FROM THE CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

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The attacks on the World Trade Center Buildings in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. on September 11th has awakened some people in the United States to the fact that we share or have in common with other peoples of the world the fate of the human condition. This realization in a country that denies, for example, the inevitability of human death, and sees itself as immortal, has caused some to honestly confront the limitations and possibilities of modern civilization in the West; it has caused some, in other words, to inquire about the West's colonial past and neocolonial present and the historical implications of both of these modern institutions on world peace and human flourishing. And for those engaged in the study of education as a cultural political force, the current circumstances of the world situation have caused them to consider'"modern education" in relation to the problem of human freedom, liberation and agency.

But what does philosophy of education contribute to the theorizing of the aims of education in a context in which forms of human evil are manifested in modern institutional structures of exploitation, oppression, and state domination? And how should philosophy of education address the aims of education in a neocolonial context, where modern institutions in the West destroy the human worth and dignity, and limit human agency and possibility of non-European peoples in particular? The articles in this volume in different ways address the theme of the 2002 OVPES Annual Meeting: "Pedagogical Encounter and the Human Condition" in that there is a concern about philosophical questions related to the problem of human condition, for example, freedom, liberation, and agency. In fact, it is these questions that define the fundamental concerns and issues of their analysis.

In his keynote address, "The Human Condition in an Age of Disciplinary Decadence: Thoughts on Knowing and Learning," Lewis R. Gordon argues for the "importance of working through contemporary problems of philosophy of education through taking seriously questions of the human condition and their relevance to our understanding of political reality." For instance, Gordon explains that philosophy of education has been responsive to the political realities of the human condition by its incorporation of social theory. Interestingly, Gordon maintains that much of the discipline of philosophy is less responsive because it denies what is most human, which is our sociality. This sort of denial Gordon believes is less the case for philosophy of education. For Gordon, sociality is, then, at the heart of the human condition. And as such, the human world is a world that is lived. Says Gordon: "Structures set the conditions for us, but they do not determine what we will do and the meaning of our various projects in life. This is so by virtue of many of us doing different

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things and creating new forms of meaning in structurally similar, if not same, circumstances. The human world is, in other words, lived, and it is creatively so."

It is in part because of Gordon's humanistic commitments as a philosopher that he turns to Hannah Arendt's classic Human Condition; and in particular Arendt's notion that "human life is a function of three fundamental activities: labor, work, and action." And that the specific configurations or privileging of one activity over another determines the form of sociality lived. Gordon agrees with Arendt that""labor" and""work" have a social dimension but that "action" is peculiarly social. This is because action is dependent on speech, which""makes it in its structure peculiarly public." And for Arendt as is for Gordon, societies where action is privileged or the other forms of sociality are subordinated to the needs of action, are societies in which politics plays an integral part of defining the nature of public life. An important focus of Gordon's is how the public sphere has been under attack by "anti-political forces." This attack has mainly been directed at universities and public education. And by implication attacks on the public sphere, and therefore on politics by anti-political forces, is an attack on "thinking," says Gordon. Writes Gordon: "where there is no thinking there is no distinction, and where there is no distinction, we collapse under the force of sameness or mandatory sameness. All this amounts to a new form of what in days past would simply be called totalitarianism. …a world in which there is literally no room for any other alternatives." For Gordon, philosophy's "disciplinary decadence," and its devaluing of "evidence" has resulted in philosophy's silence in terms of addressing important political, social and cultural questions of the day; this making it complicit with the attack on thinking by anti-political forces. Gordon claims that philosophy's silence and complicity with anti-politics coincides with its abandonment of philosophy of education.

In her 2002 Presidential Address,'"Citizenship in our Time: Community Service, Town Meeting, Protest March, or Drag Show?" Kathleen Knight Abowtiz says, "Citizenship is a category of membership, we now ask more than ever, who exactly are the "us" and the""them" after 9/11/01." Abrowtiz focus is on how contemporary discourses of citizenship construct and reconstruct our meanings of the terms of citizenship. Examined are the various discourses of citizenship circulating in Western, English speaking countries, and in particular critical, feminist, and postmodern critiques of Enlightenment based citizenship. Critiqued are Enlightenment conceptions of citizenship that rely on liberal autonomous notions of subjectivity. Abrowtiz argues instead for a conception of citizenship that is based on an intersubjective notion of agency. Also, this particular conception of agency is not confined to "institutionalized governance,""critical-rational debate" nor is citizenship a category of membership exclusive to the nation-state. Abowitz uses queer theory to construct a notion of transformative agency and citizenship that links together politics,

pedagogy and aesthetics, as well as a notion of the public as"“poetic world making.” This conception of citizenship Abowtiz refers to as “diva citizenship,” which is not based on an ascribed identity membership but is a performed enactment of political agency. As such, it is not a notion of agency and citizenship that is restricted to nation-state but is potentially transnational, and therefore is less susceptible to “us” vs."“them” constructions of citizenship. For Abowitz, the notion of transnational citizenship functions as a basis of moral criticism against the human evil of September 11. However, Abowitz points out that as important a transnational conception citizenship"“challenges our own evil within the nation-state: the oppressive cultural norms, the unfair political policies both at home and abroad, and the pervasiveness of social inequalities.”

In"Lenin and Philosophy, Louis Althusser coins the concept “ideological state apparatus (ISA).” Althusser argues that within mature capitalist societies, the dominant ISA is the system of private and public schools, he refers to also as the “educational ideological apparatus.” The function of the ISA is to constitute concrete individuals as subjects; this process Althusser calls “interpellation.” In fact, this process raises questions about the role of authority in the constituting of concrete individuals as subjects. Even though both do not directly address the September 11 attacks, Charles Bingham and William L. Fridley, in their respective articles, are concerned, although differently, about the problem of pedagogical authority and the constitution of concrete individuals as subjects. At some level, both address the human consequences of the pedagogical encounter, the pedagogical conditions of human agency specifically.

In his article,"“Educational Authority: Its Happy Violence,” Charles Bingham argues for the possible link of educational authority to violence.” Bingham focuses theoretically on identifying the characteristics of authority and teacher authority in particular. He believes that educational authority at its core is a structure of violence because it leaves from one person to another a “lasting impression.” Bingham believes, what he calls “a violence of impression” is what is at work within educational authority. Thus, the question raised by Bingham is “what is it in teacher’s authority over curriculum on students that creates impressions.” Related to this, Bingham also considers “what sort of violence is inherent in one’s shear belief in another,” and"“how does educational authority act psychically and symbolically to create impressions?” For his analysis of educational authority, Bingham turns to the work of Jacques Derrida’s deconstructive work on performative speech act, focusing specifically on his conception of authority as “happy violence” and Eric Sanders whose conception of the psyche suggest that the institutional identity of teachers"“creates repetitious chains of authority.”

In his article, “The Third Person Dimension of Moral claims,” William L. Fridley addresses the problem of teacher moral authority in the classroom as it pertains to the imposition of moral values. Fridley examines the moral

claims classroom teachers make, and recommends a third person approach that steers clear of moral claims made by classroom teachers. Fridley questions the assumption of teachers and students that assume that moral claims have an objective value; in other words, "most teachers operate with the belief that some actions are really right or really wrong, and must be labeled as such and dealt with accordingly." Fridley supports the idea of avoiding moral claims and moral language as much as possible. Actually, though, Fridley is not supportive of a third person approach that depends on empirical or observational test. He instead advocates a third person approach that is based on "factual descriptions of specific actions," and the""actual and probable consequences of these actions." Fridley says, "teachers should not be the moral arbiter of these actions, but should only facilitate informed and reflective [student] discussions."

Emery J. Hypslop-Margison examines the nature of the existential angst that characterized his student responses to September 11th, and that this tragic event provided a pedagogical opportunity "to discuss in the context of the classroom national and global issues related to terrorism." In his essay, "September 11 and Existential Angst: Shaping Authentic Educational Responses," Margison says, "the tragic events of September 11 exposed the frailty of American social infrastructure to our collective consciousness in dramatic and terrifying fashion." The philosophical strategies and concepts Margison draw on to foster critical discussion about the causes and solutions to global terrorism is existentialism. Existentialism Margison believes offers a critical approach to classroom dialogue that does not employ moral binaries to understand a crisis.

In his essay, "An Unfashionable Observation Takes Hold: Suffering and the Limits of Pedagogy," James Scott Johnson, questions the assumption that the role of education is to alleviate or reduce human suffering. And as for pedagogical theorizing, it has no business involving itself with human suffering. Borrowing from Nietzsche, Johnson argues that meaningful suffering is a part of the human condition and that it should be something we cultivate. Johnson maintains pedagogy of suffering is an imposition on persons because it removes the possibility of self-control and self-growth. Pedagogies that attempt to get rid of or diminish suffering are in Johnson's view counterproductive and counterintuitive.

In "A Lesson of Human Connection: 9-11, Film, Brotherhood, and Interpretation," Deron Boyles explores Gedeon and Jules Naudet insightful film footage from inside one of the towers of the World Trade Center on the mourning of September 11. The footage included sounds of falling bodies and scenes of firefighters trying to escape from Tower 1 after Tower 2 had collapsed. Boyles examines the different interpretations of the film that captured what the Naudet brothers faced and endured. The film allows for a philosophizing of pedagogy after September 11. For example, Boyles argues that the Naudet

brother's film provides an opportunity to move a way from classroom pedagogies that have a humanistic obsession with searching for metaphysical certainty regarding the meaning of September 11. Reflecting on the film, Boyles write: "the tragedy highlighted the very kind of uncertainty I think is a very real condition of humanity, but the utmost of non-humanitarian contexts. When people sought meaning from the events of September 11, I wondered if they weren't unwittingly questing for the very kind of certitude upon which he terrorists based their actions." Peggy Rivage-Seul searches with her students for the meaning of the tragic event of September 11th. In the essay by Rivage-Seul, "Freire in the Classroom: Thinking Critically after September 11th, Freirean principles of partiality, historicity, and critical thinking are reformulate as a set of criteria that Rivage-Seul calls "Criteria for Discernment." Rivage-Seul believes that this criterion provides the pedagogical conditions for students in her classroom to construct critical meaning about the events of September 11th. It is this critical meaning that is also the basis for her students to configure new solidarities with the oppressed.

In their respective essays, Ray Wilkie and Clinton Collins, examine Wendell Berry's work so as to bring understanding to the tragic events of September 11th. Wilkie supports Berry's claim that the cause of September 11th is related to the unquestioned technological and economic optimism characteristic of post-industrial societies such as the United States. The underlying assumption of this optimism is that world-wide economic growth and prosperity would result in world peace. In his essay, "Wendell Berry's Conception of Knowledge and his Communitarian, Ecological Worldview," Wilkie draws on Berry to argue that the events of September 11th are a function of the destruction of eco-communitarian values due to by the unquestioned technological and economic optimism of post-industrial societies. Extending Wilkie's discussion of Berry, Collins shows that Berry's perspective sheds light on the problematic linkage between American schools and the economic growth agenda of post-industrial societies. For Berry and Collins alike, American schools consequently contributed to the destruction of local communities. In her essay,'"Creativeness as an Educative Ideal in Dewey's Philosophy," Eun-Joo Yang addresses the concern about how education in post-industrial societies has made human creativeness and creativity a function of the new global knowledge-based economy. Yang's essay reclaims creativeness or creativity as an educational ideal that supports critical consciousness, and turns to the work of John Dewey to develop this idea.

In'"All Things with a Reservation: The Challenge of Alain Locke's Critical Relativism," Linda O'Neil examine the contemporary theoretical relevance of Alain Locke, an early 20th century African American philosopher, for multicultural education. O'Neil contrast Locke's philosophy of cultural relativism in which values are rooted in human attitudes not in some metaphysical reality, with the contemporary multicultural educator, Jane Elliott.

Locke's pragmatist and humanist philosophical approach to cultural relativism is believed to provide a rich framework for understanding cultural diversity. The final essay in the volume by Joseph Watras, "Boyd Bode, Jerome Bruner, and Engaging Student interests," discusses how both traditional subject matter educators and progressive educators share in common the struggle to engage student interests.