eventually internalizing the cognitive moves of each other when one is alone. As one endeavors to build on the ideas of each other, one comes to respect each person in the group (whether male or female) as a potential source of insight. All members of the community are to be taken seriously; the community of inquiry is characterized by an egalitarianism that is the ideal of many feminist philosophers. The procedures of the community of inquiry put into practice moral procedures such as tolerance, trust, compassion, benevolence, seeing things from various perspectives, understanding the different world views of those in the group, listening to one another attentively, taking the ideas of each other seriously and being disposed to self-correct in a public fashion when one realizes that one is wrong. As the community of inquiry
develops, children come to care for the growth of all aspects of each other and are willing to do what they can to make this growth a reality.

A community of inquiry is a safe environment characterized by what we call critical thinking, creative thinking and caring thinking. Such thinking pays particular attention to context and encourages children to develop ethical perception, that is, the ability to detect the important relationships and features in any particular situation and to take these relationships and features into account in making an ethical judgment. Like feminist ethics, Philosophy for Children does not assume one moral theory. Perhaps the most radical effect of feminist moral critiques is their demonstration that moral theories close off more possibilities of discernment and action than they create. Philosophy for Children assumes that a more productive route is to claim broader scope for engagement yet thorough practices, whose value is obscured by theories that pose as products of analysis but serve rather to foreclose it. The point, as Lipman puts it, is to examine different tools of ethical inquiry and gain practice in using them at the appropriate time. These tools (empathy, consistency, comprehensiveness, giving of reasons, universalizing, projecting an ideal image of the self or society, taking consequences into account, taking the context into account) constitute actual instruments to be used in communal moral deliberation. What tool to use and when, depends on the group’s sensitivity to the context in its various dimensions. The emphasis is on practical reasoning, communal deliberation and the making of qualitatively better judgments. Decision-making is marked by a thoughtfulness that contrasts sharply with the Kantian concentration on achieving a principled moral stance. Nor is deliberation the standard utilitarian procedure. The concern at its core is less with consequences that with the implications of actions and motives, both for the other people to whom the moral agent is accountable and who are affected by or implicated in her actions and for herself.

To discern these implications, children have to position themselves critically and creatively within a situation, in relation to its various aspects, so as to imaginatively account for as many of these implications as she can, while not destroying the capacity to act. Like the attitude of a good therapist to a client—a kind of objective sympathy—it requires what Martha Nussbaum has termed a perception that is “both cognitive and affective” at the same time. “It consists in the ability to single out the ethically salient features of the particular matter at hand... in appropriate emotional response as much as through intellectual judgment.” (Fragility of Goodness, p. 364.) Children learn how to position and reposition themselves within situations so as to become clear about what is at issue and to examine possible courses of action—always within the situation, “for not removed, God’s eye vantage point is available” (Lorraine Code, What Can She Know, p. 108).

Moral agents always make choices from specific positions, within specific environmental circumstances. There is no transcendent vantage point from which to judge them. Hence moral deliberations have to maintain a continuity with moral histories and experiences that are filtered out by ideal, impartial theories for which autonomy itself, in another connotation, entails freedom from the contingencies of circumstance. Although the communal, critical, deliberative and imaginative moral practice fostered by Philosophy for Children is more modest than theory construction, it has a greater potential to accommodate the subtleties of the experiences of real, historically located children, both boys and girls, for whom the traditionally autonomous, impartial moral agent or the mere follower of some moral rules is a seriously flawed character. (Code, Ibid., p. 184). The Aristotelian orientation of this approach prevents its deterioration into an opportunistic situationism. Modes of deliberation vary qualitatively, according to the character and cognitive capacities of the children, and are constantly available for critical evaluation. Hence, a deliberative morality is at once open-minded, dialogical and open to criticism, self-criticism and public scrutiny. It leaves scope for trial and error, for showing that certain practices are not conducive to the production of good moral judgments, and practices more appropriate than others, better able to promote empowering relationships and alliances, less liable to marginalize and oppress. Finding out how people should act now, in these circumstances, is often like unravelling a detective story.
Harryspeak and the Conversation of Girls

Christina Slade

In an Australian preschool in Canberra, Robyn Triglone, an experienced teacher and masters student in Philosophy for Children, created a community of inquiry with a group of 4- to 5-year-olds. I found the group startlingly articulate.

“Dr. Slade’s question is relevant to mine,” said one, and “I don’t agree with Ms. Triglone’s idea that she can decide what is good,” said another.

During the visit of a leading Australian philosopher for children to Canberra, I took him to the preschool. He, too, was impressed. “Isn’t it interesting,” he said, “that all the kids who talked were boys?”

“But they were all girls in that group,” I replied.

The visiting philosopher was not a simple sexist, unable to appreciate the intellectual contributions of females. After worrying about the incident for months, I concluded that his remark was the result of a largely inchoate piece of inductive reasoning. The fallacy is reminiscent of the mistake children often make when first being taught to use the imperative.

There are a number of interesting issues for Philosophy for Children raised by the incident. In this paper I shall concentrate on the question of gender differences in language use and reasoning (section 1). In section 2, I turn to the question of how the texts in Philosophy for Children model children’s language, and the manner in which gender is reflected in the way children talk in the texts. I shall concentrate on the texts for the elementary school and comment in particular on Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery. In section 3, I raise the question of how issues of gender might best be treated in the Philosophy for Children classroom.

1. Girls’ talk and reasoning

Over the last twenty years, the issue of the differences of language use due to gender has received considerable attention. Jennifer Coates summarizes the evidence in her book, Women, Men and Language (1986). Women—and girls—speak a language which is distinct from that of men at each level of linguistic description. At the phonetic level, women tend towards standard or dominant forms, while men tend to use dialectal variants—possibly as a means of identifying with a subgroup (Romaine, 1984). Similarly, at the level of vocabulary, women tend to use standard or socially acceptable words, while men tend towards older forms. In an extreme form, this is evident in the role of women in adopting an entirely new language. Studies have shown that women are crucial in the replacement of Provencal by standard French, for instance.

At the level of syntax, women’s language differs substantially from men’s. Robin Lakoff’s classic (1975) study of English, Language and Women’s Place, shows that women use far more tag questions in statements than men. Thus, for instance, we find forms like: “The weather’s been wonderful, hasn’t it?” where the final tag asks for confirmation. While men also use these forms, women use them far more frequently, possibly indicating a need for confirmation. Women are less likely to use the unmodified imperative (“Do...!”), but prefer modalized forms (“We could do...”). In rejecting others’ claims they use concessive phrases, such as, “I think...” rather than bold negations. More recent studies on this topic are reported in Thorne et al (1983). In the light of this evidence, it is scarcely surprising that a group of children disagreeing firmly and explicitly with each other appear masculine.

Perhaps the most interesting and evocative work in the analysis of gender based distinctions in language use is at the higher level of discourse structures. Deborah Tanner’s recent book, You Just Don’t Understand, (1991) has received intense attention in the media. She argues...
that women and men talk differently, women preferring self-disclosure in their intimate conversations, whereas men talk aggressively, in order to dominate conversations.

Sociolinguists have documented a range of conversational strategies which differ from men to women and which are liable to cause miscommunication. Coates (1986, pp152-155), lists a number of causes of miscommunication. For instance, there are differences in the meaning of questions for men and women. For men, questions are seen as direct requests for information, whereas women use and interpret questions as facilitating the flow of conversation. There are differences in links between speaker turns: men break in with their own opinions or even new topics, whereas women tend to acknowledge previous contributions and listen to others as they take turns. There are differences in attitudes towards self-disclosure, which is an exception in male-male conversation and normal in female-female talk. Coates summarizes the differences by classifying men's talk as competitive and women's talk as cooperative.

There are differences, too, of topic. Research in Australia (Slade, D. unpublished) on tea break talk in the workplace suggests that in male groups, discussions concentrate on sports, cars and politics and the only personal elements are anecdotes about amusing incidents. In female-female groups, however, personal remarks are commonplace, and intimacy is established by gossiping about mutual acquaintances.

In the educational context, differences in linguistic style have been widely remarked, and the deleterious effects on girls have received much attention. A range of studies (Whyte et al, 1985; Clark, 1989; Gilbert and Taylor, 1991) discuss the implications of the domination of classroom talk by boys. In mixed classes, even in the primary school, boys talk more, and more aggressively, are given more attention—both positive and negative—by teachers and are permitted a wider range of response strategies. For instance, girls are more often asked 'closed' questions, in which the response is a choice of a limited range of responses, whereas boys are more often asked 'open' questions. Stereotypical expectations are fashioned in the talk of the classroom, so that passive 'feminine' behavior is already implicit in the style of interaction of the primary school.

Apart from the classification of gender based differences in linguistic behavior, there is the question of whether there are differences of reasoning style due to gender. A clear argument for the existence of gender differences in reasoning is due to Carol Gilligan in her discussion of moral reasoning. In a Different Voice (1982). She develops a critique of Kohlberg's theory of the developmental stages of moral reasoning which discerned in Kohlberg's hierarchy a preference for the depersonalized 'abstract' notions of justice, over the personal. Gilligan argues that women's moral reasoning places personal relations higher that 'abstract' justice.

Gilligan's claim is an empirical claim about how women reason on moral matters. The evidence does not, however, categorize arguing styles in linguistic terms. If we extrapolate from the evidence cited above, we might expect females to use different linguistic forms in the presentation of arguments and to do so less aggressively than males. So, for instance, women would be expected to listen to others more than men, to take turns more readily, to modalize or modify when disagreeing ("You might be wrong..." or "But..., I think"); rather than bald negation) and to use anecdotes or self-disclosure more in argument than men. Whether there is such a gender based distinction in argument styles on moral—or quite general—issues in the primary school is an empirical question, one to which I do not have an answer. A further empirical question is whether any such distinction survives exposure to Philosophy for Children.

Over and above the empirical question, there is a normative question: how should we portray children and encourage children to behave? The tradition of regarding women as weak in reasoning skills, and indeed of defining the feminine in opposition to the analytic and the rational has been documented by Professor Lloyd in The Man of Reason, (1984). Lloyd shows how discussions of reason have, implicitly or explicitly, excluded the feminine, making reasoning a public, objective, impersonal activity not open to the private, intuitive female, embedded in the personal social structures of the home and family.

There are two diametrically opposed reactions to such evidence. On the one hand, some feminists argue that analytic talk is phallicentric and bad, and that the 'intuitive' female logic is to be preferred. On the other hand, there are feminists who argue that the alienation of women from the tools of analytic thought, such as higher mathematics, is a socially engendered iniquity which needs to be remedied. Lloyd's own view is more catholic. She says:

"The claim that Reason is male need not at all involve sexual relativism about truth, or any suggestion that principles of logical thought valid for men do not also hold for female reasoners...Philosophy has defined ideals of Reason through exclusions of the feminine. But it also contains within it the resources for critical reflection on those ideals and on its own aspirations" (1984, p109).

Within the locus of Philosophy for Children, Lloyd's approach is surely the most productive. If the ideals of reasoning have been defined by the exclusion of the feminine, as she argues, there is still room for debate and critical reasoned reflection on the principles of reasoning themselves. The clear moral imperative on teachers is to make that reflection available to all students.

2. Harryspeak

One question that is often asked in Australia about the Philosophy for Children texts for the elementary classes is why the characters have such funny names. The major characters, Kio, Gus and Pixie have names which might be the names of either girls or boys. Indeed, Gus in Australia is generally a boy's name, but in the text, she is a girl, Augusta. Her gender is particularly difficult to discover in Kio and Gus since the narrator's role alternates between her and Kio—a boy. The ambiguity of names is reflected in an ambiguity in conversational style: none of the three talks as a stereotypical girl or boy might talk. Pixie, for instance, asks incessant questions, wriggles her way through complex arguments, yet talks of her personal relations and her friendship at length. Gus, who is blind, has a similar style, both skeptical and personal.
The ambiguity of naming and of conversational style is emphatically not found in *Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery*, the earliest of the Philosophy for Children texts to be written and the one most directly and explicitly concerned with the principles of reasoning. Harry, who is seen in the process of discovering the principles of Aristotelian syllogism, is a boy. His role in the text confirms the gender stereotypes of males as innovative, analytic and “rational.” His friend, Lisa, is involved in his discoveries but typically plays a supporting role or raises objections which are skeptical of the value of the analytic technique.

Consider, for instance, the first chapter of *Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery* Harry introduces the principle that sentences beginning with “all” such as:

“All planets revolve about the sun” do not “turn around.” That is, they are not equivalent to the converted forms, in this instance: “All things that revolve about the sun are planets.”

He discovers the principle after making a mistake in class, when the other children laughed at him. The drive to discovery can be seen in the context of a ‘competitive’ conversation in which Harry needed to prove himself. Lisa, however, was supportive. (“Somehow, he didn’t think she had been one of the kids who had laughed at him.”)

So far, each child models a stereotypical role, both linguistically and non-linguistically: Harry responds to ridicule, by fighting back—in this case intellectually. Lisa offers support.

When Harry puts the principle he has discovered to Lisa, she finds the counter example of sentences beginning with “No” such as: “No eagles are lions.” However, she deftly turns Harry’s failure in finding a principle to success, saying: “But the sentence I gave wasn’t like yours ...Every one of your sentences began with the word ‘All’. But my sentence began with the word ‘No’.”

Lisa is shown cooperating in conversation, helping the conversation on. Even so, Harry, less adept at the interpersonal skills, fails properly to thank her: “Harry was so grateful to Lisa that he hardly knew what to say. He wanted to thank her, but instead, he just mumbled something and ran the rest of the way home.”

To reinforce the gender stereotypes, Harry arrives home to find his mother gossiping in the kitchen with a neighbor, Mrs. Olsen, about the drinking habits of a mutual acquaintance, a Mrs. Bates, who constantly visits the liquor store. Mrs. Olsen suggests that since all alcoholics constantly visit the liquor store, Mrs. Bates must be an alcoholic. Harry picks out a fallacy (of invalid conversion) in the argument and interrupts to spell it out. His mother, concerned about his manners, reprimands him, but Harry can see that she is secretly proud. Here again we have a stereotypical interrupting male, making his rationality evident to the gossiping females, who are denigrating a mutual female acquaintance.

The examples proliferate throughout *Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery*. Harry uses expressions like: “Guess who was trying to pop me off with a rock the other day?” whereas the girls’ language is standard.

Toby, the most gender stereotyped of the boys, is going to be an engineer; Mark doesn’t like school and says so, while his sister, Maria, demurs; when Lisa has her friends to stay, her father lectures them at breakfast. It is Lisa who, in the final chapter, raises the objection that the logical principles seem pointless. She quotes a line of poetry and insists on the role of the imagination as complementary to analytic thought.

It is, of course, far too easy to identify stereotypical behavior in *Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery*. Indeed, any novel which purported to describe the behavior of children had better present stereotypical behaviors—if not, it will not describe how children do behave. But the issue is more complicated with a text designed for the teaching of philosophy to children. In *Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery*, children behave quite unlike normal everyday school children, insofar as they persist in searching for logical principles. The children in the text, Harry, Lisa, the intelligent Tony, Mark and Maria, serve to model a community of inquiry for the children who are reading the story in an actual classroom. Surely the models should not reflect the gender biases in conversational style and reasoning which, in fact, exist in our society?

The issue is a vexed one, which is inherited in a more pressing form for the texts used for older children. Lisa, in the ethics based text taking her name, is worried about her appearance, about what is required of a girl when dating and other stereotypical concerns of the teenage girl. Of course, it would be possible to write a version of Lisa in which her appearance was not of concern to her, and for which dating problems were of minor concern. But unless students can talk about dating and how they look, the entire enterprise of talking about what is right will seem as irrelevant and misguided as my religious education course seemed in the 1960’s.

There is no simple solution, then, to the problem of gender stereotyping in the Philosophy for Children texts. It is awkward merely to switch names over, for instance. I am told that one version of *Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery* replaces the gossiping Mrs. Olsen with Mr. Olsen. The problem is, whatever is Mr. Olsen doing in Mrs. Stottlemeier’s kitchen just after school, at 4 p.m.? Good sociolinguistic generalizations suggest that male-female pairs do not gossip, so that, even now in the 1990’s, their chat is unlikely and suspicious. The switch from Mrs. Olsen to Mr. Olsen may well muddy the relatively clear waters of the logical error Harry identifies.

3. Gender and the Philosophy for Children Classroom

I suggest that, in the philosophy classroom, we have available to us alternative strategies for addressing the problems of gender; precisely, the techniques of philosophical investigation. We need not leave our students powerless to counter the gender stereotyping of the novels; we can address the very issue of the stereotyping itself.

The strategy is that suggested by Lloyd in the remarks I quoted earlier. As she says, philosophy “contains the resources... for critical reflection” on its own practice. The philosophy classroom allows us to ask not merely whether the gender stereotypes presented in the novels are accurate descriptions of how things are, but also to discuss whether they ought to apply. Do boys make most discoveries; do they interrupt more often than girls, do they reason better? If so, why? In the philosophy classroom we can ask such questions and the criteria which inform a reasoned response. We can ask not just if men ever gossip with women, but whe-
ther they should or could. We can ask, as Lisa does, whether the analytic excludes the imaginative.

Such questions need to be explicitly addressed in the manuals. Exercises could present thought experiments in the familiar way: "if you were a boy (girl) would your thoughts be different?" "If you were a boy (girl) would you argue the same way?"

We can ask students how differently they would understand chapter 1 of *Harry Stottlemieier's Discovery* with Mr. Olsen in Mrs. Olsen's place. Indeed, it may prove that role switches are an effective way of generating discussion on issues of gender.

Other exercises might list locutions for disagreeing: "No, that's wrong", "I don't agree with you", "I think we might look at this differently."

Students can be asked whether a girl or a boy would be most likely to be talking in these cases. The empirical generalizations which ground such judgments need to be examined: it is no easy matter to decide which forms of disagreement are most direct, or which forms are appropriate in various situations. These questions are ones which already exercise children: the very androgyny of Kio and Gus and Pixie already causes concern among students, so that the issue of how boys and girls talk is inevitably raised.

Philosophy for Children may have a further role to play in the discussions of gender. There is little or no information about the reasoning styles of young children or of adults in the extensive linguistic literature on gender differences in language. Partly this is because the techniques for the analysis of discourse have not primarily focused on the analysis of reasoning. There is no simple category of 'reasoning' which can be calibrated or classified. There are generalizations about how women disagree and anecdotal evidence on women's intuitive modes of reasoning abound, but there is little data of sustained passages of reasoning.

However, in the Philosophy for Children classroom, children are encouraged to reason at length. Transcripts of the classroom discussions provide evidence about children's reasoning strategies in longer passages of reasoning. Robyn Triglane's work with very young children in Canberra is illuminating in this regard. We have been analyzing transcripts of the philosophy classroom and comparing them to control classrooms using similar materials. There is an emphasis on creativity and self-expression in early childhood teaching which has the consequence that the control groups are frequently asked 'open' questions and generate a wide range of ideas. Triglane observes that her philosophy groups generate fewer ideas, but draw out the consequences of their own and other's ideas with great persistence. The hallmark of the philosophy group is the use of the logical operators in their discussions: 'if...then,' 'not' and so on.

This is as we should expect. The hallmark of reasoning is the sustained exploration of the logical consequences of ideas. In the data that Robyn has gathered, there are no obvious gender differences in the use of the logical operators, although girls do have a greater tendency to 'tell stories' than boys. This evidence is in accord with Reed's (1992) remarks on girls' use of personal anecdotes in moral discussion. It is an empirical question, whether in older groups of philosophy students, and in the population at large, we would find gender differences in the use of the logical operators, or in the discourse patterns their use generates.

The linguistic evidence cited in section 1 suggests that there may be greater use of concessive forms by women, and less aggression in the presentation of arguments. Such evidence is not yet an indication that women reason less than men. It is evidence only that women use different linguistic strategies in reasoning. An analysis of the discourse of a variety of groups would allow us to catalogue the differences in linguistic strategy between men and women, when reasoning. Such differences in strategy may well prove superficially distinct ways of performing very similar functions through language.

This is, so far, only a promissory note for a project. In order to fulfill the promise, we would need to correlate the functions of reasoning with linguistic strategies. A fuller investigation of transcripts of Philosophy for Children classrooms might provide us with a well motivated account of reasoning styles, precisely because, in the Philosophy for Children classroom, we emphasize reasoning as the aim of the discussion. The question of whether women do argue differently from men could then be addressed directly in terms of a discourse-based analysis of reasoning styles.

One feature of the Philosophy for Children classroom might suggest that exposure to Philosophy for Children reduces gender-based differences in reasoning strategies. This is the community of inquiry. The community of inquiry is intended to be a group in which participants examine their own and others' ideas independently of the bearer of those ideas. The model of inquiry is archetypically impersonal, in the tradition of male reason. However, the conventions governing the group discussion emphasize listening and the cooperative, rather than the competitive, nature of the inquiry. The characteristic locutions of the community of inquiry: "I disagree because ..., "Why do you say that?" and so on are, in my experience, as readily adopted by boys as by girls, precisely because ideas are assessed on the basis of truth or validity.

The conventions of the community of inquiry, as I understand it, place reason as the arbiter. The community of inquiry does not conform to the conventions of a group of women talking among themselves; nor does it conform to the conventions governing how men talk to each other in a group. It is a specific type of conventional activity, a genre of talk. Each community of inquiry develops its own style and subconventions, but all share this emphasis on reasoning. The community of inquiry is a technique for avoiding the worst of gender-based miscommunication.

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Seeds of Change, Seeds of Chance

Zaza Carneiro de Moura

I have always thought of philosophy as a kind of discourse dealing with the universal, in the sense that it handles concerns, ideas, themes and theories which transcend the mere singularity of its bearers. Naturally, the gender of the philosopher was of no significance to me. That is, the fact of having been exposed both at secondary school and at the university, for several years then, to the thoughts of male philosophers only, never struck me as peculiar. As I saw it, the lack of philosophical relevance of women to the history of Western philosophy could be easily explained: for many centuries they had been absorbed and constrained by the burdens of procreation and the care of children. Or, depending on the point of view, absorbed by their exclusive unavoidable natural duties. Again, as a member of the female gender I was fortunate enough to be born in a decade, the forties, where, amongst many other possible causes, the second world war was going to affect for ever the role held by European women in society, opening up new working avenues and responsibilities in the public sphere which for so long had predominately been the domain of men.

Also, as I saw it, technological development providing tools and machines which could do part of hard household work, and later on, in the sixties, the improvements in the field of birth control had both contributed to the liberation of women (some women at least) granting them more spare time as well as the possibility of deciding about motherhood. One shouldn't infer, though, that these contributions to positive freedom solved all the problems faced by women's specific sexuality; socio-cultural environment, (i.e., economic status), family relationships, level of instruction, age, and religious constraints, are all variables that account for different kinds of behavior concerning the reproductive phase of women's life cycle. Here, legislation is passed on the basis of the consequences, as in the abortion issue. In many countries women, either professed feminists or not, have been fighting to legalize abortion while at the same time providing better working conditions for pregnant women and outside home caring for their children.

It should be noticed, however, that depending on local circumstances there were great differences in the way those various alterations and improvements affected the traditional women's role and her place in society. My own country was neutral during the war, and politically a totalitarian nation, a "closed society" until the April 1974 Revolution. In fact, some post-war effects, particularly on the people's attitude towards a woman's right to work outside the home as a way of fulfilling her own personal potentialities and needs and also to contribute to the development of the community, didn't emerge until the sixties. Of course, there have always been women whose family income or peculiar situation compelled them to work in the fields, in the factory or in the office. But the right to gain economic independence on the same level as men, with the possibility of ascending to the same high places without having to prove to be much better at the job, the recognition of one's worth, with identical criteria being applied to both women and men, is something still to be worked out in many respects, though enormous progress has been made, as in many other domains, especially since 1974. Until then, putting it in a very rudimentary manner and making a bold generalization, one could say that the prevailing ruling authoritative political model and the one most effectively internalized by the nuclear unit—was the one of the patriarchal family. The "pater familia" was the authority whom all the other members, women and children, should obey because he was the one who knew what was best for all; as much as the head of government, always a man, was the person who knew what was best for the "well being" of all citizens and, accordingly, the one whose decisions were not to be contested. That included, of course, the prime minister's "right" decision of staying in power duly enforced by repressive mechanisms, for about forty long years.

The Penal Code bore marks of the man-husband-father outrageous authority deeply harmful of gender equality and of the woman's dignity which were only abolished after the collapse of the Estado Novo by April 25, 1947: the 372th article of the Code of 1886 allowed the husband to kill his adulterous wife if she was caught in the act (and his daughter if she was caught in flagrant corruption), the only punishment being an imposed exile of six months outside the bailiwick. Another mark of women's subordination and legal discrimination reflected itself in the first paragraph of the 461st article, which was abolished in 1976. Until then it permitted the violation of the wife's mail by the husband.

Within this social and political context, only partially sketched here, the dominant idea concerning women is that she is the one of "Kitchen, Church, Children." Given this, it may seem a contradiction, or at least an inconsistency, that women were granted the right to vote, along with man, at the first Constitution (1822). In this matter, sex was not a discriminatory factor, since women...
were not excluded by electoral law. A closer look, though, shows this *prima facie* constatation to be incorrect. In fact, referring to the framework of the constitutional law of the Fascist period which retains the preoccupations of previous legislation, there were different and more thorough requirements that women should meet in order to effectively exercise their voting right and it remained so until 1974, when the new constitutional law established absolute equality between women and men. Specifically, women needed to have “more literary skills” than men, who needed more than to be able to read and write Portuguese. If they were unable to do that, in a man’s case, it was enough to make proof of payment of a minimal personal tax contribution; in a woman’s case, if she lacked the minimal literary academic skills required, she would be excluded unless she was the head of a family, widowed, divorced, legally separated of property or, single with proof of being completely on her own. If women were illiterate they would also have to make proof of payment of a minimal personal tax contribution.

Though sex *per se* was not an exclusionary factor regarding voting exercise, there was no real equality in the face of the law. Interestingly enough this subtle discrimination was enforced by structural conditions and the real place of women in society. It seems that the law, acknowledging the fact that women were powerless and usually economically and culturally dependent on men, and presupposed that they were also more impres­sonable if not altogether unable to think and decide for themselves properly about public and perhaps private affairs. It seems reasonable to infer that women whose literary skills were not a concern regarding this matter, in order to avoid such dangers, had to be economically independent of male jurisdiction and had to be educated persons. It seems too that to be uneducated for a man was not thought to be an impediment to good political judgment. Anyway, in the period we are referring to, very few citizens, chiefly men, exercised their constitutional right, because the elections for the Presidency of the Republic were a sham.

Not surprisingly, the politics of education openly perpetuated the differences not only between the sexes but also amongst the people in general, and this was certainly in accordance with the predominant ideology that was supported by the rulers. A deep analysis of this situation is not the purpose here, (this would call for further research), though as a clue it may be interesting to note that the rate of illiteracy in 1950 was 44%; in 1960, 37.2%; and in 1970, just four years before the turning point of the 1974 Revolution that made room for democracy, the rate was still very high at 290%; in 1980, it lowered to 206%, and the global rate estimated for 1990 is about 14.4%. As for compulsory schooling (and there is here a correlation between the rates of illiteracy and the minimal requisites for access to certain jobs) by 1937 children had to attend school for at least the first three school years; complete four grades in 1956; six grades in 1964 and finally nine grades in 1986. In addition, by 1974, only about 4% of the population pursued studies at the university. Co-education, that is, elementary and secondary schools with classes formed by boys and girls, weren’t encouraged by the regime and as a rule there were completely separate buildings for each sex. As I recall it in the late fifties, very few public high schools had more than one or two classes, the last two pre-university years being attended by students of both sexes.

So, my whole student life and a great part of my adult life was spent in the context of a society where the values of Western democracies were repressed in all spheres of society. The main fight was for human rights. Speaking for myself, although I never engaged in overt or covert political action to attack the regime, I felt my freedom threatened and I was aware of the limitations imposed individually and collectively on our participation in public life and on our autonomy as human beings—either male or female.

Since the educational system usually tends to reflect and perpetuate the *status quo*, progressive ideas on education were not encouraged, or easily nurtured amongst us before our April Revolution.

Immediately after the implementation of democracy some consistently loud voices expressed feminist perspectives concerning important social, political and legal issues. In the field of education particularly, and also within the newly founded public office Comissão da Condicão Feminina (C.C.F) women immediately called attention to the urgency of “altering attitudes” pertaining to the role of both sexes, in order to promote a more equitable society. The aim of this project was to begin to “fight the stereotyped female and male images in order to enable each person to learn new roles, based on the specificity of each human being, as a means to promote better and greater participation of women and men in all domains of family, work and social life.” They also stressed the importance of an accurate examination and careful selection of curricular materials as a means of eradicating sexism from schools and promoting a balanced formation of the students’ attitudes. Defining *sexism*, in a strict sense, by analogy with racism, as discrimination based on gender, and in a larger one as the discriminatory handling of women or men based on the arbitrary association of stereotypes with each one of the sexes, they conducted several studies and issued several recommendations. They isolated several types of distortion pertaining to sex function that should be looked at in pedagogical materials: invisibility, stereotypes, selectivity/lack of balance, lack of reality, fragmentation/isolation, language.

The concept of “hidded curriculum,” the subliminal conveying of stereotyped roles, was also pointed out as well as its usefulness when trying to identify a learning situation which contributes to reinforcing a lack of self-esteem. Any curriculum (either overt or hidden) displaying the above traits delivers a message to girls: that they are less important and make less difference than men in our society. One of the strategies of this Committee has been to make educators and parents aware, both at school and at home, of the insidious way sexism may pass unnoticed in all sorts of school materials, in the book stories available, in television programs and commercials, in the way people address each other and in the way the parents themselves behave (in the case of the standard family pattern unit).

**Invisibility: the other half**

Nowadays, if we consider the aims defined for education by the Basic Law of
Education 8486, we see that it presupposes the complete eradication of sexism and states an equalitarian approach. In general, the educational system answers the needs arising from the social reality, contributing to the total harmonious development of the personality of the individual, promoting the formation of free, responsible, autonomous citizens, and valuing the human dimension of work.

Specifically, concerning the nine years of basic schooling the law asserts that it aims to secure a common global formation of all Portuguese which grants them the discovery and development of their abilities, reasoning skills, memory and critical thinking, creativity, moral sense and aesthetic sensibility, promoting their individual fulfillment in harmony with the values of social solidarity.

In terms of language, it’s reasonable to assume that the phrasing of the above item avoids any sexist bias, since it emphasizes the ideas of freedom, responsibility, autonomy and solidarity linked to female and male individual growth; another item emphasizes the fostering of the growth of both the democratic and pluralistic spirit, attentiveness to others’ ideas, openness to dialogue and to the free exchange of ideas, forming citizens well-equipped both to judge critically and creatively the social environment where they belong, and to get involved in its progressive transformation. This clearly shows the radically new framework the Law provides for the reform of education. It matches the prerequisite of a young open society within an old European country so as to raise the level of political consciousness and participation of all citizens as innovative, thoughtful agents in the consolidation of democracy.

Notwithstanding the importance of the social, cultural and political background granted to education by Law, there is more to it than asserting general principles and regulations. It calls for a new educational paradigm involving a kind of mentality that is likely to repudiate a stereotyped model of human life. It calls for the redesigning of programs and curricula too. Education, in those terms, may helpfully contribute to the eradication of sexism.

Regarding the discipline of philosophy, either at secondary school or at the university, to my knowledge, so far no direct attention to or concern with feminist perspectives has been echoed amongst us, or been translated into a new, specifically related curriculum.

The issue of the universality of philosophical discourse is a controversial and open-ended one. Even if some feminist critique were to avoid a totalitarian perspective, and concentrate solely on reflexive Western thought, depicted as the stream of collective consciousness of man, the problem of a faulty universalization would still have to be considered. An affirmative answer to the question of whether the history of philosophy really displays a universal, gender-neutral, timeless discourse would carry with it the fact that half of humankind’s reflexive thought is actually invisible. Behind this view is both the idea that philosophical tradition bears the marks of a predominantly male vision of the world, and also the idea that women’s philosophical production has not been taken into consideration. There are certainly many reasons for the scarcity of loud female voices in the domain of philosophy, as well as in other cultural spheres, up to the beginning of the last century. It is noteworthy, though, that even liberalism, which conferred political and legal autonomy on the individual, in fact excluded women. During the XVIII and XIX centuries, they remained in a position of social inferiority, legally incapacitated in the governing of their own lives, both within the private sphere and the domus familias.

In a broader sense, invisibility per se is not an exclusive mark of sexism. It can affect women or men in different political, social, cultural, professional or familial contexts. It is up to us to fight in a positive manner for our own visibility as individuals or as a group. As a mark of individuality, strictly speaking invisibility is said to occur whenever a meager representation or omission of women in pedagogical materials occurs. This is the kind of invisibility certain feminists like Janet A. Kourany criticize and associate with the lack or scarcity of positive feminine models, either in literature or as philosophy authors. In Philosophy in a Different Voice she asserts that women philosophers have clearly been excluded from the history of philosophy. In addition, she stresses the actual consequences of this situation for women’s self-image. She argues that the exclusion from philosophy courses of women philosophers who have contributed in prior centuries to the development of philosophical thought, besides lacking historical accuracy, hinders female students from getting a sense of themselves as philosophers or as being capable of doing philosophy. Accordingly, she argues for a curriculum revision that allows for the discussion of sexist bias against women, which is present in many philosophers’ thoughts, the removal of some of this and its substitution by the study of the thought of women philosophers, as well as a confrontation of tradition with the feminist critique, an examination of traditional ideas about the nature and destiny of women, in order to promote a philosophy with a more inclusive, more responsive set of voices.

The difficulties of the complete execution of this proposal have already been spelled out, namely, the difficulty in establishing the criteria for the selection of curricular authors, besides the one of sex. It can be argued, though, that the link between philosophy as a discipline and an education beyond sexism is an important one.

Concerning the teaching of the discipline of philosophy as it is usually available to our secondary or university students, it is not my intention to further develop this thesis.

Instead, I argue that Philosophy for Children (P4C) is a precious pedagogical tool at the disposal of educators enabling teachers and students to assume new roles in the teaching relationship and helping them by the use of its innovative curriculum and practice to become unbiased persons. To put the point another way, the P4C approach, defined as a redesigning of the discipline of philosophy for use with children, operates in such a way as to contribute to surmounting the problem of gender and of hidden stereotypes, eventually bypassing the limitations of those positions that acknowledge or ignore the invisibility of the other half.

I shall assume that it is no mere coincidence that the above-mentioned purposes for education encompass those of P4C, which part of the curriculum for elementary school we have been intro-
duc ing since 1988 in a number of Portuguese public and private schools.

Often, teachers who participate in intensive P4C workshops become attracted by this innovative pedagogical approach which helps them to give shape to their own aspirations, discovering sometimes with pleasure a common working ground belonging to the reflective paradigm of critical practice. Indeed, it is hard to see how the above-mentioned general goals for education, and, implicitly, the eradication of sexism as well as other prejudiced differentiations between individuals or groups, could be accomplished within the scope of what Matthew Lipman calls the standard paradigm of normal practice. In his new book, *Thinking in Education*, when discussing the restructuring of the educational process, he uncovers the dominating assumptions of both paradigms by contrasting them. In his own words:

"Education consists in the transmission of knowledge from those who know to those who don't know," vs. "education is the outcome of participation in a teacher-guided community of inquiry, among whose goals are the achievement of understanding and good judgment;" "knowledge is about the world, and our knowledge of the world is unambiguous, unequivocal and mysterious," vs. "students are stirred to think about the world when our knowledge of it is revealed to them as ambiguous, equivocal, and mysterious;" "knowledge is distributed among disciplines that are non-overlapping and together are exhaustive of the world to be known," vs. "the disciplines in which inquiry occurs are assumed to be neither overlapping nor exhaustive; hence their relationships to their subject matters are quite problematic;" "the teacher plays an authoritative role in the educational process, for only if teachers know, can students learn what they know," vs. "the teacher's stance is fallible (one that is ready to concede error) rather than authoritative;" "students acquire knowledge by absorbing information, i.e., data about specifics; an educated mind is a well-stocked mind;" vs. "the focus of educational process is not on the acquisition of information but on the grasp of relationships within the subject matters under investigation."

The overall implications of this paradigm for education are self-evident and are summed up in the idea that "students are expected to be thoughtful and reflective, and increasingly reasonable and judicious."12

**Beyond Sexism**

Bearing in mind some of the recommendations for a curriculum free from sexism, namely, the eradication of the invisibility of women and the avoidance of stereotypes in pedagogical materials, and also bearing in mind the criterion of reasonableness in the formation of autonomous persons who think for themselves, how does the P4C curriculum stand?

All the books available to children, from kindergarten to secondary, share a distinctive feature: they are philosophical novels usually intended to be read aloud paragraph by paragraph, or phrase by phrase, by each member of the community which is made up of students and the teacher of the classroom. They form an array of fictional texts constructed in such a skillful way that they easily generate among children, and among adults too, a philosophical discussion, albeit in everyday language. With the exception of *Kio and Gus*, where the action occurs during summer vacation, and the main human characters who are a small boy and his neighbor and little friend, Gus, who doesn't like to be called by her real name—Augusta—all the others, *The Doll Hospital*, *Elfie, Pixie*, *Harry Stottlemeyer's Discovery*, *Lisa, Suki* and *Mark*, occur during school time. Another common feature is that all of them depict a kind of dialogue, mostly among children themselves but also with adults, relatives and some of the teachers, which facilitates discovery of oneself, of others and of the world which surrounds them. In the particular case of the classroom setting which covers an important part of the six novels, the dialogue is both a tool and a product in the progressive formation of a "community of inquiry". Each novel is coupled with a teacher's manual containing valuable material to help him/her to guide a philosophical discussion, one that will enable everyone engaged in it to develop their thinking skills, their higher-order thinking and their self-esteem. In addition, from early childhood to adolescence the students who are exposed to Philosophy for Children, besides improving their own thinking, steadily increase their capacity to verbalize it and write in a rigorous and/or creative fashion.

The tools of formal and informal logic which the program offers also contribute to this effect. These very special stories, in the sense of adventurous action, do have a light plot, yet a deep, exciting one with respect to the inner thoughts and feelings of the characters and with respect to their dialogues and discussions. They also provide instances of different styles of thinking without depreciating or valorizing any of them. Instead, teachers and students may come to notice those differences in style and discuss them.14 (p312). The display of philosophical concepts such as beauty, friendship, freedom, equality, democracy, authority, rules, justice, law, right, wrong, truth, person, body, self, mind, appearance, reality, nature, culture, similarity, difference, relationship and so on, which are present in all of these curricular texts, have a strong appeal to the interest of students of all ages because they appear in the context of everyday situations that reciprocate in many ways those of their own lives: school, home, holidays. The exploration and/or formation of those and other concepts develops quite often into the discussion of themes and problems from traditional philosophy, either present in the story or brought up in the course of discussion, reinforcing or producing a questioning disposition in the students. For instance, it is quite possible for nine year olds to start a discussion about the mind/brain-body relationship in the scope of the novel *Pixie*, surprisingly producing two competing theories: interactionism and parallelism.15 Interestingly enough for feminists, dichotomies in the history of philosophy, for example, nature vs. culture, or mind vs. body, whenever accepted, are arguments in favor of women's invisibility and pseudo-inferiority.16 In an open-ended discussion such as those happening within the context of Philosophy for Children, there is an opportunity to engage in inquiry in a positive manner, and to confront people with the inconsistency of their own ideas and with those of their peers, eventually avoiding all types of indoctrination and prejudice.

A survey concerning the number of
characters per novel shows an almost perfect balance in the sex distribution. Actually, with the exception of *The Doll Hospital*, and *Pixie* which have no characters which appear in the other novels, all the other books include mostly the same bunch of growing kids. As for the available novels titled after one of the characters, the feminine names outnumber the masculine. If we add the fact that the books are not illustrated and that the covers avoid human representations it can be said that there is no ground for an immediate concern over the stigma of *invisibility*. A non-sexist treatment of women and men as CCF recalls*, also implies that the characters should be free of any stereotype; that is, the rigid attribution of characteristics and roles to a group grounded on sex. So neither sex should be presented as inferior or superior to the other, nor should any behavioral traits associated with boys be presented as more positive or desirable than those associated with girls. In addition, women and men should be presented in a great variety of roles and not exclusively in the traditional ones. Specifically, female personas should be presented in situations linked to a professional activity, in the sphere of the public, and not always in the context of the family or in the sphere of the private. Accordingly they should appear in connection with a great variety of professions: for instance, as medical doctors, not always as nurses; as lawyers and judges, not always as social workers, and so on. *Unreality*, another mark of sexism linked to the one above, is said to occur when there is a deliberate omission concerning the alteration of the roles of women and men in society or the omission of controversial issues pertaining to those alterations. Youth problems concerning sexuality are not directly raised by the reading of the novels, (as sexism is in some of them), not even in terms of ethical issues springing out of social reality—like abortion—or the problem of single teenage mothers, etc. Nevertheless, considering the overall characteristics of the curriculum and its dialogic emphasis, this seems hardly enough for it to qualify as unreality; that is, on the basis of the omission of controversial issues. As for the alteration of the roles of women there are, here and there, some positive indications. In chapter one, episode three of *Mark*, we learn that he and his sister, Maria, fear having to move to another town due to their mother's career as an executive of a big enterprise, this job being much more important in terms of status that that of his father. Whether we agree or not with the criteria of *fragmentation and isolation*, they don't work well within the framework of Philosophy for Children texts because they refer to the tendency towards the deliberate omission of information concerning women from the main corpus of the books. *Language* remains an important factor of sexist distortion and can be defined as the use of male dominated and/or depreciative semantics and syn-taxis to the detriment of women. For instance, in Portuguese, a syntactic rule commands the use of the masculine to designate a group of persons, even if it is formed by thirty women and one man—"Eles" (They). In this respect a thorough research of the texts mentioned here calls for an independent study which is outside the scope of this paper. However, the connection between the concepts composing the definition of sexism makes it possible to infer that no serious distortions at sublimal level are present in the novels. Lastly, *selectivity/lack of balance* in pedagogical materials, namely texts, means the perpetuation of mis-representations whenever there is exclusively a *single perspective of a theme, of a situation or the unique viewpoint of a group of persons*.

This last item is completely safeguarded. Indeed, one of the main traits of this curriculum is the cultivation of thinking skills like: taking all perspectives into account, making inferences, making suppositions, detecting underlying assumptions, giving reasons, etc., using dialogue as a form of inquiry and discovery. All characters, in the role of students or some of the teachers and relatives, or adults in different roles (Judge Bertoa, in *Mark*, for instance) at one point or another engage in this kind of interchange which is an epistemological model of open-ended inquiry. Regarding sex discrimination, *Lisa*, (the novel of the program "Reasoning in Ethics", grade range 7-12) provides an opportunity for students to engage in a discussion over sexist words, or under what circumstances there is sexism. After reading the episode of the "beauty contest" they may want to get into Mr. Partridge's (the school principal) obvious sexism regarding masculine and feminine positive and negative characteristics—which is quickly picked up by Lisa in her somewhat ironical question "Did you say, 'best looking boy, and girl most likely to succeed?'"

The problem of role identity is one of the leading ideas in *Mark* (Reasoning in Social Studies, grade range 9-12) and appears in connection with the exclusion of Jane Starr from the basketball game because she is a girl. Acknowledging the procedure of "following the discussion where it leads," the teacher will most likely guide a discussion using a few items from the manual to help take into account several perspectives, and discover the larger implications of the episode, asking the students what reasons they can give for the following practices:17

1. Men are often paid more than women for the same type of work.
2. When women and men have exactly the same job title, it is usually women who are expected to perform menial functions, like taking notes, and washing up after the meeting.
3. In many homes where the mother and father both work, the mother is still the person responsible for the care of the home and for feeding the family. (MM)

There is more to it than the question of the pedagogical materials of Philosophy for Children being free of sexist remarks. Interestingly, there is a strong similarity between the traits and role dialogue we see in P4C and the traits and the role attributed to conversation in a feminist perspective, both aiming to promote a participatory democracy. Nancy J. Hirschmann, in *Rethinking Obligation* says: "It is only through the mutual recognition found in conversation that people in a strong democracy are able to retain the decision-making power for and over themselves as individuals and common members." Categorizing the feminist conversation perspective she singles out the benefits of mutuality and recognition: "... in feminist conversation the requirement of recognition as a basic foundation ensures that the only way to solve political disagreements is through
the exercise of empathy, listening, and mutual respect... The process of conversation thus maintains the quality of working differences through to agreement, without conformity." The relational values of trust and responsibility endorsed by "mutually respecting subjects" who engage in conversation, declining the discourse of mere dispute can become, in Hirschmann's words, "a new epistemological framework to support a democratically empowering model of political action. As rights dialogue provides a language of distrust and competition, a responsibility model offers a language of trust and relationship."

The language of education, I believe, is philosophical dialogue and conversation nurturing the seeds of change to foster a better world, the seeds of change for all individuals to become more reasonable, judicious, considerate persons.

NOTES

1. In the fifties all secondary students in their last two years of schooling studied philosophy before going into university. If we add five years of studies at the university, plus two post-graduate years, we get a large exposure to this field of study.

2. The Portuguese Law of 6/84 altered the Articles of the Penal Code of 1982, relieving the medical doctor or the pregnant woman of penalty, when they decide to practice abortion in the following cases: (a) when abortion is the sole means of avoiding death, danger or serious or permanent bodily injury or risk to the woman's physical or psychological health; (b) whenever it is appropriate in order to avoid death, danger or serious and permanent bodily injury, or put at risk the physical and psychological health of the pregnant woman during the first 12 weeks of her pregnancy; (c) there is sufficient evidence that the newborn (moscitum) will suffer without remission of serious illness or congenital malformation and that it will be executed during the first 16 weeks of pregnancy; (d) there is sufficient evidence that the pregnancy resulted from the woman's rape and be executed during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy. See Dr. Ana Raposo "O Flagelo da Mulher na Era da Libertacao" Revista Practica e Criativa, No. 16, Junho de 1992. For the topic of rape from the approach of women's rights, see a comparative study of the Portuguese and English law by Dr. Teresa Pizarro Beleza, "Discriminaçao em Funcão do Genero no Sistema Penal," ed. Comissao da Conducao Feminina, Lisboa, 1984.


4. The rates of illiteracy here indicated were based on data obtained from the decennial national census of the Portuguese population. They are calculated referring to the current population and illiterate population aged more than 15 years and by age groups (10) and by sexes. All data show a higher number of female population with a higher rate of illiteracy than men. The results of the census of 1990 are not known yet. The global rate here indicated of 14%, is based on the projections made by Maria Jose Brune Esteves, in her study, *Situaçao do Analfabetismo nas suas Diferentes Formas: Analise de Populacao que Nao Possui nem Frequentao um Ensino Basico como 15 e mais anos em Portugal*, DGEE, Lisboa, 1987.


6. This project was initiated in 1979 by the *comissao da Conducao Feminina*, which was founded in 1975 in the scope of the Presidencia do Conselho de Ministros. This Committee issued several publications which were made available to teachers and parents. The Ministry of Education also issues different materials, distributed in the schools, like posters, pamphlets, which were made available to teachers and parents. This Committee issued several publications which were made available to teachers and parents. The Ministry of Education also issues different materials, distributed in the schools, like posters, pamphlets.


12. ibid, p. 14.


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Feminism and Philosophy for Children in Argentina

Gloria Arbones

I was born in 1959 under a pseudo-democratic government. My memories, since early childhood, are associated with unstable political contexts, an alternative flow of short relatively democratic periods and long and bloody dictatorships.

I will start by describing my life story, which is similar to many others, and then I will try to analyze it, looking for the reasons and motivations that explain it.

When I finished secondary school I decided to study philosophy, believing that there were all the answers I was looking for. Those were difficult times for studying. I began my career in 1977, exactly a year after the military coup of March 24, 1976, which was the most cruel and bloody of our history.

When I started my studies, the best professors were all in exile, or perhaps missing. The syllabuses had been completely modified as well as the study plans. To make it simple: there were three compulsory years of Latin and Greek, lots of medieval Philosophy and Metaphysics (with a strict scholastic view). No Hegel or Marx, of course, and too little of contemporary philosophy. Consequently, we had to search for the forbidden bibliography and read it in small groups, hidden from the world, to broaden our knowledge. (Many times I wonder how I could carry on in such conditions...).

As regards the political background, it was like a horror film. Students and professors disappeared every day, enlarging the list of 30,000 missing people. Police and military raids, even during daylight, kept us scared to death without us really knowing what was going on.

I finished my career after my marriage and worked giving philosophy lessons to private pupils. Then I decided to start my career to become a teacher at the University, at the Philosophy School. By that time, the dictatorship had ended and democracy had returned with Raúl Alfonsín as the elected president. Universities had also started a process of democratization, and we could apply as teachers, but of course most of us had to word "ad hominem" (that is to say, with no pay). I did this for a year and a half, including my pregnancy period. When my child was born, I decided to quit. It was too much sacrifice: it took me an hour and a half, plus the money to go to work. Besides, I had to leave my baby for too long. Another ordinary story, indeed.

The choices I had then were the same for most of us have now: that is, to look for a nearby secondary school, until my son was a bit older. Of course, I did not know by then that you cannot lose time, because men go on with their careers.

It is well known that not only in Argentina but also in most Latin American countries there are extremely conservative rules as regards education, within school and the family, especially concerning women's role in society.

This can be clearly observed when you look at the textbooks that were used in primary school. Even in kindergarten, we were taught to distinguish very clearly women's and men's roles in this world. This is a rule not only in books but also in games.

Thus my generation grew up learning that women must be mothers to be accomplished women, because that is "natural." To fulfill this, we are early on motivated to play with dolls, pretending to be mothers, or other similar games, but always having a passive and "feminine" role.

On the other hand, boys must accomplish their goals in life through a well-paid profession or one depending on physical activity. Boys should take part in active games, playing roles related to strength, movement, adventure and sports.

From books, and with our first words, we learned that "Mom cooks and loves me," and "Dad works" (not Mom, of course). Modern reading books try to modify this in some way, but just making a superficial analysis of the activities of these feminine and masculine characters, we realize that the differences are still there but disguised, which is even worse.

When we talk about "sexism," we refer to a concrete discriminatory exercise by which psychological characteristics and behavior are given, and fixed social roles are established by merely considering people's sex. Doing this, men and women are restricted and conditioned in their possibilities of a thorough development as social beings.

Although this ideology affects both sexes, it is evident that women have been historically deprived of their rights, presenting their full participation in all spheres of social life, and particularly their access to public life.

Although textbooks are not the only means of transmitting sexual stereotypes, society in general must admit the deep cultural mistake of providing books for children which convey these messages.

It is very difficult to find in books for children feminine characters being intelligent, brave, active and loyal. The world is presented to girls as excluding them or giving them boring roles or passive ones, never or very rarely being active participants.
Thus, girls as well as boys, internalize feminine behavior related to passivity and cowardice.

These stereotypes only simplify the complex, rich and contradictory reality of human personalities, presenting strict and schematic answers to the dynamic situations of life.

Sexism is established in education and there is no deep questioning from those who take part in it.

Let’s see what happens when an adolescent finishes secondary school and must choose a career. This is the situation she must face. The most convenient career for a woman is that which is short and enables her to have free time to take care of her family. Considering this, the choices are more or less restricted to teaching. Bear in mind the motherly aspect of this activity, keeping close to the conventions of society. Besides, although this is the least well-paid of the professions, it does not matter because husbands are supposed to provide for their families. As we have already said, women must take care of home and children. Consequently, we find hundreds of teachers that hate children and have no interest in education or, for example, a Biology teacher who really wanted to be a doctor. Still others like education but, having to earn a living, they must look for better paid jobs.

The interesting aspect of this situation is that, though sexist education is evident, few women are conscious of it. Their lives are built under a patriarchal society and they are sure this is the way it must be. Thus, to bring about even a small change, we need whole generations educated with other social and cultural conventions. By now, in Argentina, most men and women share this state of things without questioning. The feminist movement is scarce. These groups and their development are harshly rejected by society, making their development slow and difficult. In some cases they become an elite and in others they must start with more general social problems such as malnutrition or sanitary conditions, which are urgent although nobody claims responsibility for them.

If we talk about philosophy, everything fits the same pattern, although we must add some other elements.

Careers such as Literature, Sociology, Anthropology, etc., are deeply underestimated. Some years ago, there was a political reason for this: many students had active political lives and were therefore severely repressed. It was also very difficult to get a job after graduation.

Nowadays, the reason is economic. If we have it in mind that the chance to work as doctors or lawyers is very difficult, it is even worse for graduates aspiring to humanistic careers. In this field, there are very few students as it is not a well paid activity, and surely not for men.

Nevertheless, there is a striking point: 90% of the directors of the Departments of Philosophy of our Universities or the ones that coordinate the few researches that are made are . . . MEN!! The logical question is: what happened in between? Where are those women who studied philosophy? The answer is not difficult, if we remember all that was said before. Most of those women have married and had children, and had to stop, at least temporarily, their studies or professional activity. Very often, when they want to return, they find that those men who had been their fellow students hold the most important positions.

If they then want to work, the only choice is to look for a secondary school to teach philosophy and forget about investigation.

Michael Apple in "Teachers and Texts" makes an interesting analysis that leads to some questions, which also seems to help us explain in some way our reality. He states that, "the impact of descalification takes place in the ground and in the institution made up mainly of women." Thus, we can analyze the patriarchal structure of a government that deprecates a profession mainly practiced by women as another expression, from another perspective, of sexism in education.

This had been my life, similar to the ones of many other women. The 80% of my female classmates never did anything related to philosophy in their lives after graduating. An explanation to this can be found in what I have already described, and in the political situation we live in as students. Some of us had a psychological need to leave all connections with our university days behind. This is more so with those who suffered the loss of a missing or exiled friend or relative.

But my life went on a bit differently. I did not give up the possibility of research. I studied psychoanalysis for some years, and as I got in touch with adolescents, I discovered my interest in the relationship between philosophy and education. But I had lost my opportunity: I was a woman, mother, divorced and wanting to get a job as investigator or continue studies at the University, having a child . . . it was too much. Nevertheless, I went on alone.

Every night, after work and after putting my baby to sleep, I read for hours looking for new ideas to make my students understand Logic and philosophy better. Fortunately, thanks to a trip for family reasons to Barcelona in 1989, my career took a turn. When I was in that town, there was a Congress of Operative Pedagogy and I took part in it. There I found the program, Philosophy for Children, wand with it the systematization I had been so long trying to use intuitively to have philosophy as a tool to teach thinking.

I am interested in many aspects of Philosophy for Children, but keeping to the topic in question, there are some that are very interesting and seem to me absolutely necessary.

Before talking about them, I would like to tell you, briefly, what people who still believe education is a possible means to become better persons expect.

Considering that school cannot only be a mechanical transmitter of the prevailing values, rules and attitudes of a culture, the great challenge is to become a key to the transformation process. We know it has many sides, one of them being equitable education for men and women.

Although it is true that recent statistics show that each day more and more women pursue education to higher levels, this does not prove there is no sex discrimination. Men and women do not receive the same stimulation to display abilities, capacities, fantasies, or self-esteem.

Constantina Safilios-Rothschild provides a wide variety of studies on this topic, stressing that differences in socialization and education during childhood affect the selection of future studies. Boys are educated to be competitive. They get less affection, for fear of making them lose their aggressive abili-
ities which are considered necessary for the cultivation of independence and ambition. On the other hand, girls receive affection but no motivation for intellectual progress: they are encouraged to start a family.

Safilios-Rothschild shows us how “masculine” and “feminine” characteristics that become traditional stereotypes are reinforced from early childhood. The conclusions she obtains are widely available in Argentina.

**Philosophy for Children as a solution**

Philosophy for Children has an extremely important aspect that makes me think that it can be a useful weapon to defeat sexism in our society. It is the “community of inquiry”: When children are encouraged to think philosophically, the classroom is converted into a community of inquiry. Such a community is committed to the procedures of open inquiry, and to responsible search techniques that presuppose an openness to evidence and reason. It is assumed that these procedures of the community, when internalized, become the reflective habits of the individual.

Under the banner of “pluralism,” it may be contended, the convergence of views is precluded, agreement and assent are ruled out, and intellectual diversity becomes the order of the day. But this ignores the presupposition of the practice of philosophy that dissent is a right, not an obligation...” To turn the classroom into such a community is a project to introduce changes in the traditional education of children, but especially appropriate to deal with sexism. Only in groups of this type can children know other ways of seeing the world, not only what adults show them through their vision. They can create a new view of the world with new and fresh patterns.

Philosophy for Children, by means of the “community of inquiry,” can be the perfect environment to modify that situation. Leading the novels presented in the program and analyzing girls’ and boys’ roles, one can create an atmosphere appropriate for the critical analysis of other novels or tales, so as to make children be critical, selective and capable of arguing instead of accepting the models imposed.

That day, they exhibited faulty reasoning and logical fallacies. In further conversations, many of those children told me they had been able to appreciate the importance of opinion exchange and listening to others to build up their own view of the world.

It is evident that the changes Philosophy for Children can produce are very slow. But in theory I consider it an effective method to modify patterns that are being gradually incorporated from kindergarten in everyone’s mind, through pictures in reading books, or orally transmitted by teachers, who are themselves repeating concepts, schemes and frustrations.

In Argentina there are two ways of obtaining the diploma of teacher of philosophy: there are universities (public and private) which offer courses and give a diploma that enables you to teach at secondary schools and universities; and there are other institutes (non-university) where shorter courses are offered which enable you to teach in the same institutes and secondary schools, but forbidding investigation.

In both cases, we are now facing a serious problem (not only in philosophy): there are fewer students being enrolled each year, this being the consequence of the fact that the number of professionals available to carry on teaching is decreasing. Graduates from other areas such as Educational Sciences or Psychology try to fill the gap, but the teaching of philosophy could disappear.

Generally speaking, Argentine education is experiencing one of its worst moments. It has the lowest budget in our history, due to an economic policy that is severely affecting education and public health. The consequences of this situation are evident for the short term, and very clear and serious in the long term.

Three thousand teachers have given up teaching during the first two months of this school term, because of economic reasons. I wonder what the fate of education in Argentina can be, let alone the social consequences.

Even if this information is not directly connected to the subject of this essay, I
consider it very important to give you a glimpse of education in Argentina, so that you can appreciate the lack of correspondence between what it is and what it should be.

Thus, Philosophy for Children is a means for achieving that goal. In a "community of inquiry," the teacher can also learn to modify his/her beliefs by listening to the children. They in turn can grow up internalizing other roles and profiting from the exchange of ideas between the sexes. In the future, they will act and educate their children with other patterns.

I think that Philosophy for Children is necessary to produce deep revolutionary changes in many ways in Argentina. In any case, becoming conscious of one's own situation is always the only way to modify it. The problem is that that is precisely what the establishment dislikes, and then such methods as Philosophy for Children are ignored and delayed.

In this really chaotic and confused context, any suggestion is greeted with limited interest. Thus, starting to reflect about such specific matters in a certain background, is a really difficult task. As you can see, not only my university days but also those of my professional activity, seem quite unhappy, because of political or economic reasons.

I think that in Argentina, as in the rest of the Latin American countries, these changes can only happen very slowly and upwards, never the other way around, and only when the relatively legitimate democracies are not interrupted. In this case, even the smallest change is erased.

Unfortunately, dependent countries such as Argentina have patriarchal schemes so deeply rooted in the establishment, that the ones who work against them often feel like Quixote fighting against the windmills.

NOTES
1. Various authors, Documento del Congreso Pedagógico; p 1.
2. Apple, Michael; Teachers and texts, p 57.
3. Various authors; La educación de lo femenino; chapter 2, pp 4370.
4. Ibid; pp 71-72.
5. Lipman, M.; Sharp, A.M.; Oscanyan, E; Philosophy in the classroom; pp 45-46.
Prospects for Feminism and Philosophy for Children in Russia

N.S. Yulina

The sensitivity of society and its theoretical thought to the philosophical problems of women and children is an indicator of the maturity of its democratic institutions and of the level of the legal and moral consciousness of its citizens. The significance of this problem is not yet recognized in a society that has just set about developing democratic institutions.

The whole range of problems associated with woman's being in my country—the former USSR—cannot be dealt with in isolation from its specific 74-year long historic fate, the system of party and state repressions of personality, and the communist mythological and utopian ideology. One of the segments of official ideology, notably the "philosophy of equality" of equality of man and woman, had it that under socialism all or most substantial problems of woman had been solved and the remaining ones were of an economic nature which ought to be tackled as the paternalistic functions of society and state improve. Wide popularity was acquired by a thesis of the "superemancipation of women" and the "feminization" of society, with reference to a high percentage of women among professionals (51 percent) and the overwhelming majority of women in the areas such as education, health care, and culture. The lack of interest in these problems on the part of philosophers and sociologists is due in part to the prevalence of the idea that everything is all right with the problems of women.

My own destiny—that of a woman, a doctor of philosophy, who for years has been uncritical of the "philosophy of equality" and who then came to discover the huge range of female problems, serves as a perfect illustration of the difficulties in comprehending the real status of women.

Perestroika has shattered numerous myths of the "philosophy of equality" and has shown that the term "equality" served the purpose of attracting cheap labor into production and its double, exploitation. At the same time it left intact many other myths, in particular the one about "the unduly high emancipation of women." Currently, public consciousness has developed an ideological combination of stereotypes of communist ideology, religious-patriarchal views towards women, images of the female body borrowed from Western mass culture which promotes demythologization of female consciousness. The barring of women from power, the propaganda regarding their return to the family, textbooks full of patriarchal stereotypes, all-around depreciation of the values of education—these are trends providing grounds for assuming that it is now much more difficult for a talented young woman to have higher education than before perestroika.

As society stabilizes and democracy develops in this country, public sensitivity towards problems of females and children will no doubt increase. Consideration of these problems in a single package is, to some extent, justifiable and to some extent not. Women and children constitute the most vulnerable segment of the population. They happen to be the prime victims of social injustice. One is safe in saying that both feminist philosophy and Philosophy for Children are developing within the general framework of modern thought adhering to the values of democracy, humanism, and rationalism. As far as the philosophical aspects are concerned, however, there are considerable differences between them. Feminist philosophy is a reflection of adults on their own being, while Philosophy for Children is the theorizing of grown-ups as to what children need so as to gain self-reflection. To my mind, Philosophy for Children aims at a balanced sociobiological understanding of the natural dispositions of children, the barring of women from power, the propaganda regarding their return to the family, textbooks full of patriarchal stereotypes, all-around depreciation of the values of education—these are trends providing grounds for assuming that it is now much more difficult for a talented young woman to have higher education than before perestroika.
Some Reflections on Our System of Education

Margarita Nikolayevna Dudina

The short December day was coming to a close. I had just finished my seminars for fourth-year students of philosophy, called "Philosophy for Children." This course, created in faraway America, and so unusual for our system of education, with every passing lesson made both my students and me somehow different.

I didn’t want the last lesson to be like all the others... So there we were in a cozy room sitting at a round table in the center of which, on a dish decorated with a traditional Russian design, was a homemade cake; a Russian samovar burbled quietly and the lighted candles filled the room with a mysterious light. Christmas Eve was near and the new year would soon step in.

Why should we teach philosophy at school? How can it change those who study it and while changing them change our way of life as well?

Philosophy and education. That is the subject of our talk. Could it be that we have artificially put these two words together? Can we find the real meaning behind them, see the problems that arise as soon as they are joined? Do these two words have a point of contiguity, a common origin, a stem whence they branch out?

It is no secret today that there is chaos in my country, disruption and degradation. Maybe the Russians are here in this world to amaze and astonish other nations, as a warning to them, to guard them against making the same mistakes?

How could it have come to all this? Was it caused by the fact that so great a number of people wanted their dreams to materialize? But how? The ways and means were of no significance. They pursued an idea and while doing it forgot the main factor—man.

Throughout the ages the attitude towards man in my country varied. In the 19th century the philosopher and writer NG. Chernyshhevsky issued forth a call: "To the axe, Russia!" In his books he depicted unforgettable, impressive revolutionary characters. Millions were captured by his ideas and so was V.I. Lenin, as he later said.

Chernyshhevsky is my compatriot. I was born and bred on the same land as he was, and Lenin too, by the great Russian river, the Volga. The school and university I attended still bear the name of Chernyshhevsky.

But we Russians had another writer and philosopher—F.M. Dostoyevsky. Unlike Chernyshhevsky, he was greatly worried by what would happen to man, especially a man who would choose violence as the means of achieving his aims. There isn’t a single attractive revolutionary character in Dostoyevsky’s books. That was the reason why in my school the “most harmful writer,” (As Lenin called Dostoyevsky) was not included in the curriculum. Only recently have teachers begun to speak of him.

This is an illustration of the problem “Philosophy and Education” I suppose.

The hero of our Soviet period is a poorly educated man with a limited mind. The intelligentsia left the country or were physically exterminated. Philosophers were put on board ship and exiled; the intellectuals were despised.

We all know that man’s ability to reason is not inborn. It has to be developed. How and by what? Philosophy is the answer. Of course, it might be enough for a man to have some common sense in general; to glide along the surface, so to speak, not penetrating into the essence of things. In such cases he is a prisoner of his own illusions about himself. He thinks that he voices his own opinions. In reality he is simply borrowing widespread opinions and stereotypes. It is this that prevents him from forming his own ideals, opinions, standpoint.

The philosophical way of thinking leads us into the depths of man’s being and cognition. It makes us reason about things which go much deeper than just a vague common sense; it raises problems and controversies. The sooner the child steps on this path, the better are his chances of becoming aware of the surrounding world and of not finding himself helpless in the turmoil of life.

More often than not philosophy is understood as something abstract, something not connected with everyday life. Nothing can be farther from the truth. In fact, it is in everyday life that the most profound problems of philosophy take root. Life is the center of all its interests. All the rest, even the most abstract concepts and categories, are but means for understanding life’s realities and their interconnectedness, their depths and fullness, their contradictions.

It is important to keep in mind that, from the point of view of philosophy, to understand reality is to have a critical approach to it, while at the same time trying to find in reality itself the path its changes will follow. The only sphere where philosophical problems may be solved is changing reality. This is where the effectiveness and power of human thought manifests itself. And human thought is developed by education.

“The fact that philosophy and education are inextricably interwoven is obvious,” says Pavel. “This intertwining originated in the early days of mankind. Man began to ask Where? How? When? Why? while he was still half animal. From then on man couldn’t do without these
questions. This is how philosophy began
and this is how the education of man
began. It is here that we must search for
their interdependence and reciprocal in-
fluence."

At first philosophy and education went
together, as one whole. With time, dif-
ferent sciences branched out and today
the expression “a philosophical educa-
tion” is not tautology.

Man comes to philosophy gradually,
imperceptibly, step by step through edu-
cation. Education nurtures philosophy, repletes it, and in turn is changed by it.
This intertwining, interpenetration of
philosophy and education is natural. When one of them tries to “rebels” and
sever its links with the other, the con-
sequences are disastrous. We should be ful-
ly aware of this. At present my country
is experiencing the painful impact of
such a severance.

“I would like my research to concern
the problem of the interconnection be-
tween philosophy and education,” says
Lyuba, one of my students. Lyuba con-
tinues: “our society considers a school-
leaver to be a mature person. Does the
school-leaver reflect on the surrounding
world adequately, is he able to reason
critically; in fact, can he reason at all? i.e.,
to what extent is the development of
thinking the development of man himself? These are the questions society
should ask, but it doesn’t.”

The aim the totalitarian society in
which we lived for seventy years set itself
was to keep undeveloped the inborn
qualities of man. The effect totalitarian
consciousness had on the development of
these qualities was exceedingly
negative. But man is a seed that produces
two stems: body and soul. The first stem
is cared for from the first moments of
life so it will grow. The stem of the soul,
of the intellect, is left to provide for itself,
to catch up with the body stem that
grows and develops. The fruit it bears is
of the intellect, is left

of the past But what are we to set up
instead? It seems to me that in the Soviet
school humanistic ideals have disap-
11
ded. This was happy to see that they had
transformed into a group of investi-
gators. This was mutual creativeness, the
children experienced satisfaction. Some-
1
had the children better. I saw that the class
aim of teaching philosophy is to make

son is not held in any esteem either. It
is sad to say, but for many who in their
early childhood were looking forward to
attending school, it soon became the
most hated place. The subjects that can
be classified as the humanities are few
and even here the pupils learn only what
is in the textbook. The children are not
taught to think, they are afraid to ask
questions, to voice their opinion, to have
disputes with the teacher.

In my country it had always been said
that the aim of education was to bring
up a harmoniously developed person. A
great number of different subjects were
crammed into the curriculum. The more,
the better, educators thought. But
philosophy, psychology, logic and ethics
were forgotten. Without these subjects
education is not capable of influencing
a personality or changing it for the bet-
and with it life itself. Now many have
come to understand that all this talk
about a harmoniously developed man
within a totalitarian regime based on the
principles of Marxism-Leninism is sheer
hypocrisy.

Children are intelligent and inquisi-
tive, but the educational system doesn’t
let them show themselves, or allow them
to carry on a frank discussion with the
teacher. They are manacled by outdated
syllabuses and textbooks and the inflexi-
able boundaries which the lesson is not
to cross and, what is worst of all, they are
suppressed by the teacher.

When I began to teach my students the
American course “Philosophy for
Children” I tried to make them imbibe
the idea of a different kind of intercourse
between teacher and pupil, one where
cooperation and mutual creativeness are
present. Later when I attended these
lessons I was happy to see that they had
understood what is most important: the
aim of teaching philosophy is to make
the children better. I saw that the class
had transformed into a group of investi-
gators. This was mutual creativeness, the
children experienced satisfaction. Some-
times the answer took long in coming;
sometimes it came easily in play.

I am sure that only those things which
the child thinks and feels about become
an acquisition for him. Philosophy is
capable of helping man in his develop-
ment and perfection.

“There are but few of us who have
taken the risk of teaching children philosophy. I have come to it through my reflection about our life and education," says Victoria. "I went to a school which was considered a model, although the school children did not think so. The teachers and the children differed in their opinions about a good school. In this 'model' school, a teacher threw a piece of chalk at a pupil; sometimes the dullards were hit with the pointer. Thank God we had something else beside the school. That is what saved us. There were wonderful outdoor excursions, 'voyages' to the gardens of knowledge, ablutions in refined streams—with books, music and theater.'

For children the world is a complete mystery. They see it in another dimension than grown-ups who know all the answers and can always explain what is right and what is wrong. If only we could give the children a new insight into the world, foster in them a feeling of love and creativeness, show them that intercourse among people is the most valuable of all human possessions, that it is this that makes life worth living. The more I think about it, the more often I come to the conclusion that "Philosophy for Children'' is where the solutions to my problems lie.

"Philosophy for Children'' led my students to analyze their own school experience. This is what Irina said, "Life is one disillusionment after another!' It is difficult to foresee events. For decades people have been living in a country where everything was regulated. From school and even in the kindergarten the idea "you must'' was rammed into our heads. If anyone dared rise above it or step aside, a hue and cry was raised. Man was a puppet in somebody's unkind hands. The system of education strangled all individuality, a feeling of inferiority was rammed into a person, though, of course, disobedient voices were heard now and then.

I remember one of my classmates, a fifteen-year-old fellow, who said, "One can suffocate in your school. Who needs a school like that? Your lessons are boring and your attitude towards us does you no honor as a teacher.''

The teenager had his own viewpoint, his own attitude to school life; he saw what the others didn't see or maybe were afraid to say out loud.

The reaction of the teachers? The parents were summoned. The teachers' council promptly passed a resolution to expel the boy.

This happened not in 1937, a terrible year for my country—not in 1947, but quite recently, somewhere in the 1980's. At 15 an individual just begins to flower, but the teacher's unkind response makes him unfriendly and embittered.

Where is the teacher who is capable of at least trying to endure the unruly, the bold? Why such cruelty? Why can't the teachers tolerate anything that goes out of the ordinary? Who is to be the judge of human dignity? What does this consist of? Why can't we forgive a person if he has a different view, another set of values, his own opinion?

"As for me,'' Irina goes on, "I wasn't a goody-goody as a child either. I remember the terror we lived through when our parents were summoned to school where the teachers disgraced us. At home it upset me to see the sad look in my mother's eyes.

"My speciality is not in fashion now. But I'm sure when people calm down a little, they will change their opinion of philosophy. To do this we have to start with children, try to give them a good start with the help of philosophy.''

In my country ideology has overshadowed philosophy and pushed it into the background. Now we have realized this and it is time to make amends. Philosophy can help us an insight into the world surrounding us, to teach us to think freely, to form our "Ego.''

Victoria continues, "When I first heard about the course "Philosophy for Children,''' moreover, when I began to teach it at school, my own impressions of the past years started to haunt me. It's extremely difficult to place everything. Let's begin with the fact that now I have come to realize that I am a woman. I feel it now. I have my strong and weak points; I can find excuses for myself. Previously, I never felt that I was a woman. I was something sexless. At school I was a female student. There were male students there too, but somehow there wasn't much of a difference between us. We all had to obey the teachers, study the same subjects, have the same opinions. No individuality whatever. To tell the truth, I didn't like my school for its 'identicalness' and lack of variety. I am quite sure that many people of my age felt the same.''

Natasha agrees with Victoria: "It is considered that philosophy is not for children, especially girls. Their minds are simply not capable of comprehending such things. In consequence women are alienated from social relations. Maybe there's nothing disastrous in the fact that women are barred from politics. The disaster lies in the fact that the woman doesn't go back to the family, she is incapable of bringing up children. Only her sense of duty links her to the family, nothing else. A woman doesn't pay enough attention to her education, but neither can she create the conditions for bringing up her children normally. In my opinion philosophy as a science, as a way of thinking, can be called upon to solve the task of bringing up the young generation and girls in particular.''

Sergei agrees with the girls. He thinks that the course can play a great role in helping the individual form as a male or female. "I think,'" he says, "that before becoming subjected to sexual desires children must understand that, first of all, they are human beings with a very sensitive psychology. Before one begins to experience sexual desires one has to learn to respect others. With an eye on the future we can say that "Philosophy for Children'' is a very necessary subject in our schools.''

Our school education has little to do with real life. Students are unanimous in their opinion that life experience is not gained at school, it is not taught in any lesson. Generally speaking, life turns out to be something quite different. In our schools children are not brought up as human beings; that is, women, mothers, men, fathers. The participants in the discussion are quite sure of this.

The pupils simply learn their lessons and leave school without growing up and becoming independent. From then on, by trial and error, they begin to mature. In consequence, questions about the past arise: What is life, after all, in reality? Why is there such a great discrepancy between what was taught and what there is? Under the burden of these questions all dreams, ideals and romance evaporate into thin air.

Where were the teachers who were granted the right to dominate over the children? Who gave them the right to mutilate young souls, to bring up at school people who are morally and intellectually crippled? These are the questions the students ask.

It could be that the outlook isn't so

...after all; that this is just a “tri de coeur.” But the time is lost, the years when you could only listen and memorize what the teacher said, never ask “silly” questions, never think, never have your own opinion will never be replaced.

Here, I think, is just the place for “Philosophy for Children.” It gives the opportunity to think, to speak openly and develop as an individual, to relieve oneself of psychological complexes thrust upon us by a perverted society. It would teach us to communicate with each other on a higher level, to analyze our own actions and those of other people. This, I think, is the way normal children with an adequate world outlook should develop. They will judge themselves correctly and that will make them more confident.

Outside it was getting darker, big fluffy flakes of snow were falling. Only in Russia is snow like that. How dear it is to the Russian soul, however mutilated and broken it be. But maybe a soul like that needs it most? How can we teach a man to see eternity in one instant, the whole world in a speck of sand, infinity in the palm of one’s hand, and the sky in the calyx of a flower?

These are the eternal questions of pedagogics—what to teach and how to teach it. And the question of all questions: Who is to teach?

We sat round the samovar for a long time. The candles were almost burned down, but our discussion did not end.

Passionately, Eugenia told us how she was made to suffer at school. From early childhood she liked to write stories. She had her secret notebook where she wrote everything down. Once she wrote a composition, the teacher’s set home task, and was put to shame for cheating, i.e., copying it off somebody. The composition must have been so good that the teacher couldn’t believe her pupil to be so talented. Eugenia never again wrote stories; the secret notebook was torn up.

“I have finished school,” she said. “I have overcome shyness and fear. I am beginning to forget the humiliations that I had to put up with from those who are called on to teach us. But it is so difficult to put together one’s shattered dreams, to restore one’s faith in people.”

We discussed the problem from different angles, but we were unanimous in our conclusion that philosophy and education are parts of one whole. Most of the school subjects keep the mind of the child within the boundaries of that subject. Yet the aim of education is to teach the child to find his way about in life, gain a certain set of values common to all mankind, learn to approach the eternal questions about the universe and oneself, determine one’s own place in this world as part of infinity, nature, society, one’s Motherland, and find one’s own “ego.”

Philosophy teaches conceptual, fundamental and critical thinking. My students and I prefer those methods of teaching which turn the class of pupils into a group of investigators.

We all agreed that the course “Philosophy for Children” is of immense significance for the Soviet school. We were all products of our Soviet system of education; we had gone through all the sufferings and ardently desired that the new generation would not repeat our mistakes.

Philosophy as a way of thinking can help the children progress from the naive ideas of small Elfie to the maturing thoughts of Harry, Lisa, Suki; to develop an insight into things.

A child’s thoughts and feelings are put to work when reading the stories of “Philosophy for Children.” These books enrich the mind and soul. Having gone through such courses, children and adolescents will never get bored by the routine of life. Let’s hope that the hard times will pass, and the people remain. Let’s hope that these people will be free and happy. Let philosophy help educate them.

Women’s Education in Mexico and Philosophy for Children

Teresa de la Garza

“¿Para qué se educa a las niñas en nuestro país? ¿Para que sean útiles a la sociedad, para que se basten a sí mismas, para que afinen el sentimiento de su dignidad y de su autonomía? No. Para que se preparen—física, espiritual, moralmente—to ser las protagonistas de un acontecimiento que rebasa los límites de lo individual y lo social para tener las dimensiones de lo cósmico. Ese acontecimiento, ¿hay que decírtelo? es la maternidad. Si la maternidad por cualquier motivo, no se produce, sobrevendrán las tinieblas exteriores y el crujir de dientes. Si se produce, se habrá logrado la plenitud.”

—Rosario Castellanos
I started this paper with a long quotation from a newspaper article written by Rosario Castelanos, one of the most important Mexican feminist philosophers, more than 24 years ago. In it she points out that the goal of women's education is maternity. A woman is successful if she becomes a mother, all other achievements are secondary.

It is a fact that in my country, women have been considered full citizens since 1946, when we acquired the right to vote, and basic education is obligatory for all citizens, so many girls receive basic education. But in fact, the economic status of a family determines which members of that family are going to get higher education. In most cases, male children get it on the assumption that they will become heads of family and will have to face the responsibility to provide for it, whereas females will “find a good husband who will take care of them.” This argument is even more ridiculous when one looks at the statistics of the country which show a very high percentage of women who take care of their families in all senses, including the economic.

Women who get higher education at a university belong, for the most part, to the middle or upper middle classes, and their number is increasing rapidly in different fields. However, when a woman gets her degree and wants to start working, she still faces some problems. If she lives with her parents, they might think that if she starts working, her chances of being married diminish; for some old-fashioned parents, working outside the house is not “ladylike.” On the other hand, if she is married, in many cases she has to ask for her husband’s permission to work. Some husbands are very frightened of working wives, especially if they are successful. Even if she gets permission it is understood that her career is secondary to that of the husband, because her first and most important role is that of wife-mother.

Employers are usually reluctant to hire women, their main reason being that they “become pregnant” which implies license, social security, etc. So maternity, which should be the goal of every woman, becomes the main reason for not being taken seriously as an employee, and in many cases, for being paid lower salaries.

Today, many women who went to the university and got a degree hoping to make a career are asking themselves if it was worth it to face so many difficulties and to break so many unwritten rules only to become second-class professionals. The only alternative seems to be—as one of my colleagues in the Literature Department points out—to do our work better every day, to construct an image of woman’s work that will enable those who follow our steps to get better positions. At this point, we could ask ourselves, “What is it that moves a woman to ignore the traditional role and to see education as a way of self-realization? Does education help a woman to become economically independent? Does this independence help her to become a morally responsible and autonomous human being?

To these questions we do not have definite answers, but every day it becomes more clear that education should awaken and spread critical and creative thinking that can help to overcome the weight of obsolete roles, no longer useful for the new circumstances that we face in our society.

I was one of these women who had the opportunity to be educated. I must admit that it came to me as a gift; maybe that is why I feel the obligation to work towards a society where it will be considered the right of every girl. I was born in a little town in the mountains surrounding the Valley of Mexico. My father was a Chemical Engineer who worked in a paper factory. My mother was one of the few female students of Chemistry; she graduated with honors and then got married and became a perfect housewife-mother. Nevertheless the fact that she studied at the University influenced my sisters and me—for us it was only natural that we would go to college when we grew up.

While I lived in my hometown school was fun. Girls and boys of different ages studied together with a teacher who encouraged us to read books on nature and fiction. But when my sisters had to go to secondary school, we moved to Mexico City and I went to a big school only for girls and in the care of nuns. I remember clearly my first day at that school. I was six and I really was not prepared to face the discipline of that kind of school. But with time I got used to it and I even learned to behave like a “little lady!” But for me the real world was back at my hometown, where I could explore the countryside, play with my friends and in the evenings, sit in front of a big fireplace while my father read to me wonderful stories that made me love books.

Somehow I got through school and finally it was time to go to the university. I never doubted that I was going, but I was undecided as to what to study. I was fascinated with life, so my first choice was Biology. Then I considered the possibility of studying Anthropology, because human life was the most fascinating of all. Subsequently, I attended a philosophy class and decided to study philosophy. In my first class I realized that it was not going to be easy. Some of my teachers were convinced that girls should not study philosophy because it is a rational discipline and girls are emotional, and consequently they tried to discourage us by giving us low grades, or at least lower than those they gave to boys.

At first we girls felt frustrated and angry, but with time we learned from those teachers as much as we could regardless of the grades they gave us. Other teachers, however, encouraged us and taught us that humility is a condition for wisdom, together with a sense of wonder, love of freedom, willingness to listen to others, capacity to imagine, kindness and respect. They also made it clear that those qualities could be developed by girls and by boys. Gone were the days when the female students of philosophy attended classes perfectly attired, wearing even hat and gloves to make it clear that in spite of being interested in philosophy, they were still ladies.

In my last year at the university, something happened that both shocked and urged me to be a philosophy teacher in the hope of putting a stop to senseless violence. It was the student revolt at Tlatelolco.

I think it was then that I discovered that my interest in philosophy intermingled with my interest in education. I tried to adopt Ortega y Gasset’s phrase: “Entre las varias actividades de amor sólo hay una que yo pretenda contagiar a los demás, el afán de comprensión.” (Among the various acts of love, there is one I pretend to communicate to others, the will to understand).

But this will to understand requires a certain discipline, a ruled procedure and also a community of inquiry. This appealed to me in my attempt to combine my love of philosophy with my love of education. So I was led to Philosophy for Children.

Philosophy for Children, as I see it, is
a proposal—but at the same time a challenge—to philosophers. The challenge is to put philosophy at the service of education, of the education of all human beings without distinction of race, creed, age or sex. In that sense it represents a break with the tradition that keeps the richness of the discipline for a small group of specialists, mainly white males. But at the same time Philosophy for Children is a return to the origin of philosophy as conceived by Socrates. Socratic dialogue is a model that guides the community of inquiry. It represents the confidence in the human possibility of communicating as equals, getting involved in a common task: the search for meaning.

This task is mediated by language. Words are a possible means of liberation because they are the incarnation of truth, that is, they have meaning: "La palabra, que es única, es al mismo tiempo y por eso mismo, gregaria. Al surgir convoca la presencia de todas las otras que le son afines, con las que le atan lazos de sangre, asociaciones fícticas y constituye familias, constelaciones, estructuras." (Words are unique, and at the same time and for that reason, gregarious. It conjures up other similar words, words of the same family, in order to build whole constellations and structures.)

Words are unique, and for that reason gregarious, says Rosario Castellanos in a beautiful text I couldn't resist quoting. In it, she invites us to engage in dialogue, to recreate together language using the pearl hidden in every one of us, that of meaning. All words have meaning that should be present every time we use them. That meaning is meant for those who listen and who, in time, will answer. Dialogue is a very special relationship among persons. It is guided by meaning and is only possible among those who consider and treat each other as equals. It will be fruitful only among those who want to become free together.

Nowadays the massive participation of women in the productive process presents a dilemma. We know that the old roles should be changed, but at the same time we do not dare to do so because they are so integrated with our self-image that it becomes frightening to abandon them. In order to create new roles we have to change our self-image and that is only possible if we dare to say our own words. The voice of women must be heard, but first it must be created. The creator is free, she imposes her rule on the world around her, transforming it. Naming things is a way to create order in the world and it shouldn't be the privilege of man or a group of men, but the right of all human beings.

Art, Science, Literature, Philosophy, work, are attempts to recreate the world, but to be creative is not possible unless one is critical and free. It is only through the active participation in the human world of culture that we can recognize the human dignity that allows us to recognize ourselves in others. Philosophy for Children can be a powerful way to help women to express their own word, to recreate language from their own experience and to discover their true identity as persons.

The experience to be listened to attentively, and to be taken seriously, is very rare to girls, and even to women. Latin American women, especially Mexican, are well-known for the abnegation of what is considered the right way to live. But, is it enough? Evidently not, as anyone reading Latin American female literature can see. With fine irony, Rosario Castellanos judges the qualities traditionally attributed to women: intuition that substitutes intelligence and quiet acceptance of a biological destiny that replaces will. To these so-called qualities she poses a different set of qualities: strength, perseverance, criticism, freedom and courage. To foster these qualities in women will result in the construction of a better world.

The problem is: How to provide the kind of education that will foster these qualities? I think that the community of inquiry—central to Philosophy for Children—can do that and even more, because it can also foster in us the capacity to respect each other and share the enterprise of finding meaning in the world around us. The community of inquiry provides the ideal setting for girls and women to realize their essential equality with men and their worth as autonomous individuals whose participation in society is necessary to create a better way of living together cooperatively.

The community of inquiry is very important for the development of women's identity based on self-esteem and self-confidence necessary for human growth. In order to be prepared to face the challenge of creating new roles for women in our society, it is also necessary to foster critical and creative thinking, essentially linked with freedom. In this sense also, participation in a community of inquiry can be liberating. I remember one small girl from a public school in Mexico City. When I first met her, she was very shy and she dared not talk. Gradually, I came to know that she was the only daughter of a very authoritarian father and a quiet and submissive mother. At home she was not allowed to take part in the conversation, so she soon learned to keep silent; but she also learned to listen, so when she finally decided to talk, she amazed the group with her keen remarks on the arguments of others. With time, she became a very important member of that community of inquiry. When the course was over and we had to say goodbye to each other, she gave me something that I will always treasure. It was the drawing of a blooming flower and at the bottom she had written: "Thank you all for this community in which I feel free to be myself."

If Philosophy for Children can provide this kind of community for all the girls in my country, maybe we will be able to create new and wonderful roles for women and find our true identity; working together with men in the construction of a society free of uncritical acceptance of assigned roles that have oppressed so many women in the past.

The construction of a new feminine identity can only be a communitarian task. Richard Rorty believes that the traditional identity of women has been constructed from the concept of negation, absence or deficiency and he proposes narrative as a way to recreate this identity. For him it is not so important to describe or to define woman or to search for the causes of the oppression. The important thing is to create the new woman, fostering "solidarity" in actual social situations. Solidarity is not discovered, but created through identification with the life of others; it is necessary to be able to put ourselves in the place of others, in that way the category of "other" is substituted by the category of "us". The idea of a collective identity, self-constructed, is, according to Rorty, especially important for feminists. Women must start creating their own language, tradition and identity, renouncing the construction of theories about it.

The construction of a feminine identi-
ty, as Rorty proposes, that is, from mere narrative, imagining what she could be through social or aesthetic practices, is not enough. In my view, it requires reflection about those practices in the light of ideas such as freedom or justice. Identity is therefore related not only to the history and experience of women—lived or imagin-ed—but with reflection about them and reinterpretation within the horizons of each culture. It is then necessarily a reflective practice. That is why we need—not any community—but a community of inquiry and dialogue not only among women, but also with men.

"Today there is a growing awareness of the affinity between children's philosophy and feminist philosophy. Both grew out of the conflicts that arose in the nineteen sixties and both have continued to stress the rights of oppressed groups in our society. Both focus on the importance of personal and social experience as the starting point of inquiry with others, and they share a commitment to inclusiveness and pluralism... both Philosophy for Children and feminist philosophy stress a pedagogy or a procedure that involves dialogue, care for the whole person participating in the dialogue, and quest for meaning."3

If only Philosophy for Children as an educational approach could help children to construct their identity as well as their social roles.

The community of inquiry proposed by Philosophy for Children is based on dialogue among the participants. This dialogue is regulated by the rules of argumentation that are gradually internalized propitiating self-correction in the participants. But dialogue also has an ethical dimension on which I would like to comment.

Ethics based on dialogue helps us to evade the dangers of individualism and closed communitarianism, at the same time that it contributes to clarifying the relations of women among themselves as well as with men. This kind of ethical practice, fostered by the community of inquiry, establishes equality in the asymmetry of social positions, equality without power, equality based on the affirmation of being in us and in the other.

Equality must not be confused with identity or standardization and it requires: autonomy, that is, the possibility of independent election and decision; authority, which implies the capacity to exercise power; "solo puede llamarse iguales a quienes son equipoten-tes". Third, the possibility to say words that are considered worth listening to because they carry meaning, truth and beauty and for all that, credibility. Finally, there is what we may call equivalence or, better, respectability.

Reciprocity and mutual recognition between persons belong by definition to equality, and they are closely linked with dialogical relationship and responsibility. To exist as a human being is to name the world, transforming it. This is only possible in the mutual commitment to each other and to the world around us. The community of inquiry as a pedagogical strategy fosters these characteristics and helps the participants to see each other as an equal, as a source of meaning, as an ally in the process of creating a better world in which to live.

As I think of my own process of education I feel grateful for having had the opportunity to study philosophy. But at the same time I wish I could have had the experience of the participation in a community of inquiry from the first years of school. That is why I decided to help the children in my country to have that experience. My first try was with my own children who will tell you how confident I felt about the advantages of Philosophy for Children.

It is true that things have changed for the better since my days as a university student. Many girls are studying philosophy and we have several female professors in the Philosophy Department (although only two, myself and a colleague, hold full-time positions). But I think there's still much to do, but I have hope. I consider hope not as a passive wait, but as an active enterprise, a communitarian and brave fight. Freire says, "Me nuevo en la esperanza en cuanto uno llucho y si lluchan con esperanza, espero." So, every time I see a girl in a school giving a counterexample, detecting assumptions, helping some of her peers... my hope grows.

My hope grows also when I look at my female students at the university, those that have been exposed to the community of inquiry methodology. The experience of participation in a classroom community of inquiry as they said to me has helped them to realize how much potential they have and how they can be enriched at the same time they help to enrich others. My hope grows when I see my own daughter, now twenty years old and a Literature student: she is more self-assured than I used to be at her age, she sees no conflict between her career and her life as a wife and mother. I remember the day I asked her, "What will you do, get married or be a great writer?" She looked at me and said, "Mother, where do you get those crazy ideas? I think you have been watching too many old movies!

NOTES
3. Sharp, Ann M. "The Difference It Could Make"
4. "We can only call equals those that have the same power." Amorós, Celia, "Mujeres, feminismo y poder" Actas del Seminario Mujer y Poder, Madrid UC, 1989.
Bulgarian Women Facing Their Problems and the Changes in the Educational System

Roumiana Tultkova

Finding answers to issues concerning life is of vital importance to every person. This importance is even greater in those crucial times when one is overloaded by problems.

The current political changes have revised the entire cultural situation in our society. Permanent changes have taken the place of the previously existing stagnancy. The present crisis of values has posed countless problems for everyone. Intellectuals, looking for liberty of thought and the manifestation of their spiritual qualities, are faced with these problems with a great intensity. This concerns to a large extent the highly educated women, who form a considerable part of our intellectual elite.

Until now, Bulgarian women lived in the closed space of their own monologic thoughts, without a community of their own. The laws of the totalitarian society did not allow the existence of any feminist literature, feminist philosophy or feminist movements. Therefore, it’s only natural that women of today are trying to answer questions like: “Who am I?” “What is my social status and my social role?” “What do I believe in and how should I go on living?”

So what was the social status of a Bulgarian woman, educated in philosophy, history, literature, or arts—a woman striving for the manifestation of her creative abilities?

The creation of something new is not an autonomous activity of a supergifted individual. The process of creation cannot take place outside a certain social moment and is essentially part of a specific social structure. Therefore, the problem of a woman’s creative expression depends not so much on herself, but on the nature of the social structure she lives in and the reality it forces upon her.

During recent decades our society has combined social and cultural traditions with the communist ideals. Being a revolutionary ideology, communism tried to eliminate the differences between the sexes in the name of liberty. It aimed at moving women from the social periphery to the social center with the intention of eliminating sexual dependence and liberating every human being. At the same time the communist ideology made absolute its validity and made it a rule to exercise total power over the same “totally liberated” human being.

One of the main characteristics of that ideology was the overthrowing of the biological at the expense of the social environment and nothing depended on biological origin.

This anti-biological stance of the dominating ideology might be the cause for experiments aimed at the total removal of all the differences between men and women. This was done with the sole purpose of creating individuals who would be equally subservient to the proclaimed ideals. As a result of this, women found themselves in a male-centered world, where males were the standard of liberty. Women had to equalize their status with men’s by losing their female individuality.

Thus women turned out to be the social group that was forced to accept itself as totally emancipated. At the same time, the continuing male domination was called equality between men and women. From this came the paradox of declaring equality in the presence of a double dependence of women: on male domination and on the deindividuating ideology.

In such a way the Bulgarian woman was given a falsely evaluated position in a society with a fictitious equality of rights. Hence, it is not difficult to explain the denial of the existence of feminist movements and feminist philosophy in this country. It was the proponents of the communist ideology who claimed to have solved all feminine problems and who jumped to the conclusion that they were non-existent.

These declarations are easily disproved by any highly educated woman who has lived and worked under such conditions. Any such woman would say without hesitation that the whole educational system had treated her as equal to anyone else and had by no means provoked any thought in her mind that she was different in any respect from men. At the same time she would say that her education didn’t address the development of her personal individuality or talents. The social task of education, coordinated with the dominating ideology, was the stifling of individuality in
an attempt to get society to be a “cohesion” of uniform individuals. The lack of such “cohesion” would bring about the antipode of the social being—the autonomy of every personality—and lead to the disintegration of the monolithic socialist society.

Such repression was accomplished by means of pressure, compulsion and power. Obedience and subjection were accepted as expressions of their victory, and were praised as socially useful. Every question had its irreversible answer and non-standard thinking out of the context of the ideological rules was often interpreted as lack of knowledge.

All this means that sexual non-discrimination didn’t come from the equal status of the sexes. Instead of combining private and public interests, the educational system brought forth the ideological goals of domination upon individuals.

A woman would say all this was a paradox, leading her to deeply divided requirements of our changing society and the support of an organized community of its democratization. The compromise that is most often made by women is in their professional achievements, which are in permanent contradiction in a one-sided way by the socialist way of development.

Later on, such a life-start gives rise to a vicious circle of contradictions in a woman’s existence.

Educated women were not only allowed to work but were obliged to do so. Their economic independence gave them the chance of influencing to a certain extent the decisions about their status. But in practice they were encouraged to deal perfunctorily with their profession and to develop as remarkable amateurs. The number of duties (housekeeping, child care, daily concerns, etc.) called for a lot of time and they had a low standard of living. It was not expected of women to be devoted enough time to family and home were approved by men. Most of the Bulgarian men still think that the work women are born for is connected directly or indirectly with the family. Another kind of preoccupation is accepted as “lapse” or “egoism” because the process of creating requires time and self-devotion.

It turns out that women have no other alternative than to choose between the independence accompanying the loneliness of a professional career, and the dependence determined by family life. But the human aspiration for self-realization includes harmony between self-esteem and the evaluation given by others. Thus one of the most important principles of human existence gives rise to a personal drama for women compelled to exist in such a situation. Their family and professional status are equally significant to them. The absence of one of these aspects in life creates an inferiority complex and leads to a feeling of non-self-realization.

Women gradually become exhausted in their lonely search for a way out of the situation. This naturally results in the relegation of women to a position less important than men. This situation is traditionally, and conveniently too, justified by the perceived lack of personal abilities but not due to a lack of conditions for their realization.

It appears to me that the Bulgarian woman has no stability and mental equilibrium in such a situation. Being unable to find the necessary balance under these circumstances, she wavers between two extremes. Frustration and the feeling of inadequacy are her permanent companions, leading to the formation of an inferiority complex. In her drama she lacks the support of an organized community of women like herself. This kills women’s desire for creation and deepens the falseness in her family relationships.

The compromise that is most often made by women is in their professional careers. Their unrealized ambitions for creation, which are in permanent conflict with the feeling of equality with men, are being deformed and often emphasized as fundamental in the upbringing of children. Children are expected to achieve their other goals. This might be the cause in children’s upbringing for the neglect of questions like: “Who am I?” and “What’s my place in the world?”, and the substitution of them by “How do others accept me?” and “how do I present myself?” Thus the aspiration of dominating over others is encouraged. The upbringing of young people doesn’t stimulate the realization of their personal abilities, but emphasizes the acquisition of certain mechanisms for “rising” above the others. This kind of depersonalization might be called dehumanization.

The depersonalizing situation exists in education as well. The channels for its infiltration are numerous and often have a socially-determined character. But undoubtedly one of them is the existential disposition of the women who make up the majority of the teachers in our country. At the same time insofar as sex individualizes and determines a person, women should struggle for the rationalizing of feminine issues, so that they are able to achieve through the upbringing of the new generation the recognition of their equal value. As it was difficult for a woman to become a scientist, an artist or a philosopher, she, in her present position as a teacher, can strongly influence the formation of the new generation.

That’s why, on the one hand, the woman of today gives meaning to questions about who she is, what she believes in and what she demands from society; and on the other hand she can win by having an influential presence in the changing educational system.

The educational reform is all-embracing. The ex-ideology is rejected and substitutes are sought for its democratization. That’s why Philosophy for Children fits naturally into the vacuum created by the total rejection of the previous extremely dogmatic and ideological teaching in philosophy. The necessity for such a program is determined by the requirements of our changing society and the need for new criteria of values and emancipated thinking.

Philosophy begins in the wondering of man and his attempts to raise existential issues. Thus the value of Philosophy for Children is in the model of thinking it suggests. Children are not taught how to think but are encouraged to think better.

At the same time the value placed on different points of view protects children from the traditional tendency of taking things for granted and enriches their view of the world. Girls are given the
freedom to become aware of themselves and the values of their sex. Boys could develop the ability to accept another point of view as being equal in value.

Thus the idea of the formal equality of all school children could acquire meaning. Philosophy for Children is an attempt to grant children freedom of thought.

Philosophy for Children counteracts the unending competition to be best at school by stressing self-awareness and turning respect for others into a value. All this means more self-confidence and more appropriate ambitions.

Insofar as philosophy itself recognizes the completeness of human existence, the penetration into its model of thinking is always, and for everyone, an intellectual emancipation, and is in that sense a complete realization of the personal "self." So the woman-teacher, dealing with these matters, has the chance to overcome in a purely spiritual way part of the problems of her professional and personal drama.

The present social situation presents the possibility of looking at the world through the female "self" and of revealing the world through the child's "self," with the purpose of searching for ways to harmonize them with the traditionally male world.

Whether this will be achieved or will be lost again in the labyrinths of the changing society depends largely on women. They are again assigned the task of finding the solutions to many-sided problems which are vitally important for their future. Bulgaria's highly-educated women not only give a new meaning to their previous status, but discover their philosophy of life and, becoming aware of their strengths and weaknesses, they aim at moulding the world around them. Every woman has the chance to choose the direction of her interests in relation to the world, man, or her own identity—without making a personal drama out of her choice. It's the choice she makes that will determine her new place in the currently changing social structures. These new structures are the future of the society. They will determine the new ways for the upbringing and education of children, who are themselves the future.
The Vicious Circle of Anonymity, or Pseudo-Feminism and Totalitarianism

Mihaela Miroiu

As a matter of fact, the two main goals of feminism are the equality of woman with man and her liberation from the domination of a world ruled by masculine values. When these two problems are taken into account in Western literature, they are discussed in terms of man being considered as an individual while woman is aspiring to this condition, to her assertion as an individual, to her being equal with man (according to liberal theory), not only before the law but also as the potential creator of specific feminist values (in the radical feminism).

This phrase, 'as an individual', is generated by two hundred years of democratic practice. So what is the situation in an area marked by fifty years of socialist totalitarianism? What do the terms 'equality' and 'individual' mean in such a context? We may say that socialism worked systematically for the abstract human being through the systematic destruction of the concrete human being, the individual. Here are some of the instruments used by the socialist totalitarian system to carry out this work.

1. Political and economic strategies.

The first step of socialist policy was to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat within a communist regime. By changing the name given by Marx to the notion of 'proletarian' (a person without any property, who earns his or her living by selling his or her own labor), the communist regime identified the proletariat with the industrial and agricultural worker (who had only an elementary training in 1950). From this category of workers were chosen the leaders at all levels. From the very beginning (1817 in Russia and 1948 in Bulgaria), the stipulation of the political equality of woman with man and her promotion through the same mechanism as that used for man was formally established. The proletarian 'had no country', but through this strategy she had also no religion, no nationality, no race and no sex.

The type of proletarian who had become a leader initiated the process of destroying private property. They started to ruin the property itself. This was the second significant step of establishing the communist regime. Everybody became the owner of all the means of production, but not in the sense of having equal shares of a certain enterprise. The real sense was that everybody was an abstract owner of an abstract property. The results of this fact are very clear: there were going to be no real owners and no real competition among them. There was a single competitor, the state. But that couldn't compete with itself.

How was a wage-earner supposed to know s/he was an owner? Here we see another devious aspect of the communist regime: the absolute gulf between what the system proclaimed and the reality. The proletarian was repeatedly told through the mass media, or meetings, that she was the owner, the producer and the beneficiary of the principal means of production. Like any other ideological abstraction, soon these notions lost their meaning.

A second problem was this: according to the 'economic equality' everybody was the owner of all the means of production, but together and not as individuals. And so happened what Aristotle had warned of 2,300 years previously: 'what belongs to everybody belongs to nobody'.

What happened to the private property of consumer goods? In this case, things were different in different countries. In Romania, the equality of the people was pursued with a peculiar persistence. It was 'scientifically established' that each of us needed only eight square meters of living surface. Most of the existing houses were destroyed and replaced by uniform blocks of flats which were all alike, and each human being got an apartment whose size was calculated according to a formula for giving the necessary number of square meters per person. In the last few years, the system tried to build food warehouses out of which we were going to feed ourselves in the same regulated way (it was precisely calculated how many calories were needed by every social professional category). These enormous food stores were nicknamed 'the temples of starvation'.

In schools and in all kinds of offices, a uniform was compulsory. The uniform itself had become the symbol of equality.

This strange equalitarian treatment was applied to women too. In Romania, 45.9% of the workers were women because (a) being equal with men they had an equal right to work; (b) being owners, producers and beneficiaries, like men, they were obliged to work; (c) every human being had to be occupied in a state establishment so that he or she could be easily supervised; (d) no working man could earn his family's living by his wage alone; (e) those who did not work were considered offenders and were sent to forced labor camps or even to prison; (f) the constitution stipulated the equal right and duty to work. 'To choose' a way of living was nonsense.

The totalitarian regime created devious methods through which men and women were bound up with their jobs and with a certain town or village. Only by getting married could they manage to change the place of their job, otherwise they were condemned to live in the place allotted to them as a working place.

2. The 'sound Family'

Theoretically speaking (from a con-
stitutional viewpoint) any person of age could marry any other person, or could obtain a divorce when there were insufficient reasons for maintaining the family. Socialism advocated the formation of a 'sound family', but this was not to be understood on a psycho-physical basis. There was a 'metaphysical' element in the life of each person, a kind of Damocles' sword hanging over them, and this element was their personal record.

Each of us had a record which contained all kinds of data, including our political affiliation, our past, our parents and our attitude to the social order. Marriage with a person who had negative references in their record was damaging to one's personal record, resulting in impediments to any type of promotion, the loss of position or of one's job, endless criticism in front of the staff, all kinds of petitiogeries, and the distrust of the society in you as a discredited element, and so on. Once married, divorce became a second problem, because the record of a divorced person was thereby spoiled. A lot of couples did not marry, and many married couples remained informally separated, for this reason.

The number of children was imposed by state policy, and was fixed at at least four children for every family. Abortion was forbidden below this number and the contraceptive methods accepted from a medical viewpoint were made almost unavailable. If the number of children was larger than four, the state offered encouragement and decorations but no satisfactory means of sustenance. Therefore, each child born to a family endangered the other children's health and worsened their malnutrition. A lot of women die trying to terminate their pregnancies by using primitive methods. Here are some of the methods used for this purpose: 93% of the high schools had an industrial and agricultural structure, and so had 70% of the universities. The Arts subjects, such as Literature, History, Philosophy and Foreign Languages occupied together only 10-20% of the study time and were dominated by political ideology. Education was identified with political training which consisted in the canonical repetition of the texts made by the leader of the party-state. In the technical universities, humanist education was almost absent, but a lot of political training was done instead. Every day the television gave only political education during the two hours of its program (from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.). The party press plainly dominated cultural life.

The single purpose of this system was the creation of a so-called 'new man', an instrument devoted to the final goal of the 'communist terrestrial paradise'.

4. The 'new man'—man or woman?

This term, 'the new man', was the thematic obsession of all communist training. I believe that this term was an obstacle to the creation of both masculine and feminine genders, which tried obstinately to deprive the individual of his or her individuality and to obtain the gradual dissolution of the person and the melting of the individual into anonymity. The 'new man' was supposed to be the perfect and efficient anonymous person, with necessities as minimal as possible, without any personal aims, devoted to the general cause, and having duties only to the collective society, but not him/herself. Many of us were surprised at also hearing of 'duties to oneself'.

Paradoxically, some of the characteristics usually attributed to woman became features of the 'new man'. These features were: dependence, obedience, self-sacrifice and self-denial, all of them understood in relation to the society and not to the family. The 'new man' was described in functional and subjective terms as woman usually is. On the other hand, many features traditionally considered as specific to woman: the domination of the emotions over reason, sensitivity, intuition, a sense of detail, tenderness, the ability to make the environment agreeable or even delightful, personal charm, were all regarded as being completely bourgeois and injurious.

So half of the 'new man' was a semblance of the notion of woman, a main woman. How did this model consider those features traditionally associated with the masculine gender? Independence, the necessity of being prevalent, autonomy, the 'winner' spirit, the necessity of competition, force, dynamism, and selfishness were rejected as not being characteristic of the human type needed by a society in which the fundamental principle was: 'nothing for me, everything for society', in which personal interest was considered as a real crime against the community.

What does this new creature retain of those characteristics traditionally con-
sidered as being mainly masculine? Here are some of these features: a sort of rationality, subjected to the rules imposed by the political system; force, understood as physical power and as the capacity for enduring poverty; common sense, as applied to political ideology only; and existence in the public sphere, subject to the hitherto unprecedented imperatives of the state. So half of the 'new man' was a mockery of man, or, to put it differently, it was a mutilated man.

A pseudo-androgynous being was to be born; a man without manhood and a woman without womanhood. This creature was going to exist within both sexes, and in this sense had a new gender: the neuter gender. This being was not the result of a pooling of values between sexes, but the result of a mutilation that had as its final goal the creation of a 'nobody,' a new individual lacking individuality, a person without personality.

Artistic representations of this ideal were produced in the shape of strange collective pictures with identical faces, multiplied copies of an anonymous person. In Romania, only the leaders, and sometimes the sportsmen, had the right to rise above anonymity. Only these persons had a face and a name, while the others were only numbers.

This social atmosphere was preserved by a very strong fear and by its instrument, the political police, the most powerful machine of repression that has existed in Eastern Europe since Stalin. This terrifying machine was 'helping' those who were 'losing their way' and made them at least simulate the ideal of the 'new man'.

Unfortunately, the imposition of such a model, though it might be rejected by common sense, tends eventually to produce self-satisfaction and seals the life of those who are more vulnerable, including those who do not have the possibility of seeking refuge in culture or in interpersonal relations in order to keep alive their need of appreciation and a meaningful life.

Culture and spirituality were the direct enemies of the purpose we have described below. Among all forms of culture the most dangerous to this purpose were considered to be philosophy, sociology, and psychology. They became marginal subjects and they officially disappeared in 1977 from the universities. A lot of barriers, real Chinese walls, were set to prevent encounters with information from the West (especially in connection with the social sciences and humanities), while the classical authors and contemporary Romanian ones who did not have a Marxist orientation were strongly forbidden. The 'new man' had to know only what was already interpreted by the system. She was not allowed to realize that she was a thinker, a sensitive creature, a man or a woman, young or old; she had to know only that she was a worker, a devoted builder of socialism.

THE STATE OF WOMAN IN THE TOTALITARIAN REGIME

1. The 'worker' and the promotion of women.

The meaning of the word 'work' was corrupted in the sense that work became a purpose in itself. Moreover, it required such a high level of consciousness that you were not supposed to ask for rewards. Beside the traditional paid work, there was being practiced another form of work, and this new type of work was called 'patriotic work'—a form of service, especially in agriculture and construction, which was done mainly by students, pupils, teachers and soldiers but eventually by all the social categories. The 'patriotic work' was done especially on Sundays and during vacations, and often school was interrupted for these unpaid manual services. The reward was only the 'pride' of working. There were no wages, irrespective of the quantity, the quality and the type of work which was performed. Mediocrity, and professional self-sufficiency were encouraged in this way, while passion for work and innovation were regarded as doubtful attitudes. We were obliged to carry with nobility the title of 'working people.' Meanwhile, the standard of living was diminishing so much that many of us could not live properly, but merely survive, since for many of us to live meant only not to die.

The 'workers' of both sexes and no gender had uniform conditions of difficulty and payment. Women absorbed 45.2% of the jobs and occupied the majority of positions in culture, education, finance, commerce and agriculture. Women's representation in the public sphere (and even in the political leadership) was considered to be exemplary. This representation—held so desirable by the Western feminist movements—was about 20-37% in the socialist countries. Positive discrimination was being practiced, which meant that women had to be represented in ruling positions, in proportion to their number in the respective institutions. Formally, they found themselves in privileged positions given the situation in other countries where serious fights are still being carried on for such a state of affairs.

What kind of women were actually promoted and for what kind of woman was access to positions of power possible? Of course, only those who approached most closely the qualities of the 'new type of man.' The manager-woman, as well as the political leader-woman, was asked to have the following qualities: to be very authoritarian with her subordinates, to have a middling intellectual level and almost no cultural level, to be well trained in political doctrine and to have no personal ideas and opinions, but to support all the leader's opinions about any aspect of life. She was required to be married and to have a 'sound family,' to struggle day and night for the cause of the party, to divulge her whereabouts, to hide nothing from her superiors, to be very obedient, to have no personal charm, to always have a tired look—the look of one deeply concerned about the fate of society, to promote only the interests of the working class and not those belonging to the intellectuality (note that usually she belonged to the ranks of the working class), and to be able and effectively to justify anything she was doing in front of the party. The same promotion criteria were also applied to men.

After the totalitarian period the image of the leader-woman was very bad, even worse than the image of the leader-man. The reason for this is the terrible educational methods used: criticism and self-criticism. The aggressive, talkative, quarrelsome women were well suited to this practice and so these types of women were promoted to positions of power. The image of the leader-woman, a combination of aggressive stupidity and wickedness, is still very much hated in Romania. The wife of the late dictator contributed greatly to the creation of this
2. Woman—a life comrade and a crypto-servant.

By gaining equal rights with man, with or without her own consent, woman was no longer a lady or a young lady, but a life comrade, and man was no longer a gentleman, but also a comrade. In this way, they were both equal, but equal to zero. In family life, the woman was no longer the mere life, but the 'life comrade' of her husband, while the man himself became the 'life comrade' of his own wife, and things had to go on like that, at least from an official point of view.

Any concern beside 'global' or 'general' interests was considered frivolous and dangerous for any person, irrespective of sex. We should not forget that one of Lenin's retorts to Clara Zetkin was: "I could not believe my ears when I heard that the first state of proletarian dictatorship is battling over the counter-revolutionaries of the whole world... and active communist women are busy in discussing sex problems!" This, then, is how the communist propaganda trained the people in comradiship, for the allocation of tasks, and especially for the extermination of any kind of personal interest.

Duties to oneself such as preserving one's life, keeping healthy and developing one's talents and changes which were absent in socialist ethics, were replaced by their opposites; making the supreme sacrifice for the cause, not sparing one's health, and having no desires for oneself. Moreover, the official doctrine was urging the woman to be a perfect mother and wife and a hard-working employee at the same time. And so the woman as a 'life comrade', was doing more than two thirds of the total amount of social work. She was doubly enslaved, towards the oppressive state in the public sphere and towards masculine domination in the domestic sphere (it is hard to call it the 'private' sphere in the circumstances of a socialist society).

Masculine domination manifested itself, not in the form of an explicit sexism, but in the form of unspoken sexism with deep roots in the old traditions—accepted by men and women alike—of the community. Even the word 'sexism' is still strange to our language. We were so far away from the problems of the developed West that, while in the West women were fighting for their emancipation, in the East women were, and still are, fighting for their family survival. In this last half of the century, in Romania the order of priorities has not been: (1) the husband; (2) the children; (3) the woman; but (1) the children; (2) the husband; (3) the woman. I think that the main cause of our behavior was the fact that the present did not belong to us; we could not master it and it brought us only fear, worries and tiredness. We were all thinking of the future, a future that seemed too remote and too abstract for us. This is the reason why we connected the future with our children.

The weakness of woman is sometimes explained by the fact that food passes only through her hands and not through her body. The inferior status of woman comes from the different ways of evaluating food. Thus, the one who produces food is more appreciated than the one who prepares it. East European women have produced and also prepared the food without redistributing it in their favor. But in a poor country, the man cannot be considered a privileged human being either. This kind of weakness has not been exclusively feminine, although it has been predominantly so. Generally speaking, in the socialist countries, the food has passed mainly through the hands and not through the bodies of people. This fact explains the apathy, the nervousness, the anxiety, and the so-called 'living death' of the East Europeans.

A woman was spending (and is still spending) one-third of her spare time standing in lines to buy food and another third standing in the kitchen to prepare it. The domestic tools we have are those belonging to the years 1950-60, so our housekeeping is largely manual. The small quantity of edible consumer goods makes any acquisition of sugar, meat, eggs and flour; a painful and humiliating adventure. Standing in line has become a constant bane in the life of every man and woman, but cooking, house cleaning and also the bringing up of children are still the predominant occupations of the woman.

What has deeply exhausted the woman is the fact that tradition trained her for organizing and leading the household, for spending her time, her efforts and her imagination in making something for her household out of almost nothing. I use the past tense here, not because these problems belong just to the past, but because the dimension of hope, at least, has been added to the present time.

If a sociological investigation had been done (this form of investigation was prohibited during the past twenty years), women would probably have answered that their own pleasure was their children's happiness. Supererogation was so prevalent that any adult would have felt embarrassed to declare that he or she was aspiring after personal satisfactions.

The most exploited people in bringing up children have been grandmothers. Many of our children owe their survival, health and education to the united efforts and sacrifice made by their parents and grandparents. This has created a positive situation (the establishment of tight relations between grown up children and their parents) but also a negative situation (the increased dependence on the older generation, and the paying of tribute to traditional sexist education).

In Romania men were to a large extent deprived of their manhood. Because they were manipulated in the public sphere and had not been granted the exclusive status of bread winners, men did not have a privileged position as the head of the family. Women seemed to be better trained for the fight of living, owing...
to the fact that they were doubly enslaved, and owing to their daily battles through which they tried hard to maintain a higher standard of living for their children and husband. However, this does not mean that they are not also deprived of their womanhood, especially as they have not got those conditions necessary to protect them from the external social evil. The protective man was not able to interpose himself between them and the public life and this fact has produced some serious defects about which I am going to write in another part of this paper.

Briefly, the day in the life of a woman was generally divided in the following way: 8-10 hours of working; 1-2 hours for transport; 2-3 hours standing in line for food and other consumer goods (which were sold in limited quantities); 2-3 hours cooking (if the gas, electricity or water had not been cut). What was left was reserved mainly for the children. The primary day for the housekeeping was Sunday. Comparing the situation of the man with that of the woman, the privilege of the man was that of having two or three more hours free per day, and also he was not so busy thinking about the problems of survival. This fact showed its results in the past two post-totalitarian years, as we are going to see later.

However equal with the man she might have officially been, the woman abandoned her status of being a life comrade for that of being a crypto-servant, the role which she had traditionally exercised in family life.

3. The area free from the 'new man'.

The main focus of what I have discussed so far has been on what the system wanted to make out of the people, and on what the communist regime has already managed to do, albeit to a lesser degree than it intended. We are still unable to know the results of this type of regime, firstly because the official ideology has spread the idea that only good things could happen in socialism while the evil, illness and death were carefully hidden, as if they never existed. The press had to put on a triumphal to the fact that they were doubly enslav·tain a higher standard of living for their

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was generally divided in the follow-
ing way: 8-10 hours of working; 1-2
hours for transport; 2-3 hours stand-
ing in line for food and other consumer
 goods (which were sold in limited quan-
tities); 2-3 hours cooking (if the gas,
electricity or water had not been cut).
What was left was reserved mainly
for the children. The primary day for
the housekeeping was Sunday. Com-
paring the situation of the man with
that of the woman, the privilege of
the man was that of having two or three
more hours free per day, and also he
was not so busy thinking about the
problems of survival. This fact showed
its results in the past two post-totalitarian years, as we are going to see later.

However equal with the man she
might have officially been, the woman
abandoned her status of being a life comrade for that of being a crypto-servant, the role which she had traditionally exercised in family life.

 caste, the nomenclature, could have access to such kind of information.

Turning now to the idea of an area free from the 'new man', I am going to show some possible refuges for my fellow-citizens, trying to point out their importance for the condition of women. A first refuge was represented by the old generation's memory which was handed down through education from one generation to another. This enabled the child to notice the disagreement between ideology and reality, between 'the unity of our monolithic doctrine' and the wide variety of ways of thinking. Many parents could not decide whether they should have brought up their children as human beings with personality, or in the officially designated way. Many parents were afraid to tell their children the truth, in case the authorities found out. Some taught them duplicity while others taught them not to express their true opinions outside of the family circle. Thus family education has represented a zone free from the 'new man', but it also meant a subordination to traditional patterns, including the sexist one.

In effect, the little girl was receiving her mother's and grandmother's cultural heritage without coming into contact with the idea of woman's liberation from masculine domination. Moreover, this domination was nothing by comparison with that of the system itself, and a powerful oppressor produces blindness towards other forms of oppression which are weaker than its own. So the little girl was learning that housekeeping, cooking and children were her own duties, besides those imposed by society. The Woman was the only magazine intended for women. It talked about politics, and to a limited extent about cooking recipes and about how to bring up a baby, but it said nothing about women's emancipation. Most of the women in my country have neither heard about feminism, nor have any consciousness of their being exploited in a world dominated by men. Moreover, it is more important for them to be mothers and wives than to be workers or leaders. Motherhood, and housekeeping, the daily grind of unending effort were themselves refuges against public life which was rightly considered as an alienating force. Most women came back home from their jobs with the feeling that their home was the only place where they had an identity, where they were no longer a mere tool, or a figure in some set of statistics. To be a housewife was a kind of refuge, a place hidden from the public eye, but a place of assertion on a small scale.

Culture, and especially reading represented another free zone. The reading of books was a less supervised and manipulated occupation. Books have their own individual character and they have the great gift of speaking about yourself and of allowing you to escape reality. The almost nonexistent contact with Western mass media forced men and women to seek refuge in books, in the little spare time they had. Maybe this is the reason why many East Europeans are cultivated and imaginative people. There were many prohibitions regarding the publication of books. In spite of this, of the books not being up to date, and of a decrease in the number of translations made in the eighties, people sought refuge in books. And this is how they could learn and could escape reality.

Another refuge was represented by very strong interpersonal relations with relatives, with friends and with the opposite sex. These kinds of relationships could not be standardized or controlled. The main supporters of these relationships were, as they have always been, women. This situation was not possible within macro-groups, where personal relations were rather weak, for within macro-groups, the human being was only a figure, a puppet, a directed anonymous figure. In the micro-group of relatives, or of friends with the same spiritual affinity, the human being managed to have a face and a name, he or she managed to exist as an individual. Here he or she was no longer an unimportant and anonymous figure.

Irrespective of how much it was supervised, school training had its own free areas owing to the courage and the professionalism of the teachers. The sciences and practical subjects were emphasized during secondary education. Although the number of hours allotted for Arts subjects was very small, and despite the strong ideological themes of the lessons, there were teachers who abandoned the political themes officially imposed on them and who were really teaching Arts
subjects. They were risking a lot, as any
going off the official track could end in
one losing one's job. In those classes
where such deviation was possible (ow-
ing to teachers) the pupils could learn
other ways of thinking besides the official
discipline which was inculcated in them,
and they could easily escape from the of-
cial ideology. Nevertheless, there were
no lectures specifically for enabling the
pupils to acquire good self-knowledge
or to provide them with knowledge of
their own everyday lives as concrete
human beings.

The school books and the syllabus
were all the same, irrespective of the type
of school, the place and the pupils; and
they were made according to an absurd
principle, that of unique, identical train-
ing for all pupils. Optional courses did
not exist at all, because the idea of 'op-
tion' was something to which those be-
longing to the communist nomenclature
were positively allergic. School training
was not sexist as a program since it did
not refer to the individual but to the for-
mation of that hypothetical and imper-
sonal creature called 'the new man'. In
secondary education, 53% of the pupils
were girls, while in higher education the
figure was 49.5%. We can say that, from
a statistical point of view, school training
was not discriminatory as regards sex.

During their higher studies, girls' and
boys' performances are in a large
measure alike, and no important dif-
ferences regarding success in school can
be noticed. However, after graduation
most women are confronted with a de-
crease in their professionalism com-
pared to that of their male colleagues.
This decrease is real and is due to the
reinstatement of the woman in the
patriarchal model. The woman abandons
competition (which seems senseless to
her) and lets her husband assert himself.

The sense and the result of self-
expression or self-assertion were lost to
many people in a society where anything
you might have done remained
accepted only after years of waiting and
even then under a collective signature.
Even the artists were forced to sing, recite
or sign up for giant exhibitions together.

The individual person was forced to
disappear anonymously into an anony-
ous collective. We still do not know
who are our most valuable people. Many
women have surrendered to domestic ac-
complishment because only at home is
there someone to appreciate their work
and effort. They were forced into this
type of accomplishment by traditional
education and especially by the idea that
it was useless trying to assert yourself in
the public sphere.

We may conclude that areas free from
the 'new man' could exist only within the
family, within groups of spiritual friends,
within books and in relationships with
the opposite sex.

Feminist literature often notices that
woman is the silent half of humanity;
while the other privileged half hardly
deigns to listen to the voice of this first
half. And what is the difference between
the condition of the East Europeans and
that of women? The East European was
forced to keep silent in his own country,
and is now considered by the West in a
way similar to that of woman, as a poor
anonymous being who cannot or does not
know how to express himself or herself,
a potential existence that has not
been, and is perhaps incapable of being
brought up to date.

III. THE STATUS OF WOMAN IN THE
POST-TOTALITARIAN PERIOD

The two main and well-known alter-
native social strategies are individualism
and collectivism. Any postulation of the
predominance of the social order over
the individual risks the annihilation of
human rights. Romanian society had all
the features of totalitarianism. One could
not even appeal to the majority's right to
sacrifice the minority, or to the
predominance of the 'mob' over the in-
dividual, so not only did the individual's
or the majority's rights fail to work, but
the majority's rights did not function
either. In the context of Romanian
totalitarianism only the status of being
the majority's exponent mattered,
without there being any real or formal
abidance by the rules of the game ac-
cording to which that exponent must be
elected. Access to decisions was held by
a very small category of people. Work
and life programs were regularly being
elaborated to substitute for the mystical
concept 'destiny'. The party's 'oracle' was
systematically providing information
about progress in the building of 'the ter-
restial paradise—communism. It was
thought of as a social paradise; and as
the individual had already disappeared
from any kind of program, a paradise in-
habited by a ghost: the society without
individuals.

The continuous indoctrination and
the daily mass media exercises produc-
ed by the system in order to wipe out the
possessive pronoun, and even the singu-
lar personal pronoun from the vocabu-
larv, and also from people's minds, has
left a deep mark in the people's con-
sciousness. To an outside observer who
has knowledge of two centuries of democ-
rapy, the post-totalitarian reactions to li-
erty are shocking. For instance: allergy
to political pluralism, the nostalgia for a
unique truth, the people's surprise at
hearing some persons starting their pub-
lie speeches with: 'I consider,' 'I want; 'I
do,' etc. and not with the impersonal 'it
is considered,' 'it is wanted,' 'it is required',
etc. The impersonal way of thinking do-
minated the entire past period. In this
way not only did individuality and the
capacity for creation disappear, but also
the people's responsibility. The imper-
sonal mood is anonymous and generates
anonymity. We are learning with great
difficulty to eliminate the impersonal 'it'
from our way of speaking, and maybe the
women are those who find this most dif-
ficult of all. The explanation of this
behavior lies in the fact that they have
been disadvantaged by a tradition of
thousands of years when they could not
rise above anonymity, having been only
'the wife of X,' or 'the mother of Y.' While
women from the West were learning to
refuse their functional definitions and
were starting to gain their autonomy and
to get rid of anonymity, in the East
women were taught that both they and
their husbands were important only
from a functional point of view. When
the formal barriers to freedom disap-
peared and people learned (some of
them for the first time) that they could
do anything they wanted, so long as they
did not harm the same right of another
person, a lot of them were confused and
did not know what to do.

Women suddenly were free from some
of their problems, like compulsory pregnancy, forced promotion into political positions, and the duty of having a job. The first two of these freedoms seem to be favorable to women, but the third is strictly formal, as almost no wage-earning man in Romania can keep a woman from his own salary, so Romanian men are not in the position to consider women strictly from an instrumental viewpoint, as they cannot afford to pay them even for the housekeeping. And yet, there are men in the uncultivated social strata who pass over this reality and act tyrannically and even violently towards their wives (it does not matter if the woman is financially independent or not). Many women were glad that political functions were no longer going to threaten them and they quietly agreed to being made outsiders at all the ruling levels, retiring from political life without showing any resistance. Women's representation in Parliament (3.5% in the House of Deputies and 1/19 in the Senate House) is very unfavorable compared with the representation in the former communist Parliament (over 30% women). There are no women with important political positions in the present Government, and this fact is mirrored at all the other levels of social life. This phenomenon of continuous decrease in the representation of women in social life seems to bother neither the men nor the women.

Fighting for the existence of her family takes enough time and energy, so the Romanian woman submits to the idea of self-sacrifice which has been presented to her by the official communist and patriarchal education. Women lose themselves in the invisible sphere. The public services do not help them to reduce the amount of time they spend with housekeeping. In this way a lot of them remain professionals with poor performances, anonymous parts made to serve ambitions that do not belong to them. This double oppression tires them out, so that their will for self-accomplishment becomes lost, making them into anonymous servants of a master who starts to get a face and a name.

I believe that this process has been caused by the new circumstances and is aggravated by the absence of any feminist education and literature, and also by the acceptance of a kind of servitude that women are still not aware of. What is sure is that continued training in anonymity seems to be self-perpetuating. When you are forced by external compulsion to give up the idea of self-assertion, for the benefit of society, you many end up in the situation of not wishing to exist as a unique and individual being. You place yourself in the vicious circle of anonymity.

The post-totalitarian period seems to be regressive with respect to the emancipation of women, a silent giving up in the face of traditional patterns of male domination. Neither the man nor the woman dominated before this period, only the devilish system whose consequences we have already spoken about. No institutional act or rule places the woman in an inferior position; rather this inferior position is generated by the traditional patriarchal patterns and by the fact that we have not set ourselves free from the obsession of fighting for survival. This obsession keeps our spirits in prison, and we will only be able to liberate ourselves when we have the necessary objective conditions in place.

**IV. A CHANCE FOR CHANGING: FEMINISM AND PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN**

1. Philosophy as a Subversive Discipline

As I mentioned above, in the totalitarian communist system, the most threatened disciplines were the social sciences, philosophy in particular. Obviously, a major danger to the totalitarian ideology and practice was the 'dubito' and the critical and reflexive consciousness it gave birth to, as opposed to the system's endeavor to stumble over people's free thinking and acting.

But note that a totalitarian mentality exhibiting some features could be discerned in people who were subjected to the system of values characteristic of patriarchy. For in it, like in the communist and fascist states, one has to accept and obey an authority which absolutely transcends one's thoughts and will, giving all the rules of the game, considering a person as a non-independent, non-self-conscious agent. The patriarchal totalitarianism educated women in its values, as a condition of preserving its existence. Based on prejudices and on superiority and inferiority, it could be successful only if people—including women—came to the conclusion that only the 'rulers' are able to give norms and that the truth is owned only by them. The main difference in the different totalitarian practices lies in the group towards which the oppression is directed. In the communist systems they hint at all the members of the society; in a patriarchal system they hint at women; and in the educational systems, at children.

Teaching and learning the critical way of thinking is subversive in all three kinds of totalitarian systems, for it has the effect of doubting the systems' prejudices and the authority of those who own the power.

The contemporary world faces an irresistible and profound process of transition. The old mentalities should be changed by ones more fitted to the new emerging social realities, which involve to a large extent the need for moral responsibility. The original aim of the Philosophy for Children program was to restore the central, Socratic, mission of philosophy: teaching the human being in the spirit of wisdom, morality and responsibility. In so far as philosophy is just an academic discipline, it cannot answer Plato's call addressed to all those who saw the light of the 'Sun' to join their fellow citizens.

The esoteric way of doing philosophy facilitated a host of criticism on behalf of feminist theories. The main argument is that philosophy, as an intellectual enterprise, has a substitutive role, i.e., to provide meaning to the otherwise meaningless masculine life. A fierce criticism was also directed against even narrower fields of philosophical inquiry. Some feminists, e.g., insisted that logic is a phallicocratic instrument in male hegemony.

I believe that these lines of attack are powerful if directed against academic philosophy as an institutional activity. The criticism points to the social, political and psychological mechanisms through which women are still discriminated, even if the formal barriers have been eliminated. And it also points to the gender-laden mechanisms by which the selection and definition of the problematic aspects of philosophy—deciding what is a philosophical topic and what
is problematic about it—have been skewed towards men's needs and what they find puzzling. But I suspect that this feminist criticism loses its force if philosophy is conceived of, and practiced as, a means of improving one's thinking.

It is this attempt at redefining the social significance of philosophy which directs, in its main intentions, the Philosophy for Children program. The program is worth praising for its humanistic-orientated approach to education, which invites application from the very first year of the elementary school.

In developing the Philosophy for Children program, Professor Lipman questioned some very old—and very respected—prejudices. Among them we may mention: the view that philosophy is created by and for the adult man, and that women and children cannot be taught philosophy; and the view that dialectics ends in relativism and amorality, and saps the trust of young people in the values and norms of society. I think that the opposite extreme of this second prejudice can be found in the absolute rule of the dogmatic *diaimat* in the communist countries. For it involved the attempt at reducing philosophy to a collection of unproblematic claims.

Philosophy, however, a continuous fight against mystification. A fundamental characteristic of philosophy is that it attempts to revive the critical spirit, to promote reflection. It questions the deep roots of our thinking, of our preferences, and gives birth to a most significant thing: free thinking. A person educated in the spirit of the Philosophy for Children program will handle, in a genuine way, the intellectual means which lead her to the rejection of dogmatism, manipulation, intolerance and extremisms, *ie*, the basic tools used in implementing a totalitarian mentality, whatever the nature of this 'totalitarianism' might be.

A child educated in the spirit of the 'community of inquiry' would never agree to be the subject of unconditional subordination to the traditional 'magister dixit'. In a way liberation is a less complex process if its subjects are children. Indeed, the force of the prejudices to be faced is weaker if children are educated in the spirit of free thinking. In the case of adult people (be they women or men living in a post-communist society), the process is more complex and longer, for it must involve radical achievements; *viz.*, the capacity to manifest one's personality and the rejection of the state of anonymity; the capacity to think by yourself and for yourself, instead of adherence to given standards, ideas or values; autonomy instead of subordination.

However, liberation is difficult to experience, and its burden is hard to live with. One should not be surprised, therefore, to meet unexpected phenomena accompanying liberation. For example, many people long for the past, when behavior they were asked to perform automatically was accompanied by a comfortable economic and social safety. Now one meets intolerance of other economic, social and political groups, as well as the tendency to ape the oppressive behavior of the former rulers, etc. People feel that they must first become oppressors themselves and be intolerant as a precondition for their divorce from totalitarian subjection.

The Philosophy for Children program advances, in my view, one of the most promising strategies for eliminating these unhappy consequences of the transition to liberty. The concept of a community of inquiry is central to Lipman's approach to teaching philosophy. He defines a community of inquiry as the embryonic intersection of democracy and education. Its strong position in educational theory is derived from the fact that children who participate in a community of inquiry become much more proficient in critical thinking and critical reasoning, and the development of their creativity, personal and interpersonal growth, their understanding of ethics and their ability to think for themselves are all enhanced.

The contradiction between dogmatic thinking and the idea that truth is a construct to be attained is overt. *Philosophia* is a search for meanings, rather than a supply of already-existing solutions to problems. Liberation cannot be reduced to the possibility of expressing the values of the society one belongs to. If school were devoted only to this type of liberation, then it could not pass beyond tribal thinking. The mission of teaching philosophy, though, is to question the established facts, values and norms, by calling into action skills like: wondering, inquiring, being critical, analyzing concepts and arguments, rejecting stereotypes, etc.

In this respect, the Philosophy for Children program suits the feminist approach. Feminism is also an attempt to question social stereotypes, in particular the modalities in which the hierarchical dichotomies came to be rooted in the collective mentality. However, one can find in some feminist accounts the temptation to substitute a feminine paradigm for a masculine one, (and this involves a new tendency to make hierarchies, as in radical feminism), and one can also find the view that gender should be substituted by genderless. I think that such accounts raise serious difficulties "Genderless" impoverishes both men and women, as in the case which I mentioned above of the 'new man'. I argue that a proper strategy for enriching the human being is to provide a new type of education, the aim of which would be an androgynous or bi-gendered human being, as opposed to the sketchy and impersonal genderless human being.

The educational practice exemplified by the Philosophy for Children program facilitates a new account of dichotomies. They are constructed as differences which stimulate the individual to become more complex. As a member of the community of inquiry, the child raises questions and problems. The problems the child calls forth for inquiry do not belong to all, and therefore to no one. They are problems specific to this very individual member of the community, but they should become the problems of all the members of the community. This permanent personalization of the inquiry helps children to discover their own selves in the things they learn. The community of inquiry is not an entity which turns individuals into a mass of anonymous subjects one has to educate. Rather, it presupposes the moral development of the individual personalities it comprises.

The children have in a community of inquiry their own face and name, and are no longer a 'silent part of humanity' having to uncritically learn answers and adopt 'indubitable' values. As Lipman states, the community of inquiry aims at acquainting children with the mechanisms by which they can 'build their thoughts together' and, consequently,
they learn how to discover their own selves, as well as their relationships with others.

2. Community of Inquiry and the Ethics of Care

The political approaches centered on the individual favor an 'ethics of justice'. The political approaches centered on social relations seem to favor an 'ethics of anonymity'. An example is the 'socialist' ethics centered on society as a whole and in which individuals have no place.

The most powerful feminist attack against the ethics of justice invokes the egoism it involves (Gilligan, Toronto). Feminists tried instead to exalt the virtues of an 'ethics of care', which is meant to be the result of an approach centered both on individuals and the social relationships among them. Care was traditionally associated with love and friendship relationships, and it therefore seemed to be inapplicable to the relationships among people in the public sphere. But this is possible once we realize that the concept of a moral human being is not definable only in terms of cognitive abilities. Traditionally, ethics was associated with the pedagogy of learning moral principles, while the development of moral dispositions was absolutely neglected. As Toronto argued, to be moral is not tantamount to knowing moral principles; rather, it essentially involves moral dispositions like responsibility and relationships, the development of moral imagination and the ability to react appropriately in different contexts.

Now, I think that the Philosophy for Children program embodies virtues which are strongly in favor of the ethics of care. Here are some of them: the development of ethical understanding and of morally responsible individual behavior; openness to a variety of views; pluralism; tolerance of intellectual diversity and mutual respect. As Lipman notes, 'these procedures of the community, when internalized, become reflective habits of the individual' (8 p. 45). And in another work: 'the community of inquiry is a necessary seedbed for the cultivation of philosophy in the elementary school because it intermixes the critical concern with justice and the creative impulse toward caring' (10 p. 254).

This aim of cultivating interpersonal care could be attained in a community of inquiry by pursuing the following strategies: (a) developing dialogue. Thus, the members of the community become partners in a common purpose. The child discovers the ways she or he differs from the others, and also the similarities she or he shares with the others. During common activity, the child replaces hostility towards others with partnership; (b) learning the virtues of competition and winning. Children learn, for example, that the one who wins is the one who can help others to think better or to do something better; (c) learning to listen to others, to be able to understand their problems; (d) learning the positive as well as the negative meaning of liberty; (e) learning to feel responsible in relation to the public sphere; (f) becoming sensitive to context, caring about the problems of the other members of the community.

Thus, the aim of 'building our thoughts together' turns into the far more generous imperative, rooted in the ethics of care, of building our lives together.

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Women, Philosophical Community of Inquiry and the Liberation of Self

Marie-France Daniel

Did it ever strike you as a college student, that none of the great philosophers you had to study were women? Yet, there have been successful women philosophers recorded since antiquity (Hypatia, in the fourth century, is the first example).

The individual contributions of women have been historically overlooked. In other words, they have not been recorded as the cultural expression of the female generic, but as individual expressions. The content of their productions has been resorbed in the culture without becoming models: that is, without constituting prototypes to which women might have referred to identify themselves.

In fact, philosophy never transcended the same. It never risked questioning the same and giving a locus for the other. This discrimination, which still exists, rests on a set of ideas and beliefs which serve social control. Amongst the most widespread and rooted myths concerning women and philosophy, one can name the following: (1) philosophy is an objective and rational science; (2) women are less rational and less intelligent than men; (3) women did not participate in the history of philosophy; (4) there exists only one good way of thinking.

If "traditional" or "academic" philosophy did nothing for women but corroborate these myths, what about Philosophy for Children? Does it go along with the traditional prejudices or, on the contrary, does it establish an egalitarian relationship between the same and the other? Could it help female students take their place in the world? Could it be a locus for feminist evolution?

One aspect of my hypothesis is that the philosophical community of inquiry, because of its organization around cooperative values and because of the relational ideology which oversees it, seems to be an appropriate tool for feminists to develop equality. Paradoxically, the other aspect of my hypothesis is that some of the novels of the Philosophy for Children's curriculum, which are discussed within the community of inquiry, contain sexist stereotypes.

I will divide my paper into three parts. In the first section, I will approach familial and social sexism via personal anecdotes.

In the second section, I will attempt to verify the validity of my thesis. In order to do so, I will explore the essence of the philosophical community of inquiry.

And finally, I will talk about the limits of Philosophy for Children as a tool for women's equality, studying the main characters of one novel, Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery.

FAMILIAL AND SOCIAL SEXISM

My Parents

I agree with Simone de Beauvoir when she says, in Le deuxième sexe (1949/1990), that women are not born with a "feminine nature" but develop its characteristics through familial and social education.

Personally, I grew up in a family which would define as "patriarchal." Education at my parents' house followed a model described by Margaret Mead: the minor woman was under her father's dependence and the adult woman under her husband's dependence (1948/1966).

Being a "dependent" but intelligent daughter, I quickly learned that, in order to please my father and get his attention, I should not play the role of partner when he was doing odd-jobs (e.g., help him to clean the garage or paint a birdhouse). On the contrary, I knew he would give me almost anything if I sat silently, watching him work. I loved my father! So, how many afternoons I remember sitting passively on the stairs, watching his expert moves and admiring his skills.

Doing so, I was unconsciously integrating my parents' criteria of femininity. There is nothing wrong with femininity, which might be understood as complementarity, except that for most people (men and women) of this generation it was synonymous with fragility, dependence and submission. It would be no caricature to state that the ideological criteria behind the education I received were comparable to those recommended for Sophie by Rousseau; that is, exclusively aiming at the role of mother wife (Rousseau, 1962/1966, V).

Not only love, but fairy tales were (are) also great teachers for girl-children. I remember fairy tales my mother used to tell me, at night, before going to bed. My favorite was called "The princess and the small pea". It is the story of a rich and powerful prince who wants to get married. In order to choose a "real" princess from all the girls who presented themselves as such, he has a plan. He would invite all the pretenders to sleep at his palace, but a small green pea would be placed under the piles of mattresses. And, indeed, the prince recognized the real princess when, the next morning, one of these young girls was bruised after spending a sleepless night while others could not tell the difference. And that was it! They got married, lived happily and had numerous children.

What impressed me most was the passivity of the princess (she does not choose her husband, but she is chosen by him). Also the fact that her sensitivity or sensibility (versus her personality) was the most important criterion of her identity.
My comprehension of the familial and social expectations led me to the following conclusion: I should not think for myself. The development of non-reflective intellectual habits became the trademark of my femininity; the trademark I cultivated to get my parents' love. This concept of myself led me to the follow-up.

My teachers

I remember, for instance, how my first and second grade teachers used to glance at me when I showed interest in an idea not covered in the manual. The "cold glances" have always had direct effects on me: shame, guilt for something I could not explain, and the promise never to talk again. But at six and seven years old, curiosity is stronger than any promise to oneself. So, how many times did I come back home from school crying out of shame and frustration?

These interdictions to question and to talk were received, at that time, as non-justified punishments. Today I call them acts of violence. Not the kind of violence which is external and manifests itself by shouts or blows. But invisible violence. So invisible and so subtle that teachers do not even have to justify themselves. But so real that it can destroy children's self-esteem and motivation to get involved.

I came to think I had no existence as a student. I felt my value was measured in accordance with my degree of docility and my agreement with the teacher; I felt my words were recognized only if they were recitation and repetition of the masters' thinking.

Parallel to this, Dewey writes, in Moral Principles in Education, that by asking every pupil to recite the same lesson, the teacher kills their desire to learn and to communicate. Indeed, doing so, students do not have anything to give to others; they are only asked to repeat what everybody else already knows. And we know that children are born with a natural desire to give out, to do, to serve. As a consequence, Dewey writes:

Because all are doing the same work and are judged not from the standpoint of their personal contribution, but from that of comparative success, the feeling of superiority over others is unduly appealed to, while timid children are depressed. Children are judged with reference to their capacity to realize the same external standard. The weaker gradually lose their sense of power, and accept a position of continuous and persistent inferiority. The strong learn to glory, not in their strength, but in the fact that they are stronger (1959/1969, p. 24).

It is not hard to see that weak and timid students are more often represented by girls, strong ones by boys. Even more so since the "comparative school success" has always been built on male's ways of thinking and functioning. Repression, for girl students, was (and still is) stemming from three sources: (1) adult-child relationship; (2) teacher-student relationship; and (3) male-female comparison.

No wonder that the schools' sexist paradigm affected my most intimate being. Indeed, my identity was challenged and there was no way I could escape from the existential anxiety which led me to ask repeatedly of myself the eternal metaphysical question: "Who am I?" "What is my specificity?" Descartes was right to say that when it comes to reflecting about the Being one is confronted with the infinite; not to say with the emptiness. I consider that I spent many years of my life in the darkness of ignorance (ignorance of my potential, ignorance of my capacity of becoming what I am). As de Beauvoir writes, talking about slaves, ignorance happens when one has been mystified so deeply; when one believes her or his situation is not imposed by men but given by Nature (1944/1974, p. 119-125).

Myself

Having been so mystified by the school system, I was convinced I was wrong not to be able to fit into the pattern, and fulfill the school's requirements. I decided to quit school. I was 17 years old and in revolt. I went to work. Of course, my parents agreed. Having been so mystified by the school system, I was convinced I was wrong not to be able to fit into the pattern, and fulfill the school's requirements. I decided to quit school. I was 17 years old and in revolt. I went to work. Of course, my parents agreed. Anyway, I would soon have to get married and have children so there was no need for me to keep on studying in order to have an interesting and "useful" job! Simone De Beauvoir says the term "useful" is meaningful only when presented with its complement, the human being (1944/1974, p. 161). In this sense, not having to look for a useful job is synonymous with one's own uselessness.

It was while walking in the European cities and the museums, during my summer vacation, that I first came into contact with what I consider a more "authentic and egalitarian" education. What a contrast with the dogmatic and decontextualized subject-matter school had forced me to memorize! For the first time, I could enter into direct communication with the different philosophies and works of humanity. I could admire and understand the evolution of architecture through centuries; I could see different conceptions of art and learn to appreciate them all; I could verify and deepen my notions of Latin and Ancient Greek, deciphering the inscriptions on vases and temples. For once, I felt that learning was not imposed on me, nor reduced to mere memorization, nor restricted by any norms connected to gender. I could learn anything I, as a human being was motivated to learn. "To learn" became synonymous with "to conquer!" School had always placed me on the side of the conqueror. For the first time, I could, at once, learn and conquer. In other words, I was experimenting with the relationship between learning and freedom.

I had to drop out from school to discover the authentic meaning of learning. I realized that my curiosity was not extinguished, my questioning was not over, my internal dialogue was still going on . . . "Who am I?" "Who am I as a woman?" "What role do I have to play in society in order to be useful?" "Can femininity be positively reconciled with complementarity?"

As I wrote in note 3 above, I think that in the "complementarity model" femininity might carry its positive meaning. Even though complementarity has usually been thought of "in terms of hierarchy and of domination, not in terms of equality and of symmetry" (Bedinter, 1986, p. 43), we are now in a decade which permits us to think (because of feminist actions and by parallel means such as Philosophy for Children) that complementarity will soon be thought of in terms of equality and of symmetry. To say that women are the Other does not mean they have to renounce the relationship of reciprocity between sexes, nor that they have to consider themselves as "not essential" (Badinter, 1986, p. 62).

Logically, two other questions followed: "Are college studies different from pri-
mary and secondary school?" "Would college studies give me the opportunity to become who I am?" In 1980, I decided to give our system of education another chance. I completed a first degree in Ancient Studies and a Masters degree in Philosophy. Nevertheless, I realized: (a) that I knew much more about the classical (male) authors than about my own thinking; (b) that whenever I had the chance to think by myself and to share an idea or an opinion, I was barely listened to because my peers were mostly men.

As a result, I bombarded myself with questions about my own skills and abilities. "Why?" I asked myself. Is it because my ideas are not good? Because my reasoning is not logical enough? Because my voice is not loud enough? Because the words I use are different? Because I choose not to destroy others' ideas in order to valorize mine? Or is it simply because the listeners are mostly men and they do not care for a woman's thoughts? Once again, academic studies contributed to hurting my feelings as a human being, to destroying my dignity as a woman.

**Philosophy for Children**

I had decided to quit school forever when, in 1985, I came in contact with Philosophy for Children. It all started with a seminar of Philosophy of Education at Universite de Montreal, in which I had to read one chapter of John Passmore's *The Philosophy of Teaching* (1980) concerning critical thinking. The major idea I remember is that learning is significant if and only if it goes through dialogue amongst peers.

This book about education through dialogue has been the starting point of a long reflection about education and feminism. After a while, it became clear to me (a) that the philosophical dialogues I had been involved in were corresponding to a patriarchal model and (b) that this should not be, to be educative. I understood completely that during all these years, it was not me who had been wrong after all; the school system had been wrong! I also understood completely that it was not a fault to be a woman, to think like a woman or to discuss like a woman; it was only wrong to try to correspond to images men have kept drawing for us for millenia. What a relief! What an excitement! I could not sleep for days!

In order to "save" the next generations of girl-students, I started to imagine a program of philosophy for children based on egalitarian dialogue. I was anticipating writing my Master's dissertation about the conceptual frame of this "innovative" idea and to write a series of philosophical novels for children during my Ph.D. studies. I kept on thinking about it and elaborating projects until I accidentally got in contact with... the French translation of *Pixie*!

I managed to get the address of its author, Matthew Lipman, and wrote him a long letter explaining my plans. What a surprise it was when I received, a few days later, a whole bunch of documents from IAPC about Philosophy for Children! It had been in existence since 1970! I felt like someone had stolen my idea 15 years before I had conceived it! Although, when I looked at the quality of the work that had been done by Matthew Lipman and Ann Margaret Sharp, I came to understand better what Dewey really meant, when he wrote in *Democracy and Education*, that an idea is nothing unless it is tested.

I was lucky enough to get in contact, at that time, with Professor Anita Caron, from another French university, who was extremely interested herself in the program of Philosophy for Children. Indeed, she was (and is) strongly engaged in both the causes of children and of women. It is mostly because of her that in Quebec more and more women-teachers and children get acquainted with Philosophy for Children.

Anita Caron organized many sessions of Philosophy for Children—some of them even honored by Lipman and Sharp's presence. My first experiences within the philosophical communities of inquiry showed me clearly how it had become difficult to take my place within the world, as a woman. I agree with Gilligan when she writes:

> Sensitivity to the needs of others and the assumptions of responsibility for taking care lead women to attend to voices other than their own and to include in their judgment other points of view (1982, p. 16).

**PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN:**

**AN EGALITARIAN COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY**

Women and Philosophy through the centuries

For a woman to take her place within her environment it requires strength and courage. Indeed, she has to know who she is, in order to accept her limits and work at developing her talents. Yet society is made by men and, consequently, projects women towards the realization of the image of an inferior being, instead of contributing to the development of their potential as an essential part of complementarity.

Self-knowledge is also a long process. Indeed, in order to become active subjects able to construct their own self, women have to get involved in a reflective practice about their condition and their concrete environment. It is only when they stop being passive objects and become critical that they can walk towards liberation.

Philosophy for Children is an educative activity which aims to develop consciousness and critical thinking. Of course, its first concern is children. But in order to educate children the teacher has to assimilate and integrate the content and the process of the IAPC’s approach. So, the first one to benefit from this program, becomes the teacher herself.

Many primary school teachers I have worked with since 1987 felt challenged and insecure when they first heard they could use a program of philosophy in their classroom. According to their testimonies, one of their main sources of anxiety was caused by the mere term "philosophy." Comments such as the following are frequent: "I have never understood the jargon of philosophers, how do you want me to use it with children?" "Philosophy is so abstract and far from daily concerns. I could never be interested in it!" "Philosophy means thinking in a rational way and I am essentially intuitive!" Philosophical debates have always repelled me. I will not be good at fostering it amongst my students."

From these few comments, we can see that the academic subject-matter called "philosophy" is not an appealing tool to women who would like to engage in a self-discovery process. Instead, it has evolved with regard to men's words, behaviors and beliefs. Consequently, it confronts women with self-doubt, fear of failure and the feeling of "not being concerned by".
Let us remember that since Plato's decree in The Republic, philosophy has become a discipline reserved for a male elite, the rest of the community (slaves, strangers, children and women) not being "wise" enough to deal appropriately with this double-edged weapon (book V). As a result, for 2000 years, philosophical thinking and philosophical discussions have not been an expression of liberation, which reveals the self, but a language of domination, a language which shows to those who do not correspond to Plato's model that they have good reason to feel guilt, shame and fear.

The ideological change initiated by Plato found its justification in Aristotle's rational arguments. Combining natural history and metaphysics, Aristotle showed that man generates life, while woman is only carrying its seeds; that the male principle is responsible for human (man and women's) life. In crude words, women do not have any power nor any reason. Being in the impossibility to eliminate the female principle, Aristotle reduced women to a passive matter on which men ought to act (De Anima, II, 1, 412a: Metaphysics, Z., 7, 1032a, 25: De la generation des animaux, 1 and II).

With Aristotle, the basis of Occidental feminine education was settled for a long time. As I said in a previous note, we had to wait until the 18th century for a revolution to happen in mentalities. At that time, even though the progress made by women was as fundamental as undeniable, it did not lead immediately to women's liberation. For instance, in Quebec, women gained the right to vote only in the 1940's.

Concerning the education of girls, studies in Quebec show it remained unchanged from 1850 until 1960/65 (Dumont, 1986, p. 17; Fahmy-Eid, 1986, p. 32). The reason is that Quebec was essentially religious (Catholic). In the 1960's, its system of education was governed by as many as 35,000 nuns (Fahmy-Eid, 1986, p. 36). Prayers, silence, submission and devotion were the principles inherent to the education of convent schoolgirls. Submission was thus considered as the vertu par excellence for women. And the price of "good conduct" as it related to obedience and piety, constituted the supreme honor (Dumont, 1986, p. 18).

Of course, during that period of time—that is, until the early 1960's—convent schoolgirls were not offered the same options as boys. The girls' programs were specific to their "feminine nature"; that is, revolving around Home Economics. With the intention to keep them in their feminine roles, they were kept far away from Latin, mathematics, science and philosophy. (Dumont, 1986, p. 21; Fahmy-Eid, 1986, p. 29; Malouin and Dumons, 1986, p. 83-113).

According to statistics, the average age of Quebec's primary school teachers is 45 years. This means many of these women had had a convent education; so most of the present teachers were not educated in order to think by themselves, nor to think they have the right or the capabilities to do philosophy.

However, when these women transcend their initial feelings towards philosophy (fear or insecurity or dislike) and allow themselves to get involved in the philosophical community of inquiry, they discover a whole new world: their unlimited potential as woman and as teacher. According to them, as they really engage in the Philosophy for Children approach, their vision of existence is more meaningful, their comprehension of their own value as human being and as women is modified and their conception of the social role they have to play as primary school teacher widens.

A cooperative game called philosophical inquiry.

Why does this transformation happen to women? Because, first of all, the community of inquiry's basis rests on an individual's respect and freedom. For instance, the application of the program is never imposed on a teacher. Indeed, we know Philosophy for Children's success depends on the teacher's own will to do it in her classroom. As Simone de Beauvoir writes, talking about the liberation of slaves:

Of course, we are not allowed on the pretext of liberation, to throw men against their will in a new world, which they did not choose and on which they have no hold . . . These false liberations overwhelm those who are victims of it as a new bad luck (1974, p. 124).

In other words liberation happens only when education comes from the self and is not imposed by a superior (male or teacher) to an inferior (female or child).

Yet, when education is dialectic, as Philosophy for Children is, one is sure to respect this fundamentally human principle.

For centuries, philosophical dialogue has been known as an existential necessity because it allows human beings to find their own meaning. Since the 1970's, it is dialogue in the classroom which becomes a social and existential necessity. Indeed, it allows the women-teachers to find their own meaning in order to engage in significant discourse with their students.

Even though it is philosophical and aims at the development of logical reasoning, the community of inquiry is cooperative and inclusive; it is not a "male activity" in the sense that it is not competitive. With Piaget (1932) and Lever (1976), we now recognize that there exist differences in children's games: boy-games require (and develop) independence, organization and competition while girl-games are more turn-taking games or collaborative games. Because it generates deep reflections and logical reasoning, the philosophical dialogue could be considered as a male activity. Yet, the community of inquiry does not generate anxiety in women. Indeed, it is experienced as a "cooperative game."

In order to see the cooperativeness inherent in the Philosophy for Children program, let us have a look at its three main features which are: (1) the reading of a chapter of a novel; (2) the gathering of participants' questions; (3) dialogue amongst peers.

As I have just said, the first step consists in the reading of a philosophical novel by students. This step is profoundly cooperative because it allows each participant to read aloud a passage of the story. The reading becomes, then, an experience of sharing a content with the group. Moreover, the reading is not competitive; each participant will have her or his turn. And there is never a first or a last reader because the members sit in a circle. In addition to these concrete acts of cooperation, there is also cooperation between the author and the reader; between the writing and the reading; between the Same and the Other. These are implicit activities, but undeniably part of the educative process. In short, we see that the first step of the program is a place to experience cooperation: more, it is a locus to form habits of cooperation, because it fosters moral (neutral) values
such as justice, respect and responsibility.

The second step is called the gathering of questions. After the reading of a chapter of a philosophical novel, participants question ideas, words and situations; they raise problems, ambiguities and doubts. Because some degree of understanding is at the basis of all questioning, this second step presupposes awareness of the meaning of the words and of the problems it implies and, at the same time, a will to go into other's comprehension, into other's meaning. Looking for meaning is the foundation of interpersonal communication and it implies the motivation to know the other and the will to be transformed by this other. The gathering of questions also appears as a process of initiation into cooperation between men and women.

Finally, the community of inquiry of Philosophy for Children proceeds to the philosophical dialogue; that is, to a guided discussion, which aims at the development of autonomous, critical and reasonable thinking. This form of higher thinking appears to be essential to communication amongst peers. Indeed, it is solely when the woman-participant has the capacity (the opportunity) to clearly expose what she feels or what she believes that she becomes free: free from her own thoughts and of her own ideas, and thus free to become what she is. It is also only when the woman-participant has the capacity to question hypotheses, to ask for justifications, to look for accuracy that she frees herself from men's domination, that she frees herself from prejudices and beliefs. Moreover, it is only when the woman-participant finds herself in a concrete situation which requires coherence (between ideas and words, between thinking and action or between actions themselves) that she becomes responsible; that her individual self grows within a system of significant social relationships. Thus, it is when experiencing the last step of the community of inquiry; that is, the philosophical dialogue, that men and women get practice in the essential conditions of any cooperative experience.

So, the philosophical community of inquiry can be said to be cooperative or egalitarian, for it reflects and requires female as well as male characteristics. In other words, it stems from and leads to equality between participants.

This egalitarian quality is essential because authentic dialogue cannot happen when there is domination. The cause and the end of dialogue are found in equality or in complementarity. As Freire writes, the expression, "I think" is false. We should rather say, "we think." Because it is not the fact that "I" think which contributes to make the other think, but it is because "we" think, within a dialectical process, that I become able to think (1970).

In that perspective men, on the one hand, have to give women back their place. Women, on the other hand, have to reclaim their own language, take their word back from where it had been banned, from where it had been censored.

A relational or holistic perspective

Women exist within their environment. Therefore, they must be part of it. Part-whole relationships are said to be "holistic" (Dewey), "relational" (Bayles), "contextual" (Rorty) or "interactive" (Griffiths). This model, whatever its appellation, goes along with feminist philosophy, because it questions the traditional linear norms and throws light on different ways of being, thinking and feeling.

For instance, in Western philosophy, human beings have always been conceptualized in terms of body and mind. There has never been a specific category for feelings or emotions, the assumption being that feelings are part of the body or of the mind. Yet the public voice is almost unanimous in saying that women are more emotional than men, which suggests that women are more irrational than men. To apply the Cartesian model which includes feelings and emotions to gender categories and by so doing, to hierarchize men and women, Morwenna Griffiths suggests an "interactive" model rooted in physiology and which takes into account the "history of an individual's life" and "the social context in which that life is lived" (Xeroxcopy, p. 148). Because it recognizes there is not only one good model, the male one, but promotes the women's perspective, her philosophy is called feminist.

There is also Carol Gilligan's feminist theory on moral judgment which demonstrates that male and female have different ways of thinking. Gilligan outlines the following characteristics: the male's reasoning is more logical, formal, hierarchical and categorical; the female's way of thinking is more relational, holistic and contextualized (1982, p. 34-64).

In the light of such feminist research, it becomes obvious that if school programs are decontextualized, as indeed they are, it means they are conceived of as fitting essentially a male's vision of what a student is. On the other hand this also means a program which advocates a contextual and holistic mode of thinking such as Philosophy for Children, would promote women's place within society.

I say Philosophy for Children is contextual and holistic because it does not claim dogmatic truths but, on the contrary, has its foundations in the search for personal answers, ideas and meanings. As Lipman, Sharp and Oscanyan explain, love can be given, information transmitted, feelings shared, but meanings have to be discovered by the self (1980, p. 8-9). Just as it is impossible for a teacher to give her or his students an idea—for the elaboration of an idea is a process of maturation by the self—a teacher cannot transmit meanings. In this perspective, the search for meaning is not masculine; that is, exclusively oriented towards the cognitive values. Instead, it appears essentially feminine, because it is contextual and holistic.

Lipman is firmly convinced that contextual or holistic qualities are essential to an authentic education. For instance, in Philosophy Goes to School, he exposes traditional didactic because it reflects too much adult logic (I shall add; adult and male) and too few children's experiences.

The textbook is still organized logically, like a table of contents or a sequence of lectures, rather than psychologically, in terms of the developing interests and motivation of the child. […] it is a form, dreary, oppressive, and in many ways unintelligible summary of the contents that the child is expected to learn (1988, p. 21).

He also adds that "to be fully educated, one must be able to treat every discipline as a language and to think fluently in that language" (1988, p. 18). In other words, Lipman fosters a unified, homogeneous school curriculum; a meaningful school curriculum which would help students (girls and boys) to discover and develop their self.

About the novels of Philosophy for Children, Lipman writes:
In the case of the voice of the text—whether it is to be third-person or first-person—the direction in which to move is not readily apparent. This third-person voice, to the child, is the voice from on high, the voice from without rather than from within. It is the voice of the all-seeing, all-knowing, totally rational Other. It is the objective, authoritative, legitimate voice. What it says is what “it” or “on” or “as” says; what is said impersonally, by “one”, by “them”, by everyone. It possesses that God’s-eye view of time that enables it to know the past as well as it knows the present, so that it is utterly to be trusted when it begins, “Once upon a time . . . ” For this serene, imperturbable Apollonian voice, everything is ordered and everything is in its place. What it relates is what had to be, what was in the very nature of things, sometimes deified, never defiable.

The first-person voice, on the other hand, is the voice from within. If the voice of the Other is the first legitimate voice, then the voice from within seems at first to be illegitimate. If the voice of the Other is at first the establishment voice, then the voice from within is the voice of the dissenting individual (1991, p. 214).

One can link the first-person voice to an interrelational frame, and the third-person voice to a more conventional context. Yet we know the novels conceived for primary school students use the first-person voice and those addressed to secondary school students are in the third-person voice. Is this to say that the second part of the Philosophy for Children curriculum carries a degree of sexism?

THE CURRICULUM: PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN’S LIMITS

Indeed, reading these pages, one can wonder: “If the community of inquiry of Philosophy for Children is such a good means for women’s liberation, why isn’t it used by feminists?” And another one might say: “What about the novels of the Philosophy for Children curriculum: if the characters reflect children’s real behavior and experiences, as they are supposed to be, how can one say the curriculum is not sexist?” We know Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery was written in the 1970’s, a period which was still wearing heavy traces of sexism in society.

It is not the place, in this paper, to present a systematic criticism of the curriculum, nor to even make an exhaustive analysis of one of the novels. But I shall try, at least, to draw a synthetic chart of the main characters of Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery (the first novel and the one I consider the “heart” of the curriculum), in order to offer the reader a more partial portrait of Philosophy for Children. To do so, I will use Rochebave-Spanle’s scale of masculine and feminine stereotypes and introduce in parenthesis the corresponding Harry’s character.

Social Behavior: men play sports (Harry) and bad tricks on one another (Bill and Mickey) they are sometimes impolite (Harry); women play with dolls and chat together (Lisa and her friends), they are polite (Laura).

Emotional Stability: men are rebellious (Mark and Bill), determined (Harry and Tony), calm (school director) and firm (science teacher); women are temporing (Maria), sensitive (Suki), emotional (Fran), nervous (history teacher) and hysterical (Milly).

Control Mechanisms: men are disciplined, methodical (Tony), organized (Tony); women show a lack of preciseness (Mrs. Halsey), do not like to take decisions (substitute teacher) and are thoughtless (Milly).

Autonomy, Dependence: men are independent and want to take risks (Harry); women need to confide (Lisa and Fran), they gossip (Harry’s mother).

Domination, Self-affirmation: men are ambitious (Tony), they have self-confidence (Mark, Tony and Harry), and need to control the situation (Mr. Portos); women make suggestions (Lisa, Mrs. Portos), they accept rules more passively (Maria).

Agressivity: men have a fighting spirit (Harry), combative behavior, they are cynical (Bill); women ask for suggestions (history teacher).

Acquisition: men are egoistic and materialist; women are curious (Fran, Lisa).

Intellectual Qualities: men are creative (Harry), logical (Harry and Tony), they like to play with theoretical ideas and they have good reasoning ability (Harry and Tony). They have aptitudes for science and mathematics and they are critical (Tony); women are intuitive (Lisa), artistic (Suki and Ann) and have analogical reasoning ability (Lisa and Jill).

Looking at the correspondence established between the masculine and feminine stereotypes conveyed in the 60-70’s, and Harry’s main characters, one might come to believe Philosophy for Children’s community of inquiry is constructed on a layer of sexism. Before one comes to that conclusion, we shall take a quick look at the rest of the curriculum.

To start with, Lisa, Suki and Mark, the novels addressed to secondary school students, they indeed appear, a priori, to follow Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery’s sexist paradigm. These novels are the continuation of the personal history of Harry’s main personages. Each one’s characteristics remain unchanged from one novel to another. Once again, a deeper study is essential to assert any position at all. But, if my impressions are right, we get confronted, in this second part of the curriculum with the Philosophy for Children’s limits concerning the specific matter of feminism.

On the other hand, in the novels addressed to primary school students, the heroes appear to be so androgynous that children have difficulty in discerning Elifie, Gus and Pixie are boys or girls. It is not rare to hear children complain about the novel’s characters, proclaiming “a boy or a girl does not do this or that” In other words, children claim their sexual differences in acting, thinking and feeling in order to put forward their individuality, and they feel offended when the heroes of their books “short-circuit” this expression of differentiation. That is to say Lipman is quite avant-gardist in this regard.

Yet, I have noticed that some of the women-teachers I have worked with preferred the series of novels from Elifie to Pixie. Even when engaging in an adult community of inquiry, some told me they felt much less concerned about the secondary school novels. Did they feel, at that time, the “male-authoritarian-third-person voice”?

If a systematic analysis eventually confirms my intuition (which is, however, corroborated by experience), one could assert the first part of the Philosophy for Children’s curriculum is really a means which could be used to promote egalitarian rights, while the second part of the curriculum contains sexist elements which have to be re-worked.

About the re-work, two solutions might be possible. A long-term solution would consist in the complete rewriting of these
novels in order to give girls and boys non-sexist models and make them realize that the inclusion of women's discourse in the philosophical community of inquiry can lead to ways of thinking, acting and being that are essential to the evolution of all human beings.

A short-term solution would be to use the Philosophy for Children curriculum as it is, but to seek for more open discussions with children about the stereotypes and prejudices contained in it. I believe this solution should be a temporary one until the new curriculum becomes available.

CONCLUSION

In Quebec there has been an authentic revolution concerning women's status in the last quarter of a century. For instance, it is with a feeling of horror that my mother looks back to her old beliefs and my father is admitting with conviction that women's evolution is for the best. Nevertheless, men-women relationships are engraved in a general system of institutional power which has difficulty in losing its last traces of patriarchy. For instance, traditional education does not yet foster autonomous and critical thinking in classrooms and some of its programs are quite sexist.

This is why I strongly believe Philosophy for Children is a fundamental subject-matter which should be introduced in our schools. Indeed if, as I demonstrated in recent work, the community of inquiry of Philosophy for Children is essentially based on the values of democracy, then the triad Liberty, Equality and Fraternity substitutes for the asymmetric paradigm of Submission, Hierarchy and Paternity. In this sense, the philosophical community of inquiry is a fundamental means which could be used to promote a non-sexist educative experience.

I sincerely believe it is by means of philosophical discussions in the classroom, concerning gender differences or women's rights, that of young girls and boys will find, together, a convenient and egalitarian answer. I say boys and girls, because both have to engage in an authentic dialogue, as women's evolution is also related to men's evolution.

Matthew Lipman first conceived the Philosophy for Children approach in order to promote children's rights. Now, with Ann Margaret Sharp, who encourages us to liken, in meta-reflection, our woman's experience to Philosophy for Children, we come to realize that the program is an essential tool and a firm beginning point for women's liberation.

Women involved in the program have to coordinate their efforts in order to (a) continue in their respective countries what Sharp has already started and (b) to produce new material, more adapted to the women's daily experience.

NOTES

1. The term patriarchal is not used here in its absolute meaning. Indeed, we know that since the 18th century, women's exclusion and men's superiority never stopped declining in the Occident. The ideological disruptions which followed the French Revolution, in Europe, and the beginning of democracy in the United States, gave a mortal blow to any absolute power "imposed by God" and, consequently, to any idea of men's "natural superiority" over women. However, even if social structures had known a revolution, the power of the father remained quite strong for over 150 years in individuals' mentality.

2. According to Nancy Chodorow (1978), gender identity is firmly established around the age of three.

3. A philosophical debate amongst feminists is still open on this matter: is complementarity positive or negative? What I personally mean by complementarity is the participation of two to make a whole; the recognition of men and women's similarities and differences.


5. Parallel to it, concerning specifically moral judgment, one can also look at the sexism Gilligan (1982) finds in Kohlberg's six stages and in his interpretation of children's answers.

6. My behavior was the result of what I consider an "authoritarian and sexist" paradigm of education and what Lipman calls a "tribal" model of education (1988, chapter 2).

7. For the relationships I see between contextualized subject-matters and egalitarian education I refer the reader to the present article's page 5.


9. If I wrote before I had understood about the same truth during my travelling in Europe, it is probably because the understanding was only at the cognitive level. This time, I understood the message with my whole self, that is—I had integrated it.

10. By "men" I mean the whole (religious, economical, social and political) patriarchate system.


14. Talking about teachers, I use the feminine gender because, in Quebec, it is mostly women who teach in primary school. When a man works in primary schools it is, most of the time, as a “specialist”. For a concise report on sexism in this area, one can read: CEQ-MEQ (December 1987). Ghettos d'emplois et salaires inférieurs: le lot des femmes en éducation in Nouvelles CEQ 8 (5), p. 3.
15. Concerning the differences between male's rationality and women's sensitivity, one can read: Griffiths, M. (Xeroxcopy), "Feminism, feelings and philosophy"; p. 131-151.
16. About intellectual and abstract debate or intellectual debates.
17. Homer (1972) demonstrated that very often women develop anxiety when confronted with competitive activities or intellectual debates.
18. The "cooperative game" is not similar to the "cooperative learning" which implies competition amongst peers. When I use the word cooperation, I hear it in its moral sense (Daniel, M.F., in preparation). The philosophical community of inquiry and the cooperative values.
20. In order to develop the self, G.H. Mead writes it is essential that the one integrates the general activities of her or his community within her or his field of individual experience. Mead talks about the "generalized other" (1934/1963, p. 130-147).
21. These masculine and feminine stereotypes have been studied in her exhaustive sociologic research. Les roles masculins et feminins, in 1964.

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Primary School: Love versus knowledge?

Eulalia Bosch

In 1981, I wrote an article on the role of love in the teaching-learning relationship. They were years in which a real effort was being made to interpret the different realities that comprise the social framework in which we were immersed. My thesis then was that the knowledge relationship was a very passionate one and that passions are rarely abstract. In the article, I analyzed the aspirations of parents in taking their children to school and the way in which the different teaching groups—teachers, schoolmasters, university professors—responded professionally to the social needs expressed in parents' attitudes.

Rereading it today, I am struck by the fact that I still share the article's basic
ideas, in spite of the many things that have changed in the last fifteen years. Inside the school and, especially, outside it.

The opportunity offered to me by this anthology, *Women and Philosophy for Children*, has taken me back to those old papers. In the sense that the reflections of today can add a new chapter to the reflections of yesterday.

In an attempt to explain the fact that the primary school everywhere is in the hands of women, I was referring at that time to the socially dominant desire that women teachers should be an extension of the role of women in the home. As a specific task, all that was expected of them was to facilitate children’s access to life outside the family. Even the most advanced teaching sectors then supported, in the face of parents who were impatient to see their children read and write, the idea that all intellectual specificity could, or even should, wait.

“...The whole of society, through ‘mum’, expects the pre-school teacher to love her young ones. It is tolerable that she should not condition their stimuli in favor of their learning to manage alone (although enormous value is placed on her doing so) but it is inadmissible that she should not treat them with affection.”

During the first stage of primary education the teacher is expected to make the children behave (which normally means that she has to introduce them to the rugged terrain of letters and numbers) but not to forget that they are still children and if necessary to give them a kiss (or its alternative, a sweet) every time they learn a symbol.

“Things begin to change at the second stage. At this point, the teacher, who may now be a man or a woman, has to start to sow the seeds of intellectuality. He or she must concentrate on the eternal truths of mathematics and on the gradual course of social development. Little by little the teacher changes the kiss for the pat on the back. In this way, he or she grows further away from the pupil, at the same time as the pupil discovers with undeniable joy his or her entry into the world of adults...”

I think that this situation remains fundamentally unaltered. Mothers still expect friendship and moral comfort from their children’s teachers. And in this general atmosphere, the introduction of the *Philosophy for Children* project into primary schools has, or can have, highly significant resonances for teachers at this educational level:

—It can make room for objectivity between the teacher and her students. Feelings can rarely be other than subjective even if they are imposed by professional imperatives. And overcoming this gambit of personal commitment is not easy without the right resources. It is important to remember that even at this stage of incipient intellectual development, the introduction of Philosophy as a discipline for the creation of ideas of one’s own allows everybody to be him or herself. And this singularity is indispensable if they are to start to construct effective relationships in both their intellectual and their affective life: especially because it does not oppose one to the other.

The material for the *Philosophy for Children* project repeatedly stresses the importance of the interrelation between affectivity and reasoning for the development of common sense. And I do not believe this aspect has gone unnoticed by any primary school teacher who has put any of the programs into practice.

—It can strengthen the teacher professionally, allowing her to give up her exclusive role as a “collective mum” or “social mum”. Philosophy, understood in Socratic terms, makes it possible for systematic discussion of events to be what creates affinities and discrepancies within the group. And when the group is constituted in the strong sense—that is, beyond mere spatial and temporal coincidence—it can satisfy the need for protection that any human individual requires in new surroundings. Of course, the teacher will continue to play a fundamental role in this necessary support for children outside the home. But being able to teach a subject that allows her to elaborate new ideas on the basis of the pupils’ individual contributions really puts her in a very different position to what we suppose the position of the mother in the home to be.

—It can give intellectual content to a strong affective relation. Whether for reasons of duty or through sheer devotion, day to day dealings with students, and especially with the youngest ones, cannot be removed from the sphere of affectivity. Without content, it arouses a most arbitrary situation. Fecundated by the search for meaning, it can be mutually stimulating. Paradoxically, even with varying meanings for students and teacher, philosophy can place them both on a common ground of construction and knowledge. It is in this sense that the emotional relation can be professionally founded and enriched.

Overall, the primary school can gain in *work* content, in the best sense of the word. The six or eight hours the children spend at school (the same as adults at the office) can have an attraction other than simply that of the creche. The students can feel that they are the protagonists of their intellectual relations, in the same way as they consider themselves irreplaceable subjects of their drawings, their plays, their games or their first steps in the field of the experimental sciences.

What is specific about the introduction of the *Philosophy for Children* project into primary schools is its proposal for engaging in philosophy. In this sense, if what is introduced is an eclectic method where every idea is received with the same indiscriminate and monotonous enthusiasm, we will have made no progress. If, on the other hand, thinking and its elaboration responds to a critical attitude of clearing and airing the terrain of the individual’s own intellectual construction, then we shall have set in motion the backbone of the literary, scientific and technological knowledge that the school holds in store in the coming years for those students who will be abandoning primary school when they reach adolescence.

For women teachers, the chance of giving a class in philosophy to the same pupils to whom they teach science, reading and writing gym and art can come to have a very profound meaning. It can help them to assume directly and unambiguously their role in the formation of their students’ intellectual life without the need to renounce the affectivity that is part of this stage in the human relations between adults and children.
Putting Ethics at the Center

Megan Laverty

I have only recently become acquainted with Philosophy for Children, and recognize that there are still many aspects of the approach that I have yet to master. This lack of expertise has not dampened the intensity of my commitment to Philosophy for Children, nor has it diminished my belief in the tremendous significance of Philosophy for Children for present and future generations. Such a response might initially appear paradoxical: for a good theory is a theory which withstands vigorous criticism and scrutiny. My ready acceptance of Philosophy for Children might seem to signify the power of its rhetoric as opposed to the soundness of its reason. I hope to show that this is, in fact, not the case.

Put simply, I think that Philosophy for Children can improve the world we live in. I mean by world here, an individual's relationship with themself, with others and with their environment. In saying that Philosophy for Children can improve the world, I am essentially arguing that our relationships—our essential relatedness—will become to be seen in an ethical light, and in so being seen, will become ethically conditioned. I am assuming, therefore, that increasing moral goodness is synonymous with improvement. The recognition of our essential relatedness is, in itself, an ethical accomplishment, and as I argue throughout this article, Philosophy for Children not only makes us aware of this ethical relatedness but works within the limits of it.

Philosophy for Children has significant practical consequences for women as it establishes the irrationality of discrimination on the basis of sexual difference. Boys and girls come to see, through listening to each other's lived life, and this life includes our relationships with others. Philosophy for Children—by modeling that humans are ethical agents first and epistemic subjects second—is contributing to the discourse of feminism and improving our world! I will attempt to answer the question, 'HOW does Philosophy for Children do this?' a little later in the article.

'WHERE is the proof for such sweeping predictions?' you might be beginning to judiciously and justifiably ask. The above claims are not predictions in the strict sense as I am not arguing that Philosophy for Children will universally cause our students to have relationships of a moral nature. We would need empirical evidence in order to substantiate such a thesis. We could gather this evidence by doing empirical studies on children as some people are already doing. I am suggesting, however, that we can argue that Philosophy for Children will improve our world, prior to any empirical studies being done, so long as it is understood that we are arguing for a logical and not causal relationship between Philosophy for Children and ethically conditioned relationships. We are discerning what can be inferred from the philosophy of Philosophy for Children, as opposed to predicting what the teaching of Philosophy for Children will necessarily produce.

It seems that the occurrence of violence, crime and drug abuse has escalated in the Twentieth Century. Although this is a recognizably debatable fact, I suspect that many individuals at one point or another have wondered whether or not the moral standards of our society have been in slow decline. With each day it seems harder to find a rational defense of morality. How difficult it is to give adult and child alike a justification for why anyone should be a moral agent. Why should we respect and honor each other's humanity? What are we referring to when we make mention of 'each other's humanity'? The old arguments are no longer convincing it seems (if in fact, they ever were). Our inability to prove the indubitable existence of a divine being undermines the argument that morality is a set of divine edicts. Similarly, the view that being a moral agent is part of what it is to be a human being, seems contrary to the evidence. Everywhere we look, human beings are pursuing their own interests with little regard for anyone else. As my students repeatedly point out—corruption is rife, politicians are farcical, individuals can't be trusted, and businesses are blinkered in their chase of the dollar. The Mother Ther- esas of this world are exceptions and not the rule.

It begins to seem that the only justification available to us is the argument that it is to our benefit—either as individuals or as a community—to establish and maintain certain generic ethical codes in our relationships with others. The assumption underlying this view is: it is only rational to behave in ways that benefit one's self. This assumption seems contrary to the spirit of
moral agency. If it could be established that moral agency did not benefit the individual, or the community in which the individual resides, then moral agency would be considered irrational. To be a moral agent would be considered irrational because morality would be seen to involve self-sacrifice. It is difficult to establish that being moral does actually benefit the individual. The contrary seems in fact, to be the case, that is, morality does not benefit the self, if we think of benefit in terms of financial security, job prospects, material advantage, etc. Hence, it seems that there are only two choices available to the agent, and the rationality of one of those alternatives is questionable. The agent can either embrace altruism and consider the needs of others to the exclusion of himself; or the agent may choose to embrace egoism and thereby consider his own needs to the exclusion of others. The needs of the self are set up in opposition to the needs of others.

Another fundamental difficulty incurred by justifying morality in this way is that it doesn't offer us any conceptual means by which we can reflect upon moral issues and come to an informed moral judgment. If I have, for example, to make a decision between allowing my elderly mother to stay at home or placing her in institutional care, what resources does the above view offer me in my struggle to make a moral decision? Should I exclusively consider what would be accepted as moral and what my interests are, and derive my conclusion from these? Or do we consider what the grandmother wants, how she would fit in in an institution over time, how the children are affected by her staying or leaving, how the children treat her... It is an extremely complex situation and thinking of morality in terms of my wants versus the wants of someone else does not help us as individuals to come to any better understanding of what is morally required of us in any instance.

It seems then, that we cannot find a valid and illuminative justification for being moral agents. The argument that sometimes it would be to our benefit to be moral agents, is difficult to prove and a characteristically immoral way of thinking about morality, altruism is as rare as it is difficult to comprehend. It would seem that we are left with an entrenched, and as I argue, impoverished conception of morality. This conception of morality, and its place in our ordinary everyday life, is not immutable. It only appears to be so. Our relative inability to justify the ethical life merely reflects a lack of means. It does not mean that seeing oneself under moral requirements, is either irrelevant or irrational. Only by removing ethics or morality from its place in the Cartesian paradigm are we able to understand what it means to be moral and see it as inherently worthwhile.

As I have suggested, I think the difficulty we have with justifying the attempt to be ethical has to do with the dominance of a characteristically Cartesian paradigm of the world and how we come to know the world, which is itself an unethical picture of the world, according to this Cartesian paradigm, is not the collection of my relationships as I described it above. It is rather a world of objects separate and detached from me, the knowing inquirer. People are included in the collision of objects and although people may have certain characteristics which make them a specific type of object, the inquirer essentially knows them in the same way that he knows a car or a piece of fruit. The inquirer exclusively employs his reason in an attitude of impartiality to know the world as it confronts him. Objectivity—or knowing the world as it really is—is defined as that which is given in the God's eye perspective. Objectivity is neutral. The inquirer attains objectivity by combining the neutrality of reason with the impartiality of his perspective; the inquirer stands alone, outside and above the situations that confront him. By so doing the inquirer comes to have objective and thus universal knowledge.

The inquirer is entirely constituted prior to his engagement with the world. In knowing, learning, understanding, the inquirer merely EXPANDS his body of facts. The inquirer aims to fill out his body of facts until they—he is as large as the world. Evaluations are subjective, personal, and of no final consequence. That is, they tell the inquirer more about himself than about the world. Values come from within the inquirer and are laid out upon the world. Evaluative tendencies, unless checked, distort the objective picture. The disciplines of Morality and Aesthetics deal with human evaluations of 'reality'. In order to speak authoritatively they devise theories which partake of universality and impartiality so that they may similarly be identified as pertaining to objectivity.

The Cartesian paradigm of patriarchal consciousness denies difference in three fundamental ways. It denies alternative perspectives on reality. It marginalizes these perspectives to the realm of subjectivity and therefore irrationality; rationality being associated with mastery, domination and control, for real otherness is only understood in relation to the inquirers conceptual scheme; otherness is reduced to mere derivative antithesis. The inquirer is therefore denied the possibility of being truly engaged and thus affected by otherness—that which eludes its conceptual scheme. It stresses the radical separation of the knower from what is known and stresses the radical separation of the knower from the rest of himself. The subject, in order to become knowing, denies his emotions and feelings, denies that his consciousness has a particular history, and denies his attachment to other subjectivities.

One can observe this paradigm at work in our education system. Education, as it is largely structured now, assumes that the classroom is made up of a collection of individual and largely isolated students. The teacher is employed merely to facilitate their independent learning. This independent learning is further emphasized by the competitive nature of education. In order to learn, students do not have to work cooperatively together. The task at hand for the students is to appropriate the body of knowledge which describes the world. The teacher has the largest body and so the authoritative voice. Learning is a race to appropriate the largest amount of knowledge in the shortest amount of time. The school, like the society at large, recognizes that for pragmatic reasons individuals have to live and learn amongst others, so the school and society develop rules which limit interference and minimize hurt. These come to be known as moral principles, and bring with them the problems of justification which I mentioned earlier.

Philosophy for Children, importantly, subverts this paradigm and in so doing puts ethics at the center again. It identifies ethics as primitive in the Wittgensteinian sense, and distinguishes the traditional need for a justification of moral agency. This is because it works from a premise of connection or connectedness—"There arises beyond the difficulty of saying 'T' the possibility of saying 'we' which can first make 'T' meaningful." Because it does this all sorts
of things follow. Judging where to begin, in describing the way in which Philosophy for Children does this is extremely difficult; what follows is a rather clumsy attempt at this, and requires further thought and development.

The most notable feature of Philosophy for Children is that the pedagogy and the philosophy are intimately linked; the process by which we go about getting knowledge is inextricably connected with the knowledge that we gain. The children learn that real epistemic progress is made when the Community of Inquiry is functioning at its best. This means that the inquirer gains knowledge, not as an isolated mind, but as a human individual in relationship with other human individuals. This relationship is not just any type of relationship, it is significantly an ethical relationship. Knowledge is made available to me and my fellow individuals in the context of our being ethically responsive towards each other.

Philosophy for Children in its emphasis upon The Community of Inquiry is putting forward a dialogic conception of normative reason. I think Iris Marion Young is correct when she argues that:

"A dialogic conception of normative reason promises a critique and abandonment of the assumption that normative reason is impartial and universal. Precisely because there is no impartial point of view in which a subject stands detached and dispassionate to assess all perspectives, to arrive at an objective and complete understanding of an issue or experience, all perspectives and participants must contribute to its discussion. Thus dialogic reason ought to imply reason as contextualized, where answers are the outcome of a plurality of perspectives that cannot be reduced to unity. In discussion speakers need not abandon their particular perspectives nor bracket their motives and feelings. As long as the dialogue allows all perspectives to speak freely, and be heard and taken into account, the expression of need, motives and feelings will not have merely private significance, and will not bias or distort the conclusions because they will interact with other needs, motives and feelings."

This means that the phenomena of 'woman' shall no longer be described from the authoritative position of the all-seeing neutral, impartial male. 'Woman' will not simply represent the denial of all that is masculine. Real women will be able to participate in the definition of themselves. This also applies to other oppressed groups such as indigenous people, and, of course, children.

Also, because of the nature of the community of inquiry, the qualities traditionally associated with femininity are not degraded as irrational. I have in mind such qualities as caring, nurturing, being attentive to others in one's life, allowing one's emotions and desires to inform one's thoughts and reflections, and recognizing the significance of such corporal factors as the body. This is because within the Community of Inquiry there is an infinity of ingredients which collectively determine knowledge. Each individual participant of the Community of Inquiry is an irreplaceable, and hence intrinsically valuable, member.

"At Mendham, we soon came to recognize that we are all gifted—it is part of the human condition. I could characterize each gift there, each one is in a sense radical and indissoluble."

As objectivity is now inter-subjectively attained, every individual, in their uniqueness, contributes to the understanding had by the community. The individual who is cautious about each new step, the individual who worries about what is the case, the individual who always has an example ready, the individual who considers what it might feel like to be in this or that position, the individual who lacks facts but is willing to consider options—they are all intrinsically valuable.

Within the recognition of the value of all the different viewpoints, and within the recognition that human beings are essentially related or connected, their dawns an awareness on the part of the individual that they become themselves in their relationships with others. This awareness is synonymous with the individual being in an ethical relationship with others. A consequence of this is that an openness to being altered—the ability to change one's mind in the light of what another says—is not a sign of weakness, or loss of identity, but rather a readiness on the part of the individual to grow in himself. To quote Christa Wolf, "The quest for her; in the thought of her. And of the attempt to be oneself."

The further consequence is that knowledge is necessarily no longer given in the authoritative speech of the inquirer (authority being synonymous with certainty). Rather, knowledge is given in a different language; a language which is tentative, cautious, emotive, questioning, self-interrupting and self-correcting. Ursula Le Guin usefully terms it the mother tongue and describes it as follows: it is "Conversational and inclusive, the language of stories, inaccurate, unclear, coarse, limited, breaking down dichotomy and refusing splits, a voice of different responsibility, always expecting an answer. It flies from the mouth on the breath that is our life and is gone, like the outbreak, utterly gone and yet returning, repeated, the breath the same again always, everywhere, and we all know it by heart." I recognize that this subject requires an article or paper just dedicated to it alone.

Within Philosophy for Children being a moral human being cannot be reduced to simply serving the needs of someone else to the exclusion of one's own. Morality is no longer conceived of as referring to a discrete range of activities. I talk here of a moral human being and not a moral agent.

Being moral describes a certain sensitivity to others which is conditioned by a recognition of our essential relatedness. Within a Community of Inquiry I am thinking about my own thinking with the aim of improving it. In order to do this I recognize that I need other individuals. These individuals are infinitely knowable. By this I mean that my knowing of them only occurs in relation with them, but within our relationships we are always changing, developing, growing. In my relationship with them I must, in order to be truthful to who they are, recognize that they are always becoming. . .

"But in certain one's we recognize a heightened quality of giftedness. It is not really personal, in that it is nothing obvious to do with personality, or even with wisdom necessarily, in the sense of more understanding than the rest of us. But it does, I think, have to do with responsibility in its root sense of response. The man of the powerful gift, the gift which brings other people together, is seen in retrospect, to have responded to the exigencies of his time: he allowed himself to be moved, to be formulated as a response to the question put to him at the epochal moment. . . . Here is the opportunity for an etymological definition of genius as the generativity of nature in all its strength, as a power that arises from dwelling in full obedience in one's situatedness, a giving of self to calling with an integrity which produces fruit almost involuntarily."

"The Credit Due"

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Some approaches to education are more virtuous than others; Philosophy for Children is one of those virtuous approaches. This is not because Philosophy for Children causes our students to become morally better. We don't know if it does. Philosophy for Children is a virtuous approach to education because it gives the students lived experience of an ethical situation. It shows the way in which their knowledge is gained within relation to others, but not just any relationship. Knowledge is gained when individuals recognize the potential of ALL individuals to contribute to the discovery of knowledge. Within this relationship an individual recognizes that another person may play a role in changing their mind, beliefs, views, feelings, outlook, person. It allows them to perceive another person as more than their empirical properties; it provides the conditions therefore for the possibility of ethical relatedness.

Bibliography


NOTES

1. I make many claims within this article about the nature of the ethical relationship. The limitations of this article prevent me from speaking to them in more detail. I do this in detail in my Master's Thesis.

2. We can discern a parallel here between what Philosophy for Children is doing and what Carol Gilligan does in her book, *In a Different Voice: Women's Conception of Self and Morality* (1982). Piaget and Kohlberg both identified sequences or stages in the child's development in their capacity to reason about moral problems. Carol Gilligan shows in her study that the higher stages are 'given' as higher within a set of sovereign assumptions. The situation as it is favors boys. Carol Gilligan shows that if you were to alter the set of omnipotent assumptions, you would necessarily redefine the higher moral stages and this would in turn favor girls.

3. It seems that the course of greatest benefit to the individual would be for them to appear moral whilst acting for their own benefit.

4. The epistemic inquirer was for a long time exclusively male, and even in contemporary times is sometimes still assumed to be male—as we can see in the quotations from David Kennedy's article.


Education in Philosophy and Art in the United States: A Feminist Account

Sally Hagaman

This paper is feminist, in both form and content. Experiences from my own education in philosophy and the visual arts are used to introduce research into the sexism inherent in such enterprises, in a manner which some readers may find suspect. I must point out that, on the whole, I did not contemporaneously interpret those educational experiences as I do now. My consciousness has been raised, to use an overworn phrase, since the time I was an undergraduate student. But I find that I am often surprised by the levels of overt and covert sexism, generated from both sexes, that remain in education and educational pursuits, particularly within the halls of academia.

I am trying to locate a feminine (and feminist) position in the educational conversation. Frequently the voices in this conversation are masculine even if they happen to come from females. Do women recognize themselves in such a conversation? Culler (1982) finds three decisive moments of reading as a woman. In the first, criticism is thematic, appealing to the reader's experience, finding continuity between experiences of texts and life. In the second, the woman reader realizes that she has not been reading as a woman. She has been led to identify with male interests against her own. At this moment the alleged gender neutrality of knowledge is challenged. In the third decisive moment, the woman reader discovers that her own ideas about the work have been tied to and are complicit with the male's. The feminist reader/speaker/writer has the job of exploring different methods, assumptions, and outcomes which do not preserve male authority.

I suspect that most of us are now accustomed to thinking (or at least thinking about thinking) of knowledge as institutional, as that authorized and authored by human interest itself socially and historically conditioned. We may think more comfortably now about texts and images that have no stable meanings, about knowledge claims judged by standards of truthfulness rather than of Truth, about the implications of our research constituting that which is researched. If we accept that knowledge is indeed constitutive of the world, then the choices made about what to teach, how to teach, and how to interpret the texts (verbal, visual, and otherwise) that we teach are extraordinarily important decisions. They are decisions about a pervasive consciousness which shapes and projects the world (Pagano, 1990). It need not continue to be a patriarchal consciousness, leading to an epistemological inequality found in at least three areas: exclusion of women from disciplinary subject matters, distortion of the female image according to the male image of her within disciplinary confines, and denial of value to the disciplines of characteristics perceived as feminine (Martin, 1985).

**Education and Value in Philosophy and the Visual Arts**

I took classes in philosophy as an undergraduate student, although I was an art major. At the time and in my institution, it was considered unusual for an art student to pursue an interest in philosophy. It was, as I came to perceive, also unusual for a female student to pursue such an interest. Philosophy was, and I would contend continues to be, a male-dominated profession, at least in my country. I never had a female philosophy professor, at any academic level, and am told that women in such positions are still outnumbered by males by a ratio of 20:1 (Kerr, 1992). I do not remember reading or discussing the work of any women philosophers, with the exception of Susanne Langer.

I remember very distinctly coming into the first meeting of a course in the philosophy of science. I was the only female student, the only female in any room in the department, with the exception of the departmental secretary. The professor went around the room, greeting those students whom he already knew and asking those with whom he was unfamiliar to tell something about themselves and why they were in the class. When he got to me, he commented on my appearance. The comment was not a negative one; it was not meant to be insulting. However, it was the only such comment generated in response to a classroom full of students. The rest of the semester was colored by a marked difference in the responses of both the professor and other students to me and my contributions to the class, not all of which could be attributed to perception of me as an 'artist.'

Sandler (1988) lists a number of such classroom behaviors, drawn from a variety of studies, which subtly or not so subtly disparage women. Remarks dealing with appearance are directed almost exclusively to females and communicate that a woman student is viewed in sexual terms, rather than as an individual capable of scholastic and professional achievement. During discussion (obviously a large part of most philosophy classes), women are more than twice as likely to be interrupted (by faculty or peers) while voicing an idea or comment as are men (some 80% of interruptions are men interrupting women). Further, for men such interruptions tend to be a
continuation or development of their comments, such as "What you are saying is that Derrida and Lacan are not very far apart." For women, the interruptions tend to be of a different nature, more trivial and less focused upon their comments. Faculty call on male students more frequently and by name more often than women students. At the college level, male students are often called by their last names but women by their first, implying that the latter are not on par with males as adults or future professionals. Faculty tend to make more eye contact with male students, so that individual males are more likely to feel recognized and encouraged to participate in class. Professors often 'coach' male students toward providing a fuller answer by probing for additional elaboration or explanation or waiting longer for males than females to answer a question before going on to another student. Teachers are more likely to nod and gesture in response to males' comments when female students are talking. When females talk, teachers may be inattentive, looking at the clock or shuffling papers. Such behaviors are not limited to male faculty members; female professors tend to exhibit the same behaviors. Such actions mirror a perception of women shaped by the pervasive patriarchal consciousness that operates at a taken-for-granted level of assumption: that perception is part of the world as we know it, whether we are aware of it or not.

My experiences in undergraduate art classes were significantly different from and yet remarkably similar to experiences in philosophy courses. As a female, I was not unusual as an art student. The majority of art students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels in the United States are women. Despite this fact, and the related fact that this has been the case for a number of years, the vast majority of art professors are men. As an undergraduate I studied with only one female art professor. She, tellingly, was an art education, not a studio or art history professor. As you may suspect, that position was devalued for a number of reasons, the most cogent of which I would maintain is the feminization of education in the United States (for an historical analysis of that phenomenon, see Grumet, 1988). For the purposes of this brief paper, a basic finding is that teaching in general, as well as teaching in a specific discipline, tends to be devalued when compared to roles as 'producers' (not transmitters/facilitators) of knowledge within disciplines. Given the history of philosophy within the traditional liberal arts, teaching at the university level in that discipline may well face less devalorization than similar positions in the arts. However, teaching philosophy or art at the elementary or secondary level (or writing or researching about those levels of education) is clearly devalued; again, I would contend, in large part due to the feminization of teaching at such levels (Collins & Sandell, 1984; Grumet, 1988).

Despite the presence of a number of female students in my undergraduate art classes, the same types of differential behaviors toward male and female students as those evidenced in philosophy classes were apparent. One sculpture professor went so far as to say that, even though the introductory sculpture class was a requirement for all art majors, he felt that women should not be in sculpture, did not have what it took (as in a specified part of the male anatomy) to succeed in sculpture, and therefore, the "girls in the class would have to do more and better work than the men in the class to get the same grade" (my italics). Now, some twenty-odd years later, such overt sexism would not be accepted as it was (despite fuming under the breath) at that time. However, the professor in question is still teaching at that school. I suspect his more covert sexist behavior is as strong as ever.

A good deal of recent research has dealt with the question of why there are so few women, as compared to men, who have achieved fame in the visual arts (and in music, particularly in the area of composing, mathematics, and the sciences) (see, for instance, Nochlin, 1971, 1988). What Loeb (1975) called the if I haven't dusted and made the beds do I have a right to begin carving syndrome may have something to do with it. The profession of artist (or other highly creative disciplinary pursuits) requires an extraordinary commitment in terms of being willing to take rejection, to live in a less-than-wealthy manner, and to be field-independent. These are traits of committed males, but not of committed females, who more often choose careers as art educators, rather than as artists (Harris, 1989). There also seems to be a correlation between the age at which a person begins to pursue a creative profession and the resulting degree of success. The earlier a person tends to be productive, the more productive that person is likely to be. Simonton (1988) noted that being productive early in life is the best single predictor of how productive a creative person will be and that this factor pertains to all creativity domains. In fact, the statistics are so compelling that the odds that a 'late bloomer' will establish a scientific reputation are minuscule (p. 75). He quotes Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. as saying, 'If you haven't cut your name on the door of fame by the time you've reached 40, you might as well put up your jackknife!' (p. 75). The apparent necessity to achieve early and continue producing may well work against women, who tend to have different career and productivity patterns (Gilligan, 1990). Women, because of reproductive and family necessity may peak later than men and begin their career productivity later. It may then be too late for genuine eminence in a given field.

An apparently significant differentiation in response to the products of artists and other creative professionals also may answer part of the question of the scarcity of famous women artists, etc. For example, there have been numerous experiments in which groups of people rank such things as works of art, fiction, and the like. Items ascribed to women for one group are ascribed to men for another, and so on. The results are remarkably consistent: if the creator is believed to be a woman, the item is ranked lower than when its creator is thought to be a man. Both men and women do this, although men do so at a higher rate of frequency. Studies of how women's success is viewed show a similar pattern: men's success tends to be attributed to talent and hard work, while women's success tends to be attributed to luck (Sandler, 1988).

As a student, I recall being pleased when I was told that I could paint like a
man. Such a comment set me apart from my female peers as a successful student, one who could meet, or at least approach meeting, the standards of the art world. Pagano (1990) relates a similar youthful pleasure at being told that she thought like a man. She continued, “Women thinking” appeared, in fact, to be a contradiction. It is not that women can’t think—it is simply that we cannot think as women. If we would think, we must think in the voice of a culture in which we are subdued” (p. 12). Young-Breuhl (1987), in a similar vein, examines assimilation and analogy as the dominant modes of patriarchal reason and as representational modes which enact a denial and devalorization of difference, especially feminine difference (note: this important paper deals with the education of women as philosophers). Female experience must be assimilated to male experience and women must be understood to be like men. Owens (1983) maintained that “representational systems of the West admit only vision—that of the constitutive male subject—or rather they posit the subject of representation as absolutely centered, unitary, masculine” (p. 188). But, as Gilligan (1982, 1988) and others have pointed out, there is a qualitative difference in the ways females and males perceive (and, I would add, construct) knowledge and reality. Hence the statement:

What counts as knowledge must be grounded in experience… Women’s experience systematically differs from the male experience upon which knowledge claims have been grounded. Thus the experience on which prevailing claims to social and natural knowledge are founded is, first of all, only partial human experience, only partially understood by men. However, when this experience is presumed to be gender-free—when the male experience is taken to be the human experience—the resulting theories, concepts, methodologies, inquiry goals, and knowledge claims distort human social life and human thought. (Harding & Hintikka, 1983, p.1)

A pioneering study of women’s development in self, voice, and mind contrasted females with males in expressions and styles of discourse (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986). It was found that women tend to favor connectedness rather than separateness. These research-
ers comment:

Educators can help women develop their own authentic voices if they emphasize connection over separation, understanding and acceptance over assessment, and collaboration over debate… if instead of imposing their own expectations and arbitrary requirements, they encourage students to evolve their patterns of work based on the problems they are pursuing. (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 229).

I am not focusing on females’ experiences and voices to simply affirm stories (verbal, visual, or otherwise) that students tell. Such a position may degenerate into a form of narcissism, a cathartic experience reduced to naming, anger or some other response, without the benefit of theorizing in order to understand its underlying causes and what it means to work collectively to transform experience and thought. In this sense, what I am advocating is acknowledgement of epistemological and pedagogical inequality in the educational system of the United States (and probably elsewhere) in philosophy, the visual arts, and (most likely) every other discipline, and, further, a willingness to question the acceptability, and work toward change, of these pervasive forces.

Conclusion

The gift, if you will, of feminist criticism in the academic disciplines is, like an important portion of both theory and practice in Philosophy for Children, most notably the development of communities of inquiry, a gift of both questions and connections. Feminist theorists act self-consciously as part of a community. Doing feminist theory means eschewing a privatized notion of originality (and other modernist myths) and claiming our collaborative antecedents and contemporaries. We make ourselves known to ourselves by making ourselves known to others. We assert connection and difference. Feminist theory is inseparable from feminist pedagogy, including modes of knowing and representing with ‘feminine’ existential, epistemological, aesthetic, and moral referents in women and men alike. As Pagano (1990) asserts, “The muteness of any deprives of resonance the voices of all” (p. 17).

REFERENCES


Choosing Not to Play the Game

Wendy Turgeon

I was an anomaly of the early 70s: a woman seeking to do graduate work in philosophy in the heart of the Midwest. At the time I simply blundered in where angels ("glorified poultry" as described by one admired professor) feared to tread. I didn't even consider if it were appropriate. Confidently I ventured into a bastion of male power: the Jesuit university. Years later I am still struggling to interpret what followed.

Philosophy had been my second choice; I had really desperately wanted to sing opera but in college I had pushed my small voice beyond its capacity and had lost it completely. As I had gazed in despair around me my eye fell upon philosophy—the attempt to puzzle out those mysteries so painfully yet beautifully captured in music. So as I worked in philosophy I gravitated to issues in aesthetics: what makes a work of art beautiful? What occurs in the creative act? Does an objective standard of aesthetic quality exist? Fresh out of college I eagerly sallied into the departmental chair's office to find out my responsibilities as a new grad "fellow." I remember him, a crusty Jesuit, surveying me with a calm gaze, puffing on an enormous cigar, advising me that I was weak in medieval philosophy. My love for medieval music had extended to include philosophy as well so I was not really worried and just chalked up his comment as a reference to the fact that I was coming from a public university.

But graduate school brought new doubts and a growing hesitancy to trust my own abilities. At the time I simply shrank in the presence of eloquent male professors and quick-tongued male colleagues. Always shy, I now became increasingly hesitant to voice an opinion: everyone else seemed so sure. However, at no time did I make any connection between my feelings of inadequacy and the overwhelming male presence in the program.

I recall one woman professor—she wore her hair short and chain-smoked in a nervous fashion. The other professors seemed to treat her more like the wife of the Dean of the Law School than as a philosopher in her own right. There were one or two other women in the program but we never seemed to connect. Perhaps we each felt our isolation to be so great as to render any contact with one another a sign of weakness or betrayal. Then again, the concept of "sisterhood" was still alien to the Midwest.

Undoubtedly, I was surrounded by some brilliant minds, both in the professors and in my fellow students. One teacher gave me an entirely new appreciation of David Hume, the 18th century empiricist whose arguments against the prominence of reason in human experience are still difficult to refute. Another showed me Plato and Whitehead and the powers of their respective vision of a world governed by the twin mysteries of time and eternity. In one of my papers for another noted scholar I likened the cosmic model of Leibniz to the Well-tempered Clavier of Bach. (This one drew some puzzled looks from my fellow classmates.)

The students were equally impressive. In the graduate fellow office, a high ceilinged room full of old fashioned wooden desks, conversations blossomed, battles of ideas raged, and I listened. Mark was a quick-thinking Bostonian, continually amazed by St. Louis naiveté. Jerry was a native midwesterner, a born-again Christian, and adamantly sure of everything. Steve, one of my closer friends, had moved here from Louisiana. Newly married, he spent his days surrounded with books by 17th-century divines while his wife taught (or fought) English in an inner city high school. Students came and went; eventually three of us reigned in this vaulted room: Steve and I, along with another student, Michael. We three had joined the program at the same time and that created a certain bond of friendship.

As I would leave the room, Steve would pretend to detonate my briefcase. All this was a kind of cryptic statement of collegiality. In a way I felt accepted by students and faculty alike but at the same time I was conscious of seemingly speaking an alien language that more often elicited quizzical silence than nods of agreement.

Steve loved games, intellectual games. He would pose a question and then play out all the angles. For him, and the others, philosophy was the supreme game of wits. Now games had never particularly interested me and in truth, I wasn't very good at them. I never could see the point and so would quickly abandon interest. When one day Steve was encouraging me to participate in some project or other, I stated simply, "I don't play games." Everyone was vastly amused by my seemingly pompous pronouncement.

Years later, I see that episode as a kind
of summation of the essence of the graduate philosophy experience: it represented a wondrously intricate competitive game, involving thinking, speaking, writing. The goal was to best one's opponent, to have the last word. I was surrounded by men who excelled at the careful manipulation of abstract ideas. Was I too concrete—too caught up in the intensity of the present to comprehend fully these mysteries? Was my lack one of intellectual talent or simply membership in some unknown club?

As a graduate fellow I was responsible for teaching two undergraduate courses a semester. Here also I encountered doubts and frustrations. While my fellow instructors spoke enthusiastically of their courses' progress, and gave all the appearance of being natural teachers I was beset with failure: the failure to make living contact with the bored students who regarded me with benign contempt. So as my own coursework progressed, my confidence eroded beyond repair and I found a job working in administration. Here I excelled and gained back some feeling of achievement. I did not completely abandon philosophy but my colleagues looked upon me as a traitor. I was no longer considered seriously involved, dedicated. But I finished my coursework, started my dissertation, got married and moved back to New York. I had been chosen out of an astounding field of some 800 applicants for a starting administrative position in a university in Long Island.

Several years later, in 1979, I returned to St. Louis for my doctoral oral exams. My advisor, who had been so patient and willing to work with me at a distance, reassured me that all would go well. But then I was in a room, surrounded by these professors. A wave of inadequacy washed over me; my mind became numb and I was the slow-tongued student once again. I made it through, but I could see in their eyes (my advisor's too) that I was not playing the game very well.

As time went on I gradually returned to teaching. I tried to share with my students the original vision that drew me to philosophy: the burning sense of puzzlement, an aria of the mind. But a nagging sense of lack persisted. Encounters with philosophers at various academic institutions reinforced this as I was a priori dismissed as inconsequential by all but a few. I willingly accepted my inferiority but I was irked by the quickness and automatic nature of their rejection.

However, over the last few years, two events have caused me to re-examine my encounters with the academic community. I started working in the Philosophy for Children program and I discovered the writings of Carol Gilligan. In Gilligan, a Harvard psychologist who has written on moral development, I found an answer to those years of struggling to understand the male kingdom into which I had unwittingly stumbled. Gilligan's hypothesis, basically, states that women employ an alternative way of making moral decisions. Women think differently; they categorize their experiences upon a different axis from their male counterparts. While men tend to weigh moral dilemmas against a standard of absolute justice, women lean towards situating the event within a network of caring relationships. These ways are not better or worse, but just different. Yet they are different in a way whose legitimacy needed to be recognized. When she first published her findings in *In a Different Voice*, many feminists railed against her as regressive, but I found her ideas astonishingly liberating.

The second major influence has been my growing involvement in Philosophy for Children. The model of the competitive game is replaced with that of a caring community. Philosophic reflection occurs through dialogue, but a dialogue embedded within a nexus of both personal concern and intellectual integrity. Questions and persons: they both matter.

In the last chapter of *Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery*, Lisa rebels against the pattern of the discussions that had been going on in her class. Harry is hurt and interprets her reaction as a rejection of philosophic reflection and of him. Perhaps, though, Lisa is simply questioning the necessity of a homogenous style in doing philosophy:

"...you should keep an open mind, and don't think you know it all because you've figured out a few rules of thinking...it does seem to work with the way we talk. But I don't think it works with the way we imagine, or the way we feel about things, or the way we dream..."

In doing Philosophy for Children, one discovers an openness to these multiple styles of reflection. What is shared is the search for better ways of thinking, feeling and acting. Philosophy finds itself resituated within the living context of genuine wondertment.

Following Lisa, I found myself rereading those past experiences in graduate school. My perceptions and manner of thinking were not necessarily inferior to those of the men surrounding me. They were qualitatively different. I now see philosophical activity as including a delicate sensitivity to the nuances of being that surround us. These do not always spring forth fully articulated in the guise of language but rather imbue a glance with unspoken meaning. They simmer, remaining below consciousness and develop over time (much like human gestation) into an articulate pronouncement of being, of value.

Over the years I have heard philosophers talk and talk, full of self-importance and passionately caught up in the game of intellectual one-upmanship. I have heard one philosopher praise another on the basis of the fact that "he can talk me under the table about philosophy!" Now I am no longer quite so sure that theirs is the only way, this way of power and struggle. I realize that philosophy by its very nature is language, spoken and written. That I accept. But there are many paths by which to get there. Here Carol Gilligan and Lisa concur: the orientation in moral decision making towards care and responsibility to others that is found in so many women (and some men as well) finds an echo in a style of philosophizing that listens and traces the outlines of reality in each living enfleshed encounter, a "treasuring in the heart" which can then be transformed into speech when reality signals its readiness.

For me I have found that as I regain my singing voice I continue to seek an incarnate beauty which can be transformed into an avenue for philosophic reflection. I would never claim that it is the better way, except for those of us who cannot and do not want to play the game. Our silence is not that of absence, but of the intense presence of the rest note in a musical composition.
Threading My Way Towards Philosophy for Children

Patricia Smyke

Most of us find a passage in a book now and then that makes us stop and say, "Aha, that's just what I've always thought about but I've never seen it expressed so well." That is very much the reaction I had upon discovering Philosophy for Children. In it I found many ideas about children and education that I share, but I had never seen them put together so coherently or expressed so concretely as Philosophy for Children does when you see it in action.

To explain what is behind that statement, I must go back several decades and pick up the threads that ultimately came together for me in Philosophy for Children. It will be obvious that these are the reflections of a generalist, a person with no formal training in philosophy, child development or education. As it happens, however, I have had considerable exposure to children and young people around the globe—as a mother, as an occasional teacher, as a UNICEF and Red Cross staff member, as a researcher and writer on children's rights, health education, and women's issues. Here is the path of my personal odyssey toward Philosophy for Children.

Using Stories: 'Case Studies'

One thread in this story goes back to the early 1950's in Cambridge, Massachusetts. I was doing graduate studies in literature and working in the Department of Human Relations at Harvard University. The Human Relations course, part of the General Education Program of that period, was built around case studies, a teaching technique brought across the river from the Harvard Business School. That was also the era of George Homan's research on the 'human group'. Part of my work for the Department was to sit in on the Human Relations classes and observe the group dynamics in the classroom—who talked with whom, who asked questions, which members of the group became informal leaders, which ones tended to reconcile conflicting points of view, and so forth.

One of the things I noticed was that when the students were discussing a 'case' there was a different kind of interaction within the group: (1) students began to talk to each other more and to the instructor less; (2) students who had not said much the rest of the time entered in with strongly stated and strongly defended ideas about the case and how it should be resolved.

Two decades later I was teaching English as a second language to Swiss students between the ages of 13-16. They had some background in reading and writing English, but the emphasis in my class was supposed to be on spoken English. The students were industrious and had 'good study skills', i.e., they could memorize the written dialogues in the English textbook, recite them perfectly and give me the answers to the exercises. Yet it was nearly impossible to get them to say anything of their own creation—in either English or French. If my questions went beyond the sentences in their book, they agonized. Finally I concocted a short 'case' about three Swiss adolescents getting ready to have a party and disagreeing about whom to invite. We read it aloud first, going around the class. (This was not a forward-looking pedagogical strategy on my part—I just thought it might help them to get their tongues around English sounds). Suddenly, when the reading was over, they were talking, arguing, listening to each other. About the only intervention needed from me was to insist that whatever they wanted to say, they had to say it in English. It was hard, but they managed it. Once again, voices that had scarcely been heard in the classroom before chimed in, including, to my delight, a number of young female voices.

When later I taught at the Webster University Refugee Studies Program in Geneva, I knew that using case studies would be a good way to help students grasp all the political, economic, sociocultural and psychological ramifications of becoming a refugee. Sometimes we would role play the final scene of a case, which might be, for example, a confrontation between a refugee camp administrator, a refugee father, a refugee mother, their sick child, and an expatriate nurse. In the discussion afterward the entire class would join in analyzing the case, critiquing the arguments used in the role play, suggesting other options. Students experienced the difficulty of making decisions that respect everyone's human rights in such situations. They liked working on cases. They learned a lot from each other. They became a bit more tolerant as they grappled with the complexity of most refugee situations. At the same time they became more rigorous in their thinking and more demanding of each other as a group when they analyzed refugee issues.

But perhaps the main reason that I have continued to use case studies or stories is that I always learn so much. No matter how many times I have used a
case before, I learn something new as I listen to children or young people discuss it.

So, thread number one: the tremendous potential of a story as a tool for learning—learning by students and teachers alike.

Small Bodies—Small Minds?
The second thread I need to pick up comes from the period I spent at home as a mother raising children. That was without a doubt the most intellectually stimulating period of my life.

It was the era of Betty Friedan and Germaine Greer, and while they were feeling sorry for women like me who were "trapped" in their homes with small children (by implication small children = small minds), I was feeling privileged to be able to see and take part in what those small minds were doing. In that period I developed a profound respect for what young minds are capable of doing.

Like many other young mothers I knew in the mid-'50's and early '60's, I was not fully convinced by what I read about the early sensory and cognitive development of infants. Our babies certainly seemed to be doing more than the experts told us they were capable of doing in the realms of sight, sound, perception, imitation, communicating, learning...yes, thinking. But we had to admit that maternal bias could well be coloring our observations. We were not, after all, the 'experts' or so we thought. Later research on newborns, infants, and preschool children has borne out quite a few of the observations and conclusions of the mothers with whom I talked.

Above all, as our children grew and learned to talk, I was struck by the persistence with which they would try to make sense out of the world they lived in, like a puzzle with a thousand pieces that they felt driven to solve. Unafraid of asking a naive question, they were in their own ways asking the really big questions, the hard questions: who am I, what is life and what is death, how did it all start, what is 'true', how does it work? And always the two seemingly unanswerable questions lay behind the sophisticated language and convoluted logic of those all night sessions in Cambridge. When children ask you a question about something that is important to them, they will not be satisfied with the latest 'in-words', no matter how intellectually respectable they are to grown-ups. You begin to be a bit more careful about what you say, knowing you will have to defend it in terms a child can understand.

Caveats
Before going further with what I as a mother have learned from children about children, two caveats are necessary:

- First, ours was not a household full of exceptional or gifted children. They were all bright enough and blessed with good health, vitality and curiosity, but they were ordinary kids. Each was and is completely different from all the rest in personality, interests, and approach to life and learning. That diversity was one of the elements that made me feel privileged to be there: it was like having seven new windows on the world. The observations that follow are based on a large family but even so, objectively, a small number of children. I have no idea how representative they are of 'children' per se, and would not pretend that one could generalize from our experience. Yet I think it has some relevance to what we see in Philosophy for Children.

- Secondly, I would not like to leave the impression that our children ever spent much time sitting around discussing philosophy. The hard questions were likely to come up disjointedly and at ill-chosen moments, but they did come up, with every child, at whatever point that child felt the need to know and to talk it over with someone who might help find an answer. To be sure, differences of opinion on what was right or true or fair were also settled sometimes in much less civilized ways. More often than I like to admit, what was 'right' was decided by whoever had the 'might'—physical or intellectual—to make it stick momentarily.

Getting at the Hard Questions
Occasionally family mealtimes served as a forum for getting at some of the 'hard questions' as different children reported on the events of the day at play school. There were frequent differences of opinion on what the teacher, a friend or a parent should have done, on what would have been fair or reasonable and why. I remember plenty of challenges to siblings' and parents' opinions and logic: "Yeah, but what about...?" "Well, she could have tried..." "But before you said so and so... and now you're saying..."

Certainly there was nothing consciously philosophical about those dinner table conversations, but the rudiments of philosophical questioning were there, along with a groping for some way to get at the answers. I had the impression that the children were pushing hard, testing their own and each other's reasoning, not to reach any abstract goal, but because they needed to figure out as fast as they could how to deal with the world they were living in.

Of course, one motive for this type of give and take could be pure competitiveness, the need to prove "I'm right and you're wrong." But I do not think that would account for all of it, or even most of it. For one thing, the children would pursue the same topics later as they talked amiably to each other on the swings or in the back of the car. There was a genuine need to know, and to find out by trial and error how you can know. Looking back now, with a vocabulary I did not have then, I am tempted to des-
describe such conversations as embryonic 'communities of inquiry' triggered not by a story but by the events they were living day to day and needed to 'settle' in their own minds.

The Child as Teacher
A second major discovery for me was to see how much the children learned from each other. This ranged from learning to tie a bow to phonics advice on the ethics of giving someone "a light tap softly with a stone."

In those pre-Velcro days, children's shoes had laces, learning to tie a bow was an important rite of passage. I was as impressed by the older children's ability to teach this difficult task (I had had some humiliating experiences doing it) as I was by the younger children's ability to learn it. Good teaching of bow-tying I would think with envy, takes special intellectual and interpersonal gifts: knowing how to analyze the task and break it down into learnable parts, finding out how this learner learns best, knowing when to urge the learner on and when to sit back and wait patiently. It would be hard to say who was prouder when they came to show off the results, the child who had learned to tie the bow, or the child who had done the teaching.

The phonics lessons started when the oldest child entered kindergarten. As soon as she got home each afternoon, she wanted to 'play school' and usually the next oldest child would go along with this—with a little skirmishing each time about who was going to be the teacher. ("Just because you go to school doesn't mean you are the only one who can be the teacher.") But whether as teacher or pupil, the oldest child would manage to repeat to her younger sister everything she had heard that day about letters and sounds. Both girls learned to read in the process and it seemed to be happening as naturally as if they were playing with dolls or building a sand castle. Knowing what I now know about the complexity of the thought processes involved in learning to read I am amazed at the apparent ease with which this happened. Was the kindergartner more attuned to his sister's reading readiness than we, her parents, were? I think so. No one had told her not to expect too much of preschoolers and above all not to push them.

Most of the literature for parents in those days had a lot to say about what adults should do to help children develop good cognitive skills, language skills, or whatever. I never read anything about children helping each other learn. Yet I saw it happen, often.

I regret that what is said here has to be illustrated by anecdotes about our own children, but that is the only raw material I have. Any observant parent could come up with similar examples.

One summer afternoon two of our children and a friend were playing with small cars on the back porch. Through the kitchen window I heard the youngest child (about three) put this question to the other two: "Could you give someone a light tap softly with a stone?" The trio first examined the physical feasibility of doing this and decided that it could be done. This led to quite an extended discussion of why you might want to give someone a light tap softly with a stone, when you would be justified in wanting to, and whether you should do it. I smiled at the pros and cons they put forth for each point but realized just the same that they were working very earnestly to construct an ethic they could live by.

At a later age, the children addressed questions of fairness with the same seriousness, but with more adversarial flair. Each evening a different pair of children did the dishes together, one washing and one drying. While that division of labor may seem straightforward, logical and fair, it was anything but in the minds of the two children involved. There was an endless need for adjudication: does the washer rinse or does the dryer? Which one puts the dishes in the washer? Can pots and pans be considered to be in the same category of difficulty as plates? Who hangs up what afterward? An extraordinary amount of intellectual energy and resourcefulness went into marshalling arguments for each position. As time went by, rules of evidence sprang up. A body of precedents was being established. The whole scene would have done credit to the World Court. Each child was trying of course to avoid every iota of work possible and it was important to win the argument—even though tomorrow night the washer might be the dryer and would have to argue on the other side. But it was clear, too, that they enjoyed this legalistic jousting for its own sake and were, I hope, honing some kind of useful skills for the future.

From that period of "life at home with children," I emerged with the second thread: a profound respect for the ideas and the thinking processes of children and for the way they learn from each other. How consistently we underestimate them! However, I have to admit that at that time I was mostly a 'closet admirer' of children's capabilities. Except for my conversations with other mothers I did little to make my views public. They did not seem to fit with the findings of the experts. Oh, that someone had introduced me to the works of Lady Victoria Welby at that time!

The International Year of the Child
The scene shifts now to Geneva, Switzerland, the late 1970's. I was working on the preperations for the International Year of the Child (IYC) when I came across the works of Janusz Korczak. It was another occasion for "Aha, just what I've been thinking but could never express so well." On the other hand, living in Geneva also meant being doused in Piaget's views of childhood. I felt a vague dissonance between Piaget's stages and my own experience with children. I was more at home with Korczak.

During the Year of the Child (1979) I realized how nearly universal it is for adults to underestimate children. Adults were constantly expressing surprise as they actually listened to what children were saying and gave it some serious consideration. Here is an experiment that was tried in one European country during IYC:

A group of school children went into a room and for 30 minutes talked about "My biggest concern, what I would like to see happen as a result of the International Year of the Child." Their discussion was recorded on tape. The parents and teachers of these children went into another room and talked about the same theme. Their discussion was also recorded. Then the tape of the children's discussion was played for the adults, and vice versa. Each group talked about their re-
action to the other group's tape.

The reaction of the adults was amazement: "I never knew children cared about those things...I didn't know they knew that much about the world...they did have some good ideas, didn't they?" The children had talked about world peace, justice, and an end to poverty. They wanted "an end to war and killing" wanted the world to be "fair." They did not want any child anywhere to go hungry, be sick or get hurt.

The adult tape, on the other hand, centered on the traffic problem near the school, tax relief for families with children, the cost of child care. When the children listened to the adult tape they commented on some issues, disagreed with some remarks, but they were not surprised to learn what the adults had talked about. A little disappointed, maybe, but not surprised. It was quite clear who had been listening to whom before the taping. Afterwards the two groups met in one room and talked about what they had learned.

Thread number three: the need for adults to do more serious listening to children, for our sake and for theirs.

Learning to Listen

Recently I have been involved in a project called "Listening for Health," a joint project of the International Catholic Child Bureau (ICCB) of Geneva and the Child-to-Child Trust of London. Both are organizations or movements that take children seriously as partners in the important work of our time. Both have programs where children are the active agents, working to improve their own and other children's health and well-being.

In support of the children who are using a Child-to-Child approach, ICCB and the Child-to-Child Trust are producing materials designed to help children and the adults working with them become better listeners. Good two-way communication is important in the Child-to-Child approach to health education because the children often introduce ideas that seem to run counter to the local conventional wisdom. Listening is presented as a partnership where listener and speaker have a joint responsibility for communicating well.

Children and adults learn how they can get better at different kinds of listening: active listening, critical listening, empathic listening, listening to understand, listening for fun.

The listening materials use examples drawn from health activities and daily life. There are vignettes and stories to spark discussion and a booklet on the use of stories and story-telling in health. The basic pedagogic technique, already well-established in the Child-to-Child movement, is group discussion among the children.

It was while working on "Listening for Health" that I first saw Philosophy for Children in action. I realized that although Philosophy for Children and the Listening for Health project had developed in quite different contexts and with different objectives, they are based on many of the same principles:

1. Total respect for children's ideas, integrity and capacity to contribute to the important work and thinking of their communities.
2. The belief that listened thinking abilities can be enhanced, along with the attitudes or dispositions that underlie both good listening and a community of inquiry.
3. An emphasis on group discussion—children and adults talking, listening, and learning from each other—where everyone's ideas count and people learn to build on what others have said.
4. Use of stories to help children think and talk about the questions that they find important.

For me, Philosophy for Children brings together those three threads from my past experience with children. It confirms several ideas that I am glad to have confirmed and solidly formulated. But more importantly, I see Philosophy for Children as a gateway to new ideas and insights that I can use in future work with children.
Transforming the Community

Helena van den Aardweg

Introduction

If we acknowledge identity as a combination of sex, race and class then the feminist effort to end patriarchal domination is part of the larger struggle to eradicate domination in all of its forms. In this case, the construction of gender must be seen in the context of the wider relations in which it is structured.

"At issue here is the need to deepen the postmodern notion of difference by radicalizing the notion of gender through a refusal to isolate it as a social category while simultaneously engaging in a politics which aims at transforming the self, community and society" (Giroux, 1991, 97.)

But this is where the feminist movement within the South African context differs from other feminist movements in the West. Though apartheid has affected all aspects of society, especially race, gender and class, one is inclined to only think in terms of racial issues. The struggle to eradicate racial domination within South Africa has left little space for the feminist struggle to eradicate gender domination.

This paper is an attempt to explain the difference between African feminist movements and Western feminist movements due to the conditions under which African women have to live, caused by the apartheid system. I am aware of the critique of Afican feminists on scholarly work done by outsiders. It is therefore not my intent to dictate or criticize the African feminist movement, but instead to sketch the hardship African women and children have to endure within the South African context. Seen from this perspective it will become clear why the African feminist movement has chosen to isolate gender as a social category while simultaneously being forced to engage in a politics which aims at transforming the self, community and society. From an historical context I would also like to illustrate why the movement is not a collective one and why politically it is not in solidarity.

The second part of my paper will focus on the situation of the African child. Within the South African context we will have to accept the notion of the feminist struggle to end patriarchal domination not only as a political struggle, but also one which is pedagogical. Accepting the feminist view of transformation one would have to accept a transformative pedagogy. The Philosophy for Children program can be seen as such a pedagogy.

The African Woman and the Feminist Movement

It is a fact that for many women in South Africa the goal is physical survival. Debates about how to free women from the kitchen sink have little meaning for women who lack a kitchen, or access to clean water and nutritious food for their households (Cock, 1992). We have to be sensitive to these different realities, meanings and experiences. This is where we note the difference between the third and first world which complicates and separates first and third world feminism. In a way we are talking about two kinds of liberation, the one is from the kitchen and the other is to the kitchen. Also within the South African context it is not possible to isolate gender as a social category from the other aspects such as race and class which together determine the nature of any female's identity, as hooks (1989) stated, "We must understand that patriarchal domination shares an ideological foundation with racism and other forms of group oppression, that there is no hope that it can be eradicated while these systems remain intact."

Poverty and social dislocation are caused by apartheid. One would first have to remove apartheid in order to improve the position of African women. This issue causes a lot of frustration among African feminists, given that the issue of gender oppression is not the first priority of the liberation struggle; but rather one amongst many. However, the ANC does regard it as an issue as stated in the ANC Constitutional guidelines:

Women shall have equal rights in all spheres of public and private life and the state shall take affirmative action to eliminate inequalities and discrimination between the sexes.

But how will this be accomplished in a patriarchal society which is both in the private and public sector male dominated? I will give a brief description of the problems which South African women have to face every day in both private and public life. Some of these problems are caused by apartheid, others such as reproductive rights have to be understood in their cultural contexts. On the other hand, violence against women should be seen against the background of both apartheid and its cultural context.

Private life: The figure for rape is about 1000 a day. It is estimated that 60 per cent of South African husbands beat their wives. Most cases are not reported because many families believe a certain amount of violence is normal (Cock, 1992), thus illustrating the abnormality of society. It is estimated that there are 300,000 illegal abortions a year. But the problem goes beyond male resistance. Discussing the prevalence of AIDS and the use of condoms, a random survey among women maintained that condoms deprived them of the joy of sex. One woman said, "Sperms have proteins and I need those proteins" (Cock, 1992, 29). The issue of reproductive rights within the African culture is one which is very complex and even more so when one thinks in terms of AIDS.

South Africa, like many other African countries, has been hard hit by the Aids epidemic. Due to the drought in Mozambique and Angola a large amount of the population of these countries have migrat-
ed to South Africa, bringing with them the AIDS virus. Unfortunately, at this stage a structured AIDS campaign is neither the government nor the ANC’s main priority. Also, the campaign itself is faced with some major problems such as, campaigning in approximately sixteen different languages, which media to use (ie, television, radio, newspapers, billboarding) since a large portion of the target group is illiterate and lives in rural areas, and the uncertainty of whether the campaign will reach the target group. Also one is faced with cultural differences in regard to reproductive rights. Reproduction is seen as a survival strategy to ensure the future of the clan therefore using a condom is seen as a threat to the future of the clan, which is quite ironical considering the possibility of AIDS.

The diverse nature of the South African society has taken its toll on the liberation struggle and especially for the feminist movement. On all three levels, those of race, class and gender, people are divided, thus making solidarity impossible. Also because of apartheid the South African society consists of different ethnic communities which do not relate to one another. Bearing this in mind I would not exclude communal solidarity, one would only find multiple solidarities which would in fact enhance diversity. The most obvious example would be the township violence between the Inkatha on the one hand and the ANC on the other which is causing the delay in the political discourse between the government and the ANC.

South Africa has no historical tradition of gender equality. The European communities from which the white settlers came, as well as the indigenous societies of Southern Africa were male dominated and patriarchal. Even though South African women have always been subordinated to male authority it is even worse for black women; as illustrated in Jacklyn Cock’s classic work, Maids and Madams, African women are also subordinated to white women, which complicates solidarity among women in South Africa. Though some years have passed since the publication of Maids and Madams it remains a relevant and important analysis of gender and racial domination. In Maids and Madams Cock describes the position of the African domestic worker in South Africa. The African woman coming from the homelands leaving her home and children behind to work in the white city where she will take care of someone else’s children. Not only is it a document portraying exploitation and oppression, but also one which portrays the effects of apartheid on all aspects of society. As long as there are maids and madams there can be no solidarity. However, I do not believe that discourse is not possible. Many believe that one should first eliminate the class difference in order to promote discourse—presuming that one could only have discourse when all partners are equal. Only when discourse has taken place and feminists stop thinking in terms of difference and instead focus on sameness can we speak of—or build—solidarity among women. Considering the economic structure in South Africa, African women depend on work, even as domestic workers. Therefore, once discourse has taken place the work relationship will change and it will no longer be necessary to talk about maids and madams in the classic sense as described by Cock. Only then can constructive transformation within a collective movement take place.

As long as the distinction between Western feminism and African feminism in the South African context is maintained the group as a whole will suffer and never be able to mobilize as an organization. South Africa differs from other countries in the sense that it is both African and western and therefore it is possible to unify the feminist movement. If, however, it remains divided, the feminist debate might just miss the real issue, gender oppression, and instead focus on the racial issue. As long as the debate revolves around “us” and “them” there will never be solidarity within the group. Susan Bazilli (1991) also addresses this issue, as stated in her introduction in Putting women on the agenda: “We need to build a feminist solidarity by confronting the divisions of race and class that divide women from one another and weaken our collective power.”

This does not mean that differences should not be taken into consideration, only that they should not be seen as obstacles. The major fundamental characteristic of South African apartheid society is its deep divisions based on race and class. And while these divisions are deeply entrenched within a patriarchal structure, they manifest themselves differently for women located in the different spheres. While all women are oppressed, they are not oppressed equally. There is inequality within inequality. However, as Bazilli warns us, we should be wary of notions such as “hierarchy” of oppressions and instead adopt the notion that all women are oppressed, but “not in the same way.”

Building a national identity on diversity

South Africa is an extremely diverse society, built on two histories. It has not been homogenized by social forces such as public education—instead education has played a major role in maintaining the apartheid ideology, mass culture or universal military service. Its diversity not only influences race relations, but also class and gender relations, influencing both society and the forming of the individual identity. Gender relationships are, however, different in different cultural traditions. But this does not eliminate the presence of patriarchal domination in all cultures. Even though change is taking place on a political level, the historical background of diversity is noticeable on all levels of the society. At present the political issue of importance is now to build a democratic future where there will be equality for all. Acknowledging South Africa’s pluralism, equality does not mean the same as in the first world. Equality implies equal rights for all while at the same time acknowledging its diversity, as stated in the ANC Constitutional Guidelines:

“It shall be state policy to promote the growth of a single national identity and loyalty in binding all South Africans. At the same time, the state shall recognize the linguistic and cultural diversity of the people and provide facilities for free linguistic and cultural development.”

Thus the New South Africa has opted for a multi-cultural society. This brings us to another problem, the one of identity. Which identity does one take within a multi-cultural society? On my recent visit to the new South Africa it became apparent that one now speaks of an “African identity;” no longer in terms of color or race, but rather that which binds all South Africans, the continent. However, nobody seemed to be able to define this new-found African identity. And even if one adopts this new identity in favor of the old one, who determines this identity and is it a real or superficial one? If we acknow-
ledge identity as a combination of race, gender and class, society will have to change before the old identity can be replaced by a new one. Though the notion of an African identity remains vague in the sense that it cannot at this stage be defined, in a democratic society it will be up to the individual to define its own identity. Thus, where in the old South Africa identity was determined by the state it will now be determined by the individual and the community in which he or she will find himself. Thus the transformation of society will lead to the transformation of the self and the community.

**African Children**

Within the South African setting African people have never known any rights but being in this patriarchal society African women have even fewer rights. One can therefore rightly conclude that African children have had up till now no right at all. In the following passages I will give a brief description of the living conditions of African children to illustrate my point concerning the rights of African children.

From the very start, African children are exposed to hardship and unstable living conditions, these being: high mortality rate, limited educational opportunities, unemployment, household crowding, low income and mobility of the family. African children inhabit three areas in South Africa: the homeland, white-owned farms and the townships.

In a recent study conducted by Goduka, Poole and Aotaki-Phenise (1992) it is estimated that the average infant mortality rate for whites is 12 per 1000 live births, in contrast to 100 per 1000 for blacks, with significantly higher estimates in the rural areas. Black children die mainly of infectious diseases, a result of the unequal distribution of resources under the system of apartheid.

In many cases children who grow up in the homelands have to face long term separations from both the parents. Due to the lack of employment within the homelands men leave their families to work in the white cities. After a couple of years the wife will join her husband, leaving her children with the extended family. It is rather ironic that in many cases the only employment for these women is that of a domestic worker, thus taking care of white children.

Children who live on white farms are no better off. Their living conditions are poor—household crowding—and very often they are removed from school to work in the fields, thus limiting their educational opportunities.

Children who grow up in the townships have to face a different kind of hardship. Living on the outskirts of the white cities, they are exposed to what is referred to by the media as *township violence* or referred to by the comrades of the struggle as *civil war*.

The civil war against the children of South Africa started in 1976 in the Soweto township. Thousands of schoolchildren took to the streets in peaceful protest over inferior education. The police responded with armed force, and by the end of the year 176 were dead and more than a thousand injured. In *Faces in the Revolution* Gill Straker describes the psychological effects of violence on the township youth in South Africa and by doing so gives faces to the invisible statistics. I quote:

"During 1986 alone, the Detainees' Parents Support Committee estimated that approximately 10,000 children, some as young as ten and eleven years, were detained in jails. Allegations of torture and intimidation were commonplace. In addition, troops occupied many of the townships and intervened in the civil life of the young. Schools were frequently surrounded and access was strictly controlled... Between 1984 and 1986, figures show that 500 children were killed by the police and military, 1000 wounded, 18000 arrested on charges relating to political protest, and 173000 held in police cells awaiting trial. In addition, there was an increase in vigilantism, and in all forms of counter-violence. Children in the townships were thus living in a state of civil war. Under these conditions it is difficult to retain one's concern for the individual as the statistics steadily mount. Yet each statistic has a name, a face, a history and a family" (1992,6).

Children were being brutalized by the system and in turn brutalizing those they regarded as sellouts and collaborators. When children took upon themselves the responsibility of leading the school boycotts and demonstrations they were no longer children. But one should ask oneself whether these children were really ever children? They traded their childhood for the liberation of their people. In short the problems the children of apartheid are facing are of such a nature we cannot comprehend.

In short; apartheid has led to the culmination of factors which places African children at a disadvantage to white children in South Africa.

The poor are those with very few skills—the poorest people are to be found in rural areas, especially in the so-called homelands. They are typically people of very poor skill and educational levels doing menial tasks such as casual agricultural work, and more often they are women and children rather than men. South Africa's parlor educational system is surely one of the most important generators of poverty. According to the 1985 census, in the age group of 15 to 24 years, 46 percent of African males and 43 percent of females had not completed primary school (Moll, n.d.). To improve their situation they would need low-cost education and health services. Since education in South Africa has always been divided, with the state spending more money on white education, these people will always be the poor segment of society, unless education is equally divided and becomes integrated. African education has always had to face problems such as lower skilled teachers, hardly any facilities, and years of school boycotts. Though it is estimated that 300 times more is spent on African education at present than in 1985, this still does not compare with the level of education received by white children. The new South African model C schools—which are partially subsidized and partially private—are open to all races which entitles Africans to a better education. But school fees are high, which justifies exclusion based on class. But since race and class go hand in hand in South Africa one can question this new distinction. In the new South Africa one will not be excluded on the basis of race but on the basis of class unless, as portrayed in the ANC's freedom charter, the wealth of the country will be redistributed, thus opting for a social democracy.

**A Transformative Pedagogy**

The new democratic South Africa is faced with the problem of constructing a communal identity and yet at the same
time keeping cultural differences intact. South Africa will have to somehow find a way of integrating tribal traditions of civic virtue with modern political ideals of democracy. This inevitably implies that educational changes will have to take place. The educational aims will have to be the promotion of democracy and equality. Within a multi-cultural setting the curriculum will have to address issues such as specific cultural identities and a core national identity, commonness and difference. The most common criticism of conventional multiculturalism is that it presents the plurality of cultures as simply different to each other without showing the relations of power or domination between them (Girous, 1990; Muller, n.d.).

On the other hand, it is known that multiculturalism within the American setting has stimulated a degree of intercultural and gender sensitivity, and if this is conveyed to school children, a great deal of good could result (Muller, n.d.).

However, within the South African setting a multicultural pedagogy which addresses issues such as race and gender domination is not enough. It is not enough to just understand how society functions in terms of domination or the relations of power. It is not enough to just criticize this society. What South Africa needs is a transformative pedagogy which is practical in nature. I believe that Matthew Lipman’s Philosophy for Children Program is a pedagogy which addresses all the above-mentioned issues. The core of the program is the notion of the community of inquiry. In the following passages, the community of inquiry will be put forward as a concrete program of transformative pedagogy. In the sense that the community of inquiry itself engages in the transformative process. The essential conditions needed for transformation already exist within the community of inquiry. The conditions being: the community, dialogue (discourse), solidarity within the community, respecting the other view and accepting knowledge as a communal process of inquiry.

Within the community of inquiry children learn through dialogue to be in solidarity with one another. It is both dialogue and solidarity which ensure a successful democracy. From an historical point of view, South Africa has lacked both dialogue and solidarity amongst its members. The results which I have described earlier have been devastating for all. This might explain the lack of a South African democracy. We could also turn the argument around and argue that because of the lack of a democracy (apartheid), its members have not been given the opportunity to have a discourse or to be in solidarity with one another as earlier described within the feminist movement. If, however, South Africa wants to build a democratic future, it will have to promote both dialogue and solidarity, and where better place to start than in the classroom. Because the community of inquiry upholds democratic procedures children will learn these procedures and be given the opportunity to make these procedures their own. In turn, they will be able to transfer them into society. This is very important in a society that lacks a history of democratic procedures. Thus the community of inquiry becomes a transformative pedagogy when children themselves transform their society.

The community of inquiry is also a community built on trust, respect and equality. It is a tolerant and open community which enables all its members to speak up within a group. Though these conditions are necessary to enhance democracy, there are no guarantees that these conditions will prevail within the new South Africa. Yet it is this constructive tension between the conditions within the community of inquiry and the prevailing conditions outside this community which will enhance transformation.

But neither the Philosophy for Children Program nor democracy are realities within South Africa, thus we can only speculate on the effects of the program.

Conclusion:
South Africa is dynamic in the sense that it is constantly undergoing change; it is therefore very difficult to write a conclusion to this scenario. It is a country of diversity built on two histories which has successfully divided people into enemy camps. Its politics of segregation has made it practically impossible for its members to integrate or mobilize themselves as a unity. Lacking a history of discourse the people of South Africa are finding it hard to communicate. The new South Africa is at the point of transition away from apartheid domination to a consolidated democracy, but this will neither be a trouble-free nor an easy transition. South Africa will have to cope with unrealistic expectations as to what democracy can deliver, as well as deal with its own opportunities and obstacles on the path of transition. The first political priority of the new government is to ensure equality for all. However, one has to be realistic and accept that it will take years to improve the position of both women and children in South Africa. But if we understand democracy not as an accomplishment, but rather as an ongoing process which needs to be constantly re-evaluated, then we can no longer accept the language of critique but will instead need to adopt a language of transformation and hope for both women and children.

Literature
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On Women, Feminism and Philosophy for Children

Catherine Young Silva

Dear Ann:

I would like to thank you for your invitation to contribute to this anthology on Women, Feminism and Philosophy for Children. It gives me a welcome opportunity to reflect on my experience as a child born of American parents in the United States, brought up in the deep South until age nine, and then transported immediately following World War II to Brazil, where I have lived ever since. Now I have a chance to think about aspects of my life experience that have led me to become more involved with Philosophy for Children and the role of women in this new approach to childhood education.

I also appreciate the chance to tell my story as if I were in front of the fireplace in your home on some very cold New Jersey nights.

I will try to focus on three points in particular. First, what I perceive in my childhood experience as having influence on my present views regarding the role of women, children and the role of philosophy in liberating both. Secondly, I will try to deal with my vision of the predominantly male social and educational system in Brazil. And finally (and most joyfully) I will say something about my own involvement in Philosophy for Children.

I am a child of the days immediately following the Depression. My father was a professor of Romance languages; my mother majored in English literature. In 1935, the year I was born, there was scant market for either. We moved a lot in those days, to wherever my father could find a teaching position. By the time I finished fourth grade, I had been to 12 different schools and learned to read and write in almost as many ways.

The 'embers of the fireplace' allow me to remember how I enjoyed the moving at the time. For me, it was a way of life. Now I realize that those early years prepared me for the directions of my maturity: international education, intercultural relations and, of course, international Philosophy for Children.

I learned that different people in different places thought very differently about their circumstances. In my childhood, I learned to observe, identify and appreciate differences. Only a person that has lived the experience of frequently moving can really understand how the hours of solitude, even loneliness, are the unavoidable counterparts of change. I was often alone, and often felt alone, whether I was or not. I learned to read early and I read voraciously.

My family was southern Baptist and my grandfather was an Evangelical Minister. Years of regular Sunday School, Church Service and equally regular Wednesday night prayer meetings taught me that there were right answers and a straight and narrow path by which to arrive at the one and only goal. Many different people, many different ways of thinking, many different books, and a single path to Truth? This was something I could not understand. I wondered often, "how could there be a single answer to everything?" I started inquiring for myself and, of course, found myself drawn to philosophy.

In all probability, it was this experience which was for me puzzling and contradictory, that propelled my tenacious (if somewhat erratic) search for meaning. I have given up completely on Truth, as one single answer, but am deeply grateful for each tiny glimpse of truth, beauty and true meaning that I find upon the straight but unfortunately narrowing path that I have chosen. For these things, philosophy has been my beacon, if not my harbor.

I cannot leave this point without saying something about language and how important languages have been to me. Languages are much more than different ways to say the same things: they are different translations of human experience. When I went to Brazil, I learned to see the world in a different way and talk about it differently as well. Part of your concern, Ann, is built into languages that have gender differences, such as Portuguese. But I will say something about this later.

What was exciting for me was that, as I learned Portuguese and came closer in
to contact with Brazilians, I discovered that indeed a new language actually named a new world. It fascinated me then, as it does now, that English has no word for "saudade" and Portuguese has no word for "fair" and Bulgarian has no word for "sharing."

I think that this discovery about what the knowledge of different languages is able to do has been for me one of the most important things in learning how to make sense of and deepen my appreciation of the endless diversity that makes up the world. Although I am not a polyglot, I am able to converse in three languages and understand four. If life provided such opportunity, I would certainly love to learn at least twice as many languages in order to better understand our world. One world? Many? A world at least as diverse and multiple as there are people and languages. But a world which we may share more meaningfully as we learn one another's language and share experiences and ideas.

My view of the predominantly male social and educational system in Brazil is born out of my origins. As a child of an American family, people in Brazil assumed that I came to the country "liberated" and knew what "equal rights" were. My mother had always worked away from home. I had always had household duties: I was expected to be responsible in what I said and did. Nonetheless, in my "liberated" American home in which my mother was the principle breadwinner, no decision was ever made without my father's input. As a matter of fact, my father ultimately decided everything; my mother just enforced his decisions. Nothing was ever discussed with the family and as far as I know, neither parent was ever interested in what the children thought about anything. So my "liberation" was ambiguous, to say the least. Until I married, I was somehow under the delusion that things were equal for both sexes and that women (Brazilian women) just did not want or know how to relinquish their passive, seductive, secondary roles to appropriate equality for themselves.

How wrong I was! Once married to a Brazilian, I learned many of the hidden assumptions and power games that worked to keep the status quo of the women as a second citizen and person in Brazil. I learned that 'femininity' was of fundamental importance. There is a sense in which I still accept this as true. But 'femininity' meant being highly emotional and not particularly rational to the men of my young adulthood. It also meant sacrificing everything to men's whims, submitting to men's judgment in everything, not because it was good, but because men are 'fragile' creatures who need women's support ('you wouldn't want to hurt him now, would you? He might go away and find someone else who understands him, you know.') Divorce is now legal in Brazil, but it was unthinkable when I was young and to be "put aside" by a husband was like being "put away" by society.

I began to notice that men always had the best jobs in Brazil. It was rarely questioned that the best opportunities should go to men and that women might "fill in" for men when there were no good men around, but that women's work wasn't "professional" in the same way that men's work was. Women had enough to do at home, didn't they? I soon learned that they sure did.

But Brazilian "machismo" is not without its subtleties. Now nothing is really outright proscribed, and what Brazilian women living in Brazil will tolerate as being undesirable has changed a lot. Mainly in the sense that sexist discrimination has become more overt. I hope to deal with this in my article.

Two other things I want to speak about: (a) the "male paradigm," as it victimizes both men and women and which permeates society in both Brazil and in the United States and (b) the role of language in masking and perpetuating "machismo" in Brazilian society.

In the third part of my article, I will tell about how I came to be involved in Philosophy for Children and why it was so meaningful for me at that particular moment of my life (my fiftieth birthday.) I will try to explain something of my experience with Philosophy for Children in both the United States and Brazil and explore some of the ways in which it has answered real educational needs of individuals in Brazil, focusing on what Philosophy for Children can bring to women and children in my country.

Love,
Catherine.
Catherine's Story: 
THE ECHO OF THE VOICE OF THE CHILDREN

Catherine Young Silva

I became friends with Catherine Young Silva during the year she fulfilled the requirements for the Master's degree in Philosophy for Children, at Montclair State College, New Jersey. One requirement for the degree involves practice teaching, and in due course, Catherine was assigned to the Wilson Avenue School in Newark. My assignment was to monitor her progress there, and it was in this setting that our friendship bloomed, where this remarkable woman's determination to make a difference in her country was made known to me.

After sessions at the school, we would stop at the little Brazilian restaurant around the corner, have our lunch and review the previous classes. Then we would talk on about mutual interests, but above all, these intimate and pleasant times revealed Catherine's commitment to the children of Brazil. In the spirit of the children's ballad toward the end of her story, Catherine insisted that only a change with the children could guarantee substantive change for the country, in the entire range of dispositions and attitudes that mark Brazilian society, and especially those regarding street children and rain forests. At first blush, these two seem unrelated, yet for Catherine they constituted but different aspects of the same ecological balance. With a kind of Spinozistic focus, children and forests are brought under the aegis of care. In her story, Antonio gives voice to this monistic view:

INTRODUCTION by Philip Guin

For me the problem is care ... There are children, gardens and forests that are cared for; yet, there are children who are abandoned and forests that are destroyed. Human beings have a way of being careless. Instead of thinking of the future, of kids who will be grown-ups and of forests that will be no more, people just think about how things affect them personally, here and now.

Catherine saw Philosophy for Children as providing a countervailing force to the cumulative effects of indifference, ignorance and selfishness. Chico Mendes was murdered out of ignorance and selfishness. Unless children are allowed to rehearse new criteria of judgment, discover new ways of conducting affairs, alternative modes of reciprocity with nature and others, courageous models such as Chico will never prevail, and the future will merely repeat the past. Catherine was a courageous model. By refusing to succumb to cynicism and business as usual—in her dream for the future, she seemed to exercise a thoroughly apolitical agenda, as though determined to circumvent entrenched obstacles by demonstrating a realizable way for change. The unjaded dialogue of children, wherein they learn from one another, is offered as alternative, and examples of children serving one another in the dual roles of teacher and learner conclude her story. That Catherine's persistent, albeit low-keyed, manner has prevailed comes as no surprise. Because of her efforts, thousands of Brazilian children have been introduced to Philosophy for Children. Among these will surely be future leaders of the country, those whose thinking and actions will bear testimony to the cogency of Catherine's dream, her vision for the future.

In editing Catherine's story, I hope not to have transgressed or misread her important message. I was assured that her work represented a "rough draft" and that she had intended for it to be shortened and rounded. Only this assurance has emboldened me to take on the job. This final form is ten pages less than Catherine's original, yet I've tried to retain all of her wonderful episodes and characters. Most importantly, I've assiduously tried to keep this Catherine's story, even as I might have wanted to smuggle in my own thoughts. There is one fascinating inconsistency I've corrected which is worth mentioning, as a reflection of Catherine's own background from two cultures—the alternation of Peter and Pedro. Pedro won out because of its prevalence, and the character's "very blue eyes and much white hair" has also been retained. One might wonder whether in all of Sao Paulo there is a teacher named Ms. Brown. At any rate, there is a retired teacher, Mrs. Young—Catherine's mother. How do I know that Sao Paulo is the setting? Are there any other places where parrots tell fortunes?
I really don't know how to go about doing that assignment for Ms. Brown," grumbled Marcos, half to himself, half to Martha, who was walking beside him. "What does she think we are, anyway, TV reporters?"

Martha nodded but said nothing. Martha and Marcos had been classmates for a year and she was used to his occasional bad humor. So she put up with it, for he was fun to talk with and he always seemed interested in her ideas. Besides, today, she was a little annoyed herself.

Ms. Brown was the social science teacher. Last week she had informed the class that the term would be devoted to the study of ecology and the environment. And the very first assignment was to hold interviews with children in order to learn what they thought about these subjects. The assignment was due in three days and neither Martha nor Marcos had even begun.

"You're right," Martha said, "interviews with kids don't seem like they would have much to tell us about ecology. Anyway, what's the problem? All we have to do is show the relationship between living organisms and their environment, mimicking now Ms. Brown's high-pitched voice reading the definition of 'ecology' from the classroom dictionary. Then with a further touch of sarcasm, Martha concluded, "Anybody can do that!"

Marcos didn't answer immediately. He was absorbed by the trees, the grass and little flower beds along the path in the park through which they were walking. This was the children's way home after school, and often they would sit under a big tree and talk as they watched the passersby. Today was no exception, as Marcos leaned against the big tree and Martha sat beside him.

"I don't know if it's that simple," Marcos finally answered, "I'm a little mixed up. You see, if ecology is the science of the relationships between living creatures with their environment, I don't understand why this assignment is for Ms. Brown's course at all. Ecology and the relations that keep the ecological balance have to do with a different branch of science, with biology. It doesn't seem to have anything to do with social science, with people. Much less does it seem to have anything to do with what a bunch of kids think about it."

"Wait a minute, Marcos. I think I'm beginning to understand. People are living organisms, too, you know. And kids are people, aren't they?" Martha began to talk more excitedly, as though she were on to something important. "I think that social science must be interested in ecology when it studies people and the resources for them in the environment. It wants to study the relationships between people and resources, what effect these relationships have on the way people live. Anyway, if ecology doesn't have anything to do with people, why are people all over the world worried about it?"

"Well, all right," agreed Marcos, "people are living organisms and the environment holds the material resources people need in order to live. Is that it?"

"I think so," replied Martha, "there needs to be a certain balance of things in nature, like air, water, earth and climate, to give us what we require to live."

Marcos was watching two little bare-foot kids selling candy to the passersby in the park. They went up to every person to offer their wares. Some bought from them, especially if they were accompanied by their own insistent children. But most just passed by, hardly noticing them.

Now the pair approached Marcos and Martha. One was a boy, the other a girl. The boy limped a little and had a bandage on his foot. They wore faded shorts and T-shirts, though they were both obviously clean. Unsmiling, the thin, dark eyed children held out the candy without a word.

Martha made a move to get up but Marcos stayed her with his hand. To the children he asked, "What have you got there?"

The children didn't answer. They just stood there holding out their candy. Marcos took a candy roll. When he asked how much it was, the children answered in a whisper. Marcos tried again. "Do you sell much here in the park?" The girl nodded. "Are you brother and sister?" The boy shook his head indicating no.

"Where do you live?" The girl pointed to an organ grinder standing a distance away playing his instrument for the people. "Is he your father? Where is your mother? Where do you go to school?" Marcos was getting nowhere. The children just shook their heads, then, all of a sudden, they ran away, laughing.

Marcos felt embarrassed. "Come on, let's go," he said to Martha. "It's almost time for supper." The two walked silently past the organ grinder, Martha observing that he had very blue eyes and much white hair. She felt his eyes following them as they walked on.* * *

That evening, Marcos wanted to start writing his assignment. As he sat at his desk, he remembered the children in the park. Even though they hadn't answered his questions, their silence seemed to tell him something. He began to write.

All life depends on the balance of natural things, of air, water, earth and climate. All living things need food and a place to live, a natural environment. But ecology means more than this for human beings. It concerns, as well, hunger and homelessness, the environment of thousands of kids like us. This is an environment without any ecological balance. Plants and animals are not the only endangered species: so are kids.

Marcos had a hard time getting to sleep that night. When he finally did, he dreamed of the two children with unsmilng faces. They were holding out trays of candy. When Marcos bought from them, they turned and ran away. Behind them were two more waiting their turn, and behind them an endless line waiting their turn. Marcos bought and bought until he had no money. The children stood waiting, unsmilng. Marcos woke up.

In the morning, Marcos met his friend Antonio on the way to school. He told Antonio about the children in the park and about his dream. Antonio listened and nodded. "The other day I was downtown and saw a bunch of children, kids like us, rummaging in garbage cans looking for food. I saw kids asking for money to buy food, and I saw many of them sleeping on benches. Nobody paid much attention. People should be worrying about kids that are living like that—it's an unjust society."

"Yes, we make it that way," Then Marcos added, "The natural environment seems to give food and shelter to animals just so long as people don't tamper with it too much. But the environment that human beings build for themselves doesn't even provide enough food and
shelter for other human beings."

Martha, who had come up behind the boys, countered. "The forest doesn't really take care of the animals. It's just that some animals find what they need in the forest—with kids it's entirely different. It's not because the city hasn't enough for the kids, but because the people who have what the kids need to survive don't give it to them. The forest has food for the animals to live, but kids need someone to take care of them, and they don't."

The boys nodded agreement, but to himself, Marcos added, "At least there was somebody taking care of those kids yesterday. He may not have been their father or mother, but at least that old guy was doing something for them." He promised himself to talk to the organ grinder after school.

* * *

The organ grinder stopped playing and greeted Marcos with a smile. "Want your fortune told, young fellow?" My old parrot here is just a bird, but he's a lot smarter than some people I know."

Marcos thought that if he paid for his fortune to be told the man would provide the information he wanted. He had been thinking about the two barefoot children all day, and now he wanted to find out where they lived, and what kind of life they had. He had decided to write about them for Ms. Brown's assignment.

"Yes, let me have my fortune told. How much?" Marcos hunted around in his pockets for the coins. "How many fortunes does this old parrot have to tell?" he wondered, "to support the organ grinder and his kids?"

The organ grinder pulled out a small tray filled with little slips of folded colored paper. The parrot climbed down from its perch on the old man's shoulder and picked a yellow slip from the tray with its beak. Marcos took it, opened it and read aloud: "Don't believe in all you hear and only half of what you see."

"Sounds like good enough advice, don't you think?"

"Sure does," agreed Marcos. Then, not knowing how to start, he hesitantly tried, "Do you mind if I ask you some questions? I'm doing interviews for my school assignment."

"Go ahead," answered the old man. "What do you want to know?" After introducing himself and learning that the man's name was Pedro, Marcos recalled for him how the little children had indicated that they lived with him.

"That's right, Marcos. They've been living with me since they were tiny. João, the boy, was abandoned when he was just a baby. And Maria came last year. Her father is in jail and her mother doesn't make enough to keep her, so she lives with us. They're nice kids and get along well with the others."

"They're not the only ones you take care of?"

"Oh, no. There are ten of them in all. The youngest is less than a year old and the oldest, João, is fourteen."

"How come you take care of them?"

"I'm too old to work any more as a stonemason, and there's room for these kids. We all work and can buy enough food—almost enough, anyway."

"You mean that everybody works?"

"Yes, most of them sell candy and gum here in the park, where I can keep an eye on them. João and Carlos are older and they carry the two babies with them. They ask for money from the people in the cars that stop at the street lights. Marcos flushed, as he recalled the times he had raised the windows of the car, in the face of begging children carrying babies."

Regaining composure, Marcos asked, "Where do you live, Pedro?"

"Right near here. Do you want to come over and see us?"

The two left the park and walked a few blocks along streets lined with old houses, much the same, and built close together. They opened directly to the narrow sidewalk, and figures could be seen at open windows, watching the activity in the street.

They entered one of the houses and made their way down a long corridor lined with rooms from which voices and other sounds could be heard. Marcos wondered how many people lived behind those doors, and as if to answer his unvoiced question, Pedro said, "This house doesn't look very big from the street, but it does have fifteen rooms, each with at least ten people. My children and I are lucky; we have two rooms for the eleven of us!"

At the end of the corridor, they reached Pedro's rooms, one serving as a bedroom for eight. The other room had a small stove, sink, cupboard, a long table and two ancient sofas. These, Marcos thought, must also serve as beds. Three children were playing marbles on the floor, so engrossed in their game that they did not look up when Pedro and Marcos came in.

"Stand up and meet our new friend Marcos," Pedro commanded, and then to Marcos, "Chico, Tiaozinho, and Aláide are three of my children. You sit here and talk with them for a while. I'm going to fix supper for everyone. They'll all be here in a half hour and will sure to be hungry."

Marcos sat on the floor with the children. He had much to ask them, but he didn't know how to begin, and for a few moments just sat, as the children regarded him with expressionless faces. Finally, Marcos broke the silence.

"Who's winning?" The children shrugged. Marcos tried again. "How old are you?"

"Chico's ten and Tiaozinho's eleven. I think I'm eleven, too," said Aláide, bobbing her dark pigtails.

"But she doesn't know for sure. She just thinks that because she's taller than I am," said Chico.

"Where do you go to school?" asked Marcos, trying to gain more information.

"We don't have time for school because we work," announced Chico proudly.

Pedro turned from cooking, wiped his hands and walked over to the children. "You know, Marcos, I read in the paper about something called children's rights. I don't read too good but João does, and she helped me. It said that these rights are something that every kid ought to have—to play, study, eat and have a home to live in. They ought to have the right to come and go and not be frightened, to choose what kind of work they're going to have when they grow up, to have doctors to take care of them when they are sick, and a lot of other things as well. For a lot of kids, things are not like that. My kids are lucky, for even though their parents couldn't take care of them, they do have a home. With everybody helping out, we usually have enough food. And we have a little garden out back where we grow the onions, garlic and potatoes. But lots of kids don't have any of this."

Marcos looked at the children but said nothing. Pedro sat down heavily on a sofa.

Catherine Young Silva, Catherine's Story: The Echo of the Voice of the Children
and continued. "That's all of the rights they've got—rights to eat, sleep and earn whatever money they can. If they play at all, it's got to be right here, since it's dangerous for them in the street, where they could be hurt or carried off. They can't even go to school, for they have to earn money for food."

"You just do what you know how to do," Chico interjected. "I know how to sell stuff. I can sell anything. And I sell more than anybody else around here," he added proudly.

"You sure do," said Pedro, smiling down at the boy and patting his head. "But then sternly, 'You sometimes stay out too late. Then I don't like it. It's dangerous and you could be beaten and robbed.'"

Chico muttered, "I can take care of myself!"

Marcos looked at his watch and stood up. "I've got to go home, but thanks for bringing me here to talk with you and the kids, Pedro."

"Are you coming back again?" asked Tiaozinho. Marcos smiled and nodded. It was good to think that Tiaozinho had taken a liking to him.

Pedro and Tiaozinho took their visitor to the door. "You're welcome to come back whenever you want to," said Pedro.

"Hey, wait a minute, Marcos," Tiaozinho persisted, "I want to show you our vegetable garden before you go!"

The younger led the older child down the corridor, through the back door, down broken steps, and into the communal yard. A large sink of soaking clothes hung from rows of lines, and Marcos again wondered at the many people living in this old house. In a tiny section of the yard, Pedro and his children had planted their garden. The well-tended plot contained, as Pedro had indicated, onions, garlic and potatoes, in neat rows. Marcos stood for a moment. "This is very nice. Who is the gardener?"

"Everybody. But I think maybe I do the most. My plants seem to grow bigger than anyone else's," Tiaozinho said, as he pointed out some flourishing plants.

"You know, Tiaozinho, you could plant some other things, like peas and beans—xuxu, too. Vines could climb the walls there."

Tiaozinho asked excitedly, "How do you plant vines so they'll climb walls?"

Marcos answered, "Next time I come I'll bring some seeds and we can plant them together. I'll show you how."

As they retraced their steps, Tiaozinho took Marcos' hand. Marcos felt elated, as he contemplated his new friends, and the backyard walls covered with climbing bean, pea and xuxu vines.

The next afternoon, while walking home from school with Martha and Antonio, Marcos told of his visit with Pedro and his family. Martha wondered aloud, "Why do some kids have even more care than they need, while others not nearly enough? Why can't Pedro's children go to school just like we do? How can they grow up to be responsible, if no grown-ups, besides people like Pedro, have been responsible for them? And what about all those kids that don't even have a Pedro? They're part of the ecological balance, too, aren't they?"

Marcos and Antonio nodded agreement. As the three friends entered the park, Marcos sighted Pedro, João and Maria, the children with their trays of candy. Unlike their first meeting, today both children were smiling at him. He went over to say hello while Martha and Antonio sat down under the big tree.

"For me, the problem is care," Antonio said. "There are children, gardens and forests that are cared for; yet, there are children who are abandoned and forests that are destroyed. Human beings have a way of being careless. Instead of thinking of the future, of kids who will be grown-ups and of forests that will be no more, people just think about how things affect them personally, here and now."

Martha looked at Antonio questioningly. "Don't you think that we can help bring about a better world for those in the future—I mean work like Chico Mendes started in trying to preserve the rain forests?"

"Don't forget that they killed Chico Mendes out of selfishness, just so they could go on destroying the rain forests."

Martha persisted. "Maybe it was also ignorance. Maybe they couldn't see the whole picture of what Chico was trying to do to protect the rain forests. Chico wanted to keep the rain forest like it is, and just as it is with forest plants and animals, take only what people need to live" Martha wondered how human needs compare with animal and plant needs, wondered about the need of many children to go to school, yet who were deprived by the selfishness of others.

"People have to understand that destroying nature is the same as destroying themselves," ventured Antonio, "since after all, people are part of nature too. We have to use our intelligence to find ways to preserve nature and use it at the same time. It's the same as the way we treat our bodies."

"Also, it's not just that we need nature but that we enjoy it as well," noted Martha. "All its beauty, like this big old tree we're sitting under. We're not eating it, we're just enjoying it." Martha put her head back against the trunk and closed her eyes. The breeze rustled leaves pleasantly high above her.

Marcos returned with João and Maria, the children holding tightly to each of his hands. All three were smiling broadly.

"João and Maria have something they want to tell you," Marcos said. "Go ahead," he prodded. The two children were looking down shyly.

Finally, Maria looked up. "Tomorrow is Pedro's birthday. We want to have a party for him at our house. Marcos is coming. Do you want to come, too?"

"Sure," said Martha and Antonio, together.

"Then we'll come over right after school tomorrow," said Marcos, "and we'll bring some things for the party. We can all work together so that when Pedro comes in, everything will be ready. It will be a real surprise!"

"I'm going to make some coconut candy tonight," Martha promised, "and I'll bring things to make the birthday cake."

"I'll bring the makings for sandwiches," said Marcos, and he added, "I'm going to bring some seeds for the vegetable garden."

"I've got some seeds and I'll take care of the drinks," Antonio offered.

When the three arrived at Pedro's house the following afternoon, they got a surprise. All ten children were at home. Some were cutting colored paper into chains, while others were draping strands along the wall and from the ceiling. João and Maria were cutting out big paper hearts, on which was neatly printed:
Happy Birthday, Pedro!

Besides the refreshments, Marcos and Antonio had brought seeds for the garden. Martha brought something for the garden, but not seeds. She carefully opened the tissue paper wrapping the small gift, while the children gathered around to make a peek. When they saw the contents they couldn’t hide their disappointment.

“Aw, it’s just sticks!” Maria opined.

“That’s not a present! What are those things?” exclaimed Chico.

But Joana knew better. “Why, they’re rose cuttings! How wonderful!”

“Yes, they’re from my grandmother’s bushes. There are different kinds: a white rose; a red and a pink rambler; and two kinds of yellow roses.”

“Pedro will love them!” exclaimed Joana.

Tiaozinho was getting more enthusiastic about the little sticks. “Come on, Marcos! Let’s go plant them now! We’ll give Pedro a big surprise when he comes in.”

Martha and Joana set about making the birthday cake. As they worked they chatted. “I bet the kids could sell a lot of your candy in the park, Martha. I make some of the candy that they sell and your coconut candy would be a big hit.”

David and Carla, the only two children whom Marcos had not met the previous day, came in with an armful of flowers each. “When we told the flower vendor in the park that it was Pedro’s birthday, he gave us as many flowers as we could carry,” said Carla. “You see, everybody knows Pedro. They like him because he’s so nice and helps us children.”

Joana found a big bucket for the flowers. With the paper chains, hearts and flowers in place, the room was transformed into a festive party place. David, Carla and Antonio made the sandwiches. The birthday cake was just coming out of the oven when Pedro arrived with his parrot and hand organ. Marcos and Tiaozinho came in just in time to join the group around the table. Pedro was so surprised that he was unable to speak. He just looked from one smiling face to another. The children sang “Happy Birthday” while the old man laughed and clapped his hands in delight.

Then the entire group adjourned to the garden to admire the little sticks that Tiaozinho and Marcos had planted. “They’re going to be beautiful!” Pedro exclaimed. “They will always remind me of this day. Thank you so much—all of you.”

Back upstairs, everyone laughed and got acquainted, while enjoying the refreshments. They joked, telling about what they knew best and could teach one another.

“I know how to figure change better than any other kid on the street,” Chico bragged, “and faster, too” Antonio, who was poor at making change, bargained to have Chico teach him how to make fast change, for which he would teach Chico fast reading.

“I can read faces,” said Carla.

“So can I,” added David. “When we went up to the flower vendor today, we both knew that he was going to send Pedro some flowers just by the look on his face.”

Antonio admitted that that kind of reading was something he could learn. Joao thought that she and Martha could exchange candy recipes. Joao and Maria told Marcos that they could teach him to play marbles as well as they did. Marcos suggested that Tiaozinho, Pedro and the others knew as much as he did about gardening, but that he would like to work with them sometimes.

Pedro got up. “This is great, kids. Each of us has something to teach and we all have a chance to learn.” He went over to a comer of the room and produced an old guitar. “Now let’s do some singing together. It’s not a party if there’s no singing, you know.”

Everyone gathered around Pedro and joined in. Joao got a matchbox and Tiaozinho, a tambourine, to mark the rhythm. The music was lively and compelling and soon the children were dancing. Eventually Marcos asked Pedro for the guitar. A song had come to him, and now he wanted to sing it with the children. He struck a chord and began to sing: (Words for the music, “This Land is My Land.”)

We want a new world
We want a true world
A place of friendship
A place of peace
A place to live in
A place to love in
This world will be for you and me

The children joined in for the chorus:

O come and listen
to our voices
Hear the echo from o’re seas and plains
We are the children
We are your children
We are the future of the world

Pedro got his accordian to accompany Marcos. He added a verse to the ballad:

We want a fair world
We want a just world
Built together
And for us all
A place to work in
A place to learn in
This world will be for you and me.

Following Pedro’s example, several of the children added verses of their own, with everyone joining in for the chorus. Some of the verses were funny, some sad, some optimistic for the future. Finally, no one could think of more verses. Everyone joined in cleaning up. Martha, Marcos and Antonio embraced Pedro and the children, acknowledged the wonderful party, and at last said goodbye. The three left and though the strains of the children’s song was still with each of them, they made their separate ways home. The deadline for Mrs. Brown’s assignment was the next day, and there was still writing to do.
ABOUT THE AUTHORS

GLORIA ARBONES is Director of the Philosophy for Children Center at the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

EULALIA BOSCH is the Associate Director of the Institute for Research in the Teaching of Philosophy in Barcelona, Spain. She is also President of SOPHIA, the Association of Philosophy for Children in Europe.

ZAZA CARNEIRA DE MOURA is the Director of the National Center of Philosophy for Children in Lisbon, Portugal. She is also Secretary of the Portuguese Philosophical Society.

MARIE-FRANCE DANIEL is President of the Quebec Association of Philosophy for Children and associate professor at CIRADE, a Center of Research in Montreal. Marie-France teaches philosophy and moral education at the University of Quebec at Montreal and is a teacher-educator in Philosophy for Children. She is currently involved in investigating elementary school philosophy as it relates to mathematical and science education as well as cooperative learning.

MARGARITA DUDINA is assistant Professor, Chair of Pedagogics and Psychology at Ural A.M. Gorky University, Yekaterinburg, Russia. She and her colleague, Professor Ludmila Branskaya, have been responsible for translating the Elfe program, Getting Our Thoughts Together, for grades one and two into Russian and for introducing the program into seven schools in the Yekaterinburg area.

TERESA DE LA GARZA is Director of the Center of Philosophy for Children at Ibero-Americana University in Mexico City. She has just published a book entitled, Habermas, Dialogue and Philosophy for Children, and has been appointed coordinator of the PhD Program in Philosophy for Children at Ibero-Americana University. She is Vice-President of the International Council of Philosophical Inquiry with Children.

JEN GLASER is a teacher-educator in Philosophy for Children in Melbourne, Australia. Active in the Victorian Association of Philosophy for Children, she is completing her Masters Degree at Melbourne University where she teaches a course entitled, “Can Children Think Philosophically?” She has also been active in the development of animated segments of children’s philosophy designed for television and in bringing philosophy to employees in industry.

SALLY HAGAMAN is the Chairperson of the Art Department, Purdue University, Indiana. She is particularly interested in bringing aesthetic inquiry within a feminist context to elementary school children.

FELICITY HAYNES is Dean of the Graduate School at the University of Western Australia. She is also a teacher-educator in Philosophy for Children and has been active in introducing philosophy to kindergarten children and their parents in Perth, Australia.

MEGAN LAVERTY teaches philosophy at Melbourne University where she has just completed her Masters degree. Her dissertation on Iris Murdoch has interested her in looking at narrative as an alternative way of doing philosophy. She is a teacher-educator in Philosophy for Children and has been working with both teachers and children for the past year.

SAN MAC COLL teaches philosophy at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia. She is co-author of The Kinder-Kit, a program in children's philosophy for infant school children.

MIHAELA MIROIU is completing her Ph.D. in feminism and philosophy at the University of Bucharest, Romania. She is co-director of the National Center of Philosophy for Children in Bucharest and a teacher-educator in elementary and secondary school philosophy.

SARAH REDSHAW, President of the New South Wales Association of Philosophy for Children, is completing her doctorate at MacQuarrie University in Australia and is a teacher-educator in Philosophy for Children. Author of several philosophical stories, she has also written on conflict resolution and children’s philosophy.

ANN MARGARET SHARP is Professor of Education at Montclair State College and Associate Director of the IAPC. Author of the kinder- and pre-kinder-program in Philosophy for Children, The Doll Hospital, she is also interested in the classroom community of inquiry and has written several articles treating the various dimensions of such communities. Professor Sharp is co-author, with Ronald F. Reed, of Studies in Philosophy for Children: Harry Stottlemeyer's Discovery, and Studies in Philosophy for Children: Poise, which is to be published this year. A new work with Laurance J. Splitter, The Classroom Community of Inquiry, is to be published in 1994.

CHRISTINA SLADE teaches philosophy at the Australian National University in Canberra and is a teacher-educator in Philosophy for Children. Dr. Slade has done research on the effect of teaching philosophy to children in terms of their improved reasoning, reflective dialogue and general social skills.

RUMIANGA TULTUKOVA is Co-director of the Center of Philosophy in Varna, Bulgaria. A former professor of intellectual history, Dr. Tultukova has been responsible for the translation of several programs of Philosophy for Children into Bulgarian and, together with Alex Stoicje, responsible for the dissemination of elementary school philosophy throughout Bulgaria.

WENDY TURGEON teaches philosophy at the State University of New York at Stony Brook and is a teacher-educator in Philosophy for Children.

HELENA VAN AARDWEG did her dissertation on Philosophy for Children at the University of Amsterdam in The Netherlands. She is interested in eventually bringing philosophy to elementary school children in South Africa.

CATHERINE YOUNG-SILVA was the Director of the National Center of Philosophy for Children in Sao Paulo, Brazil and President of the International Council for Philosophical Inquiry with Children. In nine years, she was responsible for bringing philosophy to over 30,000 children in Brazil, and for institutionalizing Philosophy for Children in many universities throughout the country—both in schools of education and departments of philosophy. Today, there are nine Centers of Philosophy for Children in Brazil and the program is rapidly spreading. This edition of Thinking is dedicated to Catherine and her inspirational work in Philosophy for Children.

NINA YULINA is Senior Research Scholar in the Institute of Philosophy, Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia. Dr. Yulina did her doctoral dissertation on American philosophy and has founded the Center of Philosophy for Children in Moscow. She is the author of many books including Some Problems in Contemporary Philosophy; The Problems of Metaphysics in 20th Century American Philosophy and The Relationship between Theology and Philosophy in 20th Century Religious Thought in the United States.