Chapter 8
Teaching Across the Eye: Insecurity, Individuality, and Intellectual Values in Global Higher Education Practice

Eugenio Benitez

Abstract This paper describes adjustments to teaching practice after migrating from the North American to the Australasian higher education sector. Although the particular experience described is individual and personal, the discoveries and adjustments made can be useful to anyone who faces the experience of academic migration, or even to any teacher. Key adjustments recommended include emphasis on inquiry over information, patient attention to the individuality of learners and teachers, and shared practice of the values of sympathetic understanding, fairness and intellectual humility. These recommendations are not new – in fact the paper takes pains to show how ancient they really are – but they can serve as reminders to teachers facing the insecurity of the global higher education environment.

8.1 Crossing the Eye

In the Northern Winter of 1992 I left Los Angeles on what seemed an interminable flight across the Pacific – "the Eye of the earth," as Robinson Jeffers called it.[1] I felt well prepared for the job that lay ahead. I had studied classics and philosophy in one of the world's top-ranked programs at the University of Texas, and had several years experience teaching ancient philosophy at the Catholic University of America and the Smithsonian Institution. I had just been appointed to a lectureship with the brief of developing ancient philosophy at Sydney University in particular and in Australia generally, and I was eager to get on with it. In hindsight, the assignment should have alerted me to fact that in Australia, philosophy is a largely unhistorical business. I was naive enough to imagine that the deference shown to ancient philosophy in the

[1] Robinson Jeffers, "The Eye" (1948) in Jeffers (1965, p. 85); capitalisation as it appears in Jeffers.

E. Benitez (✉)
The University of Sydney, 2006 Sydney, NSW, Australia
e-mail: rick.benitez@sydney.edu.au

C. Mason and F. Rawlings-Sanaei (eds.), *Academic Migration, Discipline Knowledge and Pedagogical Practice: Voices from the Asia-Pacific*,
DOI 10.1007/978-981-4451-88-8_8,

USA was the same all over the world. At Texas, I had been taught by philosophers from North America, the UK, and continental Europe. All of them had the highest regard for ancient philosophy. Not so in Australia. One of the first questions I was asked in my new department was, "So, are you a scholar or a philosopher?" That distinction, which implies that those who study the history of ideas are not *really* philosophers, was completely alien to me, and I did not know how to answer.

The difference between Australian and American philosophical attitudes to history reflects a more general cultural difference. American political mythology has long encouraged veneration of the classics. Partly this is a result of the respect to them paid by the founders themselves. As Carl J. Richard (1994, p. 12) has observed, "The founders' classical conditioning was so successful that most learned to relish the classics as a form of entertainment and to consider the ancients wise old friends. … the classical heritage gave them a sense of identity and purpose." The turn to ancient Greece and Rome for a sense of identity and purpose is strongly reflected in American intellectual and domestic history,[2] it is visible in the Greek Revival architecture of the most prominent nineteenth century public buildings,[3] and it forms a basic, if unconscious part of the American civic perspective "from George Washington to George W. Bush" as one historian aptly puts it.[4]

Australian political and cultural history has been rather different. It is difficult to identify any parallel sense of shared political mythology in Australia, let alone one that venerates the classics. Within the sandstone walls of our Universities the story is admittedly more complex. Sydney University was at the outset an Anglophile institution, with a strong emphasis on classics, literature, philosophy and the arts. It has a distinguished history of classical studies from the earliest days to the present. Only recently, in fact, has the University removed the Latin motto *Sidere Mens Eadem Mutato* from its corporate brand.[5] Nevertheless, apart from a few classicists with philosophical interests (e.g. Sir Charles Badham), and a few philosophers with classical interests (e.g. Sir Francis Anderson), the distinction between philosophy and classics in Australia has always been strong. The primary interests of the most forceful and renowned of Australian philosophers – people like John Anderson, David Armstrong and J. J. C. Smart – were in contemporary metaphysics, epistemology and logic. Many of Anderson's followers were also significantly involved in setting a progressive, libertarian social and cultural agenda in Australia from the 1950s through the 1970s. There was little room for veneration of the classics in that environment. Thus, in the early 1990s, Australia's academic disregard of the

[2] See Winterer (2002, 2007).

[3] See Hamlin (1944).

[4] See Meckler (2006).

[5] The usual gloss on this quaint motto, which the University's own website translates "the constellation is changed, the disposition is the same" (usyd.edu.au/heraldry/coat_of_arms/motto.shtml) is that it expresses the determination to preserve the English cultural and intellectual orientation in the face of the celestial disorientation experienced by immigrants to the Southern hemisphere, upon finding that all the familiar Northern constellations had vanished from the sky. Crudely put, the motto means, "You can take the professor out of England, but you can't take England out of the professor."

philosophical past was complemented and reinforced by a general cultural apathy towards European history and the beginnings of Western civilization. Ironically, Tertullian's famous rhetorical question, "What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem?"[6] could easily have been adapted to late twentieth century Australia. "What indeed has Ancient Greece to do with Australia?" The answer, in the vernacular, was "Bugger all."[7]

These general cultural differences between the USA and Australia seem to have been at their peak around 1992. During roughly the same period as the Hawke-Keating government in Australia, America had taken the neoconservative turn under Ronald Reagan and George Bush senior. In the American higher education context, William J. Bennett had served Reagan first as head of the National Endowment for the Humanities and then as Secretary of the Department of Education. Bennett, one of America's leading neoconservatives, practically made it his mission to promote classics and Great Books in American society.[8] His edition of exemplary tales, *The Book of Virtues: A Treasury of Great Moral Stories* (1993), was based on a classical model of education going back to Homer. The particular virtues he emphasized were easily identifiable, from my own upbringing, as comprising Aristotelian ethics and Catholic morals. Although I thought of myself as a centre-left humanist, I was more influenced by neoconservative values than I realized.

Thus, upon arrival in Australia I had a sense of being in a place that was superficially very similar to America, but substantially different underneath. At the everyday level these differences were not expressed in terms of attitudes about the classics or political mythology. They showed up innocuously in small cultural differences in manners and temperament. For example, I couldn't get over why I seemed to be the only one who was worried about all the things going on in the world, or why I was the only one who showed up to a dinner party exactly on time, or why, in the university context, I was no longer addressed by students as "Professor Benitez" (that title being cordially extended, in America, even to junior members of the Academy). In Australia I was known simply by my nickname, "Rick".[9]

Nothing could have prepared me for my first day in the classroom, however. I still remember vividly standing in white shirt, silk tie and blue blazer before a first year class of about 350 students. I wasn't prepared for the lecture theatre (my largest class prior to that had enrolled about 35), nor was I prepared for the way Australian students would flow into and ebb from the classroom like a slow tide. I remember being startled at about 10 past the hour to see a young couple saunter in, wearing shorts and singlets, all bronzed and barefoot, with the scent of the sea still hovering

[6] *De Prescriptione Haereticorum* vii, in Stevenson (1987, pp. 166–167).

[7] I hope the reader will forgive my use of this familiar vulgar expression. My aim in using it is to indicate that those who ignore the past are condemned to being unable to see themselves repeating it. Many Australians would not know that in *Clouds*, Aristophanes refers to the entire audience as "buggered" (*tous euruprôktous*, 1098).

[8] See Bennett (1993).

[9] I took some solace in the tradition, now doubted, that Plato was (and still is) known by his nickname, his given name being Aristocles.

in the air around them. That someone would (or even could) come from the beach to the university for the afternoon was something I simply could not imagine. Let alone that they should bring their dog, a Jack Russell as I recall, into the lecture theatre with them.

I felt uneasy and self-conscious. I tried to make a joke. My class was "Origins of Western Philosophy", so I thought I'd try some dry humour about the first philosopher, Thales of Miletus. Thales is such an obscure figure that we wouldn't even know when he lived were it not for an astronomical event. There was a total eclipse of the Sun over most of Turkey on the evening of 28 May 585 (BCE), and Thales predicted it; at least, he predicted that an eclipse would occur during that year. As it happened, the eclipse occurred during an important battle between Lydians and Medes, so Thales' prediction could not go unnoticed. Hoping to make students feel something of the wonder surrounding how historians pieced all of this together, I said to them, "So, if you are asked a question on your take-home exam about when Thales lived, remember to go to the library, get out an almagest or similar astronomical catalogue and look up the umbral paths of solar eclipses in the pre-Christian era. Then get out a historical military atlas and look up where battles between Lydians and Medes occurred. Then compare these two sources and find the date of the eclipse that occurred where a battle between Lydians and Medes took place and – *voila!* – you will have your answer." Dead silence. The geeky irony that had gone over so well in the USA was completely lost on my Australian audience.

I left the lecture theatre puzzled and dejected, realising that I did not see eye to eye with these students. I had crossed the Eye of the earth, but I did not know how to get across the eyes of my students. Between that day and today, I have never stopped reflecting about teaching and learning, about what engages students, and what will promote insight. I did not try to make the Australian students like the American ones. Rather, I learned a valuable lesson about what is now called 'student-focused teaching': *teach to* your *audience*. Eventually, I learned a valuable lesson about teaching and learning in general: *improvise what is needed*.[10] This paper is about the development of some specific features of my teaching and learning practices in ancient philosophy across two decades at Sydney University. This development was a response to differences in attitudes about Western heritage in the USA, where I trained, and in Australia, where I teach, but those different attitudes turn out to have been the catalyst for change, not the cause that required it. In what follows, I describe some specific ways in which the initial differences led me to improvise my teaching to mind the culture gap, and how from these improvisations a distinctive approach to understanding the ancient philosophers emerged. The relevance of my experience to a more general audience is that my approach, which is based on treating philosophy as a practice rather than a subject, can be successfully adapted to other teaching and learning contexts. Moreover, it is an approach that can be utilised by twenty-first century academics, who must constantly adapt their

[10]This is actually a tag from Aristotle, about practical wisdom. See *Nicomachean Ethics* VI.10.1138a1-3.

practices to fit changing technology, changing institutional conditions, changing learning situations and changing students.

My experience is not as unique as it might seem at first sight. In fact, the geographical differences (including cultural and social differences) that I experienced between the USA and Australia are probably less significant than the changes in higher education within Australia itself from 1992 to the present. For example, when I arrived at Sydney the only computer available was a shared 512 k Mac in the department common room. There was essentially no email. Students, many of whom had been lingering around the university for years, still wrote out essays by hand. There was no Powerpoint, no Blackboard or WebCT, no Lectopia, no Clicker. "Chalk and Talk" was the technology of the day. There were no staff development programs and there were no institutes of teaching and learning. We are better equipped and better supported now, but the changes to come in the next 10 years will be more dramatic and more encompassing than those of the last 20. So this essay is not so much about getting across the Eye of the Earth, as it is about getting across the students' eyes in which things look different to how you see them. I hope that my experience can be used as a general lesson for adapting to insecurity in higher education, whether across space or across time. But in order to achieve my aim, I have to get you to think about education in a different way.

8.2 "Education for Insecurity": Teaching and Learning as a Practice of Inquiry

Not long ago, a friend who knew of my interest in teaching and learning gave me an old paper, written by a University of Sydney professor of Botany, Eric (Baron) Ashby, in 1941.[11] I like old papers. They afford us some distance. We don't have to engage polemically with them; we can just read them and think. This one had the added bonus of an intriguing title, "Education for Insecurity," and so, being myself an insecure person, I read it jealously. Initially I was disappointed. Ashby's paper was not about tertiary education (in fact, he was speaking to the Second Biennial Conference of the Australian Association for Pre-School Child Development). But his message was about education in general, and I soon discovered that he had expressed in six pages what it took me nearly 20 years to learn. Along the way, he also explained much about why my first experience at teaching in Australia had been so different from what I expected.

Ashby spoke during the height of the Second World War. He had no way of knowing what the world would look like afterwards; nor did anyone else. His views about what changes the world would see were wrong in their detail (for example, he predicted the decline of 'Economic Man'), but his general point, that the post-war world would be very different from that of the 1930s, could hardly miss the target.

[11] See Ashby (1941). I am grateful to Jean Barrett and the archive of the History Room, SDN Children's Services, Woolloomooloo, for granting me access to this paper.

And his idea that teachers should prepare learners to adapt to and cope with a fast changing world could not, I think, be more suited to the present day.

Ashby was aware that post-war students would have to adapt to new ways of learning, as well as to social and cultural upheaval. He advocated what is nowadays often called 'deep learning' as opposed to the 'surface learning' that Australian students had to "cringingly submit" to (1941, p. 44).[12] Thus he described the "formality" of Australian education as having "outlived [its] usefulness" (1941, p. 40). He criticised what he regarded as a "Gilbert and Sullivan" emphasis on specialisation, which tended to produce smart, efficient, "tiresome little pedants" who know many facts but have no sense of originality, free-spirit or adventure (1941, pp. 42–3). "Instead of becoming highly erudite parrots," he thought, students should "learn to have confidence in the processes of thought" (1941, p. 42). In the post-war environment the proposals for reform made by Ashby and many like him met with some measure of success. They explain why my free-spirited Australian students were not particularly interested in the eclipse of May 28, 585 BCE. My joke must have seemed like tiresome pedantry to them, and the deference that I expected them to show to the ancients would, I think now, have looked rather like cringing submission.

Ironically, the model for education that Ashby wanted to emplace was decidedly classical. The qualities that top his list of graduate attributes – "self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control" (1941, p. 42) – are the same ones most highly prized by classical Athenians. Ashby knew this, of course, since he took the terms straight from the mouth of Pallas in Tennyson's *Oenone.*[13] He also knew, I am sure, that his focus on learning attributes rather than learning content had a distinctively classical ring to it. The whole of a classical education was directed towards developing strength of character, balance, virtue, and sound judgment.[14] Likewise, Ashby recommended that education be directed towards "poise; courage; resource; a closeness to life; adaptability to the unfamiliar; resolve to keep alive the free spirit through hardship" (1941, p. 41).

This irony provides the key for understanding the most significant changes I made in adapting my teaching to the Australian context. Like Ashby, I realised that bare facts are the sort of things you feed to machines; they are not the nourishment of human comprehension. Rather than teach my students about eclipses, *klepsydra*, quadratrixes and a host of other narrow, arcane trivia, I realised that I had to introduce them to classical philosophy through the intellectual activities and educational values they already shared (albeit unwittingly) with the ancients. Ashby urged

[12] For one version of the deep vs surface learning distinction see Biggs and Tang (2007, pp. 13–18). A more specific version of this distinction can be found in terms of 'extended abstract' vs 'pre-structural' learning, in Biggs' famous 'structure of observed learning outcomes' (SOLO) taxonomy. See Biggs and Collis (1982).

[13] See *Oenone* (1829), ll. 143–4, in Tennyson (1832): "Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,/These three alone lead life to sovereign power."

[14] See, for example, the concise description of the classical Athenian education in Plato's *Protagoras* 325c–326e (cf. Plato *Laws* 653a-b and Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* II.3.1104b10-13).

teachers to make students "familiar with [their] own environment and with the way of life of other people" (1941, p. 42). My great fortune was to realise that I could do both things at the same time.

8.3 "Know Thyself": The Importance of the Individual in Education

One of the more popular commonplaces about education is that "teachers teach more by what they are than by what they say." Like many appealing slogans, this one is both false and misleading. It is false because it separates what the teacher is from what the teacher says, when in fact teachers are, *qua* teachers, very much constituted by what they say. It is misleading because it focuses more on impersonal aspects of teaching than personal ones – the *what* rather than the *who.* I prefer a slightly altered version: "teaching involves teaching who you are". (Note: ultimately this slogan may also be false or misleading.) The aim of "teaching who you are" is not to obscure the truth that teachers teach particular content, but to remind us of the personal contribution made by teachers in the way they communicate that content. Teachers could not even teach basic numeracy and literacy without imparting something about why (or in unfortunate cases whether) it means anything to *them*. I am still adept at the nines table because my third grade teacher told me that nine is a 'magic' number, whose multiples always add up to nine.[15] I remember what she told me because of the way she taught it, and *in* the way she taught it. She was a magical teacher, and the black bag she set on her desk every morning was her bag of mathematical tricks. Or again, one of my mentors, Paul Weiss, told me he became a philosopher because his first grade teacher told him, to his amazement, that all the words there ever were could be spelled from just 26 letters. She challenged him to wonder about things, and the playfulness of her challenge remained with him long after the alphabet became routine.

Similarly, learners learn who *they* are, at least when they are not expected to act like machines. Why does the old story of Thales falling into a well while looking at the stars stick with me? Because it reminds me of the way I get so absorbed in what I'm doing that I forget to notice what is right in front of me. How do you engage students in your classroom? By getting across their eyes and connecting with something in *them.* The trick is to do it in a way that gets them to see themselves in the connection – by showing them that there is already something of them in what you are teaching. We may think of this for a moment the way the subjective idealist does. In Plato's *Charmides*, for example, Critias says that the famous inscription at Delphi, "Know Thyself", is not an injunction, but a salutation (164b), as though the world were saying "Behold! I am You!" To borrow a phrase of Whitman's, the

[15] That is, if you take any multiple of nine, no matter how large, and add the digits in that number and keep adding them until they resolve into a single digit, that digit will always be nine.

world presents us with "tokens of ourselves."[16] Teachers engage students by getting them to see tokens of themselves in what they are learning. To that extent Plato was right to criticise those who held that education was like "putting sight into blind eyes" (*Republic* 518c). But teachers do not simply turn eyes in the direction in which they see themselves. Teachers are not passive conduits to solipsistic insight. They actively focus student learning through the corrective lens of intersubjective understanding. Nobody's vision is perfect. Teaching and learning is the generous act of sharing our partial, individual understanding with one another, and of correcting each others' insights in the light of that sharing.

If I was going to get across the eyes of my Australian students, I could not simply lumber them with abstract philosophical doctrines. I would have to share *my* understanding of ancient philosophy with them. I had to show them why it meant so much to me (how it reflected who I am) and also why it should mean something to them (how it was connected with who *they* were). Realising this brought me to a crisis. Even though I had already been studying ancient philosophy for 15 years when I arrived in Australia, I had still not reflected about these simple questions.[17] When I did think about them, the changes that ensued were dramatic. For example, I had always been attracted to Plato and the Presocratic philosophers, and I had assumed, uncritically, that this was due to an interest in metaphysics and logic (perhaps because they were the most difficult subjects). Yet when I explored my attraction more carefully, I realised that metaphysics was not my interest at all.

What attracted me *originally* about the ancient philosophers was simply their incredible capacity for imagination. To take seriously the claim that everything whatsoever might be a presentation of water, for example, as Thales said, or that the world is as illusory as shadows on a wall, as Plato said, requires significant cognitive adjustment. These were intelligent men, the greatest minds of their age, yet they seem to have said things that ordinary common sense would reject in 2 min. The effort of considering what they really meant is worthwhile not because they might have been right, but because it forces you to realise that things need not be as ordinary common sense would have it. The Socratic insight that very often we do not know what we think we know is the corollary of ancient philosophical imagination, and from it follow the familiar Aristotelian propositions that *philosophy begins in wonder* and *philosophy is the desire to understand*.[18]

When I finally realised that what interested me was the practice of provoking wonder through active imagination, and the practice of promoting philosophy through awakening the desire to understand, the world of the ancient philosophers took on a completely different appearance for me. I began to see everywhere among the ancients an emphasis on the community and practice of inquiry, rather than on abstract knowledge and theory for its own sake. I began to see philosophy and education as nearly the same thing. How could I get this across to my students?

[16] *Song of Myself* 32.10, in Whitman (1885).

[17] I have only lately discovered, to my embarrassment, that critical reflection about how you teach and why is an elementary part of teaching development. See Brookfield (1995).

[18] See Aristotle, *Metaphysics* I. 1–2.

Fortunately, the ancient philosophers themselves were there to assist me. The Pythagoreans, the members of the Plato's Academy, the Peripatetics, the Epicureans and the Stoics all lived in communities engaged in "cooperative inquiry into matters of common concern," as my one of my teachers, A. S. Cua, used to put it.[19] But that was just exactly the way in which I now saw the terms of association between teacher and students at Sydney University. The mismatch of my American background with Australian students no longer mattered. Together we could *find* common ground in company with the ancients. The only thing needed was to point this out.

That is not to say that I had my students pretend to be Academicians, or even, what is more plausible, that I got them to imagine what it might be like to study at the Academy, the Lyceum, or in Epicurus' garden.[20] Rather, I tried first just to get them to think about the teaching and learning enterprise on its own terms. What was our aim? How did we hope to accomplish it? What qualities would we need to do well? How could we develop those qualities? What did that show about the values that we held in common? Doing this prepared the ground for studying classical philosophy because it engaged them in asking the same sort of questions that they would see figuring prominently in the ancient world.

8.4 "Self-Knowledge, Self Reverence, Self-Control": Education and Intellectual Values

Eric Ashby's recommendations in "Education for Insecurity" placed a priority on values over facts. He believed that if you instill the values, the desire to understand the facts would follow, whereas the other way around things may not go so well. I have already mentioned that the chief values Ashby desired to promote – self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control – are classical values. They are also values of learning, or intellectual values. Someone who has self-reverence, or what we might nowadays be more inclined to call self-respect, will not be cowed by dogma. She will not hide away her doubts out of fear or submissiveness. Nor will she be lazy or superficial. Someone who has self-knowledge will have the good sense to admit when he doesn't know, and the confidence to work to his capacity. Those who have self-control will not monopolise the learning environment, nor, in the case of their own learning, will they run before they can walk.

Once I began to focus on education as a cooperative inquiry into matters of common concern, it was inevitable that I should take a greater interest in these and other intellectual values. It was striking, then, to discover that among the most fundamental intellectual values are ones that resemble closely the ancient cardinal virtues,

[19] Cua's beautiful description was based on his study of Chinese and Aristotelian ethics. He inspired me to a lifelong interest in Chinese philosophy. For more on this view see Cua (1978).

[20] Martha Nussbaum uses this imaginative idea to great effect in her book *The Therapy of Desire* (1994).

including: *respect, fairness, understanding, moderation,* and *openness* (where these values resemble, respectively, *piety, justice, wisdom, temperance,* and *courage*).

Respect, not just self-respect, but respect for others, would seem to be required in virtually all teaching and learning contexts. This includes the respect accorded to teachers in virtue of their presumed competence to direct learners (from which follow expectations of concern and commitment on the part of the teacher).[21] But it also includes the teacher's respect for learners, their respect towards each other, and even in-principle respect for any views put forward for consideration. Unless an attitude of respect is present, there is little hope of accomplishing any learning at all.

Along with respect comes the value of *fairness*. Respect cannot be maintained if fairness is not observed, whereas if fairness is observed, respect can often be maintained even in the face of criticism. Respect requires that teachers and learners adopt a non-prejudicial stance towards the views of others. Fairness requires that they appraise each other's views fairly. Thus is should not be uncommon for a learner to respect a classmate while judging (fairly) against his view. A special obligation of fairness is incurred by teachers in virtue their responsibility for assigning marks in a course. Conditions of equity (sensitivity to the background conditions and abilities of students), impartiality (a refusal to be swayed by irrelevant factors) and parity (willingness to award equal marks for equal performance) apply to judgments of absolute and relative merit, appraisal of excuses, and assessment of penalties. This more formal commitment to fairness is often extended to and expected of learners in peer assessment, a common practice in group exercises undertaken in large, under-resourced classes.

Understanding incorporates skill in listening, discerning, interpreting, representing and articulating. Understanding what a teacher or learner says is fundamental to making a fair judgment about it. Adopting an attitude of respect towards a learner is fundamental to understanding what she is trying to say. In general we may say that in appreciating an idea fairness and understanding are inseparable.

I have already spoken about self-control and the need of learners to curtail their own contributions in order to allow for the contributions of others. Unlike mere self-control, however, *moderation* also involves actively making contributions to learning. That is to say that like its ethical counterpart, intellectual moderation occupies a mean, in this case between intellectual self-indulgence and intellectual passivity.[22] In this sense, moderation must be finely attuned to the point where the distinction between teacher and learner begins to disappear. This is the point at which education becomes genuinely philosophical; it is the point at which the one formally designated as teacher should, and the one formally designated as learner should not hold back.

Finally there is the value of *openness*, which I take to be analogous to the virtue of courage. Courage is a virtue that involves a practical mastery over fear in matters of imminent danger. In my experience, few philosophers ever consider that

[21] See Thompson (1997, pp. 24–42).

[22] Aristotle says (*Nicomachean Ethics* II.8.1109a1-4) that the ethical moderation occupies a mean between sensory self-indulgence and being 'unfeeling' (*anaisthêton,* 1108b21).

openness might appear to present a significant risk to students. In fact, however, the situation in which persons might be expected to express their own ideas openly is fraught with the fear of exposing ignorance, naivety, stupidity, parochialism, prejudices, and so on. Indeed, the risk appears so great that some students are unlikely to be open even to *themselves*. Simms (2002, p. 400) maintains that "[a] safe environment needs to be developed and fostered so students can feel trusting enough to relate to others on a personal level." Relating to each other on a personal level, of course, is the key to teaching and learning who you are. It is the key to all learning that is genuinely *relevant* to a person.

The intellectual values of *respect, fairness, understanding, moderation,* and *openness* will be familiar to educators in the humanities. It seems to me that few values are as useful in promoting deep learning in humanities contexts. In my particular context, however, they occupy an even more central place. I noted earlier how Eric Ashby urged teachers to make students familiar with themselves and with other people's ways of life. I said that my great fortune was to realise that I could do both things simultaneously. It should now be clear how that was possible. By modeling and promoting the intellectual values central to the educational enterprise, I could make students familiar with themselves. At the same time, because the intellectual values were the central values of classical education, I was already introducing students to the way of life of the ancient Greeks, and to the philosophers' thinking about that way of life.

8.5 Conclusion

Any of my students who reads this essay will undoubtedly find it artificially packaged. The way I actually teach is a lot messier and a lot more implicit. I often forget my philosophy of teaching when I'm in the classroom. But I believe my students will have no trouble seeing *me* in this essay. This summary of my thoughts about teaching ancient philosophy really does reflect my journey across the eye, and the development of my whole attitude towards teaching and learning. It may appear at this point that I would be much more concerned with ancient ethics now than with ancient metaphysics and logic. The appearance is not altogether deceiving: most of the courses I teach are in ancient ethics, politics, or aesthetics (which, for the ancients, is almost always bound up with morals). Nevertheless, I think I would be quite happy to teach the other subjects, and I would go about teaching them in the same way: by thinking about why I am interested in them, by making that clear in how I teach, by considering what is involved in thinking these subjects for oneself, and by considering what values especially promote understanding of them. It seems to me clear that some of the intellectual values I have mentioned would occupy a prominent place in learning about *any* subject. Other values might, in some cases, displace them.

I hope there is a general lesson for all teachers in my experience. If we think of our disciplines as a practice of inquiry, rather than as a body of knowledge, we will

naturally be more inclined to identify the nature of that practice and the shared values that sustain it. We will be inclined to develop these values in ourselves and in our students; indeed, we will see them as the focus of education. In doing this we will teach and learn who we are. We will prepare our students and ourselves better for what, it seems to me, is a very uncertain future.

References

Ashby, E. B. (1941). Education for insecurity. In *Stability and progress in time of war* (second biennial conference of the Australian association for pre-school child development, 2–6 June 1941). Woolloomooloo: SDN Children's Services, History Room Archives.

Bennett, W. J. (1993). *The book of virtues*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Biggs, J. B., & Collis, K. F. (1982). *Evaluating the quality of learning – the SOLO taxonomy*. New York: Academic.

Biggs, J., & Tang, C. (2007). *Teaching for quality learning at university* (3rd ed.). New York: Society for Research into Higher Education and Open University Press (first edition 1999).

Brookfield, S. (1995). *Becoming a critically reflective teacher*. California: Jossey Bass.

Cua, A. S. (1978). *Dimensions of moral creativity*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press.

Hamlin, T. (1944). *Greek revival architecture in America*. Athens: Ohio University Press.

Jeffers, R. (1965). *Selected poems*. New York: Vintage Books.

Meckler, M. (2006). *Classical antiquity and the politics of America: From George Washington to George W. Bush*. Waco: Baylor University Press.

Nussbaum, M. (1994). *The therapy of desire: Theory and practice in Hellenistic ethics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Richard, C. J. (1994). *The founders and the classics: Greece, Rome and the American enlightenment*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Simms, R. R. (2002). Business ethics teaching for effective learning. *Teaching Business Ethics, 6*(2002), 393–410.

Stevenson, J. (1987). *A new eusebius: Documents illustrating the history of the church to AD 337*. London: SPCK.

Tennyson, A. (Lord) (1832). *Poems*. London: Moxon.

Thompson, M. (1997). *Professional ethics and the teacher: Towards a general teaching council*. London: Trentham Books Limited.

Whitman, W. (1885). *Leaves of grass, first edition (1885)*. New York: Penguin (1959 printing).

Winterer, C. (2002). *The culture of classicism: Ancient Greece and Rome in American intellectual life, 1780–1910*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Winterer, C. (2007). *The mirror of antiquity: American women and the classical tradition 1750–1900*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.