Feeling the Pull: Ethical Enquiry and the Tension It Creates for Teachers

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ABSTRACT: *Ethical topics are attractive starting points for philosophical enquiry with children who must live and learn together in classrooms that accommodate a plurality of values. However the appealing familiarity, practicality and accessibility of certain ethical topics can obscure the challenges such sessions present to teachers and their students. The teacher's role as facilitator of philosophical enquiry requires her to encourage open-ended, conceptually-focused dialogue, fuelled by questioning that, for the most part, 'doesn't offer any new ideas or information to the group but simply attempts to make visible, clarify, or connect what has already emerged' (Kennedy 2014 p. 755). Even where a facilitator does introduce new information, ideas, questions, or lines of enquiry, these contributions are not designed to lead the class to a particular conclusion. The facilitator typically assumes a 'self-effacing non-judgemental, and neutral role' with regards to the verdicts reached by the children, intervening only where it will challenge the class to work harder and not to advance her own position. However the teacher also embodies the often-unarticulated role of ethical instructor. In this role she must inform, guide, praise, promote, encourage, incentivise, reward, uphold and police conventional standards of good character and conduct. When we examine these two roles in context as this paper does, we begin to feel the pull. How can a teacher create space in which ethical norms can be challenged – even rejected – in the spirit of intellectually vigorous philosophical enquiry whilst simultaneously upholding and reinforcing them as non-negotiable expectations? The paper argues that the tension between the roles of 'teacher-as-philosophical-facilitator' and 'teacher-as-ethical-instructor' is not intractable, in fact when acknowledged and better understood, the apparently competing demands of these roles can be dissolved leading to an enriched ethical education for children.*

ETHICAL ENQUIRY

Ethical topics are attractive starting points for philosophical enquiry with children who must live and learn together in classrooms that accommodate a plurality of values; a brief survey of practitioner resources finds concepts such as friendship, fairness, and freedom recommended to teachers as rich and rewarding topics for philosophical enquiry with children (e.g. Lipman, 1983; Worley, 2010 Stanley, 2012). However the appealing familiarity, practicality and accessibility of certain ethical topics can obscure the challenges such sessions present to teachers and the children in their care.

The Ethical Roles of the Teacher

The teacher has multiple roles of ethical significance, among them moral exemplar, adult in loco parentis, and official representative of a school, a state, a faith, or a pedagogy such as P4C. Of particular interest in this context are two of these roles, the role of facilitator of philosophical enquiry and the role of ethical instructor. To highlight the subtle tensions exerted by these two

roles, I begin by describing them in terms that may strike the reader as polarised. I do so to help the reader feel the very pull that teachers sometimes report experiencing. However we must examine this tension mindful of the fact that in reality, these roles are embodied by the very same person and the divisions between them are generally less stark than this.

The teacher's role as facilitator of philosophical enquiry requires her to encourage open-ended, conceptually-focused dialogue, fuelled by questioning that, *for the most part*, 'doesn't offer any new ideas or information to the group but simply attempts to make visible, clarify, or connect what has already emerged' (Kennedy 2014 p. 755). Even where a facilitator does introduce new information, ideas, questions, or lines of enquiry, these contributions are not designed to lead the class to a particular conclusion. The facilitator typically assumes a 'self-effacing non-judgemental, and neutral role' with regards to the verdicts reached by the children, intervening only where it will challenge the class to work harder and not to advance her own position. She follows the discussion 'wherever it may lead but without letting the enquiry drift or lose the agreed focus' (Murris and Haynes, 2009, p.3). However that is not to say that she is personally indifferent about the issues under discussion, nor does it mean that she believes there is no right answer. She is careful to distinguish those views she subscribes to from those views she refrains from teaching (Scolnicov, 1978 p. 395). Her facilitation is not value-free since it embodies all kinds of philosophical, political and pedagogical commitments but when it comes to the *subject* of discussion, though she holds ethical views, she refrains from providing the children with an answer in the acknowledgement that she, like the children, is not an authority on what that answer might be. In the space created by her restraint, she expects the children to think. A facilitator must demand reasoned, and reasonable ethical thinking from her class but she cannot demand particular, predetermined ethical conclusions and stay faithful to the pedagogy of a community of enquiry.

However the teacher also embodies the, often-unarticulated, role of ethical instructor. In this role she must inform, guide, praise, promote, encourage, incentivise, reward, uphold and police conventional standards of good character and conduct. Ordinarily, when there is violence, disagreement, or theft in the classroom, the teacher is not a facilitator, a provocateur, a questioner or a co-enquirer –though she may assume these roles later in response to the incident. In that moment she is a moral adjudicator and authority, held responsible by parents, the state, and wider society for all aspects of character and conduct from cultivating kindness and compassion to instilling the importance of telling the truth, keeping promises, and respecting others' rights.

When we examine these two roles in context, as this paper will, we begin to feel the pull. How can a teacher create space in which ethical norms can be challenged –even rejected– in the spirit of intellectually vigorous philosophical enquiry whilst simultaneously upholding and reinforcing them as non-negotiable expectations?

FEELING THE TENSION

In what follows, drawing on examples from my experience as a philosopher, teacher, facilitator and teacher-educator, I describe two challenges associated with the tension between these roles of 'teacher-as-philosophical-facilitator' and 'teacher-as-ethical-instructor'.

The first challenge is a consequence of failing to feel this tension at all and consequently

succumbing to the pull of either one role, or the other. A teacher may not feel the pull because she understands (or perhaps misunderstands) the demands of one of her roles to the neglect of the other. Alternatively, she may recognise that she inhabits multiple roles but not see much practical difference between them. I have said previously that these differences are not as stark as I make out for rhetorical purposes, however they *are* distinct. Where we don't recognise this we may encounter certain negative consequences: either philosophically superficial ethical instruction or ethically superficial philosophical enquiry.

Philosophically Superficial Ethical Instruction

Philosophically superficial ethical instruction is generally the product of striving to fulfil the requirements of one's role as ethical instructor to the neglect of one's role as philosophical facilitator. At least in some cases, this may be a product of failing to feel the pull between the two roles or misunderstanding the subtle nature of one but not the other. We see this problem more clearly when we consider the use of moralising texts as stimuli for philosophical enquiry with children, especially where these texts are used in conjunction with moralistic facilitation – facilitation that pushes or praises a particular moral agenda. Consider *Tusk Tusk*, a picture book recommended by some specialists in philosophical enquiry with children and critically discussed in the work of Darren Chetty. Here is the full text:

> *Once, all the elephants in the world were black or white. They loved all creatures, but they hated each other, and each kept to his own side of the jungle. One day the black elephants decided to kill all the white elephants, and the white ones decided to kill the black. The peace-loving elephants from each side went to live deep in the darkest jungle. They were never seen again. A battle began. It went on...and on, and on...until all the elephants were dead. For years no elephants were seen in the world. Then, one day, the grandchildren of the peace-loving elephants came out of the jungle. They were grey. Since then the elephants have lived in peace. But recently the little ears and the big ears have been giving each other strange looks.* (Pete Mckee, 1978)

The moral message of this text –and the images that accompany it– is quite overt: Trivial and irrational issues motivate hatred and violence and the consequences of hatred and violence is invariably destruction. Tolerance of difference is the obvious solution, however violence and hatred will always resurface unless the triviality and irrationality of these positions can also be acknowledged and overcome. Far from being a 'thought-provoking and ambiguous' text, it is a moral fable. 'It remains fundamentally a didactic form, designed to draw in its readers through a compelling story and appealing, even cute, characters, and to teach important lessons through allegory.' (Grenby 2008 p. 11 cited in Chetty 2013)

It is possible of course, to encourage a class to 'read against the text'. But it would require very careful and disciplined facilitation to problematise the moral perspective here, thereby rendering it suitable for rigorous, intellectually challenging, philosophical enquiry. A teacher may ask: 'How analogous is this story to the experience of black children in this school?' and in doing so open up a critical reading. But this is contingent on a number of contextual factors   –such as the ethnic diversity of the classroom and the sensitivity of the teacher to issues of race– and it is likely in many settings that the moral message will dominate, effectively closing down critical debate. To the novice, time-poor, or fearful teacher insensitive to the demands of roles as instructor and facilitator, a text like this may present just enough rope to hang herself. The moral

message might be strong (and according to Chetty, also wrong) but the possibility for philosophical investigation and interrogation is hampered by the didactic tone. The facilitator will compound this if she chooses this text precisely because she hopes to advance its moral message or if she fails to see a way in which she might problematise its central ideas. When she does this she acts according to what she perceives to be the requirements of her role as ethical instructor: promoting and praising the generally acceptable view that hatred is bad and tolerance is good. However she doesn't feel the pull of her other role as facilitator of open-ended dialogue in which moral perspectives ought to be contested if they are to be deeply understood.

These problem may arise for a number reasons of which I suggest three are most plausible. The first is that enquiries like these may be the work of novice facilitators new to philosophical enquiry. It is easy to see how ignorance or inexperience can lead to poor stimuli choices and moralistic facilitation. A second possibility is that for all teachers philosophical enquiry jostles for attention alongside a multitude of other curricular expectations and initiatives all to be addressed in a finite period of time. It is inevitable that teachers will sometimes wish to kill two birds with one stone using their philosophical enquiry time to address Black History Month, World Book Day, or Anti Bullying Week. This conflation of two objectives may create conflicting priories for the teacher. These initiatives are rightfully ethically loaded, they advance ethical positions such as 'black history must not be side-lined'; 'reading is good for us'; ' bullying is wrong and should be eradicated'. Teaching these topics may require the teacher to motivate these positions through example and argument and in a philosophical enquiry context, this may tempt her to guide, shape or even manipulate the enquiry to meet external objectives. There is often a place for these kinds of interventions in school life, but they do not sit comfortably in a community of enquiry.

A final possibility is that fear motivates these kinds of session. According to Murris and Haynes, teachers have suggested that some of the stories used in P4C give 'the wrong message' to children. Certain books 'trigger an anxious and censorial reaction, cloaked as protectiveness, which seems to echo a current moral panic.' (Murris and Haynes, 2009, p. 2) Some teachers may sincerely want children to think about kindness or killing yet they remain concerned about the dangerous conclusions they may arrive at.

Ethically Superficial Philosophical Enquiry

Ethically superficial philosophical enquiry is generally the product of striving to fulfil the requirements of one's role as philosophical facilitator, to the neglect of one's role as an ethical instructor. At least in some cases, this may be a product of failing to feel the pull between the two roles or misunderstanding the subtle nature of one but not the other. We see this issue most clearly in the use of certain kinds of ethical dilemmas in the context of philosophical enquiry with children. Consider the famous Trolley Problem:

> *Edward is the driver of a trolley whose brakes have just failed. On the track ahead of him are five people. The banks are so steep that they will not be able to get off the track in time. The track has a spur leading off to the right and Edward can turn the trolley onto it. Unfortunately there is one person on the right-hand track. Edward can turn the trolley, killing the one. Or he can refrain from turning the trolley, killing the five. What should he do?* (Philippa Foot, 1967)

The conflict in this stimulus and the intellectual challenge it creates is evident; indeed it is engineered this way. In any ethical dilemma an agent is required to do one of two (or more) actions; he can do each of the actions; but he cannot do both (or all) of the actions. Consequently, it seems that the agent is condemned to moral failure; no matter what he does, he will do something wrong (or fail to do something right). (McConnell, 2010). In selecting the trolley problem as a stimulus and by bolstering this by self-effacing, non-judgemental, neutral facilitation a teacher may feel she has found the perfect register for rigorous philosophical enquiry on ethical issues. The use of ethical dilemmas may at first seem attractive; they neatly capture competing moral considerations; divide respondents by intuition and opinion, and demand careful deliberation and clear reasoning. However philosophical dilemmas such as these present their own problems that are particularity evident in the classroom.

Ethical dilemmas, in particular, fail to engage a range of ethically relevant narrative features. They are often minimally temporal: you're not in the world for long, save for the lengthy pause at the moment of decision when the time-critical moment of truth is often misrepresented, existing as an eternal pause in which the agent –in this case Edward– may take all the time he needs to deliberate: 'do I pull the lever?' In doing so dilemmas prioritise cool intellectual reasoning over the affective heat of the time-pressured moment. Ethical dilemmas are also deliberately inflexible and polarising and as a consequence, they fail to convincingly capture the causality and contingency of everyday life. Some deny a world in which many options are live, what remains is a stark bifurcation: do you pull the lever *or not?* In doing so the moral imagination is denied the possibility of finding a third way. (Robinson, 2014, p. 18) Children confronted with this dilemma will say: 'Can I shout down to the men?' 'Can I wave to the driver?' 'Can I meet the families afterwards to say sorry?' The answer is invariably 'no'. To engage in this dilemma you must play by the rules without imaginative deviation. Furthermore, most ethical dilemmas purposefully lack detail; the people that populate them are often nameless, ageless, and faceless; the places they live and die are anonymous. Ethical dilemmas are often causally restricted with little or no attention paid to what happened before the present action or what will happen next. Skeletal thought experiments typically lack psychological insight, characters such as Thomson's 'Fat Man' (a variant of the original Trolley Problem) rarely speak and so they cannot communicate their hopes and fears and as a consequence, such stories resist emotional engagement. (Thomson, 1978). Finally, unlike real ethical life or the rich narratives that represent it, the ethical dilemma frames the issue too tightly, effectively screaming: *there is an ethical issue at stake here!* (Robinson, 2014, p. 18) By using dilemmas the teacher communicates something about the nature of ethics that she may not intend: that ethical issues are exclusively, intellectual, overt or unmistakable, and irreconcilable. For teachers who must be ethical instructors as well as philosophical facilitators, this presents a problem.

Besides these reasons for thinking skeletal dilemmas unsuitable for ethical instruction, we must also acknowledge that acts of killing are incredibly rare in real ethical life, and ever rarer for children. Where they do exist they are more likely to be the result of extreme circumstances such as war, disaster and acute psychological distress. 'Those few who are faced with dilemmas that involve killing are often profoundly psychically wounded by their actions. Even the thought of killing – of *really* pulling a lever amidst the screeching of breaks and screaming of terrified people – unnerves the ethically alert person. Contemplating killing, is not an intellectual game; it is a profound act of the ethical imagination that requires both a clear head and a beating heart.'

(Robinson, 2014, p. 17) The use of some skeletal dilemmas present compelling intellectual challenges to students but in the classroom context where ethical instruction is also a priority, they risk making a game out of the serious business of the ethical education of children.

The problem of ethically superficial philosophical enquiry may arise for a number reasons. Firstly, teachers who have received formal philosophical training may understandably look to thought experiments –devices of the imagination used to investigate the nature of things– as reliable and rich stimulus for philosophical enquiry. This may also be true of teachers who have received instruction and mentoring from those with a formal philosophical education. The use of thought experiments in academic philosophy is commonplace, though sometimes contested. (Gendler, 2000) From Searle's Chinese room and Putnam's twin earth to Jackson's Mary the colour scientist; thought experiments have expanded and enriched academic philosophical discourse and beyond. Their use in schools can also be found in the work of Thinking Space and the Philosophy Foundation among other organisations philosophising with children. Thought experiments afford both academics and students a means by which they can explore an intended realm of investigation without new empirical data. However the uses of certain kinds of thought experiments, specifically skeletal dilemmas, are not always as useful as they may seem. Such dilemmas by their very nature, scrimp on the contextual detail that helps children make connections with their everyday acts of ethical reasoning and become perceptive of the ethically salient features of complex situations. Their emotional flatness implies emotions have no role in ethical deliberation. The intellectual stimulation such paired-down puzzles provide may appeal to the teacher-as-philosophical-facilitator. But in doing so, it may distract teachers from the equally important task of providing children with ethically educative experiences. These ethically educative experiences, which may also be philosophically rigorous, are more likely to be found in rich 'flesh and blood' narratives full of character, complexity, and contingency –since these are the factors at play in moral life.

Another explanation for ethically superficial philosophical enquiry may be found in the attitude of educators to ethics. Where there is the belief that ethical reasoning is essentially an intellectual exercise, we are more likely to find the emotions and imagination are neglected. This attitude should come as no surprise since there is a long history in academic philosophy – found notably in Kantianism and Utilitarianism– of treating ethics as the concern of supreme rationality alone.

A final explanation presents itself. There are many philosophy teachers who are external practitioners visiting schools for an hour a week to lead discrete philosophy sessions. For many reasons, these practitioners may not consider it their role to instruct children on ethical matters of conduct or character. Even where such a practitioner does consider ethical instruction to be part of her role she may limit the exercise of their authority to simple practical matters such as good manners and compliance with basic rules, leaving instruction and intervention on significant matters such as bullying, homophobia, or racism to the class teacher. If an external practitioner considers it her role to talk with a class *about* bullying, without regard to incidents of bullying taking place within the class or without authority to police or punish bullying –or to protect the bullied– then she will not feel this pull. But that does not mean that it isn't there. Philosophising in a school setting cannot be disentangled from the child's ethical development since it is –in part– the promise of this development that justifies the compulsory nature of schooling.

A Note On My Examples

By using these polarised examples, I am being descriptive rather than prescriptive. I suggest that these kinds of scenarios do sometimes occur and that where they do, this may be the result of failing to feel the pull of these two roles. Often this is a result of an inadequate understanding of either ethical instruction or philosophical facilitation. We might think, for example, that ethical instruction necessarily involves the habituation of character traits that are uncontroversial. Or we might think that philosophical facilitation is necessarily rationalistic and removed from everyday concerns. Neither of these things is true, and these examples are designed to highlight this and prompt a more nuanced understanding of a teacher's roles. It is not my intention to suggest that we *ought* to think of ethical instruction and facilitation in these impoverished ways.

One might respond to this account by dismissing the sketches above as examples of bad practice. Good quality ethical enquiry is neither moralistic and manipulative nor abstract and disconnected from everyday life and most teachers navigate this middle ground quite well. This is true, however, I should emphasise here that this occupation of the middle ground ought to be intentional and this requires an appreciation of the subtleties of both roles. These examples attempt to assist here by demonstrating how and why things might go wrong.

FEELING AND FEARING THE TENSION

The second challenge arises for teachers when the tension between 'teacher-as-philosophical-facilitator' and 'teacher-as-ethical-instructor' is acknowledged but is considered intractable. Here there is the risk that the teacher –fearful of moralising, trivialising, transgressing, or confusing– will avoid ethical topics altogether. This is most evident when we take a long view of philosophical interventions. Consider, for example, the religious school that includes philosophical enquiry in school life but advocates that religious topics and ethical issues related to them are best avoided. In a school with a Christian ethos and devout population, a teacher who recognises the tension created by her roles, might face a considerable challenge. How should she manage discussion around core beliefs and values (evolution, sex before marriage, or life after death) in such a way as advance those values whilst ensuring that they are also interrogated? One pragmatic solution is to avoid such issues favouring instead metaphysics, language, and logic where the tension is less likely to be felt.

This approach is understandable but it is ultimately inadequate as a solution. Primarily, this is because the consideration of ethical issues is a crucial part of a philosophical education. Many ethical issues –among them secrets, divorce, recycling, and consumerism– have great relevance for students, connecting with everyday experiences that are both mundane and deeply mysterious. Not only are these issues current for children and young people, they also have enormous significance for their future and the future of the society at large. Questions of how to treat a partner or how to treat the planet will resonate throughout the lives of young people and the consequences of unreflective actions will be felt by others. This is not to suggest that dealing with ethical issues in the philosophy classroom will resolve these problems. While they are undoubtedly connected to children's lives, they are also widely contested. Within the community of enquiry children will encounter conflicting and contradictory views; indeed throughout the course of their lives, the later views of young people and adults may well conflict

with those of childhood. The value of dealing with ethical issues in childhood is not to arrive at neat answers for future reference. Its value is in rehearsing those intellectual, emotional, and imaginative skills that will be required when confronting ethical problems now and in the future; or to put it another way, to cultivate the virtues. It is precisely because ethical issues are both deeply connected to everyday life and deeply contested that they present such a valuable educational challenge to students. Far from being a soft-touch subject, ethical issues explored philosophically –especially those presented in rich narrative contexts– make significant intellectual demands on students to judge, justify, hypothesise, exemplify, compare, contrast, critique, analyse, and summarise. Simultaneously they ask us to engage affectively, feeling sympathy, pity, compassion, anger, disgust, hope, forgiveness, and even love. Few educational experiences demand that we respond as holistically as ethical educational experiences.

A further reason why dodging ethical issues in philosophical work with children won't do is this: ethical issues will arise anyway. Even sessions on logic must have content that will inevitably be provided by the children's own experiences, concerns, and interests. Children live and learn in a world imbued with value and there are very few learning experiences where these values can be excluded. Finally, avoiding ethics for fear of the tension it might exert on the facilitator, fails to recognise the complementary nature of the roles of 'teacher-as-philosophical-facilitator' and 'teacher-as-ethical-instructor'. In what follows I will elaborate on this.

RELIEVING THE TENSION

This tension is not intractable, in fact when acknowledged and better understood, the apparently competing demands of these roles begin to dissolve and an appreciation of this can enrich the ethical education of children. Though the teacher-as-philosophical-facilitator and the teacher-as-ethical-instructor employ different methods, the outcomes they aim at are in fact complementary. This becomes clearer when we see the ethical education of children through an Aristotelian lens.

Aristotelian ethical education involves the cultivation of virtue: both ethical virtues such as courage and intellectual virtues such as wisdom. Becoming virtuous is achieved in stages according to Aristotle who describes a process whereby individuals must develop the proper habits (*hexis*) during their childhood, and then, when their reason is fully developed, must acquire practical wisdom (*phronêsis*). 'This does not mean that first we fully acquire the ethical virtues, and then, at a later stage, add on practical wisdom. Ethical virtue is fully developed only when it is combined with practical wisdom'. (Kraut, 2014) Aristotle himself would consign children to the first phase until adulthood –with the exception of female children and slaves who are excluded from the development of virtue altogether. However I want to suggest that from this position where our actions and emotions are tested and corrected, through education we are all able to make the transition from relying on the instructions of others to thinking for ourselves.

Through this Aristotelian lens we might regard ethical instruction as an essential part of ethical education. Before they develop the good character to see compelling reasons for acting well and desire to act on those reasons for their own good, children begin the development of good character through obedience, imitation, and the formation of good habits. This requires both role models and authority figures that can instruct them on how to be and how to behave.

We may rightfully have concerns about ethical instruction. It is contingent upon the teacher's good character and the adequacy of the rules set out by the school or society. At its worst, ethical instruction can be ad hoc, unreflective, inflexible, prejudiced, and misguided. However even where ethical instruction is not at all like this, we should still have concerns since instruction alone is insufficient for the development of good character and the conduct that results from it. Ethical education should aspire to more than the development of obedient rule-followers, mechanical creatures of habit, or mimics. Actions that issue from these kinds of states might hardly be considered moral at all. Providing children with an ethical education does not require us to suspend them in a state of unreflective passivity nor is this implied on an Aristotelian view. In fact, Aristotle's use of hexis, from where the translation 'habit' derives, denotes an active condition –'a tendency or disposition, induced by our habits, to have appropriate feelings' (Kraut, 2014). Hexis is not automatic; it still involves choice. We must choose to habituate our emotions so that they respond appropriately to ethical challenges. Though they may be pulled in different directions, a person who has been habituated in this sense finds themselves in a more stable position to judge how to act well for reasons she is committed to with the right kind of desires in play. Such a person is in a state of *readiness* to act. (Simon, 1986)

It is our job as educators to create the conditions in which a child can actively and reflectively develop good character and act accordingly. Here the teacher's ability to facilitate philosophical enquiry is ally and not a foe. Subjecting received ethical wisdom –of the kind communicated in schools rules or teacher's admonishments– to philosophical investigation can bring it into the light where children and teachers alike can examine it. Teachers should not fear that the standards of good character and conduct they promote fail to stand up to scrutiny of children, since where these standards do stand up to scrutiny, the children gain a deeper and more enduring appreciation of the norms, expectations, and values that shape their lives and they gain insight into their own developing character. In the rare cases where the standards recommended by teachers fail to stand up to scrutiny, questions are rightfully raised about their legitimacy. Even in cases where instruction is the product of careful, perceptive, and reflective thought, the quality of thinking that produced these instructions cannot be expected of children who have not been offered their own opportunity to think in this way. Philosophical enquiry helps us create these conditions, helping us to 'develop a larger picture of human life, [in order that] our deliberative skills improve, and our emotional responses are perfected.' (Kraut, 2014)

Through the same Aristotelian lens, we may appreciate that the facilitation of philosophical enquiry around ethical stimuli is the natural next step in a classroom already committed to supporting the development of good character and conduct however that is to be construed. Although the development of practical wisdom is partly a matter of accumulating life experience, it is also a matter of perception; of being able to identify the salient features of a situation and being responsive to the right kinds of reasons. Philosophising is an activity explicitly concerned with reasoning and here we begin to see its contribution to the ethical education of children. For Aristotle, reasoning is intimately connected with living well; insofar as if we are rational, we aim at living well. The person who develops practical wisdom is in theory, someone who is able to navigate the complex ethical world without instruction motivated by the desire to live well. This is a worthy aim for ethical educators.

However compelling in theory, experience in the classroom reveals some concerns about the limits of philosophical enquiry. At its worst it can be overly intellectualistic, disinterested,

abstract, pedantic and even myopic. Those who use it many have no aspiration to cultivate good character and conduct and that within the classroom, the insights gained by children in ethical discussion, may have little or no bearing on how the classroom is governed or how the individual lives his life. Even where philosophical enquiry is not at all like this, our concerns must remain since the facilitation of philosophical enquiry alone is insufficient for the development of good character and conduct. In order to analyse and understand virtue in a fruitful manner, children must first have accrued ethical experiences along with the pleasure that accompanies being good and the desire to be good that flows from that. This phase in the development of virtue is best supported by instruction.

However, I do not mean to suggest that with the advent of philosophical enquiry comes the end of instruction. It is not realistic to expect children to 'graduate' from hexis to phronêsis while at school, in fact, we may well doubt if we ever 'graduate' in adulthood. The need for instruction in the form of examples, guidance, rules, and punishment in schools remains. However there is scope for the dialogue that takes place in a community of enquiry to shape these instructions. This is in keeping with the Deweyan democratic spirit of a community of enquiry, which is thought of 'as both seeking to attain desirable goals, and arguing over how to do so, and also as arguing over what a desirable goal is.' (Dewey, 1987, p. 56) If knowledge acquisition within a community of enquiry 'is a public process with people agreeing and disagreeing about what counts as knowledge – something that can be challenged, evaluated and possibly changed (by everyone, including young children), then it follows that knowledge should be presented to children as contestable and always open to revision. (Haynes and Murris, 2009, p.10) This includes ethical knowledge of the kind espoused in ethical instruction in schools. Philosophizing about ethical issues as a discrete activity that has no bearing on classroom life, is not an authentic option in this case.

Instruction provides the groundwork for enquiry and enquiry ought to inform future instruction. Consequently, in order to do her job, the teacher must be both instructor and facilitator, and she should look beyond the tensions these roles create, to the complementary nature of their aims. I do not intent to dissolve this distinction entirely, suggesting contrarily that facilitators should push or prohibit certain agendas, or that instructors should use every instruction as an opportunity for debate. There is a right time and place for the enactment of each of these roles and the teacher is best placed to make this judgment. However I do hope that a deeper understanding of these roles reveals that like so many distinctions, they are not so stark as they first appear. Is it not possible that a teacher-as-ethical-instructor could become more philosophical? Or that a teacher-as-philosophical-facilitator could become more instructive? Finally, let's not forget, that one and the same person embodies these two roles; and so the separation between the two can never be as pronounced as my nomenclature might imply.

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