

DONNA H. KERR

## TACKING TOWARD THE SUBJECTIVE

*Request of my audience.* How you listen to what I have to say matters deeply to my telling of this story. I need you to listen not just as the scholar you are, but as the whole person you are – as the one who conducts your scholarly work in the context of living your larger life. Indeed, to trust that you will hear what I have to say to you, I need to allow myself to imagine you as a capacious person, who happens also to have a professional life as a scholar. If as the curtain goes up, you are present in this way, then I can tell you of my struggle to bring myself into my work, which has been and remains my central narrative.

With the license of an autobiographical essay, I offer not an argument, but my professional life's case for expanding how we think of education to include a most central educative aim: developing a robust self-awareness and our related capacities as creatures formed in and thriving through relationships. Contrary to the permission that the fairly recent use of narratives in academic work may seem to offer, I continue to believe that saying something about one's own story is risky. As I do so, I risk feeling vulnerable. So much is humanly at stake in redrawing the boundaries of the educative responsibility that we bear for one another.

Today I am deeply content and enjoy a profound sense of equanimity born, I believe, of self-awareness. To me, this being present to myself and to others supports living at its best. This is not some sort of end state, but a way of being. It remains a life's work, however long that may be. With it, I am launching a career into another form of education – a kind that succeeds only in measure that educators are present to themselves and others. On entering my career as a philosopher especially interested in education, I did not set out with the aim in mind of becoming present to myself. No, I could not even have comprehended the idea. I do, though, have some understanding of how I came to live this way.

### EDUCATION WITH MINIMAL SELF-AWARENESS

I began my university studies excited to pursue a career in nuclear physics and mathematics. Fortunately in my view, a program of liberal studies intervened – studies in which I learned that a way of inquiring called analytic philosophy asked fascinating questions about disciplined ways of thinking, such as what is the nature of historical narrative, of scientific fact, of legal reasoning and the like. During the years that the intervened between physics and philosophy, I studied the Russian language, literature and history; Slavic and Soviet area studies; and the French

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language and culture. Throughout these adventures, the lure of philosophy dangled as a shiny object, especially as I experienced two long Alaskan winters of reading philosophy. On returning to the “lower 48,” it was with great relish that I treated myself to those intense years of doctoral study in philosophy and education at Columbia University. Jonas Soltis pulled together challenging texts for seminars. The brilliant and dear Ernest Nagel lectured with unparalleled clarity and was notably respectful of his students’ work, including mine on the uses of theoretical models. Arthur Danto dazzled me with his novel work, such as his distinction between basic and mediated action. Sidney Morgenbesser, with his legendary analytic mind, could spot seventeen senses of a word pervading a single brief philosophical paper. It was he who inspired me to write what still I regard as my best analytic work ever, “Six Senses of Certainty in C. I. Lewis’s *Mind and the World Order*.”<sup>1</sup> To me, this was education at its best.

Moving from studying physics and mathematics into doing analytic philosophy flowed so easily and took me exactly where I wanted to be. Indeed, I experienced coming up with multiple senses of certainty embedded in Lewis’s work with utter delight of a certain familiar sort. Now I am going to say something quite strange to account for the ease of that disciplinary shift: I did not take myself into my study of philosophy and education. I “did” philosophy much as one might do mathematics, all while thinking of myself as a point in space at the intersection of skills, capacities, abilities, and particular interests that I’d acquired. I myself did not have a story to tell or at least shunned such an activity, so told none; instead, I could tell you how well an argument was made or whether the concepts employed were adequate to the task. It is in that mode that I wrote both *Analysis of Educational Policy*<sup>2</sup> and *Barriers to Integrity*.<sup>3</sup> While I enjoyed writing them and still believe each to be a useful book in its own way, they do not represent taking myself into my work in a way that would reflect substantial self-awareness. I was not present in my academic work, but absent from it, even though I thereby enjoyed certain satisfactions.

STUMBLING ONTO EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE THAT GROWS  
A SENSE OF THE *SELF AS OTHER*

I set out as a young professor to educate in the fashion at which I excelled as a student. My approach fit well in the academy. However, stirred to attention by an abusive, but common classroom practice, I came to make a major adjustment. At Columbia I had noticed some fellow doctoral students and now some of my own students doing something that severely limited their relationships both to the authors of course readings and to their peers. They demonstrated their “prowess” as critical thinkers by first saying everything they believed to be wrong with the text under consideration and then blamed that which they did not understand on purported repetitiveness or obscurity in the text. It did not take these “critical thinkers” long to trash any and all texts – texts I had chosen for us to discuss because I believed them to be of value. The stunning result was that by practicing critical thinking, so conceived, these students failed even to perceive the author,

but referred instead to the text as “it” or “they.” These texts might as well have consisted of pages of randomly generated numbers.

Based on this experience, I introduced the practice of *reading generously*, which responds to questions that treat the text as a human artifact: What is the author trying to do in writing this text and how is he or she doing it? Only after carefully constructing answers to these questions from the evidence in the text could we then move to a third question: what modifications might this person make to enable *him* or *her* to better accomplish what he or she is attempting? After some initial grumblings about how this way of reading demands so much more of us as readers, we settled into satisfying discussions about texts. Happily and, to me, unexpectedly, students who had previously found writing to be even painful reported that generous reading changed their writing experience for the better, enabling them to write without fears born in anticipation of imagined “critical thinking.” No longer did they discard draft after draft as they stumbled over their disabling fears. The questions to themselves as writers became “what am I trying to do,” “how am I trying to do it?” and “how could I do it better?” That is, by honoring text as another person’s effort to do something, students seemed more accepting of their own efforts in writing a paper – something that could be safely put in front of those whom they trusted to hear them out rather than risking a hostile response. That is, the practice of generously reading another’s text led to a greater generosity toward oneself as a writer, *as an other* to be honored. This shift was powerful in ways I would only later come to understand.

#### THE PEDAGOGIC FAILURE OF NOT TAKING MYSELF INTO MY WORK

And then one day, something happened that made me both stop taking on graduate students and cease classroom teaching. Yes, it was that big. In a meeting with her doctoral supervisory committee to discuss the scope of Sharon’s general exams, one committee member outside of her “specialization,” a senior faculty member, declared that Sharon would need to be responsible for reading the basic texts in his field and likely change her topic. That sent Sharon packing. As the chair of her committee, I was stumped. She was passionate about her topic and a strong student as measured by her GRE and MAT scores, by her writing, and by her performance in classes. Moreover she was highly personable. I blamed myself for not standing up to a senior colleague. Further there seemed to be something terribly wrong with a set-up that would not allow a student to pursue that about which she was so passionate, providing that she could do so in an academically solid way. A couple of trusted colleagues opined in confidence that they saw no action by which I could help her continue her studies, at least not short of persuading her to acquiesce to this committee member’s demands. Perhaps as viewed by others, I gave up teaching seamlessly, without any hint of my dismay. The sleight of hand was easy, for I increasingly immersed myself in my expanding administrative and leadership roles, which I found enormously engaging and satisfying. And yet, what happened to Sharon haunted me. I wanted eventually to return to the classroom and again mentor graduate students, but I knew that if I were to do that, I would have to bring

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myself into my work. Only then could I know how to help Sharon be there with her passions and interests. I only vaguely understood my words “bring myself into my scholarly work.” All I knew was that I needed to learn something to get “there” – for me, a powerful possibility that would not wane, though it had to wait.

Some years passed as I served as the University’s academic vice provost and then as the dean to lead the development of two new campuses, from “need studies” through garnering public support and legislative approval, and on through program development and the hiring of faculty. Even during those times when my reading consisted of little beyond executive summaries, I still wondered how I might one day return to the classroom. Minimally, I imagined that I would need to give myself permission to “follow my nose” – to read on issues that *moved me*. An invitation from the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences nudged me to decline offers of new leadership challenges at other institutions and make the shift back to teaching, even though I could not figure out a way to take advantage of the Center’s attractive offer. Hoping for clarity, I opted for a sabbatical year in the context of a yet longer self-imposed moratorium on publishing. I needed to create space to figure out a new way forward.

I read around, fueling my fires. I succeeded in following my passions in my own studies. Then in the crucible of graduate seminars, there evolved a pedagogy that both honors students’ passions and develops the student’s capacity to enter conversations of scholars. This became my signature approach both to mentoring my own doctoral students and in my “mega,” intensive seminars, for which students would register with enough credits to be able to stay focused. My intent was to offer a safe, significant opportunity for students to bring themselves into their graduate studies and, at the same time, enable them to enter the scholarly conversations of the careers toward which they were navigating.

#### ENABLING STUDENTS TO BRING THEMSELVES INTO THEIR STUDIES AND CAREERS

I do not know how broadly the practice I am about to describe can be applied. Whatever its applicability, the approach has successfully helped mid-career adults bring themselves into their work, something of which I had no clue until the last twenty years of my own academic career. For me, it represents more than a pedagogic achievement. It ushered in a personal transformation.

Rather than recounting the specifics of how this pedagogic practice for doctoral studies evolved, I begin in the middle, by describing its full-blown version in two contexts. (Here I use the present tense to represent how I hold it in mind; indeed, if I were I to step back into the academy, this remains exactly the practice I would continue to refine.) The first context regards how I mentor or coach my doctoral advisees. With a wink, I package it here as a recipe. Step One: on first meeting, ask the student to tell the story that has her in its grips – the story that motivates her to undertake doctoral studies in philosophy of education or cultural studies of education. Step Two: ask the student to give that story a title, as if it were to become the topic of her dissertation, and then to jot down her dissertation’s five

chapter titles. Step Three: encourage the student to select courses and a supervisory committee that she believes will help her learn to write that dissertation. Those three steps take about an hour total; the rest of the time of, say, four years, consists in the student's acting on her plan. Of course the student modifies the story and along the way rethinks the tasks she needs to address, but one fact remains: the student thereby brings herself into her work; her passion supports not just the dissertation, but subsequently her career.

These three steps are repeated in the context of the mega-seminars, populated by more than just the graduate students whose studies I supervise. Students supervised by others in the College of Education and elsewhere in the University join us. Here the steps are descriptively more revealing. I structure these seminars to provide an "umbrella" under which students can bring their interests in education. While I never repeat a course and the readings are almost always new, the rubric regards asymmetrical and symmetrical human relationships as contexts for human formation, for better or worse: domination and acquiescence and the alternative of equality or mutuality. Sometimes the course texts on the book store shelf draw students to the seminar; other times, a one-page handout provides the hook. But after a few such seminars, students come mostly by word of mouth. I interview all students who are interested in registering, so that I can signal that our work begins with the stories they initially bring in truncated form. Hence, students walk in the door with the expectation and commitment to bring themselves into their work with others.

When we meet, Step One consists in the students getting to know their own and each other's stories – stories that arrive inchoate. The first assignment is to produce a one-paragraph version of the story and to share it in a small group. Subsequently, the students retell their stories in more powerful forms. It is not surprising that even with the initial version eyes well up in the telling and listening, for students bring what matters most to them, whether it is a story they live (or lived) or one they witness: the man who feels a deep tension between being a black male and literate; a woman's touched by her aunt's unsuccessful attempt to get her child into an educational program; a school psychologist who was touched by the homeless child who became honored as the class poet; the teacher who challenges his school's argumentative students to join his after-school debate team; the father who catches himself bullying his own son; and so on. Sometimes these narratives feature *miseducation* rather than education. Either way, *these stories move us*.

Before hearing one another's narratives, we talk about how to listen and respond to one another. We need to be attentive, to respond in respectful ways, and to let the teller know its impact on us. All of this attention to each other's stories comes before we begin reading the course texts. Or, I should say, that the stories become the focal texts, which we come to view through the lenses of the course texts. By telling one another our stories about which we are passionate, we seminar participants come to matter to one another as persons, as evidenced by our voluntarily meeting in pairs or small groups outside of class sessions.

Now familiar with one another's stories, we are ready for Step Two: giving each assigned text a generous read, responding to the questions noted above: what is the

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author (*for example*, Michel Foucault, Danielle Allen, Mikhail Bakhtin, Michael Oakeshott, Richard Wollheim, Amy Gutmann, Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, Martha Nussbaum, Toni Morrison,<sup>4</sup> Alan Roland, John Dewey, Ramon Guitierrez, Jessica Benjamin, or Michelle Alexander) trying to do?; how is he or she doing that?; and what, if anything, would help him or her strengthen the text? With regard to the latter, hard as we try, we rarely come up with much of a suggestion. Mainly, we think and think and think *about* the texts, until together we construct the most generous reads we can. Of course, we are never of a single mind.

Then and only then do we progress to Step Three: thinking *with* the text *about* our stories, treating the text as a lens through which to regard our stories or to invite the text's author to listen to our stories and tell us what he or she hears or notices. We even role play the text authors. Step Three seems no less than magical. Playing a course author to hear one's own story almost always provides a welcome relief from being inside the story to being outside with a fresh perspective, a way of making new sense of the power of the story. In Step One, we hear our colleagues listen empathically; that feels good and helps us care about one another. In Step Two, we together practice reading generously, so that we can together better appreciate the text. That provides its own reward and sense of achievement. Then in Step Three, as we "become" the authors of the course texts, we acquire the capacity to look back at ourselves as a respected other, to visit our stories anew. We do so as if among friends, so in safety. And we read for one another, thinking of each other's stories, thereby attending to one another in ever richer ways.

The "academic products" of this disciplined work appear as course papers that grow into conference presentations or published papers, into dissertations or, as has happened in a number of instances, into books. From the outside, the process can be described as a recipe or formula: Bring something to the table about which you care deeply, consider it through the lenses of works of mostly scholarly conversations, and share your insights in scholarly conversations, whether in-person or in-print. The semblance of being formulaic disappears when we add the layers of refinement with which the stories are told and when we see the methodological shifts made in gravitating to what feels most profoundly insightful.

That is the story of how I learned to bring myself into the classroom. I gave myself permission both to follow my interests by reading across disciplines and to forebear publishing for several years. What resulted pedagogically was my fierce insistence on providing graduate students who study with me a context and process whereby they might bring themselves into their studies – a context where I imagine that Sharon, too, would have flourished. Together we come to appreciate ever more fully the human and educational import of honoring one another's stories, the discipline of reading generously so that we ourselves can assume generous readers of our own writing, and the power of regarding ourselves from the outside -- providing welcoming interior space for the insights of others. As I witness my students so bringing themselves into their work, I myself learn to do so.

Now I could stop here with the observation that this is an effective educational approach to helping students contribute to academic conversations in cogent and important ways about what matter to them. But ending with this claim, although I

believe it true, would lose track of the central thread of my story. Yes, this approach enables students to do excellent academic work that matters deeply to them. And it allows me to produce what I regard as some excellent academic work addressing issues of profound import to me, such as is represented in the capstone to my career as a scholar, “Cruelty to Compassion: The Poetry of Teaching Transformation.”<sup>5</sup> Ending the story here would stop with only a hint of importance of the subjective work embedded in excellent, humanly powerful academic work as measured with “objective” yardsticks.

To appreciate what comes next, my turn to purely subjective education, it is helpful to highlight the highly subjective sources of power in my beloved form of graduate studies. Something very exciting happens when students tell their stories, read generously rich texts, and then revisit their stories again and again from the perspectives of the texts they’ve studied so closely. They *link their passions with their studies*. This is not just another form of education made “relevant” by linking “it” to what students enjoy doing, such tying a science lesson to a fifth grader’s joy of building model airplanes. Instead, it is a matter of mature adults learning to tap the profoundly felt narrative wellsprings of their pursuit of advanced studies, to practice “getting outside of themselves” (i.e., thinking about their own narratives from other perspectives – perspectives that differ from their own), so as to enrich their own narratives, to write them anew, and to express what matters deeply to them in the conversations of scholarly conferences and publications. Hence, the aim of this form of graduate studies is hybrid, intentionally tapping the power of one’s own subjectivity and grounding one’s work in “objective” scholarly conversations.

#### UPPING THE ANTE FOR THE SELF: SUBJECTIVE EDUCATION

As was my wont, I exercised prudence in planning for my retirement from the University of Washington. I had other interests, in which for years I’d already been engaging “on the side.” In particular, I longed to have more time to study languages, compose photographs, and do improvisational theatre. Logistically speaking, I was ready. But when retirement came, the wildly unexpected happened. These familiar longings did not, as I’d anticipated, motivate me, even though the longings remain, as is the case to this day. (Being a human is so very interesting! As it turns out, I enjoy them not as my main focus, but as “get-aways.”) Instead, again I needed to follow my heart, as I had done two decades earlier. So I took myself into new terrain, exploring without a clue where I’d land. Unsurprisingly in retrospect, this exploration has led me to a new, yet ever so old, form of subjective education.

Historically, the first case of such subjection education I know of appears as a kind of coaching that Mencius (fourth century B.C.E) provides King Hsuan of Chi’, the point of which is to encourage the King to “follow his heart” in his actions as king, so as to become the better leader he wants to be.<sup>6</sup> On passing through the courtyard, King Hsuan had gazed into the eyes of the ox that was being prepared for a ceremonial sacrifice and felt empathy; King Hsuan’s people are

upset because he sacrificed but a sheep instead of an ox. The King is anguished, so seeks Mencius' help. King Hsuan does not need further "objective" education, say (in a fit of anachronistic playfulness), advanced studies in strategies of wielding power in kingdoms. No, he already knows the ropes. Instead, he is struggling with his experience of acting out of good intentions and yet, in doing so, annoying his subjects, whose views matter to him. He is shaken. His concern is not how to manage some kingdom, but how he can serve as a good king in both his own eyes and those of his people. That is, he seeks an education not in an *objective*, but a *subjective* sense, so that *he himself* can choose to be the king he wants to be. He approaches Mencius because by himself he cannot see a way forward; he is stopped in his tracks. For Mencius to help King Hsuan build this capacity, he has to focus precisely on King Hsuan's interior life, his immediate circumstances, and relationships in which he finds himself.

What sort of educative help does Mencius provide? What sort of educative responsibility does he bear for King Hsuan? Here I take license to map language of the last couple of centuries back onto this ancient encounter. Clearly his educative task is not to introduce the King to an opus of academic literature and the disciplinary bases that guide its production. Instead, it is to be present as another human being who can stand alongside him in a way that will help the King follow his heart. My attention rivets on the fact that Mencius can coach the King in this way *if and only if* he Mencius takes himself into it what he is doing – a presence without which he cannot help the King build the needed self-awareness.

Mencius' coaching King Hsuan of Chi' beckons me. Such education bears no resemblance to my relationship with my own doctoral studies and my early writing and teaching. I can learn to do what Mencius does (here it comes again!) *if and only if I take myself into my work*. Mencius raises the bar. Such presence of one human being to another is not just nice, but necessary to the enterprise.

Today's "kings" are similarly persons in leadership roles: CEOs, department heads, mayors, heads of schools and universities, community or other political leaders, and others for whom the stresses of demands for ever higher productivity with dwindling resources and long work hours commonly exact anguishing tolls in severely diminished personal lives, career burnout, problematic working relationships, and the like. For others, the challenges that bring them to today's Mencius arise at times of transition, such as upon the loss of a job, a divorce or the death of life partner, deep disenchantment with one's work, or a serious illness. In the first case, Mencius' work is called "executive coaching" and in the second, "transition coaching." Whichever the label, the point is to not to "fix" the client. No, Mencius is not there to "correct" the King. Nor is it to *heal* the King. He is mentally healthy. Instead, the aim is *educative*, i.e. to help the King *acquire the capacity to chose to a different way of being* – a way that enables him to both follow his heart and to be a better king.

Years ago, when Sharon left the doctoral program, I had no idea of how to structure graduate studies so as to enable her to bring her passions into her work and find support, precisely because I did not know how to do it for myself. Subsequently, in figuring out how to structure my work so that students could



bring themselves into theirs, I myself learned to do so. At least I developed a way for students (and me) to honor the stories that move us in how we enter and participate in academic conversations. Now Mencius ups the ante. How can I help another person develop the capacity to choose another way of being, this time without the course texts to help shed light?

What if I have only myself and not a stack of course readings to bring to the table? Whatever am I to *do*? What does education consist of when one aims to help another person to build the capacity to be in the world in a different way? Yes, what if my pedagogy consists in using myself as the educative instrument – myself out there and visible, with no course texts to hide behind? Clearly, I as a person with self-awareness I must show up present to my client. My aim is educative: to help my client acquire the capacity to develop a new way of being with himself and others. That capacity consists of self-awareness: a *clarity* about what is at stake in one's actions and a *commitment* to do the work of developing new practices or patterns of acting that support and express the desired new way of being. However, just saying that the coach's self-awareness and presence constitute the chief pedagogic instrument and noting the educative aim does not tell us what any coach *does*. For that, we need to consider, at least in a general way, the general coaching moves that constitute this form of subjective education, viz. helping the client acquire the needed capacity.

Not surprisingly, coaching's "doing" is not singular, but complex. *The focal points* of the educator coach's attention contrast sharply with the educator's focus in traditional or objective education, where typically one is thought to attend in some objective way to subject matter and students, little if any note is made of the teacher's self-awareness, and the focal pedagogic outcomes are named in advance of any educative efforts and evaluated by similarly external measures. To show the stark contrast with objective education, I offer the three focal points to which I attend and note the *subjectively educative* action.

*What I am experiencing, while I am with my client.*

Only if I show up self-aware and present can I hear and respond to my client as distinct from me. That is, I can enact the subjective curriculum if and only if I have the capacity to use myself as an instrument. The action required of me is a constant, ever deepening practice of being present to myself and to my client.

*How the client would like to live.*

As a coach, I derive my subjective educative aim from the passions and hopes of the client. I solicit and, where needed, assist my client in helping her learn to refine the way she articulates that aim as she develops self-awareness.

*Building the client's capacity to choose the new way of being.*

I offer the "process curriculum" (the client provides the content) based on the educative need for the client to develop self-awareness that enables the choice and practices to constitute the new way of being. I call my client to self-notice, to see her own subjective (emotional, cognitive, somatic) patterns, and to locate and

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consider her own resistance or reluctance and other obstacles to her living in the way she desires.

With that overview, you have caught up with my narrative, a story that continues. Now practicing being present to myself and learning my way into a practice of such subjective education, I am able to see and say that of which I was incapable when I stepped into my academic career four decades ago. Having arrived at this point, I utter my findings as the whole person I am as I continue to conduct my professional life. In doing so, I will be measured in my words, as befits my professional persona. For a moment, I set that aside to say that I love my new career as a subjective educator and feel so fortunate to have the opportunity to keep learning my way along. I am not just present, but dancing, alive to life.

#### CONCLUDING NOTE: MY FINDINGS

The subjective education for which King Hsuan approaches Mencius cannot substitute for the objective education that introduces him to what the knowledge disciplines have to offer. I believe that is well and widely understood. What goes largely unnoticed, however, is that such objective education cannot substitute for subjective education -- the kind that attends to the formation of the psyche and individuals' patterns of interacting with others. So common is the belief that within the traditional curriculum and methods of our educational institutions we can educate for responsible citizenship in a democracy within or educate for other subjectively rooted capacities. Yet we know that the curriculum of objective education alone does not help Lisa, a small child, understand that her isolating bossiness derives from her jealousy of those who have friends.<sup>7</sup> Nor does it help ourselves as today's King Hsuans acquire the self-awareness that will enable us to become better versions of ourselves. In a general sense we hope that "objective" doctoral education, perhaps especially when the general topic is education, can help us learn how to better live our lives, yet unless we are prepared to structure doctoral education to invite students to bring their lived stories into their academic work, such is but pie in the sky.

I offer my career-long quest to bring myself into my work as a plea to reconsider the aims and practices of objective education specifically alongside the character and power of subjective education. I applaud the *Harvard Business Review* for publishing papers and blogs on the role of self-awareness in successful leadership and those writing about the theory and practice of leadership and transition coaching.<sup>8</sup> Let us, as philosophers of education, rethink our educative responsibilities for one another as persons. Studies of leadership and various psychological theories are pertinent to my plea, but they alone cannot be expected to provide the broader understandings of *subjective education as an essential part of acquiring the capacity to develop livable, moral lives* – understandings without which many graduate-student Sharons will be sent packing or (worse) become subservient to others' passions, without which we will continue to define basic

education mistakenly and anemically as solely objective education, and without which we ourselves as King Hsuans will founder, isolated in our anguish.

I invite your company in redrawing the boundaries of educative responsibility that we bear for one another.<sup>9</sup>

## WORKS THAT HAVE INFLUENCED ME

During the last twenty years of my academic career, I focused on relationships of domination and acquiescence and their alternatives. I have come to believe that the key moral and educational question is what sort of asymmetrical relationship might not only avoid the ravages of domination, but also grow psyches capable of participating responsibly in relations of mutual respect – a necessity for the practice of democracy in its deeper sense. Or, cast within the project of this self-portrait, the point would be to grow a psyche and community that would support persons bringing themselves into the way they live their lives. In my view, that is a matter of life and death of sorts. Here I list books by a half dozen contemporary writers whom I've found especially helpful as I've mapped and remapped this terrain. Each calls me in a different way to see what is humanly at stake in how we are with one another. OF course, there are scores more, from Mencius to Albert Memmi and Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, to whom I am indebted.

Toni Morrison

*A Mercy*  
*Beloved*  
*Bluest Eye*  
*Home*  
*Jazz*  
*Paradise*  
*Playing in the Dark*

Mikhail Bakhtin

*Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*  
*Rabelais and His World*  
*The Dialogic Imagination*

Jonathan Lear

*Love and its Place in Nature*  
*Open-minded*  
*Happiness, Death, and the Remainder of Life*  
*Radical Hope*

Richard Wollheim

*The Mind and its Depths*  
*On the Emotions*  
*Thread of Life*

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Vivian Paley

*The Boy Who Would Be a Helicopter*  
*You Can't Say You Can't Play*

*The Girl with the Brown Crayon*  
*In Mrs. Tully's Room*

Martha Nussbaum

*Upheavals of Thought*  
*Therapy of Desire*  
*Love's Knowledge*  
*The Fragility of Goodness*  
*Poetic Justice*

#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Unpublished manuscript, 1972.
- <sup>2</sup> Donna H. Kerr, *Analysis of Educational Policy: Analysis, Structure, and Justification* (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1976).
- <sup>3</sup> Donna H. Kerr, *Barriers to Integrity: Modern Modes of Knowledge Utilization* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984).
- <sup>4</sup> Fairly frequently I include a novel by Toni Morrison, who powerfully portrays lived asymmetrical relationships and their human costs.
- <sup>5</sup> Delivered at Oxford University to the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain, and subsequently published in *Studies in Philosophy and Education* (2011) 30: 574-574.
- <sup>6</sup> See Donna H. Kerr and Margret Buchmann, "On Avoiding Domination in Philosophical Counseling," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 23 (1996): 341-351.
- <sup>7</sup> See Vivian Paley, *You Can't Say You Can't Play* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992).
- <sup>8</sup> Two such works that I find helpful as overviews are Pamela McLean, *The Completely Revised Handbook of Coaching* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012), and Doug Silsbee, *Presence-Based Coaching* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008). Pamela McLean co-founded and heads the Hudson Institute of Coaching, where I am studying. I've have the good fortune to have Doug Silsbee serve as my coaching coach.
- <sup>9</sup> For related invitation, see my "Cruelty to Compassion: The Poetry of Teaching Transformation," *Studies in Philosophy of Education*, as cited above.