CHAPTER 8

Tocquevillian Education for Self-Governance

Andrew G. Humphries

One cannot doubt that in the United States the instruction of the people serves powerfully to maintain a democratic republic. It will be so, I think, everywhere that the instruction that enlightens the mind is not separated from the education that regulates mores.
Still, I do not exaggerate this advantage and I am still further from believing, as do a great number of people in Europe, that it suffices to teach men to read and to write to make them citizens immediately.
Genuine enlightenment arises principally from experience, and if one had not habituated the Americans little by little to govern themselves, the literary knowledge that they possess would not greatly help them today to succeed in it.
—Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*

How can we speak of Democracy or Freedom when from the very beginning of life we mould the child to undergo tyranny, to obey a dictator? How can we expect democracy when we have reared slaves? Real freedom begins at the beginning of life, not at the adult stage. These people who have been diminished in their powers, made short-sighted, devitalized

A. G. Humphries (✉)
George Mason University, Department of Economics, Fairfax, VA, USA
e-mail: ahumphr5@masonlive.gmu.edu

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by mental fatigue, whose bodies have become distorted, whose wills have been broken by elders who say: 'your will must disappear and mine prevail!'—how can we expect them, when school-life is finished, to accept and use the rights of freedom?
—Maria Montessori, *Education for a New World*

Tocqueville's Challenge for Pedagogy

Tocqueville (2000) found the source of the liberty, prosperity, and order he observed in America in the mores of the American people. Other countries with similar geographic advantages had imitated much of the constitution and legislation of the United States, but had "not become habituated to the government of democracy" (p. 294). They transported the "letter of the law to themselves" but "they could not at the same time transport the spirit that enlivened it" (p. 156). There must have been something in the culture and character of the people, therefore, that animated, ordered, and sustained democracy.

By mores, Tocqueville meant the intellectual presuppositions and habits of the hearts and minds of a people, how they habitually think and behave, and how they feel others should behave (Tocqueville 2000, p. 275). Mores make up a social operating system that serves as the shared context and foundation for conscious choosing, strategic behavior, and interpersonal coordination. Such presuppositions and habits form the tacit constitution that gives meaning and force to the formal constitution. As Tocqueville sees it, "the happiest situation and the best laws cannot maintain a constitution despite mores, whereas the latter turn even the most unfavorable positions and the worst laws to good account" (p. 295).

It was Tocqueville's goal in *Democracy in America* (2000) to search among the mores of the American people, who had progressed furthest along the path of democracy, "for what is favorable to the maintenance of political institutions" (p. 275). He described it as the principal goal of his book to show how

> [p]olitical societies are not made by their laws, but are prepared in advance by the sentiments, beliefs, ideas, the habits of the hearts and minds of the men who are part of them, and by what nature and *education* have made those men. [emphasis added] (2012)

How, then, can education help cultivate moral character and mores conducive to liberal democratic self-governance?

This chapter interprets Tocqueville's broader project in *Democracy in America*—including its elaboration by Vincent and Elinor Ostrom—as a guide to pedagogy. It argues that those interested in advancing a Tocquevillian vision of society should consider how mores are influenced in learning environments, not only by the explicit content of education but also by the "hidden curriculum" implicit in the form that education takes. Specifically, it argues that not only should education for self-governance promote an understanding of the ethics, economics, and political science of association, it should also promote habits of initiative, responsibility, and cooperation through modes of learning in which the arts of association are actively practiced.

Central to sustaining the political institutions of democracy, for Tocqueville, is the need to avoid a kind of soft despotism, what Vincent Ostrom (1997) calls Democratic Despotism (p. 18). While Tocqueville largely approved of the spontaneously generated order of American society, he was concerned that excessive focus on short term, private interests would enable people to cede responsibility for public matters to a centralized, bureaucratic, and paternalistic authority. He feared people's capabilities to self-govern would atrophy without a culture to encourage them to look beyond themselves and to connect with peers in the pursuit of common goods. They would fall prone to a form of despotism in which they would become dependent on wardens to solve their problems for them.

Tocqueville thought a measure of art was, therefore, necessary to cultivate civic virtues and public institutions to preserve democracy. He thought the development of such character and culture was to be achieved largely through the experience of self-government itself. Free exchange and cooperation in associative life was a kind of hard "apprenticeship" (p. 229) that constituted metaphorical "schools" where the knowledge and habits of self-government were learned (pp. 57, 497). In contrast, wardens governing the people under soft despotism would not be like tyrants, but rather like "schoolmasters" who pretend to do everything for them (2000, pp. 662–663). This chapter argues that educators should be careful not to become the kind of schoolmasters Tocqueville used to describe the centralized administration of a soft despotism, but to cultivate classroom environments where something like the hard apprenticeship of freedom generates virtues conducive to a free society.

The next section explores Tocquevillian reasons why a science and art of association should be studied and practiced by all. The third section contrasts Tocqueville's observations of penitentiary systems and of spontaneous association in American society at large as alternate paradigms for modes of education. The following section argues that top-down bureaucratic control of schooling and teacher-centered classrooms tend to generate a "hidden curriculum" more conducive to the soft despotism Tocqueville feared than the self-governing civil society he admired. The penultimate section gives a brief introduction to alternative modes of education more aligned with the kind of moral education Tocqueville admired. The final section concludes.

Tocqueville's New Political Science and the Ostroms's Science and Art of Association

Tocqueville (2000) argues "a new political science is needed for a world altogether new" (p. 7). A significant component of what he had in mind was political economy.[1] As Vincent Ostrom (1997) explains, Tocqueville refers to this new political science as a "science of association," the practice of which is an "art of association," "the mother of action" which should be "studied and applied by all" (p. 276). What role does education in political economy have in a democracy? Why need it be "studied and applied by all"?

The brief answer is that democracy creates new prejudices and problems for social order that make a general enlightenment in the conditions that preserve democracy imperative.

First, democracy erodes a sense of social authority. Although Tocqueville seems to use the term "democracy" without analytical precision, he contrasts democracy with aristocracy. Democracy is a kind of "equality of conditions" (2000, p. 3) in which there is a tendency toward a "universal leveling" of wealth, power, and enlightenment (pp. 4–5). Elster (2009)

[1] Tocqueville clearly engaged with the political economy of his day. He studied Jean-Baptiste Say's *Cours complet d'économie politique* carefully in 1828 and organized his extensive notes for later reference (Drolet 2003). He and his traveling companion, Gustave de Beaumont, read Say again on the boat to America, along with a history of America. They evidently expected Say's work to help them make sense of what they would observe on their journey. It is difficult to specify how Say's thought influenced Tocqueville. Tocqueville does not refer to Say in his published works (Swedberg, 83). But according to Beaumont, Say's work appealed to Tocqueville and him "very strongly" (in Tocqueville 2010, p. 12).

identifies Tocqueville's equality of conditions with the idea of a high level of social mobility (pp. 114–115). But as Tocqueville explains, conditions were not yet so equal that inequality of wealth or the relation of master and servant had disappeared (p. 546). Rather, the essence of the equality of conditions is "a sort of imaginary equality" between men "despite the real inequality of their conditions" (p. 550).

Equality of conditions leads to a widespread belief in a moral and jural equality of individuals. Differences in the classes are no longer seen as expressions of permanent, natural, or divinely appointed differences. The relation of servant to master, for instance, becomes a matter of contract between two equal wills, not an expression of a divine right of aristocrats to command and a duty of serfs to obey (Tocqueville 2000, pp. 549–550). Traditional patterns of duty and willingness to submit to a hierarchical structure, therefore, can no longer serve to order people into mutually beneficial patterns.

Secondly, as individuals associate more by choice and less by tradition, they come to see tradition as a source of mere information, not of wisdom or as an adjudicator of moral or intellectual questions (Tocqueville 2000, pp. 403–404). They tend to look, instead, to their own reason or to public opinion as their guides. And since received "forms" often stand in the way of pursuing specific goals, such forms are thus ever more in danger of being rejected unless their utility can be demonstrated and justified (pp. 404, 669). People in a democracy may thus be too quick to abandon traditional structures that have preserved peace and social order when the functions of such structures are poorly understood.

Tocqueville (2000) was especially concerned, for instance, about the erosion of respect for the institutions of individual rights (pp. 227–228, 669–670). He thought an earlier "divine notion of rights" was disappearing and mores were changing such that the "moral notion of rights" was being erased (p. 228). Without a sense of rights to order relations among equals, or the older set of traditions to lead some to rule and others to obey, only tyranny remains to order political society.

The modern world thus requires a general enlightenment in a political science that teaches people why certain moral, economic, and political institutions are likely to conduce to their long-term self-interest and to the common good, even when such institutions appear to stand in the way of more immediate wants.

Tocqueville (2000) finds a source for such enlightenment in a science of interests (pp. 500–503). Unenlightened interests alone are insufficient

to guide individuals' actions toward long term or common goods. Instincts can lead people down paths that result in undesirable outcomes. But Tocqueville saw what he called "the doctrine of self-interest well understood" as "the most powerful guarantee against themselves that remains to [men in our times]" (pp. 502–503). A doctrine of self-interest well understood teaches individuals how "little sacrifices each day" are useful in advancing their own longer-term interests (p. 502) and teaches the citizen-legislator where the "individual advantage of the citizen" can "work for the happiness of all" (p. 501).

As Vincent Ostrom explains (1997), for Tocqueville,

> "Self-interest rightly understood" depended on a right understanding to be achieved by the development of a science and art of association that would enable citizens to act in such ways that individual interests would become associated in patterns of reciprocal and complementary interests. The constitution of democratic societies is a product of human artisanship in which "freedom, public peace, and social order itself will not be able to exist without education"—presumably an education appropriate to citizenship in self-governing societies. (pp. 17–18)

Tocqueville (2000) thought that upon such a doctrine, the authority of certain institutions would be grounded on an understanding of their usefulness: "The people, instructed in their true interests, would understand that to profit from society's benefits, one must submit to its burdens" (p. 9).

A central teaching of the doctrine of self-interest well understood, connecting personal interest with the common good, is the importance of respecting individual rights. Rather than relying on the idea that rights come from a Creator, political economy offers an account of our rights and duties as balancing and advancing people's interests:

> Do you not perceive on all sides beliefs that give way to reasoning, and sentiments that give way to calculations? If in the midst of that universal disturbance you do not come to bind the idea of rights to the personal interest that offers itself as the only immobile point in the human heart, what will remain to you to govern the world, except fear? (p. 228)

Political economy promises to explain just how institutions, such as moral and legal respect for individual rights, can tend to harmonize interests. Widespread enlightenment in political economy can, therefore, give new force to ideas and mores upon which democracy is founded and sustained.

But though Tocqueville (2000) thought it necessary to promote a widespread understanding of how individual rights promote freedom and prosperity, he thought a notion of such rights alone was insufficient to sustain a democratic social order. As indicated above, Tocqueville feared the consequences of what he called "individualism"—a situation in which individuals socially isolate themselves and pursue a vision of their own self-interest that excluded investments in various social commons needed to maintain freedom in a democracy (pp. 482–483).

People who lack practice in associating to satisfy their needs and in resisting autocratic centralization of public administration fall prey to a vicious cycle. As central administration takes away responsibility of the citizenry for solving its own problems locally, people become less and less competent to solve such problems over time, creating a state of dependency on a central administration leading to yet further centralization (p. 648), eventuating in Democratic Despotism.

Tocqueville, therefore, thought democracy would decay, unless such atomistic individualism were counteracted by other forces, forms of education and cultural practices, that encourage spontaneous association and skill in collective action for common purposes. Enlightenment in how to promote one's long-term interests must, therefore, include an understanding of how those interests are advanced by forming associations.[2]

[2] Tocqueville's self-interest well understood consists of more than a materialistic sense of man's interests. He thought the new science should not only inform people about how to obtain their preferences, but guide them to some degree about what preferences will be worth cultivating for virtue, happiness, and a sustainable social order. In discussing a journal he was hoping to launch as a young man, Tocqueville wrote:

> While all the efforts in political economy seem today to be in the direction of materialism, I would like the policy of the journal to be to emphasize the most immaterial side of this science, to try to introduce ideas and moral feelings as elements of prosperity and happiness, to try to rehabilitate the spiritual dimension in politics and make it popular by making it useful. (Tocqueville as quoted in Swedberg 2009, p. 3)

Tocqueville (2000) also expressed his opposition to modernist materialists and materialistic utilitarians, who strive "to make man into matter, to find the useful without occupying themselves with the just, to find science far from beliefs, and well-being separate from virtue" (p. 11).

See also Danoff's discussion of Tocqueville's views on the limits of calculative reasoning to establish the mores needed, and the need for some republican civic virtue, to preserve the conditions of self-government in his *Educating Democracy: Alexis de Tocqueville and Leadership in America* (2010, pp. 11–18).

Elinor and Vincent Ostrom shared Tocqueville's concern that democracy would decay without some understanding of principles that underpin cooperative action. For them, the Prisoner's Dilemma is paradigmatic of the failure to self-govern. Without a knowledge (both theoretical and practical) of how to coordinate by means of speech rather than violence or hierarchical imposition, people would become incompetent to manage their own affairs and relations with others. Citizens would become like "the prisoners in the famous dilemma" who "cannot change the constraints imposed on them by the district attorney" (Ostrom 1990, pp. 6–7; see also Ostrom 1997, p. 17).

To guard against descent into Democratic Despotism, the Ostroms emphasize Tocqueville's call for a political science and art of association beyond the study of voluntary exchange of private goods. The new political science and the doctrine of self-interest well understood must include understandings conducive to the solution of collective action problems and the provision of public goods. As they conceive of it, the science of association seeks to elevate people from the condition of interacting like isolated prisoners to be able to "enhance the capabilities of those involved to change the constraining rules of the game to lead to outcomes other than remorseless tragedies" (Ostrom 1990, pp. 6–7).

In her article "A Frequently Overlooked Precondition of Democracy: Citizens Knowledgeable About and Engaged in Collective Action," Elinor Ostrom (2006) argues that "[n]o democratic system can be sustained for long without educated citizens who are able to solve many of their own collective-action problems" (p. 2). In the article, she outlines how the Progressive centralization of public administration has removed many people, including children, from participation in the local provision of public goods and has thus deprived them of a practical education important to the maintenance of democracy. She writes,

> the basic conditions leading to our own democratic institutions may be eroding through the reforms that have been undertaken as a result of dominant theories of how to create an efficient public sector and through the education (or, rather, lack of education) provided in our high schools and colleges about the essential role of citizens in multiple kinds of collective action. (p. 4)

Beyond supporting the notion of incorporating various forms of civic engagement and service learning in the formal curriculum, Ostrom pre-

scribes teaching students about the science of association they might otherwise have been more likely to learn organically in a more decentralized, democratic order. Specifically, she argues,

> we have an obligation to provide students with effective theory about (1) how individuals overcome the many facets of social dilemmas that pervade all aspects of public life, (2) how to avoid the tragedy of the commons, and (3) how to learn to take advantages of the opportunities that arise from conflict to better understand problems and use their imagination to achieve conflict resolution. (2006, p. 10)

Elinor Ostrom thus argues that a greater portion of formal studies should consist of the political science, economics, and ethics needed to preserve a Tocquevillian vision of democracy to make up for the loss of practical experience of voluntary association. Presumably, such a curriculum would include elements of her book *Governing the Commons* (1990), which outlines the theoretical structures of collective action problems and design principles derived from examples of how communities have developed rules to govern themselves and common resources.

Tocqueville and the Ostrom's thus believe that an understanding of the ethics, economics, and political science of individual rights and association to address collective action problems is necessary for the preservation of self-governance in a democracy. But as Tocqueville argues such "literary knowledge" is still insufficient to sustain democracy. Some things cannot be transmitted as factual information, but must be learned by participating in a culture. Mores consist of habits as well as of ideas. Tocqueville understood, with Aristotle, that moral character cannot be developed by listening to lectures, nor can it be achieved by the teacher or anyone else "legislating" character from without. We acquire habits and virtues by exercising them (Aristotle, II.1; Tocqueville 2000, p. 291).

As Vincent Ostrom (1997) argues, "putting words on paper is never sufficient for achieving knowledgeable or lawful relationships in human society" (p. 281). Constitutions are never merely written on paper or spoken allowed in a public sphere. They must be woven into the habits of the heart, mind, and tongue (McCloskey 2010). Even if certain forms of radical transformation are proposed, they must be grafted onto the status quo, or the scion will be rejected by the rootstock. Formal rules must be picked up, studied, debated, widely accepted,

and translated into social practice. Rules in form have little power unless they conform to deeply rooted rules in *use*.[3]

One cannot learn to ride a bicycle by listening to lectures on the physics, mechanics, and anatomy of bike riding. One must practice trying to ride a bike and experience the responsibility of correcting oneself in the face of one's own success and failure. Similarly, moral character must be gained through practice, habituation, and apprenticeship within a culture. One must actually practice being self-directed, solving problems, making rules for oneself (individually and collectively), and dealing with collective action problems all without recourse to a directing warden. Education proper to democracy must, therefore, include not just instruction in the science of association but practice in the art of association.

Yet those interested in teaching liberal values often focus on changing the explicit content of the curriculum—what is to be "covered"—at the exclusion of thought put to the form of education itself. Many teachers "think they are heard for their much speaking." But as Vincent Ostrom suggests, it is not the writing down or the speaking of words that makes for shared meaning. Ideas must be taken up, discussed, debated, integrated with prior understanding, and found useful in practice. Words "covered" in readings assigned or lectures spoken can be as meaningless as declaring that The Constitution of the United States is now the governing document of Somalia. If the constitution was "assigned" and even read aloud and explained by experts in public there, we would not expect it to have much effect. So why do we think or act so often as if things are much different in a classroom?

Vincent Ostrom (1997) concurs with the need for practice beyond literary instruction:

[3] The importance of institutions and even mores has seen a recent re-emergence in political economic thinking. In addition to a surge of work in New Institutional Economics and Law and Economics, work on a variety of topics has also stressed the crucial role that informal-cultural institutions play in creating the context needed to generate and perpetuate economic development, a liberal social order, and entrepreneurship. See for example, Lavoie and Chamlee-Wright (2002) *Culture and Enterprise;* Boettke, Coyne, Leeson, and Sautet (2005) "The New Comparative Political Economy"; Boettke, Coyne, and Leeson (2008) "Institutional Stickiness and the New Development Economics"; Coyne (2008) *After War: The Political Economy of Exporting Democracy*; McCloskey (2010) *Bourgeois Dignity: Why Economics Cannot Explain the Modern World*; Williamson and Coyne (2013) "Culture and Freedom"; Storr (2013) *Understanding the Culture of Markets*; Grube and Storr (2015) *Culture and Economic Action*.

> I cannot understand how human beings can construct democratic self-governing societies without drawing on the essential experiences of first living in the small traditions of family, neighborhood, and community as places to be cultivated [cultured] as worthy of emulation. (p. 299)

The modes of interaction we engage in cultivate in us visions of life and capabilities fitting to those very modes of interaction. If we wish people to possess certain skills and virtues such as initiative, self-reliance, interpersonal cooperation, tolerance, problem solving, and civil and reasoned discourse, we must cultivate social cultures in our institutions of learning where those skills and virtues are actively practiced.

Those interested in cultivating a Tocquevillian vision of society must thus see to it, where possible, that learning environments be such as to invite practice and experience of initiative, cooperation, and voluntary association proper to an ideal civil society. They must consider how the mores of the classroom either educate people to practice these ideas and values or the reverse.

Tocqueville saw the American society of his day as providing just such arenas of experience that taught the American people the spirit of freedom and how to govern themselves. He referred to these learning environments metaphorically as "schools" for the development of mores. He offers observations of two contrasting forms of societal practice, that of prisoners at Sing Sing and those of freely associating individuals in American society at large. These serve as models of experience to be drawn on to understand how different forms of practice may conduce to people falling prey to Democratic Despotism or to preserving democracy.

A Contrast in Learning Environments: Passive Isolation Versus Active Association

Tocqueville's ostensible purpose for visiting America was to study and write a report on the American penal system. Ironically he wrote one of the most famous studies of the nature of democratic freedom in America in the process. Alternating observations of the democratic freedoms of the Americans and of oppressive prison environments must have presented a contrast that informed his views on which kinds of practice and mores conduce to sustained freedom and self-governance, on the one hand, and which conduce to the decay of such liberal self-government and to servitude, on the other. Tocqueville's observations of these two contrasting

environments of practice can be read as studies of what kind of learning environments might prepare people to self-govern.

Tocqueville may have begun to conceive of his concern about atomistic individualism from his observations of the discipline at Sing Sing. He was shocked at how few guards were needed to control so many prisoners in outdoor work (30 guards to 900 inmates). He described the form of discipline used to achieve this result in a letter home and in his report on the penal system with Beaumont (1833). The two principles, which were vigorously enforced, were that the prisoners were not "free to talk" and were given no leisure or time to think or to generate purposes for themselves:

> In order to enforce complete obedience with so few real means of repression, and at the same time to make prison work useful, the Americans have undertaken to convince each inmate, by isolating him, that he stands alone against a body of warders. Silence and continual work are their agents: the silence that separates the individual from the crowd, the work that absorbs all his moral and physical strength and diverts him from mischief. That is the secret of the system. (Tocqueville 2010, p. 57)

As described above, Tocqueville came to believe that systems of atomistic individualism, would guide people to relate to one another similarly to the forms of (non-)interaction he observed among the prisoners at Sing Sing.[4]

[4] Boesche (1980) also discusses this under-appreciated connection in the Tocqueville literature in his article, "The Prison: Tocqueville's Model for Despotism." His interpretation is very similar to the one I propose and his examination contains complementary insights to those made explicit here. But Boesche seems not to appreciate the role of Tocqueville's first observations of the Auburn system at Sing Sing, in particular, in jumpstarting and in formulating his understanding of the problems of despotism. Boesche focuses, rather, on Tocqueville's later observations of the Pennsylvania system. While in the Pennsylvania system, the prisoners are kept physically isolated at all times, including while working during the day, in the Auburn system (1) the prisoners are physically proximate to one another, with no physical barriers between them, and (2) they work in an open air environment from which one might presume the prisoners could readily escape. Sing Sing was the first prison they observed, and Tocqueville was astonished at the sight (Pierson 1938, pp. 101–102). Isolation at Sing Sing was not achieved by walls and chains, but by rules that generated a despotism of the mind—silence and zero communication among the prisoners. This silence, of course, was enforced with the whip.

People who communicate can cooperate.[5] It is the inability of individuals to communicate with one another that generates the standard Prisoner's Dilemma Elinor Ostrom referred to above. Tocqueville (2010) recognized that

> [s]trength lies not in numbers but in association, and thirty individuals *united* by constant communication, ideas, common projects, and schemes, have more effective power than nine hundred people whose isolation is their fatal flaw. (p. 64)

The effective power of men united allows them not only to resist authority but to realize objectives without recourse to wardens. Isolated persons, however, lack social capital and practice in dealing with others and solving problems with equals. Such people may look to authority to solve their problems, including the control of other people whose behavior they dislike.

On the other hand, Tocqueville (2000) argued that the "weakness" of independent men in a democracy at large teaches them to work together (p. 490). The experience of freedom itself is the hard "apprenticeship" by which people learn that, when there is no warden to care for them, they must associate to care for themselves and one another (p. 229).

> The inhabitant of the United States learns from birth that he must rely on himself to struggle against the evils and obstacles of life; he has only a defiant and restive regard for social authority and he appeals to its power only when he cannot do without it. This begins to be perceived from school onward, where children submit even in their games to rules they have established and punish among themselves offenses defined by themselves. … The same spirit is found in all acts of social life. (p. 180)

The apparent absence and passivity of governors in American society at large habituated people to turn to themselves and each other to solve their own problems. Importantly, Tocqueville saw such self-initiated activity not only in commercial transactions but in voluntary associations to address the provision of public goods.

[5] Peart and Levy (2015) summarize the literature on experimental findings regarding the relationship between communication and cooperation: "There is perhaps no stronger experimental evidence than the conclusion, confirmed in many experimental studies, that discussion strongly enhances cooperation" (43). They argue that practice in the art and skill of discussion, such as in classroom discussion, can thus facilitate the skills of communication conducive to social cooperation.

Tocqueville argued that the source of America's resilience against the dangers of atomistic individualism was, therefore, to be found primarily in their habit of entering into civic and political associations. And he saw these associations as analogous to "great schools" responsible for the development and reinvestment in the mores needed for democratic self-government (p. 497):

> Without [them] a nation can give itself a free government, but it does not have the spirit of freedom. … The township institutions that moderate the despotism of the majority, at the same time give the people a *taste* for freedom and the *art* of being free. [emphasis added] (2000, p. 274)

In these "schools" of civic and political association individuals interact face-to-face, they talk, problem solve, teach, and learn from one another. "Sentiments and ideas renew themselves, the heart is enlarged, and the human mind is developed only by the reciprocal action of men upon one another" (2000, p. 491).

A potential problem with the interpretation given here needs to be addressed. In his report on the prisons, Tocqueville promoted the rules of isolation and continual work as potentially beneficial and reformative for prisoners to prepare them to live in free society (Beaumont and Tocqueville 1833, p. 58). How could he, at the same time as supporting such rules within prisons, fear that a free society would be endangered by these conditions writ large among a free population?[6] One answer is that Tocqueville sees peer teaching among prisoners, in particular, as a bad thing (Beaumont et al., p. 49). One wants cooperation conducive to productive activities, and learning that facilitates this kind of cooperation, but not communication and cooperation for criminal or destructive purposes. Isolation in prisons stops prisons from becoming, what Tocqueville calls "*schools* of crime"! (Beaumont et al. p. 125, emphasis added). One can learn from the habits of people in civil society, or one can learn from convicts. One can learn to cooperate with others in civil society, or one can learn to cooperate with pirates to prey on civil society. One form of peer interaction promotes the positive qualities conducive to democracy, the other undermines society. More or less passive obedience to good laws and to honest employers is certainly preferable to predation. But such activity is inappropriate to the perpetuation of democratic society when writ large.

[6] Boesche (1980, p. 555) raises and addresses this question similarly.

Tocqueville saw the different forms of civic and political life above as analogous to "schools" or "apprenticeships" for those different forms of life. But the reverse also holds. A school is a little society in itself. It is a society in which the habits of heart, mind, and tongue are modeled and cultivated. Different forms of education necessarily present models of societies and arenas for practice that cultivate visions and habits conducive, either to the active, self-reliant, and associative form of life Tocqueville witnessed in democratic America, or to the passive, dependent, and isolated form of life Tocqueville observed at Sing Sing. As quoted above, Tocqueville thought American attitudes and skills of self-reliance begins to be learned "from school onwards," not when children are directed by others, but where they deal with each other and make rules for themselves.

In contrast, Beaumont and Tocqueville (1833) thought the isolation characteristic of the adult prisons they observed was inappropriate to the moral education of children:

> absolute isolation would be intolerable to children, and silence could not be maintained among them without punishments, the violence of which alone must make us repugnant to them. There would be, besides, the greatest disadvantages in depriving them of social relations, without which their intellectual progress would be checked. (p. 114)

Beaumont and Tocqueville's observations of the houses of refuge, which were a sort of a mix of school and detention for delinquent children, provide elements of a model for addressing the need for moral education in formal schooling (p. 112). Beaumont and Tocqueville were particularly impressed with the House of Refuge in Boston whose form was that of "a small society, upon the model of society at large" (p. 115). In it the children were "treated as if they were men and members of a free society" (p. 118).

The children voted on matters of import and had to give account of their own conduct each night and prescribe the consequences for their own misconduct, similar to rules Tocqueville (2000) observed school children to make and enforce among themselves (p. 180).

> Experience has shown that the children always judge themselves more severely than they would have been judged by others; and not unfrequently it is found necessary, to correct the severity and even the injustice of their own sentence. (Beaumont and Tocqueville 1833, p. 119)

If any difficulty arises about the nature of the wrongdoing or the proper punishment, "a judgment takes place."

> Twelve little jurymen, taken from among the children of the establishment, pronounce the condemnation or the acquittal of the accused.
>
> Each time that it becomes necessary to elect among them an officer or monitor, the little community meets, proceeds to the election, and the candidate having most votes is proclaimed president. (p. 119)

Beaumont and Tocqueville believed that

> [t]here is … more depth in these political plays, which agree so well with the institutions of the country, than we would suppose at first glance. The impressions of childhood and the early use of liberty, contribute, perhaps, at a later period, to make the young delinquents more obedient to the laws. And without considering this possible political result, it is certain, that such a system is powerful as a means of moral education. (p. 120)

In this kind of modeling of the practices of a free society within the school lies a clue to how to extend Tocqueville's concerns for the education of mores into the classroom environment. As the Italian educator Maria Montessori (1917) writes,

> By keeping children motionless, seated side by side … 'relations between children' cannot be established, and infantile social life does not develop. It is by means of free intercourse, of real practice which obliges each one to adapt his own limits to the limits of others, that social 'habits' may be established. Dissertations on what ought to be done will never bring about the construction of the will … it will not suffice to inculcate 'ideas of politeness' and of 'rights and duties.' If this were so, it would suffice to give a minute description of the movements of the hand necessary in playing the piano, to enable an attentive pupil to execute a sonata by Beethoven. (p. 174)

Beaumont and Tocqueville point out, however, that facilitating such a system of freedom, spontaneity, and peer interaction in the learning environment relies on more genius and training than is usually to be expected from a mass bureaucratic form of state management. Instead, they believe, a bureaucratic government is more likely to be successful in controlling young delinquents by imposing rules that allow for less discretion, though they are less conducive to moral education (p. 121).

The Hidden Curriculum of Mass Bureaucratic Schooling

Modern day schooling is dominated by environments in which students are physically proximate to one another, but mentally isolated, dependent on a single intellectual authority who directs their movements and tries to solve their every problem from above—environments much more like Sing Sing than the forms of association Tocqueville admired in America at large.

The common mode of schooling today arose in part from an ideology that sought to centrally plan learning through a bureaucracy and due to the problems of organization inherent in the mass bureaucratic approach to schooling it created.

Prior to the attempt to create mass bureaucratic schools, schools were locally controlled, poorly provisioned, seemingly irrational in their methods, and employed corporal punishment. Yet attendance was voluntary. Rural school life was much closer to community in form and in practice. Students interacted spontaneously with people of different ages, teaching, playing, and caring for one another. Teachers were often drawn from the community and, because of local control, were accountable to the parents and taxpayers with all their demands and idiosyncrasies (Tyack 2003, p. 18). They lacked means to compel students to do almost anything, but instead had to use their wit and charm to persuade students and parents of the value of school activities. Students and teachers had to learn to deal with one another and resolve conflict, which could sometimes even escalate into physical fights (p. 19). School buildings also often served as a central meeting place for political, social, and religious functions of the community. And school life was only a part of a system of community opportunities for learning through work and participation in business, family, civic, and religious activities (p. 15).

Progressives in the 1840s, however, found the polycentrically grown collection of locally controlled schools an impediment to improving schools via top town measures. Rather than the local control by amateurs, they wanted schools to be controlled by professional leaders who were assumed to have the knowledge, incentive, and institutional structures required to perform better than parents and local taxpayers.

Inspired, in part, by theories of "scientific management," education reformers started thinking and speaking about schools more in the language of mechanics and industry (Callahan 1962, p. 33; Tyack 2003,

pp. 41–44). The factory became a paradigm for schooling. Students came to be seen more like a passive raw material on a production line upon which the school operated, adding knowledge to the children as they were moved along (Tyack 2003, p. 49).

In order to achieve their goals, the engineers would need to control every part of the process to make it predictable and efficient. They wanted to "standardize" and "grade" the "product," making it more "uniform." Students were moved from place to place and lesson to lesson according to pre-established schedules. Curricular content was standardized and textbooks developed. Classification of students based on measurable, objective characteristics such as age and performance on examinations were essential to bureaucratic management of the system. And not only was the activity of the students to be directed from above, but that of the teachers as well, who were to be effective instruments of the superintendents' superior foresight, insight, and planning (Tyack 2003, p. 61).

At the height of this Progressivist philosophy America experienced the fastest rate of urbanization in its history. In 1845, for instance, Chicago opened a school which they expected to be under-attended. A total of 543 children attended in the first year and 843 in the next, with only three teachers to teach these students. Some order to deal with the problems of urbanization was desperately required. But rather than facilitating development of a decentralized system of local control, reformers took what they saw as the only rational and scientific way to create order: establish centralized bureaucratic control to discover and implement "the one best system" from above (Tyack 2003, p. 39).

While many educational reformers openly embrace the inculcation of obedience to bureaucratic norms (Tyack 2003, p. 49)—presumably to generate good social order and to help make students fit for work in industrial employment—the modes of interaction inherent in the expert-directed, factory model of schooling necessarily generates a "hidden curriculum"[7] that tends to inculcate such mores, irrespective of the motives of those who currently perpetuate it.

[7] Writing from a neo-Marxist perspective, Giroux and Penna (1979) provide an excellent overview of the idea of the hidden curriculum and provide suggestions for reform highly consonant with the argument presented in this chapter. See also Lillard (2019) for a discussion of the implications of cross-cultural and cultural psychology for how we think about culture within schools.

Consider the problems of discipline and order required in the Chicago school described above. The teacher to student ratio is analogous to the problem faced by prison guards at Sing Sing. How is one to keep students in regular order and in conformity with the wishes of their teachers? One solution is to follow the same pattern as the wardens at Sing Sing: silence and continual busywork. One visitor in a New York public school observed of an early instantiation of this form of order:

> There were the hundreds of perfectly silent children, eyes fixed straight ahead, sitting 'as regular as rows of machine-planted corn.' … 'To manage successfully a hundred children, or even half that number, the teacher must reduce them as nearly as possible to a unit'
>
> How did the teachers preserve such order in a school which included members of 'many different social classes'? By keeping each child busy at a specific task every minute, by competition for that scarce commodity, praise, and by the 'terror of degradation.' (p. 54)

Many of the characteristics of schools we see today are a perpetuation of these ideas: age segregation, standardized tests, grading, uniform curriculum and schedules planned in advance, a system of extrinsic rewards and punishments, and students sitting silently in rows facing forward waiting to be told what to think and what to do.

In the bureaucratic, teacher-centered classroom, as in a centrally planned economy, spontaneous activity must be suppressed as a potential disruptor of the plan to be executed by experts. Spontaneity must be frowned upon and regarded as naughtiness. Passivity, conformity, obedience to authority must be taught as fundamental virtues. The ideal of such a system is one in which "every pupil appears to be in anxious waiting for the word of the teacher, and when issued it is promptly obeyed by the class" (Tyack 2003, p. 51). Such dependence, passivity, and uniformity are qualities prized by the central planning autocrat. As Tocqueville (2000) writes,

> [e]very central government adores uniformity; uniformity spares it the examination of an infinity of details with which it would have to occupy itself if it were necessary to make a rule for men, instead of making all men pass indiscriminately under the same rule. (p. 645)

Externally regulated order and discipline can create apparent order, especially in the short term, but such order is often traded off against the more complex internal and interpersonal order that can only be generated by spontaneous action, interaction, and discussion.

Development of personal character and culture are similar in their bottom up complexity to economic development. Unfortunately, many people treat the classroom and the learning process analogously to how an armchair, blackboard economist might treat the economy. While the implausibility of using a top-down approach to planning an economy or to "exporting democracy" to a foreign country may be evident, many ignore the analogous problems faced by an educator when trying to "export" democracy or any other sophisticated body of ideas, values, or ethical behaviors to students in a classroom. While it is possible for the educator to create incentives for students to exhibit certain outward behaviors while he is watching them, and to reproduce canned responses to recitation questions, it is impossible to achieve a genuine embodiment of these attitudes, behaviors, or a sophisticated understanding of knowledge from outward incentives alone.

Tocqueville (2000) believed that central authority can often achieve objectives more quickly and effectively in the short-run than systems that relied on decentralized initiative and responsibility. He thought such short-run gains, however, were traded off against the use of dispersed knowledge, motivation, initiative, and as written above, capabilities that tend to do an even better job in the long term (pp. 86–91). In a system of decentralized initiative and responsibility, "in the long term the general result of all the individual undertakings far exceeds what the government could do" (p. 90). Although intended to describe centralization of public administration in society at large and its effects, Tocqueville's words, with my comments interspersed, apply perfectly to the form of order common in the modern classroom:

> Centralization [of the planning and activity of the classroom in the person of the teacher or in the bureaucracy he represents], it is true, easily succeeds in subjecting the *external actions* of man [students] to a certain uniformity [from apparently orderly physical behavior to performance on standardized tests] that in the end one loves for itself, independent of the things to which it applies, like those devotees who adore the statue [of silent, static students] forgetting the divinity that it represents [the inner life of learning, which the outward order is supposed to represent]. Centralization succeeds without difficulty in impressing a regular style on current affairs [student seated in rows looking forward, taking notes]; in skillfully regulating the details of social orderliness; in repressing slight disorders and small offenses [Johnny! Stop bothering him! Stop tapping that!]; in maintaining society in a status quo that is properly neither decadence nor progress; in keeping in the social

> body a sort of administrative somnolence [sleepy, but non-disruptive students] that administrators are accustomed to calling good order and public tranquility. It excels, in a word, at preventing [spontaneous activity and learning], not at doing. When it is a question of moving society profoundly or pressing it to a rapid advance [in a new understanding], its force abandons it. If its measures need the concurrence of individuals [initiative and cooperation by the learners in the learning process], one is then wholly surprised at the weakness of that immense machine [the weakness of the operose machine of bureaucratic, teacher-centered schooling to cultivate and utilize the capacity of students to problem solve and cooperate to understand or perform anything]; it finds itself suddenly reduced to impotence. [emphasis added] (2000, p. 86)

Tocqueville explicitly uses the metaphor of a "schoolmaster" to describe the form of centralized, bureaucratic administration that enervates and removes all responsibility from citizens under soft despotism (2000, pp. 662, 664, 692).[8] He sees the form of centralized government constitutive of this soft despotism as "an immense tutelary power" which would oversee all aspects of the citizens lives, obstructing them with a network of innumerable, small rules, and removing all significant responsibility from them, reducing them to "nothing more than a herd of timid and industrious animals of which the government is the shepherd" (p. 663): "It would resemble paternal power if, like that, it had for its object to prepare men for manhood; but on the contrary, it seeks only to keep them fixed irrevocably in childhood" (p. 663). The passivity promoted in the Sing Sing like classroom is perfectly in line with the form of Democratic Despotism Tocqueville feared.

In his speech accepting New York State Teacher of the Year in 1991, John Taylor Gatto revealed some shocking elements of the hidden curriculum inherent in the one-size-fits-all, externally enforced, and bureau-

[8] In a note, Tocqueville (2000) quotes M. de Malesherbes from 1775 as using this word (*tuteurs*) to complain of the tendency of the French to over-govern by central power and then goes on to suggest the French tendency to centralize administration was brought to completion in the French Revolution (p. 692). One might wonder whether he has French *tuteurs* or American teachers of one-room schoolhouses in mind or both when he compares the over-controlling nature of bureaucratic centralization to a schoolmaster. Given what is said about one-room school houses above, it seems most probable that it is the first. But the aim of this chapter is not to uphold pre-Progressive American schools. Instead, this chapter aims to show parallels between over-controlling or over-helpful guardians in society and in the classroom and to the moral dangers inherent in both kinds of excessive guardianship.

cratic model of education: confusion, class position, indifference, extrinsic motivation, and that one's life is and should be under constant surveillance. Finally, the public school teacher, according to Gatto, teaches intellectual dependency:

> Good students wait for a teacher to tell them what to do. This is the most important lesson of them all: we must wait for other people, better trained than ourselves, to make the meanings of our lives. The expert makes all the important choices; only I, the teacher, can determine what my kids must study, or rather, only the people who pay me can make those decisions, which I then enforce. … We've built a way of life that depends on people doing what they are told because they don't know how to tell themselves what to do. (Gatto 2002)

Against many measures, the dominant form of modern schooling today is exactly what many of the educational reformers hoped to achieve. It may even be conceded that much of the knowledge and skills students learned in these environments have increased their productivity in certain kinds of employment, especially during an earlier era of industrial capitalism. The issue is, rather, that the mode of mass bureaucratic schooling developed in an era of Progressive centralization of public administration may undermine other qualities of character and culture required to sustain freedom in a democracy—virtues, as the Ostrom's would conceive of them, not of working efficiently within given rules and roles, but of being able to conceive of and construct understandings, rules, and roles for oneself in cooperation with others.

To be autonomous, human beings must find themselves in environments that constantly invite them to practice responding to real problems and to communicate and problem solve with equals without recourse to a directing warden. Unfortunately, the pattern of schooling which sees the teacher as the only relevant agent and the student as the material on which the teacher acts has become the dominant culture of education, and people often cannot even imagine an alternative way of going about things.

Models of Self-Government Within the School

Given that our experience with education is dominated by the top-down, bureaucratic, and teacher-centered paradigm of schooling criticized in this chapter, it may be valuable to outline some paradigmatic alternatives.

One set of alternatives can be characterized by what is known as "unschooling." Unlike certain visions of homeschooling that import the structures of teacher-centered schools into the home environment, in unschooling children pursue their own interests in the absence of any imposed curriculum. Unschoolers may go about planning their own activities independently, engaging in real-world learning activities, perhaps with the guidance of Grace Llewellyn's (1998) *The Teenage Liberation Handbook: How to Quit School and Get a Real Life and Education*. But unschooling need not be an isolated or purely individual enterprise. Unschoolers can join learning clubs or even choose to enroll in learning centers or cooperatives.

In unschooling environments like Sudbury Valley there is no set curriculum, no organized classes, no grades, and no tests. Nor are students age segregated. The staff act as common sense adults in the environment and may be resources and learning consultants for the students, but try not to push students into any form of learning or activity over any other. Students are expected to be responsible for themselves and their school, which includes not being disruptive to other students. Rather than being told what to do, students practice initiating their own activity or persuading others to engage with them, and experience the consequences of their attempts. They practice being self-motivated and experience intrinsic feedback.

Sudbury schools are also democratically managed. All community members have an equal vote in running the school. Parents join students and staff in a general assembly to deal with large policy issues, such as decisions about the school budget. Running day-to-day activities is left to students and staff members through a School Meeting, in which students experiment with governing themselves by making "laws" for themselves and each other.

Unschooling can preserve initiative and promote self-governance and autonomy of the individual. Because they are democratically governed, unschooling environments like Sudbury schools can also provide experience in democratic self-governance in society similar to the township and civic associations Tocqueville admired. There students can experience challenges of living with others outside of the family, participate in the creation of rules, running of meetings, and of managing common resources while preserving the general spirit of "liberty and responsibility." Daily experience of such democratic forms, and accompanying discussions of the proper role of government in preserving freedom and managing common

resources, can give students—who choose to participate—a deep moral education in the practice of Tocquevillian self-governance.

While unschooling can be far superior to inculcation to the mores of bureaucratic, teacher-centered schooling, it may not be ideal. That the learner is the most important agent in his or her own learning and development and must be treated as such does not imply there is no role for a conscious art of education. One cannot expect people to pursue knowledge they are not exposed to or to possess virtues they have never practiced or seen modeled. It is desirable that educators encourage certain qualities of culture, skills, habits, standards of thought and action—not the least the sciences and arts of association described above. Repetition and regurgitation of slogans cannot be the mortar of a society of free and virtuous persons. But neither is there any reason to believe that entirely spontaneous interactions alone will tend to lead to the knowledge and mores required for a Tocquevillian vision of society. Tocqueville certainly believed the perpetuation of self-government could not be abandoned to the natural course of things, but needed to be achieved through art (p. 645). Instead, education for such a society must involve a cultivation of cultures in which intellectual and moral virtues are practiced and rewarded with authentic social esteem and intrinsic awareness of one's own growth in virtue. Much of the success of unschooling in cultivating educated people relies implicitly on young people interacting with adults who model certain qualities of culture. But can there be an art of cultivating and modeling such desirable cultures more consistently?

Two models of pedagogy, which combine the spirit of freedom and responsibility of unschooling with the conscious attempt to cultivate forms of knowledge and intellectual and moral virtues conducive to a society of free and responsible persons, are Montessori and Socratic Practice.

Montessori education emphasizes student choice, self-direction, peer learning, and intrinsic motivation within a prepared environment (Lillard 2019, 2015). As in unschooling, Montessori students are free to move around, interact, and choose their own activities within limits. They also make constitutional rules for themselves and engage in group problem solving and conflict resolution. But rather than merely leaving children to themselves, Montessori environments include an established array of learning materials and activities found by experiment to attract children's attention and induce periods of deep, intense focus and concentrated learning. Students are organized into multi-age groupings to allow for peer learning and teaching corresponding to three-year periods

of development (3–6, 6–9, etc.) and are provided with developmentally appropriate physical and social environments to help them practice being independent.

The role of the adult in these schools is that of a largely non-interfering guide, who prepares the rich environment of possible learning activities, offers lessons to individuals or small groups of students introducing them to concepts and materials to explore, and to help students discover things to learn about. Montessori guides do not reward, punish, or correct children, but help create processes by which learners evaluate themselves and tend to discover and to want to correct their own errors. Montessori materials and activities provide a rough sequence in which earlier stages of learning facilitate the next, and are intended to facilitate certain kinds of learning, from gross and fine motor skills and sensory acuity, to reading and writing, to mathematics and science, to, say, economics, more consistently and systematically than can be expected from purely accidental and unguided activity.

In addition to superior academic outcomes, students admitted to Montessori public schools, after applying and being chosen by lottery, performed better on indicators of executive function (which undergirds self-control and self-regulation) as well as social cognition and social competence than students who applied but were not admitted (Lillard et al. 2017; Lillard 2019). One of the indicators of social competence used is particularly interesting for the argument of this chapter:

> Social competence was measured more directly with stories from the Rubin's Social Problem-Solving Test—Revised (Rubin 1988); a different story was used each year, and scoring was modified to home in on the maturity of social competence revealed in children's responses. In these stories, one child has a coveted resource (like a swing) that another child really wants, and children need to come up with strategies the focal child could use to obtain the resource; responses like "I would ask her to share for 10 min then she could have it for 10 more minutes" are considered highly competent, whereas "I'd tell the teacher" or "I'd say please, please, please" are not. (Lillard et al. 2017)

Montessori environments at higher levels also involve students in low and high ropes cooperative activities, in collective planning of complex activities like running a business or designing and executing class trips, and in involvement in service learning volunteerism and internships outside of the classroom.

Highly complementary to Montessori, especially at the middle, high school, and college levels, is a pedagogical approach called "Socratic Practice," articulated by Michael Strong (1996) in his book *The Habit of Thought: From Socratic Seminars to Socratic Practice*. In Socratic Practice students practice virtues of intellectual and moral autonomy on a daily basis by working together to make meaning of conceptually difficult, but rewarding texts.[9] In Socratic Practice, students face each other in a circle, ask questions of the text and of each other, make hypotheses about what the text means, and exchange reasons and evidence for their claims. The texts present novel conceptual worlds that help students think more deeply and more clearly about topics they tend to care about: What is just? What is real? What are the proper roles of conformity vs. individuality? How should I live my life? They also spend a significant amount of conversation connecting the ideas and issues of the text to their lives to give energy to their conversations and make meaning of the texts in question.

In Socratic Practice, the guide does not tell students what to think or how to interpret the text, but may ask questions that reveal interesting points to be explored or even coach students in learning strategies to be able to figure out what the text is saying. Socratic Practice should not be confused with "Socratic" conversations in which the teacher has a definite conclusion in mind he wants the students to reach and tries to get them there with clever or manipulative questions. Nor should Socratic Practice be confused with conversations in which people merely express unexamined or unquestioned opinions or where "all opinions are equal." While open ended, Socratic Practice is task oriented. Participants are expected to support their assertions with argument and use reason and evidence from the text to discipline their own and others' interpretations and judgments. In a Tocquevillian spirit, the guide creates an environment that helps students discover their own individual weakness in the face of the task (making sense of a difficult text) and the need to collaborate to figure it out. "Sentiments and ideas renew themselves, the heart is enlarged, and the human mind is developed … by the reciprocal action of men upon one another" (Tocqueville 2000, p. 491).

Finally, unlike many forms of classroom conversation, Socratic Practice students engage in systematic reflection on the dynamics of their group

[9] Although the central model of Socratic Practice is to practice making meaning of difficult verbal texts, the subject can include anything from a painting, to a movie, a cooperative game, a mathematical proof or scientific experiment, to the internal workings of a machine.

process and generate an evolving set of norms and rules for themselves. Students are constantly invited to practice, reflect on, and refine the intellectual and moral habits conducive to reasoned, shared-inquiry dialogue. Regular debriefs about their attempts to reason clearly together and to cooperate invite students to try to make the hidden curriculum of the culture in their environment explicit. They reflect on their experiences in order to continually reformulate norms and standards for themselves based on what tends to facilitate and what tends to frustrate productive conversation and cooperation.

Ultimately, Socratic Practice is the daily modeling and practice of a certain idealized culture of inquiry in which people cooperate with equals in a common search for standards of truth, beauty, and the good.

> Socratic Practice is a means of passing on the foundations of the Western intellectual tradition: Socratic inquiry as a way of life and Socratic dialogue as a norm of social interactions…As Socratic dialogue becomes the norm of interaction, people may learn to create authentic communities which are consistent with democracy and intellectual progress. (Strong, p. 34)

Socratic Practice thus fits Vincent Ostrom's (1997) notion that resisting democratic despotism requires the common pursuit of ideals and solutions that transcend strategic pursuit of any narrow, preconceived idea of self-interest. Ostrom thinks that "[c]ivic education broadly construed is concerned with developing a culture of inquiry" (p. 219).

Montessori and Socratic Practice guides are the opposite of Tocqueville's "schoolmasters" who rob students of responsibility and initiate a vicious cycle leading to democratic despotism. Rather than robbing students of responsibility, Montessori and Socratic Practice guides continually invite students to identify the resources available to them and to use their own judgment to solve their own problems, to be autonomous, to make rules for themselves and reflect on the consequences of their actions, while providing an environment that invites them to explore the elements of culture that may be valuable to progress in human life and civilization.

Montessori and Socratic Practice can often be seen as investments in student attitudes and skills that must be traded off against "covering content" early on. But with time, students versed in self-direction and the skills of Socratic Practice tend to demonstrate greater skills, self-motivation, and ability to work together without an intellectual authority to understand any text, lecture, or to explore any question. Such atti-

tudes and abilities greatly facilitate the transfer of content later on (Strong, pp. 14, 21). In contrast to the hidden curriculum described by Gatto above, Strong (1996) writes:

> Once learners understand the learning process as a matter of constructing their own meaning, acquiring knowledge becomes a fundamentally different process. At present, students experience school as a situation in which they try to incorporate someone else's ideas into their existing understanding by means of memory. … [But] As individuals construct their own understanding, instead of accepting the understandings provided by authorities, they find themselves in dialogue with all texts, all ideas, all experience, all of reality. This is empowering, exciting, invigorating work. (p. 14)

Pedagogy as Part of a Tocquevillian Political Economy

The Prisoner's Dilemma illustrates how self-seeking, strategic conduct can lead to tragedies unless the power of human intelligence, cooperation, and virtue can be called upon to transcend the constraints leading to such social dilemmas (Ostrom and Ostrom 2014, p. 251). Yet orthodox economic reasoning too often constraints itself to a core model of instrumentally rational agents (automata) trapped within a framework of given preferences, given means, and given rules. One might describe such agents as "rational fools" (Sen 1977) incapable of learning beyond the acquisition of information. Intelligent political economy, as Vincent Ostrom conceived it, however, must push the envelope of non-market decision making to include forms of epistemic choice that transcend the narrow forms of strategic behavior that result in social dilemmas (p. 243).

> [If] other aspects of the political economy of life are excluded from the focal attention of inquiry and swept into the background. … If attention is given only to preferences, there is a danger that the 'whole moral and intellectual condition of a people' will be reduced to 'intellectual dust,' as Tocqueville asserted. (Ostrom and Ostrom 2014, p. 252)

Similarly, Elinor Ostrom expressed that she wished to address her science, not to the metaphor of prisoners trapped in a dilemma, but as individuals capable of talking, cooperating, and changing the rules under which they are governed (Ostrom 1990, pp. 6–7). Ostrom's metaphor, of

course, parallels the distinction between the forms of life Tocqueville observed in Sing Sing and associational life in America, respectively. Educators interested in Tocquevillian self-governance might revolutionize how pedagogy is conceived in analogous terms.

Tocqueville's and the Ostroms's vision of political economy suggests the need for a liberal education of human intelligence, language, communication, truth seeking, and cooperation that transcends mere obedience to experts, memorization, and strategic behavior within given rules. Such an education must cultivate the intellectual and moral virtues that promote initiative, inquiry, sympathy, and peer communication and cooperation beyond a preconceived self-seeking and narrow sense of rationality—not only through reforming the content of education to include the ethics, economics, and political science needed for self-governance, but also through the modes of interaction practiced within the little model society of the classroom itself.

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