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Table of Contents

The History and Philosophy of Education

Mightier Than the Sword: Challenging Totalitarianism's Heavy Footfalls

In turning over and thinking through the idea I develop in this essay, I am besieged by worry about the waning power of the pen. Can it still inspire real introspection? Does the pen still have the power to make change? Is the pen still "mightier than the sword?"[1] So many writers have posed this very question, Virginia Woolf among them, situating writing as a kind of war according to preeminent Woolf scholar our Virginia Worley.[2] This is a logical attribution given Woolf's razor-sharp anti-war argument in her feminist educational treatise *Three Guineas*,[3] but I wonder if Woolf might have borrowed from Voltaire, who penned, in a letter to Jeanne-Grâce Bosc du Bouchet, Comtesse d'Argental, in October 1748, that "to hold a pen is to be at war."[4] A few years back Toni Morrison edited a book of essays[5] on the power of the pen, including such authors as Salman Rushdie, Orhan Pamuk, David Grossman, and Nadine Gordimer, themselves all PEN Award recipients, in which Gordimer opines that writers' power comes from their predilection to acute observation; writers see what is really happening in the world, says she.

Some of the mightiest power and most momentous effect of the pen resides in writers' anti-war resistance—in their use of the pen as pacifistic sword. This leads me to ask, amidst ultra-fragmented public attention and, most troublingly, in a time of censorship, heavily propagandized "news," and extreme political polarization, when polarization has slammed peoples ears and eyes tightly shut, can the pen's power possibly hold? Can words ever reach ears and eyes to affect heart and mind? Perhaps not. Nevertheless, the pen is my tool—it is *our* tool—so if the pen has lost its power with an audience of historians and philosophers, then I surely must lay my pen down once and for all.

Today I choose to go forward in hope, even if I can only call my present hope "fading." I first want to talk through with you circumstances that may seem somewhat farfetched, but please bear with me, since if what I think is happening is happening, I fear we are coming into a time of far greater suffering and hardship than what we have experienced even over the past 18 months of global pandemic—and far graver danger. Here is the nugget of it: in the U.S. those who have not taken the jabs—either out of disbelief they are "safe," or due to individual ideological objection, or

because the jabs are medically contraindicated—are systematically being demonized and separated into a reviled underclass, blamed wholesale for the U.S.' failure to "stop the spread" of covid–19.

We, for I count myself among this reviled underclass,[6] are in the process of having our freedoms and liberties stolen, our entitled claim to membership in democracy revoked. This action should terrify everyone, yet it seemingly terrifies few. As of the time of this writing, in New York one cannot enter public places without proof of "vaccination." And the so-called "vaccine passport" comes soon to your state, specifically to your mobile device to follow your every footstep and to remind you of when it is time to take your next jab.

You may believe blaming those who have chosen not to participate in the U.S.' covid–19 vaccination program and barring their entry a fit punishment for non-compliance or refusal to take this hastily developed, understudied, unprecedented set of shots. To be clear, these are medical procedures named "vaccines," yet they do not prevent one from contracting the SARS-CoV-2 virus, since, unlike most vaccines, these do not sterilize one against the virus, the process by which most vaccines confer immunity; these jabs were never designed to confer immunity. Indeed, for the state and its supporters to argue through media channels these jabs will "stop the spread" therefore represents an illogical proposition. These jabs can never protect the population from covid–19 disease spread, even though "stopping the spread" is widely propagandized to be a key outcome of the vaccination program. But the consequences of this logical fallacy are not simply about the un-jabbed not being able to work out in their neighborhood gym or tuck into an order of hot wings while perched upon a stool inside their local chicken joint, rather the fallacy along with public health mis-messaging are designed to create a hated sub-group widely propagandized to be the root cause of the majority's problems: a group that will be jeered and oppressed and punished by the state. The situation in which we now find ourselves is also about widespread, unwarranted, deeply felt belief that if said reviled group could only be eliminated, then all the problems of the majority would disappear. Fault for the SARS-CoV-2 virus' spread is therefore re-designed by the state to fall entirely upon the unvaxxed. So now I must ask you, does this political playbook sound familiar? ...because these circumstances are reliable functions of totalitarian rule.

While these jabs are part of an unprecedented experiment (so in one way not unlike the gain-of-function research believed to have led to the covid–19 pandemic), they are also supposed to be an experiment in which all ostensibly are allowed to decide whether to participate. International law backs this up; both the Nuremburg Code and the Geneva Convention prohibit medical treatment, particularly experimental medical treatment, without participants' *uncoerced consent*.[7] But the majority in the U.S., revved ferociously by the vaccine-propaganda machine, have become murderous in their conviction to "return to normal." For example, employees asking

store patrons to wear a mask have repeatedly been attacked and even killed. Recently a man was stabbed at an anti-vaccination protest in Los Angeles.[8] Across the country teachers, healthcare workers, firefighters, EMS workers, and government and private sector employees are being threatened with termination of employment if they do not submit to the jabs. Many have quit or been fired.[9] This is not consent; this is clear coercion.

Today in the U.S. the un-jabbed are not just being endlessly shamed and chivvied, although such messages come at us from every corner and cranny. Today some people are learning they will not receive needed, life-saving organ transplants because they do not want to participate in these experimental jabs. Some patients who do not have the jabs will not be put on the infamous "list" as eligible for transplant or are being removed from that list.[10] No doubt access to other critical medical treatments will follow, like kidney dialysis, which disproportionately affects the poor and people of color, many of whom are less likely to have consented to the jabs given the U.S.' history of medical experimentation on Black folks' bodies,[11] and policy which will equate to a death sentence for those who require hemodialysis to survive. To effect the deaths of these souls will essentially purge the rolls of Medicare and Medicaid patients who are served by the U.S.' End-Stage Renal Dialysis Program (ESRD), a high-cost program perennially on the chopping block.

Coincidentally, the ESRD was born of Washington state's attempt, in 1962, to choose who would be eligible to receive dialysis and who would not, proposing to base their decision on each patient's "social worth" or "anticipated contribution to society."[12] A group of renowned U.S. nephrologists exposed and opposed this policy, calling out the state's formation of what they called a "god panel" and leading to the institution of Public Law 92–603 protecting citizens' access to end-stage renal care.[13] In 2009, when President Obama proposed the Affordable Care Act, Republicans claimed the plan would "create government-sponsored 'death panels.'"[14] Today, it feels like those then-unsubstantiated rumors have come true, especially for those of us with skin in the game; at some point in the next few years I expect to join the list of those who need donor organs, the result of a rare genetic mutation.

When totalitarianism begins its march, typically there are few who hear its footfalls. I am grateful that, while I may most certainly be in the minority, I am not alone in my thinking. As Illinois' governor just issued a declaration all healthcare workers are required to take the jabs effective 9/5/21, many healthcare workers who do not want to consent to participate in the U.S.' experimental vaccination program are understandably reticent to be named. One such worker with whom I spoke recently sees clearly that, "The unvaxxed are on their way to being cut out of society. The vaxxed are being allowed to keep participating."[15] This healthcare worker reasons that, as in the past, people in the majority recognize, even if on a subconscious level, that if the reviled minority group can be treated so

viciously, so too can they and, what is more, the majority *will* be treated the same way eventually. Today, the fear that comes from the majority's below-consciousness knowledge

> …is being constantly misdirected at the unvaxxed. It's [in line with] the most basic slave mentality in history. Treat one group of people viciously, and the rest will grovel and do ANYTHING to not be lumped in with them. Instead of recognizing [unjust hatred levied against the unjabbed] the authorities don't give a damn about them; [instead of protecting these citizens' civil and human rights] they join in the abuse of the low-status individuals.[16]

When one looks at this situation holistically, it becomes clearer that the state's current actions are less about controlling a pandemic and saving the health of the state's citizens, and more about social control fed by fear and enacted by threat. Rationality has fallen: no longer does it function properly as a tool of persuasion. Pro-vaccine propaganda fills the papers, social media, and airwaves with false comparisons: comparing these shots to the polio vaccine (the SARS-CoV-2 shots are non-sterilizing, the polio vaccine is a sterilizing vaccine); comparing getting the shots to wearing a seatbelt (the shots are not a passive safety measure, they are an invasive experimental medical procedure that, once done, cannot be undone); conflating the shots' designed effects with other vaccines using the constant chant that taking the shots will "stop the spread" (again, the shots are a non-sterilizing vaccine meaning they cannot provide immunity to the virus, therefore cannot "stop the spread"); pushing the shots using the legal term "safe and effective" when the perennially underreported VAERS database[17] shows that, for an alarming, unprecedently large group in the U.S. these shots have proved anything but "safe," and as mistakenly labeled "breakthrough" cases rise, the claim to "effective" wavers significantly. These propagandas are based on false equivalencies, yet without rationality and, more importantly, reliable scientific information, a listener or viewer does not have access to tools used to determine false comparisons, calling into question the nature of consent to treatment.

The public's ability to recognize and be critical of state propaganda has been eroded during this, the "post-truth era." And that is to say nothing of the current rampant censure of critical medical knowledge and naming peer-reviewed and clinically observed science "disinformation" in the press and on social-media platforms. Without reliable information, without long-term studies on the effects of the shots, without state or corporate liability for damages or death (for the shots' makers have been indemnified by the state), with doors and borders everywhere closing on the "unvaxxed," and with those who refuse the shots vilified and jeered as a deviant underclass, how can any shot participant claim uncoerced "consent?" Such tactics rate highly among the effective tools of totalitarian rule. Indeed, the present majority (at this date 70% of adults have had at least one jab) would be wise

to review German naval officer Martin Niemöller's pacifist poem, "First They Came for the Communists."[18]

I long ago lost count of the number of times, both in my writing and my teaching, I have referenced John Steinbeck's *Banquet Speech* delivered when he accepted the 1962 Nobel Prize in Literature. In no time since I first came across his remarkable words, charged as is his writing is with what Nobel committee members called, "sympathetic humour and keen social perception,"[19] can I recall feeling their astonishing prescience. His words soberly remind of the power of the pen and the catastrophic effect on humanity when those who write—those who produce knowledge and art—fail to speak out against atrocity and runaway scientific "progress." Steinbeck warns,

> The present universal fear has been the result of a forward surge in our knowledge and manipulation of certain dangerous factors in the physical world. It is true that other phases of understanding have not yet caught up with this great step, but there is no reason to presume that they cannot or will not draw abreast. Indeed, it is part of the writer's responsibility to make sure that they do. With humanity's long, proud history of standing firm against all of its natural enemies, sometimes in the face of almost certain defeat and extinction, we would be cowardly and stupid to leave the field on the eve of our greatest potential victory.[20]

Steinbeck here speaks of the World War II era's scientific technologies, but his words ring true not only on the science behind these shots, but additionally on the logical lapse in sanity that a scientific field like gain-of-function research is permitted to exist, moreover is funded by taxpayer dollars. The following paragraph I excerpt from some early writing in which I propose literature be used as a data source in qualitative research, however this paragraph did not make it into the piece's published version.[21]

> Before Steinbeck, Einstein raised this same caution, then took action by joining with eight other scientists to form the Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists. The critical "task of this committee was to bring to the notice of people everywhere the tremendous change that had taken place in the world after the splitting of the atom and the production of the atomic bomb" (Jahn, 1962).[22] These Nobel-Prize-winning scientists' concerns— that atomic science had come too far too fast, and that science's ethical links to humanity had not kept pace—earned them intense scrutiny, communist brandings, and suspicions of treason (for many were pacifists), some coming to lead lives "isolated and ostracized" (Jahn, 1962).[23] Seeking to challenge what he viewed as the scientific revolution's unselfconsciously destructive forces, Steinbeck again raises the critical concern of atomic scientists by pressing writers of literature to accept their responsibility to

humankind by asking: Who will challenge the scientists? Who will insist that their hearts keep pace with their heads if not those writers and artists delving beneath and exploring human experience…?

Once again, no matter how well-intentioned their work, scientists' heads have outpaced humanity's hearts, this time with what may well be even more dire, far-reaching global human consequence.[24] The "unvaxxed" among us cannot and should not be made into a reviled underclass, treated with violence, contempt, isolation, and denial of their right to make a living. We writers cannot now fail to speak, for our own wellbeing and the survival of our democratic nation are at stake. We must combat this swift trend toward totalitarianism. But what combats totalitarianism? Inspiringly, love, creativity, and ridicule of totalitarian rulers challenges the totalitarian, not evidence, well-crafted logic, or rationality. Indeed, in this moment rationality is proving an abject failure.

We writers and artists are humanity's watchdogs, not to be for or against a vaccine, but to come together, to galvanize others, and to fight for our democracy, for civil rights, for humanity. Those of us working in the humanities and social sciences have long used pen and brush to keep the march of science morally in check. Those who came before us and we are the public critics, the public intellectuals, the academics, the cultural critics, creating words that have helped to expose and dismantle dangerous lapses in humanity, morality, and equity. These are the voices which have, again and again throughout history and sometimes at great personal cost, signaled problematic or disastrous, unintended effects of scientific knowledge. Some of our faculty colleagues are presently engaged in this work: MIT's Stephanie Seneff and her colleague Greg Nigh, for example, are boldly leading the charge.[25] May we muster the conviction to emulate their bravery. It is my belief we in the U.S. now find ourselves at an alarming, critical political crossroads. So, to champion the cause of democracy and to challenge the march of totalitarianism, I implore of you, let us all lift our pens!

<div align="right">Stacy Otto
Illinois State University</div>

Endnotes

[1]   Allison Gee, "Who first said 'the pen is mightier than the sword'?," *BBC News Magazine*, January 9, 2015, https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-30729480

"The English words 'The pen is mightier than the sword' were first written by novelist and playwright Edward Bulwer-Lytton in 1839, in his historical play Cardinal Richelieu." He opines, *"The pen is mightier than the sword…. Take away the sword; States can be saved without it!"* By the 1840s the saying had become a "commonplace." Bulwer-Lytton also first penned the infamous opening line, "it was a dark and stormy night…."

2   Virginia Worley, personal communication with the author, August 22, 2021.

3   Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas* (Richmond, Surrey, UK: Hogarth Press, 1938).

4   Documentation can be found at https://www.azquotes.com/quote/303795

5   Toni Morrison (Ed.), *Burn This Book: PEN Writers Speak Out on the Power of the Word* (New York, NY: Harper, 2009).

6   Let me be transparent: after extensive research and consultation I have decided not to participate in the jabs (which now seem to promise to be an endless series of injections of unlabeled, undisclosed ingredients, not to mention a source of revenue for big pharma Pfizer et al., the likes of which n'eretofore has been seen. After all, if you look at your "vaccination card" you'll see there are five slots; I do not believe this design coincidence or happenstance). But, to be clear, I am not an "anti-vaxxer." In fact, I experience this term as hate speech. My life has been saved many times by medical advances; I have consented to take numerous sterilizing vaccines when their makers can document their long- and short-term safety and effectiveness.

7   In Europe a Nuremberg trial currently advances against the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control. See https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/stories/committees/paec/COVID-19_Inquiry/Submissions/119._Kassandra_Mouzis_Brudenell_Redacted.pdf; https://medicalveritas.org/covid-nuremberg-trial/

8   The Associated Press, "Man stabbed at LA anti-vaccination protest leaves hospital," *ABC News*, August 15, 2021, https://abcnews.go.com/Health/wireStory/man-stabbed-la-anti-vaccination-protest-leaves-hospital-79471785

9   The Associated Press, "153 Hospital Workers Quit or Were Fired Because They Refused to Get COVID Vaccines," *NPR*, June 22, 2021, https://www.npr.org/2021/06/22/1009268874/153-hospital-workers-quit-or-were-fired-because-they-refused-to-get-covid-vaccin

10   Jason Rantz, "Rantz: UW Medicine pulls heart transplant patient from list after refusing COVID vaccine," *KTTH 770 Radio*, August 20, 2021, https://mynorthwest.com/3094868/rantz-uw-medicine-transplant-

covid-vaccine/; Mike Hixenbaugh, "'A death sentence': Critically ill patients denied transplants amid coronavirus outbreak," *NBC News*, March 18, 2020, https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-care/death-sentence-critically-ill-patients-denied-transplants-amid-coronavirus-outbreak-n1163066

[11] Harriet A. Washington, *Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present* (New York, NY: Anchor, 2008).

[12] Will Ross, "History of Medicine: God Panels and the History of Hemodialysis in America: A Cautionary Tale," *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics* 14, no. 11 (2012): 890–896, https://journalofethics.ama-assn.org/article/god-panels-and-history-hemodialysis-america-cautionary-tale/2012-11

[13] Ibid.

[14] Jim Rutenberg and Jackie Calmes, "False 'Death Panel' Rumor Has Some Familiar Roots," *The New York Times*, August 13, 2009, https://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/14/health/policy/14panel.html

[15] Illinois healthcare worker speaking under condition of anonymity, August 22, 2021.

[16] Ibid.

[17] In the U.S., the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) is often underreported by 10x or more. https://vaers.hhs.gov/data.html

[18] Matthew D. Hockenos, *Then They Came for Me: Martin Niemöller, the Pastor Who Defied the Nazis* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2018).

[19] The Nobel Foundation, *The Nobel Prize in Literature 1962 Banquet Speech*, delivered by John Steinbeck, December 10, 1962, Stockholm, Sweden, https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/1962/steinbeck/25229-john-steinbeck-banquet-speech-1962/

[20] Ibid.

[21] Stacy Otto, "Beneath and Beyond Truth: Studying Literary Narratives to Research Human Phenomena," *International Journal of Research and Method in Education* 30, no 1 (2007): 73–87.

[22] Gunnar Jahn, *The Nobel Peace Prize 1962 Award Ceremony Speech*, prize awarded to Linus Pauling, December 10, 1963, Oslo, Sweden, https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1962/ceremony-speech/

[23] Ibid.

[24] Stephanie Seneff and Greg Nigh, "Worse Than the Disease? Reviewing Some Possible Unintended Consequences of the mRNA Vaccines Against COVID-19," *International Journal of Vaccine Theory, Practice, and Research* 2, no. 1 (2021): 402–443.

[25] Ibid.

The Master–Slave Concept in History, Philosophy, and Education

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Introduction

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) writes in his *Social Contract* that "Man is born free; and everywhere he is in chains. One thinks himself the master of others, and still remains a greater slave than they."[1] He thought he could establish the reasons for this change in the human condition through analysis of society. For Rousseau the social order was just that—social— not a gift of nature but emanating from and evolving with society. The idea of a social contract did not originate with Rousseau, though. John Locke (1632–1704) wrote about such a theory of natural rights and an implied social contract which empowers the consent of the governed with the alternative being the devolution into what amounts to a general slavery.[2] But I am beginning in the middle of the story. One purpose of this essay is to track the historical impact of the concept of slavery in the literal case of permanent chattel servitude, the temporary condition of indentured service, and in the metaphorical sense of becoming a subject to another or others through social, economic, or personal conditions. A second purpose is to examine the impact of the idea of slavery as a metaphor for social and economic relations on philosophy and the impact of Hegel's so-called master–slave dialectic. Although a brief discussion of the institution of slavery is necessary, I do not intend this essay to detail an extensive examination of slavery's history, impact, and legacy in the American experience, for that project would require a much differently focused, lengthy investigation.

Slavery in practice and in abstract has a long history. Before the Age of Discovery slavery was a consequence of the growth and expansion of some societies at the expense of other societies. Plato (424/423–348/347 BCE) considers slavery a given fact of social existence. This is not to say that in his writings he does not struggle with the concept of slavery, since he recognizes that, absent slavery, individuals have an opportunity to find their own position in society. The presence of slavery and its necessity in Athenian society mitigates against any significant changes and, in fact, Plato expands the concept of slavery to include the relations among social classes so that all members of society are subject to gods, laws, rulers,

elders, parents, and so on. Plato maintains individuals should accept their station, justified by his idea that individuals are all subject to or slaves of their inborn nature. Laborers are governed by their appetites, artisans by creativity, guardians by seeking glory, and philosophers by the search for wisdom.[3] Aristotle (384–322 BCE) believes human beings are meant to live in a complex and stratified social setting (*polis*) dominated by the aristocracy with a laboring slave class. He indicates his acceptance of the idea that free men and slaves were born to their positions, the former to participate in the life of the *polis*, the latter to make such participation by free men possible.[4] This social structure lasted throughout the ancient period up to the change to serfdom which tied an individual to the land rather than the master. Thus, slavery in practice, well known among older societies, became the metaphor for slavery in the abstract, an idea which considers the social structure a system of servitude. Therefore, Rousseau reasonably can say humans are "everywhere in chains" and Locke can claim the "state of equality"[5] as still lacking. It is then up to philosophers to elaborate on the conditions of slavery in all its forms.

Idealist Thought and Slavery

Rousseau greatly influenced the thinking of Immanuel Kant (1724–1804). In his analysis of reason Kant finds Rousseau's view of human nature expresses the moral and spiritual world and that view influenced his interest in basic moral philosophy, his appreciation for the common man, and his quest for a practical philosophy.[6] Kant sought to counter the empiricism of Locke, David Hume (1711–1776), and other English philosophers. He writes that Hume "interrupted my dogmatic slumber … and gave my research in the field of speculative philosophy quite a different direction."[7] Kant rejects the empiricists' dependence on sensory experience, cause-and-effect connections, slavery to the passions, and the empiricists' turn away from *a priori* reasoning in favor of the inner experience, the power of reason. Carl Friedrich (1901–1984) writes that, "Indeed, the problem of freedom, the freedom of the human personality to unfold and fulfill its higher destiny, is the central issue of all of Kant's philosophizing."[8] This quest for freedom through reason opposes the bondage of one person to another and opposes the idea of a person as an end and never a means.[9] Kant's questioning of the rationality and legality of the practice of voluntarily selling oneself into slavery challenges the ancient view of slavery as a natural if unfortunate condition of human existence, establishing the view of the wrongness of enslavement of one person by another.[10]

The source of the more modern, expanded view of slavery as an abstract description of many social relationships is the master–slave dialectic of G. W. F. Hegel (1770–1831), who, in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, develops the dialectical reasoning devised to allow for the development of science. His phenomenology refers to a particular means to derive from apprehendable sense-experiences an encompassing scientific approach

to acquiring knowledge. This process depends on human consciousness and the activity of consciousness using a dialectic method of temporal movement through a process of opposition, positive and negative, thesis and antithesis. Hegel posits "three relations of conscious subjectivity to its object: the sense-certainty … the Perception … and finally the Understanding … [of] their manifest, phenomenal surface."[11] For Hegel, individuals are simultaneously independent and dependent, self and other, lord and bondsman.[12] He introduces the concepts of lord and bondsman (master and slave) in an earlier work as a

> …relation [that] is immediately and absolutely established along with the inequality of the power of life. At this point there is no question of any right or any necessary equality. Equality is nothing but an abstraction—it is the formal thought of life, of the first level, and this thought is purely ideal and without reality. In reality, on the other hand, it is the inequality of life which is established, and therefore the relation of lordship and bondage.[13]

Hegel believes that, based on the unequal distribution of power, "where there is a plurality of individuals, there is a relation between them, and this relation is lordship and bondage."[14] In his *Phenomenology*, however, he examines the individual's self-consciousness. This self-consciousness consists of two aspects: the powerful and the powerless. For the powerful, "the lord is the consciousness that exists for itself…[and who] relates himself mediately to the thing through the [powerless] bondsman."[15] This interconnectedness forms the basis for the development of self-awareness or self-consciousness necessary for the rise of science. Hegel writes,

> The genesis of Science is the theme of the Phenomenology of Spirit. This genesis starts from Spirit immediate or spiritless Spirit, i.e. from the consciousness of sense, and must tread a long road before it can become true Science, can give birth to its true concept or element. Such a genesis will not be a fancied illumination of the road to science, nor yet an actual founding of science, nor yet a pistol-shot of illumination aiming straight at absolute knowledge…. The task of proceeding from the uncultured to the knowing mind is really performed by the universal individual, i.e. self-conscious Spirit as such.[16]

Hegel establishes the dialectic, the structure of thesis : antithesis : synthesis : thesis, as a method of acquiring knowledge. He develops the idea of the bifurcation of the individual into Lord and Bondsman, establishes a connection between the ideal and the perceived and anticipates the development of the role of science and truth. He observes that

> The true shape in which truth exists can only be the scientific system of such truth. To help bring philosophy closer to the form of Science, to the goal where it can lay aside the title "love of knowing" and be actual knowing—that is what I have set myself to do.[17]

Hegel later clarified his master and slave thinking, explaining that "knowing" exists on two planes: the sensible and the abstract. Hegel holds that "The slave knows not his essence, his infinitude, his freedom, he does not know himself in his essence, and not to know himself is not to think himself The self-consciousness, which by thought apprehends that itself is essence."[18] Hegel indicates all are born into the sensible, slave world and can only escape through learning.

> In his direct life, before it is idealized by self-consciousness, man is merely a natural being, standing outside of his true conception. Only through the education of his body and mind, mainly by his becoming conscious of himself as free, does he take possession of himself, become his own property, and stand in opposition to others…. The standpoint of the free will, with which right and the science of right begin, is already beyond the wrong view that man is simply a natural being, who, as he cannot exist for himself, is fit only to be enslaved…. There is thus by this movement brought to pass a struggle for recognition, and, as a necessary result, the relation of master and slave.[19]

Hegel recognizes the conundrum created by the opposition of status of master and slave as well as the interpenetration of the two. "Hence slavery," says Hegel,

> …is a wrong not simply on the part of those who enslave or subjugate, but of the slaves and subjects themselves. Slavery occurs in the passage from the natural condition of man to his true moral and social condition. It is found in a world where a wrong is still a right…,[20]

and "It lies in the nature of the matter that the slave has an absolute right to make himself free."[21] Hegel's focus is on scientific progress and he provides the notion of consciousness of the will in order to move between the sensible world of the slave to the abstract world of the master. It was then left to Karl Marx (1818–1883) to apply the Hegelian Master–Slave Dialectic to Marx's theories of class warfare, economic determinism, and social movement toward proletarian hegemony.

The Marxist Conception of the Master–Slave Dialectic

Among philosophers who advanced Hegel's thought, it was Karl Marx who applied Hegel's dialectical to the examination of social and economic conditions. Marx and his collaborator, Friedrich Engels (1820–1895), aligned themselves with a group called the Young Hegelians who were largely concerned with the philosophical denunciation of religion.[22] Among the Young Hegelians was Ludwig Feuerbach (1804–1872), a student of Hegel with whom Marx shared anti-religious and materialist views used to construct historical materialism. Like Hegel, Marx views historic processes in terms of contradictions. For Hegel these contradictions are developed through consciousness.[23] Notwithstanding the fact that Marx never

mentions the *Herrschaft–Knechtschaft* dialectic, he understood that when Hegel talks about *Herrschaft–Knechtschaft* in *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807) he differentiates between *Knechtschaft* and *Sklaverei*, leaving a discussion of slavery for a later time in his *Philosophy of Right* (1821).

Marx, however, uses the slave metaphor to describe social, economic, political, gender, religious, and family relations. He describes the relation of lower classes to upper, proletarian workers as wage slaves, landless farmers to landowners, common citizens as slaves to government, women as slaves to men, the devout as slaves to their church, and children as slaves to parents. Instead of making things better for workers, the growth of industry and the development of new means of production made things worse since the machines required less-skilled workers, devaluing human labor.

Marx's dialectic focuses on material processes in society, especially the growth of capitalism, labor, and production which result in a social-class structure rife with struggle. For Marx, the human movement toward and thirst for freedom in personal and social life represents a master–slave dialectic described by dialectical materialism. In this dialectic, early communal social relations are the thesis, the rise of domination of one group over another in a master–slave relationship is the antithesis, and feudal society rises as the synthesis. Feudal society then becomes the thesis, industrial society the antithesis, and capitalist society the synthesis. Capitalist society is then challenged by proletarian upheaval resulting in socialism, which ultimately becomes a classless, communist society. Marx focuses on the new industrial working class, the proletariat, as an exploited, marginalized, and alienated class of society. He believes the consciousness of the proletariat contains the antithesis to capitalist society.

The Marxist dialectic contains the Hegelian concepts of the qualitative shift, the interpenetration of opposites, and the negation of the negation. This qualitative shift is the idea that change occurs quantitatively up to the point at which a new structure is formed. The interpenetration of opposites postulates that the meaning of things is found in the relationship with their dualistic opposites while the negation of the negation is a restatement of the Hegelian dialectical process of thesis–antithesis–synthesis. Marx sees his materialist Master–Slave dialectic as the basis for various forms of capitalistic oppression and slavery, both real and metaphorical, and as the descriptor for industrial economic relations. Hannah Arendt (1906–1975) observes that "When Marx made labor the most important activity of man, he was saying, in terms of the tradition, that not freedom but compulsion is what makes man human.[24]

Challenges to the Marxist Slave Dialectic

In his critique of Marx and Marxism, *Otázka Sociální*, T. G. Masaryk (1850–1937) writes that Marx gives various definitions for Historical Materialism such that "As we view all Marx's definitions and explanations

and the explanations of his followers, it appears to us that the entire teaching of historical materialism is confused."[25] In Masaryk's analysis of Marx and Marxism he concludes that,

> Marx proclaims a permanent revolution…. Revolution cannot be the end … only a means, and even that only in extreme circumstances…. There is really little new in what Marx has to offer. Up to now society has been built more on death than on life. We have not yet learned to live, to live fully, positively.[26]

Nonetheless, it is the master–slave dialectic that forms Marxist class struggle. Masaryk writes, "Murder and suicide are only acute manifestations of the chronic destruction of life…. We are still masters and slaves. And more—we are barbarians. We want excitement, not work. We enjoy exciting sports, including revolution."[27] Masaryk does not deny the mutual bondage of master and slave but concludes that revolutionary action can only change the occupants of the slave and master roles. He suggests this relation is already made manifest within the rise of capitalism. He writes, "Capitalism begins with the liberation of production from feudalism. The fight against feudalism appears politically as a fight for freedom and equality; but that freedom and equality meant in fact something quite different, it meant proletarianization and capitalization."[28] Instead Masaryk proposes the expansion of the social democratic process gives rise to free citizens, equality before the law, and the withering of class privilege.

Hannah Arendt's thought contributes greatly to the understanding of individuals and their political lives. She designates the lives of individuals in terms of their activities. Like Plato she identifies different impulses for the day-to-day lives of people. Arendt's *Vita Activa* consists of individuals as workers, *animal laborans*; as creative artisans, *homo faber*; and as free social actors, *zoon politikon*.[29] Arendt believes that the important relationship is the relationship between the social, political, life, and labor. She writes,

> Politics in the original Greek sense of the word began with the liberation from labor, and in spite of many variations remained the same in this respect for nearly 3,000 years; and this, as we know, was first made possible through the institution of slavery.[30]

The intolerable conditions of slaves led to many violent slave revolts which kept alive the desire for freedom from chattel servitude. Arendt theorizes that, slave revolts notwithstanding, slavery was not sustained as a political issue. She analyzes the role of violence during the social and political upheavals of the 1960s, writing about organized violence in student insurrections and anti-war movements and the spontaneous violence that arose as a reaction to intolerable conditions in many inner-city regions. She reasons that "rage is by no means an automatic reaction to misery and suffering as such; … [that] only where there is reason to suspect that conditions could be changed and are not does rage arise."[31] Arendt warns, however, that "The real rift between [B]lack and white is not healed by

being translated into an even less reconcilable conflict between collective innocence and collective guilt."[32]

Existentialist Applications of the Master–Slave Dialectic

Nikolai Berdyaev (1874–1948) also had an interest in the relationship between freedom and the master–slave mentality. He writes,

> Man is in a state of servitude. He frequently does not notice that he is a slave, and sometimes he loves it. But man also aspires to be set free. It would be a mistake to think that the average man loves freedom. A still greater mistake would be to suppose that freedom is an easy thing. Freedom is a difficult thing. It is easier to remain in slavery.[33]

He finds the answer in what he calls the philosophy of personalism. Personalist philosophy comes from Berdyaev's concept of personality which exists in all individuals as an "ethical and spiritual…absolute existential centre."[34] Berdyaev's *Slavery and Freedom* uses the Hegelian master–slave dialectic to examine the human condition. He writes, "the inward motive forces of philosophy are determined elementally: the primacy of freedom over existence, of spirit over nature, subject over object, personality over the universal, creativeness over evolution, dualism over monism, love over law."[35] For Berdyaev, personality exists independent of any social, economic, biological, or historical condition. The socialized, the civilized, maybe even the educated are sociologically enslaved and objectified, but the conditions of servitude are considered acceptable. There exists, however, a contradiction. Personality, while highly individual, is

> …also social, in it there are traces of the collective unconscious. It is man's way out from isolation. It belongs to history, it realizes itself in society and in history. Personality is communal; it presupposes communion with others, and community with others. The profound contradiction and difficulty of human life is due to this communality.[36]

From personality, theorizes Berdyaev, character is developed.

> Character is the possession of power over oneself, it is the victory over slavery to oneself, a triumph which makes possible victory over slavery to the surrounding world also. Character is revealed above all in relation to environment. Temperament is a natural gift; character is conquest and attainment; it presupposes freedom.[37]

In the first section of *Slavery and Freedom*, Berdyaev examines the role of personality, the importance of the individual person, and his philosophy of personalism with the opposing master–slave idea. In the second section he considers the problem of individual freedom versus slavery in its many different social and psychological aspects, such as one's slavery to being, to God, to nature, to society, to culture, and to individualism. Berdyaev goes on to lay out historical and economic slavery to: sovereignty, war, nationalism,

aristocracy, and consumption; revolution; will and slavery to revolution and utopian; slavery to love in its multiple forms (erotic, compassionate); and, finally, slavery to the aesthetics of beauty, art, and nature. Finally, he engages the religious, historical, and ideas of time. In its essence, Berdyaev's personalist philosophy is an expansion of Kant's imperative to treat others as an end, not as a means to an end. Berdyaev opines, "every human personality, the personality of the least significant of men, bearing as it does within itself the image of the highest existence, cannot be a means to any end whatever."[38] The conflict between freedom and objectivization exists in the existential struggle for the expression of personality. "The source of slavery is always objectivization," writes Berdyaev, "that is to say exteriorization, alienation. It is slavery in everything; in the acquisition of knowledge, in morals, in religion, in art, in political and social life."[39] In this Berdyaev signals agreement with his contemporaries of the Frankfurt School and the New School for Social Research.

Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980) locates the expression of the master–slave dialectic in the concept of oppression: "exploitation of man by man…characterized by the fact that one class deprives the members of another class of their freedom"[40] In her work Simone de Beauvoir (1908–1986) incorporates not only the Hegelian dialectic of master–slave but also the Nietzschean genealogical model of investigating social contradictions. She develops the notion that the most important aspect of becoming an adult is the socialization into gender-specific roles.[41]

Critical Theory Applications of Master–Slave

In the 20th century, the mixture of Hegel's and Marx's dialectics, sociological, psychological, and economic investigations culminated in the development of Critical Theory. Herbert Marcuse (1898–1979) observes that "the dialectical method, with its uncompromising 'spirit of contradiction,' was the essential without which the critical theory of society would of necessity become a neutral or positivist sociology."[42] Marx's idea that modern industrial production and mechanization, "the very means that should liberate man from toil, makes him a slave of his labor,"[43] establishes the relationships of the hegemonic social and political power. Modern societies' structures, posit critical theorists, result in the domination and oppression of the less-powerful. For critical theorists, enslavement is life without consciousness, without agency, without the ability to participate meaningfully in a society, and as subject to demagoguery.

Marcuse likens critical theory to Hegel through Marx to modern social relationships. In *Reason and Revolution*, Marcuse theorizes that the connection between the consciousness of freedom, i.e., the freedom of the mind and the exploitation, alienation, and ressentiment, is caused by the opposing economic and social forces of capitalism. He writes, "the unity of identity and contradiction in the context of social forms…means that the state of negativity is not a distortion of a thing's true essence, but its very essence itself."[44] "…material historical conditions…cast off their philosophical

form as soon as they are subjected to the scrutiny of critical theory and are seized by conscious social practice."[45] Max Horkheimer (1895–1973) wrote in 1937 that "…[critical] theory never aims simply at an increase of knowledge as such. Its goal is man's emancipation from slavery."[46] Identifying social, economic, and political life with slavery and employing the dialectic of contradiction enabled the rise of a critical theory of society from which forces of domination and liberation could be identified and analyzed.

The Frankfurt/New School philosophers identify hidden ideologies as the unacknowledged source of all human action and social systems. Such ideologies go largely undefined, yet are accepted as the norm. Critical theorists seek to expose the ideological superstructure by bringing it into the open, by illuminating how the ideological elements control social institutions and relationships. Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937) theorizes the role of class-based relationships on society and how hegemonic power and dominance function in society, how the economic and social conditions of society are judged to be natural and inevitable, dependent on the dominated groups' agreement, buying into their own domination, and selling themselves into slavery. Thus, critical social theory in its many manifestations seeks out the contradictions of society's expressed values in relation to the reality of day-to-day lived experiences of its members. Critical Race Theory especially identifies the inequities in society that have historical roots in the legacy of slavery and continuing contemporary presence of racial bias, social inequality, economic injustice, and increasing disenfranchisement.[47]

Critical Race Theory is used to explore some of the same issues as the unique U.S. situation identified by Myrdal and his colleagues in *An American Dilemma*, theorizing that

- Race is not biologically real but is socially constructed and socially significant;
- Racism is a normal feature of society and is embedded within systems and institutions, like the legal system, that replicate racial inequality; and
- Racism is codified in law, embedded in structures, and woven into public policy.

Fighting racism means, among other things,

- Embracing the lived experiences of people of color, including those preserved through storytelling, and rejecting deficit-informed research that excludes the epistemologies of people of color;
- Exposing the ways racism is often cloaked in terminology regarding "mainstream," "normal," or "traditional" values or "neutral" policies, principles, or practices; and
- Analyzing how racism has affected the experiences of various people of color.[48]

The recent increase in politically motivated and supported race-based violence is a sign the animosities towards minoritized groups today thrives and can be provoked through rhetoric.

Theorizing Social Equity

In the Western Hemisphere, slavery's existence did not become controversial or political until the formation of the nation. Jefferson, for example, in his draft of the *Declaration of Independence* notes the role of the Crown in creating and maintaining the slave trade, then supporting a slave uprising against rebelling colonies.[49] Hannah Arendt observes U.S. political conditions lacked the precursor of feudalism that was broken by the rise of the merchant class and then the Industrial Revolution. Another aspect of U.S slavery is that slaves, kidnapped and brought forcibly from Africa, were unlike indentured servants who served under contract for a finite time before their release, nor were they like European immigrants who often suffered oppression in the early generations of their presence. For former slaves and their descendants, the process of emancipation was slow, painful, and incomplete. While there are regular calls for reparations, and that call has a significant history, there is significant opposition and purposeful forgetting in play.[50]

Gunnar Myrdal (1898–1987), aided by many able social, political, and economic thinkers of the time, studies the conditions of minority groups' oppression and obstacles to their social equality. He focuses on the differences between society's expressed values and the reality of daily life. He finds a disconnect between what he calls the American Creed and the lived experiences of the social relationships between majority and minoritized citizens,[51] since such a dilemma had never occurred historically and uniquely is based upon the institution of U.S. slavery. Myrdal finds that "America, compared to every other country in Western civilization, large or small, has the *most explicitly expressed* system of general ideals in reference to human interrelations."[52] His exhaustive study, now dated, and ideologically questionable, delineates the major issues of the dissonance between the American Creed, which he describes as "centered in the belief in equality and in the rights to liberty,"[53] and the continuing discrimination, bigotry, and hatred that still thrives in U.S. society. Criticism of *An American Dilemma* focuses on the sociological descriptions of African-American life, offered without examination of society's power relations and corresponding deficit-based discourses.

Ralph Ellison (1913–1994) finds "the main virtue of Myrdal's *An American Dilemma* lies in its demonstration of how the mechanism of prejudice operates to disguise the moral conflict in the minds of whites produced by the clash on the social level between the American Creed and anti-Negro practices."[54] He credits Myrdal with exposing the ideological underpinnings of race-focused sociological studies and challenging

mythologies about "anti-democratic and unscientific racial attitudes and practices."[55] Ellison finds *An American Dilemma* to be

> …the blueprint for a more effective exploitation of the South's natural, industrial and human resources. We use the term "exploitation" in both the positive and negative sense. In the positive sense it is the key to a more democratic and fruitful usage of the South's natural and human resources; in the negative, it is the plan for a more efficient and subtle manipulation of [B]lack and white relations, especially in the South.[56]

Ultimately Ellison finds *An American Dilemma*'s "positive contribution is certainly greater…than those negative elements,"[57] but maintains "It will take a deeper science than Myrdal's, deep as that might be, to analyze what is happening among the African-American masses."[58] Finally, he warns that "a full solution will lie in the creation of a democracy in which the Negro will be free to define himself for what he is and, within the large framework of that democracy, for what he desires to be."[59] For Ellison it is up to "liberal intellectuals to get busy to see that *An American Dilemma* does not become an instrument of an American tragedy."[60] Ellison recognizes that education, not the paternalistic philanthropic education focused on a narrow conception of African-American ability, but an inclusive and democratic education that recognizes talents will have a great role to play in the advancement of economic opportunity and social equality.

Education

Recent social and political history is replete with issues that illuminate society's shortcomings. Radical and reactionary unrest seems indicative of society's deep divisions along lines of economic, racial, nationalistic, and gender identity. Continued protest responses to violent, oppressive policing behavior exacerbates these shortcomings and indicates a visceral reaction to intolerable conditions. Certainly educational intervention clarifying the issues of social stratification and concomitant problems can be of help. The question then becomes, Is there a master–slave dialectic at work in education and the philosophy of education? Or more to the point, perhaps: What form does the master–slave dialectic take in educational philosophy? Hegel's analysis of the rival consciousness of *Herrschaft* and *Knechtschaft* results in broad interest in the roles of lord and servant in society manifested not only in true slavery but also in the metaphorical slavery of social relationships. If we follow Aristotle with the belief that there is a separate slave class or a separate slave morality, that thinking implies that education for the masses should somehow be different than for the master or ruling class.

John Dewey (1859–1952) first studied Hegel under the tutelage of H. A. P. Torrey (1837–1902) at the University of Vermont during "a year devoted privately under his direction to a reading of classics in the history

of philosophy and learning to read philosophic German."[61] That Hegel influenced Dewey is undoubtable. Dewey writes, "acquaintance with Hegel has left a permanent deposit in my thinking."[62] While he rejects much of Hegel's dogmatism, schematism, and idealism, Dewey is drawn to, in his words, "Hegel's treatment of human culture, of institutions and the arts, [and] dissolution of hard-and-fast dividing walls."[63] Dewey rejects the dualism of the Master–Slave dialectic and focuses on Hegel's desire that the procedures of science would become the basis for philosophic enquiry. In contradistinction to Kant, whose *a priori* categories are separated from scientific method, Hegel's categories are the result of the process of knowing and its continuous reconstruction. Bothersome to Dewey was the observation that

> …since Hegel was haunted by the conception of an absolute goal, he was obliged to arrange institutions as they concretely exist…. …individuals have no spiritual rights; personal development, and nurture, consist in obedient assimilation of the spirit of existing institutions. Conformity, not transformation, is [for Hegel] the essence of education.[64]

Such conformity, perhaps, is the moral equivalent of slavery and was anathema to the democratic ideal which Dewey identifies as "the recognition of mutual interests as a factor in social control … [the] freer interaction between social groups … but change in social habit—its continuous readjustment through meeting the new situations produced by varied intercourse.[65] He recognizes there are problems in a society which professes liberty and justice yet does not extend social equality to all its citizens. Dewey wonders,

> Are we entirely free from that racial intolerance, so that we can pride ourselves upon having achieved a complete democracy? Our treatment of the Negroes, anti-Semitism, the growing (at least I fear it is growing) serious opposition to the alien immigrant within our gates, is, I think, a sufficient answer to that question. Here, in relation to education, we have a problem.[66]

He asks,

> What are our schools doing to cultivate not merely passive toleration that will put up with people of different racial birth or different colored skin, but what are our schools doing positively and aggressively and constructively to cultivate understanding and goodwill which are essential to democratic society?[67] [and,] What are we doing to translate those great ideas of liberty and justice out of a formal ceremonial ritual into the realities of the understanding, the insight and the genuine loyalty of the boys and girls in our schools?[68]

Marxist and critical theoretical interpretations seek to educate the young for class-consciousness focused on the role of economic relations in the society. A look at the U.S. educational system of the 1970s convinced some authors the Marxist interpretation and the Deweyan observation that education's objective is conformity are essentially correct. Public education serves to perpetuate the socioeconomic status quo as an essentially predetermined winnowing process: training for wage slavery, filtering out the "unsuitable" through expulsion for non-conformity, drop-out/push-out through alienation, and sorting the rest into their labor roles. Despite the promise of The American Dream, real U.S. social-class mobility continues to be severely limited and occupational roles narrow according to social structures. Bowles and Gintis write in *Schooling in Capitalist America*, "The structure of social relations in education not only inures the student to the discipline of the work place, but develops the types of personal demeanor, modes of self-presentation, self-image, and social-class identifications which are the crucial ingredients of job adequacy."[69]

The existential perspective on the master–slave relationship exposes societal conflicts and contradictions that give rise to social, political, religious, and economic relations that provide a basis for social control of individuals. The process of education as objectification through conformity, alienation, and exploitation therefore, by design, deprives individuals of the opportunity for freedom.

Conclusion

If there is a recurring theme in the master–slave metaphor it is that consciousness or awareness of the social situation in which one finds oneself is critical to escaping social or economic limitations. The role of the school as an institution of a democratic society is to raise this consciousness, or what Paulo Freire (1921–1997) calls *conscientização*, or critical consciousness, in support of a more egalitarian society. John Rawls' idea of justice as fairness, based on liberty, equality, and opportunity with the goal of a well-ordered society and a moral, educated person led him to write that educated citizens should "understand the public culture, participate in its institutions, … [become] economically independent and self-supporting members of society … and in … developing the political virtues, [and] all this from within a political point of view."[70] Doing so, believes Rawls, means focusing resources on the most vulnerable. Dewey observes that,

> …because the conditions of life change…the problem of maintaining a democracy becomes new, and the burden that is put upon the school, upon the educational system is not that of stating merely the ideas of the men who made this country, their hopes and their intentions, but of teaching what a democratic society means under existing conditions.[71]

He therefore asks,

> What are our schools doing to cultivate not merely passive toleration that will put up with people of different racial birth or different colored skin, but what are our schools doing positively and aggressively and constructively to cultivate understanding and goodwill which are essential to democratic society?[72]

This returns us to Rousseau and Locke and the social contract under which the people have the power to change the society. Plato, if we believe the *Republic*, might have focused on students' achievement to indicate whether they would ascend in society, the assumption being all students have the same opportunity, that social status and agency are somehow equalized. This, however, is still a goal to be sought.

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Norms, Laws, and Democracy[1]

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Let me first make clear that this is not strictly an academic paper: I am inviting my readers to consider some aspects of our democratic polity—and perhaps of democratic polities in general—that are less theoretical than they are observations of how things seem to me to work. It has been said that the job of philosophy is to make the familiar strange. What I would like to explore with my readers is a set of all-too-familiar complaints about our current situation. What I am going to suggest is that there may not be a way out of this situation, at least not one that we can accept on our own terms.[2] I intend this paper to be a conversation, not an argument. In it I ask, *what happens to democratic government when a significant portion of the polity is not interested in playing the democratic game, at least not as we understand that game*? What happens, indeed, when different portions of the polity are committed to different, antagonistic, and radically incommensurable visions of what democracy means, what it should like, and whom it should serve? In the course of developing these questions I appeal to readily observable phenomena and common-sense understandings of the state of our polity in an effort to make clear a problem I think is not commonly sensed.

There are two general themes I want to explore. One is the dangerous necessity of norms in democratic governance; norms are necessary for the maintenance of democratic life in specific ways I will discuss. At the same time, the very existence of strong moral norms poses a threat to democratic governance, which must, of necessity, include a great deal of compromise and accommodation to function effectively.

The second and related theme is that democratic governance requires that we see our political opponents as *adversaries*, not *enemies*. While democratic polities must indeed resolve conflict, resolution must be done in ways that treat our adversaries as though they are part of the same polity as are we. Differences of opinion on policies are real and inevitable, but for a democratic polity to function we cannot see our adversaries as enemies. The question then arises, *what are the consequences when one (or both) sides of a political disagreement see their opponents not as adversaries with whom to compromise, but as enemies to be eliminated*? Perhaps more to the point, what follows when competing political visions are in fact radically and irreducibly incommensurable and the realization of either vision entails the elimination (or at least marginalization) of the other?

Let me begin my reflections with an exploration of the meaning and operation of norms. Imagine, please, that you are driving on an interstate highway and the posted speed limit is 60 mph. Now look at your imaginary speedometer. How fast are you going? While there would be a range of answers to my question, 60 mph would not likely be the most common answer. Sixty-nine and 70 mph would likely be popular answers, given the common wisdom that most police officers allow a 10 mph leeway before writing a ticket—or perhaps you are one of those drivers who adjusts your speed to keep up with the flow of traffic. Likely there would be several other answers to my question. I suspect, however, that very few of the answers would be 60 mph, and even fewer below 60 mph. That is, few people would report obeying the posted law.

Now consider what it means that many drivers adjust their speed to the flow of traffic. Specifically, consider that these drivers conform to the speed of others, not to the posted limit, i.e., not to the clearly visible, unambiguous law. This example points to one significant feature of norms: they are shared. *We learn and come to share norms as members of a community.*[3] Put another way, to be a member of a morally normative community is to hold a particular set of moral norms, norms that define that community and its members, and community members develop systems and institutions to pass those norms from one generation to the next.[4]

Note another feature of the "flow of traffic" response. It is only loosely related to the law: the higher the actual posted speed limit, the faster will be the flow of traffic. Where the posted speed limit is 60 mph, the flow of traffic is likely to be somewhere in the 65–70 mph range, but where the posted speed limit is 70 mph, the flow of traffic is likely to be in the 75–80 mph range. Where the posted limit is 80 mph, it is my experience that significantly fewer people speed, and those who do so do so by less.

Now return in your imagination to the driver's seat. There is a car ahead of you driving 60 mph in an area of the interstate where the speed limit is 60 mph. There is likely a steady stream of cars passing it. Now, imagine that as you approach the car and are about to pass, a car merges onto the interstate, also traveling at the posted speed limit. The car already on the road moves into the left lane to allow the entering car to merge into the right hand lane. Now the two cars are traveling next to each other, both at 60 mph. You cannot pass, as this is a two-lane highway. How do you feel right now?

When I do this exercise with a group, there is often laughter at this point. Most individuals say they would be angry, and they say so with quite a bit of heat. Just thinking about being trapped behind such inconsiderate drivers makes them feel some anger. It is not just that drivers expect each other to disobey the clearly stated law, it is that people find it positively offensive to be made to obey the law themselves. And, significantly, this is the case for most otherwise-law-abiding people.

Note also that if I suddenly find myself driving at the speed limit and blocking traffic by doing so, I am likely to feel embarrassed, or even ashamed. That is, as I realize I am blocking others I also know this is something that one should not do. While speeding or obeying the speed limit is a matter of personal choice, normative conventions dictate one should make way for those who wish to drive faster than the posted limit. That is, the expectation is that we will all clear the way for those who wish to break the law, and to do otherwise is to be guilty of a serious breach of social expectation. Yet, significantly, we do *not* generally consider obedience to the law a matter of personal choice.

What we have considered so far is the operation and nature of norms, which not only shape behavior, they shape how we judge the behavior of others. So, for example, while I might have a very strong preference for eating vanilla ice cream, my preference is not a norm; I do not care much whether you choose also to indulge or not. In this way, this example is very different from the expectation I have of your driving behavior when we share the road; not every preference is a norm.

Another important understanding is that our attachment to norms is mostly emotional, a part of our identity, not intellectual. Norms are about communal membership, not rational choice. It is not just that doing a certain thing in a certain way is abstractly the right way to do that thing. It is, much more significantly, that one does that thing that way. That is, *norms are the signs and the meaning of membership in a morally normative community.*

When I use the term *morally normative* here, I reference morality in a broad sense. Community members learn what it means to be good and bad—to be virtuous or vicious—as members of moral communities,[5] which is to say humans are social animals who are taught moral norms as we mature to membership *in a community*. This is the central problem every community must solve: how to bring children born into *this particular* community into full membership. Member induction entails passing on the moral commitments of the community: first, the understanding that there is such a thing as right and wrong and, second, what that understanding means in concrete terms. This concretization of "good/right" and "bad/wrong" is the essence that differentiates an "us" from a "them." Members must come to understand and act on the community's moral commitments: *we are those who share a particular set of moral norms, who live within a particular moral architecture.*

The sense that morality has an architecture—has multiple architectures that define different moral communities—is not a relativist view of morality, but it does mean that, as a phenomenological experience, morality is inevitably the morality of one's own community. While there may be an absolutist "God's-eye" view of the moral world, there is no "we" who occupy that point of view. Our view of the moral world is

inevitably bounded by our situatedness in the social world. Because our view is limited, our morality is inevitably *our* morality: *a* moral way of living, not *the* objectively moral way to live. Nevertheless, the fact remains that whatever moral architecture has made us seems to us to be absolute. Moral architecture is most powerful when it is least visible as a social constraint, that is, the things that seem to us to be right and wrong seem just to be the proper way to live. So herein lies the potential for good news, but also the potential for bad news for democratic life in the relationship between norms, laws, and behaviors. The good news first.

Norms give laws their authority, which is quite different from laws merely being enforced. Norms allow us to say that the law *should be obeyed*, that it is *legitimate*, that it is *good*. Laws need such support in all polities, but especially in democratic ones. This is due to the nature of democratic life, in whatever way it is understood. Consequently, the more say people have in the making of their laws according to their ideas of good society, the less coercion is necessary for social life to be organized according to those norms. A society with a police officer stationed on every street corner or with an extensive network of informants cannot be called democratic. This is why *Nineteen Eighty-Four*'s[6] Oceania has rightly become a trope denoting existential threat to democratic life.

Where laws do not have support and power, a sign of serious difficulty for a democratic society arises. Recall my earlier speed limit example. Because the law is not only not supported by, but is positively opposed by our norms, it is only obeyed when enforced. If those in power felt it was important this law be obeyed, enforcement would be constant and pervasive: only constant coercion would do.

So, consistency between norms and laws need not be perfect, but it must be much more common than not. When not the case, a society has clear evidence that its democratic governance is breaking down. That the law and the norms are at odds with each other in the matter of speed limits is not, in itself, a serious problem, but neither should its significance be overlooked. How did we come to have a law so universally in place and so universally ignored?—and, ignored without much consequence; people brag about getting away with speeding, meaning breaking this law is not something people feel ashamed of. Again, in the matter of speed limits, ignoring the law may (or may not) be particularly significant, but if such is the general attitude toward a society's laws, that society is in trouble.

Norms therefore matter. When norms do not support law a society truly must choose between intrusive and oppressive exercise of police power on the one hand, and chaos and anarchy on the other. So, while it is certainly true that all governments rely on norms for stability and smooth functioning, this is uniquely true in the case of governments that seek to be democratic.

This is why, when the Soviet Union broke apart and newly independent states emerged from the U.S.S.R. seeking to establish themselves as democracies, there was much discussion about the possibility that these experiments would fail because of their lack of "democratic culture," which is to say the lack of democratic norms. Closer to home we see the same phenomenon; this is exactly what commentators, both friendly and critical, mean when they discuss the Trump phenomenon. Critics said President Trump was a threat to democracy because of the gleeful way he shattered a long tradition of norms that limit and direct actions of the U.S. presidency. Likewise, when his supporters cheered the way he turned Washington upside down, what they were reacting to was the way Trump discarded one set of norms in favor of a very different set. It is important to consider of what those norms consisted—both broken and newly made—, but to do so would be a different argument than my present one. What I want to do here is to turn toward a different, but very real danger to the project of democratic governance: the question of what happens when the moral architectures inhabited by significant numbers of citizens becomes foundationally different and radically incommensurable, when there is no agreement on the content of identity-conferring norms? That is, when one government must hold together two (or more) radically incommensurable moral communities.

The problem I pose is not based on norms as weakly held, rather that norms of opposing moral communities are strongly held and, as a result, the laws of such a society must violate (at least) one set of identity-conferring norms. I see this as the prescription for a loss of confidence in government: a government that does (or allows) this cannot be legitimate, yet this is the situation in which we in the U.S. find ourselves.

One commonly heard lament about the U.S.' current political situation is that society has lost the ability to compromise. The common assumption in this lament is that democratic government is (almost) by definition a form of government that requires constant compromise—and that has in fact been the U.S.' reality throughout our nation's history. No single point of view in U.S. political society has had such a dominant majority that the state has been able to legislate without compromise, so the U.S.' history offers a strong case for the essential nature of compromise in a functioning democracy. However, our ability so far to compromise is a result of an historical oddity about our system, one that has recently become undone.

Unlike most democracies, the U.S. has a two-party system rather than a multiparty one. As it happens, both parties dominating U.S. politics have held a wide range of political ideologies; until recently there have been "liberal" and "conservative" Republicans and "liberal" and "conservative" Democrats.[7] This system has mostly allowed government to negotiate across serious *ideological and moral* differences without being overly polarized

along *party or political lines*. Until recently, ideological differences did not line up very neatly with partisan identities, so ideology and partisanship did not reinforce each other.

The unraveling of this state of affairs began in the post-World War II era, as the modern Democratic Party began to be more and more the party of civil rights, a political and morally normative position that was originally shared by many in the Republican Party as well. Civil rights laws passed in the 1960s all had strong bi-partisan support. This changed over time, though, and today the U.S. has clear partisan ideological divisions between the two parties. Bi-partisan legislation is so rare that it has become headline-worthy.

Paradoxically, I am now old enough to remember when such bi-partisan cooperation and collaboration was seen as a problem. Many commentators opined that ideologically aligned parties would allow voters to make clear choices between candidates and then hold parties—and politicians—accountable for their effectiveness. They hypothesized that more-representative legislative bodies would result, leading to a more coherent ideological identity within each political party. This process of ideological alignment began with Nixon's recruitment of Southern voters from the Democratic Party to the Republican, accelerated under the U.S. House Speakership of Newt Gingrich, and has led to the current Red–Blue divide, which should perhaps be filed under "be careful what you wish for."

As civil rights, and then abortion rights (and other issues related to full civil presence and recognition of traditionally marginalized groups) came to be litmus tests for both political parties, ideology and party began to align: slowly at first, then all at once. Any wishes (and much rhetoric) to the contrary notwithstanding, I suspect this current ideological stalemate was inevitable. Political questions are always at root moral questions, questions of identity, and questions of policy all wrapped up in one. This wrapping becomes obvious when debating issues like abortion and civil rights, but is just as true in debates about taxation and spending, criminal justice, and access to medical care. All these issues raise questions about how we should live together, what unalienable rights we have as individuals, what we owe one another, and what moral limits are placed on the use of government power to coerce each other since *norms both authorize laws and precede them*. Under what circumstances and to what extent we are allowed to use the power of the state to coerce the behavior of others is the question that is the beating heart of social morality—the question of *what kind of people "we" are*.

The question of who is granted full civil and legal membership and recognition in the U.S. polity was always present, but for most of our history this was not a political question. So, for example, U.S. women have always called for full civil rights and membership. Similarly, there was an

abolition movement and then a civil rights movement long before the U.S. became a nation (which is why the issue of slavery was so contentious in the Constitutional Convention).[8] Significantly, while these historically resilient voices were always *present*, they were rarely *heard*.

Here again we see the power of norms over laws, even over cherished constitutional statements. We think the First Amendment guarantees free speech for all in the U.S., as it supposedly does: supposedly but not actually. The first way that norms trump laws is by direct action. For example, Norman Thomas, though a candidate for president, was also locked up for speaking for socialism and against WWI. The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was jailed for speaking in favor of civil rights. In the very early days of the republic, the Alien and Sedition Acts characterized criticism of government officials as sedition, and therefore illegal. In general, speech that is found to be sufficiently offensive or threatening by enough people to be declared illegal is so declared. However, open oppression and naked injustice have not been terribly successful long-term strategies, because those who present themselves and are seen as victims of government suppression tend to have the better argument in the public square, if only in the long run.[9]

However, there is a second, more subtle way norms trump laws, a way which is more insidious because it is more effective. Historically, political society simply refused to hear the voices of certain individuals and groups.[10] The power to silence—to refuse to hear—is the power to exclude from public speech and therefore from the public itself. The norms of white supremacy and patriarchy are so powerful that, for much of the U.S.' history, women's demands for full equality were not debated because they were simply not taken seriously—they were not heard. Women were subjugated to their husbands and in society because that was just the way things were, had always been, and should remain. Similarly, until very recently in U.S. history, the demands by people of color for full equality, especially demands by African Americans, have simply not been heard. Such debate as did exist was between white men who might have differed on the question of how much citizenship would be allocated to people of color, but this was a question that literally could not be asked of a citizenship of white men because debate was restricted to white men coming to agreement, not people of color. Because the voices of African Americans are still not heard as a serious part of civic discussion, reparations for slavery have never seriously been considered by Congress, despite the fact that a resolution to study the question—H.R. 40—has been introduced in Congress during every session since 1989. Most white people remain unaware that this is the case. Such is the power of norms in preventing us from hearing the voices of our fellow community members. Systemic racism depends upon social systems through which we do not choose to oppress, rather our norms and institutions do the oppressing for us, by design, creating racism without

racists, misogyny without misogynists. Obviously I do not mean that in the U.S. there are not still racists and misogynists among us, but in many ways we are coming to understand that systemic oppression is much harder to confront and challenge than are individual oppressors.

These same moral divisions are at the root of many of our most contentious political and public disputes. Indeed, these issues have become so contentious because they so are rooted in the U.S.' moral architectures in deep, foundational, identity-conferring moral commitments. These are, by definition, not commitments that can be compromised. Or, to put it more precisely, if we compromise on these principles, either we give them up as identity-conferring or we sacrifice our integrity. In either case, compromise on such issues cannot be seen as virtuous from within the moral architectures that are built upon such moral commitments.

By understanding such division and contention, it becomes clear why U.S. citizens who believe that a fully formed and distinct rights-bearing human being exists from the moment of conception will not be able to reach a lasting, stable compromise with citizens who believe that women have an inviolable right to choose whether to carry a pregnancy to term. The former group considers abortion to be morally indistinguishable from murder; the latter group argues that forcing women to bear children against their will is morally indistinguishable from bondage. And what we need to note, and what should greatly concern us, is that from within their respective moral architectures, both positions are inarguably correct, and the opposing point of view is so wrong as to legitimately be labeled *evil*.

Nor is this a difference that can be settled by reasoned debate and logical argument. What defines this disagreement is not a matter of reason or of logic, but of foundational assumptions; they are as much emotional attachments as empirical claims (though it is not uncommon for each side to state their claims as though they are empirical, or at least self-evident, because that is how such things feel from within their respective moral architectures). An appeal to find some middle ground and reach a compromise therefore is incoherent and fails to grasp what is at stake. While, yes, the two positions as stated in my previous paragraph seem extreme, that is because each *rightly* views the issue as existential. Either a fetus is or it is not a fully rights-bearing individual; either women do or do not have the right to choose whether to carry a pregnancy to term.

Finding a middle ground here under such circumstances is not possible, at least not if the adherents to the two points of view have public standing, because there is no middle ground to find. Compromise was possible when politicians were all (or effectively all) men, because it was not their bodies being compromised. Women today by no means have equal access to public power (or any other kind), but they do have sufficient presence in public spaces to make their voices heard.

Significantly, when we look back through history to issues more distant to us today, we recognize this fidelity to moral commitments as admirable; the abolitionists who agitated for an end to slavery even to the point of Civil War are heroes today precisely because they were not willing to compromise on the morally defining issue of slavery. However, it is also true that a substantial subset of citizens believes the real heroes of the nineteenth century are men such as Robert E. Lee, Jefferson Davis, and Stonewall Jackson. The moral architecture of the "lost cause" continues to be transmitted through the fight to preserve monuments to political and military leaders of the Confederacy.[11] Though the underlying moral architectures of these two views of the past are radically and incommensurably different, what they have in common is that their heroes were men who refused to compromise on what to them were identity-conferring moral principles.

So today in the U.S. we face a persistent and politically and socially significant paradox. On the one hand, we value compromise and civility as a means to find a way forward in democratic societies. On the other hand, we honor those who stand on moral principle and refuse to compromise when their cause is just. The problem, of course, is that the essence of what I call different moral architectures is that they define justness differently—and incompatibly.

In a series of works over many years, Dewey developed a rich and robust theory of democratic life and the role of education to prepare society's young for that life.[12] To conclude this paper, I sketch briefly what I think are the implications of my preceding argument, specifically from a Deweyan perspective on democratic life.

As Dewey constructs democratic life, it is a pursuit of the common good. The shared understanding of the common good is arrived at as common problems are identified by the action of the assembled commons: what Dewey identifies as a *public*. Conceptually, what Dewey describes as a public is what we might call "democracy in its work clothes." It is as a public wherein the polity comes together to identify common problems and work in common to find common solutions. This coming together depends upon two premises. First, everyone's interests and commitments should be and are taken into account, and the solution should benefit the public *as a public*, that is, as a whole. The second premise is that there is a common good to be reached, but for this to happen there must be some agreed-upon vision of what that common good consists of, however much disagreement there might be over how to attain it.

The dilemma the U.S. now faces is that there is strong evidence that there is in fact no agreed-upon common good and, arguably, there never has been. Since any idea of what the common social good looks like and entails is rooted in some moral vision of what is *morally* good—what counts has

both private and civic virtue—the existence of radically incommensurable moral architectures means there are also radically incommensurable understandings of what constitutes the common good.

So, a white supremacist does not—indeed *cannot*—count a policy that leads to equal civil rights for all as contributing to the common good; liberal democrats can accept nothing less. Similarly, libertarians believe that government should be restricted to the most minimal necessary functions, and taxation beyond that is theft. Democratic socialists, on the other hand, define the common good as including a reduction of inequality and provision for the basic needs of all citizens through political policy-making and taxation. Abortion, as discussed previously, is another of those issues on which the political problem is that there are multiple, competing, and radically incommensurable visions of what the common good requires absolutely.

In such a situation, to seek maximization of the common good through principled compromise is to search for a unicorn: on too many issues of identity-defining significance, there is no such thing. I am not suggesting that Dewey has nothing useful and important to offer us. However, I think we need to differentiate between in-group and out-group publics. I am frankly not sure Dewey would share either my conclusions or my recommendations, but it does seem to me that the evidence is strong that we need to bifurcate our thinking about democratic life if we are to maintain it. What might this look like?

The in-group discussion should be very much as Dewey described: significantly like-minded individuals and groups should come together as a public to work toward their shared vision of a democratic society. People and groups will differ to some extent about the details of that vision, and certainly there will be real and sometimes serious disagreements about the means to reach commonly agreed-upon goals. Note that in *this* public, to compromise is not to lose one's integrity, but to set aside one's own opinion seriously and respectfully to consider, sometimes to accept, and sometimes simply to defer to, the opinion of others. In *this* public, the exchange of views will, at least some of the time, lead to changing minds as individuals listen to the voices of others who bring different experiences and different points of view to the policy-making table. In *this* public, all voices are heard with respect, and all points of view are considered. This view of society is summed up in Barack Obama's keynote address to the Democratic National Convention in 2008:

> There's not a liberal America and a conservative America; there's the United States of America. There's not a [B]lack America and white America and Latino America and Asian America; there's the United States of America. The pundits like to slice-and-dice our country into Red States and Blue States; Red States for

Republicans, Blue States for Democrats. But I've got news for them, too. We worship an awesome God in the Blue States, and we don't like federal agents poking around our libraries in the Red States. We coach Little League in the Blue States and have gay friends in the Red States. There are patriots who opposed the war in Iraq and patriots who supported it. We are one people, all of us pledging allegiance to the stars and stripes, all of us defending the United States of America.[13]

But the question remains: what do we do if a significant portion of citizens do not agree with this view of America? Suppose we listen instead to a very different convention address, delivered by Pat Buchanan to the Republican National Convention in 1992:

My friends, this election is about more than who gets what. It is about who we are. It is about what we believe, and what we stand for as Americans. There is a religious war going on in this country. It is a cultural war, as critical to the kind of nation we shall be as was the Cold War itself, for this war is for the soul of America. And in that struggle for the soul of America, Clinton & Clinton are on the other side, and George Bush is on our side.[14]

Or, if 1992 seems too long ago to be relevant, consider the premise stated by Attorney General William Barr in February of 2020 in his address to the National Religious Broadcasters Convention: "It seems to me that the passionate divisions of today result from a conflict between two fundamentally different visions of the individual and his relationship to the state."[15]

What is important to note in these two different visions of U.S. sociopolitical life is that the second description becomes accurate merely by the fact that a significant portion of the citizenry hold it: *it may take two parties to make peace, but it only takes one party to make war.* And that is the circumstance in which we find ourselves today: one side openly views politics as warfare, though I actually think this is true of both sides, the evidence of which I have already discussed with respect to Civil Rights.

Much has been written in the past four years about how Russian troll farms, as well as domestic ones, have exploited our political divisions. The phenomenon is real and should concern us, but I think this concern misses the real point: the troll farms, foreign and domestic, are able to exploit these divisions *because these divisions are real, and they are fundamental, significant, and identity-conferring.* They go back, in fact, to before there was a United States.[16]

In a real sense then, Buchanan and Barr are more correct than Dewey and Obama. However, I think the Buchanan/Barr view of politics-as-warfare is something the Obama/Dewey view actually shares, though likely in denial about it. Take as examples the movements for full civic

membership for U.S. women and people of color. Compromise over these issues is not the goal of either movement; the goal is victory over the other point of view. If liberal democrats do not seek the total eradication of white patriarchy, they certainly do and should seek to silence and marginalize it. To do otherwise as a matter of public policy is to abandon the meaning of liberal democracy.

This is the reality behind the outrage at President Trump's comment that there were "good people" on both sides of the infamous, deadly "Unite the Right" 2017 rally in Charlottesville. This reality is also, of course, at the root of affirmations like Elijah Cummings's oft-repeated, "We are better than this." The flip side of his claim is that those of us who are not in fact "better" (by "our" standard) are not therefore part of "we." The question then becomes, who gets to decide what defines "better?" Who gets to define "us?" Those Americans who were offended by President Trump's affirmation that there were "good people on both sides" at the Charlottesville rally, were really offended by the notion that "they" can be counted as part of "us."

I do not mean this as a criticism. It is simply the way things are. When moral commitments are at the root of political disagreements—and I maintain they often and inevitably and properly are—then compromise will and should be avoided as much as possible, and undermined whenever made. Of course, such stands are virtuous only when they are (1) correct and (2) necessary. The problem is that it is easy to believe these conditions are true if our moral architecture has shaped us accordingly. The real question, then, becomes not whether to compromise, rather the question is *when* to compromise but also when *not* to compromise.

Endnotes

[1]   This paper has been drafted and revised in a time of serious political turmoil in the U.S. The broader context for this turmoil is a crisis of confidence in democratic governance in the Western democracies in general as theorized by Anne Applebaum, *Twilight of Democracy: The Seductive Lure of Authoritarianism* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2020).

[2]   "We" here and throughout this paper means, roughly, those who are committed to a liberal democratic order.

[3]   Emile Durkheim, *On Moral Education: A Study in the Theory and Application of the Sociology of Education* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1961).

4   In truth, life is more complicated than this. We are all members of multiple morally normative communities: family, church, neighborhood association, professional group. For simplicity's sake, I mostly talk as though moral membership is a unitary thing.

5   John F. Covaleskie, *Membership and Moral Formation: Shame as an Educational and Social Emotion* (Charlottesville, NC: Information Age, 2013).

6   George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1949).

7   The terms "liberal" and "conservative" in the U.S. system are rather idiosyncratic; these terms do not mean in U.S. political discourse what they mean when identifying classical political theories. For reasons that need not detain us here, we should just note that the U.S. does not have what would be described as a consistently classical Liberal or Conservative Party.

8   Andrew Delbanco, *The War Before the War: Fugitive Slaves and the Struggle for America's Soul from the Revolution to the Civil War* (New York, NY: Penguin, 2016); Charles W. Mills, *The Racial Contract* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997).

9   Brutal and violent defenders of Jim Crow like Bull Conners, Lester Maddox, and George Wallace did a great deal to advance the cause of civil rights, however much they intended the opposite.

10   Thomas F. Green, "Public Speech," *Teachers College Record* 95, no. 3 (Spring, 1994): 369–388.

11   John Kennedy supposedly once observed that we would have wars until we start building monuments to pacifists.

12   John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems* (New York, NY: Holt, 1927); John Dewey, *The School and Society* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1900); John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York, NY: Macmillan, 1916); and John Dewey, *Experience and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1933).

13   Barack Obama, "Keynote Address at the 2004 Democratic National Convention," July 27, 2004, Boston, MA, http://obamaspeeches.com/002-Keynote-Address-at-the-2004-Democratic-National-Convention-Obama-Speech.htm

14   Patrick Joseph Buchanan, "Culture War Speech: Address to the Republican National Convention," August 17, 1992, Houston: TX, https://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/buchanan-culture-war-speech-speech-text/

15   William P. Barr, "Remarks at the 2020 National Religious Broadcasters Convention," February 26, 2020, Nashville, TN, https://www.justice.gov/opa/speech/attorney-general-william-p-barr-delivers-remarks-2020-national-religious-broadcasters

16   Delbanco, *The War Before the War.*

Examining the Unexamined Education: Reviving Philosophy in Secondary Schools

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Introduction

In Plato's *Apology*, one of the world's great philosophers, Socrates, was charged with impiety and corrupting the youth of Athens. Upon reading that text, one has to stop to ask, in what depraved wickedness was the founder of modern western philosophy engaged? Socrates was not involved in the misappropriation of funds from the Athens public school system, nor was he indicted for fraudulently manipulating Greece's standardized test scores. Plato tells his readers Socrates implored all the people of Athens that the unexamined life was not worth living (Worley, 2018). Socrates merely wanted all citizens of Athens to question their beliefs, better to understand themselves, and to become more conscientious citizens of Athens.

Indeed, such faith in self-reflection is part of the bedrock of the U.S. public education system. During his term, former President Obama urged a national campaign to promote problem-solving, critical thinking, and creativity in U.S. schools. Across the political spectrum, educational policymakers have made a part of their platforms improving schools and focusing curricula on problem-solving. Why then, in so many states and nationally, has an attack been waged upon the very courses best suited to teaching the foundations of critical thinking and problem-solving? Teachers of philosophy are no longer sentenced to death through poisoning, but are now being forced to accept the other option Socrates refused: exile.

Presentation of the Problem

The technology that moves U.S. schools into the twenty-first century has led to a curricular turning away from basic lessons of self-reflection learned more than twenty-four hundred years ago (Cam, 2018). The dwindling influence of philosophy in the U.S. curriculum is a common problem throughout school systems in the U.S., in particular in large urban school districts (LUSD) (Burgh, 2018). Educational leaders vehemently detail their aspirations for promoting critical thinking and problem-solving while simultaneously making far less likely such growth by pulling funding from subjects considered otiose in the 21st century (Hand, 2018). Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) educational programs are promoted and funded at the expense of philosophical study.

Various states and LUSDs implement STEM projects ostensibly in order to prepare students for the information age. An unintended consequence of this privileging is heavy reliance upon standardized testing, best utilized to measure students' recall of facts and formulas presented in math and science courses. Even in courses called the humanities, such as English Language Arts and U.S. government, student outcomes are measured in ways that fail to measure or evaluate critical thinking skills and interpretation. Therefore, if critical thinking and problem-solving skills are to be a primary focus in U.S. schools, districts will need to bring the basic skills required for such higher level thinking back into the classroom.

After having worked within an LUSD for numerous years, I chose to focus my research on the underutilization of philosophy within high school curricula. Numerous organizations and educational entities provide philosophical scholarship and training for K–12 students, such as the Center for Philosophy for Children at the University of Washington and the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children at Montclair State University, along with international organizations, such as the UK's Society for the Advancement of Philosophical Enquiry and Reflection in Education which all correspond to the P4C movement started in the 1970s. However, since students within my own district primarily are educated to score well on the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) examination, philosophy curricula is not stressed. My research is not meant to mount accusation against my district's administration, rather I critique the ongoing consequences of the Bush administration's No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and the resulting singular focus on STEM curricula (Chetty & Suissa, 2017). As the era of high-stakes accountability drones on, educational institutions and educators are justifiably driven by fears of funding loss, and therefore turn their focus to promote "practical" skills that purportedly translate into jobs in an ever more globalized world economy while neglecting skills that can help make those same students responsible, thoughtful world citizens.

Impact of Philosophical Studies

Research on philosophy curricula for public schooling has primarily focused on the needs, weaknesses, and results of implementation. Voices across this contentious issue range from those of professional philosophers, educational researchers, politicians, school administrators, and classroom teachers. Even philosophy instruction's detractors are not opposed to the study of philosophy, but rather what they frame as its incorrect usage (Fitzsimons, 2014; Thompson & Lašic, 2014). Consensus has been building over the past 90 years about what benefits philosophical studies contributes towards students' development of critical-thinking skills, and now the debate surrounding philosophy in secondary schools has evolved into a struggle to find the correct pedagogical model.

The majority of scholarly work on philosophy curricula in secondary schools focuses on the necessity and benefits of implementation (Cam, 2014, 1998; Burke, 2013, DeCesare, 2012; Dewey, 1997; Keddie, 2011; Lane, 2012; Lippmann, 1988, 1980; Nussbaum, 2010; Ralston, 2008). This cadre of researchers, philosophers, and teachers point to positive, lasting effects philosophical study has on students' lives, particularly the skill of learning to think about problems through a philosophical lens and how that skill increases a student's ability to problem-solve, think critically, and develop or deepen empathy.

Among the consequences of re-introducing philosophy into public school curricula (Arcilla, 2002; Pelletier, 2008), the three most-often-cited issues are: a lack of time, "improper" teaching methods, and accountability. Within the current educational environment, it is difficult for educational administrators to find room in secondary curricula to include a philosophy course. Second, opponents of teaching philosophy to school-aged children argue teachers are not trained well enough to facilitate such courses successfully. Lastly, critics point out flaws in outcomes measures, calling for a standardized way to measure student outcomes before adding courses to the curriculum.

I argue the ongoing shrinking of the world through globalization only increases and makes imperative the need for instruction in philosophical perspectives. Dakmara Georgescu (2008) calls the impact philosophy has on broadening students' views as the ability to reject "absolutes and the quest for certainty in epistemology" which he sees as "a dominant position in current thought" (p. 50). The U.S. is behind the times, for the positive impact of philosophy in education has been accepted by the United Nations and the Dutch, Australians, and New Zealanders.

The litany of critiques fails to recognize how the teaching of philosophy not only affects student outcomes, but also provides beneficial outcomes for instructors. Rosie Scholl (2014) measures the impact of learning philosophy on teachers' pedagogy, documenting how,

> …teachers spoke of changes in terms of their pedagogy, moving from a "banking" model of teaching and learning to a more collaborative, democratic and interactive, inter-responsive, inquiry-based approach that found its impetus in student questions; in student (not teacher) voice. (p. 93)

Teachers became more open to new, more interactive, and participatory ways of teaching. Millet and Tapper (2011) document that "teachers doubled their use of open-ended questions over a 6-month period" (p. 9). Significantly, educators who learn philosophy of education become more willing to allow students to think for themselves and develop answers and follow-up questions instead of merely checking for memorization skills (Proedfriedt, 1984; Weber & Wolf, 2017).

A fear administrators face when deciding upon whether to allow philosophy to be taught within their packed schedules is whether students will be able to show measurable growth. Anecdotal evidence is pertinent for parent/teacher conferences, but proves not as concrete or persuasive at district compliance meetings. But, Kienstra, Imants, Karskens, and van der Heijden (2015) measure the significance of teacher-led philosophy lessons on student achievement, finding students "produce a higher level of doing philosophy with teachers who chose to organize a philosophical discussion with shared guidance by the teacher together with the students" (p. 1).

Effects on students introduced to philosophical ideas and dialogue become more prominent as the student matriculates through their schooling. Topping and Trickey (2007) find "philosophical enquiry involving interactive dialogue led not only to significant gains in measured verbal cognitive ability but also generalization to nonverbal and quantitative reasoning ability" (p. 271). Aside from the problem of governmental high-stakes accountability, the research on the benefits of integration of philosophy within schools seems overwhelming positive.

Kienstra et al. (2015) also offer specific, measurable areas for research, collecting student data on reflection, sentence building, searching for counterexamples/exploring boundaries, producing criticism, deductive reasoning, and defining concepts. Such skills are applicable across school curricula from English and language arts to science, mathematics, and the social sciences. Sharpening skills vital to other fields of study—fields seen as "more prestigious"—is one way to counter the negative attitudes towards including philosophy in an academic program.

Millett and Tapper (2011) report "A whole population of children gained on average 6 standard points on a measure of cognitive abilities after 16 months of weekly enquiry (1 hour per week)" (p. 9). I set out to conduct research the results of which might guide school administrators into appreciating the benefits of philosophical inquiry. Since platitudes are boundless in support of increasing problem-solving and critical thinking, I set out to bring sceptics the data.

Design of the Study

In this study I test my hypothesis that participation in a philosophy-infused classroom improves the critical thinking skills of LUSD students on logical reasoning, and to determine whether ability examinations measuring problem-solving were valid. The definition and concept of teaching philosophy within the secondary classrooms I chose revolves around the idea of introducing students to the world of philosophy, largely for the first time. The primary text used was Patton and Cannon's (2015) *The Cartoon Introduction to Philosophy*, and copies were procured through a student-led Donors Choose campaign combined with The Center for Learning's *Philosophy Books 1 & 2* (Kasmarek, 2002, 2004). Texts were chosen to give

students an initial taste of philosophy in an identifiable manner mixed with examples from popular culture to provide student-friendly context. For example, rather than solely discussing the "Allegory of the Cave," students combined their reading of Socrates with the film *The Matrix* (Wachowski & Wachowski, 1999).

I set out to measure whether the re-introduction of a formal logic curriculum would increase the analytical problem-solving skills of students at The Academy. To accomplish this goal, quasi- project began with a simple question: What effect does the engagement with and study of formalized logic have on LUSD students' ability to answer questions rationally? Throughout the courses and research, the primary objective was to provide experience with formal logic and problem-solving. Kasmarek's (2004) second volume served as the basis of instruction on logic, with additions from the work of Patton and Cannon (2015). Students worked through sections on formal logic, symbolic logic, and mathematical logic with the inclusion of deductive and inductive logic over a span of seventeen weeks. Due to most students' limited preexisting knowledge and the random effects of otherwise-accumulated knowledge, the individual specificity of weeks per topic naturally varied across cohorts consistent with delivery of any topic in a school setting.

My goal was to measure the improvement of students' reasoning and logic skills after exposure to a beginning philosophy class in which students were taught formalized logic. In addition to the pre- and post-tests, students were simultaneously assessed on verbal reasoning pre- and post-tests. The department of education describes the verbal reasoning test as "a multiple-choice test that measures the ability to think and reason using words and language. Items in the test tap into vocabulary, word relationships, classification and deduction" (2016). The numerical reasoning test was "a multiple-choice test that measures the ability to think and reason using numbers. Items in the test tap into series, matrices, arithmetical reasoning and deduction" (State, 2016).

A key facet of my study is inclusion of a control group, the members of which were actively enrolled in a corresponding social studies seminar course and learning without a structured program dedicated to problem-solving and critical thinking. Data accumulated at the terms' end was not only reviewed for changes within individual subjects, but also assessed across the two seminar courses. Whereas the social studies seminar class infused with philosophical topics and reasoning and logic curriculum primarily promoted critical thinking, the other seminar classes only included problem-solving as a side-effect of the district's typical curriculum. I found statistical significance and benefits among a structured course promoting essential skills needed for critical thinking, which corresponds to Rondhuis and van der Leeuw's (2000) call for more stringent assessments in children's philosophy instruction.

One limitation in my results is that the control group was taught by a different teacher than the experimental group. However, to mitigate this limitation, effort was made to provide both groups with educators of relatively similar qualifications and backgrounds. Instructors of the control group and experimental group were of the same gender and race, both were highly qualified social studies teachers with content-area master's degrees, and both received dual-credit certification through a local university. The main difference between educators was the control group teacher had more years of classroom experience.

The district predominantly serves an African-American (81.8%) community with a small white (11.5%) minority and even smaller populations of Latino, Native American, and Asian students and families. Data comes from the scores of pre- and post-tests given to experimental and control groups. The independent variable is the philosophy and logic curriculum implemented in the experimental group. The assessment tools themselves were developed by the Australian state of Victoria's Department of Education and Training as an entrance exam for secondary students. The decision to select an Australian instrument was twofold; first, one of the course's aims was to present new ideas and new ways of understanding to students and introducing an international assessment helped to broaden their ideas of educational assessments. Secondly, the assessments correlated well together with qualitative and numerical sections designed to provide consistency in the question design. Finally, the instrument could be delivered within a single class period rather than requiring additional time as do many, more lengthy examinations.

The assessment selected to measure the increase in students' cognitive abilities was a commercially produced test rigorously piloted and tested by the education department in the state Victoria in Australia. The assessment was implemented as a non-parametric test since the structure of the overall study was quasi-experimental. Lastly, the assessment was also a criterion-referenced test. The data collected from the students was originally disaggregated and then re-combined to look at individual increases as well as group achievement.

The target sample was composed of two separate groups of twelfth-grade students at The Academy drawn using the same principles as Hannam and Echeverria (2009). The full population of the study ended up being 80 students with 40 experimental group students analyzed for improvement after the incorporation of the independent variable.

Data was analyzed utilizing a quasi-experimental quantitative methodology. To create a more formalized, standardized method of assessment, I implemented a pre-test-post-test non-equivalent group design. Therefore, students were given a pre-test at the beginning of the school term for the school years 2016–2017 and 2017–2018. The post-test

portion of the study occurred during May 2017 and 2018. Both pre-tests and post-tests were composed of two reasoning tests.

Results

As mentioned in my presentation of the problem section, numerous previous research studies report beneficial effects of studying logic in the classroom (Cam, 2014; Daniel & Auriac, 2011; Georgescu, 2008; Kienstra, Imants, Karskens, & van der Heijden, 2015; Millet & Tapper, 2011; Rondhuis & van der Leeuw, 2000; Stewart, 2014; Topping & Trickey, 2007). However, my study is the first of its kind to be conducted in a U.S. urban school district. Analysis demonstrates a modest to moderate benefit to students who participated in the introduction to philosophy course when compared to those not enrolled. Over the course an academic year, students' numerical reasoning in the experimental group grew by 5% from 27% to 32% while those in the control group increased by a single percentage point (Figure 1). Additionally, the experimental group also outperformed the control group on the verbal reasoning assessment by improving by 3%, from 33% to 36%, while the control group failed to improve, remaining at 33% (Figure 2).
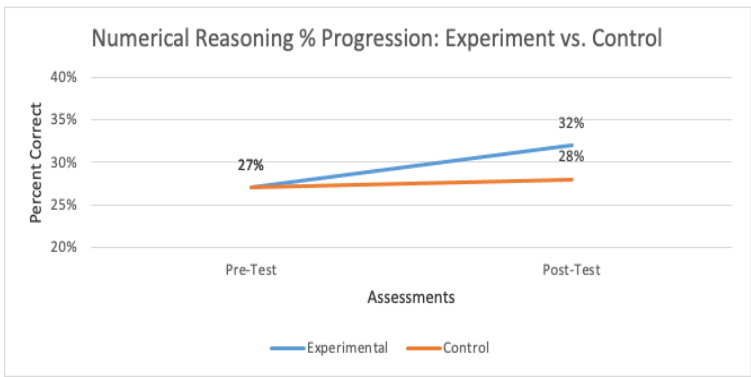

Figure 1: Comparison of numerical reasoning progression.

Analysis of the data reveals further differentiation between the experimental groups and control groups. For instance, the 2016–2017 experimental group improved their verbal reasoning scores by 10%, while the same year's control group remained the same at 28% (Figure 4). A 10% divergence in student performance illustrates the benefits that come from a formalized critical-thinking-based curriculum. I found that students were able to improve their logical problem-solving skills by formally participating in a philosophy course. However, as is always the case with statistics, the story of acquiring rational and logical decision-making capabilities is more complicated.
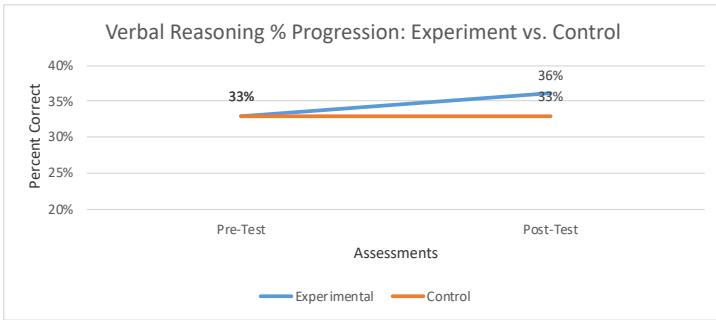
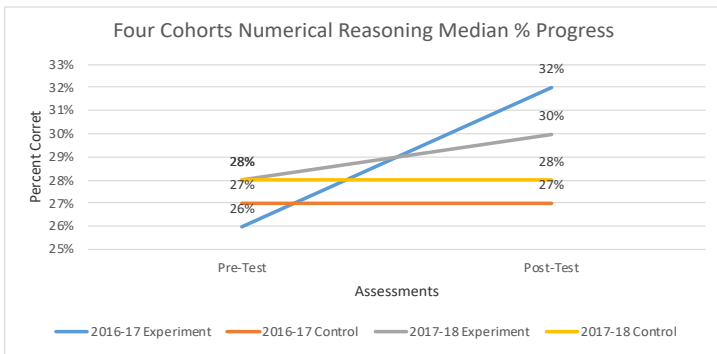**Figure 2**: Comparison of verbal reasoning progression.

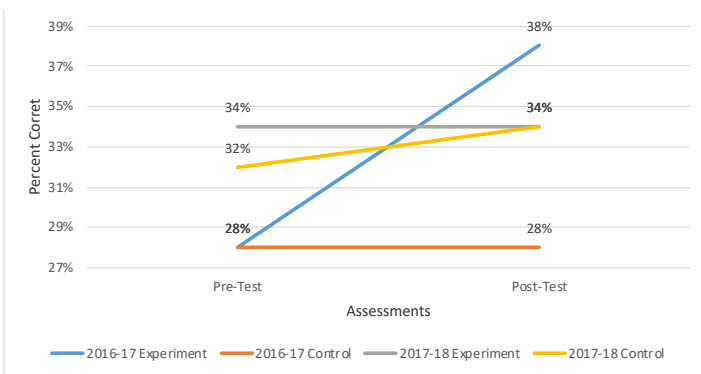**Figure 3**: Disaggregated numerical reasoning comparison.

Figure 4: Disaggregated verbal reasoning comparison.

One of the more fascinating results from the study is revealed by comparison of the standard deviations between the control cohort and the experimental cohort. In both cases, the control group had a lower standard deviation than the experimental group (Figures 5 & 6). These smaller numbers, 8.79 on the verbal and 7.03 on the numerical, compared with 11.32 and 7.97, demonstrate the philosophy curriculum's influence on student learning. Students from the control group remained at a basic level of understanding of logic and rational problem-solving, while those engaged in the philosophy class were able to extend their learning and advance their levels of capability, dispersing further away from the mean and each other.
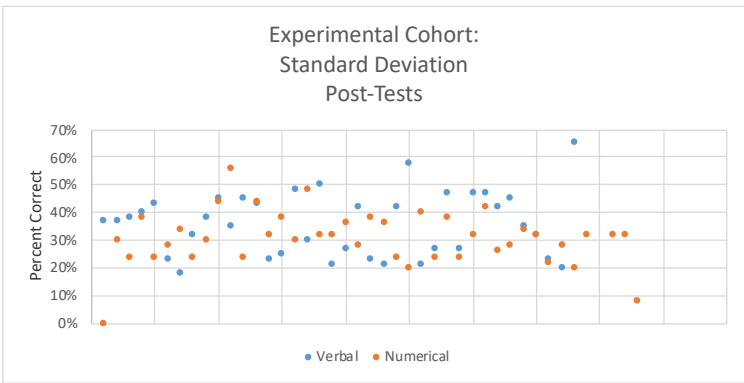

Figure 5: Experimental cohort's standard deviation for post-tests.
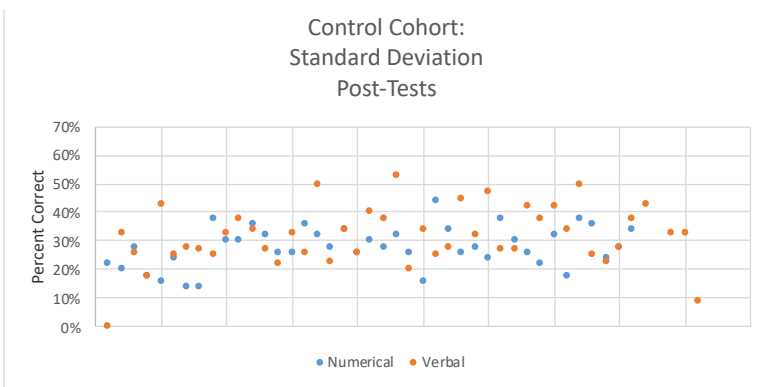

Figure 6: Control cohort's standard deviation for post-tests.

Utilization of a pre-test-post-test non-equivalent group designed quasi-experimental method enabled me to compare the aggregated experimental cohort with the aggregated control group. This combination of methodologies created the effect sizes based on Cohen's *d*:

Type of Logic	Effect Size	Strength
Verbal	0.30	Modest Effect
Numerical	0.53	Moderate Effect

Table 1: Experimental vs. Control Design.

Type of Logic	Effect Size	Strength
Verbal	0.22	Modest Effect
Numerical	0.70	Moderate Effect

Table 2: Pre-Test vs. Post-Test Design.

I see the effect size as key to answering my initial research question on the effects of a formalized logic curriculum. The data demonstrates a 0.53 and 0.30 effect size (Table 1) for those enrolled in the introduction to philosophy course as opposed to the control group and a 0.22 and 0.7 effect size (Table 2) for those students solely enrolled in the introduction to philosophy course. This secondary measure helps to minimize the role of difference across students' cognitive abilities within the small sample size and differences in teaching abilities within the experimental and control classrooms. Therefore, overall, students in the philosophy class demonstrate that curriculum had a modest to moderate effect on their ability logically and rationally to problem-solve.

Figure 7 reports the experimental group's growth at the conclusion of the course, comparing female students to male students. On the numerical reasoning test growth rates between the two gender groups were very similar after curricular engagement; the males' scores increased overall by 4% and the average female's score improved by 5%. The verbal scores offered more diverse results, as males improved by 5%, while females decreased by 1%, although females still outscored their male counterparts. The female verbal score averages on pre- and post-tests highlight a question on the pitfalls of relying solely on high-stakes accountability measures: Did women's understanding of logical reasoning decrease over the semester or did the pre-test lend itself to being overly vulnerable to guessing?

A second demographic disaggregation is offered in Figure 8 which reports the result of looking at differences that occurred between Black students and white students within the experimental cohort. Black students outperformed their white classmates on the verbal assessment, scoring an average of 37% on the post-test while the average white student scored 2% lower. However, on the numerical reasoning test, white students improved by 10% while Black students increased their performance by 4%.
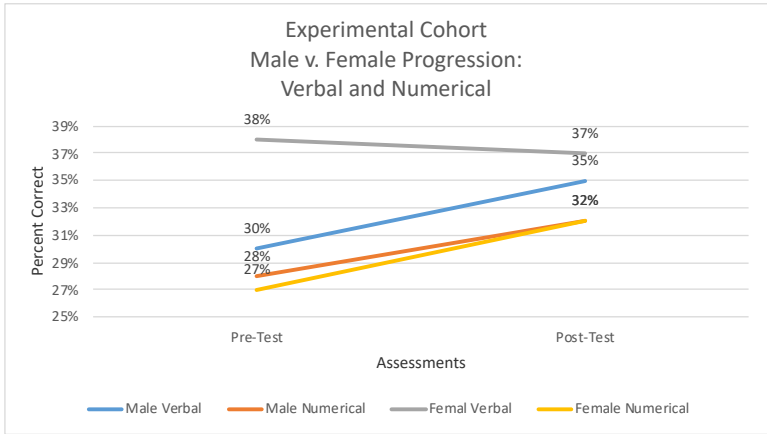

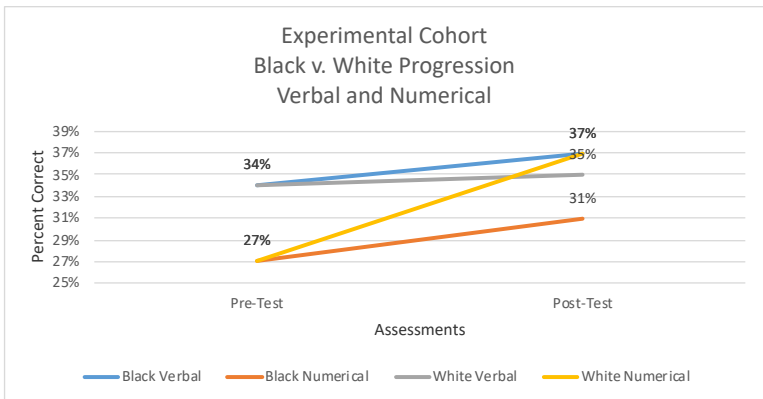**Figure 7:** Female and male progression for verbal and numerical.

Figure 8: Black and white progression for verbal and numerical.

Recommendations

Students engaged in the study of philosophy at The Academy were able to improve their logical reasoning skills as measured through examinations assessing problem solving, which coincides with Daniel and Auriac's (2011) findings. The modest and moderate effect sizes are evidence of the class' success, but these are only the first step in re-introducing the study of philosophy into secondary schools.

The ability to reason and problem-solve from various vantage points will only be enhanced by providing these necessary philosophy skills earlier in a student's academic career. Perhaps the formalized study of logic might wait until students reach secondary school due to its complicated and somewhat illogical style of thinking, although Montclair State's philosophy of education program focuses specifically on teaching philosophy to children. Therefore, if the basic principles of logic can be taught and used by students throughout elementary and middle school, then a student's ability to comprehend and contribute to philosophical arguments cannot help but be significantly enhanced.

As with all educational topics, the curriculum for introducing students to philosophy and rational decision-making process could become more standardized and universal (Poulton, 2014). There is no high-stakes accountability instrument that measures the effects of teaching such a course at the secondary level, and often philosophy is an elective. To gain the full benefit of increasing student performance in problem solving, educators will need to design courses and pedagogical strategies to enhance the skills of teachers and facilitators (Knight & Collins, 2014).

Unsurprisingly, most research examining the teaching of philosophy in schools comes from countries outside the U.S. and other countries in North America. If the U.S. begins implementing problem-solving instruction in educational settings, such universal implementation stands to create an entire generation of students who will be better prepared for a more complex and ever-changing world.

One last caveat about my findings and recommendations. Adequately to measure the impact of formalized study of logical reasoning requires longitudinal study. The thorough analysis of changes in individual gains over the course of a student's academic career, when compared with students not enrolled in a philosophy course, can provide essential data and evidence in support of re-introducing philosophy in secondary schools.

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Refusal to See: A Concise History of Racial and Disability Passing

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Introduction

Perhaps neither by accident nor small coincidence the term "passing" is used to refer to death—points to the one-dying's absence and loss and to one's life as it comes to its end, as one "go[es] to one's spiritual destination"[1]— because passing effects upon the one-passing a little death: of self, identity, and community, when one "come[s] to an end, cease[s] to exist."[2] This meaning proves apt since the concept and practice of passing are steeped in loss, moreover in "a sort of life in death"[3] that results in the purposeful extinguishing and extinction of self. In no way the "playful"[4] sort of passing that comes from the dramaturgical practices of those who are able to slip between worlds undetected and unmolested, the passing of which we speak in these pages is the deliberate, permanent or near-permanent taking on of another identity, what Drake and Cayton call a "sociological death and rebirth," since, particularly with racial passing, individuals who pass must "break all their current social ties and then create new ones to pass successfully."[5] Ultimately, those who pass permanently manage to kill off their pasts by masking a sociopolitically "spoiled"[6] and "hated identity with a less threatening one."[7]

While the theory and practice of passing may seem straightforwardly about deception and fraudulence wherein "visual codes evade the duped spectators,"[8] it emerges instead as a trope with multivariate meanings—meanings nearly as varied as the term's myriad present and obsolete etymological roots. And passing manifests across a wide array of sociocultural power struggles, historically and of late falling along "issues of gender, [sexuality,] religion, class, ability, health, crime, and punishment."[9] Originating from the Anglo-Norman, Old French, and Middle French verbs *passer*, initially meaning "to get across, [or] to cause or enable to get across,"[10] passing invokes a metaphorical bridge that spans the life circumstances between that from which one walks away and that which one seeks, be it moving onward and making one's way, moving past or from one set of experiences to another, moving from scrutiny toward gaining acceptance or admittance, or to cross literally or figuratively from life to death.

Although one can never lose one's past, the more one considers the practice of passing the more it becomes clear that, at its root, passing is always and forever a loss: a little death. For passing is attempted only when those imposing social or legal coercion make plain that the way one "is" is perceived by the dominating[11] group as wrong, undesirable, dangerous, demonic, or pathological. Passing is only attempted when an individual reaches the shattering conclusion that it has become too difficult or dangerous to remain oneself. Not attempted out of avarice, greed, or whim, with few exceptions passing is embarked upon out of fear. Individuals' reasons for such fear may fall along a continuum, from fear of not belonging (which may seem unworthy of such weighty emotion, but is nevertheless a pressing, foundational human need) to fear for one's life at the hand of violence. That such fear pushes an individual to hide or snuff out a part of one's identity, forces one to kill off qualities offensive to the dominating group's imposed norms, particularly those qualities seen as "weakness," lies at the center of our philosophical and empirical inquiry.

We offer the following brief history of passing's roots not only to situate our empirical work with individuals experiencing blindness and low vision who attempt to "pass" as sighted, but to offer our theorizing of this phenomenon to educators on how systems of oppression such as racism, ableism, and heteronormativity threaten individuals' lives in subtle, deep-seated, and highly consequential ways not immediately apparent. Our empirical research confirms passing is resorted to only out of fear: neither out of bravado nor out of a desire to "overcome" one's disabilities. While oftentimes lauded as admirable or astonishing,[12] when a blind or low-vision individual "passes" as sighted, they/she/he not only act to extinguish some aspect of their humanity, but also to reinforce debilitating, exclusionary, dominating "norms." In order to theorize the phenomenon of blind and low-vision individuals attempting to pass or who succeed at passing as sighted, we here recount the history of racial passing, drilling down to define and historicize disability passing as we consider historical and anecdotal evidence of individuals who are blind or have low-vision who pass as sighted. We do so to aid in educators' understandings that while the many forms disability passing takes might seem wholly separate from racial passing, the two cannot be disentangled, moreover the two together evidence an uneasy yet apt alliance with passing as figurative or literal death.

Passing and Ocular Certainty

The term "passing" and its practice have come to reference one's ability, intended or no, to move at liberty within and through the social world masquerading as a body that satisfies dominating group characteristics even though the one-passing occupies a non-dominating identity and sociocultural characteristics constructed so as to fail to satisfy the norm's parameters—a calculated re-enforcement of hegemonic power. Passing

allows one to move through the world undetected, unpunished,[13] while simultaneously harboring socially constructed identity[14] characteristics that, if detected, would mark the one-passing's body and reveal the one-passing as occupying identity characteristics that those who occupy the dominating group construct as difficult, dangerous, offensive, sub-standard, unclean, frightening, savage, pathological, illegal, or threatening. But passing is not only the work of the one-deceiving, for Brueggemann theorizes "we are always passing together," since humans are collaborative, communal, and interdependent beings, by which she means we all are collaborators and co-conspirators in all forms of passing.[15]

Passing is made possible by the ocular not because it is a passive sense, rather quite the opposite; as Kaschak explains and evidences, vision is a learned skill.[16] Indeed, passing would rarely be possible if sight were merely a passive, received sensory stimuli, but since sight is both learned and acculturated, radically challenging "the taken-for-granted epistemology of sight,"[17] a good deal of passing's ocular magic comes from sociocultural knowledge and influence, not the "folk knowledge"[18] of sight's certainty famously used to tout the empirical truth "seeing is believing." Passing depends on this relation between the physiological mechanism of sight and humans' "perceptual readiness" to recognize or discard informational cues,[19] investing that which is seen with some combination of what Goffman calls "attention" and "disattention,"[20] the latter of which Zerubavel theorizes as the "sociology of denial."[21]

> Ignoring something is more than simply failing to notice it. Indeed, it is quite often the result of some pressure…actively [to] disregard it. Such pressure is usually a product of social norms of attention designed to separate what we conventionally consider "noteworthy" from what we come to disregard as mere background "noise."[22]

The ways eyes and brains together "filter and consolidate" reality forms the "meaning structures" that make passing possible. Not only must human society be complicit for passing to "work," so must be human physiology.

Passing also "works" because of humans' intolerance for ambiguity. As Douglas explains, unlike premodern humans who could not help but be tolerant of incoherence, modern humans yearn deeply for rigidity in the form of certainty of meaning: modern humans' cosmologies require mentally "hard lines and clear concepts."[23] So strong is the human's emotional thirst for certainty, and so strong are the modern human's "infatuation with sight" and preoccupation with segregation, that sight becomes "the sense most associated with differentiation and distancing,"[24] so ocular facts too difficult or uncomfortable to acknowledge are disacknowledged and mentally "pushed" into "the comfort of a cleanly classified world."[25] This is the exact mechanism by which passing is practiced and the ocular

certainty of classification overridden. Insofar as complicity in passing is concerned, Kaschak wonders, given the complex physiology of the eye and the ocular/brain function, how can we possibly rely on sight for our truths, "a faculty that leads us astray as often as it guides us…even in its simplest functions? …[It seems] the arrogance of the human mind, the human eye is rooted firmly in physiology,"[26] defying basic evolutionary understanding, she argues.

Racial Passing's Roots

Passing most often refers to a person of color who is "light enough to pass"[27] (and more recently to gender or ability characteristics), entering the white, dominating world and leaving behind their/her/his community to live among whites as white, a calculated power exchange meant to escape how race-based discrimination "unfairly allocate[s] economic, political, social, and institutional resources along the color line"[28] and a "…commitment that seems to begin with a self but is legitimated only by willfully obscuring most of its boundaries."[29] However, the boundaries of race are far more permeable[30] than white people like to imagine, revealing the "bankruptcy of the race idea"[31]—its absurdity—and calling into question just what it is the "colour bar"[32] represents, defines, and enforces. The illusion of passing is not simply the decision of the one-passing, but the decision of white individuals (or another dominating group) to accept and even embrace the one-passing as one of their own and therefore deserving of membership and all entitlements due one who belongs. The dominating group is always complicit in successful passing; once one crosses and is "accepted or believed," the one-passing acquires and is vested with the dominating group's "higher social status"[33] by virtue of having crossed and transcended a "(real or notional) barrier"[34] designed to enforce "the ways putative racial differences [serve] social and political ends" through "deliberate exploitation, domination, or persecution of one group by another."[35]

Since sociologist Goffman famously, erroneously construes passing as just another form of "impression management," and as "emotionally inconsequential for the individual,"[36] it is therefore unsurprising that, in the case of racial passing, "historians…have paid far more attention to what was gained by passing as white than to what was lost by rejecting a [B]lack racial identity,"[37] since the power gained from successfully passing as white is naturally assumed to be the prize. But, the one-passing's loss of identity culminates in grief over the loss of one's "embeddedness in a community or a collectivity. [Indeed,] passing reveals that the essence of identifying is not found in an individual's qualities, but rather in the ways that one recognizes oneself and is recognized as kindred."[38] Successfully hoodwinking the dominating social group and transiting the dominating power structure cannot make up for the monumental loss of belonging to one's beloved community—with all its traditions, stories, food, family,

music, and humor—so, once stripped away, the one-passing is left with "an ache for…interconnectedness…and [a] longing"[39] for the life left behind, often permanently. Loss of a shared sociocultural understanding casts the one racially passing into a figurative no-man's land, stuck on passing's bridge between an adopted white identity and a past rendered dead: a past to which the one-passing must never again lay claim.

In times of slavery, passing provided a bridge to escape slavery's unimaginable brutality since "'a stranger' would see a white, and presumably free, man" rather than a Negro slave with "legally invisible white ancestors."[40] Escaping slavery either by means of passing or flight meant risking mortal danger; even slaves' *desire* for freedom was pathologized by naming the "Black desire for freedom a psychologically aberrant mental illness": drapetomania.[41] "Passing capitalizes on the absence of reliable evidence of difference,"[42] so a Black individual could therefore trespass[43] onto the white world and thereafter magically be entitled to the power and privilege the white-appearing body or the body cloaked in the mantle of whiteness not only affords but enjoys—startlingly, to this day. Passing thereby disguises one's socially constructed "natural" or "true" identity for what may either be a permanent crossing or a "brief, situational, or intermittent"[44] crossing into a safer, dominating-class-normative appearance and accompanying power dynamic: a ticket to move freely and act with agency, gaining humanity and shedding the designation "property"[45] as well as the stigma of intellectual inferiority in the bargain. Whether the one-passing can move freely between the former and assumed identity or whether passing proves a one-way enterprise, passing, much like hegemony, "is not a singular performance,"[46] but must be performed again and again and the new identity re-won.[47] "Whatever the rationale, both the process and the discourse of passing interrogate the ontology of identity categories and their construction,"[48] "predicated [as those categories are] on the false promise of the visible as an epistemological guarantee,"[49] whereafter seeing can no longer be considered synonymous with truth, a massive breach in epistemological logic that challenges scientism's privileging of sight and calls into question how something as fixed as one's identity is instead revealed to be highly contextualized, an ontological distinction that reveals a failed "politics of optics."[50] In fact, given how the category "white" is not only manufactured,[51] but subject both to radical change and shifting alliances, some argue "all rac[ial] identity is…the product of passing."[52]

Racial passing is most often associated with Black individuals coming surreptitiously to enter and dwell within the racial category of what has come to be known as "white."[53] "Critical to the process and discourse of 'passing' in [U.S.] history and in the American cultural imaginary are the status and privileges associated with being white and being male."[54] Slaves' passing stems from what is perhaps one of the most insidious outcomes of chattel slavery; "in the sexual exploitation of [B]lack slave

women by white men," via white slaveholders' abject rape of Black slaves, "'whiteness' was [paradoxically] reproduced from '[B]lack' female bodies,"[55] an unconscionable, unwitting transfer of the "inheritance"[56] of "whiteness as property."[57] "Passing muster"[58] as white by overcoming the hardened "'epidermal schema' of racial difference"[59] means one's body has met by "examination" or "inspection" the "required standard"[60] and is thereby allowed to cross the bridge and begin to move through the white world inhabiting a physiologically inherited or chosen alternate identity conjured by "cunning," but created by necessity, a disarming "sleight of hand."[61] During the time one passes, the one-passing's body is made safe from the scrutiny and threat of harm, however the threat that one's identity might be revealed as the pathologized, non-dominating "other" makes for a life rife with awful tension, since one's "true" identity is never far from being disclosed, revealed, unmasked, and the social, emotional, economic, and legal consequences of passing's "lie" come due. During much of history, for those who passed there was no turning back; "to write a history of passing is to write a history of loss."[62] Once passing's metaphorical bridge is crossed a person of color experiences the loss of self as a person of color and begins life anew as a "white" person.

White hysteria over racial passing is attributable to white individuals fearing the loss of social status, power, and hegemonic rule. When Black individuals pass for white this transgression of the perceived social order "threaten[s] the security of white identity, on both a societal and an individual level,"[63] "destabiliz[ing] the grounds of privilege founded on racial identity"[64] and dismantling "something assumed to be fixed, coherent, and stable…displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty"[65] and rendering racial classification disturbingly arbitrary to those who create and hold fast to the power whiteness grants. A similar social hysteria—and often deadly violence—results as gender- and sexual identity-based passing, when unmasked, triggers swift misogynist backlash; when powerful patriarchy, heteronormativity, and racism at once are challenged, individuals from the dominating group respond with murderous results as three sacred social boundary structures are breached, placing transgendered women of color, for instance, disproportionately in mortal peril, for "untraditional acts of passing are about much more than mere disguise. Untraditional acts of passing are about rhetoric—the symbolic social construction and reconstruction of identity within particular situational constraints and social networks."[66]

Those members of the dominating group who accept the one-passing's assumed identity give the one-passing freedom to move about unscrutinized, unmolested, unjudged and, by virtue of the dominating group's complicity, make real the delusion's all-powerful, false belief. While passing may appear a simple act of stepping away from one identity and leaving that identity behind to assume another, in practice it is instead a

complex set of power moves requiring many parts and players. Sedgwick posits:

> …to identify as must always include multiple processes of identification *with*. It also involves identification *as against*; but even did it not, the relations implicit in *identifying with* are… in themselves quite sufficiently fraught with intensities of incorporation, diminishment, inflation, threat, loss, reparation, and disavowal.[67]

For instance, as some queer studies scholars theorize, societal complicity electrifies the lure of the closet: queer bodies pass instead as "straight," because "straight people want to overlook…difference and choose to ignore signs of a different identity,"[68] making the one-passing's deceitful passage smooth. Successful passing of all varieties is at least two-sided; passing makes significant demands of both the one-passing and all those acknowledging and upholding the one-passing's assumed identity. Robinson theorizes passing has another accomplice, making passing three-sided in its complicity. She disrupts "the conventional dyad of passer and dupe with a third term—the *in-group clairvoyant*"[69]—an individual who skillfully "reads" the one-passing's cultural performance of passing using "an almost intuitive faculty of recognition."[70] Case in point, Ellison claims that while, "sociologists tell us that thousands of light skinned Negroes become White each year undetected, most Negroes can spot a paper thin 'White Negro' every time because those who masquerade missed what [other Black people] were forced to pick up along the way: discipline."[71] Goffman refers to these knowers as "the wise," or those individuals who see through the artifice and know the passer's true identity: "persons who are normal but whose special situation has made them intimately privy to the secret life of the stigmatized individual and sympathetic…."[72]

Disability Passing

Moving "beyond bipolar racial terms of [B]lack and white,"[73] forms of disability passing are revealed to be tightly tied to the politics of racial passing even though disability passing does not carry the burden of the U.S.' terrible history of slavery and its violent, racialized oppression. "Disability passing" most often "refers to the way people conceal social markers of impairment to avoid the stigma of disability and pass as 'normal.'"[74] But disability "passing expresses, reifies, and helps create [and solidify] concepts of normality,"[75] and so actively works against the political project disability-focused identity politics confronts and challenges. For disabled individuals, the decision whether and when to pass is complicated by how the category "disability" subsumes an astonishing array of physiological, emotional, mental, and intellectual variance, whether identity- or physiology-driven. Disability passing can be further complicated by some individuals' use of assistive technologies since devices may signal deviation from narrow,

socially constructed physiological normalcy and able-ness: this despite the fact so very many bodies require and utilize such assistance, employing everything from eyeglasses to bionic body parts, yet persistent belief in a caste system of physical, emotional, and intellectual functionality and its visible markers nevertheless pervades among much of the dominating, "able" class. Consequently, for those who cannot pass, disability is often used as an excuse to restrict, limiting individuals' "freedom and independence"[76] and putting those with "social markers of impairment"[77] at greatly increased risk of discrimination and violence.

Claiming and retaining autonomy and agency can be at the heart of disability passing; the challenges of and reasons for passing can be complex. As Goffman evidences, once one is made to feel inferior, that individual can no longer feel any sort of security with the group imposing judgment.[78] Ableist tropes pervade many if not most societies, placing those deemed less-than-able when measured against so-called "scientific" norms at an array of physical, emotional, and economic disadvantage. The appallingly low employment rate of those with physical and mental disabilities, in spite of how well-educated and well-qualified an individual may be, in particular for those individuals with low vision and blindness, can inspire disability passing. For example, Brune reports some blind and low-vision individuals pass because they have "internalized the stigma of disability and its association with pauperism;"[79] in a neoliberal economy never making one's way economically means never having the means to live independently: a rite of passage to adulthood for many.[80] Even though passing requires of those with a disability identity "sufficient genius to disguise their identity,"[81] and the ingenuity, intelligence, and skill set required to pass regularly attests to the one-passing's ingenuity, employment numbers show those individuals with disabilities are routinely discounted from the hiring pool, making it no wonder that physically and mentally disabled people go to great lengths to appear "normal" and competent,[82] thereby "masking discreditable identities with more socially acceptable ones through passing."[83]

Some individuals may attempt disability passing because they do not want to be an object of pity.[84] Others may wish to pass to escape the pernicious, pervasive societal stereotype that those individuals with sensory, physical, or mental disabilities[85] also lack mental capacity, another way disability passing intersects with racial passing. Yet another reason for passing connects to safety and autonomy; disability passing can be necessary in order to avoid appearing physically vulnerable either because such vulnerability can be interpreted as lacking in certain abilities needed in order to be "up to the task" or so as not to have one's physical vulnerability make one the target of violence, scam, or emotionally abusive taunting. Too, disability passing falls along the lines of socially constructed gender roles. Brune argues that, starting in the late 19th century, "independence and financial self-sufficiency became central to the American masculine ideal,"[86]

a trend that only accelerated post-World War II. As a new ideal male body-type emerged—muscular, strong, and intensely threatened by any perceived emasculation—society at large began to place "more pressure on men to live up to masculine ideals that were increasingly antithetical to notions of disability."[87] All told, powerful, dominating social systems conspire to keep disabled individuals in their place, much as those same systems effectively constrain along racial lines, inspiring both racial and disability passing used to circumnavigate or short-circuit inequitable social systems, opening opportunity to individuals long denied, shortchanged, and harmed by systemic oppression.

Passing as Sighted

Arguably the most difficult—if not altogether unfathomable—performance of disability passing may be when blind and low-vision individuals attempt to pass as sighted, for "passing as sighted is not a casual act or one that depends on simple imitation; it requires deliberation."[88] In societies relentlessly focused on the visual, societies whose cosmologies rest upon epistemological and ontological ways of knowing and being where truthmaking arises directly from visual observation (and thus who employ the adage "seeing is believing" to epitomize society's dominating philosophy of science), the power of vision as the predominant source of sensemaking is unparalleled and unchallenged.[89] Consequently, in the general public's mind, vision's absence typically registers as the most taboo and difficult-to-accommodate human sensory difference: a bridge too far.

Brune points to modern memoirs by blind individuals who recount experiences of passing as sighted[90] and who detail how they learned to pass either by obfuscation or by learning specific methods for appearing sighted, particularly those methods used to navigate social interactions with sighted individuals. Because "passing capitalizes on the absence of reliable evidence of difference"[91] and because blind individuals cannot rely upon mimicry, they instead must aquire, learn, and utilize highly detailed knowledge,[92] since behavior that enables blind individuals to pass as sighted is only learned through intensive, "deliberate study rather than practicing… merely from habit."[93] Passing as sighted is first accomplished simply by shedding assistive devices and other objects that "give away" one's impairment—dark glasses, the long white cane, magnification assistance—and later by implementing diversion tactics: adopting facial expressions of "preoccupation;" walking "fast, purposefully;" and when asked to read text individuals "pat their pockets for reading glasses they do not own. When they make mistakes, they feign absentmindedness."[94] Finally, in the most highly choreographed, finely rehearsed means of passing as sighted, the one-passing must come to know

> …the minutest details of how everyday existence is oriented
> to the expectation that sight is an ever-present feature of that

existence; it means knowing the customs, habits, and signs of seeing people…knowing how to do things with eyes, and knowing what to do that looks sighted…[95]

…in spite of the fact the one-passing cannot see social cues. This is achieved by learning to "eliminate the 'blind look,'" not holding one's head too high or one's neck too stiffly, and learning seemingly to "look people in the eye,"[96] a Western social cue that epitomizes human connection and communicates attentiveness, understanding, "smartness,"[97] empathy, and trustworthiness.

Unlike those who practice racial passing who cannot return across the bridge they have crossed, those who cannot revert to their previous identity, many individuals passing as sighted anecdotally profess a crossroads event in their effort to conceal visual disability, when the masquerade begins to wear on the one-passing, eventually inspiring the one-passing to shift both their everyday practice and identity politics radically away from passing, instead entering, joining, and embracing blind culture, its community, and its tools.[98] In the process the ones-passing give up what must be a highly stressful as well as physically and emotionally exhausting enterprise, a charade of complicated origins and outcomes. Passing as sighted manifests as a "radical liberatory corporeal politics,"[99] raising the questions of whether and how passing as sighted represents performances of ingenuity,[100] a radical response to the trope non-normative bodies are "the ultimate sign of unsuitability,"[101] or simply young adults' needs to assert independent identities by "passing as normal?"[102]

Conclusion

As educators we must move sharply away from seeing forms of passing as escaping or overcoming one's "spoiled identity"[103] or sensory inferiority; neither disability passing nor racial passing can ever be construed as lauded wins. Bruggemann[104] criticizes addressing the societal valorization of "overcoming," instead insisting educators proactively move away from such valorization as reinforcement of ableist societal norms. A d/Deaf person and pedagogue herself, she makes her undergraduate students aware of and then moves them away from the "narrative normalcy" of telling stories about disability that always end with the "overcoming" of disability and the push toward "inspiration": an ableist narrative that brings every accomplishment back to one's disability, minimizing if not obliterating agency.[105] It is awfully tempting to highlight and praise exceptionalism of some wildly unlikely performative behavior such as a blind person passing as sighted. In our larger body of work on this phenomenon we liken these performances of passing to Cobb's notion of "persons of genius," but we do not do so in order to elevate the extraordinary. Rather, we do so to show the lengths to which people suffering under multiple systems of oppression will go in order to look "normal," to convince the world of their belongingness,

and to demonstrate the "rugged individualism" that proves to bystanders that those who resolve to pass have worth. But the concept and value of "rugged individualism" shores up and supports supremacist thinking,[106] blames those who cannot perform so-called normalcy in ways that deny agency, dehumanize, and gaslight, and perpetuates the fear that motivates passing in the first place. It is precisely for these reasons the histories and practices of racial passing and disability passing cannot be disentangled. Ultimately, respect cannot come "'in spite of' one's differences,"[107] but radical respect for difference might push back the necessity and allure of passing's little death.

Endnotes

[1]   Oxford University Press, "Pass (v.), *intransitive*, II.6.a," in *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 2020), https://www.oed.com/

[2]   Ibid., "Pass (v.), *intransitive*, III.11.a."

[3]   Carole-Anne Tyler, "Passing: Narcissism, Identity, and Difference," *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 6, nos. 2 + 3 (1994): 212–247, 212.

[4]   Daniel G. Renfrow, "A Cartography of Passing in Everyday Life," *Symbolic Interaction* 27, no. 4 (2004): 485–506.

[5]   St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton, *Black Metropolis* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1945) paraphrased in Renfrow, "A Cartography of Passing in Everyday Life," 488.

[6]   Erving Goffman, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* (New York, NY and London, UK: Simon & Schuster, 1963).

[7]   Drake and Cayton paraphrased in Renfrow, "A Cartography of Passing in Everyday Life," 488.

[8]   Amy Robinson, "It Takes One to Know One: Passing and Communities of Common Interest," *Critical Inquiry* 20, no. 4 (1994): 715–736, 715.

[9]   Ibid.

[10] Oxford University Press, "Pass (v.)."

[11] Throughout our essay we self-consciously use the term "dominating class" rather than the term "dominant class." We do so because we want to move away from supremacist thinking and toward description of the power dynamic at work in systems of oppression as well as to acknowledge that many if not most forms of domination require and count upon the complicity of those dominated.

12   Tobin Siebers, "Disability as Masquerade," in *Disability Theory* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2008), 96–117.

13   Oxford University Press, "Pass (v.), VIII.38 v. *intransitive*."

14   Of late in popular nomenclature the controversial, complex term "identity" has strayed from its namesake theoretical term, "identity politics," to spread far and wide, co-opted by dominating culture and achieving an uncomfortable universality often used to mean, "who I think I am." When we use the term "identity" within our argument, we refer to the realm of identity politics, which we define as pointed political activity and analysis "founded in the shared experiences of injustice of members of certain [marginalized, oppressed, or underrepresented] social groups…aim[ed at securing] the political freedom of a specific constituency," and working against dominating, "oppressive characterizations" of a group often founded in inequitable economic structures "with the goal of greater self-determination" (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2020). "What makes identity politics a significant departure from earlier, pre-identarian forms of the politics of recognition is [the] demand for recognition on the basis of the very grounds on which recognition has previously been denied…. The demand is not for inclusion within the fold of 'universal humankind' on the basis of shared human attributes; nor is it for respect 'in spite of' one's differences. Rather, what is demanded is respect for oneself *as* different." Sonia Kruks, *Retrieving Experience: Subjectivity and Recognition in Feminist Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 85, emphasis in original; quoted in Cressida Heyes, "Identity Politics," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2020), https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/identity-politics/

15   Brenda Jo Brueggemann, "On (Always) Passing," in *Deaf Identities: Exploring New Frontiers*, eds. Irene W. Leigh and Catherine O'Brien (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2020), 336–348, 340. Also see her foundational essay, Brenda Jo Brueggemann, "On (Almost) Passing," *College English* 59, no. 6 (1997): 647–660.

16   Ellyn Kaschak, "The Eye of the Beholder," in *Sight Unseen: Gender and Race through Blind Eyes* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2015), 1–15.

17   Asia Friedman, "Toward a Sociology of Perception," in *Blind to Sameness: Sexpectations and the Social Construction of Male and Female Bodies* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 16–32, 19.

18   Ibid.

19   Ibid., 22.

20   Goffman, *Stigma*, paraphrased in Friedman, "Toward a Sociology of Perception," 23.

21   Evlatar Zerubavel, *The Elephant in the Room: Silence and Denial in Everyday Life* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2007), quoted in Friedman, "Toward a Sociology of Perception," 23.

22   Ibid.

23   Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1966), 163, quoted in Friedman, "Toward a Sociology of Perception," 27.

24   Yi-Fu Tuan, *Segmented Worlds and Self* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 120–132, paraphrased in Friedman, "Toward a Sociology of Perception."

25   Edmund Leach, *Culture and Communication: The Logic by Which Symbols Are Connected: An Introduction to the Use of Structuralist Analysis in Social Anthropology* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1976), paraphrased in Friedman, "Toward a Sociology of Perception."

26   Kaschak, "The Eye of the Beholder," 2.

27   Catherine Rottenberg, "Passing: Race, Identification, and Desire," *Criticism* 45, no. 4 (2003): 435–452, 435.

28   Cheryl I. Harris, "Whiteness as Property," *Harvard Law Review* 106, no. 8 (1993): 1709–1791, paraphrased in Allyson Hobbs, *A Chosen Exile: A History of Racial Passing in American Life* (Cambridge, MA & London, UK: Harvard University Press. 2014), 12.

29   Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press 1990), 62.

30   Hobbs, *A Chosen Exile*, 8.

31   Ibid., 8–9.

32   Elaine N. Katz, "Revisiting the Origins of the Industrial Colour Bar in the Witwatersrand Gold Mining Industry, 1891–1899," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 25, no. 1 (1999): 73–97, 73.

33   Oxford University Press, "Pass (v.), IX.43.d., v. *intransitive.*"

34   Ibid., "Pass (v.), VIII.41., v. *transitive.*"

35   Elaine K. Ginsberg, "The Politics of Passing," in *Passing and the Fictions of Identity*, ed. Elaine K. Ginsberg (Durham, NC & London, UK: Duke University Press, 1996), 1–18, 6.

36   Goffman, *Stigma*, paraphrased in Renfrow, "A Cartography of Passing in Everyday Life."

37   Hobbs, *A Chosen Exile*, 11.

38   Ibid., 14.

39   Ibid.

40   Ibid., 1.

41   Harriet A. Washington, *Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2006), paraphrased in Moya Bailey and Izetta Autumn Mobley, "Work in the Intersections: A Black Feminist Disability Framework," *Gender & Society* 33, no. 1 (2019): 19–40, 25, emphasis added.

42   Marcia Alesan Dawkins, *Clearly Invisible: Racial Passing and the Color of Cultural Identity* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2012), 4.

43   Ginsberg, "The Politics of Passing," 3.

44   Ibid. Also see Renfrow, "A Cartography of Passing in Everyday Life."

45   Washington, *Medical Apartheid*.

46   Jeffrey A. Brune and Daniel J. Wilson, "Introduction," in *Disability and Passing: Blurring the Lines of Identity*, eds. Jeffrey A. Brune and Daniel J. Wilson (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2013), 1–12, 9.

47   The definition and practice of hegemony we take from Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from The Prison Notebooks*, trans. Quentin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (London, UK: Lawrence & Wishart, 1971).

48   Ginsberg, "The Politics of Passing," 4.

49   Robinson, "It Takes One to Know One," 716.

50   Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (1988): 575–599; Robinson, "It Takes One to Know One."

51   Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me* (New York, NY: Spiegel & Grau, 2015); Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. 1992).

52   James Weldon Johnson, *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* (New York, NY: Knopf, 1927/1912) quoted in Ginsberg, "The Politics of Passing," 10.

53   Coates, *Between the World and Me*; Morrison, *Playing in the Dark*.

54   Ginsberg, "The Politics of Passing," 5.

55   Ibid.

56   Oxford University Press, "Pass (v.), VII.32, v. *intransitive*."

57   Harris, "Whiteness as Property."

58   Oxford University Press, "Pass (v.), VIII.40.a., v. *transitive*."

59   Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lamm Markmann (New York, NY: Grove, 1967) quoted in Ginsberg, "The Politics of Passing," 4.

60   Oxford University Press, "Pass (v.), VIII.40.a., v. *transitive*."

61   Ibid.; Oxford University Press, "Pass (v.), VII.†36.a., v. *intransitive*."

62   Hobbs, *A Chosen Exile*, quoted in Karen Grigsby Bates (host), "'*A Chosen Exile*': Black People Passing in White America," A*ll Things Considered* (radio program), *Code Switch: Race and Identity Remixed* (program segment), guest interview of Allyson Hobbs (author), aired October 7, 2014, on National Public Radio, https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2014/10/07/354310370/a-chosen-exile-black-people-passing-in-white-america

63   Ginsberg, "The Politics of Passing," 8.

64   Marjorie Garber, *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1992), paraphrased in Ginsberg, "The Politics of Passing," 8.

65   Kobena Mercer, "Welcome to the Jungle: Identity and Diversity in Postmodern Politics," in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London, UK: Lawrence, 1990), 43–71, quoted in Ginsberg, "The Politics of Passing," 8.

66   Dawkins, *Clearly Invisible*, 3.

67   Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet*, 61, emphases in original.

68   Siebers, "Disability as Masquerade," quoted in *Difference and Identity: A Special Issue of Literature and Medicine*, eds. Jonathan M. Metzl and Suzanne Poirier (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 1–22, 3, paraphrased in Jeffrey A. Brune, "The Multiple Layers of Disability Passing in Life, Literature, and Public Discourse," in *Disability and Passing: Blurring the Lines of Identity*, eds. Jeffrey A. Brune and Daniel J. Wilson (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2013), 36–57, 41, emphasis in original.

69   Robinson, "It Takes One to Know One," 716, emphasis in original.

70   Ibid., 715.

71   Ralph Ellison, "The World and the Jug," in *Shadow and Act* (New York, NY, Vintage, 1953), 107–143, 124.

72   Goffman, *Stigma*, 28.

73   Dawkins, *Clearly Invisible*, 3.

74   Brune and Wilson, "Introduction," 1.

75   Ibid., 2.

76   Brune, The Multiple Layers of Disability Passing," 38.

77   Brune and Wilson, "Introduction," 1.

78   Goffman, *Stigma*, 13.

79 Brune, "The Multiple Layers of Disability Passing," 39.

80 Molly Pasley, "Young Adults with Visual Impairments and Driver's Education: Journeys of Self-Efficacy, Identity, and Transition to Adulthood," Ph.D. diss. (Illinois State University, 2018).

81 Brune, "The Multiple Layers of Disability Passing," 41.

82 Robert Rueda and Hugh Mehan, "Metacognition and Passing": Strategic Interactions in the Lives of Students with Learning Disabilities," *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 17, no. 3 (1986): 145–165.

83 Renfrow, "A Cartography of Passing in Everyday Life," 488.

84 Brune, "The Multiple Layers of Disability Passing."

85 We draw throughout our work from disability studies scholars' characterizations and the U.S. Census Bureau's three major categories of disability: sensory disability ("conditions that include blindness, deafness, or severe vision or hearing impairment"); physical disability ("conditions that substantially limit one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting, or carrying"); and mental disability ("because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition lasting 6 months or more, the person [experiences] difficulty learning, remembering, or concentrating"). See U.S. Census Bureau, *How Disability Data Are Collected from "The American Community Survey,"* last revised February 23, 2021, https://www.census.gov/topics/health/disability/guidance/data-collection-acs.html

86 Brune, "The Multiple Layers of Disability Passing," 40.

87 Ibid. In advancing his conclusion Brune draws from a number of cultural history texts, among those: Michael S. Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY and Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2006); E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1993); Christina S. Jarvis, *The Male Body at War: American Masculinity during World War II* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2004); and Tom Pendergast, *Creating the Modern Man: American Magazines and Consumer Culture, 1900–1950* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2000).

88 Brune, "The Multiple Layers of Disability Passing," 44–45.

89 Stacy Otto, "Studying Visual Culture," in *Handbook of Research in the Social Foundations of Education*, eds. Steven E. Tozer, Bernardo P. Gallegos, Annette M. Henry, Mary Bushnell Greiner, and Paula Groves Price (New York, NY and London, UK: Routledge), 534–545.

90 Brune, "The Multiple Layers of Disability Passing," speaking in reference to these works: Georgina Kleege, *Sight Unseen* (New Haven,

CT: Yale University Press, 1999); Georgina Kleege, "The Strange Life and Times of John Howard Griffin," *Raritan* 26, no. 4 (2007): 96–112; Ryan Knighton, *Cockeyed: A Memoir* (New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2006); Stephen Kuusisto, *Planet of the Blind* (New York, NY: Delta, 1999); Stephen Kuusisto, *Eavesdropping: A Memoir of Blindness and Listening* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Co., 2006); Rod Michalko, *The Mystery of the Eye and the Shadow of Blindness* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1998); and Rod Michalko, *The Difference that Disability Makes* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2002).

91   Dawkins, *Clearly Invisible*, 4.

92   Tanya Titchkosky, *Disability, Self, and Society* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2003).

93   Brune, "The Multiple Layers of Disability Passing," 45.

94   Kleege, *Sight Unseen*, 70.

95   Ibid.

96   Ibid.

97   Beth Hatt, "Smartness as a Cultural Practice in Schools," *American Educational Research Journal* 49, no. 3 (2012): 438–460.

98   Catherine Hickley, "He Can't See All the Art, but He's One of Germany's Top Dealers," *The New York Times*, November 7, 2019, https://nyti.ms/2JYF36t; John Howard Griffin, *Scattered Shadows: A Memoir of Blindness and Vision* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2004); Kleege, *Sight Unseen*; Kleege, "The Strange Life and Times of John Howard Griffin."

99   Bailey and Mobley, "Work in the Intersections," 26.

100 Brune, "The Multiple Layers of Disability Passing;" Edith Cobb, "The Ecology of Imagination in Childhood [work in progress]," *Dædalus* 88, no. 1 (1959): 537–548; Edith Cobb, *The Ecology of Imagination in Childhood* (Putnam, CT: Spring Publications, 1977).

101 Bailey and Mobley, "Work in the Intersections," 21–22.

102 Pasley, "Young Adults with Visual Impairments and Driver's Education."

103 Goffman, *Stigma*.

104 Brenda Jo Brueggemann, "On (Always) Passing," in *Deaf Identities: Exploring New Frontiers*, eds. Irene W. Leigh and Catherine O'Brien (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2020), 336–348.

105 Ibid., 346.

106 This is an idea that comes from a recent "unconference" presentation by DEIJ consultant and principal of the firm Brevity & Wit, Minal

Bopaiah. She delivered this session on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Justice on 7 July 2021 for the National Federation of Community Broadcasters' membership.

[107]   Kruks, *Retrieving Experience*, 85.