UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

CIVIC EDUCATION AND SELF-KNOWLEDGE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the

degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By
DARA FOGEL
Norman, Oklahoma
2006

Downloaded from SHAREOK. Persistent Handle URL: https://hdl.handle.net/11244/994

UMI Number: 3207533



UMI Microform 3207533

Copyright 2006 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company.
All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

CIVIC EDUCATION AND SELF-KNOWLEDGE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

_____
Dr. Edward Sankowski, Chair

_____
Dr. Tom W. Boyd

_____
Dr. Zev Trachtenberg

_____
Dr. Steven Ellis

_____
Dr. Thomas J. Burns

c Copyright by DARA FOGEL 2006
All Rights Reserved.

AKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my parents, Dr. Norman Fogel and Rev. Joane' P. Fogel, Drs. Tom and Barbara Boyd, and especially Dr. Edward Sankowski. Without their constant help, faith and encouragement, this dissertation would not have been possible. I am also indebted to my dear friends Kokopelli and Koshare who kept me happy during the process.

For J

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1 Introduction ……. 1

Chapter 2 The Foundations of the Communitarian – Neutral Liberalism Educational Debate ……. 16

Chapter 3 The Communitarian Response …….. 51

Chapter 4 Epistemic Responsibility …….. 68

Chapter 5 A Preliminary Model of Human Potential …… 94

Chapter 6 Modern Selves, Egos and Archetypes ……. 117

Chapter 7 Conclusion …… 145

Bibliography …… 160

Chapter One

I. Introduction

A democracy is defined by self-rule, liberty and equality, with the continuance of any democracy contingent on the good decisions of its electorate to act on behalf of the whole democracy's best long-term interests. A functional democracy depends upon engaged citizens with the capacity and skills to make wise long-term decisions that will foster both the people and the continuance of democracy. What is the best way to reliably produce citizens capable of wise self-rule, and thus perpetuate democracy, without falling prey to the many challenges to the spirit of democracy? I undertake to answer this question through an interdisciplinary exploration of the particular challenges and potential of character education in higher education in the United States.

Civic education[1] necessarily implies character education, for to teach a student how to be a good citizen should coincide with the teaching of a student how to be a good person.[2] Increasingly, colleges and universities are once more taking up their historic mantle of character education, but there seems to be no real consensus of what the curriculum should contain, nor agreement of what character education means in a pluralistic democratic society such as ours. It is even contentious to

[1] Civic education is also variously called character or moral education. Although each term has slightly different implications, they are all getting at the same concept – that of teaching young people the social and ethical skills and knowledge needed to survive and thrive within a given society.
[2] I am making the foundational assumption that the characteristics of a good citizen are coterminous with the characteristics of being a good person.

define which characteristics and values foster the democratic ideals and are desirable to promote in students and young citizens. Without a clear goal, how can we hope to consistently pass on our democratic values to future generations? At this time, the nation is more ideologically fragmented than at any previous time in living history. With the rise of immigration, multiculturalism, an ever-widening gulf between the rich and poor, whites and African Americans, republican and democrat, as well as increasing citizen apathy and alienation, the perceived "smelting pot" homogeneity of the 1950's era has been shattered. We can no longer expect that simply living in America provides everyone with comparable values and beliefs. If we truly value our liberty and democracy, it is incumbent upon us, as a culture, to take pains to identify and pass on those democratic characteristics that foster the preservation of that liberty and equality that is the hallmark of democracy.

It is at state colleges and universities that many freshmen from rural and small town backgrounds first encounter the broader world of myriad cultures and belief systems, thus, it is appropriate, I argue, to help young citizens to learn to have some means of interacting with other cultures and religions that includes respect and tolerance without losing sight of their own beliefs and values. For our democracy to survive the increasing pressures of multiculturalism and expanding international conflict, we must find some way to encourage a sense community engagement that sees individuals as not only American citizens, but also citizens of the world, without the loss of liberty and the devaluation of the individual, as occurs in fascism and communism. This position is known as Communitarianism, where focus is on strengthening social bonds between the individual and others, thereby promoting

social responsibility, at the international level as well as the local level. It is my task to offer a possible model for the approach of this kind of civic education.

Twenty-five centuries ago, Plato warned that democracy erodes into tyranny when the citizens of the polis become too self-indulgent and greedy, when self-interest supplants civic engagement.[3] To prevent this, the ancient Athenians took the education of the character of their youth very seriously.[4] As we shall see in Chapter Two, the Greek *Paideia*, or educational system, was all-inclusive, with the express goal of fashioning ideal citizens to create and partake in an ideal society and culture. The ancients, from the heroic age of Homer through to the fall of the Roman Empire, all aspired to create the highest and best expression of civilization (according, of course, to their own culturally-determined standards). How well they succeeded is evidenced by the two millennia reign of Hellenistic values and culture, which underpins and informed the founding of our own culture, and by the fascination and admiration Hellenic ideals still inspires.

In America, the task to produce good citizens generally has fallen by default to the nation's public school systems in recent years. Prior to this, character education was performed by the family, religion and society. But with the breakdown of religion as a dominant social institution, the loss of the extended family and rise of the atomic family and single and absentee parenting, families and religion can no longer be relied upon to provide a roughly uniform standard of democratic socialization of children. Thus, this job is increasingly thrust onto the society itself in the form of public primary and secondary education. Yet, the

[3] Plato, *Republic*, Book VIII, 562a – 566b
[4] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book I, Chapter 13, 1103a15

meaning of civic education as a school subject has itself changed over time in response to the changing needs of the modern era, as the role of citizen shifted over time, and the contents of civic education in public have changed accordingly.

While institutions of higher education used to be conscious of their moral-shaping potential,[5] many colleges and universities have increasingly regarded character education as outside their purview as a long-term trend. Claiming to protect the rights of oppressed minorities, some of academe claimed to purge herself of all perceived nests of racism and prejudice. Civic education programs were sometimes abolished in Ivy League and state colleges alike.[6] In some institutions, civic and moral education was and is emphasized. But in the late 1970's, the idealism of the 'sixties wore off, revealing trends towards rampant political and economic misconduct, the rising influence of special interest groups upon government, chronic low voter turnout and lack of civic involvement that indicated a critical failure to fulfill the mandate of citizen education for at least the last thirty years. I contend that it is this failure to properly educate the consciences and characters of the last two generations (at least) in America, as well as a toxic cultural belief system that threatens the future integrity of our democracy. If we wish to avoid the fate of Plato's democracy's slide into tyranny, then we must find a way to reverse this trend. As educators, it is our responsibility to prepare the young to take up their places as productive citizens within our democratic culture. Yet, to not teach the young how and (more importantly) *why* they need to tend to their

[5] Bok, 1990: 13
[6] Bok, 1982 119 - 120

democracy and cultural beliefs undermine our very efforts to prepare them to take part in it!

Current scientific thought holds that character is formed by two means: 1) biological predisposition and 2) enculturation, thus settling the old Nature versus Nurture debate in a tie.[7] Biological predisposition is roughly just as important as enculturation (or socialization) to the proper development and unfolding of a human being. But it is sometimes very difficult to discern where culture leaves off and biology begins, and vice versa.

Social psychology states that society is prior to the individual, and that individuals are only explained within the context of society.[8] The self is created when the individual begins to become aware of how others see them and adjusts their social behavior accordingly. We unconsciously see ourselves as others see us, and we come to address ourselves as other address us. We unconsciously put ourselves in the position of the other and act like them. According to Social Psychology, it is this awareness that begins the development of self-consciousness. Therefore, the personality is seen as only arising within a community, partaking of that community's institution and conduct, utilizing the language of the community as a medium for acquiring personality and social roles.[9]

Belief systems and worldviews play an important role in the enculturation process, for what an individual expects to be true generally tends to become true for them, as they interpret their experiences through that particular filter, further complicating the boundary between predisposition and environmental influences.

---

[7] Pinker, 2002: viii
[8] Mead, 1934: 7

Belief systems establish the plausibility structure, which in turn determines what is acknowledged as *real* and *true*, and what is deemed *imaginary* or *false*. Examples of this abound in cross-cultural exchange, for instance many Asian language-speakers cannot differentiate between an 'r' sound and a 'v' sound. Which phonemes are recognized by a particular language group are entirely culturally derived and varies widely, while the native tongue of an individual not only determines how they speak, but also how they think. Another example would be that of primal tribal peoples, such as in New Guinea or the Amazon, who have never seen or used computers, questioning the reality of the Internet, which cannot be seen or touched except through a technology of which they have no knowledge or experience. How children are enculturated will stick with them and shape their worldviews for life. Therefore, I shall consider how belief systems interact with enculturation.

I will include a discussion of broad religious movements where religion intersects with education to illustrate how beliefs affect our worldview and our motives for educating our young. What we believe shapes what we experience, because what we value informs our decisions and our interpretations of our experiences. A single objective event can be interpreted in a myriad of ways, such as a car wreck being viewed as an "accident," as an intentional attack, or as "the will of God." Each of these interpretations will lead to very different responses to the same event. In a world growing ever smaller through the wonders of technology, we must consider the consequences of our beliefs and the possible impact of our beliefs on others.

---

[9] Mead, 1934: 162-163

We must constantly ask: what is a society trying to accomplish with its approach to education? Is it vocational training? Personhood training? Citizenship training? We must ask: what is the motive and goal(s) of education in the United States? The Founding Fathers of this nation saw education as citizen training crucial to the success of democracy. For the last century, the goal of public education in America is to pass state mandated tests of minimal competency and churn out minimally skilled workers to work in urban factories and rural farms.[10] But changes in the economy and technology in the last fifteen years made a high school education insufficient to secure a good paying job and to catch the fast-track to the American Dream. Higher education has been cited by President George W. Bush as the solution for the outsourcing of jobs to foreign countries. But is this use of education as vocational training sufficient to preserve the future of our democratic values in the face of the multiple threats of terrorism, multiculturalism and economic upheaval? How do we hang onto those beliefs and values that have historically defined the American spirit without surrendering them for the promise of immediate personal security or profit?

Sociology offers us two functional models of education. In the dominant view, education is seen as an organized network to socialize and process individuals.[11] The other view of education is more controversial, and holds that education is an allocation system that confers success and failure onto individuals.[12] The organized network view performs its socializing function by providing a network of rules, creating classifications of people and knowledge, creating

[10] Toffler, 1971: 57 - 58
[11] Meyer, 1977: 55

competencies for professionals and determining access to social roles according to the amount of education, thus focusing primarily upon individuals and less upon social impact. The allocation view of education claims that education functions as a legitimizing large scale classification system that initiates individuals into higher status, roles and behavior. This view holds that education is the means by which ruling elites maintain and perpetuate their control of society.[13] As such, in this view the impact of education transcends the education of individuals and has widespread effects upon the whole society.

The allocation view of education raises critical questions about the true motivations of education. This view argues that academic credentials help maintain social inequity by protecting the existing power structure through the allocation and distribution of social roles and personnel under the guise of merit and equality. But, proponents argue, the system is determined by biased standards established by an entrenched ruling class with the unspoken purpose of supporting and maintaining the status quo.[14] Each of these views has broad political and social implications beyond the scope of this work, but from these brief descriptions, we gather that education carries serious impact upon both the future of individuals and upon society at large.

Education is the most easily controlled means of enculturation and ensuring the creation of good democratic citizens. To employ education as the means of shaping citizens requires a holistic model of human potentials and a delineation of desirable characteristics within a democracy (which must respect all individuals as equal) in order to determine what is possible and what are the most effective ways of

---

[12] Meyer, 1977: 56
[13] Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977: 7

developing desired potential, while also determining ways of decreasing other unwanted potentials. The criteria for determining which characteristics are desirable and which ones aren't desirable must conform to strict democratic standards of equality and liberty, or else be prey to abuse and corruption.

Some uniquely human capacities only develop under the influence of culture, such as the capacity for language and abstract thought.[15] Without language and socialization, some higher level human capacities simply never emerge. It is beyond the scope of this paper to consider deeply the biological aspect of the question, such as the ethical implications of genetic engineering of morality (eugenics), as interesting and controversial as that topic is. But we will look at some of the underlying biological functions and tendencies that often unconsciously drive culture and individual behavior.

Formal education is our nation's primary mode of enculturation, one that is revisable to meet new conditions and information in ways religious and familial modes of learning are not. As we shall see, the task of civic education has changed form and content over the centuries, as the needs of each civilization dictated the definition of *citizen* according to its own standards and values. But civic (or character) education in a post-modern pluralistic democracy is tricky business. So tricky, in fact, that the effort was mostly abandoned as too risky in the era of the Civil Rights Movement. The use of indoctrination and brainwashing techniques by the Nazis under the guise of character education had left an unpleasant connotation to the whole enterprise at the close of World War II. Similar techniques were used

---

[14] Bourdeiu and Passeron, 1977: 18, 129-130
[15] Pinker, 2002: 60

on indigenous and minority peoples in the U.S.A. and Australia, as their cultural and religious identities were systematically stripped away, often with disastrous results for the cultural identities of those peoples.[16] It came to be held by many that character education bordered on cultural genocide of minorities, and thus had racist/supremicist overtones. The rise of multiculturalism exposed the traditional modes of American character education as biased, and thus not universally applicable. By the 1970s, in some schools civic education had been reduced to a single semester in the sixth grade, in which students were taught how the United States government is organized and elected, but nothing was offered in how to be a good citizen in the larger culture. It was believed by some that it was better to teach the barest minimum, just the mechanics of the federal and state structures, rather than to risk the possible abuses of character education.

By the 1980s, the excesses of the era revealed a narcissistic society and an increasing fragmentation of the larger culture. In the decade after the Watergate scandal, voter confidence in the government was failing and would continue to decline, along with voter turnout, until the recent chronic lows. Many citizens were so disaffected and alienated that they believe the whole political system too corrupt to be salvaged and in need of abolition. One of these alienated citizens was the Oklahoma City Murrah Federal Building bomber, Timothy McVeigh, who believed he was striking the first blow in a coming civil war against the United States federal government. Fortunately, very few are driven to such extremes. Most of the

[16] The deterioration of the Native American and Australian Aborigines are prime examples of this process, where children were removed from their indigenous families and adopted into white families, where the children grew up knowing nothing about their birth culture and history. The result of this was the loss of many native practices and beliefs, as the chain of cultural transmission was severed.

disaffected simply drop out of civic involvement, the obligations of citizenship too much of a burden to take time out from the many demands of work and family. Many find the intricacies of modern politics too confusing, too corrupt and too exasperating to willingly participate in.

Yet, if the citizens refuse to participate, what happens to the democracy? By the 1990s, the multitude of social ills caused by a culture-wide failure to prepare children for life in the world forced public education to take on more and more of the burdens traditionally borne by the extended family, despite concerns about the potential for abuse or indoctrination. Increasing exposure to immigrants from different cultures and value systems forced the schools to address issues of morality, gender, religion, nationality, race and culture in ways unthought-of in the more homogeneic Christian society that gave birth to this nation. Increased exposure to the threat of new and different beliefs caused polarization among different elements of society, while more and more political and economic power was appropriated by multi-national corporations and special interest groups. The sum total effect of these is the fragmentation and alienation of the average citizen from the political process, revealing the glaring need to create new ways to bring cultural diversity into harmony. I contend that this civic fragmentation is indicative of a more fundamental personal fragmentation and alienation of the citizens themselves. By being indoctrinated into a culture that splinters their identity, without developing means to cope and transcend, citizens are crippled and stunted civically and morally, resulting in the social vices listed above.

Education is often held up as the panacea for all of society's ills, filling in the gaps where parenting and culture have failed. Character education in primary and secondary education has been under serious review and development since the mid-1980s. Some forerunners in top tier research universities also began to address this issue in the 1980's, but the topic of character education in higher education is only now seriously addressed in a renewed way in the public universities and colleges. Character education for college-aged students is emerging as another means to help prepare our young to live in an ever-shrinking global village. Students seeking careers in fields as diverse as politics, business and science are finding that their career fields are increasingly exposing them to alien cultures and belief systems, some of which can seem hostile or threatening to the emerging sense of self. In an age of terrorism and multi-national corporations, increased sensitivity to the beliefs and worldviews of others could literally make the difference between life and death, war and peace.

Character education for the college-age student brings up questions and concerns quite different from those raised for children. Questions of morality, selfhood, autonomy, values, enculturation, religious orientation, and political impact are all involved when considering how to prepare young adults about to enter the job market and life, in general. Civic education in a public institution of higher education presents its own set of challenges, as educators must also navigate the First and Second Amendments complications not applicable to children while teaching students how to be good citizens of the nation and the world. How these questions

are addressed will make an important impact on the future of our democracy and of our planet, even as it impacts the emerging selves of the students.

Sociologists, ethicists and religious leaders all have stressed that one does not really ever know themselves without also knowing others and vice versa.[17] But how are we to come to know others whose ideas are so different from our own, when it seems that we have no common denominator, no foundation for understanding? If we only know our own tradition's beliefs and worldview without questioning them and challenging them with the beliefs of others, then our identity is unexamined and untested, risking becoming stunted and ingrown. We don't know how to relate to others if we don't know how to self-reflect. In learning about ourselves, we learn how to engage others as we engage ourselves.[18] I will argue that an education grounded in self-knowledge, character and experience is more likely to inculcate judgment and engagement than one oriented to achieving high test scores and vocational training. I shall propose a theoretical approach that protects the autonomy of students while connecting them to the wider community of the world. Drawing from Plato, Aristotle, Charles Taylor, Michael Sandel, J.J. Rousseau and others, I explicate a grounding for education that engages learners with themselves and others in a larger context. A grounding in critical thinking and self-knowledge is offered as antidote to the selfishness, greed and ethical misconduct rampant in industry and government.

Current research in Social Cognitive Psychology supports the thesis that individuals with high levels of self-knowledge receive many benefits, personally and

[17] Mead, 1934: 50
[18] Baumeister, 1999: 23

socially, from their enhanced self-understanding. Certain beliefs about the self are demonstrably more efficacious than others. It only makes sense to teach people which ways of thinking about the self are clinically proven to be beneficial and which ways of thinking about the self have been proven to be problematic, if not self-defeating. Many forms of depression and emotional distress are due to ignorance and poor mental hygiene. It seems obvious that we are morally obligated to alleviate these relatively easily correctable evils amongst the citizenry. The underlying assumption is that happy, moral and well-adjusted citizens will create a happy, moral and well-adjusted society.

It is true that while you can lead a student to the font of wisdom, you can't make him think. But shouldn't we as educators use every means at our disposal to improve the quality of citizens under our tutelage? After all, we will leave the future of our nation and democracy, as well as the world, in their hands.

The development of my thesis is as follows: In Chapter Two, I describe the Communitarian – Neutral Liberalism debate over the Formative Project, (or a republic's conscious attempt to fashion good citizens) which provides the larger canvas on which the question of civic education is played out. I start with a historical overview of the Formative Project, beginning with its origins in ancient Athens, through what Alasdair MacIntyre calls "the Enlightenment Project," (the inspiration behind the founding of America), up to the rise of the Civil Rights Movement and the ascension of Neutral Liberalism. In this, I show how the mandate and contents of education in general and civic education in particular shifted over

time, paralleling the shift in the meaning of language of virtue identified by MacIntyre.

In Chapter Three, I explore the Communitarian response to Neutral Liberalism, through the lens of its implications for civic and moral education. I discuss the distinction of Positive and Negative Liberty and how this is a crucial orientation to the application of democracy. I then explicate the Communitarian arguments in favor of the Formative Project and shall address objections.

In Chapters Four and Five, I offer a model for civic education founded in self-knowledge, supported by current research in the field of Social Cognitive Psychology. I introduce the term *Epistemic Responsibility*, by which I mean being aware of and taking responsibility for the short and long-term consequences of one's beliefs and worldview. In applying this to higher education, I argue in favor of teaching students about the pragmatic and logical consequences of many dominant world belief systems when objectively analyzed as part of an inclusive global dynamic. I also advocate the teaching of evaluative and critical reasoning skills so that the students are able to make their own well-considered value judgments, both civically and personally. I support my theory by drawing from historic sources, such as Plato, Rousseau, and Kant. This chapter also includes a consideration of the connections of self-to-self and self-to-others, in both a personal and a global sense. The Sixth and final chapter will conclude this study by distilling out the essential principles developed in this work and by responding to anticipated objections to the Formative Project, as well as to my model and theory.

Chapter Two

The Foundations of the Communitarian-Neutral Liberalism Educational Debate

> *"In short, efforts to create a serious program of moral education seem caught between the evils of indoctrination, on the one hand, and the hazards of ethical relativism, on the other. Escaping this dilemma is the key to success in helping students to develop stronger ethical standards and a greater concern for the welfare of others. How this can be managed and whether it can be done at all are questions that still await an answer."*
>
> Derek Bok[19]

What I characterize as the Communitarian-Neutral Liberalism educational debate stems from two entirely different conceptions of liberty, democracy and citizenship. Both models are driven by internally consistent cultural ideals and belief systems, arising within a larger historic socio-economic nexus, and each arrives at very different conclusions about the role of the citizen and society as a whole. Yet, both of these views are consistent with the dominant American cultural values and standards, each expressing a different interpretation and understanding of the same values. As a result of these different ideas and beliefs about liberty, democracy and citizenship, differences in the duties, rights and responsibilities of citizens are reflected in competing views of the rights and duties of citizens, society and government.

This is especially important when it comes to the area of education, for in education the society perpetuates itself by (more or less) consciously teaching its

[19] Bok, *Universities and the Future of America*, 1990:78

young which values are socially acceptable and which ones are not.[20] This in turn shapes the future of the society itself, as students become citizens, who themselves give birth to the next generation of students to be inducted into the society's values through education. Both of these competing systems of democratic ideals of liberty are present to one degree or another in today's society and educational aspirations, and both have much to offer. But the shortcomings of both must be transcended if we are to craft engaged citizens capable of perpetuating our democracy beyond the twenty-first century. Neutral Liberalism focuses on the rights of the individual and has been instrumental in securing civil rights and protections for minorities during the Civil Rights Movement, (there have also been song Communitarian currents in the Civil Rights Movement and its successors). This altruistic position stresses the importance of the individual, sometimes at the expense of the community, in an effort to prevent vulnerable individuals and populations from being exploited in the huge cogs of government and industry. These values are reflected everywhere throughout our culture.[21] It was an important stage in the liberation of minorities from historical oppression, and protecting them from exploitation and indoctrination by the majority. As socio-political philosopher, John Rawls (the patron saint of Neutral Liberalism) contends, the quality of a democracy depends upon how well the minorities are treated.[22] Neutral Liberalism loosely defines liberty as the civil freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, protected by the

[20] This function of education is questionable when seen from the allocation view of education, which holds that the primary purpose of education is to maintain and secure the current power structure at the cost of non-elites' potentials. Bourdeiu and Passeron, 1977: 129 - 130

[21] "The needs of the one outweigh the needs of the many." Captain Kirk in the Paramount film "Star Trek III - The Search for Spock"

government, legal system and armed forces. Neutral Liberalism has been the dominant stance in America since the New Deal and World War II, and is responsible for the creation of social support institutions such as Welfare, Social Security and Medicare.

The Communitarian position arose in response to the perceived flaws in Neutral Liberalism, such as relativism, selfishness, alienation and loss of community. It holds that a balance must be found between minority rights and the needs of the whole city/state/nation. Communitarians advocate a return to the ancient models of the republic, in which liberty is defined by self-rule, not by government-guaranteed rights and dependence upon the state. Unlike the ancient models, the Communitarian position, minorities protect minorities because they are actively engaged at all levels of government (not disenfranchised and in need of special protection) and are included within the whole of the society, as are all citizens.[23] Communitarianism emphasizes communal values and builds a commonly defined good. Instead of the citizens being passively dependent upon the state for the guarantee and protection of rights, Communitarians holds that all citizens must actively engage in self-governing to procure and maintain their own civil rights. I advocate an infusion of this view into the current educational landscape.

To see how these two competing approaches arose and developed, and the consequences they precipitated over time, I shall give a brief historical overview of

---

[22] "Social and economic inequalities are to meet two conditions: they must be: (a) to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged; and (b) attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair opportunity." Rawls, "A Kantian Conception of Equality," 1999: 258

[23] Communitarian Michael Sandel tells us: "The liberal begins by asking how government should treat its citizens and seeks principles of justice that treat persons fairly as they pursue their various interests and ends. The republican begins by asking how citizens can be capable of self-government, and seeks the political forms and social conditions that promote its meaningful exercise." Sandel, 1996: 27

the conceptual foundations of the two views in question. This overview is not meant to be definitive or exhaustive, but merely to provide the reader a context in which to appreciate how this debate unfolded and developed throughout western history. The theoretical underpinnings of the differences between Neutral Liberalism and Communitarianism will be considered in the following chapter.

In *Sources of the Self*, Charles Taylor asserts that meaning only makes sense against the background of something other than self.[24] He claims that we can only understand the self against the background created by three main sources: 1) culture, 2) significant others and 3) strong evaluation.[25] These external sources of identity entail that ethical phenomena affirm the independent value of choices, in opposition to the radical subjectivism that drives much American behavior. We often don't realize what we know, except through interactions with others. And it is well known in education that the best way to really understand something yourself is to try to explain it to someone else, hence the reliance on group work and student presentations in the classroom. No one exists in a vacuum - we only come to understand who and what we are in the context of the social milieu of others, with all their traditions, values, beliefs and social structures.

"Individualism," however, is a fundamental value in our democracy, and, like all deeply held values, this ethos has its negative points as well as its positive. Along with the rise of individualism, we have also experienced a sense of loss of meaning, often manifested as a nostalgic looking back to a past perceived to be superior to the current experience of alienation and corruption – "the good old days…" Taylor

[24] Sociology supports this view. Mead, 1934: 162 - 163
[25] Taylor, Charles, 1989: 25 – 43

refers to this loss of meaning as the "disenchantment of the world," the root cause of our existential discomfort.[26] When individualism becomes self-centered and neglects its vital connections to others, it goes sour, turning into self-absorption and egoism.

In *The Ethics of Authenticity*, Taylor examines the moral ideal of authenticity, defined as being true to oneself. Drawing on both Anglo-American and Continental philosophy, Taylor claims that authenticity is an idea not usually understood by the majority of Americans. Taylor observes that there are many moral concepts tied up in the idea of authenticity, and that these concepts can be articulated creatively, through art and literature, for example. He seeks a clarification of the idea of authenticity through the discussion of subjectivism and relativism. Subjectivism denies the validity of value judgments independent of chooser. All value judgments are held to be expressions of individual taste or opinion. Relativism holds that all choices are equally valid within their own context, meaning that every choice is justifiable within some conceivable context. In subjectivism and relativism, there are no hard and fast standards by which to make value judgments, and every choice must be made according to private standards alone. This places vast pressures on the individual, as they are held totally responsible for any bad choices, without providing any education in making wise choices beyond personal preference and advertising. This often leads to lives crippled by damage, guilt and shame for unwise decisions in youth.

[26] Taylor, 1991: 4

In his critique, Taylor identifies three "malaises" of modernity.[27] The first is the loss of meaning and moral horizon. While he acknowledges the major achievements of modernity, individualism is seen as a source of anxiety, as well as fulfillment. Authenticity is a very important idea in our modern culture, albeit poorly understood. Each person is held to be a unique self, obligated to live up to his or her own unique potential. Although the individual is freed from many past constraints, our traditional moral horizon is lost. These moral horizons delineated the traditional ways of making sense of meaning beyond individual purpose.[28] Loss of those horizons meant the loss of a larger context to life, which provides the individual with the sense of having an established place in the cosmos in which they belong. Isolated individuals cannot generate this larger context of life; it must be created by the combined efforts of groups and cultures.[29]

Modern individualism is skeptical of the need for the larger communal context. The individual is sometimes held to be the sole author of values through acts of volition. This view holds that the act of choosing is what imparts value, as it is believed that there is no meaning beyond that affirmed by the individual. Taylor holds that this type of individualism drains the world of meaning – the disenchantment of the world.[30] In seeking to rise above individualist subjectivity, science creates a mechanistic worldview, but it excludes any expressions of larger

[27] Taylor, 1991: 2
[28] Taylor, 1991: 3
[29] "...[T]he family is no longer commonly regarded as the unit to which we owe our primary loyalty. Instead, more and more people seem to view it merely as a convenient arrangement to be discarded when it grows too burdensome." Bok, 1990: 58
[30] Taylor, 1991: 4

purpose, as in the case of modern biology,[31] which excludes basic reference to purpose in the description and explanation of natural processes, further diminishing the importance of context.

This leads to the second of Taylor's modern malaises, the rise of "instrumental reasoning," that is, the manipulation of circumstances to fulfill desires. Science is valued for the sake of "progress" as control, and not for the enlightenment or moral force it brings to human life. In instrumental reasoning, or the type of thinking that sees all things and people as merely means to an end, rationality is focused on maximizing efficiency and pay-offs. The growth of instrumental reasoning has been hastened by the loss of a cosmic order, for without traditional beliefs systems to serve as moral compass, the individual's own desires are elevated to serve as the prime motivator in life. Instrumental reasoning leads to critical social problems, such as the unequal distribution of wealth, disregard for the well-being of the environment, devaluation of human life by impersonal institutions and the glorification and worship of technology and the "iron cage of modernity," in which the individual is trapped in the impersonal institutions which control our lives[32]

Finally, the third malaise of modernity that Taylor identifies is the threat to our freedom and democracy when citizens focus only on themselves and blot out the rest of the world. This leads to shrinkage of interest in democratic processes and participation in the world at large, as the nation is run by a juggernaut government

[31] Actually, the cutting edge of biology is recanting the mechanistic view of the universe in light of very recent discoveries about the cell membrane as the source of cell intelligence, and not DNA, as has been previously thought. (Lipton, 2005: 5)
[32] Taylor, 1991: 5 - 6

with purposes of its own and little public control.[33] As Tocqueville noted so long ago, a self-absorbed citizenry would rather pursue their own interests than participate in self-government so long as the government's functioning is sufficiently effective and does not interfere with their private pursuits.[34] But individual liberties *are* lost through the imposition of instrumental reasoning and by the social structure. A current example of this is the recent Supreme Court ruling in which individual home ownership is now subject to seizure under eminent domain if the city deems the land could be more profitable to state and private development.

This culture of self-absorption has serious implications for our national security, at home and abroad. Ignoring the effects of corporate colonialism and the ever-widening gap between the rich and poor has led to severe erosion of international good will towards America. As Immanuel Kant taught us, good will is the foundation of all ethics.[35] Without this general good will, American citizens everywhere are targets for terrorists and radical extremists willing to die for *their* belief in a larger theologically framed worldview. As a nation, America reflects the atomism of the individual citizens, alienated from many in the world community of nations. America consumes twenty percent of the world's resources while only constituting at most five percent of the world's total population. We act as though our right to compete in a free market and accrue unlimited profit at any cost excludes us from any moral obligation towards the third world nations we exploit for their cheap labor and resources in the name of expanding markets. But as other nations

[33] Systems analyst, John Gall notes: "Systems tend to expand to fill the known universe... and as systems expand, they encroach." Gall, 1975: 14
[34] Taylor, 1991: 9
[35] Kant, 1964: 62

develop to the point of becoming serious competitors with America, we will no longer be able to continue in our accustomed ego-centric ways. Regardless of whether Americans want it or not, the world is changing and we will have to adapt or be left behind.

The primacy of instrumental reasoning puts major emphasis on statistics and outputs, in both institutions and in thought. In our capitalist culture, market phenomena are often the ultimate determinant of policy. Market functions are used as the justification for decisions throughout the Western culture. Some Americans see their government as serving in the role of protector of the market economy. The rise of instrumental reasoning not only entails the increased influence of market functions; it also includes the dominance of our culture by technology. Technology is our "magic bullet," to solve all problems, the ultimate means to every end.[36] But we still are in need of critical evaluation of the relative benefits of technology. We have yet to delineate its limits and how best to use it. Moral issues about topics once considered science fiction, such as cloning and genetic engineering, are being forced on our courts and legislators. How can we be sure that the market will make the wisest choices for humanity's best interest? Caught between market and bureaucracy, modern individuals are trapped in the "iron cage" of modernity, as described by Weber.[37] This is not to deny the positive benefits of technology, such as medicine and computers, but rather to highlight the need for insight and wisdom in the applications and uses of technology and bureaucracy.

[36] Taylor, 1991: 20
[37] *ibid.* 98

Taylor rejects the totality of the "iron cage" view and its accompanying sense of helplessness and alienation. He points to the current fulfillment of Tocqueville's prediction of "Soft Despotism," that is, the degeneration of meaning and participation in self-government, as everything is run by the big machines of government and industry with little citizen control.[38] While the government may seem democratic and moderate, perhaps even responsive, it is still a form of tyranny if the people are isolated from the forces that govern their lives.[39] Although few to none of the victims of the World Trade Tower attacks were directly responsible for the policies the Muslim extremists so violently reject, it is those innocent citizens of many nations who paid the price of the policies of multinational corporations and the U.S. government. We are now held hostage in our own airports and subways. The critical failures of the local, state and federal responses to the aftermaths of hurricanes Katrina and Rita, created massive loss, suffering and expense which was foreseeable and could have been avoided. These recent crises further expose the breakdown of the relationship between citizens and government. But freedom can be lost in less dramatic ways. We lose freedom through the imposition of instrumental reason by the social structure. Examples of this are urban sprawl and the necessity for private transportation to get anywhere, which supports car manufacturing and oil production, rather than investing in public transportation. This is another example is

---

[38] *ibid.* 112 – 113

[39] Taylor identifies a vicious circle of political helplessness: "…the more fragmented a democratic electorate is in this sense, the more they transfer their political energies to promoting their partial groupings… and the less possible it is to mobilize democratic majorities around commonly understood programs and policies. A sense grows that the electorate as a whole is defenseless against the leviathan state; a well-organized and integrated partial grouping may, indeed, be able to make a dent, but the idea that the majority of the people might frame and carry through a common project comes to seem utopian and naïve. And so people give up. Already failing sympathy with others is

the domination of public elections and legislation by lobbyists and special interest.[40] Yet, the average citizen, while concerned over this loss of freedom, is content to allow the erosion as long as they are not too inconvenienced. The reason is that the problems are too huge and overwhelming for a single individual to overcome, leading to a kind of cultural denial.

Taylor takes authenticity seriously; his central contention is that people are to be true to themselves, eschewing denial and embracing self-knowledge. In order to do this, we must be clear on what selfhood means. Taylor claims that the self is only articulated and understood in the context of dialogue with others. We require relationship to others in order to come to know ourselves. This sense of self is also tied to what Taylor calls "strong evaluation," or those things that we value most highly. A clear understanding of what it is to be a self requires that an individual reflect upon those objects of strong evaluation and the belief systems that inform them. This critical examination of one's own beliefs and values creates the self-knowledge required of an authentic individual. For me, authenticity implies the actualization of self-knowledge, for I must know what I love and what I believe in order to be true to myself. If I am ignorant about myself, I will not be able to accurately assess my capabilities or convictions, thus rendering my judgment poor and my commitments shallow. The self is articulated through creativity and exploration, as in artistic endeavors and in dialogue with others. It is this core self which is the essential chooser inside each individual, and it is more fundamental than

---

further weakened by the lack of a common experience of action, and a sense of hopelessness makes it seem a waste of time to try." Taylor, 1991: 113

[40] *ibid.* 9

autonomy, or the exercise of choice, for I must have opinions and beliefs in order to act as an agent and make choices.

Thus, thinking of the self as a unique person and fulfilling the self requires special attention to individuality and to the relations of the self to significant others and those values most deeply held. There are many pressures against authenticity. One of these pressures opposing authenticity that Taylor identifies is Neutral Liberalism, specifically, the position that the state must not impose any religious or moral values on citizens. Being a Communitarian, Taylor believes that the state must and should take a side in the discussion of what constitutes both the "good life," and "good character." For the Communitarian position, society should try to define what it means by "good character" and what the communal ideals should be, based on commonly shared beliefs, goals and needs. However, this position is problematic in a diverse culture, as different individual definitions of the "good life" and "good character" are debatable according to differing worldviews and belief systems.

To better understand where we are now, it is helpful to have and understanding what has come before, leading up to the current state of affairs.

A Historical Overview of the Formative Project

It is important to understand the history of what the goals of education have been in our culture and how they have changed in order to understand where the culture is heading in order to better appreciate our current dilemma. I shall begin my discussion with a look at the primary educational approach of the ancient Hellenic

world, expressed in one form or another from the time of Homer until the fall of the Roman Empire. The Hellenic culture was founded upon the concept of the Greek *Paideia*, a culture-wide approach to education, aimed at producing virtuous elite citizens to perpetuate their democracies, republics and empires. As Alasdair MacIntyre famously noted, the meaning of the word *virtue* has shifted over time from its origination in the ancient Mediterranean culture, yet our modern language and discussion of virtue has not kept pace. This work is a preliminary attempt to remedy that oversight, as it specifically pertains to character education.

I) Ancient Ideals

The Formative Project, or the effort to fashion good citizens, has a long and varied history. In the West, we look to ancient Athens for the foundation of our own culture. Yet, the ancient Greek view of education and its role in culture and politics is markedly different from our modern view. The ancient Greeks used what they call the *Paideia* to prepare their young for the privileges and duties of citizenship within the *polis* (city-state). There is no English equivalent to the term *Paideia*, but the closest definition I have found is the general education that prepares young for an active participation in the life of the nation (*polis*), including a grounding in the Athenian worldview of a unified harmonious cosmos, and a teleological view of human nature[41]. "The aim of the *paideia* was the proper formation of students,

[41] "In approaching the problem of education, the Greeks relied wholly on the clear realization of the natural principles governing human life and the immanent laws by which man exercises his physical and intellectual powers. To use that knowledge as a formative force in education, and by it to shape the living man as the potter moulds clay and the sculptor carves stone into a preconceived form – that was a bold creative idea that could have been developed only by that nation of artists and philosophers. The greatest work of art they had to create was Man. They were the first to recognize

intellectually, morally and religiously."[42] The undertaking of the education of the youth was considered to be a community project, and as such, the whole community was responsible for the quality and content of the education received. This is based on the conviction that the individual and the community are inextricably bound, as the quality of individual citizens combine to create the quality of the nation (*polis*). [43] Therefore, it was culturally assumed that by producing the best possible citizens, they could produce the best possible nation (*polis*). This teleological view of humanity gave rise to some of the most celebrated poets, politicians, sculptors, architects, philosophers, generals and dramatists in the history of the West, and this ancient democracy became the inspiration and set the paradigm for our own culture and democracy.

The ageless excellence of the ancient Athenian people and culture was no accident – they planned and consciously worked hard at creating what they considered to be the best possible civilization and the optimal Man. Of course, this worldview spawned its own horde of ills and challenges, and I will discuss those in due time. At this point, I wish to examine the motivation behind the Greek's education system, which reflected their tendency to think in terms of wholeness and unity. They thought big and lived big, seeing cosmic significance in every action and decision. We still venerate them for the depth and breadth of their understanding and daring.

---

that education means deliberately molding human character in accordance with an ideal." Jaeger, Vol. 1, 1939: xxii

[42] Beaty, 3

[43] "In early Greek history, every branch of intellectual life grows straight from the same root, the life of the community… Thus, to describe the Greek polis is to describe the whole of Greek life. The polis is the social framework of the whole history of Greek culture…" Jaeger, Vol. I, 1939: 75)

The Greeks struggled to attain *Arête'* – another Greek concept that has no contemporary English equivalent – but is often roughly translated as "manly valor." But the idea goes far beyond machismo, for it is more widely understood to mean the excellence of human merit, in this case, the combined excellences of the Athenian aristocrat.[44] Athenian virtue entailed the successful fulfillment of one's designated role, with the roles and the standards of success and failure clearly defined.[45] The sense of self in the heroic age (a view passed on to future Hellenistic thinkers) is inextricably connected to their social role, demanding a highly culture-specified type of accountability requiring equally culture-specific excellences and virtues.[46] The Athenians strove after the highest personal excellence according to the standards of their day and society.

Athens gave rise to many philosophers and teachers during the classical and ancient eras whose wisdom still reverberate into our own era, but two of the most influential in the field of education are Plato and Aristotle. Both were heir to the rich Homeric tradition, which enunciated the Hellenic ideal that is the target of *arête* and the *paideia* Neither of them questioned the wisdom nor necessity of teaching *arête*, both agreed that character education is critical to the creation and success of a nation.[47] Both Plato and Aristotle agree that the virtues arise only within the socio-

[44] "…[P]erhaps we ought not to translate the word *arête* in Homer by our word 'virtue,' but instead by our word 'excellence'…" MacIntyre, 1984: 181
[45] MacIntyre, 1984: 122
[46] MacIntyre, 1984: 126
[47] "But Democracy…, by its optimistic belief that men were capable of ruling themselves, assumed that they should all be highly educated. This naturally suggested that education should be made the fulcrum upon which (as in Archimedes' epigram) the world, the political world, could be moved." (Jaeger, Vol. 2, 1939: 6)

cultural context of the polis.[48] Where they disagree is about exactly how to go about achieving the vision.

a) Plato

Taking the Delphic injunction *Know Thyself* seriously, Plato's teacher and inspiration, Socrates, perfected the technique of the *elenchus*, or the dialectic through which one challenges common assumptions with common sense and logic. Through the process of undergoing the *elenchus*, all of the individual's personal beliefs and cultural assumptions are questioned, with the eventual result of the realization of the limits of one's actual knowledge and the broad extent of opinion and supposition. By removing false beliefs and assumptions, wisdom is eventually achieved. The *elenchus* is the Platonic means of achieving self-knowledge, and thereby excellence, through taking responsibility for one's own moral education.[49] A good way to start is by identifying the limits of what one *really* knows about such important things as truth, piety and justice. Plato, and Socrates before him, sought unity through the perfecting of the self through the process of *elenchus*, questioning and answering, chipping away all false, conflicting and unsupportable beliefs, until only true, unconflicted excellence remains. In the process of the *elenchus*, it is through the shock of cognitive dissonance and subsequent acknowledgement of seeing how far we fall short of our ideals that the dross is burned off. Perfection is achieved through

[48] MacIntyre, 1984: 135

[49] "The core of the unified moral conception is it the dialectical activity of Socrates, 'the patron saint of moral philosophy,' and its implications: the development of a moral practice that contrasts with sophic education, usually thought of as 'Socratic elenchus'; the crucial notions of unity of *arête* and that *arête* is knowledge; and the psychological and political consequences of Socrates' moral practice. All of these implications have as their guiding notion 'self-education': the idea that we must each take the responsibility upon ourselves for our own *paideia*." Turner, 2

submission to the process of exposing one's own flawed thinking and then taking the personal responsibility for correcting it accordingly.[50]

In the *Republic* Plato specifies in detail the kind of education his ideal polis would employ, drawing heavily from the then-living example of the militaristic democracy of Sparta,[51] which had dominated the Athenian militarily during the Peloponnesian Wars and later politically in the form of the Thirty Tyrants. I can't help but wonder if there isn't a bit of 'Stockholm Syndrome' in Plato's choice of Sparta as his role model, yet, the type of education outlined by Plato is consistent with the ideal of the *paideia*, in which the whole individual is to be educated in order to be part of an ideal society. To modern individualistic eyes, the communistic Spartan model hardly seems desirable in its harshness, yet its discipline and focus assured its historical efficacy, as we still tell of their bravery and civic sacrifice.

Plato's description of his conception of an ideal society also mirrors what Plato took to be the ideal citizen, for both polis and man were to be perfectly balanced within an orderly cosmos, with each part performing its own specified function, without interfering in the functioning of the other aspects of the society and soul.[52] We can see how closely the ancients connected the individual to the community, for without a good environment and proper education, even the most excellent child with the greatest potential will not flourish.[53] For Plato, the ideal

---

[50] Turner, 4

[51] "…Plato's ideal, like other theories of *paideia*, was largely based on the Spartan model, although the spirit of it was quite new…. The great social problem of all later Greek educators was to determine how individualism might be repressed and the character of every citizen might be developed on one communal model. The Spartan state, with its rigid authoritarianism, appeared to be the solution of this problem in actual practice; and as such it occupied Plato's mind through-out his life." Jaeger, Vol. I, 1939: 80

[52] Plato, *Book II, 368e – 369b* and *Book IV, 434e – 435b*

[53] Plato, *Book VI*, *491d-e*

society cannot but help produce the ideal citizens, and ideal citizens cannot help but produce an ideal society. They are reciprocal. As is already obvious, this view has many challenges, for the whole thing hinges on how virtue, or *arête,* is defined, and further the Platonic model is predicated on a thought experiment, not really intended to be implemented.[54] Many of Plato's ideas of what an ideal society consists of are questionable to modern sensibilities, such as the total subjugation of the individual to the state, and state's assignation of fatherhood according to the calendar, and so forth.[55] While Aristotle agreed with the universal assessment that the *polis* was critical to the creation of virtue, his views were less theoretical than Plato's and more pragmatically focused on how to achieve *arête* in an imperfect world.

b) Aristotle

As Plato's student and a fellow-product of the Greek culture, Aristotle had many of the same cultural assumptions and beliefs as Plato, but he articulated these in his own distinctive fashion. Whereas Plato was describing both the ideal of man and state, as well as the many stages of its decomposition, Aristotle, in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, described a more practical approach to how to cultivate virtue. Like Plato, Aristotle believed that *arête* was a goal to be sought and highly prized. But for Aristotle, *arête* or virtue are highly desirable because of their instrumentality in the achievement of *eudaemonia*, the teleological goal of human life. *Eudaemonia*, like many Greek terms concerning the human psyche, has no exact English translation and is most often interpreted as meaning 'happiness,' but a preferable

[54] Plato, *Book V, 471d*
[55] Plato, *Book IV, 423d* and *Book V, 461d*

translation is 'flourishing,' as flourishing has a more holistic and stable implication consistent with the Greek ideal. *Eudaemonia* is held to be man's highest good.[56] The virtues and *arête* are both the means to attain the goal and part of the attainment of the goal of happiness (or flourishing) itself, for it is through consistent right action and right choices for the right reasons in the right circumstances that one creates the ideal person deserving of attaining *eudaemonia*. In striving for the ideal of the golden mean through the moderation of one's actions and the cultivation of virtue, one becomes habituated to the patterns that contribute to the achievement of *eudaemonia*.[57] For Aristotle, practice could literally make perfect, provided one had the necessary prerequisites. Plato was not concerned with the happiness of individuals, but rather, he was more interested in the total harmony of the city.[58] But the underlying assumption is that if the city is in total harmony, then the individual citizens that constitute it must likewise be in a subjective state of total harmony.

To achieve the lofty goal of *eudaemonia*, one must be virtuous. Aristotle defines virtue as functional excellence. The example he gives is the eye – the virtue of the eye is good sight.[59] The virtues must be educated, for virtue lies in the middle of any two extremes, and is specific to each person, occasion and instance, and therefore cannot be subject to a universal standard. Through instruction and practice, intelligence turns tendency into the habit of virtue.[60] For Aristotle, virtue must be learned and rehearsed until it becomes second-nature, and the citizen is virtuous

---

[56] "He [Aristotle] gives to it the name *eudaemonia* – as so often there is a difficulty in translation: blessedness, happiness, prosperity. It is the state of being well and doing well in being well, of a man's being well-favored himself and in relation to the divine." MacIntyre, 1984: 148
[57] Aristotle, *Book i, 1103a15 – 1103b25*
[58] Plato, *Book V, 466a*
[59] Aristotle, *Book ii*, *1106a15-24*
[60] MacIntyre, 1984: 155

without having to consciously will or choose to be virtuous, but rather, it happens automatically through conditioned response.[61] Aristotle also affirmed the unity of all the virtues and their total dependence upon the polis for their discovery and development.[62]

Plato believed *eudaemonia* was to be achieved through the elimination of all non-perfection through the process of the *elenchus*, while Aristotle believed it could be achieved through the acquisition and cultivation of the appropriate habits of virtue. Both of them stressed the importance of education to the creation of a functional society and citizen, and both were willing to go to extremes to get it.[63] We must remember the historic context of these two influential teachers, each of whom was fashioned to suit the changing needs of Greek society. When Plato was writing, it was soon after Athens had reasserted her independence from foreign domination, and was still recovering from years of war, subjugation and privation. It seems entirely predictable that someone like Socrates would arise to question the old status quo that had failed to protect them from the travails of the Peloponnesian War and its aftermath.

Aristotle, on the other hand, was writing during a time of Greek ascendancy, a time when Phillip of Macedonia and Aristotle's tutee, Alexander the Great, were conquering unprecedented amounts of territory, peoples and goods. Again, it seems reasonable, given the social context, that Aristotle should not wish to rock the boat

---

[61] In this, I might hazard to say that Aristotle was the first recorded Behaviorist.
[62] MacIntyre, 1984: 158 and Aristotle, *Book vi*, *1144b33*
[63] "But it is hard for someone [to be] trained correctly for virtue from his youth if he has not been brought up under correct laws, since the many, especially the young, do not find it pleasant to live in a temperate and resistant way. Hence laws must prescribe their upbringing and practices; for they will not find these things painful when they get used to them." Aristotle, *Book x, 1179b30 – 35*

by speaking truth to authority, and only systematized the beliefs already extant. As the Macedonian Greek fortunes rose, so also did the belief in Greek cultural superiority spread. Like Plato, Aristotle also espoused a fondness for the role model of Sparta, renown for its extreme anti-individualism and as an invasive state.[64] No doubt he found this view helpful in securing the lofty position of tutor to the son of a Greek conqueror.

The Greek system was the inspiration for both the Roman and Medieval Scholastic approaches to education. With some modification to be consistent with Christianity, this basic teleology was prevalent until the rise of Industrialism, when western culture moved from an agricultural-based economy to an industrial-based economy.

II.) The Enlightenment Project

The advent of Christianity had a profound affect upon the culture and belief system of the west (and east as well, but this work is primarily concerned with the culture and education in the United States and its roots), including a profound affect upon the motivations and goals of education. Although much of the language and stated goals of education remained unchanged since Hellenic times, the worldview and, more importantly, the cosmological view of Man's place in the universe caused a massive shift in the application of education. The concept of Original Sin, advanced by Paul and Augustine, popularized a view of humanity unknown to the Hellenes. In the Christian view, humanity was born in a corrupt state, due to the historical failings of the species' progenitors. As a result, education was still seen as

[64] Aristotle, *Book x, 1180a20*

necessary to the perfecting of the virtues, but the starting place had changed: instead of assuming that man is fundamentally good and simply needs to cultivate good habits, as the Hellenistic cultures did, Medieval Christian culture assumed that man was inherently evil and a specific kind of theological education was necessary to rectify the race. Education was seen as necessary only to the clergy and the elites, without any concern for training citizens (in the few places where citizenship still existed) at all, as eras of political upheaval and feudalism required quiescent peasants, not free-thinking equals.

This is a profound difference in worldviews, which changes the context in which education takes place. Hence, virtue is still deemed necessary, but for a different *telos* (goal). Instead of seeking personal and civic fulfillment through *eudaemonia*, the Medieval Christian culture sought salvation from damnation, implying a more pessimistic orientation. Reliance on reason was replaced with reliance on faith and grace, as human reason, taken alone, was held to be too fallible to depend upon. The emphasis on the negative aspects of humanity can be sociologically understood as a reaction to the fall of the Roman Empire and the resulting social chaos and degeneration. Without the stability provided by *Pax Romana*, the world must have seemed bleak indeed, and as there was no end in sight to the devolution of civilization, it is understandable why emphasis would be placed on seeking a better afterlife, as living a virtuous life in during the Dark Ages was not the guarantee of happiness and success promised by Aristotle (who, nevertheless, was considered a guiding light by the scholastics).

As Europe became more stable economically and politically, the Renaissance was born in the wealthy city-states of mercantile Italy and spread throughout Europe. It does not seem unreasonable to link (at least in part) the growing economic stability with the rising optimism and appreciation for that which is good in humanity, as is evidenced in the Renaissance. At this point, Plato was re-introduced back into western culture, inspiring the new humanism, which relied more on human capacities for reason and conscience than on revealed truth. With the faith in human ability restored, scientific inquiry emerged (slowly at first, and then with increasing alacrity) as a valid method of gaining knowledge about the world and the self. Education, although limited primarily to the wealthy, became more and more open to the new knowledge generated by science, and less and less dominated by history and theological doctrine.

Protestantism rejected much of the perceived corruption and superstition of the Roman Catholic Church, but it also shattered the mostly homogeneous worldview shared throughout the West since the consolidations of the Middle Ages. As the Church lost power and influence, she fought back with inquisitions and witch-hunts, but she could not fight back the tide of the Protestant Reformation. In America particularly, the Puritan belief in the value of work and individual efforts revived a social belief in human capacity. Reason once again became acceptable and the world saw a proliferation of invention and "natural" philosophy. Thinkers such as Rousseau, Kant, and Hume sought to find a new ground for a morality that had lost its universal grounding during the Renaissance and Reformation.[65]

[65] MacIntyre, 1984: 47

With the resurrected belief in the ability of human intellect to save humanity, the intellectual elites in western culture attempted to create a utopia founded upon logic, reason and technology. It was believed that human ability was sufficient to solve any problem, natural or social, and that because of the intrinsic value of humanity, each citizen is guaranteed certain "inalienable" rights by sheer virtue of being part of the species. As such, many consciously undertook the so-called "Enlightenment Project," which was to raise humanity out of the mire of superstition and fear through the application of reason and technology.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was believed widely that rationality could save humanity from its own vulnerability and mortality.[66] To this end, science was invented to predict and control nature. Our own nation was created out of this matrix of humanistic optimism and Protestant industriousness. The Founders believed that the creation of America was a providential act, lending sacred significance not only to the American goals of equality and liberty, but also lent an air of righteousness to our politics. This belief in the inspired nature of our national policies still lingers and has troubling implications for international relations with nations operating under very different religious worldviews. At this point, public informed and able to critically evaluate in order to participate in the self-government of the new republic. Yet, like the ancient democracies that the United States was modeled upon, the definition of citizen was extremely limited and only applied to a small segment of society. As noted in the previous chapter, modern critiques about the motives of education within society are important considerations, questioning what the goals of education truly are: are they truly to benefit the individual and

society through the dissemination of skills and knowledge, or is education merely another tool of political power and social control?

Alasdair MacIntyre tells us that the Enlightenment Project failed when those seeking a universal foundation for morality failed to find a metaphysical grounding for ethics that everyone could embrace.[67] They thought they could manipulate life as effortlessly as Mozart seemed to manipulate music with mathematical precision. What they failed to recognize was that the source of that beautifully balanced and predictable music was himself erratic and unpredictable. You can't control genius. All of these attempts to rectify morality failed. Based upon the same structure exposited by Aristotle, they all assumed human potentiality, rationality and some *telos* (although they disagreed over what that *telos* would be) to aim for. The foundation of Christian values within this system added a layer of Divine Law not present in the original Greek model. These new values carried with them an implicit belief in revelation and absolutism that rendered reason untrustworthy, which in turn, led to the divorce of reason from faith and morality.[68] It is believed by some that this split between reason, faith and morality eventually caused the Enlightenment Project to falter and fail.[69]

a) Rousseau

Rousseau set Europe aflame with revolutionary spirit when he stated that most of the monarchial governments in existence at the time of his writings were not

---

[66] MacIntyre, 1984: 103
[67] MacIntyre, 1984: 106
[68] MacIntyre, 1984: 54
[69] MacIntyre, 1984: 103 – 108, and Taylor 1991: 2 – 12

legitimate, and were ripe for a justifiable revolt.[70] Rousseau based this claim upon an even more incendiary claim in the basic goodness of human nature. Denying the Christian doctrine of Original Sin, Rousseau maintained that man's basic nature is fundamentally good, if entirely self-centered, and only becomes corrupt through the exposure to the evils of society, where he is made into a slave of social convention.[71] As such, Rousseau was a historical pessimist, who did not see humanity as moving towards a future utopia, but rather, saw the species in a state of degradation and devolution.[72] Rousseau focused on culture in political life more than any other philosopher of his era. The Social Contract, the tacit agreement to live in a civilization and to abide by its rules and standards in order to receive its protection and benefits, can only be effective if supported by institutions and practices.[73] For Rousseau, civic virtue is founded on moral self-interest, in which the free individual gives up his *Natural Liberty* in order to gain security and *Civic Liberty* [74] Civic Virtue entails the sublimation of the citizen's own wants and desires to the good of the community, gaining his own satisfaction through the satisfaction of everyone. This is in contrast to private self-interest, in which the individual identifies with her wants and desires as parts of herself, and demands special priority of her own desires.[75] [76] This is a very similar position to that of Communitarianism.

---

[70] Melzer, 1983: 295
[71] Rousseau, 1979: 42 – 43
[72] Melzer, 1983: 295 and 299
[73] Trachtenberg, 1993: 1
[74] Rousseau, 1968 60
[75] "Clearly inspired by Plato, in the Discourse on Political Economy, Rousseau advocates a system whereby children are educated communally by the state. The object of their training, Rousseau makes clear, is not cognitive, but motivational: Public education has the task of forming the structure of children's motivations so that they identify with their society and conform to the general will." Trachtenberg, 1993: 233
[76] Trachtenberg, 51 and 70

Rousseau worried about the loss of the citizen's sovereignty by the government, usurping the power of the General Will of the citizens (which Rousseau saw as the sole legitimate authority in a government) for its own ends.[77] The weakening of the General Will of a nation is caused, in Rousseau's thought, by the weakening of social ties, resulting in a loss in the unity of the state and a rise in private interest. This echoes Plato's warning about a rise in self-interest leading to a democracy's slide into tyranny.

Rousseau advocated the abolition of social evil and tyranny through revolution, while at the same time abhorring the danger and evils engendered by revolution, this resulted in a seeming conflict unresolved in his writings. On the one hand, he seems to foment rebellion, while simultaneously fearing it and warning against it.[78] Although he claims to not have meant to incite revolution, revolutionaries in France and Europe, in general, were inspired by his thought.

Rousseau believed that humanity had been corrupted by social conditioning, subscribing to a belief in the "Noble Savage."[79] The domestication of humans, according to Rousseau, was a corrupting influence that resulted in making humanity competitive, exploitative and paranoid, for dependence upon others was deemed to conflict with humanity's natural independence and selfishness.[80] Christianity, he held, contributed to this corruption through the diversion of attention away from this life and onto an afterlife, through the persecution of non-believers, and through the rise of a powerful priesthood, which vied with the state for supreme power. The only

[77] Rousseau, 1968: 150; and Trachtenberg, 1993: 57 - 58
[78] Rousseau, 1968: 89
[79] Rousseau's notion of the 'Noble Savage' has been recently debunked by evolutionary psychology. Pinker, 2002: 55

cure Rousseau saw for this was the creation of ardent patriots, who ruthlessly repressed their own individualism and lived for the success of the state, with revolution only as a last resort for a flailing humanity.[81] For Rousseau, the old Homeric values of manly virtue and strength were the long lost pinnacle of mankind, now doomed to inequity and vice due to corruption and weakness.[82] He outlined the grounds on which patriots could justifiable rebel. But Rousseau never expected this to happen, for his belief was the future was so pessimistic that his guidelines would most likely not be utilized, as people are too cowardly to rebel and the corrupt government in need of over-throwing too powerful.[83] [84]

Rousseau dared to write about freedom and the sovereignty of the people in order to keep these ancient ideals from dying out altogether.[85] Rousseau warned against the corruption of progress, civilization, and modernization in the hopes of delaying, if he could not altogether stop, the inevitable decay of humanity. He tried to minimize and diminish the bad effects of political enslavement, to keep alive the ancient ideals of freedom and moral health, and to teach humanity how to live under permanent tyranny. For Rousseau feared that the future would hold only the loss of human vitality through social vices, leaving humanity a species of petty criminals.[86]

---

[80] Melzer, 1983: 300
[81] Rousseau, 1968: 108
[82] Melzer, 1983: 303
[83] "Culture of the wrong sort creates self-interested individuals for whom free-riding is inevitable, hence for whom successful political life is unattainable. But culture of the proper sort creates individuals who face political cooperation with a sense of membership in and loyalty to a group." Trachtenberg, 1993: 72
[84] Melzer, 1983: 305 and Rousseau, 1968: 89
[85] Melzer, 1983: 311
[86] Melzer, 1983: 317

[87] Rousseau calls upon humanity to recall their innate goodness and to eschew the corrupting influences of luxury, inequality and other socially derived evils. In his treatise on education and character formation, *Emile*, Rousseau expounds the protection of emerging spirit of young and the rejection of willing slavery. Rousseau saw education as a preparation for life, much as the ancient Greeks and Romans did, often referring to the Spartans and Romans as role models. Rousseau would likely take issue with the modern view of education as vocational training.[88]

While our society socializes us to be obedient to authority, Rousseau would teach the youth to be resilient and self-reliant.[89] I will consider Rousseau's view of the self in detail in Chapter Five.

b) Kant and the Birth of the Modern Era

Immanuel Kant did not address the question of moral education directly, but his work to establish a universal morality had a profound affect upon the theoretical framework undergirding education. For instance, the Social Constructivist schools of sociology and education have adopted a primarily Kantian model and epistemology. This attempt accompanied a growing faith in human capacity to discover and master the laws of nature. The rise of science led to specialization, which effectively destroyed the ancient belief in the unity of knowledge. Ethics was reduced to the rarified strata of meta-ethics and highly abstract normative ethics. With the shattering of the homogeneity of the Roman Catholic Church and

[87] This is not an entirely unfounded fear, as evidenced by America's current record for having the highest percentage of its population behind bars in the world – but that is an entirely different discussion.
[88] Rousseau, 1979: 42 and 1968: 157

proliferation of Protestant sects, Kant sought a universal foundation for morality, not dependent upon belief or religion. Kant and the Enlightenment Project rejected the ancient Greek (and scholastic) teleological framework of virtue theory. Kant wanted to ground morality on human reason, not virtue, since virtue is subject to interpretation.[90] For Kant, in order for people to be considered truly rational, the will (or reason) must be free.[91] To be a rational being implies the obligation to live under a self-imposed moral law.[92]

Kant divides the world into two realms: that of the sensible – the empirical world of the body and appearances; and the intelligible world of ideas and reason, in which things are known in themselves.[93] Although the intelligible world is causal to the sensible world, the intelligible world cannot be known directly. As individuals partake in the intelligible world, they cannot directly observe themselves, and as they partake in the sensible world, the self that is knowable is only mere appearance and not the true self.[94] Since morality cannot be proven empirically, and individuals cannot gain self-knowledge through introspection, Kant must rely on human reason and duty to compel morality. This is a complete rejection of the ancient Delphic injunction to "Know Thyself," as Kant denies that this is even possible.

The implications for moral education shift from a holistic training for citizenship to a formulation of maxims and universal duties. As all individuals are independent moral agents, others are never to be used merely as a means, but are

---

[89] Rousseau, 1979: 88
[90] Grosch, 3
[91] Kant, 1964: 116
[92] Kant, 1964: 98
[93] Kant, 1964: 46
[94] Kant, 1964: 119

always to be considered to be ends in themselves, and given due proper consideration as such.[95] The shift from holism to lawmaking called for teaching an entirely different skill set to students. Kant's endeavor to find an objective justification for morality divorced moral worth from outcomes, and a rejection of teleology. For Kant, only a good will has moral worth, as it alone is incorruptible and unconditioned.[96] This undercuts the ancient view of virtue and *arête*, rendering practices and habits secondary to the cultivation of the good will. Therefore, students must be taught a universal formulae for determining morality and duty (called the *Categorical Imperative* - the Ten Commandments and Golden Rule were Kant's inspiration). This is unmistakably the influence of monotheism on meta-ethics, which stresses the law and justice above balance and compassion. But critics tell us that Kant failed to provide sufficient support for his system, instead he merely asserts its truth.[97]

In response to Kant's failure to give the framework he intended, Kierkegaard took the next logical step into what MacIntyre calls "emotivism," meaning the belief that personal preference is the legitimate ground for all evaluative pronouncements.[98] Kierkegaard, seeing that reason was unable to ground morality and faith, placed the burden on choice. Hume tried to ground ethics in desire. Bentham responded to Kant's failure with the hedonic calculations of utility, while Mill responded with the division of pleasure into higher and lower varieties.[99] The collective attempts of these philosophers to find a universal justification and grounds for moral truths

[95] Kant, 1964: 101
[96] Kant, 1964: 62
[97] MacIntyre, 1984: 46
[98] MacIntyre, 1984: 11 – 12

hastened the growth of relativism, as each new universal solution was only universal for some.

c) Founding of America

With the rise of technology and the Industrial Revolution, culture in the West shifted radically from a rural agrarian-based society to an urban production-based society. This shift not only changed the traditional basic structures of society (for example, the shift from large, self-sufficient extended families to smaller, nuclear suburban families), but the mandate of education also changed again. Instead of the purpose of education being to produce functional citizens, princes and leaders, the purpose of education became to produce minimally skilled workers. The rise of the factories changed everything, as the end of the industrial era in our own day is changing everything once again.

Liberation from the burden of manual labor allowed leisure for unprecedented numbers of individuals. The success of science and technology created the sense that all of humanity's problems could be solved by human reason and technology. It then seemed reasonable to believe that all of humanity's myriad issues could be reduced to a few simple equations discoverable through the application of reason. The rise of science and technology brought forth an age of revolutions in the west, as the new worldview supplanted the old, replacing a universal homogeneous cosmology with a worldview predicated on empirical observation of specific phenomena. Taylor credits the rise of what he calls "Instrumental Reason," which entails the use of rationality to maximize efficiency

[99] Grosch, 3 and MacIntyre, 1984: 47

and profits, with the hastening of the loss of cosmic order. Without a deity as the foundation of morality, individual desires and preferences are elevated to the role of prime motivator.[100] I hold this to be roughly equivalent to MacIntyre's idea of "Emotivism." The shift from the universal to the specific also took place at the level of the society, with the rising demand for individual rights. An increased emphasis on autonomy led to the overthrow of many ancient monarchies. The democracies and republics that replaced them looked back to the Hellenic thinkers for inspiration and role models. Innovation and technology increasingly became the order of the day, as science found solutions to many of life's perennial problems, promising a bright and easy future.

As America entered the twentieth century, both technology and the population grew at unprecedented rates, causing even greater social change. As the democratic ideal of equality was expanded to become more and more inclusive, individual rights became the focus of political thought and innovation. Hence, access to affordable public higher education was included as a civic right – a right that large numbers of World War II veterans exercised en mass after the conclusion of hostilities. Through the G.I. Bill, higher education became widely accessible to the middle and lower classes, immigrants and minorities alike.[101] Increasingly, higher education became vocational training of highly specialized knowledge to accommodate the burgeoning number of college students seeking higher paying jobs. By the 1960s, in the name of protection of minorities and families, character

[100] Taylor, 1991:3 - 5

[101] According to Derek Bok, the G.I. Bill turned higher education from elitist institutions into "one with an open door for all who were able and willing to seek further learning." Bok, 1990: 2

education was abandoned in favor of vocational training, and Liberal Education began its decline.

c) Civil Rights Movement/Rise of Neutral Liberalism

The Civil Rights movement sought to correct the many abuses of oppression, slavery and segregation for women and minorities. Focusing on claiming the equality segment of American Dream, the suffragettes and sit-in participants embodied an expanded definition of citizenship. This expanded sense of citizenship was supported by a complex framework of federal laws and shifting social values. Traditional class boundaries broke down with the rise of the middle class during the 1950s and 1960s, and the emphasis turned to making sure that citizens' rights were being respected and upheld. The 1960s and 1970s saw the largest expansion of civil rights in the history of this nation.[102] The protection of those hard-won rights for minority students created a vast bureaucracy in higher education to oversee and administer to them, known as Affirmative Action. Though often condemned by detractors as the application of racial and gender quotas, Affirmative Action was intended to correct glaring abuses of the past. In an age of growing litigation, Affirmative Action also had the responsibility of protecting state schools and universities from prosecution, making them the buffer between the students' constitutional right and the institute of higher learning. Along with the protection of the rights of women and minorities, religion also played a significant role advancing the protection of students' rights. With the rising tide of multiculturalism, state

[102] Yet some would contend that in spite of an unprecedented number of legally guaranteed rights, we have less actual liberty than at any other time in our nation's history.

schools had to cope with students coming from many divergent traditions, belief systems and worldviews. In order to provide a more level playing field, it was thought prudent to drop character education classes or programs that contained any vestiges of religious, racial or gender bias.

Derek Bok identifies five reasons for the change from the ancient view of education (in which all education contained a moral element), to the modern view (where moral education, if addressed at all, is often marginalized in public higher education). First, Darwin and evolutionary theory undermines the teleological view of the unity of all knowledge; Second, the rise of academic research and empiricism further removed traditional values from education; Third, the professionalization of curriculum placed importance on research and funding, not the modeling of moral character by faculty; Fourth, the social change caused by the shift from a rural agrarian culture to one of urban industrialism; and finally, the widespread practice of awarding tenure for research and publication, and not for good teaching.[103] We shall see the political and social ramifications of this shift in educational goals and ideals and their impact on the Formative Project in the next chapter.

[103] Bok, 1990: 66 - 67

Chapter Three

The Communitarian Response

A) Communitarian Complaints Against Neutral Liberalism

Neutral Liberalism holds that each citizen is entitled to protection of her or his personal liberties under the law. Presidents and pundits extol the virtues of *Liberty* and *Freedom*, and the power of *Democracy* to transform terrorist threats into peaceful markets and allies (whether or not this is true is another debate). But what do they mean by this magic-like condition known commonly as Liberty? Michael Beatty tells us:

> The dominant narrative in the West is the narrative of emancipation that posits the happiness of individuals as the ultimate aim of all social and political institutions. Happiness requires freedom. Thus, the narrative of emancipation evaluates all institutions by their liberation or emancipation of individuals. Modernity, then, is the story of the growth of individual freedom and its corollary, liberal democracy.[104]

As the dominant theme in our culture, liberty dictates the justification of all social and political institutions seek their justification for existence here. But we don't really know what liberty actually entails in practical life, as its definition seems to vary from case to case, making it very difficult to discern where we are and how we are doing with respect to liberty.

One individual's liberation can be another individual's coercion, as evidenced by debates over choice versus right to life, or over separation of church and state versus individual free speech, or over Affirmative Action versus reverse discrimination, as well as countless other issues that pit one set of individual rights

[104] Beatty, 5

against the rights of another.

Are there certain criteria by which we can recognize and evaluate liberty? Are we all using the same definition, or are there subtle differences which hide an unexplored world of political and social implications? Politicians on the campaign trail rarely define such emotionally-laden terms as liberty, allowing each potential constituent to fill in the blanks for themselves in order to appeal to the widest possible audience.

Is liberty just having the freedom to do whatever you want, whenever you want? Does liberty mean having an open market and the ability to choose between different brands and prices of merchandise? Or is liberty the holding of free elections that elect government representative of the citizens? Is liberty the guaranteed government protection of inalienable individual rights, for minorities as well as the voting majority? Does liberty in the United States mean the same thing as liberty in other nations? Should we apply the same criteria and standards of liberty to other countries as we apply at home? But, most critically, what do we mean when we use liberty to justify war? If we are not clear about why we are killing and dying, how can we honestly claim that our cause is just and our sacrifices not in vain?

The answers to many of these questions are not immediately obvious or simple to identify, and are beyond the scope of this work. But we must take up the question of the interpretation of liberty, where it relates to the inculcation of democratic values in our children and young adults. Throughout the history of our democracy, different voices have meant different things when speaking of liberty.

Yet all use the same terminology to reach radically different conclusions.[105] As we explore the primary ways that liberty has been employed historically, we shall see how its meaning comes to bear on our topic of moral and civic education. The study of social and political theory begins with the basic disagreement over the goals and ultimate purpose of a society, each of which has far-reaching implications and intentions.[106] This disagreement is over the nature of liberty, one of the two founding principles or ideals of the United States of America. The other main American principle is that of equality, which conflicts with liberty just as often as it nurtures liberty.

There are two primary ways of defining liberty, according to tradition. Isaiah Berlin most succinctly distinguishes the two as *Negative Liberty* and *Positive Liberty*. *Negative Liberty* is defined as the 'freedom from interference,' while *Positive Liberty* is defined as 'freedom to… (fill in the blank),' or autonomy.[107] Berlin describes Negative Liberty as equivalent to the extent to which no one else controls or interferes from the outside with our will. The more outside interference that exists, the less freedom exists, even resulting in outright enslavement, even if the individual in question appears superficially to be free from observable constraints. Under this definition, coercion is seen as the deliberate interference in the actions of

[105] Just as Alasdair MacIntyre famously observed about the unnoticed shift in meaning in the language of virtue, so I argue that there has been likewise a shift in the meaning of liberty over the time that has escaped attention, resulting in a haze of confusion when we speak about the concept and applications of liberty. I further believe that this phenomenon of 'Meaning Shift' is likely observable in most, if not all, of human cultural ideals, such as Equality, Happiness, and (as Socrates so famously showed) Piety. Each of these terms is deemed superlative, yet is so vaguely defined that its meaning can be manipulated to justify almost anything. Each of these cultural ideals operates as a cluster of related ideas, and at different stages of social and political development, different aspects of the definition are emphasized and others down-played, to suit the message and need of the day.
[106] Berlin, 1997: 199
[107] Berlin, 1997: 193

others to prevent the execution of a chosen action, and so, must have a human source. This allows the exclusion of natural impediments, such as disease or physical handicap, from being considered coercive, but does not excuse human-generated handicaps like poverty or class status.[108] The elimination of interference with the individual requires that they be granted certain protected rights; in America, these government protected rights were enacted through the Bill of Rights, amended to the United States' Constitution, which promises its citizens, no matter how poor or insignificant, 'life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.' This is the definition we most often hear espoused by adherents to Neutral Liberalism: Liberty is seen is the guarantee of civil liberties to all citizens equally and the protection of minorities. Prior to the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, racism was an institutionalized leftover from pre-Civil War slavery. Jim Crow laws still prevailed, with minorities marginalized and harassed.

Embracing the rhetoric of exponents of Neutral Liberalism such as John Rawls, the middle decades of the twentieth century became devoted to securing more and more rights for under-privileged and exploited groups, even while those same protected minorities were essentially barred from actual participation in government on the local, state and national levels due to ingrained prejudice and lack of resources. Many past injustices of racism and intolerance were finally recognized and addressed for the first time in the middle of the last century, even if many remain unresolved to this day. Americans became tempted to think of any form of constraint as enslavement, as more and more emphasis was placed on individual choice as exercised in a free marketplace of ideas and goods. American freedom was

[108] Berlin, 1997: 194

expressed in the choice of religion, location, way of life, speech, and most importantly, in the marketplace. Anything that enhanced individual freedom was justified, and anything that obstructed individual freedom was challenged.

Adam Smith's eighteenth century utilitarian concept of the "Invisible Hand" holds that somehow all personal interests harmonize naturally, since individual freedom is assumed to be the ultimate good, and universal freedom would be the highest possible good. This view also holds that selfishness is good for progress because it drives economic markets and invention.[109] This view assumes an underlying harmony and balance of individual human self-interest that is often lacking in an age of faceless multi-national corporations and global bureaucracies.

But freedom from oppression and coercion alone are not sufficient to create the multi-cultural utopia promised by the Neutral Liberal theorists and proponents. Bias, cultural prejudice and intolerance can run very deep, and the rights of the minority can and will conflict with the will of the majority. As I noted above, far too often one citizen's liberty is another citizen's oppression, as in the case of those who complain that religious holiday symbols on state property is a violation of the separation of church and state, versus those who complain that the removal of nativity scenes and the Ten Commandments from state property is not only discrimination, but also ignores the assumed will of the majority of citizens, as the majority of citizens are overwhelmingly Christian.

Obviously, with so many competing interests, each with a valid point to make, it is common for the needs of some not to be met, and for the powerful to oppress the weak, despite ever-increasing new rights granted by the government.

How are we to adjudicate between rival claims when both sides have viable but conflicting arguments, based on the same principle of liberty as seen through different prisms? Who must the government protect – the minorities or the majority? The interests of the one (or the minority) often conflicts with the interest of the many. Who shall be asked to give up their rights so that someone else's rights might be preserved, if all are considered equally entitled?

Mill, Locke and Tocqueville each believed in the necessity for a minimal area of inviolable personal freedom in order to develop properly as a whole human being. This requires a boundary of some kind between the impingement of the government and the personal promise of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," however that individual should construe it. But the difficulty lies in where to place that boundary.[110] The necessity of living with others requires that we be willing to give up some of our radical liberty in order to live together in peace and relative security.[111]

The question becomes: how much liberty is it permissible to give up for the promise of protection and access to markets without being subject to oppression and/or exploitation? This is what John Rawls sought to address with his creation of 'the Original Position,' in which the principles for organizing a totally equal and just society are sought.[112] In order for each individual to retain as much natural liberty as possible, absolute equality must be sought. To a great extent, our social and political policies are founded on the belief in creating an even playing field for people of

---

[109] Smith, 1923, Volume I 163
[110] Berlin, 1997: 194 – 196
[111] Rousseau, 1968: 61 and 77
[112] Rawls, "The Idea of Public Reason Revisited," 1999: 581

diverse backgrounds. The willingness to give up a bit of one's own freedom in order that all others might be more free is at the heart of Neutral Liberalism, with the underlying unquestioned assumption that limited freedom for all is a higher good than unlimited freedom for an elite few and oppression for the rest. This is in accord with the utilitarian principles of Mill and Bentham. And public policy attempts to take up this noble and lofty ambition through legislation and public policy.

But even the noblest and loftiest of ambitions can go awry in application. Affirmative Action is a prime example of the state's attempt to provide equal access to minorities, but this is considered reverse discrimination by those groups accustomed to privileged access as part of the majority. It has been appropriately assigned to the courts to weigh the arguments on these kinds of value judgments that pit individual or minority rights against the will of the majority. But the decisions of the courts cannot help but be affected by whichever definition of liberty they may be employing, and the prevailing definition is usually decided emotionally and politically, not through careful rational analysis and consideration of alternatives and implications. The Bill of Rights was enacted to protect the individual or minorities from the power of the majority, yet its application in the courts is likewise affected by the prevailing political milieu, granting more or less weight to the rights of the minority depending on the current environment.

The other interpretation of freedom, that of Positive Liberty, is defined as self-rule in which the individual is an agent unto themselves, and not the instrument of another. It means to be conscious of one's self as an doer of one's own

purposes.[113] The perennial problem with this self-mastery is that one can be free of outside interference and still be a slave to one's own passions or nature. Isaiah Berlin answers this challenge with a call to self-governance and self-control. By building the locus of liberty into the individual and not the government, political bodies cannot give liberty nor take it away. In this sense, the concept of freedom is derived directly from the concepts of self, and is not dependent upon prevailing political opinion.

This approach employs a dualistic model of the self: a higher self, which is an idealized self controlled by reason – the autonomous self; and a lower self, which is controlled by passion and desire, the empirical self.[114] The impulsive lower self should be subject to the cool rulership of the higher self. This view parallels Aristotle's distinction between the rational self and the irrational self, or perhaps more recently, Freud's distinction between the Id and Superego, with Ego serving as the go-between. Positive Liberty holds that no matter what the physical circumstances, and individual can always choose what attitude they will take internally towards the external circumstance. It is through education and self-knowledge that individuals learn how to strengthen and exercise this inner freedom. This position is similar also to that held by the Stoics and Epicureans, who believed that inner peace and contentment is not dependent upon external contingencies, but rather believed that any unwanted desire, pain and fear can be transcended, leaving the individual no longer at the mercy of "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune."

[113] Berlin, 1997: 203 – 204
[114] Berlin, 1997: 205

Berlin suggests that people may project their higher selves onto a social context, such as race, tribe, church or nation, which then impinges upon the lower selves of the community (such as naughty members of the collective) and brings them into line with the collective ideals.[115] Rousseau refers to this projection of the individual higher self onto the state as the General Will, to which each citizen must subject themselves.[116] Through this projection, the collective selves gain a higher freedom by taming their bodily natures. The obvious problem with this arrangement is that it can suppress and coerce individuals into conformity with the majority view, whether the dominant view is accurate or not.

Two vital questions arise: First, at what point is it permissible to coerce an individual for their own good? Rousseau believed that an individual can and should be coerced into freedom for his or her own good, for in their state of ignorance, citizens will not understand the benefits of the liberty being offered until they have tasted it.

Democracies are dependent upon an educated and well-informed public who can make informed and well-considered decisions, for themselves, for their communities and for their nation; to that end, we have state mandated primary and secondary education. Consistent with Beatty's concept of the dominant Western narrative of emancipation, it is argued that a minimum mandatory education is necessary to equip a democracy's citizenry with the minimum skills needed to be productive and participate in that society. To provide less than this is considered to

[115] Berlin, 1997: 204
[116] Rousseau, 1968: 72 - 77 and 85 Rousseau further claimed that the state must employ a 'censor' to maintain the purity of public expression, according to the prescribed moral standards of that society.

deny the principle of liberty, as a totally illiterate and uneducated citizen will not be capable of independence in a literate society. Nor could they easily inform themselves objectively on political issues in order to make up their own minds. The continued existence of academe is thereby justified as furthering the goals of liberty and independence.[117] Hence, in America and most other democracies, children have compulsory education for their own good, and to abridge or terminate this process is considered un-American and bad parenting.

This, in turn, leads to other important questions: How much compulsion is too much? Is there a universal minimum for coercion or does each individual have unique tolerances – do some students require a firmer hand, while others need more space to figure it out for themselves? When does coercion for the others' own good become oppression and tyranny? Who decides what that boundary is and using what criteria? What should be included or excluded from the curriculum? Who decides – using what standards? Who should be considered qualified to teach or develop curriculum? Who watches for abuse? How are abuses reported and dealt with? This list of questions is just the beginning of an avalanche of concerns regarding public education.

Secondly, what if the majority (who control public policy in a democracy through the election of their chosen representatives and their obedience to legislation) is wrong, deceived or manipulated? Hitler would not have been able to

---

For Rousseau, the rights of the individual were subordinate to the preservation of the harmony of the state.

[117] Michael Beatty, "Paideia: Moral Education in the University?"p. 4 Beatty continues: "Following the narrative of emancipation, the modern university justifies itself by contributing to liberal democracy. The university was to reflect and reinforce the goals of a liberal democracy maintaining and enhancing individual freedom and creativity. Thus, moral education and civic responsibility must be expressed and grounded in claims about individual freedom. How is that accomplished?"

do what he did if the vast majority of Germans did not go along. One of Socrates' most stinging criticisms of democracy is the observation that democracy glorifies 'mob rule,' which is notorious for often being extreme and reactionary, established in fear.[118]

The Founding Fathers subscribed to a humanist belief in the innate nobility of humanity that, given freedom from oppression and external coercion, will naturally blossom into creativity and prosperity. This nation was founded on a profound faith in the goodness of human nature, which undergirded the call for majority rule. They believed that rulership by popular vote would not only correct the many abuses of the ancient monarchial system that concentrated power into the hands of an elite few, but the founding generation of America also believed that the common sense of the majority would balance out extremes in public policy, resulting in a mostly conservative state resistant to radical change. But the founders of America never foresaw the use of the internet, media, advertising and public relations firms to disseminate "spin" to the masses. If public opinion is swayed and manipulated by a slick ad campaign, a catchy jingle or a politician's oft-replayed public faux pau calculated to maximize impact by highly-skilled specialists backed by meticulous research, then it follows that the conditions which the Founders assumed as baseline to American society and government no longer apply. If this conclusion is correct, then the majority cannot be depended upon to balance out the more radical political extremes as in the past, as they are under the influence of advertisers and spin doctors. Unless the electorate is capable of seeing through sophisticated public relations campaigns in politics and social issues, we no longer have true free will in

[118] Plato, *Republic*, Book VIII 556e - 557b, 558a and 563d

our politics and democratic culture. Instead of a true democracy as envisioned by the Founding Fathers, we will have a form of mob rule, controlled by whoever is most effective in stirring up the passions of the mob - exactly the danger in democracy that Plato warned against over two millennia ago.

2) Arguments For and Against the Formative Project

When national politics began to focus on civil rights in the middle of the twentieth century, anything that smacked of 'old school' elitism was suspect, as the emphasis shifted from maintaining the political status quo of the dominating Caucasian males to empowering minorities to claim the civil liberties long promised but usually denied them. At the middle and late decades of the twentieth century, the Formative Project was mostly abandoned by the educational system, which was straining to adjust to the challenge of integration and feminism, (however, the Black Civil Rights and Feminist Movements also had strong Communitarian features). The old system of inculcating the Protestant Anglo patriarchy's ethos was no longer suited to an emerging multicultural and mixed gendered nation. During this time, politics were focused on the 'Equality' aspect of democracy. This led to a primary focus on Negative Liberty, when oppressed minorities found the voice to demand their constitutional rights in numbers too large to ignore or suppress. There was a shift from an elitist model of education (in which the goal was the training and preparation of future leaders and landed gentry), to a more egalitarian view of education (based upon the principles of utilitarianism, which sought to maximize the

individual's happiness).[119] Political fervor began to focus on guaranteeing rights, rather than on actually including and empowering these newly 'equalized' minorities in government. Hence, we still find that the vast majority of our elected representatives are wealthy, white, land-owing males, with just a handful of women and non-Anglos.

Social Political theorist Michael Sandel identifies two primary objections to the revitalization of Positive Liberty (which includes the Formative Project), what he calls Civic Freedom: first is the objection that the world has become so complex that it is unrealistic to revive this interpretation of liberty; the second objection doubts that Positive Liberty is something early twenty-first century Americans would find appealing.[120] These objections are based on the argument that average modern peoples do not have the leisure to learn and debate about public concerns. Further, we live in a highly diverse mobile society inside of global markets, a condition which does not foster community involvement. Another argument against Positive Liberty is that the rise of Procedural Liberalism (the government granting and protecting of rights for citizens) is seen as an improvement over historic civil abuses and that the loss of community and self-government is worth the gain in tolerance and individual choice.

Underlying these objections, Sandel claims, are two fears of republicanism: that of elitism and coerciveness. The Formative Project is seen as coercive, as it is decidedly not neutral about its emphasis on virtue, and elitist, as virtue has

[119] Michael Beatty 4
[120] Sandel, 1996: 317

historically been tied to class role. But Sandel claims that virtue is not necessarily intrinsic to republicanism or elitism, as virtue can and should be taught publicly through the auspices of the Formative Project. Yet, the Formative Project is often suspect in democracy, because it runs the risk of becoming coercive, a form of 'soul-craft.'[121] Like Sandel, I agree that such 'soul-craft' need not be destructive of the students' individual will, as Rousseau's approach tends toward.[122] But rather, moral education within the Formative Project can gently promote independence and personal sound judgment through persuasion and habituation, instead of through authority and punishment. Unlike Rousseau's assumption of the need for a unified republic, Sandel argues that a return to a republican construal of Liberty does not require mindless conformity or coercion to achieve it.

Neutral Liberalism (or what Sandel calls Voluntarism, defined as respecting the rights of freely choosing selves) was supposed to avoid the risks of the Formative Project as it detached itself from the concept of self-government and focused on individual choice. Thus the Formative Project was narrowed to teaching tolerance and respect in public elementary schools. This approach eliminates problems of self-rule, as well as debate over what constitutes 'the good life,' thus making morality no longer a publicly debated issue, but more one of personal preference. Sandel points out several problems with the view of citizens as free atomistic agents: this view leaves out the real obligations and beliefs of citizens, thus assuming a range of options which may or may not be viable for all citizens. The bracketing of morality in order to avoid a public debate over 'the good' is not satisfying emotionally nor

[121] Sandel, 1996: 318-319

socially, for without public moral debate, Sandel claims that the public focus will shift to exposing the vices and scandals of politicians. Another result of this Voluntarist view is the loss of mastery, in which freedom becomes equated with the accumulation of more rights, but less actual citizen control over their own lives. Sandel claims that current political conditions prove that liberty cannot be separated from self-governance because a Liberal Procedural republic cannot inspire moral and civil engagement. Hence the dire need for a national Formative Project.[123]

Rousseau argued that a choice must be made between creating a man or a citizen, as the two were diametrically opposed to one another.[124] For Rousseau, man is atomistic, independent, selfish and free because his powers equal his needs. Whereas citizens are part of a larger whole, dependent upon society, but still free within the confines of the General Will. A citizen is a natural man stripped of his independent forces. Rousseau believed that both natural man and citizens are created through what we now call enculturation. Current thought in Social Psychology would agree.[125] Human nature itself is plastic enough to accommodate whatever programming shapes it. No matter what we do, through our educational processes, we are creating one kind of individual or another. As we saw above, one of the most-cited fears of moral education is the fear of indoctrination. But no matter what approach we take to moral education, whether we are for it or against it, no matter what our beliefs tell us is right, we are indoctrinating students. The essential nature of education *is* indoctrination of one variety or another. Even teaching students how

---

[122] Rousseau, 1968: 85
[123] Sandel, 1996: 321-323
[124] Rousseau, 1968:248

to evaluate and think for themselves is still a form of indoctrination, as it still has a specific agenda informed by particular values, which tend to result in predictable dilemmas and triumphs. Indoctrination cannot be avoided in education. The Big Question is 'what is being indoctrinated and by whom?' The real fear behind indoctrination is loss or abuse of power, as students are in a vulnerable position relative to the faculty. The fear is that students will be warped according to a professor's or a university's bias, rendering them pliable to manipulation by unscrupulous individuals, corporations or movements, or infringing on their First Amendment rights.

Another fear generated by the Formative Project includes that of colonization or imperialism, in which students are taught to how to exploit those less fortunate, inculcating prejudice and intolerance. Serious concerns are also raised over the content of the Formative Project and the criteria for evaluation. Moral content has traditionally come from religious sources, yet the Formative Project cannot undertake to teach morality without drawing from some source, and religious sources are not appropriate for state universities. State schools in particular must be careful not to teach morality in any manner which could be construed as religious proselytizing, which would violate the students' First Amendment rights. Yet, the curriculum must at the same time be acceptable to the majority, who support state universities with their taxes. The question arises: is it possible to teach morality without abstracting it to meaninglessness or reducing it to enforcing rules?[126]

---

[125] Pinker, 2002: 60

[126] "The history of higher education is studded with efforts to develop character that, in retrospect, seem quaint, misdirected or downright objectionable. More often than not, such ventures have either

Derek Bok offers a five-part suggestion for the restoration of moral education. These are: 1) offering courses in applied ethics; 2) the discussion of rules of conduct with faculty and students; 3) the fair administration of rules of conduct; 4) employing high moral standards and emphasizing community service and 5) consistently relating to students according to the institution's stated ethical standards.[127]

While these suggestions are a good start, I contend that they are not enough. Bok's approach will prove as ineffective as the previous attempts he disparages, for he is still looking at the student as subjects to be molded according to some master plan. But, regardless of how good Bok's intentions are, his model does not go far enough, for it still objectifies the students, rather than engaging them in their own moral journey. The challenge for the future of the Formative Project, if it is to have a future, is to balance exposure to ethical reasoning with praxis in a manner that does not violate civil liberties.

This chapter has traced the history of the debate over moral education in America and described our current dilemma. Next, I will explicate my proposal to help remedy this situation.

---

proven ineffectual or degenerated into crude attempts to impose particular doctrines or piety rules of behavior. Despite these problems, moral education is too important to discard just because prior effects have failed. Besides, universities cannot avoid the task whether or not they relish the responsibility. Like it or not, they will affect the moral development of their students by the ways in which they administer their rules of conduct, by the standard they set in dealing with ethical issues confronting the institution, by the manner in which they counsel their students and coach their athletic teams, indeed, even by their indifference toward moral issues in and out of the classroom. The only question is whether they choose to proceed blindly and ad hoc or with careful forethought." Bok, 1990: 79

[127] Bok, 1990: 80 – 85 and Beatty "Moral Education?" 6

Chapter Four

Epistemic Responsibility

Sociologist and educator, Parker J. Palmer claims that every epistemology implies an ethic – every way of knowing creates a way of being. In our culture, the primary mode of academic epistemology is "Objectivism," which holds that reality is "out there," waiting to be discovered apart from individual bias and subjectivity.[128] But social cognitive science has shown this to be false – there are as many interpretations of reality as there are selves to perceive "reality," and none of them is completely unbiased or free from subjectivity. Furthermore, each individual exhibits different 'selves' in different environments.[129] So, how can we ever really know what reality is "out there" without reference to our own subjective experiences and biases? Without our subjective biases and beliefs, we have no criteria or framework with which to evaluate or understand the raw data of experience. What we believe determines and colors what we perceive "out there" as reality, as our beliefs filter our knowing into pre-established forms and patterns.[130] We cannot know that which we have no concept for; without a pre-existing framework with which to recognize new experiences, then raw sense data remains just that – raw and unknown. And our primary mode of objective epistemology further alienates us from our deeper selves and our communities, as attempts to remove subjectivity splinter awareness as the objectivist individuals try to divorce themselves from what they claim to know.

[128] Parker J. Palmer, from public speech "Epistemology and Community," 2000
[129] Turner, 1999, Markus and Cross, 1989

At this point, I would like to introduce the term *Epistemic Responsibility*, by which I mean taking responsibility for all of the consequences of an individual's beliefs. 'Reality' as we experience it, is a product of interpretation, which is totally dependent upon belief, founded upon an assumption of radical free will. All beliefs create outcomes, whether acknowledged or not, intended or not, foreseen or not. True maturity and participation occurs when we recognize this and take seriously the choosing the beliefs to which we subscribe. When we take conscious responsibility for *all* of the consequences of our beliefs, conscious and unconscious, intended or not, we become epistemically responsible. Epistemic responsibility can be expressed in a whole range of degrees, from the totally unaware but self-involved individual (such as your garden variety party-obsessed teenager or redneck) to fully mature and self-actuated individuals who accept responsibility not only for their own belief outcomes, but who actively work to help others recognize and husband their own self-beliefs (Christ or Buddha come to mind).

In the *Republic*, Plato sets the groundwork for the general question of epistemic responsibility with the main topic question: Why be just? Is there some reason, beyond the fear of being caught and punished, for being a good person?[131] Plato goes through an elaborate political analysis of many systems of government in order to answer this most basic of questions. Although Plato's keen insights into political orders and devolution are of great interest, the political critiques are not the driving purpose of the Republic. Plato's burning question, "Why be just?" has even greater impetus in the current age of transitioning values, when corruption and crime

[130] This thesis has profound implications for the ethics predicated on John Rawls' "Veil of Ignorance," but an exploration of this issue must wait for later explication.

seem to pay much better than an honest minimum wage job at 'Mickey-D's,'[132] and slacking off and playing video games are much more fun than working hard to earn a solid education and become a good citizen. Plato answers this question by using the political analyses as a means of illustrating dysfunction in individuals just as much as it is a description of the strengths and weaknesses of governments. Using the political analyses as instruction aids, Plato claims that there *is* a good reason to be just – that to be unjust is harmful to the psyche of both the individual and the *polis*.[133] For Plato, injustice occurs when there is an imbalance in the functioning of an individual or a state, when one part inappropriately seizes power and usurps the proper functioning of another internal component. I contend that this imbalance that Plato discusses, both in the state and in the individual, is primarily generated by faulty and unexamined belief systems.

Epistemic responsibility carries a strong indictment of 'spin,' bullshit, hypocrisy and deliberate lying to gain one's own ends.[134] The use of hypocrisy, lying and spin are seen as indicative of an imbalanced belief system that holds that the hypocrite, liar or spinner's goals and intentions somehow trump the value of the truth and the autonomy of others, a wide-reaching charge in a world saturated in advertising and polarized agendas. This idea has broad implications for ethics in general, but, beyond a general enunciation of the concept in broad strokes, I shall

---

[131] Plato, *Republic*, Book II, 357 a – 368d

[132] Economist Steven J. Levitt has discovered that despite the common public perception to the contrary, most of the crack dealers on the street actually end up only making about as much money as they would make at a minimum wage job, such as at MacDonald's, proving that the image and the reality are often very different. Levitt and Dubner, 2005: 99

[133] Plato, *Republic*, Book X 610a – 613e

[134] Harry Frankfurt differentiates between bullshit and lying. Bullshit occurs when individuals are called upon to discuss subjects they know little about, not necessarily with malicious intent, while lying is the deliberate deception of others for self gain. Frankfurt, 2005: 6 – 13

confine myself to a focus primarily on how this idea applies in the field of civic or moral education.

We all have countless beliefs, many of them contradictory and conflicting, while some beliefs are just downright self-destructive. Usually, we only reflect upon our beliefs in times of crisis – when, for whatever reason, our beliefs have failed us. Rarely do we reflect upon the beliefs by which we steer through the seas of life without being forced to such reflection by pain and dire need. Any scion of bureaucracy will recognize this as crisis management – notoriously the worst style of management in terms of both efficiency and efficacy. When our lives flow smoothly, we have no pressing need to review our belief systems for inconsistencies and out-moded beliefs, so very few people bother to put forth the focused effort to examine the coherence and efficacy of their beliefs. Mid-life crises, traumas and life-threatening illness are the most popular occasions for a subjective epistemic review and revisions, forcing us to re-visit past decisions and events in a new perspective. When we do re-evaluate our beliefs under the pressure of the crisis du jour, we often make hasty assumptions and judgments that we must later correct. Everyone knows that decisions made under stress and duress are of notoriously poor quality, yet this is the preferred method of personal and collective belief management espoused by our culture. The accumulated result of two hundred years of this approach is record levels of stress and stress-related illnesses, as well as a cultural cycle of escalation of rhetoric in almost every sphere of life, as knee-jerk and extreme reactions become the order of the day. Time, energy and resources are

wasted in useless over-reaction in the personal daily lives of individuals as well as at all levels of social and political interaction.

The true subject of self-knowledge is beliefs about the self, because this determines and limits our capacities. When I don't know who I am, I don't know what I believe, and so I will change my beliefs to suit the needs of the moment without considering the implications or long-term repercussions. And if I don't know what to believe, then I don't know how to *be* in the world or how to relate to others. If I do not know these things, then any talents and skills I may have will be greatly undermined, as will my self-esteem.[135] Without the full benefit of my talents, skills or self-esteem, it is very difficult to be happy, much less to defend myself against the assault of peer pressure and media generated values. I will acquiesce to whatever sounds good, destroying integrity and self-esteem as I re-make myself to try to fit in and be happy. But I won't really know how to be happy, as I won't know what is appropriate for me and what is wrong for me. So I will accept the decrees of experts and advertisers, in the hopes that they know me better than I know myself. Many Americans work long hours, estranging themselves from their families, or bankrupt themselves with over-extended credit, trying to buy the confidence and happiness they feel lacking in their lives by purchasing the latest product, undergoing another procedure or buying the biggest sport-utility vehicle, or through that most particularly post-modern form of personal relationships: serial monogamy, in which one dysfunctional relationship is replaced by another once the old one becomes too painful or complicated.

[135] Campbell and Carver, 1999 and Tangney, 2002

The most common motivator in life is fear. We get and stay in unsatisfying jobs out of fear. We stay stuck in abusive relationships and situations because of fear. We are afraid because we believe that we can't handle life without that person, that title, that salary, that property…. We are afraid that we are not "enough" to deal with the challenges of life on our own terms because we don't know who we are, so we don't know what our capacities or terms are. A belief in helplessness and victimization limits our awareness and capacity to respond to situations and relations.[136] When obsessed with the crisis management of one's own life's dramas, things like citizen participation in government and community involvement seem very distant and insignificant, as civic participation carries a high price in personal investment of time and attention. Yet, it is only on the foundation of citizen participation and community involvement that democracy thrives. The threat to democracy arises when a significant percentage of the population falls prey to this growing malaise.

I argue that it needn't be this way. If we aspire to more efficacy and efficiency in commerce and government, how much more should we aspire to in the psychic management of ourselves? And if it is possible to teach the skills required, then it is incumbent upon us to learn these skills and pass on them on to our students, especially in public education, as a matter of public mental hygiene. Current research has shown that the more self-knowledge an individual acquires, the more stability, empathy and integrated a self-concept is developed.[137] A more mature and integrated citizenry is a well-informed electorate, and creates a stronger democracy.

[136] Dweck and Leggett, 1998
[137] Campbell, Carver, 1999 and Tagney, 2002

Unlike other creatures in the animal kingdom, humans do not rely heavily upon instinct for clues about how to interact and be in the world. We receive this social knowledge from our family and culture, and that knowledge can vary widely. Our 'everyday reality' in which we live, move and have our being in is socially constructed. Sociologists note the plasticity of human nature that allows for such diversity as is found in the multitude of cultures around the world. Humans can believe and adapt to almost anything.[138] This human capacity for adaptability has kept us alive as a species throughout the millennia in an amazing range of conditions and environments. Problems with this system of handing on family and cultural beliefs can originate when the belief systems handed down by family and culture are mistaken, outdated or miscommunicated. But conflicting beliefs can cause the worst fracturing and splintering of the individual, sparking identity crisis and possible debility, as the individual struggles with divided loyalties (consciously or not). The beliefs we pick up "on the street" in our life experience may conflict with the belief system we accepted as children, or we may be forced by circumstances to do something we feel is morally wrong, but cannot avoid doing, either through duress or weakness. The persona we embody at work may violate our deepest values, but we may have another set of beliefs that plays upon our fears of invasion, exclusion and poverty, that urges us to continue to act in conflict with our values "or else." We may not realize there is even a conflict until we have played out the whole script dictated by the contending beliefs. Often, it is only after the beliefs have run their course do we look back as we pick up the pieces and see how our beliefs precipitated our experiences (especially those insidious beliefs that we hide from ourselves).

[138] Berger and Luckmann, 1967: 36 - 40

Beliefs about the self tend to become self-fulfilling prophecies – "as you believe, so shall you do."[139] But seventy to ninety percent of our beliefs about ourselves are unconscious, and therefore beyond our control until we actually take the time to examine them.[140]

Only in retrospect do we come to understand how we have hidden our true beliefs from our conscious mind, yet enacted them inerrantly nonetheless. Indeed, much of the stuff of which soap opera and contemporary life are comprised comes from exactly these kinds of belief conflicts, both on the individual level and at the cultural level. Communitarian Charles Taylor addresses this alienation and splintering of the self at length, and concludes that this alienation is socially derived.[141]

Taylor asserts that meaning only makes sense against the backdrop of something other than the self. He claims that we can only understand the self through three primary external sources: 1) culture, 2) significant others and 3) strong evaluation.[142] These external sources of identity entail that there exist phenomena that affirm the independent value of choices, in opposition to radical subjectivism. The values we embody are usually gleaned from these three sources, but often, these values contradict one another, providing the primary origin of alienation.

Yet, many conflicts can be resolved merely through the conscious recognition that we hold certain beliefs that conflict, and through the conscious selection of which beliefs we choose to continue to hold and enact in our lives. Both

---

[139] From "And the Children Shall Lead," *Star Trek*, the Original Series
[140] Snyder, 1979; Deci and Ryan, 1999; Markus and Wurf, 1987; Markus and Kitayama, 1999; Carver, 1999; Dweck and Leggett, 1988.
[141] Taylor, 1989: 25 – 43

contemporary psychological research and the ancient wisdom of many cultures teach us that we can access our beliefs and belief systems from a meta-level, examine and weigh which beliefs we will continue to endorse and which beliefs require extinction, the goal always being greater integration and functioning of the self.

As current research in the field of Social Cognitive Psychology indicates (and the ancient knowledge has always known), some beliefs – especially those regarding the self – have demonstrably predictable results. In other words, some beliefs about the self and the individual's place in the world are empirically proven to be more beneficial to the overall health, well-being and effectiveness of individuals, and other beliefs have been empirically proven to erode the individual's health, well-being and effectiveness. In essence, this research tells us that the greater the degree of integrity and self-knowledge, the better adjusted and happy the individual. The more self-examination of beliefs that an individual does, the better for their own selves and for the relationships with the other lives they touch, spreading out into the community and society at large.[143] If we seriously mean to equip our youth with the means to not only live healthy and happy lives, but also are seriously committed to the preservation of our democracy, then shouldn't we provide our youth with the benefits of this science? How is it that we spend vast resources to educate our young, with the intention of preparing them to take their place in the world, without ever teaching them how to get along with themselves, much less get along with others?

---

[142] Taylor, 1989: 25 - 43
[143] Campbell, 1999; Carver, 1999, and Tangney, 2002

I contend that it is incumbent upon us to utilize the knowledge already present within each of us, as well as that discovered by current scientific research, to help our young adults develop more beneficial beliefs about themselves and their place in the world. I am aware that a frank and open discussion about shaping beliefs is bound to be controversial in the current climate of polarized and warring ideologies, but I hold that such a discussion is long overdue. I believe that the so-called 'culture wars' now raging could have been either avoided or greatly mitigated had these strategies been in wide practice. If you are mostly secure in your beliefs about who and what you are, you don't need to resort to extreme behavior or threats of extreme behavior to convince others that your point of view is sound. It is only those who harbor secret fears that they might be horribly wrong who try to ram their own beliefs down the throats of others, or are threatened by the mere existence or proximity of differing beliefs of others. And only those who don't know who they really are or what they actually believe are easily swayed by others who are convinced that they know what's best for everyone. What is worse about this chronic human condition is the observation that most of this type of behavior is entirely unconscious. Because this perceptual morass is the usual order of procedure for our culture, many discussions of the formative project often boil down to a question of *who* is to do the teaching, using what *standards* and *criteria*? This is a serious question and deserves more attention than possible in this essay. However, in the meantime, I contend that basing civic or moral education for young adults on self-knowledge avoids much of the traditional problems of the formative project as the individual always is the final arbiter of which beliefs truly serve the self and

which ones need to be eliminated. No one can force anyone to believe anything – that is the primary principle of Epistemic Responsibility – radical free will.[144] Individuals, regardless of circumstances or status, have complete control over their own interpretation of their own experiences. No belief can ever be imposed, even under duress. All beliefs must be subjectively accepted in order to be activated in the psyche. Acceptance of beliefs can be bribed, evoked, seduced, mistaken, dysfunctional or ill-founded, but it can never be forced against an individual's will. Within our own psyches, we are absolute despots, and we rule our little kingdoms accordingly, for our own and others' good or ill.

Do not confuse this inner freedom with individualism or subjectivism. Individualism is a basic value in our culture, spurring the invention and innovation for which this nation is famous. However, there is a dark side to individualism as well, for along with the rise of individualism experienced in the West in the last five hundred years, we have also experienced a sense of loss of meaning, often manifested as a nostalgic looking back to a past perceived to be superior to the current experience of alienation and corruption – "the good old days...." Taylor refers to this loss of meaning as the "disenchantment of the world," the root cause to our existential discomfort. When individualism collapses in on itself and excludes the rest of the world, neglecting its vital connections to others, it turns sour, becoming self-absorption and egoism. Such subjectivism denies the validity of value judgments independent of the chooser, rather all value judgments are held to be expressions of individual taste or opinion. While turning to the authentic self as the

[144] Psychologist Viktor Frankl's experience of internal liberty in the holocaust explicated the innate freedom of the human mind, even under the most extreme of duress. Frankl, 1985: 21 - 115

touchstone of all beliefs and values, it can never be forgotten that the self was forged in the fires of family and culture. Without connection to those sources of the self, the individual is vulnerable to isolation, depression and delusion. Despite a superficial appeal to self-reference, without a deeper grounding in integrity and self-examination, subjectivism and individualism do not have the cohesiveness and coherence needed to withstand a lifetime of conflicting external demands.

All of the currently wide-held belief systems in the world evolved in relatively isolated indigenous cultures, in which other cultures were seen as primarily enemies and rivals in rural and agricultural contexts, and not as neighbors to be tolerated and included. With the rise of globalization and multiculturalism, these provincial and traditional ways of approaching the world are sorely threatened, as all the old social boundaries are cracking under the pressures of social relativism.[145]

Taylor identifies three "malaises of modernity": the first is the aforementioned *loss of meaning and moral horizon*. While modernity has had many major achievements, such as quantum leaps in travel, communication and medicine, individualism is a source of anxiety, as well as gratification. Although the individual is freed from many past constraints of an inherited social status and family profession, we have lost our traditional moral horizons. These moral horizons delineated the old ways of making sense of meaning beyond the purposes of any particular individual.[146] The loss of these traditional horizons meant the loss of a larger context in life. Isolated individuals cannot generate this larger context; it must be created by the combined efforts of groups, communities and cultures. As a result

[145] Ibid.
[146] Taylor, 1991: 3

of this loss of moral horizon, the individual is sometimes held to be the sole author of the values that generate self-beliefs through acts of volition. This view holds that the act of choosing is what imparts value, as it is believed there is no meaning beyond that affirmed by the individual. Taylor holds that this type of individualism drains the world of meaning.

In seeking to be above subjectivity, science has contributed to this split in its pursuit of an objective reality, creating a mechanistic worldview that traditionally has excluded any expressions of larger purpose. This gives rise to Taylor's second "malaise of modernity," the *rise of instrumental reasoning*, in which circumstances are manipulated to fulfill desires. Under this view, science is believed to be valuable for the sake of control and profit, and not for any enlightenment or moral force it may bring to bear on human life.

The primacy of instrumental reasoning puts major emphasis on statistics and outputs, both in institutions and in thought. In our capitalistic culture, market phenomena are often the ultimate determinate of policy. Market functions are used as the justification of decisions once unthinkable throughout the Western culture. Some Americans see their government as serving the role of protector of the market economy. But many a political regime has fallen due to failed economic strategies. Along with economic forces, technology dominates our culture as our "magic bullet" to solve all problems that arise.[147] But we are still in need of critical evaluation of the relative benefits of technology. We have yet to delineate its limits and how best to use it. Moral issues about topics once considered science fiction, such as cloning and genetic engineering, are increasingly being decided by in our nation's courts and

legislatures. How can we be sure that the market will make the wisest choices for humanity's best interest? Both systems theory and meme theory hold that once a system is set in motion, its primary goal becomes the continuation and growth of the system, not the goals for which the system (or bureaucracy) was originally created, which then are demoted to secondary goals.[148]

The third of Taylor's "malaises" is the *threat to our freedom and democracy* when citizens only focus on themselves and blot out the rest of the world. This leads to shrinkage of interest in democratic processes and participation in the world at large. In a post 9/11 world, we can see that this cultural self-absorption has serious implications for our national security, and comes with a high cost. Democracy has a high cost in participation, but if only special interest groups can be bothered to show up for town meetings and caucuses, if only committed partisans run for public office, then our democracy is in jeopardy. If I am not alive to the wellsprings of my own culture and selfhood, then I will be tempted to think that my participation is unimportant and that my own amusements and dramas are more critical and gratifying.

This opens the door for the fulfillment of Tocqueville's prediction of 'soft despotism' setting in, that is, the degeneration of meaning and participation in self-government, as everything is run by the big machines of government and industry, with little citizen control.[149] While the government may seem democratic and

---

[147] Taylor, 1991: 20
[148] Systems analyst John Gall has two pertinent axioms: 1) "Systems Develop Goals of Their Own the Instant They Come into Being;" and 2) "Intrasystem Goals Come First." Gall, 1975: 59
[149] Taylor, 1991: 112 – 113

moderate, perhaps even responsive, it is still a form of tyranny if the people are isolated from the forces that govern their lives.[150]

As the old traditions face growing challenges, fundamentalism, extremism and terrorism emerge as a knee-jerk protective responses. In a world of six billion, such cultural responses are maladaptive and require readjustment. It stems from a polarized belief system of "us versus them," handed down through the ages. Any form of exclusivism, individual or cultural, originates from a fear of limited resources and not getting enough.

On the subjective level, almost all individuals hold unexamined maladaptive beliefs that lurk below the level of consciousness, an identity time bomb waiting for the right moment to explode open the self-beliefs. These beliefs may haveonce been adaptive in a particular situation, but have outlived their usefulness, have been taken out of context or have become twisted and compulsive. Good contemporary examples of this phenomenon are: the parochial school lesson that all sex is dirty, that, in adulthood, prevents the individual from enjoying a healthy sex and family life; or the chubby child who becomes the bulimic young adult because they equate food with comfort and confuse thinness with their ability to be loved.

Throughout the ages, self-beliefs were shaped within the cultural contexts of family, religion and personal experience, and the achievements of the ancients attest

[150] Taylor identifies a vicious circle of political helplessness: "... for the more fragmented a democratic electorate is in this sense, the more they transfer their political energies to promoting their partial groupings... and the less possible it is to mobilize democratic majorities around commonly understood programs and policies. A sense grows that the electorate as a whole is defenseless against the leviathan state; a well-organized and integrated partial grouping may, indeed, be able to make a dent, but the idea that the majority of people might frame and carry through a common project comes to seem utopian and naive. And so people give up. Already failing sympathy with others is further weakened by the lack of a common experience of action, and a sense of hopelessness makes it seem a waste of time to try." (Taylor, 1991: 113)

to the efficacy of this natural evolution of the self-beliefs. But, as the above commonplace examples show, this method of self development is not without flaws. Low social status and poverty, physical imperfections or not being a member of the privileged caste are well-known psychological origins of low self-esteem, depression, substance abuse and crime. Humans as well as animals have their pecking orders. Unwanted and neglected children grow up to commit crimes, seeking the attention denied them in childhood.[151] Most social and personal histories turn on the interacting influences of such unexamined beliefs playing out their inexorable conclusions.

What was true throughout history is doubly true now, with the rise of multiculturalism and the disappearance of the middle class. Now, we get our beliefs from the media as much or more than from the traditional sources of family, religion and personal experience. Often, we replace our own beliefs with the words of media "experts," role models and ideologues whom we have never met or spoken with personally and who have no knowledge of our personal existence, much less our situation. We accept their decrees without our considering whether or not the expert's advice is suitable for us personally. Peer pressure keeps us from expressing our true natures, as we fear ridicule and ostracizing. If you were to go to a kindergarten class and ask, "How many of you are dancers?" the whole class would respond affirmative. But if you put the same question to a group of sixth grade children, you will get only a few respondents whose parents happen to send them to dance classes. If you ask the same question of a group of college age students, only

[151] In a controversial finding, economist Steven J. Levitt claims that the dramatic drop in crime rates in the mid-1990s was the result of the absence of a whole generation of unwanted babies, with the

those few serious students of professional dance would dare to call themselves "dancers." We come to define ourselves as we think others see us, often diminishing our potential and capacities as we see ourselves through increasingly narrowing lenses.

As a culture, we have forgotten how to evaluate and choose for ourselves what we want to believe. Instead, we substitute media images for heroes and role models, attracted to the appearance of perfection, but we eagerly devour gossip about our role models' downfalls, fueling a kind of cynicism that holds heroes in such low esteem that we dub anyone who has provided a professional service or survived a trauma to be a hero. As the pedestals of our role models and heroes hit the ground, we see that they, too, are all too human and their vaunted ideologies are mere utopian fantasies. If "nice guys finish last," then it is foolish to adhere to the traditional values of honesty and humility. So, where are we to turn for a model of human integration and potential?

We can and do choose what we believe in everyday. We do it whether we are aware of doing it or not. We are doing it all the time, whether we choose our beliefs wisely or whether we are deplorable at managing our belief systems. "If you choose not to decide you still have made a choice," says the old *Rush* song. We cannot avoid choosing our beliefs. I am advocating a more conscious approach to the whole choosing procedure, which usually is only done in times of crisis. What I am proposing does not contradict any of the major world religions – in fact, in my opinion, it rather fulfills and deepens existing faith without imposing dogmas or doctrine. The heart of what I am advocating is the conscious examination and

---

advent of legalized abortion. Levitt and Dubner, 2005: 139

choosing of beliefs about the self utilizing scientifically proven techniques to shed corrosive self-beliefs.

It may be argued that this approach is inherently utilitarian, that is the end results of the self-beliefs are judged to justify the belief, and therefore in danger of violating the individual's autonomy. Why should individuals and the nation at large care about some idiot who harbors low self-esteem and resentment towards authority? Neither the state nor the higher education system should tamper with the self-beliefs of students, opponents might argue, as such would be a violation of the students' autonomy and force them all into cookie-cutter belief systems. This would be a valid objection, if a standardized and universal belief system was the goal of my approach, but it is not. As stated above - no one can force another to believe what they don't want to believe. Even if our bodies are enslaved and imprisoned, our minds are still our own. But very few people ever stop to consciously consider and choose what they believe about themselves, even after they have accumulated experience that proves their current self-beliefs to be insufficient or even debilitating. Everyone past a certain age has at least one story of self-sabotage due to fear or lack of faith in oneself, even those deemed highly successful by society's standards. If we are lucky, some of us may accumulate enough such wisdom in middle or old age to see past such fears and insecurities and to go after the lost opportunities, such as taking up a musical instrument for fun in middle age, going back to college and completing an unfinished degree after retirement or jumping out of airplanes at the age of eighty. But if there are any means of ameliorating the suffering and wasted

potential of self-ignorance at an earlier age, isn't it our responsibility to learn and disseminate this knowledge?

There are many social and political implications tied up in this is well, for how high is the quality of our electorate if the masses of Americans are too caught up in avoidable subjective psycho-dramas to actively participate in their communities and nation? How objective and well-considered are the decisions of an electorate and congress fueled by greed, adrenaline and fear, governed by personal crisis management techniques? How engaged can the chronically depressed be? On a socio-economic level, the loss of potential creativity and productivity to depression and neurosis in this nation is staggering to consider.

Therefore, I argue that it is in the nation's best interest to educate the young on self-beliefs in general and provide them with the techniques for choosing and implementing beneficial self-beliefs in the place of destructive and uncoordinated self-beliefs.

Revisioning Civic Education

Before we can begin to choose more efficacious self-beliefs, we must first examine those beliefs and see what is contained within the belief system. I call what you find when you examine your beliefs about your self: *Self Knowledge*. Self-Knowledge is the bedrock of maturity and participation. Those who we call "Self-Absorbed" are such precisely because they do *not* know who they are or where they fit in, so they are constantly seeking to make the world fit what they think might be nice at a particular moment. They are disconnected from their environment and

community because they do not know how they fit in, leading to the attempt to impose their own order to make sure they are not left out. Because they are disconnected, they cannot read the social clues, which makes them insecure. Hence they seek to become more secure by applying more pressure, behaving more aggressively to make sure they are not forgotten. A more accurate nomenclature for this condition of narcissistic self-absorption would be *Self Ignorance*, for poor narcissists really have no clue of how they connect, both internally and externally. Self-Ignorance has many forms and symptoms, infecting this nation in epidemic proportions. This is especially true for college age students, who are emerging from under their parents' wings and testing their own. They are bombarded with self-messages from the media and their peers. Often for the first time in their young lives, they are making life decisions for themselves. If their self-beliefs tell them that they are losers and slackers who can't handle anything too challenging, how prepared will they be to handle the shocks and emergencies of life? If their self-beliefs tell them that they are a precious darling who needs to be protected and is entitled to only the best, how will they cope with the inevitable rejection and deprivation in adult life?

More than any previous generation, the current generation of college aged students (born in the 1980s) has been taught that they were entitled simply by virtue of showing up. This attitude has arisen in the attempt to bolster epidemic low self-esteem in schoolchildren.[152] They have been trained to mistake the map for the territory, to mistake the appearance of value without the substance for authentic value. The result is record numbers of teenage plastic surgery, drug addiction,

bulimia and obesity. If the teens were not trying to compensate for a perceived lack in themselves, they would not need plastic surgery, or abuse drugs or food in either excess or deficiency. They may find out decades later that the self-beliefs that held them captive for years could have been changed, or even avoided entirely. You see this enacted daily on "The Dr. Phil Show" and "Oprah," as well as in countless other media outlets, when the light bulb lights up and epiphanies ripple from the amazed talk show guests.

Protection from Abuse

It might be argued that this is "soulcraft" and therefore is vulnerable to abuse from radicals and ideologues. In fact, the opposite is true, as the approach of Epistemic Responsibility to moral education protects the students' autonomy by placing all the choices and the responsibility of choosing self-beliefs back on the individual. It is the individual him/herself who must do the internal examination and evaluation of what is turned up by the investigation into the self-beliefs. The standards used for evaluation are also self-chosen. Therefore, no single belief system is advocated, nor are any particular choices preferred as long as the over-arching goal of integration and authenticity is maintained. Throughout, the democratic values of liberty and equality are respected and in full force. *You can lead a student to the font of wisdom, but you can't make him think.* Students are always free to reject the concept of epistemic responsibility, but they are not exempt from doing the work of epistemic review. Despite this, the option to examine and upgrade one's self-beliefs would represent a profound investment in the future of

[152] Somers and Satel, 2005: 11

America, and I believe that many students would recognize and take advantage of the opportunity.

Self-knowledge provides a basis for moral and civic education that cannot be abused or co-opted, for the final decisions always rest in the hands of the students. Self-knowledge provides individuals with the firm foundation from which to participate in the world. Even if confronted with strange customs and beliefs, individuals who know that they know themselves will meet the world with curiosity, instead of fear and threat, as a strong grounding in Self-Knowledge imparts the ability to discern a true threat from a false alarm.

Creating Whole Citizens

Everyone from Marx to Sartre to Charles Taylor bemoans the "alienation" of individuals from their "authentic" self, although each takes a slightly different tack in their approach.[153] But what does this "alienation" actually mean? A cursory semantic analysis yields the answer that something that is in a state of alienation must have had a prior state of wholeness or completion, which has been somehow fragmented. For Marx, the alienation is from the fruits of the workers' own labor that creates the fractured self. For Sartre, the alienation is from the inspiration and potential of the self, as we seek to conform to the social expectations of our families and society. For Charles Taylor, the alienation is from the traditional horizons and definitions of the self. For the monotheistic traditions of the Book, this alienation is grounded in the metaphor of the Fall of Adam and Eve.

Whatever the original source of the split, there seems to be a universal agreement that something is seriously wrong with the world. We see contemporary

expressions of this subliminal awareness in such books as *Ishmael* by Daniel Quinn, the widely popular *Matrix* movies and the record-breaking thirty-year phenomena that is the mythical story of *Star Wars*. All of these stories are predicated upon the awareness that something is seriously out of balance in the human psyche. Perhaps it is the optimism of fiction that places the power to correct this cosmic-human imbalance within the sphere of human choice. Yet, this has been the driving inspiration for utopians of all stripes, from Plato to the Bible to the cutting edge research of Cognitive Psychology. All seem to agree that human autonomy (a.k.a. Free Will) is sufficient to meet and rise above all challenges. Examples that come to mind are actor Christopher Reeve's response to the challenge of his spinal cord injury and subsequent paralysis, or the inspiration that Martin Luther King provided forth to galvanize the Civil Rights Movement. Mahatma Gandhi changed not only the face of India, but served to change the world by spending his time doing very humble acts such as spinning thread, making salt, being hungry… Each of these examples draw on some inner strength that most humans rarely experience. In every case, the man was able to overcome the miasma of internal conflicts and coalesce into focus. The unconventional dance teacher and mystic, G. I. Gurdjieff was noted for often saying "Most men cannot *do* anything. Most of our experiences just happen to us." Obviously, King and Gandhi represent the few who could actually *do* something. Reeve also accomplished something profound on the personal level rarely modeled in modern culture. In all three, we see a clarity and focus extremely rare amongst the population at large.

Examples such as these indicate that there is far greater potential available to

---

[153] Marx, 1978: 96; Sartre, 1994: 9 and Taylor, 1991: 10

humans than are commonly accessed. Disciplines such as the martial arts and yoga also indicate that far more is possible than is usually actualized. Stories about the triumph of the human spirit over adversity abound from the 9-11 firefighters to the Katrina hurricane survivors. The founding fathers embodied an American ideal of integrity, independence and self-sufficiency that still inspires countless bestsellers. All of these examples illustrate that there is something within the human spirit that can transcend the forces that lead to the alienation from the self. One way I have heard it put is "living on full throttle," as opposed to living a life of quiet desperation, so popular in these days of Prozac and Welbutrin. In any case, it is this elusive élan that provides the clarity and inspiration to persevere under the most extreme conditions. Concentration camp survivor and psychologist Viktor Frankl found that humans can withstand almost any torture or abuse if they have a *self-chosen reason* to survive.[154] Ultimately, whether or not we succeed and are happy as individuals or as a nation depends upon the quality and integrity of our choices. These choices are driven and conditioned by our fundamental beliefs about our selves and our place in the world.

Epistemic Responsibility entails the recognition that our own beliefs about ourselves shapes our expectations about both ourselves and about the world, and this affects our responses, which in turn determines our experience of both ourselves and the world. For example, if I go on a job interview with the intention of securing the job, and if I don't get the job, then I will have failed and my self-esteem will take a big hit. But, if I go on a job interview with the intention of seeing whether or not the position is a place I can make a real contribution and be happy and I don't get the

[154] Frankl, 1985: 86 - 87

job, I will know that the job is not the right one for me and my self-esteem will not be damaged. In the first case, my selfhood is to be defined by the environment alone, in an arbitrary and high stakes gamble in which the employers hold all the cards. In the second case, the self is defined by my own values and the environment is interpreted in a holistic exchange between self and the world. In the first case, my values and self-worth are defined by others, and thus are vulnerable to fear, coercion and abuse. In the second instance, I define my own values and self-worth, regardless of the decisions of the potential employers, granting me integrity and protection against fear and abuse.

The majority of people are not awake to this level of personal responsibility, as it requires the willingness to honestly examine our experiences and motivations. When individuals do become alive to the experience of Epistemic Responsibility, it is usually in the wake of some major identity crisis, often occurring in middle age. The reason for the awakening of this sense of Epistemic Responsibility so late in life is primarily due to poor psychic hygiene and ignorance. We are never overtly taught that we can choose to shed ourselves of maladaptive beliefs without creating a personal drama or crisis. We can't be held responsible for something we never knew we had control over… or can we? Vast numbers of people are held captive by their own selves, squashed down and victimized by their own detrimental beliefs, wasting potential and resources, unaware that all the while they have hold the key to their own prisons. As the population increases, so will this problem increase.

While to a large extend we cannot choose what reality exists "out there," we can take responsibility for choosing our beliefs and conceptual frameworks through

which we will filter the raw data of our experiences. Without taking Epistemic Responsibility for our beliefs and interpretations of experience, we fall prey to manipulation and loss of self-esteem. We can choose to be at the mercy of external forces or we can learn how to examine our beliefs and values, and jettison those which do not serve us. We can choose to follow the ancient Delphic injunction "Know Thyself," and thereby come to know how we relate to others and to the world. As always, the choice is up to us, whether we are aware of and avail ourselves of the choice or not.

Chapter Five

"What we are today comes from our thoughts of yesterday. And our present thoughts make the world of tomorrow. Our life is the creation of our minds."

~ Buddha
500 b.c.e.

"In the province of the mind, what is believed to be true either is true, or tends to become true, within certain limits to be determined experientially and experimentally. Those limits are further beliefs to be transcended. In the province of the mind, there are no limits."

~ John Lilly
1972 c.e.

A) A Preliminary Model of Human Potential

I) The need for a reliable model

Current research in the field of Social Cognitive Psychology seems to be converging on a discernible description of human nature that is far more adaptable and culturally defined than is widely assumed. Research implies that there is no fixed cognitive or affective orientation in individuals, but these are rather socially derived. There is no such thing as a single, universal human norm, as far as behavior or beliefs are concerned. Humans are capable of a broad range of capacities and potentialities that few ever actualize because we don't believe in ourselves or because our culture does not recognize and support those capacities or potentials. But the nature of selfhood is not a *tabula rasa* that we must construct and fill from scratch by ourselves, for true selfhood cannot be achieved in isolation.[155] Rather, we most learn about who and what we are in and through relationship to others. Our

[155] Reports of feral children, rare though legitimate ones are, often describe them as lacking a concept of self and being totally unable to think about themselves objectively. Without others to model and

beliefs about ourselves, our abilities, and our social roles create expectations that we tend to fulfill through our choices, interpretations and behavior.[156]

There are some ways of construing the self that are pragmatically more adaptive ways to choose and some that are less adaptive choices. Studies have shown which kinds of orientations are adaptable (that is, conducive to an individual's growth and flourishing) and which are detrimental to growth and happiness (as measured by levels of anxiety, satisfaction, desired affect, etc.). A review of some of these studies will be reviewed later in this chapter. Counselors apply this knowledge daily in clinics across the world, and researchers expand the boundaries of this knowledge, but there are clear educational and social implications beyond theoretical and therapeutic applications. If we now realize, as a culture, that we *choose* our orientations to the self and therefore the world, then shouldn't we be teaching people what this means and how to make the best possible choices for themselves? Currently, we wait for a crisis, whether individual, community or national, before we begin to teach this understanding, and then, we dole it out one individual at a time - closing the barn doors after the horses are gone.

Clearly, then, there are also ethical questions raised, for if we possess knowledge that can improve individual's lives as well as benefit society in general, shouldn't we teach it to as many individuals as we can – especially our youth? Wouldn't we want them to avoid many painful and unnecessary pitfalls in life? Don't we want our young to grow and flourish in satisfying, peaceful, responsible citizenship? Isn't it both shortsighted and self-defeating not to teach individuals that

---

reflect, what we recognize as the self does not develop. What we recognize as the self is, at least in part, a social construct. Pinker, 2002: 61

they can shape their experiences by their choices, and to withhold the tools and skills from them?

1) A Model of Human Epistemic Potential

To teach these new insights to humanity, we must have a cohesive, accurate model that can be easily communicated, and embellished and elaborated as the individual's development and current research progresses. This model must sufficiently account for human thoughts, feelings and motives, as well as awareness, influence and autonomy, while reflecting as many facets of the psyche as possible. A tall order.

I will make a start of an articulation of what principles and applications I gleaned from reviewing the works of Charles Taylor, Michael Sandel, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, amongst other philosophers, as well as research on the subject of the self in current Social Psychology. In this chapter, I will begin with the theoretical framework and then review some current empirical studies, focusing on three main reoccurring concepts. These are: 1) a dualistic view of the self; 2) self-knowledge and its impact, including the emergent theory of the self that is implied by current Social Psychological research; and 3) where and how current research supports ancient and classical models of the self. Both Charles Taylor and the Communitarian formative project rely upon a Platonic, teleological model of the self that seems to be confirmed and supported through emerging studies of the self. I will only do this in broad, generalized strokes. Fleshing out of all the details and implications for civic education could be a career!

---

[156] Baumeister, 1999: 23

A) A Working Definition of the Self

Ethicist Charles Taylor makes a distinction between the Authentic Self (or self-actualized individual who both knows itself and its place in the world, and is in harmony with itself and its environment) and the Alienated Self (which feels isolated, judged and powerless).[157] Phenomenologists, such as William James, report a dual-natured subjective experience of self. James describes these two as the distinction between "I" and "Me." "I" refers to the subjective sense of self as the experiencer and interpreter, and "Me" refers to the self seen as an object of "I's" self-reflection, thus including all of an individual's thoughts, dreams, feelings, habits and possessions… all those things that feel like "mine!"[158] But the vast majority of the other articles I reviewed also used similar dualistic models, nineteen studies out of twenty-three, in fact.

Each one of the nineteen studies explores some aspect in application of this major principle of duality. For instance, Turner presents the Institutional Self versus the Impulse Self. The Institutional Self adheres to high standards of social behavior, where the self is perfected through personal effort. This fits very nicely with Taylor's Authentic Self. Conversely, the Impulse Self is discovered through personal choices, and relates to Taylor's atomistic Individualism. The Institutional Self corresponds to the social veneer of the superego (in Freudian terms), while the Impulse Self, sometimes seen as the 'true' self, correlates to the id.[159] This is a common theme through the majority of the articles I reviewed: there are primarily only two ways of

[157] Taylor, 1991: 61 and 117
[158] James, in Baumeister, 1999: 69

regarding human nature: fixed, stable and bounded (Institutional Self/Ego) or malleable, adaptable and potentially limitless (Impulse Self/Id).

The vast majority of the articles I reviewed fall into one of these two camps, from Dweck and Leggett's discussion of Entity (fixed) and Incremental (malleable) theories of intelligence[160] to Kernis and company's discussion of High Stable Self-Esteem and High Unstable Self-Esteem and their effects on anger, hostility, guilt and shame. In Kernis' research, individuals with unstable self-esteem are revealed to be prone to violence, shame and hostility, while those with stable self-esteem are less vulnerable to emotional suffering and more empathic.[161] Two studies on High and Low Self- Monitors[162] posit self-positions in which individuals either are awake to the social cues and inner promptings that make social life easy and satisfying, or they are asleep to the notion that their own unconscious signals are effecting the way others respond to them, and hence, effecting their success and satisfaction in social and personal interactions.

The much acclaimed theory of Emotional Intelligence also entails to a dual model, as high Emotional Intelligence is the ability to monitor one's own feelings, as well as the feelings of others, and to discriminate between those feelings to use them as a guide for thoughts and actions.[163] The more efficient one is at doing this, the better one operates in the world. As children, we are all proficient at discerning the nonverbal cues of others, but by adulthood, we often lose this natural capacity.[164]

---

[159] Turner, in Baumeister, 1999: 79
[160] Dweck and Leggett, 1988
[161] Kernis, Grannemann and Barclay, 1989
[162] Markus and Wurf, 1987 and Snyder, 1979
[163] Salovey, Hsee and Mayer, in Baumeister, 1999: 185
[164] Salovey, et al. in Baumeister, 1999: 186

We begin as an integrated, self-knowing child, but we become splintered and alienated from ourselves as we interpret the blows of life as judgments upon us as persons. We lose self-esteem when we focus excessively on the image of us that others perceive (Performance Motivations) and we can gain self-esteem if we risk a loss of face in order to learn and grow (Learning Motivations). If we can see failure as a challenge to meet and overcome, not as a risk to be avoided, then we can gain a Mastery orientation towards life that rejects the choice of helplessness.[165]

B) Self-Knowledge in Application and Theory

Recent Social Cognitive research is generating data that seems to support the practices of self-knowledge as beneficial to social and personal relations and choices. Markus and Kitayama's work illustrates how the development of the self is heavily reliant upon the social context.[166] Vast cultural differences in orientations of the self in the Far Eastern and Western populations indicated the malleability and adaptability of the self. The self is much larger than we give ourselves credit for. It is this 'small' thinking that creates what classical mysticism calls the 'ego' or 'false self' – the belief that the self is limited or somehow fixed without room for improvement. In psychological terms, this kind of thinking produces low self-esteem, a condition associated with anxiety, an unstable self-image, rigid thinking and behavioral patterns, and little self-knowledge.[167]

As we saw in the dualistic model of self, focus on the limitations makes them true. Therefore, *the true subject of our self-knowledge is our beliefs about ourselves,* as our capacities and behavior will be conditioned by those beliefs and any limits

[165] Dweck and Leggett, 1988: 266
[166] Markus and Kitayama, in Baumeister, 1999: 341

they might impose.[168] Those with low self-esteem have a poorly articulated notion of who and what they are, preferring uncertainty and a fluctuating self-image to the feared certainty of low performance. They are more vulnerable to shame and external suggestion. With more self-knowledge, the more integrated, empathic and stable the self-concept becomes.[169]

Therefore, *how* we think about ourselves may be more important than *what* we think about ourselves. There are many different ways we can interpret ourselves to ourselves, just as a single action can be seen as belonging to several levels of interpretation, from physical to conceptual.[170] Believing ourselves to be helpless, hopeless and vulnerable limits our awareness and therefore, our capacity to read and respond to immediate circumstances.[171] Self-knowledge, in this context, seems vital to establishing a stable, fulfilling life, and thus, under the republican ideal of the formative project, should be a central part of civic education.

C) Models of Self-Knowledge – Part One

i) Ancient Models of the Self

Plato and Aristotle both describe at length the Greek model of a teleological self, whose ultimate destiny is to achieve full self actualization (called *Eudaemonia* by the ancients). The self is divided into three interactive parts, each responsible for fulfilling a specific set of functions in the individual. Plato calls this division of the self into three functions the Tripartite Soul, consisting of the Intellect, Emotions and

---

[167] Baumeister, 1999: 19; Leary, et al., 1999: 91; Snyder, 1979: 98; and Campbell, 1999: 233
[168] Leary, et al. 1999: 88
[169] Campbell, 1999: 224; Carver, 1999: 183; and Tangney, 1999: 99
[170] Vallacher and Wegner, 1987: 4 and 10

Body. *Eudaemonia* (flourishing/happiness) is achieved when each of these three parts work in harmony, each doing their own work without usurping the functions of one of the other parts.[172] Central to the Greek conception of the self is the concept of *Arête'* (excellence), in which the goal of Eudaemonia is reached through the striving for and the expression of personal excellence, achieved through the proper education of the emotions and thoughts.[173] For the ancient Greeks, self-mastery is achieved through reason.

In the *Republic*, Plato attempts to answer the question "why be just?" In my opinion, this is the fundamental problem of ethics, for justice is universally held as the ideal for social interaction and modeling. In Plato, the question of justice boils down to a question of the self. Plato spends ten books describing the ideal and theoretical relations of the self and society. As Plato tells us in Book II, the individual can be likened to the *polis* (city-state), in that the city embodies the same ideas and values as the individuals that constitute it.[174] By describing the differing types of relations within a city, Plato also describes what he takes to be the type of relations within an individual self. In the end, justice is defined as a certain balance of internal relationships in both the city and the individual.[175] To articulate this, Plato describes what has been called the "Tripartite Soul," in which the self is divided into three parts: 1) Reason (mind) 2) Spirit (will) and 3) the Desires or Appetites (body and instincts). These three parts of the soul correspond to three classes of society. Respectively, these are: 1) the Rulers (Philosopher-Kings); 2) the

---

[171] Dweck and Leggett, 1988: 266 and 269
[172] Plato, *the Republic*, Book IV
[173] Aristotle, Book ii, 1106b15
[174] *Republic*, Book II, 368d – 369a

Guardians (the military class) and 3) the Craftsmen (everyone else). Reason is held to be the highest part of the individual, as it is through the rational faculty that the self can grasp the ideals embodied in the forms. Reason is the controller and harmonizer of the other two parts. The Spirit or Will is seen to be the faculty which allows us to choose and to apply ourselves in the face of hardship, but this part can become discouraged or obsessive and needs the guidance of reason. The Desires are the bodily drives to maintain corporeal existence and to propagate the species, which can again usurp the just rule of reason if out of balance. Each of these parts has its own respective virtues and vices, strengths and weaknesses, which can be encouraged or suppressed at the choice of the rational self.

Justice in both the polis and the individual is then defined as:

> "…with respect to what is within, and respect to what truly concerns him and his own. He [the just citizen] doesn't let each part in him mind other people's business or the three classes in the soul meddle with each other, but really sets his own house in good order and rules himself; he arranges himself becomes his own friend, and harmonizes the three parts, exactly like three notes in a harmonic scale, lowest, highest and middle. And if there are some other parts in between, *he binds them together and becomes entirely one from many, moderate and harmonized. Then, and only then, he acts…"* (*Republic*, Book IV, 443d, emphasis added)

Plato claimed the foundation of personal and social action (aka: ethics) is in the harmonization and balancing of the three distinct features found within each individual a self.[176] In his description of the tripartite self, it is clear that Plato (via Socrates) is not referring to a conception of an everlasting soul. His description is of

---

[175] *Republic*, Book IV, 443c – e

[176] For my purposes, Plato's use of the term "soul" or "psyche" is analogous to my use of the self. Both refer to the subjective experience of being, including the relations of that subjective being to the subjective beings of others.

a pragmatic perception of the human psyche in action. For Plato, this much-desired harmony of the soul is achieved by letting each internal part control that which it is best suited by function to control. As Plato tells us in Book I of *the Republic*, a virtue is by definition the proper functioning of the thing in question. For a person, the proper function of the soul is justice.[177] For this reason, the just man is not attracted to vice or injustice, as the harmoniously balanced just man has no desire to upset his hard-won balance through lying, cheating or stealing.[178] "The contemplation of all time and all being" undertaken by the just self makes corporeal desires and thrills dull by comparison.[179]

This description of Plato's view of the human psyche is meant to prepare the ground for the later explication of my theory of self. To further my task of preparing a historical foundation, I now leap over two millennia to a consideration of a more modern view of the self.

ii) Rousseau and Relations of the Self

Emile is Rousseau's treatise on education. It is more about the personal than the political, but I suggest that we find embedded within *Emile* an early articulation of authenticity. In *The Social Contract*, Rousseau focuses on the issue of autonomy, but in *Emile*, he focuses on what I take to be authenticity. Although, as we shall see, Rousseau's vision is far from perfect, we can detect the beginnings of the notion of authenticity in modern times.

Given the fallen nature of the world and human nature, Rousseau undertakes to create the least corrupt medium in which to grow citizens. Man in the state of

[177] Plato, Book I, 353a – e
[178] Plato, Book IV, 442e – 443a

nature has the lowest form of negative liberty, that of non-interference. But in *Emile*, Rousseau wants his tutee to have the positive freedom of self-government. Whether or not Rousseau accomplishes his goal is debatable, as Emile is seemingly dependent upon the tutor for the whole of his life, first as a youth in need of instruction, but then later as a new parent in need of advice. It can be argued that Emile is controlled and manipulated by the tutor throughout his life, so although Rousseau's goal is self-sufficiency, Emile is not without external control. Rousseau is trying to protect Emile from what he sees are the corrupting influences of society, and to prevent Emile's spirit from being broken by public opinion. But what is originally meant as protection risks degeneration into deception and manipulation. Yet, Rousseau does articulate a conception of how independent judgment might be fostered through proper education, despite Rousseau's own difficulty in letting go of control.

Rousseau articulated two senses of self-love, both of which are important for understanding Rousseau's conception of the self. The first is *amour de soi-meme*, a preconscious sense of the intrinsic worth of being, the brute experience of the goodness of life. This is a self-contained sentiment, that of the primitive self-reliance of natural man prior to socialization, with no need of others. It represents a radical emotional independence from others. This is the emotional state of children prior to puberty, before the demands of peer pressure and the need to be desired by others and reliance upon external forces for the sense of self-worth forces the youth to conform to society's enslavement to the opinions of others. This, I believe, is a part of what Taylor later calls the authentic self. It is the core self, the individual chooser/experiencer, but without the self-reflection required for true authenticity.

---

[179] Plato, Book IV, 486a

The transition from this idyllic pre-critical state of total self-acceptance, warts and all, comes with the onset of adolescence. Others become more important to our own sense of self-worth. Our self-value becomes dependent upon the opinions of others because of the strong instinctual drive for sex. According to Rousseau's conception of the self, our own opinions of ourselves become mixed up with our perceptions of our own desirability to others. It is this drive that Rousseau claims makes civilization possible. But the very thing that allows us to come together also disrupts our initial self-contained happiness. From then on, our happiness is contingent upon the happiness of others. Once we make ourselves vulnerable to the opinions of others that the possibilities of coercion and manipulation become manifest temptations. This second kind of self-love Rousseau calls *amour propre*.[180] Hobbes made this dual distinction, prior to Rousseau, but Rousseau systematized them. Rousseau was the first to link the individual to social life, even though he drew on pre-existing ideas.

Emile is about the forestalling of *amour propre* and the growth of vanity in a controlled manner. But, according to Rousseau, *amour propre* is necessary to live in a society, for to be completely free of *amour propre* is to be completely unattached to others. So, *amour propre* must be harnessed to social ends. In this manner, Rousseau attempts to account for human cooperation and civility. Thus, in a balanced individual, the individualism of *amour de soi-meme* combines with the social awareness of *amour propre* to create an authentic self.

[180] Rousseau, 1984: 99

In recent years, research into cooperation and cheating has actually revealed an evolutionary need for community.[181] Rousseau was wrong about the solitary origins of humanity. But his descriptions of *amour de soi-meme* and *amour propre* seem to tell of the early modern attempts at articulating the concepts of an authentic, connected whole self, versus the false, fragmented and alienated self. The degenerative effects of domestication weaken the human psyche, but these can be resisted if *amour propre* is harnessed correctly. In *Emile*, Rousseau offers many insights into these crucial relations of self-to-self and self-to-others. To consider the merits and shortcomings of them all would be an opus in itself. Instead, I shall offer a few of the points I consider most salient to the issue of authenticity and civic education.

In *Emile*, Rousseau describes an approach to education designed to promote *Amour de Soi* and to forestall *Amour Propre*. Rousseau seems to be saying that Emile is a man who has never had his spirit broken by being forced to obey against his will. Emile is autonomous and able to think independently because he is taught to investigate for himself and not to rely on the pronouncements of the government. Emile is just, because he has never been oppressed and has learned compassion for other's suffering through fully experiencing his own suffering. Emile is virtuous because he has not been corrupted by luxury or greed. Emile is authentic because he does not pretend to be something he is not in order to impress or please others. Emile is happy because his desires do not exceed his ability to fulfill them. Emile is

[181] "For hunter/gatherers, social contracts, that is, cooperation between two or more people for mutual benefit, were necessary for survival." (Gigerenzer and Hug, 1992: 130)

self-reliant because he carries inside himself the means to provide for himself wherever he goes, without the need for charity from others.

The education that Rousseau proposes to accomplish the shaping of Emile's character is founded on the principles of self-sufficiency and personal experience.[182] Rousseau's treatise on education focuses only on the teaching and shaping the character of one student, not a whole school or nation of them. Yet, many of his ideas of an exploratory/experience-based education are sound and harken back to ancient Roman and Spartan models.[183] Rousseau assumes that by not breaking the spirit of the student by demanding mindless obedience and parroting (as is assiduously done in almost every educational system), the student's nature is not twisted or corrupted, thus preventing the decay and development of socially-induced vice.[184] The student is allowed to develop naturally, without force or coercion that warp him into a socially acceptable form.[185] The goal of*Emile* is to produce a man uncorrupted by social vice, not to produce an ideal society. In fact, it seems that the educational advice given in Emile is at odds with the requirements and characteristics of a citizen. The singular nature of Rousseau's educational theory seems contrary to his political theory, which focuses on the collective. It is difficult to reconcile these two, for Rousseau seems to claim that the individual must be squashed in order for the state to flourish, yet, *Emile* is devoted to the preservation of individuality.

[182] Rousseau, 1979: 92
[183] Rousseau, 1979: 119 and 1968: 157 – 167
[184] Rousseau, 1979: 113
[185] Rousseau, 1979: 116 – 117

It seems that the educational approach in Emile conflicts with the position Rousseau puts forth in his political works, where he advocates public education for the express purpose of inculcating a sense of loyalty and belonging to the community, rather than promoting the individual uniqueness of the citizens.[186] In the political arena, the function of education is to instill civic virtue and obedience to the law and authority, in which citizens are constantly under surveillance, making students and citizens aware of the society's expectations of them.[187]

Rousseau admonishes us to teach civic virtue, in which the individual must totally identify with the state,[188] yet it appears that there cannot be a truly public education of citizens due to *Amour Propre*. So Emile is educated for a private life, and not for true citizenship and participation in the state. I will take another look at Rousseau's views of the self and education in Chapter Six. As we shall see later, as in Plato and Aristotle, there is much to be commended, but there are also serious problems.

Rousseau begins his theories of education as well as his social/political theories with pessimism about humanity's progress. Rousseau notes man's need to "improve" nature, stamping our own will upon the world, and how often this improvement goes awry.[189] When compared to the seamless fabric of nature, human attempts at controlling nature and bending her to our will seem blind and blundering. Nature requires no assistance from us, yet we insist, despite knowing our efforts to

---

[186] "…[T]he purpose of public education is to make the nation the ground of the students' identity." Trachtenberg, 1993: 234

[187] Trachtenberg, 1993: 235 – 237

[188] "Individuals must be obliged to subordinate their will to their reason; the public must be taught to recognize what it desires. Such public enlightenment would produce a union of understanding and will in the social body, bring the parts into perfect harmony and lift the whole to its fullest strength. Hence the necessity of a lawgiver." Rousseau, 1968: 83

be ultimately futile. In humanity, we have encrusted our inherent nature with a false self we created to attract the approval of others. Rousseau contrasts the natural man to the civil man. The natural man lives entirely for himself, whole and unified; while the civil man is fractionated, dependent and relative.[190] Rousseau blames social institutions for stripping man of his wholeness, rendering him dependent upon society for his survival. The citizen, Rousseau asserts, must be willing to sacrifice his own self-interest to the public good. Indeed, the citizen cannot see his own self-interest divorced from the public good, for it would be impossible for the citizen's personal interest to gain at the expense of the public good, as the loss of public good will eventually affect the citizen's own interests. The two are inextricably bound. But the selfless duties of the citizen conflicts with the solitary nature of man, as both require total commitment. Trying to fulfill both the needs of our natures and the demands of living in society forces a split our natural (dare I say 'authentic'?) selves and the façade we adopt to get along with others.[191] This rift in the self is further deepened by the educational process, as the child is taught about "everything except how to know himself, except to take advantage of himself, except to know how to live and to make himself happy."[192]

In Book II, Rousseau discusses some of the vagaries of the human condition: constant change throughout life in both our bodies and minds, and the overabundance of suffering as compared to enjoyment. Rousseau agrees with the hedonist claim that the life of the least suffering and most pleasure is the best. And

---

[189] Rousseau, 1979: 37
[190] *ibid.,*40
[191] *ibid.,* 40
[192] *ibid.,* 47

with them, he agrees that an excess of desires is the root source of unhappiness. Therefore, to learn to be happy consists in reducing one's desires only to those things which are attainable, in the effort to limit disappointment and loss, and find a balance between will and power.[193] Rousseau claims that imagination inflames our desires out of proportion to our ability to fulfill them, causing us to become miserable. And the more grandiose the desire, the less the possibility of fulfillment. It is this confusion between the imaginary and real worlds that constitute the majority of suffering in the world, according to Rousseau. But natural man is content with whatever he can provide for himself, so he does not devour himself with envy or bitterness at the seeming injustices dealt by life. Natural man is not defined by his needs, as the civilized man is. Rousseau exhorts us to trust children's natural needs, and protect children from excess, as overindulgence is a sure recipe for misery because it teaches children to want too much.[194] And when it comes about that the natural man suffers, he does so without inflating the intensity of his pain through trying to avoid it. Because he knows himself, he also knows how to endure suffering without fear.[195]

Ultimately, we only have control over our own selves. And as Nature and Freedom are the first goods, all education, Rousseau claims, must be based on freedom, not authority. In teaching from authority, we teach weakness and

---

[193] "In what, then, consists human wisdom or the road to true happiness? It is not precisely in diminishing our desires, for if they were beneath our power, a part of our faculties would remain idle, and we would not enjoy our whole being. Neither is it in extending our faculties, for if, proportionate to them, our desires more extended, we would as a result only become unhappier. But it is in diminishing the excess of the desires over the faculties and putting power and will in perfect equality. It is only then that, with all the powers in action, the soul will nevertheless remain peaceful and that man will be well ordered." Rousseau, 1979: 80

[194] *ibid.* 87

[195] Rousseau, 1979: 81

dependence, instead of teaching self-reliance. We weaken children by creating false needs for them. We force children into slavery by making them do things that will have little to no bearing on their lives outside of school. Dependence upon men makes us into slaves, and thus, we should train children only to depend upon things, not upon men.[196] The demand for obedience leads to coercion and manipulation, as control of the child becomes more important than the lesson at hand. Rousseau identifies three negative results of the demand for obedience. These are: 1) it destroys love by enslaving it; 2) it teaches children to become liars in order to avoid punishment; and 3) it inculcates a habit of deception in the child, which will bear evil fruit later in life.[197]

We should use age appropriate reasoning and natural limits to teach children. When we force child to begin to use reasoning before that faculty has properly matured, we damage the child's psyche, subverting energies naturally designated for growth. Children will never rebel against necessity, but they always will against an overbearing ruler. The more control is forced on a child, the more the child will eventually rebel. Rousseau sets down the maxim that "nature is always right," and that it is only through perversion of nature that people become immoral.[198]

The ideal Rousseau is aiming for is described thus:

> "If he knows nothing by heart, he knows much by experience. If he reads less well in our books than does another child, he reads better in the book of nature. His mind is not in his

[196] *ibid.,* 85
[197] *ibid.,* 91
[198] "Let us set down as an incontestable maxim that the first movements of nature are always right. There is no original perversity in the human heart. There is not a single vice to be found in it of which it cannot be said how and whence it entered, The sole passion natural to man is *amour de soi-meme* or *amour-propre* taken in an extended sense, This *amour-propre* in itself or relative to us is good and useful; and since it has no necessary relation to others it is in this respect naturally neutral. It becomes good or bad only be the application made of it and the relations given to it." Rousseau, 1979: 92

> tongue, but his head. He has less memory than judgment. He knows how to speak only one language, but he understands what he says; and if what he says he does not say so well as others, to compensate for that, what he does, he does better than they do. He does not know what the routine, custom, or habit is. What he did yesterday does not influence what he does today. He never follows a formula, does not give way before authority or example, and acts and speaks only as it suits him."[199]

The goal is to teach the child judgment, not preparation for any particular social role or occupation. The child must learn to distinguish real relations from apparent ones, without becoming dependent upon the opinions of others.[200] This teaches the child to depend upon his own judgment, and gives him the experience to be able to know that his judgment is reliable. To me, this sounds a lot like authenticity.

With the dawn of puberty, the rising passions of the youth are employed to teach him about human relations and the control that love can exert over nature.[201] For love tames he who would be loved, yet this same impulse is also the source of rivalry and jealousy. Love begets love, but it also begets hate, as some loves will always be unrequited. Therefore, we should seek to instill in children the wisdom of the passions: 1) to know the true relations, both personal and social and 2) to order one's own relations according to these true relations.[202] The key to mastering the passions is to master one's own imagination.

Once adolescence is engaged, the youth will tend to compare himself with others, but he must be taught how to do so properly, so as to not inflame his

---

[199] Rousseau, 1979: 160
[200] *ibid.,* 203
[201] *ibid.,* 214
[202] i*bid.,* 219

imagination with grandiosity or wretchedness.[203] The art of observing men well must be mastered. This entails a great interest in our fellow man, as well as impartiality in judgment of them. Pains must be taken to help the teen avoid ego inflation as well as depression when compared to others. All this must be done through experiential means, for a teen filled up with abstract ideas and then set loose upon the world has no idea how to care for himself or to connect to others.[204] Teens require practical survival skills, not abstractions.[205]

Finally, I submit the Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar. The main relevant notion I wish to highlight is the idea that self-interest becomes meaningless when seen in the larger context of life.[206]

As we have seen, Rousseau starts with the concept of a whole unified self, which is fractured by the desire to please others. The whole impact of *Emile* is to raise children with what we call in modern culture an intact sense of self-esteem, and the capacity to judge for themselves (thus, the capacity for self-government), by the prevention of the development of a false self. By harnessing the natural passions of *amour de soi-meme* and *amour propre* in the service of reason and judgment, the alienation from self is forestalled instead of further shattered. This view of educating the young to be self-reliant is still somewhat antithetical to our current educational philosophy, which stresses regurgitation, obedience and submission, although improvements are being made, there is still much to be remedied.

---

[203] Rousseau, 1979: 243
[204] *ibid.,* 249
[205] "It is in doing good that one becomes good. I know of no practice more certain." *ibid.,* 250
[206] i*bid.,* 294

iii) Kant – Ethics and Reason

Similar to my own efforts, Immanuel Kant sought a foundation upon which a universal ethics can be based. Whereas I am utilizing both a contemporary model (current empirical psychological research) and an ancient model (classical Greek and the perennial philosophy), Kant sought to predicate his ethics entirely on a universal human reason and good will. Like me, Kant was seeking to ground his ethics empirically by conforming to what he saw as universal natural laws which are discoverable a priori through human reason. Kant felt that these *a priori* universal principles cannot be discovered through the senses, hence the need for a metaphysics of morals, in which he assumes that we can know how to discover and understand universal principles by which the mind/reason function. Kant believed that these rational universal principles are to be found in science and human actions. This emphasis on rationality and universal principles gives rise to a view of the self defined within the matrix of duty.[207]

In this view, duty (which entails the overcoming of obstacles) is not done out of self-interest or personal inclination. Duty includes overcoming impulse and temptation. Indeed, the goodness of an act's motive increases if the act is done from duty and not from self-interest. In his Second Premise, Kant only ascribed moral worth to acts done from the motive of duty in this formal maxim.[208] This concept takes its ultimate manifestation in the Categorical Imperative, which exhorts us to never act in any way that you cannot will to become universal law. Kant saw this as the bare minimum required for morality. For him, morality comes from subjecting

[207] Kant, 1964: 13 - 24
[208] Kant, 1964: 19 -21

the self to a universal law, such as duty, rather than self-interest. The Categorical Imperative ought to be obeyed for its own sake, Kant believed, and not because of any specific content or results. The Categorical Imperative can be understood as a super-sized Golden Rule, in which all forms of morality are derivable from the universalized Imperative.

Kant held that the will is defined as a rational agent acting according to principles, manifesting as practical reason. As far as an agent acts from objective principles, he is considered good. But humans are imperfect beings who do not always act from objective, rational principles, rather, all too often we yield to the temptation of self-interest. Because of this imperfection, we feel the imposition of objective principles as restrictions, as we are not fully rational enough to grasp their truth and subject ourselves to its wisdom. A fully rational individual, Kant believes, would not feel the weight of the Categorical Imperative to be a burden.[209]

Individuals are seen to be rational agents, who are ends in themselves because they have unconditioned and absolute value. In the "Formula of Autonomy," Kant tells us "So act that your will can regard itself at the same time as making universal law through its maxims."[210] The law to which we are bound must be of our own choosing and must be universalized. If rational beings are ends in themselves, then they can only follow laws chosen or made by themselves in order for those laws to have moral value, but those laws must also be applicable to all and be free of self-

[209] Kant, 1964: 22- 26
[210] Kant, 1964: 33

interest. Free Will (or autonomy) for Kant, then is the willing adoption of self-imposed laws, in other words, the adoption of morality. [211]

Kant sees humanity as having a dual nature, partaking in both the Sensible and Intelligible Worlds. For Kant, man is the sum of sensation and reason. But Kant claims that the self cannot be known directly through introspection. Understanding, although it may arise internally, is bound to the senses and not to reason. Reason is the power of ideas, producing concepts spontaneously without the input of the sense. Because of this dual nature, humanity is not at the mercy of the senses, as the will is free from physical causation.[212] The self cannot be sensed in the Intelligible Realm because the senses do not apply in the Intelligible World. We can only experience our own will negatively, through freedom from constraint, and positively, through acting on our own principles.[213]

We have looked at several historical approaches to the self and the problems entailed in each vision to gain a sense of how we have arrived at our current understanding of selfhood. Each approach construes the self as divided, which allows for the analysis and evaluation of values and beliefs. Although each view took a different approach, all of them were trying to articulate the basic experience of selfhood and the foundation of morality. As we shall see, the theory of a divided self is carried forth into modern and contemporary models, and will form the foundation of my own proposal.

[211] Kant, 1964: 41
[212] Kant, 1964: 44-45
[213] Kant, 1964: 46

Chapter Six

iii) Modern Selves – Egos and Archetypes

Sigmund Freud, the so-called father of psychoanalysis, like Plato, also divided the human psyche into three parts: the Ego, the Id, and the Superego.[214] In Freud's system, the Id corresponds roughly to the desire aspect of Plato's tripartite soul. Freud's Id represents the most basic part of the psyche, which is primarily concerned with bodily drives – food, sex, security. The Ego represents the center of the will and judgment – that which strives to maintain a balance between the three parts of the psyche.

As I understand it, Plato has no exact counterpart for the ego, although some ego functions seem to be fulfilled by Plato's Rational part of the soul. The Ego is the conscious self, the face we show to the public, as well as the private self we are internally aware of. The ego is the part of the self that rationally chooses, communicates and registers reactions, but all of the ego's functions can be skewed or even controlled by either the Id or the Superego in dysfunction. The Id and Superego can also subtly influence the ego below the level of awareness, causing the ego to believe it is behaving rationally and objectively, while in reality it is being manipulated by unconscious forces. Freud's Superego represents the internalized influences of others impinging upon the individual, such as a critical parent or teacher. Again, there is no direct correspondence between Plato's and Freud's systems, but it appears that at least some of the functions of the superego are also

[214] Pals, 61

embodied in the reasoning part of the tripartite soul, as well as some that can be located in Plato's Spirited segment of the soul.

Freud's view of the self has been extremely influential upon Western countries and has become internalized by our culture and institutions. Although Freud does not apply his work to a larger body of ethics, no account of the modern conception of the self could be deemed adequate without some reference to Freud's groundbreaking theories.

Of greater interest to me, however, is the work of Freud's student, Carl Jung. While Jung accepted much of Freud's psychological framework and theoretical approach of the "talking cure," one area in which Jung profoundly differed from Freud is in the understanding of humanity's unconscious. Freud's treatment of the Id presents the psychic processes below the level of awareness as a snakepit of repressed desires, impulses and instincts. Jung took an optimistic view of the self below conscious awareness.

Jung abandoned the more traditional triune model of the self for a simpler dyadic model. Instead of three competing parts of the soul, Jung hypothesized the existence of only two: 1) the Ego, similar to Freud's understanding of the rational, conscious self, and 2) the Unconscious, which is seen as more comprehensive and influential than either the Id or Superego.

Jung's Ego is the persona by which we present ourselves to the world, "meaning between our true selves and our environment, just as our physical clothing presents an image to those we meet. The ego is what we are and know about

consciously."[215] The other side of the ego is the Unconscious, which contains ninety percent of our psychological being. The unconscious contains the snakepits of Freud's id, renamed the Shadow, as well as a rich inner world populated by internal characters and functions which embody many psychological patterns called Archetypes. These Archetypes are both personal and shared. The personal archetypes are embodied as the anima/animus, or the contra-sexual image-ideal within each individual. The anima or animus is the locus of many motivating functions of self-image and sexual relations. The shared archetypes are contained in what Jung called the Collective Unconscious. They are called collective because the same images and functions appear in some form across all times and cultures, and hence seem to be universally human.[216] The unconscious holds our drives, impulses and instincts, as well as our aspirations and inspirations. The collective unconscious can be said to contain both the highest and the lowest that humans are capable of.

Because so much of our selves remain in the unconscious, the majority of our selves are unknown.

> "Most people confuse 'self-knowledge' with knowledge of their conscious ego personalities… but the ego knows only its own contents, not the unconscious and its contents… What is commonly call 'self-knowledge' is therefore a very limited knowledge, most of it dependent on social factors, of what goes on in the human psyche."[217]

What we experience as a unique individual is actually informed and controlled by the movement of these universal archetypes below the surface of

---

[215] *Shadow,* Johnson, 1986: 3 – 4

[216] The archetypes are "essential building blocks in the psychic structure of every man and woman. If something is archetypal, it is typical. Archetypes form the basis for instinctive, unlearned behavior patterns that are common to all mankind, and represent themselves in human consciousness in certain typical ways." Sandford, 1980: 6 – 7

awareness.[218] The suggestion is that the internal self is predicated upon the existence of an internalized community of shared psychic patterns.

Jung is primarily an essentialist, as the 'true self' is contained within the unconscious, and must be recovered and revealed through the intentional stripping away of emotional accretions and defense mechanisms. These components (archetypes) in the psyche compete for control and energy unless they are made conscious. Through a creative interactive process within the psyche called Active Imagination, in which internal questions and relations are investigated subjectively, bringing unconscious material into awareness. This process uses art, self-expression, imagination and ritual to give voice to and to dialogue with the internal characterizations of the archetypes. Like Plato and Freud, Jung sought harmony within the warring parts of the self. But unlike Plato and Freud's subjugation of the unconscious to the rational or the ego, Jung's self-actualization consists of bringing more and more unconscious material into awareness and the conscious integration of this material into the self-consciousness. In Jung's view, the achievement of integration leads to balanced and harmonious social/interpersonal relations.

As I see it, Jung's view of the self offers three main advantages over the tripartite views of Plato and Freud: 1) Simplicity – only two segments of the self are posited, in accord with Ockham's Razor, although the balance of conscious and unconscious is not made any easier by the subsuming of elements of id and superego into the unconscious; 2) The Hope for Improvement/redemption as unconscious

---

[217] Jung, 1957: 14 – 15

[218] "Our souls as well as our bodies are composed of individual elements which were already present in the ranks of our ancestors. The 'newness' in the individual psyche is an endlessly varied recombination of age-old components." Jung, 1957: 235

processes are absorbed into the consciousness through active imagination or other therapeutic techniques; 3) Compassion and Stability - Jung's model is more equitable and maintainable, in my opinion, than either Plato's or Freud's, as both of Jung's predecessors rely on a 'Dominator' model of the psyche, in which the unconscious forces must be held under tight control by reason or the ego. In Jung's version, increased awareness performs this function by integrating the splintered elements of the self. This idea of integration and unity of the self will take on more significance as we proceed. Although Freud's 'talking cure' was also intended to bring unconscious elements into awareness, Freud limited his techniques to only the treatment of psychological pathologies. Jung used his techniques to bring about self-transformation and expanded awareness to everyman, as the means to achieve psycho-spiritual growth or self-actualization.[219] While Plato indicates that the reasoning part of the psyche can be educated through philosophy to harmonize with the other two parts, Jung claims that the struggle between the conscious and unconscious is part of a larger cycle of unfolding awareness of self and universe. This implies that the self is in a state of perpetual growth, giving hope for improved future prospects of increased consciousness, as increased awareness leads to improved communication and interaction with both self and others. The two parts of the self are to be brought together and honored as fundamental components of a wondrous whole. In Plato and Jung, the spiritual seeker is justified in pursuing the intangible balance of inner harmony and the higher perceptions that brings, but Freud's focus on pathology precludes the use of his model for purposes other than

[219] "I began to understand that the goal of psychic development is only a circumambulation of the self." Jung, 1961: 196

seeking effective psychological relief of unwanted symptoms. For Freud, psychology was a medical discipline with the purpose of curing disease, not for self-exploration.

All three of these models tend to have a bias of elitism. For Plato, only those with the leisure to practice philosophy had any hope for achieving the delicate balance of the soul he calls justice. For Freud and Jung, only those with the resources and leisure to embark on lengthy psychoanalysis could hope to achieve mental health or self-actualization. But of these two, Jung's system is more creative and less constrained by the therapist-patient relationship than Freud's system. While Freud's technique depends heavily on therapeutic sessions, Jung's technique is more accessible to the would-be self-actualizer. Through a multitude of excellent books (by Jung and his many followers) and through self-exploration in active imagination, an individual can begin to do "inner work" alone, without mortgaging the house to go into therapy, although a certain level of education and leisure is required in order to read, understand and apply Jung's teachings.

iv) Social Constructivism and Social Cognitive Views of the Self

Social Constructivism is the position held in favor by current social science. It holds that an examination of social institutions and structures reveal a functional explanation of social roles apart from any contextual or subjective meaning. The individual is seen as shaped and constituted by the social roles he/she fulfils.[220] This view is called "The Blank Slate" by MIT psychology professor Steven Pinker, and is contrasted by him to a biological-genetic basis for understanding the human psyche.

The Social Constructivist position (Pinker's 'Blank Slate' position) holds that the effects of culture are what shape an individual, lending features and distinction to an otherwise undifferentiated psyche.[221] The social constructivists are in good company in holding this view of the lack of an essential human nature, also holding this view are the influential philosophers, Descartes and Rousseau, who believed that the human psyche is fashioned primarily by external social forces.

Social Constructivism holds that knowledge is personally and socially constructed, discovered and not made. Interpretation is held to be prior to facts, as we cannot look at a fact without interpreting it first. Therefore, truth is believed to be provisional and limited, not certain or absolute. In this view, the role of knowledge is seen as providing frameworks for understanding the world, not direct access to the world (which is believed to be impossible to access directly).[222]

More recent philosophers like Charles Taylor and Michael Sandel have espoused a social constructivist view of the self. In this view, the self is to be understood as having developed through the historical mediation of social institutions called Frameworks or Orientations. Taylor asserts that we gain our sense of identity from sources both universal and individual, complex and many-layered.[223] To define the self is to identify with Frameworks that provide a structure of meaning by giving standards for distinctions and evaluations.[224] But these frameworks are inherited, not created, as they exist prior to being chosen by an individual. We might

---

[220] Rosenberg, 1988: 101-102
[221] "…Social scientists saw the malleability of humans and the autonomy of culture as doctrines that might bring about the age-old dream of perfecting mankind…[P]sychology is sometimes driven by a utopian vision in which changes in child-rearing and education will ameliorate social pathologies and improve human welfare." Pinker, 2002: 27
[222] Olsson, 1996: 276 - 280
[223]Taylor, 1989: 29

be tempted to hear echoes of Jung's archetypes in the Social Constructionists' frameworks were it not for a critical distinction which sets them in opposition: in the Social Constructivists' view, the self is both *molded by* and the *medium of* inherited social institutions (frameworks) that are imposed upon the individual by external sources. These frameworks are accepted and internalized by the individual, imparting meaning and an orientation to experience. The emphasis is on the relation to these external frameworks as the primary 'sources of the self' of Taylor's book of the same name. In Jung's approach, the self is the center of focus, with the archetypes being internal sources of meaning and value, mediated through the collective unconscious and expressed within and by society.

Taylor offers external historic frameworks a remedy to the three ailments of modern culture, which he identifies as: 1) Individualism; 2) the Disenchantment of the World; and 3) the Political Consequences of the first two malaises. To Taylor, individualism, while offering a new autonomy to individuals, also entails the loss of traditional moral horizons which delineated and gave meaning to experience. The Disenchantment of the World refers to the loss of cosmic order and higher purpose once imparted by historic institutions. This loss of purpose is linked to a narrowing of vision caused by egoism and self-centeredness. Crucial to the success of this disenchantment is the rise of Instrumental Reasoning, in which rationality is focused on maximizing efficiency and profits. This pragmatic modern rationalism differs from the Platonian model by emphasizing the enhancement of ordinary life, rather than focusing on abstract conceptual excellence. In Instrumental Reasoning, others are seen as means to our ends, human life is devalued by impersonal institutions and

[224] Taylor, 1989: 30

science and technology is glorified in the worship and hope of the 'technological fix.' The political fallout of individualism and instrumental reasoning is the loss of freedom due to the imposition of Instrumental Reasoning. As self-absorbed citizens fail to participate in government, soft despotism is given a foothold. Without civic participation, individuals face monolithic institutions alone, further discouraging participation and alienating them from the political sphere.[225] Without this civic participation, we are in danger of losing our ability to control our political destinies.

For Taylor, meaning is created through connection to others, rendering introspection and self-exploration a harmful exercise in self-indulgence.[226] Taylor asserts that an individual's values and choices are shaped by culture and caste, and cannot be totally self-generated, as Jung's collective unconscious could be construed to be.[227] Taylor links self-discovery to creative-artistic self-expression, but limits individual originality only to those creations which enhance social values.[228] It is through immersion in the group traditions that the individual finds the fulfillment of his/her self.[229] Taylor's position is consistent with his personal conservative Catholic beliefs.

---

[225] Taylor, 1991: 2 – 10

[226] "The agent seeking in life, trying to define him- or herself meaningfully, has to exist in a horizon of important questions. That is what is self-defeating in modes of contemporary culture that concentrate on self-fulfillment in opposition to the demands of society, or nature, which shut out history and the bonds of solidarity. These self-centered 'narcissistic' forms are indeed shallow and trivialized… To shut out demands emanating from beyond the self is precisely to suppress the conditions of significance, and hence to court trivialization." Taylor, 1991: 40)

[227] Taylor, 1991: 47

[228] "The demands of self-truth, contact with self, harmony within ourselves could be quite different from the demands of right treatment that we were expected to accord to others. Indeed, the very idea of originality, and the associated notion that the enemy of authenticity can be social conformity, forces on us the idea that authenticity will have to struggle against some externally imposed rules." Taylor. 1991: 63

[229] "…[S]elf-fulfillment, so far from excluding unconditional relationships and moral demands beyond the self, actually requires these in some form." Taylor, 1991: 73

There is much good to be found in Taylor, especially in his diagnosis of the 'malaises of modernity,' but I do not agree with the Social Constructivist view of a self entirely fashioned by culture and institution. The selfish egoism identified by Taylor is certainly a problem prevalent in our culture, but Jung would diagnose this condition as one of alienation from the true self, and not necessarily as an indication of the entire failure of a subjective approach, as Taylor seems to claim. Rousseau would argue that it is the very social forces so empowered by Taylor and Social Constructivism that is responsible for the corruption of man's original state of natural honesty and self-reliance.

At the opposite spectrum of the approaches to understand the self is the Cognitive view of the self. In the Cognitive camp, the self is seen as the result of brain processes, in the most recent form of Physical Reductionism. The faculties of mind are believed to have evolved in response to conditions in the environments of our ancestors. These faculties are characterized as modules in the mind, usually corresponding to specific locales in the geography of the human brain. The self or "soul" is seen as the interaction of these modules.[230] Our selves are, in large part, determined by our genetic inheritance. It is undeniable that many personality traits are inherited, as science continues to discover the physical processes by which this occurs. To his credit, Pinker does acknowledge some external input, in that certain faculties (such as language) do not develop unless the individual is provided a

[230] "[S]cience is showing that what we call the soul – the locus of sentiences, reason and will – consists of the information-processing activity of the brain, an organ governed by the laws of biology. In an individual person it comes into existence gradually through the differentiation of tissues growing from a single cell. In the species it came into existence gradually as the forces of evolution modified the brains of simpler animals." Pinker, 2002: 224

potential-enriched environment.[231] But to the Cognitive psychologist, the individual self is still determined and constrained by forces outside his/her conscious control. And, like Freud, the exercise of Cognitive therapy is limited to the correction of pathologies, not self-actualization or exploration. The Cognitive view also falls prey to Taylor's malaises, as the values and relations of the self are reduced to biological processes, devoid of significance and higher purpose. Like Freud, the cognitive psychology approach utilizes and glorifies Instrumental Reasoning, and thus is prone to all the political and moral devolution's identified by Taylor.

The Cognitive view of the self as multiple modules of different mental faculties returns us once again to a view of a splintered self. In the Cognitive schema, a module or group of modules act as a 'central executive,' coordinating and controlling the other competing modules, corresponding to the Ego of Freud and several other systems. Like Freud, the cognitive view is a contentious model, and the internal conflict is reflected in social conflict. But like Plato, the module responsible for rational thought is considered superior to the other modules.

By now, it should be apparent that I am biased in favor of the Jungian view of the self. It has the virtue of having both simplicity and depth. While positing only two divisions of the self, it accounts for the multiplicity of drives, instincts ad aspirations, while affording the self not only creativity (like Taylor), but also spirituality – something conspicuously lacking in most of the other models thus discussed. From Plato, we get the idea of the self as an internal relation. From Freud, we get the concept of unconscious processes requiring consciousness. From Jung, we have the enhanced collective unconscious and the archetypes. Social

[231] Pinker, 2002: 38

constructivism gives us a sense of the ethical relations and connection to larger contexts, while cognitive psychology allows us to explore the connections between physical processes and personal experience.

v) The Perennial Philosophy

I now turn to a consideration of what has come to be called the "Perennial Philosophy," (so called because of its perceived continuity throughout history) as several of its main tenets are echoed in my approach. The name, Perennial Philosophy, is commonly attributed to Leibniz, but this is mistaken. The use of the name predates Leibniz by at least two-hundred and fifty years, and the idea goes back even farther than the name.[232] Although the Perennial Philosophy is primarily theological, it contains an embedded view of the self and approach to education that corresponds to both ancient philosophies of character education (virtue ethics) as well as to emergent research in the fields of psychology and sociology. Although in this work, I avoid making any theological claims about the nature of reality or theology,[233] I will highlight how the ancient view of humanity embedded within the Perennial Philosophy has been validated by contemporary science. I contend that this is so because the Perennial Philosophy developed over thousands of years of actual personal experiences, and it is for this reason Social Cognitive research is now catching up to the observations of saints and sages made eons ago: it now appears that the view of humanity found within the Perennial Philosophy is based on an

[232] Schmidt, 1998: 506

[233] To do true justice to the consideration of the theological impact and implications of the correlations between current psychological research and the Perennial Philosophy would require a different dissertation of its own of a very different tenor.

empirical observation of human behavior and nature, just as much as the current research is based on empirical observation of human behavior and nature. Therefore, I discuss the Perennial Philosophy, despite its perilously close affiliation to religion, because the ancients, Communitarians and Social Psychology all share many concepts in common with the *philosophia perennis* and should properly be included in a consideration of the educational and civic applications of self-knowledge (albeit briefly). The implications of this are interesting, as more and more of the ancient wisdom is becoming empirically validated by modern psychology and sociology.

The syncretistic tradition of the Perennial Philosophy claims that its history can be traced through some of the most influential minds in western history. Great philosophers claimed by the tradition include: Zoroaster, Hermes Trismegistus, Orpheus, Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Plutarch, Jamblichus, Diogenes Laertius, Augustine (once the tradition migrated into Christianity), Thomas Aquinas, Proclus, Giovanni Pico, Francesco Giorgio, Agostino Steuco, and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz.[234] More modern syncretistic thinkers in line with the tradition include Blaise Pascal, William Blake, Aldous Huxley, Nicholas Berdyaev, C.G. Jung, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Martin Buber, William James, Paul Tillich, Karl Jaspers, Rollo May, Gabriel Marcel, Mircea Eliade, James Hillman, and Joseph Campbell.[235]

It is generally recognized that there are four major tenets of Perennial Philosophy. These are: 1) the Physical realm is only a part of the total reality - Reality actually consists of an underlying unity, which is seen as the ultimate ground of being. This underlying unity is identified with deity, with the individual self seen

[234] Schmitt, 1998: 513 - 531
[235] http://www.mythosandlogos.com/perennial.html

as a fragment of a greater whole. This concept is exemplified by Plato's Divided Line of upper and lower realms, or Kant's and Descartes distinctions between the realms of Sensation and Intelligibility (or Mind). It is not within the scope of this work to consider the metaphysical claims of the existence of deity - far greater minds than I have considered the logical validity of a Prime Mover and I refer you to them for a discussion of it.[236]

2) The Perennial Philosophy holds that this primal unity can be directly accessed through the human mind. Every individual has their own unique connection to this unity, whether they are aware of it or not. The lack of awareness of the existence of this permanent connection to the unity does not deny its existence. Plato claims that we partake in the world of Forms through reason (or mind). Jung emphasized a common bond in humanity through the Collective Unconscious and Archetypes. Taylor recognizes a common unity of humanity grounded in equal capacity for moral choice. Social Cognitive Psychology recognizes an emerging view of a universally malleable human nature that is shaped by whatever culture subjects it to socialization.

3) Humanity is seen to have a fragmented nature, divided into two or more realms, always including at least the physical realm and the mental/spiritual. Some perennial thinkers, such as Plato and Freud subdivide the human psyche into three parts, while others, such as Kant, Jung and Taylor only focus on two parts. Rousseau, Taylor and many others emphasis an original unification of self that is shattered by

[236] In his book, *The Other Perennial Philosophy, A Metaphysical Dialectic*, author Alan M. Laidelman gives an exhaustive examination and discussion of the various historical arguments generally used to support the existence of a Prime Mover.

social contingencies, but which unity can be regained (to varying degrees) through proper efforts and education.

4) The perennial philosophy is unabashedly teleological and claims to answer many of life's most burning and basic questions, such as "Why am I here?" - one key to its lasting appeal. According to the Perennial Philosophy, the goal of human life is to perfect oneself, that is, to figure out your self and your place in the cosmos so that you might take up your proper relations to the world. The ancient Greeks referred to this as *Eudaemonia*. In our era, we simply call it being happy. According to this view, everyone has direct access to unity and self-knowledge, even if we don't know it or take advantage of it. The goal of human existence, according to the Perennial Philosophy, is the attainment of self-knowledge.

Ancient mystic tradition holds a complimentary view of the self, in which the self is also divided into multiple parts that were interconnected by a fundamental underlying unity. The part of the self that is multiple is called by many different names by many different teachers: the Conditioned Self, the False Self, the Ego, the Alienated Self, etc. This part of the self is created through social interaction with others and can be characterized as consisting of multiple selves that constantly change according to the situation.[237] The goal of mysticism is to achieve unity, both within the self and with the larger universe. To achieve this unification, the seeker is taught to identify with the part of the self that still lies in unity. This part of the self is variously called the Higher Self, the Soul, the Real/True Self, etc. By identifying the self with the higher, more coherent aspects of the self, the individual seeks to create through their actions and thoughts the "Observer" self – an aspect/identity that

sees the self objectively and is capable of reflecting upon the whole of the self and control the multiple identities as needed. This Observer is created through self-observation that doesn't get identified with any one single identity and through the cultivation of mystical experiences of unity, in which the atomistic individual self is perceived to be an illusion.

The self is seen as possessing limitless potential that must be consciously recognized in order to become actualized. It is axiomatic that the individual creates the reality they perceive and experience through their thoughts, choices and beliefs in a feedback loop (called Karma by some traditions). The false self or ego is held to have many layers and defense mechanisms that must be first observed and then accepted in order to be released and transcended. All illusions of a separate self must eventually be surrendered to achieve the goal of Self-Actualization, also called Liberation, Enlightenment or Awakening. Fully awakened individuals are extremely rare, and are completely integrated into any environment in which they might stumble, for they perceive no differences between themselves and others, one situation and another. Since they have no ego to protect anymore, they are free to respond in any manner, and since they have nothing to prove, they can humbly adapt themselves to the situation in compassion and universal love. This view of the self underlies most world religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism).

Social Cognitive theory supports much of the ancient views of the self, whether it be James' distinction of "I" (the subjective experiencer) and "Me" (the

---

[237] Ouspenski, 14

subject known through introspection), that are integrated through self-knowledge[238] or the theory of the Interpersonal Self, in which schemas of the self are developed through social interaction and the process of increasing differentiation of the self from others.[239] Others discuss the creation of self identifications through interpersonal agreement and given whatever 'spin' we desire to project the desired self-image to others.[240] Like the ancients, modern theory holds that the more of these splintered identities that are consciously assimilated into the larger self, the more healthy and successful the individual.[241] The creation of reality of the mystics is supported in modern theory, in which it is shown that we project onto the world what we believe about ourselves in a self-fulfilling prophecy, justifying those expectation and beliefs about the self.[242]

Apart from the theological and metaphysical considerations, both the Perennial Philosophy and empirical psychology emphasize the fragmentation of the human psyche and the goal of unity or wholeness, which pre-existed the fragmentation and can be returned to, given sufficient maturity and development. Both Social Cognitive Psychology and the Perennial Philosophy emphasize that the lack of self-knowledge is the root cause of most psychological and social problems. Both also emphasize the corrective powers of self-knowledge on moral education and development.

---

[238] James, in Baumeister, 1999: 74 and 75
[239] Marcus and Cross, 1990, 583 – 585 and Turner, 1999: 79 - 81
[240] Schlenker and Weigold, 1989, 245 and Swann et al,1999: 392
[241] Ryan and Deci, 1999: 255, Baumeister et al, in Ego-Depletion, 1999: 323; Leary et al, 1999: 88; and Carver, 1999: 182
[242] Snyder, 1979:121; Deci and Ryan, 1999: 255 – 257; Markus and Wurf, 1987: 322; Markus and Kitayama, 1999: 341; Carver, 1999: 181 and Dweck and Leggett, 1988: 269

The Perennial Philosophy flows through and informs much of not only Western culture, but can be found in both the Near East[243] and Far East cultures as well, as the syncretistic strains also found in Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism are just as prevalent in those societies as well.

The ultimate metaphysical status of reality or the existence of deity is not necessary for the Perennial Philosophy to pragmatically function effectively in the individual's psyche, as the underlying unity can fall within a range, allowing individuals to pursue whatever beliefs they choose (more on this to follow). However, for the purposes of our discussion, I will assume that there is *something* larger than ourselves and of which we are all a part, whether that something be a sentient cosmos, the so-called "blind" forces of nature and evolution on this small planet or the social cohesion of the community/state/nation, I will not speculate here.

D) Citizen, Self and Others

i) Common Features

The understanding of the self is central to any attempts at civic or moral education, and must be founded upon a model of the self that is accurate and effective. Current research in Social Cognitive theories of the self reveal a view of the self that is consistent with many ancient and traditional models of the self. I have attempted to make a preliminary articulation of the emerging model of self as viewed through the prisms of dualism, self-knowledge and historic models of the self.

ii) Relation of Self to Others

[243] Islamic philsopher, Avicenna and the Hindu sage, Patanjali, are both well within the tradition of the Perennial Philosophy. Laidelman, 2000: 35

In *Philosophical Arguments*, Charles Taylor argues for a politics of recognition. According to this belief, identity is inextricably bound up with the recognition we receive (or fail to receive) from others. Non-recognition is tantamount to oppression.[244] Over time, this external non-recognition can become internalized into self-hatred and discrimination against oneself. Positive recognition is a fundamental human need, Taylor claims. This is in stark contrast to Rousseau's claims of man's natural solitary self-sufficiency, but Rousseau does acknowledge the need for all of us to live together in society, thus making some measure of recognition by others necessary.[245]

With the collapse of traditional social hierarchies and the honors they once accorded, in democracy the concept of dignity is now considered universal amongst humanity, thus all are considered fundamentally equally deserving of recognition. The object of equal recognition is the authentic identity of each individual. Embedded within this authentic self is the original sense that gives rise to morality. This is an inner resource equally available to all individuals to assist in judgment. Therefore, morality is achieved through contact with this internal source of moral knowledge, not through some rational calculation or resort to an external god or ideal. This inner source of knowledge is described at length in the works of St. Augustine.[246] Rousseau also connected morality to a correct inner connection to the self.[247]

---

[244] Taylor, 1995: 225

[245] Rousseau, 1979: 243

[246] "…[T]he source we have to connect with is deep within us. This is part of the massive subjective turn of modern culture, a new form of inwardness, in which we come to think of ourselves as beings with inner depths. At first, this idea that the source is within may not exclude our being related to God or the Ideas; it can be considered our proper way of relating to them. In a sense, it can be seen as just a continuation and intensification of the development inaugurated by Augustine, who saw the

Historically, identity has been tied to social position, but in a democracy, the identity is expected to be self-defined. But, as we have seen in previous sections, it is impossible to get a true understanding of the self in a vacuum. One must have others to engage in dialogue to discover one's own authentic self. It is through the interactions with others that our selves are called into articulation. But the external recognition of inner realities is not guaranteed, it must be earned through interaction with others and always runs a risk of failure.[248] Recognition on the intimate level is dependent upon our relations with significant others, while recognition on the social level is manifest through the struggle for equal recognition. This equal recognition is crucial for democracy, and the failure to achieve it carries the risk of harm to those overlooked by society.

Taylor proposes that we adopt the universal capacity of all individuals for self-definition as the basis of a standard respect for the dignity of all persons. This affords all individuals, at least theoretically, an equal right to recognition because of their individual uniqueness. But problems occur when this is expanded to include what individuals have made manifest, as well as the recognition of potential. This approach, Taylor tells us, runs the risk of forced homogeneity and thus alienation from the authentic self.[249]

Rousseau warned against the dependence upon the esteem of others, but Taylor wants to assert that dependence upon others need not be a form of slavery and

---

road to God as passing through our self-awareness. The first variants of this new view were theistic, or at least pantheistic." Taylor, 1995: 228

[247] "Rousseau frequently presents the issue of morality as that of following the voice of nature within us. This voice is often drowned out by the passions that are induced by our dependence on others, the main one being amour propre, or pride." Taylor, 1995: 228

[248] Taylor, 1995: 231

[249] Taylor, 1995: 236 – 237

oppression. Taylor points out that Rousseau does give the esteem of others an important part in the creation of the potentially good society.[250] The unity of a perfectly balanced reciprocity within a society would function to preserve both the equality and uniqueness of individuals. If united for a common purpose, our cooperation with others, if returned in proportion, need not alienate us from ourselves. This form of concern for the opinions of others is consistent with freedom of choice and self-government.[251] To strive for individual honors is to harbor the enslaving kind of esteem, but to strive for universal dignity instills unity in individuals and societies, as it does not lead to competition for the meting out of limited resources, but rather it seeks to share. Taylor notes that Rousseau's concentration of dependence upon the General Will alone is what leads to tyranny and oppression. But equal freedom without equal recognition is tantamount to the same thing. Neutral liberalism, while granting equality of rights, cannot recognize uniqueness, leading to a lack of tolerance for cultural and individual differences.[252] The question becomes, how can we acknowledge uniqueness without destroying equality? Ultimately, the preservation and recognition of uniqueness is not a neutral act.

Taylor offers a new model of liberalism: one founded on how minorities are treated, rather than on neutrality.[253] So, under this new model, a society with collective goals could still be considered liberal if it respects the rights of its

---

[250] "But when we look at his [Rousseau's] accounts of a potentially good society, we can see that esteem does play a role in them, that people live very much in the public gaze. In a functioning republic, the citizens do care very much what others think." Taylor, 1995: 238
[251] *ibid.,* 240
[252] *ibid.,* 242
[253] *ibid.,* 247

dissenters, as well as the majority. Taylor argues that the pressures of multiculturalism and a mobile society are making the traditional model of liberalism impractical. A politics of equal recognition can be applied to education by the inclusion of other cultures in the curriculum. All societies have something important to contribute to the world and must have recognition in order to give it.[254] With this, we broaden our horizons to include all others, granting them the recognition they require while expanding our own identities.

Taylor argues that true neutral objectivity is impossible for biased humans to achieve – some standards will always be applied in evaluation. The automatic acceptance of differences leads to the degradation and homogenization of differences. Therefore, only the adoption of a universal respect preserves uniqueness while ensuring equality.

But all the uniqueness and recognition in the world is worthless if we hate ourselves. All true self-esteem is based on our opinions of ourselves. Rousseau knew this when he tried to halt or at least slow the influence of the opinions of others upon the emerging self. We fear looking at ourselves most of all. We want total acceptance exactly as we are from others, but how can others accept us exactly as we are, when we don't accept ourselves exactly as we are?

We seek approval from the world, but we will never really accept any approval we do receive from others if we don't approve of ourselves. We project this onto the world and believe others don't like us – in our fear and frustration, we may even feel that the world has turned against us, believing it to be a dark and dangerous place. No amount of positive regard from others will change this, because

[254] Taylor, 1995: 252

we will find some way to reject any positive regard we might receive because it is alien to us if we don't believe we truly deserve it. We are constantly trying to make the grade, to get the job, to find the right mate, to get that promotion… all attempts to seek approval from others that we are incapable of accepting because it conflicts with our fundamental beliefs about ourselves and what we deserve from others. We use externals such as career, money, status, relationships, etc. to prove to ourselves that we are worthy. We keep ourselves at bay from ourselves (lack of self-knowledge) because we're not sure if that which is within us is worthy or not. But we won't know the true nature of what lies underneath the mask and armor we use to protect ourselves from others. We are always trying to make ourselves look good enough and to understand enough to "make" others accept us. But unless we accept ourselves at the level of naked being, without using social props and expectations as armor, no achievements or relations will have real meaning for us, because it will all stem from an alien acceptance of someone else's conception of the good, and not from our authentic selves.

We must accept ourselves beyond the level of manifestations and accomplishments: at the basic level of being. Here we find the universal basis for universal respect. Without an underlying experience of our authentic selves and the knowledge that that self is fundamentally good, we will try to identify with externals, further splitting from ourselves. Proof of humanity's intrinsic goodness is impossible to prove scientifically, and must be an article of belief. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, man is corrupted by choice from an originally pure state. Technology cannot prove or disprove whether or not humanity (and hence the self) is

intrinsically good or evil. It still requires a leap of faith. But when the consequences of not leaping are considered, the risk of erroneously judging human nature to be good is negligible when weighed beside the known evils caused from alienated selves (shades of Pascal's Wager). If we think we are good because our performance is good or because we have fulfilled the expectations of others, our self-esteem is dependent upon our perception of the opinions of others, not upon our authentic selves. We play games to get the approval from others and go to extremes to get a certain group of people to think we are worthy. But pretense of any kind is the absence of authenticity.

There are no exterior features, skills or accoutrements that conclusively indicate the presence of authenticity. Authenticity is a certain inner relation of the self, based on an appreciation of individual uniqueness apart from any mode of expression, without the attempt to "armor," or the creation of mental buffers to protect the self from the threat of others. We are always on guard to defend against the dangers of the world. But we create what we defend against: in trying to defend against the rejection from others, we create that rejection. We cannot live our lives trying to please others because this causes us to create a false self, leading to the loss of meaning, connection and moral horizon, as Taylor noted. In defending against disapproval, we actually create disapproval by overcompensating for those lacks we believe others see in us. The belief that we must put forth the best face we can to others is a defense against what would happen if we were to just let go and trust that our authentic self is sufficient, regardless of the approval or disapproval of others.

To live as an authentic self means not trying to be any particular thing at any particular time to meet some preconceived ideas of what is required to fulfill one's own interests. It means living moment to moment, spontaneously in trust that whatever comes along, the authentic self can deal with it without resort to plotting, manipulation or obsessing about the details.

The culture and our egos fear that without conscious control and manipulation, all our structures and institutions will lapse into chaos. But as Rousseau admonishes us, nature is always right, and people are naturally good.[255] If we relax and quit trying to control everything, there is a natural order to things which will reassert itself once we take our hands off and quit trying to micromanage the cosmos.

Ultimately, we must look into the self and see what is there to be convinced whether or not the self is fundamentally good. But before we can do this, we must overcome our fear of rejection and vulnerability. We think we must ally ourselves with others and remain in their good graces because we are too weak to survive alone. The divided self does not give up its control easily. Rousseau recognized this in his discussion of *amour propre*. This is why he wanted to forestall its creation as long as possible to allow the individual long enough to establish a strong connection to the authentic self (*amour de soi-meme*) to withstand the challenges posed by the opinions of others. The false self (ego/*amour propre*) does not want us to see how strong and powerful we are in our natural state. But once recognition of the authentic state is actualized, we are able to relate to others without armoring against them; without trying to defend against their possible rejection of us.

The discovery of the authentic self leads to a more stable individual who is not swayed by the opinions of others, and who has good judgment because they can look past their own fears and limitations. Such individuals are desirable in democracy because they are able to make wise decisions for themselves and their community (self-government) because the can see their own private interests as connected to the interests of the whole community at large.

This authentic self is not the responsibility of the individual to create – it already exists. Instead, what is required is the removal of the armor that serves as buffers to keep others at arm's length, lest our vulnerability cause us pain, to remove all that prevents us from being our authentic selves. It is exactly this authentic but vulnerable stance which is the source of our true connection to others and to the community. This lack of artificial façade in relating to others by definition respects differences without homogenization. It respects equality because it is founded upon the fundamental recognition that everyone has an authentic self worthy of respect, regardless of how we present ourselves behaviorally. It preserves democracy and self-government while avoiding the risks of bias and coercion because the authentic self cannot be manufactured or coerced by authorities or peer pressure without ceasing to be authentic. As the self is understood in terms of a unique expression of a larger natural order, the self is not isolated, but rather seeks articulation through participation in relations and community.

Nature has provided an interdependent web of life that is self-regulating and self-renewing. If we take the lessons of the physical sciences seriously, we must admit this interconnection of life has evolved into the complex ecosystem that gave

---

[255] Rousseau, 1979: 92

rise to the evolution of both humanity and democracy. It does not require human intervention, but humans do require participation in and cooperation with nature to survive. If we accept a biological model of life, then we must be alive to its intrinsic order and beauty, and be willing to apply that to ourselves. Just as our government and the world at large is facing the dilemma of how to balance industry and ecology, so are we as individuals seeking a balance between the demands of living in a community and the demands of our authentic selves. If we accept nature as our maxim, we must see ourselves as self-contained organs within a larger body. When we try to determine for ourselves what our function is according to our own desires and the opinions of others, we impede or stop the function nature intended and thus render ourselves irrelevant to nature's plan for evolution. In trying to control the world, we cut off our own future potential before it can even begin to materialize.

Building on the ideas of thinkers such as Rousseau, Taylor and Sandel, I have attempted to show that authenticity is not only desirable in democracy, but to suggest that it is actually a necessary condition for the long-term preservation of democracy and freedom, because only authentic selves are capable and willing to make considered judgments for the long-term good of themselves and their communities. The means I propose to achieve this is through the formative project, modeled and based upon self-knowledge and authenticity. Through the foundational use of authenticity, bias and coercion is avoided and autonomy is preserved. By improving the individual citizen's capacity for judgment through connection to the authentic self, we improve their capacity for critical evaluation and wise choices, hence improving the overall prospects for the future of democracy. By reuniting the

fragmented self, we reconnect with self and community, seeing one as an expression and extension of the other, and thus cease behaving as atomistic agents with no moral obligations to others. Once we recognize ourselves as part of a larger, planet-wide web of life, we will cease to anthropomorphize the world and will return to the authentic ecological niche encoded within the natural forces of evolution.

As the recurrent flooding of the Mississippi Basin, with its intricate system of dams and locks, has shown, nature will not bow to man's will for long. Eventually, the natural order reasserts itself, often with calamitous devastation. This devastation can be avoided if a return to authenticity is undertaken and attempts at the control of nature are harmonized to cooperate with nature or are stopped. It is ridiculous to suppose that nature was capable of creating this wonderfully interconnected system of life on this planet for billions of years, but it all came to a grinding halt as soon as humanity came on the scene, and so our micromanagement is necessary to ensure our rights and comfort. It is only when we ignore or violate the ways of nature that we exclude ourselves from the evolutionary process. If we, as a nation, see the world as the larger context of our being and not as our market to be exploited, we will cease many of the more offensive capitalistic practices. If others who do not fit the mold are not marginalized and alienated, individuals will not be driven to extremes or violence to receive the recognition denied them. Thus, an adoption of the authentic stance should be considered a critical need for the preservation of our liberty and for our relations to the world.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

I) Distilled Principles

Currently throughout American culture, there is much concern and hand-wringing about the threat to our traditional values made by our post-modern multicultural world. Conflicting beliefs, lifestyles and cultures have challenged historical approaches to everything from politics to education, rendering many of these approaches either obsolete or inappropriate. One of these past approaches is the Formative Project – the conscious effort to shape future generations through education, in order to prepare them to take part as active citizens within a functioning democracy. In America, this effort was traditionally undertaken by public education, but in the last fifty years, this approach has fallen out of favor for a number of reasons, including fears of indoctrination, colonization, elitism, and the separation of church and state. These fears have been proven to be historically valid, as the Formative Project has usually been undertaken in a homogeneous and nationalistic setting, with quasi-religious overtones, as evidenced by the Greek Paideia's approach to civic education. But, as we have seen, such approaches are not suited to our highly heterogenic twenty-first century technocracy. Yet the need for such civic education has not changed – citizens still must be prepared to take up their civic responsibility in order for our democracy to continue to function. The rise of Neutral Liberalism, however, undermined much of the traditional means of accomplishing this, and in the fifty years since the dawn of the Civil Rights Movement, very little progress has been made in replacing traditional civic and moral education. This task

has been primarily left to family and church, with at best mixed and inconsistent results, as witnessed by increasing voter apathy and alienation. Without engaged citizens endowed with the capacity to make good decisions on behalf of themselves and others, a democracy flounders.

The challenge I have sought to answer in these pages is to fill the dire need for preparing citizens for active participation in democracy through public education at the college level, through the application of current psychological and sociological research to teach students skills in decision-making and self-knowledge. Backed by current Social Cognitive Psychology research, I contend that the lack of self-knowledge is at the bottom of many of our current social problems, and that the teaching of self-evaluation and values evaluation skills can alleviate many of the problems now facing our country, not only politically, but socially as well. *How well* we know our values is just as or even more important as *what* values we hold. Recent research suggests that some ways of thinking about the self are more efficient and efficacious than others – specifically, that the lack of self-knowledge renders an individual vulnerable to manipulation, coercion and depression (which can lead to alienation and isolation). All of these are deadly to the preservation of democracy, as well as individual happiness. By encouraging students to question their own belief systems (without advocating any one specific belief system apart from the basic democratic values of liberty and equality), as well as teaching basic critical thinking skills whereby students can evaluate the desirability of their beliefs, I argue that many social ills can be remedied and our own culture safeguarded against many of the dangers of civic apathy and political manipulation.

II) Objections and Responses

As with all approaches to the touchy problem of civic education, there are unanswered question and potential problems with this approach. In this section, I shall try to enunciate and respond to concerns that naturally arise with the proposal of a controversial endeavor such as this.

A) The Religious Objection

Our culture, indeed, the whole world, is undergoing a major challenge to determine the role of religion in a postmodern multicultural world. Traditionally, moral education had taken place under the aegis of religion, and the values imparted were mostly if not completely derived from religious origins. Many writers in the fields of ethics, values and character all bemoan the loss of a homogeneous culture with clearly defined values and boundaries, such as those provided by a Christian paradigm. Philosopher Charles Taylor and Sociologist James Davison Hunter are exemplars of the view that the loss of a religious context is equated with the loss of values and character.[256] Both point to the rise of multiculturalism and the displacement of Christian values with secular values as the culprit for many social ills, ranging everything from political disaffection to crime to ethical relativism. This question is indicative of a larger debate going on in the world, but rarely recognized. This deeper question is: What is the role of religion in a postmodern multicultural world? This question has spawned many other burning issues in our time that, in my opinion, are merely smokescreens for the pains of displacement felt by those who advocate traditional belief systems as science and secularism encroach

upon their traditional territory. Emerging issues related to this central question include, but are not limited to the raging debate over evolution versus creationism, school prayer and terrorism. This issue is far too broad to completely address here, but I shall attempt to respond to how the loss of the traditional unifying role of religion relates to moral and civic education.

Both Taylor and Hunter assume that moral education is best done in a religious atmosphere, and the loss of the universality of that context is tantamount to the permanent loss of character in culture, as neither of these authors seems capable of imagining something else as capable of fulfilling the ethical function of religion. For these two, the only recourse is a return to traditional religion in order to recapture any semblance of social morality. This view assumes that without religion as a basis for ethics, ethics is impossible. I argue that this is an unwarranted assumption. While religion has been the historical source and vehicle for ethics, I do not hold that it is the only one.[257] Underlying the ethics of all religions is what is known in Christianity as "The Golden Rule," which holds 'Do unto others that which you would have others do unto you." All major religions have some version of this sentiment. But as universal as this idea seems to be, it also carries a fatal flaw – it relies upon the prior existence of self-love. But the ugly truth is that most people do not love themselves, hence their ability to commit acts of violence and abuse. Although all major religions carry this idea, proponents of every religion are guilty of violations of this idea, exactly because of the scarcity of self-love. I contend that

---

[256] Taylor, 1991: 36 and Hunter, 2000: 77-78

[257] Kant attempted to found ethics on rationality, through the Categorical Imperative, but this attempt ultimately fails because only a small percentage of humanity could be categorized as being fully

the religious context for moral education is highly over-rated, as many of the most heinous acts of violation and torture against other humans were committed in the name of religion. Evidence of this ranges from the Crusades and pogroms to acts of religious terrorism, as witnessed in every major religion. No, religion alone is not sufficient to found a universal ethic upon. If it were, it would have already been achieved during the thousand plus years of Christian dominance in Europe and some two hundred years in America. The lack of universal morality and the existence of crime and corruption in religiously homogeneous cultures is strong evidence that a homogeneous religious culture is not a sufficient or even necessary condition for the formation of morality and ethics.

Another argument in favor of the need for a religious context for moral education is that the threat of eternal damnation or incurring unfavorable karma and the promise of eternal reward or a favorable reincarnation is needed to goad people into being moral or developing character. But the evidence extant in the world would suggest that these bribes and threats are not sufficient to prevent the occurrence of violence, crime and corruption. The Salvation-Damnation position makes the same fatal error of assuming a prior self-love that may not actually exist even in self-professed believers.

Indeed, the religious motivation for morality will only function if the individual has a favorable self-opinion upon which the carrot-and-stick or the Golden Rule approach can work. I have observed that traditional religious approaches work great for those who already have a good store of high self-esteem and self-love, but

---

rational. The majority of humanity will not base their values and decisions purely on rational premises. For this reason, Utilitarianism is also doomed to failure.

tend to erode and undermine those with low self-esteem and lacking in self-love. Telling someone who already feels badly about themselves that they are a damned sinner is not likely to motivate them to like themselves better. Under these circumstances, the injunction to "Treat others as you would have them treat you" can be disastrous, for if I feel that I deserve punishment, then I will be more open to abusing others, projecting my own guilt outwards onto others. Therefore, I argue that epistemic responsibility is a critical prerequisite for the effective application of religious morality.

Science and Ethics

In the previous section, I examined the religious approach to the foundation of ethics. In the following two sections, the adequacy of science to ground ethics will be explored.

Reason is a great thing – it has given us the "miracle of science,' but is reason sufficient to ground an ethics upon? As we saw in the previous historical review, Plato, Kant and Rawls all seem to think so. But Aristotle, Berlin, Sandel and Taylor disagree. Plato, Kant and Rawls all assume reason to be above personal interest and accessible to all. But Berlin and Taylor question this assumption, while Aristotle and Rousseau seem to take a middle position and incorporate some measure of reason, mitigated by emotion. Reason itself is neutral and can be turned to the achievement of any goals, moral or not, as we saw evidenced by the murderous efficiency of the Nazis in the Holocaust. Reason alone may be intrinsically pure, but that does not necessarily carry over to its application.

B) A Normative Objection

A major issue in normative ethics is the source or grounding of ethical theory. One important objection to my position essentially states that it is a mistake to infer that an intrinsic value is equivalent to a judgment value – we cannot get ethical values from physical descriptions. In our case, this would mean that just because there is scientific evidence suggesting that people would likely be happier and more successful if they were to apply these findings to their own lives, we cannot claim any moral authority for the institution of these findings in our colleges and universities. Clinical results cannot be translated into an endorsement of the approach and techniques I advocate, and people should not be forced into epistemic responsibility merely because there is some research that seems to support it.

While it is true that you cannot derive "ought" from "is," it is also true that there is a lot of unnecessary suffering in the world due primarily to ignorance of this knowledge of the self. A moral imperative cannot be claimed by the existence of the research cited in this study, nor can it be claimed that this is the only valid approach to take to solve many of the problems this approach seeks to address. My response to this objection is to appeal to functionalism – some things observably work better. I do not propose the teaching of values, rather, I advocate the education of evaluative skills and techniques, including functional models with empirical research to back them up. There is widespread need for some kind of approach to the solution of these issues, especially concerning the implications for the future of our democracy. Without some attempt to deal with the observed results of widespread suggestibility

and the low self-esteem that is presumed to cause it, it could be difficult to preserve the quality of our liberty.

C) Scientific Unreliability

For every study supporting a particular point of view, other research can be found that would seem to indicate that the exact opposite point of view is equally valid. The goal of science is not to prove any one particular agenda, but rather, it is a means to seek the observable state of affairs through trial and error. Science seeks *truth* with a lower case "t," rather than seeking a higher *Truth*, such as that claimed by religious teachings of divine revelations. Therefore, the truths revealed by science can be confusing and contradictory since they do not claim to emanate from any single source apart from natural means. Hundreds of thousands of scientists are conducting research around the world, testing an infinite number of hypotheses. No one single human being can locate and assimilate all of the existing research at any given time. And even if one intrepid graduate student was capable of such a feat, by the time she finished reading all her accumulated research, a whole new slew of studies would have been completed, and graduation would become an ever-receding goal. With so much information available, much of it conflicting, how are we to evaluate which research is correct and should be applied, and which is spurious and should be ignored? What kind of criteria should be applied and under what conditions?

Obviously, in a study such as this, only research supporting my position is cited, and I am forced to acknowledge the limitations of this approach. A broader

study would seek out and examine any conflicting data that may exist, and evaluate whether that conflicting data would mount a serious challenge to the approach taken in this dissertation or not. However, I am a philosopher, not a cognitive psychologist, therefore, the criteria and evaluation methods I utilize are those that seem to best support my arguments, based on establish modes of ethical and social philosophy. As I am not constrained by the traditions, regulations and methods of clinical science, I have not produced any original empirical studies to prove my claims. Rather, I have made a general study of the field of social cognitive psychology's research on the self under the guidance of a trained psychologist and specialist in the study of the self. My goal is not to prove any particular scientific hypothesis, but rather, my goal is to look at the broader picture of the state of human affairs, given the scientific observations, and to consider the social and political implications of the current state of affairs and to use the scientific evidence to construe an optimal ideal based on the data. Amongst the studies I examined, an obvious trend emerged, which I endeavored to describe in these pages and none of the studies examined contradicted this approach, but a broader study may yet reveal such in the future. However, a review of all extant literature in this field would be a larger project than can be undertaken at this time.

D) Impossibility of Implementation

In his critique of Derek Bok's advocation of a return to civic education in higher education, Michael Beatty notes that as long as higher education holds values that displace the *paideia*, moral education is impossible in higher education. Bok

notes that modern moral education teaches only moral reasoning, which results in generating students that excel in arguing, but believe in nothing – in other words, teaching moral relativism. However, Beatty claims that these moral problems evident in higher education reflect a larger split in the nation's perspectives. In order to fulfill Bok's proposal of increasing civic education, each university is forced to choose a particular morality to adhere to and force the university population to live with it – from students to faculty. Such a stance would require universities to hire their faculty based upon the candidates' personal beliefs and the degree of fit with the university's espoused moral code – clearly a violation of the candidates' civil rights. Beatty argues that such a move would serve to marginalize universities, as each would focus only on its own chosen moral code to the exclusion of all others – a seemingly arbitrary move in a world of increasing multiculturalism.[258] In Beatty's estimation, these challenges are insurmountable; with the end result that moral education cannot be implemented in higher education.

If Bok's view of a return to a religiously construed or a nationalistic based civic education is adopted, then Beatty is correct and moral education at the college and university level is doomed. However, I advocate a different approach, with a different grounding. The model outlined in this dissertation draws upon a more functionalist perspective, using the utilitarian goal of maximization of happiness. As such, the approach is both individualistic and universal. It is individualistic, in that individual cohesion and integrity is used as the means to furthering social and democratic cohesion and integrity. It is not reliant upon any religious or nationalistic beliefs or agendas, nor does it require the acceptance of any specific belief system.

[258] Beatty, 5 - 7

The techniques proposed are based on personal experimentation and experiences, not upon any pre-defined belief system, therefore eliminating the need for the choice and adoption of a particular moral code and the accompanying marginalization that would naturally follow.

E) Illusion of Self - impossibility of integration- Milgram

A classical "Candid Camera" episode illustrated how individuals in an elevator, when confronted with a group of people facing the back wall, would turn to likewise face the wall in order to avoid being different from the crowd. A recent study showed that people, when required to give answers out loud to a group, will tend to change their responses in order to conform with the group, even if it means changing their answer from the correct response to an incorrect one. It is interesting to note that, when met with a group response, individuals tend to question their own abilities and responses.

Psychologist Stanley Milgram produced research in the 1960's and 70's about the effects of authority on individual conformity. He found that people are often quite willing to inflict painful electric shocks on human "victims" when ordered to do so by an authority figure or expert, despite their own personal misgivings. This phenomenon accounts for the banality of Nazi cruelty, which almost uniformly claimed "I was only following orders." Both of these all too human responses to social pressure point to a serious objection to the possibility of epistemic responsibility – the common lack of autonomy in everyday people which

prevents the possibility of integration. This objection claims that belief in a truly autonomous self is only an illusion.

Under research conditions, Milgram found that roughly eighty percent of the population will concede to external pressure, in spite of their own convictions or conscience. But Milgram also found that some twenty percent of the population resisted the influence of external forces. Rather than disproving my position, I consider this support for my claims, for Milgram found that those who resisted were most commonly those who were acting from personal experience.[259] In other words, mere beliefs and convictions were not strong enough to help individuals stand up to authority figures or peer pressure. The more actual experience individuals have examining their beliefs, the more resistant they are to coercion and manipulation by others.[260] So, rather than refuting my arguments, the Milgram research actually supports and underscores the urgent need for widespread implementation.

III) Final Thoughts

A) Is Humanity inherently good or evil?

Throughout history, there has been a debate whether the inherent nature of humanity is good or is the inherent nature of humanity evil? Most of the surviving traditional religions of the world hold to the position that humanity was created to be good, but have somehow fallen from our original pristine state. Many philosophers also hold to this position, including Plato, Rousseau, Mill, Smith and Taylor. These philosophers hold that humanity is fundamentally good, but has become corrupted, primarily because of social conditions. This fundament belief in the goodness of

[259] Blass, 2000: 39 - 44
[260] Campbell and Carver, 1999; and Tangney, 2002

humanity is necessary, otherwise, we risk becoming genocidal and cruel if we believe that humanity is basically evil and deserving of punishment.

The necessity of living under conditions of scarcity and temptation are blamed for the fall of mankind, and those conditions are only created when there is a gathering of human population living in proximity with limited resources. Daniel Quinn argues that it is the artifice that we call "civilization' that is responsible, in that it creates condition of artificial fear and greed, giving rise to violence and scarcity.[261] Rousseau would seem to agree, yet Rousseau believed that civilization was necessary for humanity to achieve its full potential, as Natural Man gives up his Natural Liberty to become Civil Man and gain the protection and rights therewith.[262] Christianity holds that the fall of humanity is due to human weakness in the face of temptation – placing the blame on free will. And in that tradition, it is the same free will that is touted to be the salvation of a doomed humanity.

The goal of ethics throughout the ages has been an effort to discover the ideal conditions under which humanity's basic goodness could be expressed, and philosophers to this day (including this author) are still engaged in that worthy goal. Even with all its failings and shortcomings, civilization is the primary mode of human existence, and it looks to continue to be the primary mode for the foreseeable future. Many of the flaws, failings and problems faced by both individuals and communities in our modern era are at least exacerbated by social conditions, if not caused by them. Yet, with over six billion of us on the planet, it is highly unlikely that we shall be able to avoid the negative influences of those pressing social

[261] Quinn, 1992: 107 - 110
[262] Rousseau, 1968: 60

condition without some sort of conscious effort to do so. While religion is quite helpful, in our secular age, many cannot hold to an ancient belief system, founded millennia ago and formulated in medieval conditions. Plus, there is the problem of conflicting and rival belief systems. In our own age, the conflicts between cultures and beliefs have turned violent and dangerous. Within our own culture, we find a broadening rift between traditional believers and more secular individuals. Some means must be found to transcend these conflicts and rifts if our culture, indeed, humanity and our planet, is to survive.

I contend that the answer to the age-old question of the inherent goodness of man is that, in reality, we have vast potential for either good or bad. Far too often these days, we find the potential for bad being exercised more often than our potential for good. Yet, we have astonishing capacities and abilities built in us that we have yet to begin to tap and explore. This study is a beginning movement to develop some of those untapped potentials for good.

B) Self as Responsible Being

The foundation of Western ethics is a belief in free will and the responsibility of individuals for making choices and for the consequences of those choices. Christianity teaches us that humanity chose the fall. It is evident that Germany chose to follow Hitler, even when rumors of atrocities were confirmed. Why do we conform to evil, or even with unsavory forces when our consciences and belief systems would indicate otherwise? As we have seen, we often are influenced and conform when we do not have a strong enough acquaintance with our own deep

selves – the wellsprings of conscience and true faith. We give into evil when we fear our fellow man, when we lose our sense of common humanity and believe that we can truly benefit at the expense of another. Evil may be a vital force in the world, but it is born of human weakness and alienation.

Socrates taught us that the unexamined life is not worth living. The vast majority of us have never examined our lives, much less our beliefs. There are many reasons for this, but a primary reason is that most people do not have the conceptual skills to perform such a task. Many are frightened by what might be revealed by such a probing examination – that underneath the veneer of their conditioning and social mask, there lay a cesspool of unconscious and dark emotions, too powerful to control. This view was supported in the modern era by figures such as Freud. Yet, to not examine those dark emotions and inner forces is to become the slave of them. The task of teaching the approach and skills of epistemic responsibility may be a logistic impossibility, but the consequences of continuing to ignore our own inner selves are too dire and awful to allow.

Bibliography

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*. Trans. Irwin, Terence. Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis and Cambridge 1985

Baumeister, Roy, *The Self in Social Psychology: Key Readings in Social Psychology*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Hillsdale, New Jersey 1999

Berger, Peter and Luckman, Thomas, *The Social Construction of Reality: a Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge.* Anchor Books, New York 1967

Berlin, Isaiah. *The Proper Study of Mankind*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York 1997

Blass, Thomas, ed. *Obedience to Authority – Current Perspectives on the Milgram Paradigm.* Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, London and New Jersey 2000

Bloom, Allan, ed. *The Republic of Plato.* Basic Books, New York 1968

Bok, Derek, *Beyond the Ivory Tower – Social Responsibilities of the Modern University*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge and London 1982

Bok, Derek, *Universities and the Future of America*. Duke University Press, Durham and London 1990

Bourdeiu, Pierre and Passeron, Jean-Claude. *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*. Sage Publications, London, Newbury Park, New Delhi 1977

Frankfurt, Harry G. *On Bullshit.* Princeton University Press, Princeton and Oxford 2005

Frankl, Viktor, *Man's Search for Meaning*, Washington Square Press, New York and London, 1985

Gall, John, *Systemantics, first ed.* Quadrangle/The New York Times Book Co., New York 1975

Gilbert, Daniel; Fiske, Susan and Lindzey, Gardner, eds. *The Handbook of Social Psychology, fourth ed.* McGraw-Hill, New York, 1998

Hunter, James Davison. *The Death of Character – Moral Education in an Age Without Good or Evil.* Basic Books, New York 2000

Huxley, Aldous *The Perennial Philosophy.* Perennial Classics Division of HarperCollins, New York 1945/2004

Jaeger, Werner, *Paideia: the Ideals of Greek Culture Vol. I*, G. Highet, trans. Oxford University Press, New York 1939

Jaeger, Werner, *Paideia: the Ideals of Greek Culture – In Search of the Divine Centre Vol. II*, G. Highet, trans. Oxford University Press, New York 1943

Johnson, Robert A. *Inner Work – Using Dreams and Active Imagination for Personal Growth.* Harper and Row, San Francisco, Cambridge, Hagerstown, New York, Philadelphia, London, Mexico City, Sao Paulo, Singapore, Sydney 1986

Jung, C.G., *Memories, Dreams, Reflections.* Vintage Books, New York 1961

Jung, C.G., *The Undiscovered Self,* Mentor Books, Boston, MA 1957

Kant, Immanuel, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Harper & Row Publishers, New York 1964

Laidelman, Alan M., *The Other Perennial Philosophy: A Metaphysical Dialectic*. University Press of America, Lanham, New York, Oxford 2000

Levitt, Steven D. and Dubner, Stephen J. *Freakonomics*, HarperCollins Books, New York 2005

Lilly, John C., *The Deep Self – Profound Relaxation and the Tank Isolation Technique,* 1977. Warner Books, New York

Lilly, John C., *Programming and Metaprogramming of the Human Biocomputer*, Julian Press, New York 1967

Macedo, Stephen, *Liberal Virtues – Citizenship, Virtue and Community in Liberal Constitutionalism.* Clarendon Press, Oxford 1991

MacIntyre, Alasdair. *After Virtue – A Study in Moral Theory*. University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, Indiana 1984

Marx, Karl. "The Meaning of Human Requirements," in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, second edition. Ed.Tucker, Robert c. W.W. Norton and Company, New York and London 1978

Mead, George H., *Mind, Self and Society- From the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist.* University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1934

Mill, John S., *On Liberty.* Hackett Publishing Company, Inc. Indianapolis, Cambridge 1978

Ouspensky, P.D. *The Psychology of Man's Possible Evolution*. Vintage Books, New York 1973

Palmer, Parker J., *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life.* Jossey -Bass Publishers, John Wiley and Sons, Inc. San Francisco, 1998

Pals, Daniel L. *Seven Theories of Religion*. Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford 1996

Pervin, Lawrence, *Goal Concepts in Personality and Social Psychology*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Hillsdale, New Jersey, 1989

Pinker, Steven, *The Blank Slate – The Modern Denial of Human Nature.* Viking Press, New York London, Victoria, Ontario, New Delhi, Auckland, Johannesburg 2002

Plato, the *Republic*. Trans. Bloom, Allan. Basic Books 1968 and 1991

Polanyi, Michael, *Personal Knowledge – Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy.* University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL 1957

Polanyi, Michael, *The Study of Man.* Phoenix Books, Chicago, IL 1959

Quinn, Daniel, *Ishmael, An Adventure of the Mind and Spirit*. Bantam/Turner Books, New York, Toronto, London, Sydney and Aukland 1992

Rawls, John, *Collected Papers.* Harvard University Press, Cambridge and London 1999

Rosenberg, Alexander. *Philosophy of Social Science.* Westview Press, Boulder, CO, Oxford, England 1988

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, trans. by Allan Bloom. *Emile, or On Education*. Basic Books, USA 1979

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, trans. by Maurice Cranston. *A Discourse on Inequality.* Penguin Books, London, New York, Ontario, Victoria, Auckland 1984

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, trans. by Maurice Cranston. *The Social Contract* Penguin Books, London, New York, Ontario, Victoria, Auckland 1968

Sanford, John A., *The Invisible Partners – How the Male and Female in Each of Us Affects Our Relationships.* Paulist Press, New York 1980

Sandel, Michael. *Democracy's Discontent: America in Search of a Public Philosophy.* The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England 1996

Sartre, Jean-Paul, *Existentialism and Human Emotion*, Carol Publishing Group/Citadel Press, New York and Toronto 1994

Sommers, Christina H. and Satel, Sally *One Nation Under Therapy - How the Helping Culture is Eroding Self-Reliance.* St. Martin's Press, New York 2005

Taylor, Charles. *The Ethics of Authenticity*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England 1991

Taylor, Charles. *Philosophical Arguments.* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England 1995

Taylor, Charles. *Sources of the Self: the Making of the Modern Identity.* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts 1989

Toffler, Alvin. *Future Shock*. Bantam Books, New York, London, Toronto, 1971

Trachtenberg, Zev M. *Making Citizens, Rousseau's Political Theory of Culture.* Routledge, London and New York 1993

Wright, Robert, *The Moral Animal – Evolutionary Psychology and Everyday Life*. Vintage Books, New York 1994

Articles

Abbarno, John M. "Corporate Sponsored Education: the Limits of Social Responsibility" Paideia http://www.bu.edu/wcp/Papers/Educ/EducAbba.htm, accessed 2/15/05

Annas, Julia "Virtue Ethics" unpublished paper

Baumeister, Roy "The Self." in Gilbert, Fiske & Lindzey (listed above)

Baumeister, Roy "How the Self Became a Problem: A Psychological Review of Historical Research." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 52, No.1 1987

Baumeister, Roy, Bratslavsky, Ellen, Muraven, Mark and Tice, Dianne "Ego Depletion: Is the Active Self a Limited Resource?" in Baumeister (listed above)

Beaty, Michael "Paideia: Moral Education in the University?" Paideia http://www.bu.edu/wcp/Papers/Mpsy/MpsyBeat.htm, accessed 6/27/04

Campell, Jennifer "Self-Esteem and Clarity of Self- Concept." in Baumeister 1999

Carver, Charles "Self-Awareness." in Baumeister 1999

Cummins, Denise Dellarosa, "Cheater Detection is Modified by Social Rank: The Impact of Dominance on the Evolution of Cognitive Functions." *Evolution and Human Behavior*, Vol. 20 1999

Dweck, Carol and Leggett, Ellen "A Social-Cognitive Approach to Motivation and Personality." *Psychological Review*, Vol. 95, No. 2 1988

Fish, Stanley "The Case for Academic Autonomy." The Chronicle of Higher Education online http://chronicle.com.jobs/2004/07/2004072301c.htm, accessed 7/05/04

Gigerenzer, Gerd and Hug, Klaus, "Domain-specific reasoning: Social contracts, cheating, and perspective change." *Cognition*, Vol. 42 1992

Grosch, Paul D. "Paideia: Philosophy Educating Humanity through Spirituality." *Paideia* http://www.bu.edu/wcp/Papers/Educ/EducGros.htm

James, William "The Self." in Baumeister 1999

Kernis, Michael, Grannemann, Bruce and Barclay, Lynda "Stability and Level of Self-Esteem as Predictors of Anger Arousal and Hostility." in *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* Vol. 56 1989

Leary, Mark, Tambor, Ellen, Terdal, Sonja and Downs, Deborah "Self-Esteem as an Interpersonal Monitor: The Sociometer Hypothesis." in Baumeister 1999

Lipton, Bruce "The New Biology." Unpublished, 2005

Markus, Hazel and Cross, Susan "The Interpersonal Self." in Pervin 1989

Markus, Hazel and Kitayama, Shinobu "Culture and the Self: Implications for Cognition, Emotion and Motivation." in Baumeister 1999

Markus, Hazel and Wurf, Elissa "The Dynamic Self-Concept: A Social Psychological Perspective." *Annual Review of Psychology*, Volume 38 1987

Melzer, Arthur M, "Rousseau's 'Mission' and the Intention of his Writings." *American Journal of Political Science,* Vol. 27, Issue 2 1983

Meyer, John W., "The Effect of Education as an Institution." *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 83, No. 1 1977

Moulakis, Athanasios "Civic Humanism." Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/humanism-civic/

Neuberg, Steven and Newsom, Jason "Personal Need for Structure: Individual Differences in the Desire for Simple Structure." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* Vol. 65 1993

Ryan, Richard and Deci, Edward "On Assimilating Identities to the Self: A Self-Determination Theory Perspective on the Internalization and Integrity within Cultures." in Baumeister 1999

Salovey, Peter; Hsee, Christopher and Mayer, John "Emotional Intelligence and the Self-Regulation of Affect." in Baumeister 1999

Schlenker, Barry and Weigold, Michael "Goals and the Self-Identification Process: Constructing Desired Identities." in Pervin 1989

Schmidt, James "Civility, Enlightenment and Society: Conceptual Confusions and Kantian Remedies." *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 92, No. 2, June. 1998

Schmitt, Charles "Perennial Philosophy: From Agostino Steuco to Leibniz." Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol 27, No. 4 (Oct - Dec., 1966) 505-532

Sedikides, Constantine "Assessment, Enhancement, and Verification Determinants of the Self-Evaluation Process." in Baumeister 1999

Snyder, Mark "Self-Monitoring Processes." *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology,* Vol. 12 1979

Steele, Claude "The Psychology of Self-Affirmation: Sustaining the Integrity of the Self." in Baumeister 1999

Swann, William, Griffin, John, Predmore, Steven and Gaines, Bebe "The Cognitive-Affective Crossfire: When Self-Consistency Confronts Self Enhancement." in Baumeister 1999

Tangney, June Price "Self-Conscious Emotions: the Self as a Moral Guide." In *Self and Motivation: Emerging Psychological Perspectives*. Tesser, Abraham, et al, ed. American Psychological Association, Washington, DC 2002

Turner, Jeffery S. "The Project of Self-Education in Plato's Protagoras, Gorgias, and Meno." *Paideia*. http://www.bu.edu/wcp/Papers/AnciTurn.htm, accessed 7/26/04

Turner, Ralph "The Real Self: From Institution to Impulse." in Baumeister 1999

Uhrmacher, P. Bruce "The Curriculum Shadow." *Curriculum Inquiry*, Vol 27, No. 3 Autumn 1997

Vallacher, Robin and Wegner, Daniel, "What Do People Think They're Doing? Action Identification and Human Behavior" *Psychological Review.* Vol. 94, No. 1, 1987