Peirce, Feminism, and Philosophy for Children

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The overall purpose of this paper is to explore three related themes: (a) feminist philosophy and philosophy for children have much in common including pedagogy, an inclusive orientation and fallibilist but critical epistemology, (b) both feminism and philosophy for children benefit from a close reading of Peirce, but only philosophy for children draws explicitly on Peirce, and (c) because of this common bond feminist philosophy and philosophy for children provide place to stand against the postmodern retreat to texts.

Not long ago, Richard Rorty was speaking at Inter-Continental University in Mexico City and voiced the view that feminist philosophy would do well to look to the pragmatists for a theoretical underpinning of their own work. One thesis of this paper is that they would find much in the work of Charles Sanders Peirce that would be helpful in working out a feminist theory of self, epistemology, ethical and educational theory.[1]

Both elementary school philosophy and feminist philosophy have much in common in terms of theory and practice. In many ways they share a philosophical framework that can be viewed historically as a response to the tensions and contradictions of the 1960s. Today there is a growing consensus among philosophers that much of the history of philosophy would look very different if certain suppressed voices, the voices of the poor, the voices of ethnic minorities and the voices of women had been taken into account. In the last ten years, elementary school children have been doing philosophy in thousands of classrooms around the world. 25,000 children alone in Brazil do philosophy as part of their regular school day, and close to half that number of children in Australia, Québec and Spain do the same. The existence of philosophy in the lower schools has now given rise to the view that perhaps the history of philosophy would also look very different if children's philosophical views had been taken into account. Study of the philosophical dialogues in classroom communities of inquiry, many of them published in *Thinking* and *Analytic Teaching,* attest to the fact that not only can children do philosophy well when guided by a teacher who knows what she is doing, but that they are most capable of creating original alternative theories that, in certain contexts, give a new dimension to philosophy itself.

The past 22 years of practice in classrooms have shown that children are not only capable of mastering formal and informal logic and the various components of critical thinking often faster than their teachers, but that they have an ingenious disposition for the creation of metaphysical, ethical and aesthetic inquiry. The younger the children are, the more fresh and unique their views and the more successful they become in a relatively short time in philosophizing well together. One has only to look at the video tapes of Professor Thomas Jackson of the University of Hawaii working with first graders over the period of one year to see that children are quite capa-

ble of doing philosophy well. Certain rules of procedures become routine and dispositions of tolerance, listening attentively, critical questioning and inquiry as well as the generation of original alternative views are fostered and reenforced with every experience of doing philosophy in the classroom.

A study of both movements — feminism and philosophy for children — reveal striking similarities with regard to philosophical assumptions. Both stress the discovery of meaning and the advantage of taking many perspectives into account in coming to know. Both pay particular attention not only to the content under discussion, but to the way we do philosophy — the ethical, political and social implications of the process. Both reject Cartesianism with its stress on clear and distinct ideas divorced from human experience and its assumed dichotomies of body and mind, subject and object. Both tend to see the self as relational and social. Both use the narrative as a valuable tool in motivating philosophical inquiry. In children's philosophy, the classroom community of inquiry is the pedagogy. in feminist philosophy, a similar procedure prevails. Stress is on cooperative rather than competitive inquiry, perspectivism, respect for persons, communal reasoning as an arbitrator, evaluation of criteria, norms and ideals against the backdrop of human experience. Both see all theories as value-laden creations that continually must be tested against the experience of children, women and men as well as the rest of nature.

In this time of post-modern theory, both stand for the efficacy of communal reasoning and its ability to improve the world. Both reject the notion that reason is impotent. The post-modern retreat to the text has a political dimension that is unacceptable to both women and children who are just beginning to discover their rights and their rightful place in the world of intellectual conversation and decision-making. The abandonment of trust in the efficacy of reasonable inquiry can be accompanied by a loss of hope and a sense of resignation, a nihilist position that there is nothing to be done in making the world more reasonable because nothing can be done. At a time when the weight of reasonable inquiry sustains prescriptions for the granting of children's and women's rights — rights they have never enjoyed before — it is counterproductive to accept a view of philosophy that claims that communal reasoning is impotent. Women and children do not have to claim absolute, a-historical validity for their views — the products of their communal inquiry. Their reasoning can be justified on the grounds that it has the capacity to offer different perspectives, illuminate existing social and political relations, and show the deficiencies of solely male adult perspectives.

Rather than signalling the *end of philosophy* as many of the Post-moderns claim, philosophy for children and feminism has the capacity for breathing new life into the discipline. The ideal of absolute intellectual purity and belief in the possibility of unmediated knowledge of the world are passing out of the discipline. Feminism and philosophy for children are offering coherent alternatives to the old ideals.[2]

PEIRCE'S CONCEPTION OF THE SELF

A study of the collected works of Charles Sanders Peirce sheds light on the community of inquiry, reason's role (induction, abduction and deduction) in bringing about a more reasonable world and the nature of the self-in-community — three fundamental ideas that underlie philosophy for children, its pedagogy and its stress on the social nature of the self. One need only to study the seven novels of philosophy for children and the various manuals to see Peircean ideas in chapter after chapter: the nature and importance of inquiry, the importance of fallibilism, the role of logic, the importance of the cultivation of good habits as a means of self-control, the social construction of knowledge, the role of the aesthetic in ethical inquiry and many more. Philosophy for children assumes with Peirce that it is immersion into logical, ethical nd aesthetical inquiry that can provide children with the norms and ideals that they need to make wiser judgments about their own lives. For Peirce, it is this immersion that will help each child discover: "How feeling, conduct and thought ought to be controlled, supposing them in a measure to be subject to self-control, exercised by self-criticism and the purposive formation of habits."[3]

In feminist writings, there is little consciousness of how the philosophy of Peirce is, in accord with feminist views and could help resolve many of the inner contradictions that have emerged in feminist writings on epistemology, the community and the self.[4] Some American feminists, for example, Evelyn Fox Keller, Naomi Scheman and Jane Flax have been drawn more to the British *object-relations* school, which emphasize the development of the self in relation to others. Often elaborating on the work of Nancy Chodorow, they have developed a fertile theoretical frame-

work for exploring gender differences in early infant development, and their implications for male-dominated culture. The central target of criticism here as been the overvaluing of autonomy in our Western models of reason. But it is Catherine Keller in her *From a Broken Web: Separation, Sexism and Self*, who stresses the relational aspect of the self from a philosophical framework, in her case a Whiteheadian framework.

For both Peirce and Whitehead, the self is a process of growth that only makes sense in relation to the others that influence it. Further, the self grows only as it increases its own capacity for self-control over one's own conduct. Unlike. Amelie Rorty, who thinks of the self as a possessor of properties, and persons as unified centers of action, choice and control — the unit of both legal and theological responsibility, Peirce ascribes the characteristics of Rorty's persons to selves. The ultimate criterion which guides one's self-control is reasonableness and this reasonableness develops within community. For Peirce, "to be a self is to be a possible member of some community."[5] To think of the self as independent of society doesn't make sense to Peirce. Each individual self is continually in the process of creating and defining her own identity through her give-and-take with the natural world and other people. "No mind can take one step without the aid of other minds."[6] In this sense, all selves are inter-dependent.

Peirce thought of the self as a sign. This sign is in the process of continual growth by means of a dialogue one conducts with oneself and others. Such dialogues are of such intimacy with what one calls the self that they can be compared, he thought, with personal beings:

> *Two things here are all important. The first is that a person is not absolutely an individual. His thoughts are what he is saying to himself, that is, is saying to that other self that is just coming into life in the flow of time. When one reasons, it is that critical self that one is trying to persuade...The second thing to remember is that man's circle of society (however widely or narrowly this phrase may be understood) is a sort of loosely compacted person, in some respects of a high rank than the person of an individual organism.*[7]

Thinking is a process of internal dialogue for Peirce. When the self thinks, there are always two selves operating: the critical self and the innovative self. When the self thinks it is the critical self that the innovative self is trying to persuade. The former represents the habits of a person, the latter a challenge to these habits. The claim that thought is a form of internal dialogue and that dialogue presupposes a community in which there are standards and norms for discourse is one of the fundamental insights of Charles Peirce which is later built upon by George Herbert Mead, John Dewey and Lev Vygotsky. Since the innovative self is always in dialogue with the critical self, there is a real sense in which we are always a mystery to ourselves — it is as if we are never quite sure of who we will be tomorrow.

At the beginning of his career, Peirce thought of the human personality as a coordination of ideas. Later, however, he came to see the personality as a unity of habits. To have a habit is to say I will behave in a certain way always given certain conditions. These habits may be positive or negative and are subject to change upon reflection and experience. Throughout all of his writings, however, Peirce viewed their self as (a) oriented towards the future and (b) representing a developmental teleology, a pursuit of purposes in which genuinely novel purposes can and do emerge and (c) during any moment of its life, the self is first and foremost a process in which some species of meaning is also evolving.

Peirce through that the human self is not confined to the body. Since the self is a sign, it can be compared to a word. Like words, it is possible that minds can be in two places at one time:

> *But are we shut up in a box of flesh and blood? When I communicate my thoughts and my sentiments to a friend with whom I am in full sympathy, so that my feelings pass into him and I am conscious of what he feels, do I not live in his brain as well as in my own. True, my animal life is not there; but my soul, my feeling, thought, attention are. If this be not so, a man is not a word, it is true but something poorer. There is a miserable, materialistic and barbarian notion according to which a man cannot be in two places at once, as though he were a thing.*
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> *A word may be in several places at once... because its essence is spiritual; and I believe that a man is not inferior to the word in this respect.*[8]

In his later thought, Peirce not only saw the self as an evolving sign but as a center of purposes and power, the power of autonomous self-control. To be a self is to be a person who controls her own behavior in accordance with her

own ideals. Peirce draws a distinction between power as self-control or autonomy and power as force, especially force over others.

> *What the pragmaticist adores, if he is a good one, is power, not the same power of brute force, which, even in its own specialty of spoiling things, secures such slight results; but the creative power of reasonableness which subdues all other powers and rules over them with its sceptre, knowledge and its globe of love.*[9]

Peirce thought that all human beings are capable of evolving into autonomous selves or agents given the right education directed toward the cultivation of three very distinct powers:

> *The first of these is composed of powers of feelings, or say, of consciousness, of being or becoming aware of anything. The second consists of powers of action, that is to say, of really modifying something... The third power consists of powers of taking habits which, by the meaning of the word includes getting rid of them, since, in my nomenclature a 'habit' is nothing but a state of 'would-be' realized in any sort of subject that is itself real. In other words, a person — a full person — must possess the capacities to feel, to act and to learn.*[10]

An education that empowers the child to "feel, to act and to learn" is one that provides her with the tools that she needs to become a full person. A person's capacities to accomplish new and undreamt of — wonderful things — is limitless. In Peirce's view, most of us accomplish only a small fraction of what we are capable. Certain things are beyond our control — hurricanes, blizzards, some diseases — all of which can incapacitate us. But given a supportive environment and the ability to control our own behavior, most of us could accomplish much more than we do. To live in community is to increase our possibilities of accomplishing more. It is the community that helps us gain more and more self-control over ourselves as we grow. Richard Berstein points out that for Peirce, there are five degrees or levels of self-control, three of which that can be cultivated in the educational process:

1. inhibitions and coordinations that escape our consciousness
2. instinctive modes of self-control
3. self-control that results from training and the socialization process in general
4. power to control self-control, as when a person becomes one's own training master in terms of moral rules
5. power to control one's control of self-control. This power comes into being when one undertakes to reflect with others upon and improve one's rules of conduct through communal inquiry. Each time a classroom community of inquiry engages in logical, ethical or aesthetic inquiry there is the possibility that a child may practice the power of controlling her control of self-control.[11]

To speak of the essential self, or the real self, only makes sense to Peirce if one thinks of it as an achievement rather than as a discovery of something already there. The self is something that comes into being as we consciously impose habits, control of these habits and control of the control of these habits in our everyday conduct. This control is always guided by the norms, criteria and ideals that we have come to accept for ourselves as worthwhile. To be educated is to be given the opportunity to inquire with others into the disciplines of logic, ethics, metaphysics and aesthetics so as to discover for ourselves the norms, criteria and ideals that we want to live by. It is in this sense that we can envision the self as growing in self-control and wisdom, and becoming critically aware of one's own imperfections. The wonderful thing about being human is our ability to self-correct.

For Peirce, the eternal forms of Plato are the intrinsically admirable ideals that we come to respect as we inquire with others into the domains of philosophy. Moreover, it is not a totally active process. Yes, we have to do our part. We have to learn how to think well, listen to others, generate alternative views, identify assumptions, read the works of others and immerse ourselves in the various disciplines. Further, we have to internalize the process of inquiry so that when we are alone we can continue to inquire with ourselves. It is hard work. However, as the process goes on, the ideals themselves begin to exert a pull or an attraction upon us to which we either respond or don't respond. Peirce assumed that most of us cannot resist the pull. Further he subsumed all ideals under the growth of concrete reasonableness in the world. it is, he thought, by committing oneself to the ideal of reasonableness that the self becomes itself in its fullness. It is at this point that the human being can think of herself

as a conscious agent cooperating with all of nature to grow new ideas, new institutions, new mores, new values that will help the world become more humane, more reasonable, more beautiful.

If the self can only realize itself through its commitment to ideals and if the commitment to even higher ideals paradoxically requires more and more surrendering of the self (or ego), then it follows for Peirce that the coherent, integrated self can only emerge when the unreflective, selfish, grasping ego is overcome. In his view, the selfish, grasping self rests upon the most vulgar delusion of vanity. Its self-absorption ultimately leads to self-destruction. On the other hand, the self-that-has-been-overcome by means of self-control is an autonomous power capable of dedicating herself to the creation of a more beautiful world.

Peirce holds a view of the self as an agent that is brought into being through struggle for self-control and self-correction. His view renders a vision of the self in community as an instrument through whom the ideal of reasonableness becomes concretely embodied in reasonable habits, reasonable goals, reasonable arrangement sin society that serve the growth of all people. In our capacity as instruments, we are signs — means by which nature itself is evolving into something characterized by mind. In this sense, the purpose of the self is to serve. Concrete reasonableness, its embodiment in the world, is what we are all about. It is to be distinguished from rationality that can be rigid, merely deductive, a-historical and uncreative of new criteria, norms and values. The post-modern loss of faith in communal reasoning would make little sense to Peirce for whom selves were part of nature and nature itself is always evolving into something more reasonable.

EPISTEMOLOGY-IN-COMMUNITY

Charles Peirce was a fallibilist. He thought that all human thought is limited and therefore all good thinkers are those who habitually look to correct themselves, to discover the limitations of their own views and theories. The method he advocated was one of continual communal inquiry.

Fallibilism means that persons must internalize the fact that their views are probably wrong — or at least very limited. This internalization gives rise to the disposition of open-mindedness and critical thinking together as a willingness to welcome new horizons, new conceptual frameworks in which to view reality. Knowing, for Peirce, presupposes involvement in a social process replete with rules of compliance, norms of assessment and standards of excellence that are humanly created. Although humans aspire to unmediated knowledge of the world, they will never attain it. Such direct access is not possible. The only mode of finding out that has any credibility is through theory-laden hypotheses that organize and structure our observation by according means to observed events and bestowing relevance and significance upon the phenomena. It is human perception combined with social convention that is involved in all strategies for problem-solving and identifying methods by which to test the validity of proposed solutions. Knowledge then is a convention rooted in practical judgments of a community of fallible inquirers who struggle to resolve theory-dependent problems under specific historical conditions. No investigation, no matter how contextual or critical or self-conscious can escape the fundamental conditions of human inquiry. This is the basis for fallibilism itself.

However, this is not reason to despair. Science, social science and the humanities can still make progress — progress that is always open to revision. Because our cognition is always theoretically mediated, the world captured in human inquiry and designated as factual is always something that one can question. A fact for Peirce is essentially contestable. If our view of the order of things were to change, it follows that what we consider factual would also change.[12]

For Peirce, like modern feminists, there is no such entity as the objective knower, a self who experiences the world independent of the social community to which she belongs. What is involved in any knowing is always heavily dependent on what questions are asked, what kind of knowledge is sought, what assumptions are taken for granted, what perspectives are taken into account and the context in which the inquiry is undertaken.

A Peircean view of cognition as human communal inquiry — human practice — has a great deal to offer feminist philosophy, as well as philosophy for children. It can provide an explanation of adult male bias within dominant thought, while at the same time examining the specific processes by which knowledge has been constituted within this tradition. It can explore the effects of the exclusion of women and chil-

dren from the inquiry process itself. A whole slew of reconsiderations of traditional epistemological problems such as relativism, perspectivism, the role of emotions and body in knowledge, the possibility of ultimate foundations and so on — is opened up. This is not to say that detachment, clarity and precision will cease to have any value in the process of understanding. But perhaps modern feminist philosophers are more than willing to agree with Kant that objectivity itself is the result of human communal structuring and that *vagueness* as well as specificity, the particular as well as the general, tentativeness and valuation are essential to good thinking.

Thus women and children are raising different questions, challenging dominant views, posing different issues while at the same time attending to the method of inquiry adequate for a consideration of these issues, can contribute significantly to the development of a more comprehensive understanding of human experience, the world and philosophical inquiry itself. Fallibilism assures the community of inquiry of children and/or women that they are themselves always working within a framework of references that could change, while, at the same time, are calling the dominant tradition into question. Since there is no absolute certainty, all proposed ideas must be tested against the changing experience of reality and the verdict must often be delayed. Although Peirce does posit truth at the end of all inquiry — he reminds us that it will only come at the end of infinite inquiry by an infinite number of inquirers working together in community.

Peirce's view of cognition has metaphysical implications. While ideas are fallible and emerge through communal, tentative probings, they also form themselves into habitual patterns. Peirce was always struck by the power of habit to mold and govern the process of inquiry itself. Underlying a belief in the habitual structure of ideas is his metaphysical view that nature itself is evolving into certain patterns that can also be described as habits. The so-called laws of nature are such habits that prevail at a given cosmic epoch. These habits are subject to change across long stretches of time and can reform themselves into novel patterns. The centrality of the concept of habit in cosmology, epistemology and ethics provides Peirce with a justification for both fallibilism, continual inquiry and hope in the efficacy of human reason.

THE COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY AND EVOLUTIONARY LOVE

For Peirce, pragmatism is future-directed and always open to novelty. One assumes that reality can never be adequately known by an individual inquirer Since knowledge is fallible and since nature itself is subject to novel variation (Peirce's doctrine of tychism), the individual must rely on others for some form of reliable knowledge. For Peirce, the community of inquiry is the most adequate horizon for the quest for knowledge. Peirce thought reality can only be determined by sign series — that is, it can only be discovered by a community as it works across long stretches of time.

> *The real, then, is that which sooner or later, information and reasoning would finally result in, and which therefore is independent of the vagaries of me and you. Thus, the very origin of the conception of reality shows that this conception essentially involves the notion of a community - without definite limits and capable of a definite increase of knowledge. And so these two series of cognition — the real and unreal — consists of those which, at a time sufficiently future, the community will always continue to reaffirm and of those which, under the same conditions, will ever after be denied.*[13]

Philosophy for children defines a community of inquiry as a group of people who are willing to deliberate cooperatively and collaboratively in a self-reflective and critical manner about an issue of concern to all of them. It need not be a scientific concern. Such a community is characterized by dialogue that is fashioned collaboratively out of the reasoned contribution of all the participants. in such a community, participants learn to object to weak reasoning, build on strong reasoning, care for each other as well as the procedures of inquiry, accept responsibility for making their contributions within the context of others, follow the inquiry where it leads and collaboratively engage in self-correction. Such individuals come to take pride in the accomplishments of the group, as well as oneself.

When Peirce talked of the community of inquiry, he had in mind primarily an ideal group of dedicated persons pursuing a self-correcting method of scientific investigation. It is self-correcting in the sense the objectivity lies not with the individual member but in the activity and deliberation of the entire community. Such a

community combines many insights and talents in order to arrive at some consensus, that itself, is tested against experience and recognized as tentative. Although Peirce was primarily thinking of scientific inquiry, the concept of community of inquiry was always innovated for him because it implies commitment to self-correction and critical reasoning. In such a community, all knowledge claims become subject to further analysis and evaluation. The community learns to welcome counter-examples and new frames of reference that force the participants to rethink the addictive inferences of their general theories. Such a community can make progress toward objectivity, if what we mean by objectivity is a more comprehensive understanding. For Peirce, inquiry can make a qualitative difference in our lives in bringing us a fuller understanding not only of the world but of ourselves.

The progress that the community of inquiry makes is dependent upon the ability of the participants to look at the data afresh and so conceive new frameworks in which to theorize. Once the new framework is established, the inquirers cooperate in working out its implication and in testing its consequences or results in the world. What has been verified in old frameworks rarely disappear altogether (although it conceivably could happen.) Often it has its counterpart in the new framework but is seen in an entirely different way. Peirce insisted that the method of communal inquiry was preferable to methods of authority, tenacity or a-priority reasoning as a way to come to know.

Knowledge, which itself is based on signs, can be won only when the individual participants identify with the life of the community. the community of inquiry renews itself by placing all inferences under the skeptical eye of the investigators, who are dedicated to the search for counter-examples. The community has the drive toward that ideal future in which knowledge is secure and based on general metaphysical principles such as agapism. For peirce, the search for truth and understanding in the spirit of humility is one of nature's most powerful means of making the truth appear because right reason requires respect for the facts of experience, and, at the same time, it itself is a fact of experience which must be taken into account. Experience and nature then become our final teachers and the correctors of all human theorizing.

Despite his rejection of Cartesianism and his belief in fallibilism, Peirce never lost hope in the ability of all human being to impress reasonableness on the world. For him, it was this task that sets human beings off from the animal world. The process is slow and halting. The conclusions are always fallible, but ultimately he thought such inquiry would result in a more just, reasonable world. This optimism is characteristic of the pragmatic movement of the first half of the twentieth century and it is just this optimism that is questioned by modern philosophers today.

To be a participant in a community of inquiry is to voluntarily undertake communal reasoning with others. Such reasoning involves probing logical, ethical and aesthetic, and metaphysical assumptions. Persons are signs or beings who are not tied to the infallible instincts of the animal kingdom, but beings who can control themselves by means of norms and ideals they have come to accept. To make a normative judgment is to criticize. To criticize is to attempt to correct. To attempt to correct presupposes a measure of control over what is criticized in the first place. For Peirce, logics, ethics, and aesthetics deal with three kinds of goodness and persons can begin to understand the nature of this goodness by immersing themselves in these disciplines.[14]

Peirce thought the higher development of persons within the context of the community of inquiry is characterized by a dialogue that gives us the means by which we open ourselves to the pull of ideals. The ideal of concrete reasonableness itself requires a radical openness to what may confront the individual person, either in the guise of another person or of inner thought. In developing the habit of self-correction, the community of inquiry internalizes the disposition never to ignore the different or foreign. To welcome the foreign, the novel, the alternative, is to affirm the connection between concrete reasonableness and creative love.

The higher development of human reason, for Peirce, is agapistic. Agapism is his third general principle of cosmology. It affirms that the principle of evolutionary love operates in the universe as a whole. Agape lets growth develop freely without a predetermined goal but, at the same time, growth is always toward a perfected state of concrete reasonableness. (Here we seem to be on the ground of faith.) Peirce saw all of reality as a continuum. Whatever is, for him, is part of a continuum. The general habits of nature he saw as moving toward the ideal convergence in which, in an infinite future, the disharmony and unreasonableness that we all experience in the world will be transformed into reasonableness. "Love, recognizing germs of loveliness in the hateful, gradually warms it to life and makes it

lovely."[15] It is the dialogue between persons with different views, different frames of reference, that provides the most important opportunity for this creative process.

> *It is not by dealing out cold justice to the circle of (either my interlocutors or) my ideas that I can make them grow, but by cherishing and tending them as I would the flowers in my garden.*[16]

Reason then is a form of love for Peirce. "Reason as a form of love, seeing terms of reasonableness in the irrational, gradually warms it to life and makes it reasonable. What love is in the affective domain, reason is in the cognitive sphere, namely a creative process of generalization."[17] A genuine community of inquiry manifests this love in a variety of ways: love for the tools of inquiry, love of other's ideas, love of truth, love of each other as persons, love of the ultimate ideal, love of the world. Such a community is never a mere collection of individual selves or individual ideas. It is always a living union of integrated selves. The union of selves that constitutes the community is analogous, to the coordination of ideas that constitute an individual personality. In this sense, the community of inquiry itself is a person. Peirce never saw the individual participant as a private sphere. The communicative self for him is the authentic self with its roots not in reason alone, but in agape.

Peirce thought that nature has a purpose. In this sense, he was a Hegelian. He saw nature as evolving and we, as part of nature, are also evolving. The evolution itself is characterized by chance, the brute element and reason that is subsumed under agape. It is by means of love that the mind develops and it is mind that makes nature concretely reasonable. Only so far as the cosmos itself is mind, and so has life, is it capable of further evolution. Love for Peirce was creative. It issues in new ways of looking at things. Because we are always in the process of evolving, we experience a need for love as we experience a need for reasonableness in our lives. Peirce envisioned the task of all persons to consist in consciously contributing, by means of their own self-control and self-correction, to the process of nature itself becoming more reasonable. For him, evolution itself is driven by love and such love is circular. It consists of impulses that project creations into independence and then draws them back into harmony.[18]

If a person should try to go against reason, experience itself will force her to recognize the necessity for reasonableness. If she still resists, she will destroy herself or be led to live a life of complete bondage. Such a life is characterized by a complete lack of self-control. It is unfree and, in a sense, not human. Yet, we are at liberty to choose how we want to lead our lives.

> *That is, the person can, or if you please is compelled to make his life more reasonable. What other distinct idea than that I should be glad to know can be attached to the word liberty*[19]

To be a moral agent implies autonomy, that is the capacity for self-control.

> *What most influences men to self-government is intense disgust with one kind of life and warm admiration for another. Carefull observation of men will show this; and those who desire to further the practice of self-government ought to shape their teachings accordingly. Meantime instead of a silly science of aesthetics, that tries to bring our enjoyment of sensuous beauty... that which ought to be fostered is meditation, ponderings, day-dreams (under ccontrol) concerning ideals — no, no, no, no! 'Ideals' is far too cold a word. I mean rather passionate admiring aspirations.*[20]

Without such aspirations, without such love o something higher than ourselves, the self will never grow in reason. The moral task is self-regulation in light of just these aspirations — aspirations that we have dreamed up for ourselves with the help of our fellow inquirers. It is as if we are the kinds of beings that must live for something more than ourselves. In so doing, we cooperate with nature itself in becoming more beautiful.

For Peirce then, it is up to us to make the world more reasonable. The *summum bonum* is not action but concrete reasonableness itself. However, it is human action that comes more and more to embody those characteristics which can be called reasonable. As we evolve and as nature evolves driven by the creative powers of love, communal reasoning comes to play a greater role in shaping and directing the future of nature itself. Evolution then is reason progressively manifesting itself. Again, nothing could be more Hegelian. However, Peirce's world is a far more open world than Hegel's. He leaves a great deal of room for chance, human spontaneity, novelty in this continual evolution. Reason consists in its

governing individual events and without those actual events, it would have no reality at all. It also consists in being continually embodied in facts that are themselves always open to interpretation. It follows then that reason can never be fully embodied since no number of events of actual facts can ever fulfill its potentiality.

> *So then, the essence of reason is such that its being can never be completely perfected. It always must be in a state of incipiency, of growth. It is like the character of a man which consists in the ideals that he will make, and which only develop as the occasion arise. Yet in all his life, no son of Adam has fully manifested what thee was in him. So, then, the development of reason requires as a part of it the occurrence of more individual events than ever can occur. It requires too all the coloring of all qualities of feeling, including pleasure, in its proper place among the rest.*[21]

In this schema of things, all human beings — men, women, and children — hold a privileged and unique place in the world. If reason is the working out of ideas in the world, it follows that to exclude a person from the conversation of persons regarding matters of importance is to hinder the evolution of reasonableness.[22] As children, women, and men in a community of inquiry, persons are capable of cultivating dispositions of tolerance, respect for others, self-control, self-criticism and self-correction — dispositions that may lead to reasonable actions. Women and children, as well as men, need norms and criteria to guide these actions. it is the discovery or creation of these norms and criteria that we seek when we do philosophy within the context of a community of inquiry. Such philosophizing is deliberation at a highly self-conscious level. It is not an abstract endeavor. It is always related to the universe we experience, the universe which we can come to understand to some degree because we arose out of it and are forever a part of it. The communal inquiry is the basic stuff of education.

CONCLUSION: FEMINISM AND PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN

Although there is a literature on feminist philosophy of education, one finds little stress on the importance of philosophical inquiry in the formative years of the next generation of citizens. As important as the theoretical work in feminist philosophy, sociology, political theory, linguistics and literature is, feminist philosophers need to develop a view of education that would assure that the children of today have an opportunity to engage in philosophical inquiry within the context of a non-sexist community of inquiry. Why? Because such inquiry is essential in becoming an active participant in a democratic society while at the same time being able to apply wise norms and criteria when making political and social judgments. It has always amazed me that feminist philosophers have been, till recently, so uninterested in philosophy for children as a means to bring about a non-sexist society. If they have found the one particular curriculum that was created unacceptable, I would have thought that they would have been interested in cooperatively creating an alternative curriculum that would find its way into the public and private schools of the world. If Peirce is right, such an education is essential if women are ever to be liberated and if sexism is to be overcome.

People who have been oppressed are often denied access to the education they need to become a strong voice in the dominant society. Peirce was convinced that one needed to study deeply the sub-disciplines of logic, ethics and aesthetics if one were to gain the tools of autonomous thinking. Philosophy for children aims to provide children — half of whom are females — with the opportunity to participate in philosophical communities of inquiry where each person is respected as a potential source of insight, regardless of one's sex. The children of today are the citizens and leaders of tomorrow. To the extent that they have been educated to think well, to the extent that they can apply well thought out norms and criteria to the judgments they make, to that extent they will be responsible for creating strong democracies where the voices of women are given equal consideration. Such education is essential if one is to think of the possibility of bringing about a world of international understanding and peace.

Philosophy for Children focuses on the doing of ethical, aesthetic and logical inquiry. It makes possible for young persons the opportunity to see issues from many different perspectives, while at the same time to always consider the normative question — what ought to be. The classroom community of inquiry, guided by the ideal of concrete reasonableness, is a means of preparing children to think in terms of context, criteria, consequences, while at the same time giving them the opportunity to create new norms, criteria and ideals with which to guide their lives. Such practice aims to create disposi-

tions essential for the formation of responsible children who are able to inquire collaboratively about matters of importance.

Classroom communities of inquiry result in an almost immediate positive consequences in terms of relatedness, participation, relevance and respect for persons. Feminists have been strong in their critique of traditional philosophy from many perspectives. Keller and Bordo have questioned the Cartesian assumptions of philosophy, Lloyd, the male bias of reason that has been handed down through the centuries; Moulton, the adversarial method that philosophers have used to do philosophy; Code, Jaegger, Gould, Baier, Daly and Ruddick, the separation of epistemology and ethics; Pateman, McKinnon and Hawkesworth, the male bias of political theory and Schor, the emphasis of the general at the expense of the particular. The male bias in philosophy is evident not only in what the discipline deals with, but in what it has chosen not to open for inquiry. Until recently, the perspective of women and children have not been taken into account at all. In summary, feminists have highlighted three major weaknesses of traditional philosophy: (1) lack of relevance to the personal experience of over half the population of the world (2) embeddedness in an alienating male-oriented tradition and inaccessibility due to jargon and style.[23] One of the reasons one would think that feminists would find philosophy for children appealing is that it attempts to avoid these negative aspects of traditional philosophy while at the same time laying stress on collaborative inquiry, respect for all persons, reasonableness, relevance and good judgment. Philosophy for children i an attempt to overcome the dichotomy between practice and substance in philosophy and in so doing revitalizes the discipline beyond what we would have every thought possible.

Like Peirce, modern feminist philosophy, posits that love has an epistemic role to play in the doing of philosophy. It is this same love that enables very different people in a community of inquiry to share an intellectual pursuit in a committed, rigorous and collaborative fashion. Although some feminist posit that this love is erotic rather than agapistic, like Peirce they stress that it is a source of power — that which drives persons to desire to know, understand and seek wisdom. Peirce tells us that we should love the tools of inquiry as we would a new bride. It is love that makes possible a bridge between participants in an international community of inquiry who bring very different world views to the enterprise — a bridge that can eventually be the basis for some mutual understanding of that which makes them similar and that which makes them unique. It is a sense of shared love acting as an epistemic force that can temper individualism and enable many to overcome differences that often block a more comprehensive understanding of the issue under inquiry.[24]

The claim that love is essential for understanding and wisdom is not new with Peirce or feminism. Plato, himself, eventually came to accept that in the end knowledge required a very purified form of love. It is no accident that in the *Symposium* Socrates learns this lesson from Diotima, the wise woman.

The liberation to be found for all children in doing philosophy well during the formative years of their education is of utmost importance today. Le Doeuff points out that "the most lively philosophical attitude possible is in harmony with a certain feminist tradition "because it provides the possibility of questioning the dominant values of the society and sets up the possibility of opposition and change."[25] Philosophy for children is not a political ideology. It does not aim to get children to think that they must oppose the dominant values in the society. Rather, it aims to give children the tools that they need to think for themselves about what is essential in creating a better world for themselves. Children who do philosophy well know how to question what most people take for granted and to measure what is against what they think ought to be. Such children have been provided with the intellectual tools they need to become potential agents of change for the better. But nothing is guaranteed. If it were, there would be no sense in aiming to develop children's autonomous thinking.

Although we might have many reservations about Peirce's faith in nature's inevitable reasonableness, we assume in philosophy for children that an education in excellent thinking within the context of the discipline of philosophy and the community of inquiry is a necessary first step in the evolution of a more reasonable world. Peirce warned us over and over again: **Do Not Block the Road to Inquiry!!**His own philosophical works laid out much of the theoretical foundation for an education that would aim to transform the classroom into a community of inquiry. Modern feminism is also committed to an education of inquiry in the hope that it will lead to the creation of a more just society. There is a real pragmatic sense in which neither philosophy for children nor feminism can retreat to the post-

modern world of the text with its sense of hopelessness and resignation. Even if we do not have Peirce's optimism, even if we do not have his faith in the inevitability of concrete reasonableness, it seems to me that we owe it to ourselves and the rest of nature to act as if the world can be more reasonable, can be more just, given the right education of the future citizens of the world. Such a world would be very beautiful.

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NOTES

1. See M.E. Hawkesworth, *Beyond Oppression: Feminist Theory and Political Strategy.* (N.Y.: Continuum Press, 1990); T. O'Flanagan and A.O. Rorty, *Identity, Character and Morality: Essays in Moral Psychology* (Boston: MIT Press, 1990); Azizah Yal Hibri and Margaret Simmons, *Hypatia Reborn; Essays in Feminist Philosophy* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1990); Julia Penelope, *Speaking Freely: Unlearning the Lies of the Fathers' Tongues* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1990); Marilyn Frye, *Politics of Reality: Essays in Feminist Theory.* (New York: Crossing Press, 1983); Sarah Hoagland, *Lesbian Ethics: Toward New Value.* Palo Alto: Institute of lesbian Studies, 1988); Sandra Lee Bartky, *Femininity and Domination.* (New York: Routledge, 1990); Annette Baier, *Postures of Mind: Essays on Mind and Morals.* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985); Katyryn Pyne Addelson, *Impure Thoughts: Essays on Philosophy, Feminism and Ethics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991); Catherine Stimpson, *Where the Meanings Are: Feminism and Cultural Spaces,* (New York: Methuen Press, 1988); Sarah Ruddick, *Maternal Thinking: Towards a Politics of Peace.* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989); and Susan R. Bordo. *The Flight to Objectivity: Essays on Cartesianism and Culture* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1987.)
2. See Susan Bordo, *The Flight to Objectivity.* Also Jean Grimshaw, *Philosophy and Feminist Thinking.* (Minneapolis: Un. of Minnesota Press, 1986) especially chapter 4, 7 and 8. Here Grimshaw deals overtly with the inner contradictions in some of the current feminist thinking. Also see Alistair McIntyre, *After Virtue* (South BEnd: Un. of Notre Dame Press, 1981); Catherine MacKinnon, *A Feminism Unmodified: Discourse on Life and Law.* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987); Lynee McFall *Happiness.* (New York; Peter Lang, 1989); Elizabeth Spelman, *Inessential Woman: Problems of Exclusion in Feminist Thought.* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1988); Janice Raymond, *A Passion for Friends: Toward a Philosophy of Female Affection.* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986); Iris Young, *Justice and Politics of Difference.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); Marilyn Friedman "Friendship and Moral Growth," *Journal of Value Inquiry,* 33, 1 (1989) pp. 3-13; and "Feminism and Modern Friendship: Dislocating the Community," *Ethics,* 99, January, 1989, pp. 75-90.
3. Charles Peirce, MS 6555-24 (1910)
4. Susan Bordo in her *Flight to Objectivity* is a welcomed exception. The concept of self is important in feminist literature. Simone do Beauvoir, Mary Daly, Amelie Rorty an Catherine Keller have all explored the concept from a philosophical perspective. Irigaray inquires into the concept from a psychological and philosophical framework. Nancy Chodorow attempts a psycho-social explanation, as does Dorothy Dinnerstein. Dinnerstein discusses what she takes to be the psychological sources of the dominant cultural equation of femaleness and the natural world. We first encounter the mother "before we are able to distinguish between a center of sentience and an impersonal force of nature." (p. 106 in *The Mermaid and the Minotaur*).
5. Charles Peirce, 5. 402.
6. Charles Peirce 2. 220
7. Charles Peirce, 5. 421
8. Charles Peirce, 7. 590
9. Charles Peirce, 5. 520
10. Charles Peirce, NIM 142, "The Basis of Pragmaticism" (1906)
11. Richard Bernstein, *Perspectives on Peirce* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965) pp 87-88. Also see Vincent M. Colapietro, *Peirce's Approach to the Self: A Semiotic Perspective on Human Subjectivity.* (Albany SUNY Press, 1989).
12. Peter Skagestad, *The Road of Inquiry: Charles Peirce's Pragmatic Realism* (New York: Columbia University Press 1981) chapters 1 and 5.

13. Charles Peirce, 5.311, also quoted in Robert S. Corrington, *The Community of Interpreters* (Georgia: Mercer Press, 1987) p. 13
14. Vincent Potter, *Charles Peirce: On Norms and Ideals.* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1967) pp8-25.
15. Charles Peirce, 6.289. Also see Carl R. Hauseman, "Eros and Agape in Creative Evolution: A Peircian Insight," *Process Studies* 4:1 (Spring 1974) pp 11-25. Compare with Allison M. Jagger, "Love and Knowledge: Emotion in Feminist Epistemology," in *Gender, Body and Knowledge,* Edited by Jagger and Bordo, (Rutgers University Press 1989).
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. Charles Peirce, 1.602.
19. Charles Peirce, MS 675, 15-16.
20. Charles Peirce, 1.615.
21. Ibid.
22. *Letters to Lady Welby*, edited by Irwin C. Lieb (New Haven, Yale University Press 1953) p. 28.
23. I am indebted for these insights to Sam MacColl in her "Opening Philosophy," a ms. submitted for Ann M. Sharp's, *Women and Philosophy for Children*, in preparation. MacColl cites Evelyn Fox Keller, *Reflections on Gender and Science* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985); Genevieve Lloyd, *The Man of Reason: Male and Female in Western Philosophy* (London: Methuen, 1984) Sandra Harding and Merill Hintikka, *Discovering Reality: Feminist Perspectives on Epistemology, Metaphysics, Methodology and Philosophy of Science,* Dordrecht: Reidel Press, 1983). Also see Sandra Harding's new work on feminist epistemology and philosophy of science published by Cornell University Press.
24. See Audry Lorde, "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power" in Lorde's *Sister Outside: Essays and Speeches* (New York: Crossing Press 1984) and Ruth Ginzberg, "Philosophy is Not a Luxury," in *Feminist Ethics*, edited by Claudia Caird (Kansas University of Kansas Press, 1991) p. 126-45.
25. Michel, Le Doeuff, *Hipparchia's Choice: An Essay Concerning Women and Philosophy,* (Oxford: Blackwell Press, 1991) quoted in Sam MacColl's "Opening Philosophy."

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