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Teaching as an Ethical Act

Center for Catholic Studies, Seton Hall University

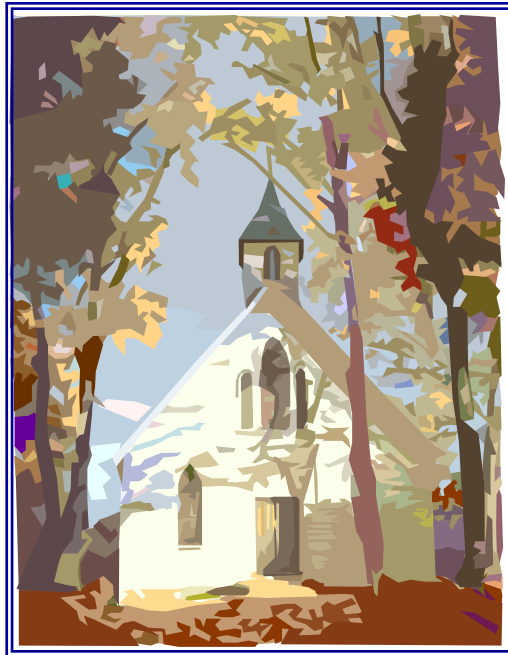
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“TEACHING AS AN ETHICAL ACT”



**2010 Summer Seminar
Center for Catholic Studies
Seton Hall University**

CENTER FOR CATHOLIC STUDIES

Faculty Summer Seminar 2010

“Teaching as an Ethical Act”

Facilitator: Dr. Michael Doorley
Director of the Ethics Program at Villanova University



May 25-27, 2010

“Teaching as an Ethical Act”

Teaching is a profession that places those of us who are teachers into powerful and influential roles. As with any exercise of power, one must learn to wield that power responsibly. It is on this question of responsibility that this workshop focuses its energies. We will look for guidance in the work of the late philosopher/theologian Bernard Lonergan to sort through the ethical dimensions of teaching – raising questions about one’s attentiveness to the task, one’s openness to insight, one’s quality of judgment, and one’s more or less adequate response to what is valuable. Finally, we will explore how one can understand and value one’s teaching as an act of love, calling on St. Augustine for inspiration and example.

Dr. Mark Doorley received his M.Div. from the Washington Theological Union in 1988 and his Ph.D. in Philosophy from Boston College in 1994. He has taught at Villanova University since the Fall of 1997, where he has served as Director of the Ethics Program. His research focuses on the analysis of human consciousness. He is the author of *The Pace of the Heart* (University Press of America, 1996) and co-edited *In Deference to the Other: Lonergan and Contemporary Continental Thought* (SUNY Press, 2004).

Since 1998 the annual Faculty Summer Seminar has provided the opportunity for faculty to reflect in depth on topics central to the purpose of learning and teaching at Seton Hall University.

This seminar is co-sponsored by the Center for Catholic Studies and the Center for Vocation and Servant Leadership at Seton Hall University and it is part of a series of such workshops focusing on the notion of “calling” in the various disciplines.

The Center for Catholic Studies at Seton Hall University is dedicated to a dialogue between the Catholic intellectual tradition and all areas of study and contemporary culture. For further information please visit our website: academic.shu.edu/ccs

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Teaching as an Ethical Act

Paula B. Alexander

I participated in the Faculty Development Seminar, May 25-17, 2010, which focused on “Teaching as an Ethical Act.” The seminar was led by Mark Doorley, Ph.D., who directs the Ethics Program at Villanova University. The approach was based on the Theology of Bernard Lonergan, S.J.; there have been several seminars and symposia organized by Monsignor Richard Liddy, Director of the Center for Catholic Studies at Seton Hall, in which I have participated, and which help us integrate Bernard Lonergan’s approach into our own thinking and into the curriculum. I am grateful for the opportunity to have gathered with my colleagues to have considered teaching as an ethical act, under the leadership of Professor Doorley and Monsignor Liddy.

Initially, the topic, “teaching as an ethical act” intrigued me. Indeed I have long considered teaching to involve ethical obligations, particularly the obligation to offer educational value and to be fair in grading. My practice to assure fairness in grading has been to make sure that I feel comfortable with the grades. What I do is first to “estimate” the term grade holistically, then I “crunch” the numbers, and wait a couple of days to see how comfortable with the grades I am. The other perspective about teaching as an ethical act which I brought to the seminar is that more recently I have pondered the role of emotions in teaching. My consideration of the role of emotions in teaching has been both “professional” and personal. The recognition of emotional intelligence is a topic that I have integrated into my teaching curriculum. But more personally I have wondered about whether and how to incorporate my own emotional responses into my interactions with students and in in the classroom. I have found that students who are “lazy,” or who appear to be “lazy” and who fail to put forth good effort, or who engage in inappropriate conduct generate a negative emotion in me, and I have wondered whether and how to express such emotion in those instances. It is easier with positive emotions, but even there one, I, need to watch out for the perception of favoritism by other students who perceive the positive bonds with certain students. And a few years ago, I decided, partly in

response tone of our more mature MBA students “reading me” to let go and to engage my emotions in teaching. In some cases, and perhaps even for the most part, this has had a positive effect with my engagement with students. However, this has not been the case in all instances: at least my expression of negative emotions, or acting on them, to or with students has been sometimes followed by a negative response by students. This observation, along with the “college fear factor” that we learned about during the seminar, in a discussion led by author Rebecca Cox, and the power differential between professors and students, provide a note of caution. Nevertheless, the demonstration of a connection between social bonding and learning (imprinting) and my observation of the role of emotion in athletics, particularly the relationship of players and coaches, affirms my sense to engage with students emotionally as well as intellectually. The question is how? And the answer developed in the seminar, and in reflection, is to follow Lonergan’s five transcendent principles: be attentive; be intelligent; be reasonable; be responsible and be loving.

Be attentive, and self-monitoring about my own emotions, and the effect that their expression may have on the student and class or students observing us. Be intelligent in assessing the learning environment created by my own role and that of the other students in the classroom. Be reasonable in expectations, and in the expression of emotions. More specifically, I have been fortunate to have been mentored in my education, in all stages throughout my life. This mentoring process has had a constructive effect on both my education and my life, and I note that my own mentoring of students has had a positive impact on my students’ lives. So the reasonable expression of emotion in teaching may require that the expression of negative emotion serve as a “call” to the student or students in question to be better. Be responsible; most recently I have explicitly stated “rules of engagement” for the classroom; the seminar in Corporate Social Responsibility is case, and discussion based. During this past academic year, I found that some students even in the graduate program were not engaged, but using computer to do other work, “multi-tasking” particularly during presentations led by other

Gaged, but using a computer to do other work, “multi-tasking” particularly during presentations led by other students. Now I have added an explicit statement about “rules of engagement” and the learning environment for the classroom to the syllabus, I have always thought that knowledge creates an obligation to act, and I explicitly articulate this perspective in my teaching, particularly when we consider Business ethics; I feel affirmed in this perspective as a result of the presentations by Professor Doorley, and in our discussions.

One of the other topics introduced by Professor Doorley was an article by William Deresiewicz “The Disadvantages of an Elite Education,” from *The American Scholar*. I concur with the perspective that the arrogance and pride that comes with admission and enrollment in our elite educational institutions is something that we can do without. Indeed, I attended, and graduated from New York University School of Law and there was a lot of arrogance among the students admitted to this elite institution. But that did not mean that the education presented and which we received did not call us to critical and independent thinking. Indeed it did, and in fact, one of the difference I noted between the education in law at New York University compared to other, less-elite institutions, is that we were invited to develop and express our own opinions, and indeed as first-year law students, to critique even the opinions of the United States Supreme Court. Indeed I have noted particularly among our MBA candidates differences among their undergraduate foundation, work ethic and critical and analytical thinking. So I am a supporter of elite education, without the arrogance.

The other point raised by Professor Doorley that challenged me was a critique of the philosophy of Liberalism, the notion that “Progress” is inevitable. The faculty of Villanova apparently has decided to challenge the philosophy of Liberalism. This served as a challenge to me, particularly as I present and discuss certain philosophical foundations of business ethics. So this is a point of reflection for me. Certainly we will continue to discuss such approaches as John Locke on private property, Immanuel Kant, and John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*. My approach to corporate social responsibility with our MBA candidates invites, and hopefully requires, the students

to engage in critical thinking about events in our time, and that there are many setbacks, that do not constitute inevitable progress. But I will continue to consider whether and how assumptions of Liberalism should be questioned.

Overall, the seminar has challenged me “to be a better person,” and in particular to examine my own habits of attention; intelligence; reasonableness; responsibility; and lovingness. The challenge is to model these principles in my own life, so that they are enacted in my own life, and observable by my students and colleagues.

Teaching as an Ethical Act

Tracey L. Billado

I found the seminar on “Teaching as an Ethical Act” both interesting and useful, and I thank the organizers, presenter and participants for the experience. The three topics that were perhaps most valuable and relevant to my own teaching were the discussions of the purpose of a university, the “patterns of experience” outlined by Bernard Lonergan, and how we should attempt to address students where they are. Consideration of these topics pushed me to think more clearly about the ways I teach medieval history and construct my courses, as well as about the way our history major is constructed. Much of what follows is or will be incorporated into my introductory lectures for my courses and my discussions with my advisee history majors.

If the purpose of a university is to encourage students to want to learn, the history classroom is sometimes a place where I have to overcome other approaches to learning. As I often joke with my students on the first day of class, I hated history classes in high school. A number of my students have told me that they had avoided or were wary of taking college-level history courses because they had had experiences similar to mine. What we had in common were teachers—in my case, a teacher who was primarily a football coach—who approached history as the simple dissemination of information for students to memorize and regurgitate. While there certainly is a place for memorization in all kinds of learning, such an approach is not terribly conducive to thinking, which is what I want my students to be doing. Or, in the language of Bernard Lonergan, I want the students to be engaged in the “intellectual pattern of experience,” in which students attempt to answer questions, solve puzzles, and consider the relationships that particular pieces of data have to one another.

One of the ways I can attempt to encourage students into this “pattern of experience” is to discuss with them on the first day of classes how studying history is not simply memorizing historical facts that, in and of themselves, have little or no meaning or relevance to our lives. My role as a teacher is not to fill students’ brains up with information and reward those students who are

best able to repeat in an exam the materials from my lectures and their textbooks. Rather, I should attempt to encourage students’ desire to learn by showing them that the relevance of whatever they are studying depends on their active engagement, in this case with the past. That is something that can never be accomplished by memorization alone. In fact, although history classes necessarily involve conveying knowledge to students, in many ways it is better that students *learn* history, rather than know it. In other words, the process matters just as much as the result. Learning history, rather than memorizing it, is a process that requires students’ full involvement, whereby they analyze data, look for patterns and relationships, ask probing questions and, in a sense, discover for themselves the meaning of the past.

Presenting historical materials as puzzles is one way to actively engage students in the learning process. Getting students to interact with primary materials—the “raw materials” of history, which are documents or objects that come directly from the period under study—has been one of the best ways I have found to accomplish this goal. Students’ curiosity about medieval Europe—a culture at once both familiar and alien to our own—is much more easily brought out by having students read, for example, an Icelandic Saga or the transcript of the trial of Joan of Arc, rather than read textbook accounts or my lectures that summarize the material. I plan to add more of these materials to my courses so that at least once a week, my courses will involve discussion and interpretation of these primary sources. This approach, of course, has the added benefit that students do not come to class simply expecting to write down whatever I say about the materials. By analyzing primary sources alongside works by historians who have used those sources, students will be able to see how history, and what historians do, is a *process* rather than a static fund of facts to assign to memory. For most class sessions, I certainly have an outline of issues I wish to raise and connections I want the students to see in the materials. But engaging the students always means leaving room for students to surprise me (and themselves) with what they see in the texts and how they react to and build on other

students' comments. My hope is that students will leave the classroom with a desire to continue this process in other areas of their lives.

I also plan to discuss these goals with my advisees in the history department when reviewing the requirements for their major. We recently finished a revision of our curriculum that not only encourages and allows students to pursue their own interests, but also requires them to take more courses that are reading and discussion-driven, rather than lecture-based. In particular, our new upper-level colloquium, which I taught for the first time last semester, will be an excellent arena for teaching students how to think by encouraging them to use assigned materials to find their own questions around which to craft assignments and essays.

Finally, a course in pre-modern history may be a sometimes difficult place for addressing students where they are, but two ways in which I do this are by incorporating discussion of historical films into the classroom, as well as relating course materials to contemporary issues. Most students' familiarity with ancient and medieval history comes from Hollywood. My courses thus involve at least one discussion of a historical film, along with related primary sources and an essay on historicity in film. These assignments show students that they have learned enough factual information to critique cinematic representations of historical events and persons. The assignments move beyond mere questions of "accuracy," however, leading students to discuss contemporary uses of the past, and making the historical process more immediate and relevant to them as human beings. Similarly, in classroom discussions of topics such as capital punishment in the ancient world or medieval torture, students often will refer to contemporary issues that are significant to their own lives. Rather than stifle discussion of these topics—as I have had my own former professors do—I use these moments to impress upon students exactly how their own engagement with and interpretation of the past is relevant to their own lives, no matter how remote they considered the subject upon entering the classroom.

In closing, I am grateful for the opportunity of participating in the seminar, as well as for the opportunity to reflect on these subjects here.

Teaching as an Ethical Act

Maureen Byrnes

Having the opportunity to attend Seton Hall University's Faculty Summer Seminar "Teaching as an Ethical Act" has provided me with many new insights into the philosophic discussion of ethics that can serve as foundational precepts for many teaching disciplines. My gratitude to the university's Center for Catholic Studies and the Center for Vocation and Servant Leadership must be acknowledged for providing this opportunity.

As a member of the College of Nursing, I recalled how I was required to take a Philosophy course as an undergraduate nursing student, and can still remember the lively classroom conversation on Plato's "What is Justice?" Our lively faculty seminar discussions, facilitated for us by Dr. Mark Doorley, focused on Lonergan's view on a university being a "center for the pursuit of truth." Dr. Doorley's *Spiritual Exercises in Cosmopolis* proposed that "fear is the empowering emotion of the day; fear is what motivates our polity, our economy and, indeed, our religion." The spiritual dimensions of my profession as a nurse-midwife and role as nursing faculty, leading and instructing our nursing students in maternal-newborn care, are never far from my conscious level of awareness. This seminar has helped me remember the important aspects of responding to a 'calling' within one's professional life as a vocation. There are numerous opportunities and aspects of teaching nursing that provide this faculty member with the opportunity to live my faith and without fear. This may indeed be a unique perspective in an academic setting, yet one that is appreciated, I feel, by nurses on a daily basis as they care for human needs within the physical, emotional and spiritual realms. Perhaps, as I reflect now on my nursing, God-appropriation applies to my *Spiritual Exercise in Cosmopolis*. The development of one's spiritual life is addressed in Dr. Doorley's discussion of Lonergan, in noting the need for silence and the need to honestly put one's life before another. "What is necessary is that one allow one other person, one who is him or herself engaged in the life of self-appropriation, to listen to one's story." The role of a sponsor in 12-step programs was referred to by Dr. Doorley in his essay. People in

recovery programs refer to it being "a simple program for simple people; and a complex program for complex people". "Teaching as an Ethical Act" can easily reflect the simplicity inherent within a 12-step program. The three foundational tenets of AA; "don't drink, get a sponsor, go to meetings" can be translated as "don't cheat, communicate with your academic advisor, go to class." *Spiritual Exercises in Cosmopolis* can be appreciated within the work of one of the famous co-founder's of AA fellowship, "As Bill Sees It", which were borrowed from the fields of religion and medicine. The spiritual ideas of the fellowship were codified for the first time and the application of those steps to its members' dilemma were made clear. I will strive to "Keep It Simple" as I come "to believe that a Power greater than ourselves (myself) can restore us (me) to (clarity regarding ethical teaching)" and as I address any roadblocks of indifference I may have in understanding the importance of my faculty role in modeling ethical behavior reflecting my "right relationship to God" for our students... "As Maureen Sees It."

Augustine's case studies between teacher and student, "Instructing Beginners" and "Confessions", were provided for the faculty seminar participants as part of our required reading materials. This was my first exposure to Augustine's work reflected his ideas on teacher/student interactions. And so Augustine's notion of "it is in loving one another that we learn" and "the relationship is what makes things work" will be a very important aspect of my approaching the learning environment of both my nursing theory and nursing clinical course work here at Seton Hall University. Dr. Doorley encouraged us to apply the material to my own life. Dr. Doorley challenged us, as Augustine did, to "bring him (the student) to the point that he actually enjoys being the kind of person that he wishes to appear" not by forcing, but by providing opportunities for the student to reflect on their own ethical behavior. During the Fall semester, I presented by freshmen nursing students with an opportunity to consider their values and ethics studying nursing by attending a lecture "Making a Life,

by Professor Gene Ahner, of the Catholic Theological Union of Chicago. I requested a brief essay of the nursing students who chose to attend to see if their exposure to this topic could “bring them to the point where (they) actually (could) actually enjoy being the kind of (nursing student) that (they) wish to appear” being. I offer a student’s submitted essay here, as testimony to Augustine and Doorley.

Mr. Ahner spoke on how most business people are taught to not lie, cheat, or steal, but they end up still doing (those things) because of greed. Business people want money, lots of it, and quickly. They have the tendency of doing anything for the money. He stated a bunch of things that he has seen business people do for the money. As he kept on talking about business matters I began to think that the same policy would go for nurses. Nurses are also taught to not lie, cheat, or steal in not only their respective work places but in their everyday lives as well. A Nurse is responsible for the treatment, safety, and recovery of people who are ill. Nurses are told to promote health and give a sense of stability within families, and communities. Nurses, in short, are the stronghold of society. So if nurses were to lie, cheat, or steal, society would go into a decline. Nurses are supposed to set examples to all people. Their patients trust them with their lives, literally. If a nurse is lying, cheating, or stealing it could either end in a patient’s unfortunate death, or losing their jobs. At first I thought nothing would really grasp me at this lecture because I believed the whole lecture was about business and even though it was mostly about business I managed to look at the values of business men and women and applied them to the values nurses, and eventually found that the two professions are not too different at all.

Having had the opportunity to attend Seton Hall University’s Faculty Summer Seminar: “Teaching as an Ethical Act” has helped me to clarify for myself that addressing ethics within the academic environment is of the utmost importance.

Ethics is not only important to the student-nurse during their four years here at Seton Hall University but for the 40 years that they are not.

Teaching as an Ethical Act: The Profession of Nursing

Colleen Carrington

The profession of nursing “called” me as a young girl of thirteen or fourteen. Now it is more than 40 years later. I have never doubted, or regretted my decision to make nursing my life’s work. Every moment has been an inspiration. I have grown up in the profession. Nursing has molded me, matured me, enlightened me, and created a comfortable identity for me. I am most complete in the role of nurse.

I have never taken this blessing for granted. It is a unique gift from God to be given a role in life that fulfills you emotionally, intellectually and spiritually. I have attempted to nurture this gift by continuously expanding my knowledge and enhancing my role through higher levels of education.

This has lifted me to “higher ground.” I would not have thought it possible to find an equally sacred form of expression to nursing, but I have been lead to a *new* calling. Just 10 months ago I found myself standing in front of a class of nursing students. I am a “teacher.” I can share my joys and experiences of nursing with young aspiring students who have received the same calling. I have been humbled by this enormous responsibility. I pray that I will never take for granted this venerable opportunity. I am relentlessly seeking insights and instructions to guide me in the delicate work of reaching the minds and souls of the students in my charge. This is the reason I was drawn to the summer seminar given for the Seton Hall University Faculty, entitled: “Teaching as an Ethical Act.” I have come to find over this first year of teaching, that making a “connection” with a student is as valued and fulfilling as the nurse patient relationship. I see my role as an influential one. I hope that by my passion for the profession of nursing, I will have a positive influence on the novice nurses in my care. Teaching is a new role, not a new identity. I am still a nurse. Teaching nursing has simply added a new dimension to my profession.

Reflecting upon the discussion presented by Dr. Mark Doorley, where a focus was placed on the responsibilities we have as teachers to in-

fluence and guide our students in a moral and ethical way, I have gained an understanding of my first experience of teaching and the amazing range of emotions I have felt, of the deep fulfillment I have experienced and the beautiful relationships I have discovered. In simple terms, I did not know that teaching would make me so happy. I may be acting naive to think that this bliss will continue, but what a lovely introduction I have had!

The discussions of the philosophies of Bernard Lonergan and the ethical dimensions of teaching have drawn me into a deeper understanding of my moral and ethical responsibilities as a university professor. Lonergan’s concepts of the “Patterns of Experience” have made me more attentive to my own reality as a teacher. More importantly, I now realize the significance of identifying the patterns my students may be experiencing.

It is inspiration, respect, challenge, and encouragement, that I have found my students yearn for the most. Young nursing students have a vision of what nursing is, but they are in a place of uncertainty of what is to come. Words of inspiration, demands for high standards, and stories of personal nursing experiences help them to begin the process of identifying with the role of nurse. Nursing students must learn extensive information and technical skills, but they must also learn how to act and think like nurses. This involves not only teaching anatomy and physiology, biology and chemistry, but through example they must witness integrity, dedication, compassion, patience, and commitment.

Nursing is a vigorous and demanding curriculum. Our young students find themselves thrown into a world that is intimidating and unfamiliar. Suddenly they are caught in a whirlwind of science, medical terminology, statistics, pathophysiology, pharmacology, and mental health, and maternal health, pediatric and adult health. They must learn technical skills, and perform them perfectly. They must learn how to interact with people, those that are well and those that are ill. Communication skills must be taught and practiced. They must be taught how to be a

professional, how to look and act with dignity and integrity. It must be instilled in them that they are becoming members of a sacred profession and they must always be mindful of their responsibility to uphold the standards of that profession. It is important for them to know that the public trusts them more than any other group of people. They must never deceive that public. They are needed and many will depend on them.

This is an awesome responsibility for a nursing professor. We want to develop nurses that are medically competent, but also highly professional, caring and compassionate individuals. I do not believe that it is possible to teach someone how to care, how to feel compassion for others. It is hoped that nursing students bring their desire to serve with them when they enter the program. I agree with David Hoekema, that whether consciously or unconsciously university professors serve as moral guides to their students, especially in nursing (Hoekema, 2010). We do this through our behavior, through our own demonstration of professionalism, and through our caring for them. Unlike the majority of students, nursing students do envision their future following the same vocation as their professors. Therefore, nursing professors must teach with their whole being, who they are as people and as nurses. This means expressing to the students an understanding of what the vocation means to them, and demonstrating a love and pride for the vocation. Perhaps, this would be consistent with Bernard Lonergan's belief that the primary moral aim for teachers is to awaken in students "a desire to know," a desire for consistency.

When contemplating Lonergan's "Patterns of Experience," I have begun to understand the importance of being attentive to my student's feelings at the moment we are together, where they are in relation to life's stresses. One of the major goals of teaching nursing is to encourage students to think critically. In order for a novice nurse to begin this process, she must be confident, flexible, and inquisitive and as Lonergan would say reasonable. She must be able to ask the question, "Am I right thinking this way?" I once read an article that said we should grade our students on the questions they ask, rather than on their answers. When they question, they are thinking outside the box. As stated in the seminar, "Questions lead to insights." Lonergan's pat-

tern of Relevancy reminds us that students need to be shown what relevant questions are.

Lonergan's pattern of Responsibility made real for me what I told my students from the beginning of the semester. I will do everything I can to help you do well in this course. It is my responsibility to work hard to teach you this material. I will be flexible and open to your needs, BUT I cannot change the grade numbers on your tests. You must take responsibility for that. The "student is responsible for his learning." As teacher I am only the "facilitator." It is my responsibility to attempt to instill in my students a sense of "wonder" as Aristotle called the basic drive to know.

As summer is here, and I reflect on my first year as a teacher of nursing, I believe that my success and positive experiences with my students are basically rooted in the students' knowledge and confidence in the fact that I genuinely love and care for them. They became to me my own children and each one was a unique and special individual. Through this love I felt a need to nurture them, to encourage them, and at times to show my disappointment with them. We worked as a team, each with our role, each giving our best. Of my 35 students, one failed the course, and as she handed in her final exam (I believe knowing that she could not pass), she hugged me and thanked me. We had worked together trying to come up with strategies to help her pass, but she was carrying too much as a single mom with a full time job and a toddler at home. She knew I did not want to fail her, and she took responsibility for her failure.

St. Augustine is an inspiration for me in his discussions on teaching and on being compassionate and loving our students as a brother, mother or father. A mother loves all her children equally. She sees something good in each one. I cannot imagine losing my excitement for teaching, since each experience will bring me more children to love and care for. I have been privileged to know that close bond with my students that Augustine describes. It is this loving relationship that brings alive the joy of teaching.

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Teaching as an Ethical Act

Colleen M. Conway

This year's faculty seminar was an important time away from my normal busy schedule to reflect on the importance of my role as a teacher at Seton Hall. I was encouraged to hear the seminar begin with the premise that as a university, Seton Hall, should be focused on attending to the whole person, not simply training career professionals. Equally encouraging was the representative nature of the seminar participants—we constituted a wide cross spectrum of the university including faculty from the schools of Business, Nursing, Arts and Science, Education and Human Services. I have always thought that it is fundamentally important as our identity as an institution that we concern ourselves with educating the whole person and, especially at the undergraduate level, instilling in our students a desire to know, rather than training them for a particular occupation. The fact that there were faculty members gathered around the table to discuss this idea from multiple schools in the university suggested a shared conviction of purpose.

Based on this premise and shared conviction of educating the whole person, Mark Doorley, our facilitator, invited us to think of our teaching through Bernard Lonergan's precepts: be attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible and loving. Doing so helped me to understand and articulate more fully *why* I thought a Seton Hall education should focus on stirring up or further developing a student's desire to know. It is not just because I am a liberal arts type who values "the life of the mind" above everything else. It is because this desire to know is intimately connected to developing one's character and becoming an agent for good in the world. If Lonergan is right in his claim that human consciousness is driven by a desire to act consistently with what one knows, then instilling in our students a desire to know is critically important, not just for them, but for our local communities and indeed, our larger world. So, it was with pleasure that I spent three mornings considering, through Lonergan, my ethical responsibility to reach out to my students in ways that might engage their whole person, and help to shape them as agents for good in the world.

There are several things that I found particularly helpful about the seminar. The first was that rather than focusing on how to get our students to conform to our vision of ideal learners, we focused instead on what Lonergan's precepts suggested about our role as educators. Secondly, I appreciated the recognition of the complexity of the teaching/learning task that ran through the discussion. Lonergan's precepts—be attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible and loving—are related to his philosophy of living a life of authenticity, a worthy goal for both Seton Hall faculty and students. Still, on first hearing, they may sound like a lofty platitude—the words of a philosopher, to be sure, but not particularly practical wisdom for surviving in the classroom. But as we discussed these precepts more fully, it became clear that they attend precisely to the complexities of the human subject and the cultural conditions that can make the college classroom environment such a challenge.

For example, Lonergan's precept to "be attentive" calls for a recognition of what he calls the "patterns of experience" that may be shaping both the present moment in the classroom, and the approach to the course as whole by both teacher and student. Certainly, I am quite aware of when I'm "losing" a particular student in the discussion, when she is focusing on her laptop, texting a friend, or just trying to hold her eyes open. My automatic reaction to this might be irritation and frustration, but Lonergan's admonition to be attentive requires a more circumspect approach. If my students come to my classroom because it is one more requirement checked off toward getting a degree and getting a job (which many of them do), it is no wonder that some of them are not engaged with discussions of the history of ancient Israelites or the synoptic problem. Rather than simply feeling irritated with a student, attending to what pattern of experience is shaping my student's concerns and behavior in the classroom might open the door to more effective teaching strategies.

Moreover, another of Lonergan's precepts, "be intelligent," might assist in this effort. Again, on the surface, the precept to "be intelligent" would seem the least of a professor's worries. Most of us have been "intelligent" all our lives which is why we landed in the academy in the first place. But in the seminar, we focused on this precept as a way to consider what we are doing in the classroom. How are we setting the conditions whereby our students can have success as problem solvers? The ability to do this well fits with all I have read about the importance of engaging students through active learning in the classroom. If students are solving problems (rather than passively receiving information which they may consider irrelevant to their concerns) enables active learning which effectively ignites the desire to know. Here I am reminded of a professor of Buddhism who carefully planned his class sessions as puzzles be solved. This same professor got the student award for best teacher on his campus..

The precept "be reasonable" challenged me to think about my own temperament and that of my students. To what extent am I open to a critical assessment of my own views and how might I help my students to be open to critical views? This is a particular challenge for me because my area of study is one of wide-ranging convictions (or lack thereof) for many students. Indeed, students come to my classroom with wide-ranging views on the Bible including antipathy, apathy, heartfelt devotion and everything in between. On the other hand, my own approach to the text is one based on a critical analysis knowledge based on its historical, cultural and socio-political context. As a teacher, "being reasonable" includes maintaining a keen sensitivity to the potential of what my students bring to the classroom in their understanding the Bible, even if it does always not conform to my own academic approach. Modeling this openness may help encourage my students to do the same with their own thinking.

Being more open to my students coincides with the last of the precepts that we discussed—"be loving." This is perhaps the biggest challenge confronting me as a teacher of typically close to one hundred a semester. The precept calls for me to see each individual student as a person with their own ideas, dreams, fears, and challenges. One highlight of the seminar was a lunch

discussion led by a faculty member, Becky Cox based on her recent book, *The College Fear Factor*, brought to light in a powerful way the common disconnect and misunderstanding that exists between student and professor. As a result of our discussion of this book, and my reflections on the precept to "be loving," I have a new goal of reaching out in a more personal way to my students, especially my struggling students, for the 2010 fall semester.

Overall, I was glad for the opportunity to learn both from my colleagues and from our presenter, Mark Doorley. I look forward to more campus conversations on teaching in the future.

Teaching as an Ethical Act: Reflections

James K. Daly

When I saw the title of the seminar, I knew I wanted to attend. I've been teaching for thirty seven years, sixteen of them at the middle school level, and twenty one here at the university. I, like all teachers, entered the field for many reasons. I originally chose it because of what I perceived as the ethical dimensions of the field. At the time the Vietnam War was raging, and I saw the corporate world as an enabler of what I sensed was a brutal and racist assault on an undeveloped and poor nation. In my eyes, education was an arena where one could work free of the questionable moral practices of business and industry. Much has changed since those days. The seminar provided a good opportunity for reflecting on what I "know" to be true now.

I found the readings to be valuable. Selections from "Instructing Beginners" by St. Augustine provided a good foundation from which to explore teaching. The piece highlights the theme of reciprocal determinism, with teacher and learner influencing one another. This is a powerful concept when consciously used by the teacher, who with passion and commitment can have a significant impact on a learner. Concern for the learner themselves, and with a genuine commitment to the topic or field of study, creates an arena where both can grow in knowledge, skills and dispositions.

Mark Doorley's article, "Spiritual Exercises in Cosmopolis" was timely and thought provoking. I found his three contentions about the modern world to be compelling. He states that the lack of dialogue between competing perspectives and worldviews is largely due to the inability to move beyond one's horizons. From a different discipline, the work of Bishop and Cushing (2008) and of Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2002) address this phenomenon from an American perspective. Their work suggests that ever stronger barriers are built within, and between, communities. These barriers are purported to be evidenced in the political partisanship that appears to be increasing. They cite that large numbers of people refrain from newspapers, magazines, TV, or discussions that do not reflect their views. Even their choice of communities in which to live is so im-

packed. This lack of dialogue creates within the self contained and self satisfied community a sense that their views are more widely shared than they are. Along with Doorley's work, their findings have significance for those of us in higher education. Ours is an arena where we can address these issues every day. Both overtly and covertly, our acts (and omissions) in teaching and assessing "teach" much about community, valuing alternate perspectives, and the importance of deliberation and dialogue. There are few other places in today's society where such can happen.

Doorley also addresses the arts, finding them lacking in terms of critical analysis of culture. Indeed, popular culture seems to so dominate the society that this lack seems insignificant. The arts are overwhelmed. When the society is inundated on radio, TV, magazines, newspapers and the internet with the day to day escapades of Britney Spears, Lindsey Lohan and Tiger Woods, who has time to consider issues of social justice, war, and religion? Can art, literature, and film help us examine the essence of being human in the context of celebrity and immediacy? Indeed popular culture takes aim at culture itself, elevating the vain and vile, while criticizing the traditional arts. "The Real World", "The Hills", and "Mo Nique" all promote uneducated unreflective liberated pre-pubescent perspectives. Although most of the popular culture emerges from large multinational corporations, much of it feeds on class differences, and builds on historical antagonisms to both education and the educated.

The third focus Doorley provides is on the commercialization of the university. Indeed the university is far behind the pre-collegiate rush to consumerism. Cuban (2001) cited the demise of the historic civic mission of the schools to corporate imperatives. He contends that school "report cards" are focused on a narrow range of knowledge and skills identified as essential by corporate and political elite's. This rush to mediocrity, spurred on by the report of "A Nation at Risk", has made low level basic skills a centerpiece of educational policy. Doorley seems to accurately describe the advance of such changes into the world of the university. From accreditation

agencies to presidential task forces, to the rise of marketing and cute slogans, the academy is under assault. This is an assault unlike any in the past, fueled by consumerism embedded in the society, an anti-education popular culture with powerful influences in all media forms, and a loss among many in the academy about their role in and their perspective in the mission of university.

Doorley, in his writing and in the seminar, helped provide an arena from which to consider these challenges. His review of Lonergan's *Insight* seems critical. The critique of common sense, and the focus on Cosmopolis as a potential remedy is interesting. My own hope is that discussion on these issues can continue beyond the seminar. At our own institution, and in schooling throughout the society, the aims of Cosmopolis to challenge, critique, and expose the "truths" of any given group or groups, face institutional and social barriers. Schools as institutions are designed to maintain the status quo, the known "truths". Even when that mission is tied to the need to prepare citizens able to examine and consider alternatives, the task is difficult (Besag and Nelson, 1984). The very nature of our institutions, even how we teach, carries important learnings. The often unquestioned rush to technology (without compelling evidence of the consequences) seems to suggest a pause to reflect. But, we can't, because everyone is doing it, and we must remain competitive.

From corporate boards, to school administrations, to families, we like seeing charts and data. Report cards of all types make sense, and are easy and quick to read. Despite the fact that more important and significant information appears to exist, we allow questionable data to drive decisions. Data collection carries the facade of science, but often unexamined is the very nature of the data and the data collection method itself. Doorley cites the teacher as a witness to the possibility of alternatives. He expands on Lonergan's invitation to self appropriation through the classroom, through the actions taken (and those not taken), with a conscious effort on the part of the teacher to be increasingly aware of their own influence from the general bias.

Lonergan's work, as addressed in the readings and in the seminar discussions, seems congruent to the work of others. Educational theory, especially in my area of interest in social

education, has a robust body of scholarship calling on educators to question their own beliefs and practices. This scholarship promotes examining what we teach, why we teach it, and how we do so. It calls into question assessment procedures, and considers what we don't do in these areas to be of critical importance (building on the concept of the Hidden Curriculum).

The seminar discussions were intriguing, and I wish there had been more time. The consideration of who gets recognized and rewarded deserves more attention. The bureaucratization of our programs, especially in light of accreditation demands, needs discussion and reflection. The burgeoning growth of rubrics, rules, guidelines and checklists has the potential to stymie both teacher and learner. As Doorley commented in discussion, we need to be attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsive and loving. Much in our routine way of doing things prevents this from happening.

During my teaching career I've remained idealistic about teaching and learning, but it is an idealism tempered by a better understanding of society and of schools as institutions. I've come to recognize that schooling by itself neither liberates the mind nor serves human progress (Counts, 1962). We must recognize the distinction between schooling and education, and that for education to serve human progress it must be consciously so designed. Indeed Lynd's question, *Knowledge for What?*, poses similar questions. For what are we schooling the young? For what purposes do we educate? Even as a faculty member in a college of education, time is not provided to address these questions. There are multiple page rubrics to fill out, reams of data to be recorded (now electronically so we get even larger reams of 'scientific' data to look at). We generate data to generate data. We have mountains of data. Our accreditation agencies are happy, so, we must be doing well. It's just common sense. Thus, the need for more conversations.

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Teaching as an Ethical Act

Mark Doorley

In an article for *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, David A. Hoekema identifies the unidentified ethicists on college campuses. The article, entitled “The Unacknowledged Ethicists on Campus,” appeared in the January 24, 2010 edition. He identifies three groups: faculty, student life professionals and student leaders on campus. The article became a source of insight for me about teaching as an ethical act in that those responsible for teaching are in positions of power *vis-à-vis* the students, not only in terms of the evaluation of student performance but in the shaping of student attitudes toward the life of the mind and the role of that life in the solving of contemporary social, political, economic and environmental problems.

A university, and certainly a Roman Catholic university, is not a place in which information is simply deposited in waiting receptacles that are our students’ brains. The university is a place where whole persons are formed. The university is not merely interested in the ability of students to digest vast amounts of information, and accurately replicate that in an exam. The university is also interested in the moral formation of its students, with the aim of graduating students who are more engaged, critical and responsible citizens. What kind of moral formation or teaching are we talking about?

We are not teaching our students particular moral precepts about particular moral problems. It is not the goal of the university that every student be against the Iraq War or fight to protect the life of the unborn. No. The point of the university is to awaken in students their desire to know, and a desire to do what is consistent with that knowing. However, such an awakening demands a very different approach to education than we have normally taken. There is a sense in which our system is set up to reward those students most who can spit back on their exams, and in their papers, the ideas that we’ve given them. Is that thinking? Does that model enable students to really think, to be searchers, to value the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake?

The seminar involved reflection on the five transcendental precepts of the late Bernard J. F. Lonergan, SJ. These precepts are explicitly identified in the 1972 book *Method in Theology*,¹ but their development owes much to the work Lonergan did in his 1959 *magnum opus Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*.² In what follows I will touch briefly on each of these precepts. The goal is to illuminate what it means to say that teaching is an ethical act, particularly in an institution which posits as its mission, at least implicitly, that it aims to form people who are engaged, critical and responsible citizens in the world. The precepts are articulations of the desire to know and to act consistently with one’s knowing. That one wants to know is manifest in one’s questions. That one wants to act consistently with one’s knowing is manifest in the disease of one’s conscience in failing to so act, and in the satisfaction one experiences in success. A detailed examination of the evidence for this claim is beyond the scope of this introductory essay, though the reader interested in such an examination should pick up Lonergan’s *Insight* and then *Method in Theology*.

The first transcendental precept is “Be Attentive.”³ One is rarely purely attentive, so the precept is not aimed merely at getting us to simply “turn off” our minds. The fact is that our attention is always already patterned in some way. It is oriented by a concern, a question, a worry. Lonergan identifies several patterns of experience which impact our attending to our experience. By experience I refer to the data of my senses, my memory and my imagination. The most common pattern is the dramatic pattern of experience.⁴ My attending to my experience is dominated by my concern to be somebody in the world. I am concerned with my own interests, my hopes, dreams, fears and worries. The pattern impacts what I attend to in the field of experience. If some aspect of experience doesn’t pertain to my concern about my future, I don’t pay attention to it.

A less common pattern of experience, but one on which universities depend for their

existence, is the intellectual pattern of experience. In this pattern the concern is the relationship of things to each other. It is not my fears and desires that are central to my concern, but the world as it is, independent of me. My attending is quite different in this pattern, as my concern is not my self, but things in relationship to each other. Think of the scientists pursuing answers to questions about a theory in physics, or in biology, or in chemistry. Think about the doctoral student who is consumed for hours in the pursuit of questions related to her dissertation. People can become consumed by this desire, so much so that they forget to eat or sleep.

A pattern that we all experience is that of the biological pattern. The body has demands for sleep and nourishment. When these demands are not met, they can interfere with my capacity to attend to anything other than the satisfaction of these demands. The increasing need for breakfast programs at public schools in this country is evidence that a child with an empty stomach will be paying more attention to the hunger pangs than he will to his ABCs.

Professors must be attentive to their own patterns of experience, and be sensitive to the patterns of experience operative in their students. Students and professors alike can come to class dominated by a variety of desires: the desire to earn a living, to be understood, to reach a certain status, to pass a required course, etc. A professor is responsible to ascertain, to the best of her ability, what concerns students have in approaching a course. Having some sense of student concerns can lead to insights into pedagogical strategies that will be successful. When students experience their concerns being registered by a professor, it goes a long way to creating an effective working relationship in the classroom.

The second transcendental precept is "Be Intelligent." The primary goal of the teacher in the classroom is to facilitate insight. We want our students to grasp the material presented in the course. We also want them to be able to articulate what they understand. To be intelligent reminds the teacher of her primary responsibility: to set the conditions under which understanding is reached. Those conditions are the images, words, experiences that a teacher can utilize. However, the student must desire to understand.

The most creative images and experiences in the world will not be effective if the student has no desire to understand. Hence, before any learning can take place, a student must desire to understand, and the teacher needs to awaken that desire. Here is a place where a faculty member must understand herself as one on a team at a university. It is highly unlikely that in one course a teacher can make a student go from no desire to understand to a desire to understand. However, as a member of the team, building on what has gone before, he or she can be successful. It becomes critical, then, how students are brought into the intellectual life of the university. Does the university's first year curriculum emphasize the love of learning, the joy of understanding, the excitement that comes from solving a difficult intellectual puzzle? These are questions that the institution as a whole must address, but faculty members have a role to play in those answers.

The fact is, though, that there are forces at play that hinder the development of the desire to know. Lonergan calls these biases of human consciousness,⁵ and there are four. What is common amongst them is their tendency to truncate the pursuit of knowledge. The first is the dramatic bias which is often idiosyncratic to the development of an individual. The individual has a blind spot, perhaps caused by some traumatic event, that disables his ability to pursue certain lines of questioning. The second bias is the individual bias which is self-centeredness. Questions that are not directly related to self-interest are not entertained. The third bias is group bias, which is a technical term for prejudice. Groups form blind spots which undermine the ability to clearly investigate situations since there is a vested interest in maintaining the *status quo*. The fourth and final bias is the general bias. This is the most prevalent bias in human consciousness and it manifests itself as a rejection of theoretical questions. The goal of common sense is to get things done, so there is no interest in pursuing theoretical questions, since common sense doesn't grasp the connection between the theoretical and the practical. In fact, common sense militates against grasping that connection. All manifestations of the rejection of the life of the mind or of the value of intellectual inquiry is a manifestation of general bias.

A recognition of these biases is critical for

the teacher in the classroom because they can and do impact his or her own consciousness, and so influence the choices he or she makes in the classroom. They are also operative in the consciousness of students. It is imperative to enable the desire to know to gain the upper hand in its struggle with these various flights from understanding. This is both an institutional level concern and a concern for the faculty member.

Complicating this even more is the fact that each individual in the classroom has a unique combination of these biases operative at any one time. The goal of this precept is not to manage to undermine the influence of all biases in all students. The goal is to move in that direction, to understand the polymorphic reality of any given group of students, operating with some combination of these biases. It invites a more complex analysis of what is needed to achieve the pedagogical goals of one's course.

The third transcendental precept is "Be Reasonable." Insights are a dime a dozen. A bright idea comes along regularly. However, the desire to know is satisfied only when we have understood something correctly. So, the insight I have had about some part of the material in class leads automatically to a further question: have I understood correctly? A student pursues this question by asking questions of clarification, or comparing her insight with what the professor is saying, or testing her understanding by sharing it with a peer who seems to have mastered the material. Being reasonable is to be critical of what one thinks one knows. This is important for both student and professor. It is a mode of being selfless, since the concern is not with whether or not my understanding makes me feel comfortable, or satisfies my own self-centered desire, or is good enough. What "be reasonable" insists upon is that I have the grounds or evidence upon which to affirm that I have understood something correctly.

There are several elements to this precept. The first has to do with temperament. Some people are more impulsive, so that they reach judgments quickly. This can backfire if they don't have all the information. Other people are indecisive, so that even when the evidence is overwhelming that a particular insight is correct, they

hesitate. To be reasonable demands different things from people of either temperament. The first movement toward an adequate response to this precept is the ancient adage, Know Thyself.

A second element has to do with trusting the process of learning itself. The teacher ought to encourage students to engage in the whole process, to be unhurried in their search for correct understanding, to trust that their desire to know will give rise to further questions which may undermine their initial insight or modify it significantly. The bottom line here is that insights are a dime a dozen, and so having an insight is insufficient for knowledge of a subject. Knowledge is only reached when one can make a judgment that the evidence is sufficient to affirm particular insights. Judging the sufficiency of the evidence is a function of one's mastery of the field of study, leading to the third element.

Students in a subject are not going to arrive at mastery at the end of one semester. The faculty are in a better position *vis-à-vis* mastery of the field, but even they, given the vastness of the knowledge today, need to recognize the limit of their immanently generated knowledge and their reliance on a world-wide community of knowers. There is much that we claim to know that we know only because we trust the authority of those who do know. Surely, in a biology class, the students are not going to be masters of the subject after one semester, but the professor can introduce the students to the world-wide community of researchers in biology, and to the process by which this community of learners vets each person's work, and the grounds that exist for affirming what this collaborative enterprise achieves in terms of correctly understanding the biological world.

"Be reasonable" is a call to being critical, to challenging one's own hunches, to unearthing the evidence to support one's insights, to taking the time to explore further relevant questions, to trust in the community of knowers whose ongoing and cumulative results are available to support one's individual pursuit of knowledge. It is a faculty member's duty to introduce students to the demands of reasonableness in their own study and to the community of those who are in pursuit of answers to the same questions.

The fourth transcendental precept is to “Be Responsible.” Lonergan’s work is aimed at facilitating the insight that the human subject is a knower, oriented by the desire to know which unfolds first in one’s experiencing, then in one’s insights into that experience, and then in one’s judgments that one’s understanding is correct. But the desire to know is not satisfied by merely knowing what is the case. The desire to know the truth becomes a desire to do the good, either by doing that which will maintain an already achieved and valuable situation, or doing that which will make an already existing situation better. The desire to know demands a consistency between one’s knowledge and one’s doing. Evidence of this demand can be found in the tendency to avoid thinking about the moral demands of one’s situation, or in rationalizing one’s preferred plan of escape, or by throwing one’s hands up in despair at the possibility of moral behavior.⁶ Education involves judgments of value about the reality that one comes to understand in one’s education. What is judged not valuable, or insufficient in some way, leads to a further question: What can I do to make things better? A university is a place where students should be prepared to pursue these questions, and act on them. The classroom is a critical place where this task is realized.

The notion of the good is a difficult one to parse. One can speak of the good as the object of desire. As such, the good is multiple, since every person has some set of desires, and the object of those desires is an instance of the good. There is, though, superimposed on this set of goods as the object of desire, the good of order, by which these goods are achieved. Finally, there is the good as value which is manifest in the particular good of order that is chosen to facilitate the satisfaction of individual desires. A syllabus is a kind of good of order. It seeks to facilitate the satisfaction of multiple desires. What is in the syllabus, how the course is set up and administered, is a function of the values that the professor judges most important. A university may try to achieve uniformity among syllabi in light of some communal value or values. For instance, requiring that all professors include a statement about academic integrity in their syllabus identifies academic integrity as a university value that is not subject to individual professors’ judgments and so satisfying individual student desires will be mediated, in part, by an

academic integrity policy.

A meditation for a faculty member might be to examine his or her syllabi with this question: what values dictate the way in which my syllabus is set up? Are those the values I want to espouse? Are there values I hold dear that are not evident in my syllabus? As an institution, are their values espoused by the institution that are not mandated in syllabi? Should they be? Is there a university value that they not be so mandated? In light of David Hoekema’s reflection on the ethicists on campus, it is critical that the individual professor and the institution examine policies and procedures, syllabi and assignments, in light of the values that the professor and/or institution explicitly or implicitly endorse.

The last transcendent precept is “Be Loving.” Teaching is a relationship between persons. And we ought to meet each other precisely as persons. What is a person? A person is a unity identity whole characterized by the capacity for questions, for answering those questions satisfactorily and for living in accord with those answers. A person is also characterized by the more or less successful engagement with those capacities. Moreover, and in the deepest sense, each person is characterized by hopes and dreams that more or less reflect his or her self-understanding, achieved to that point. This is as true of teacher as it is of students. Loving is the activity in which persons engage with persons. So, “be loving” captures the responsibility that teachers AND students have to respect the hopes and dreams of the other.

St. Augustine is a good exemplar of this precept, both in his failure and his ability to live up to it. In the *Confessions*, Augustine recounts a young man with whom he found fast friendship. They pursued philosophical questions, and Augustine succeeded in dragging this fellow away from the Christian faith in their pursuit of truth. The fellow fell very ill, and was baptized as his death seemed imminent. Augustine, who was at his bedside throughout the illness, knew his friend would make light of the so-called baptism when he should be well enough to speak of it. As it turned out, Augustine was wrong, and when he proceeded to engage his friend in satirical commentary of his baptism, the young man in no uncertain terms told him to be done with such talk

if he wanted to be his friend. The young man soon died.⁷

In another case, Augustine was friends with a student named Alypius whom he loved dearly. Alypius got involved in the Games of Carthage and lived for the thrill of violence. Augustine felt unable to engage him as Alypius' father forbade his son to attend Augustine's course. However, Alypius, from love for Augustine, appeared one day at Augustine's class. In pursuit of a worthy example for a point he was making to his students, Augustine began to speak of the frivolity of the Games. Not intending this for Alypius at all, Alypius took his words to heart and that day changed his ways.⁸

These two incidents demonstrate something important about the teacher-student relationship. In the first Augustine was so in love with himself that he could not see the impact of the near death experience on his friend. Consumed by self-interest, Augustine wanted to make fun of his friend's Christian commitments. This inability to love his friend for his friend's sake caused Augustine to be unable to be a friend, and in fact to lose a friend. In the second incident, Augustine has moved away from a self-centered love for his friend Alypius. He is in pain at Alypius' life style, but he is powerless to intervene. However, his constant love for Alypius, even in the midst of his misguided lifestyle, prompted a critical self-examination by Alypius, completely unintended by Augustine.

The point here is that loving our students, engaging them as persons with hopes and dreams, and perhaps misguided in those hopes and dreams, makes possible the insights in to self that are at the core of the liberal arts education that Seton Hall University offers its students. It is difficult to love individual students. It is difficult to get to know students in a semester, in required courses, let alone come to love them. However, what the precept points to, and these Augustinian vignettes suggest, is that a loving attitude toward our students, an excitement about teaching them, a enjoyment of our vocation as professors, can set the conditions for an education of the whole person that our institution values.

In the text "Instructing Beginners in Faith," Augustine describes the relationship between teacher and student that can serve as a

model for all of us.

Now, if we find it distasteful to be constantly rehearsing familiar phrases that are suited to the ears of small children, we should draw close to these small children with a brother's love, or a father's or a mother's, and as a result of our empathy with them, the oft-repeated phrases will sound new to us also. For this feeling of compassion is so strong that, when our listeners are touched by us as we speak and we are touched by them as they learn, each of us comes to dwell in the other, and so they as if we speak in us what they hear, while we in some way learn in them what we teach. Isn't this what generally happens when we are showing people who had never before seen them those impressive and beautiful sights, in the city or in the country, that we had grown used to passing by without the slightest pleasure because we had already seen them so often? In showing them to others do we not find that our own enjoyment is revived by sharing in the enjoyment that others derive from seeing them for the first time? And this we experience the more intensely, the closer our friendship with one another is, for the more the bond of love allows us to be present in others, the more what has grown old becomes new again in our own eyes as well.⁹

The challenge of Augustine here is to relate to our students as a mother might to her child, or a sister to a brother. Compassion should be the mark of our relationship with our students. It is this compassion that can motivate students to accept our invitation into the process of learning, and so discover for themselves the satisfaction of pursuing a question to its end, and then acting in harmony with the answer, to bring into existence a world that can only be born with their commitment and their struggle.

This essay serves as an introduction to a series of reflections by participants in the faculty seminar. I have tried to capture in words here the substance of what I had to say in my remarks during the seminar. I'm sure there was much more that I had to say in the productive give and take with the faculty. I hope, though, that this essay gives the reader a sense of what I offered the faculty. In the

end my hope was to encourage reflection on teaching as an ethical act. The reflections that follow suggest that I have accomplished that in ways that I could not have envisioned prior to our gathering.

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Teaching as an Ethical Act

Paul F. Gibbons

“...Every class is to some degree a class in ethics.” (Hoekema). I focused on this quote for two reasons; I just finished teaching a class on contemporary moral issues to thirty undergraduates and I was “one of the professors standing in front of their classrooms,” therefore one of the “ethics experts on campus.” So the idea struck me as having both theoretical and practical aspects to it, though, truth to tell, the thinking about the practice and being a practitioner of the theory does not automatically make them easier to write about.

I don't know whether David Hoekema was a student of Bernard Lonergan's or not, certainly his language and expressions do not suggest that: but Lonergan's dicta; Be Attentive, Be Intelligent, Be Reasonable, Be Responsible, Be Loving are clearly reflected in his paper. “For it is not so much the content as the conduct of classroom discourse that shapes students' conceptions of how to lead their lives. Students learn what it means to disagree forcefully but respectfully, and they observe how much or how little concern their instructors show when a student is unable to grasp critical concepts. Professors teach students about morality by the ways in which they grade tests, structure assignments, and respond to student complaints.” It is a sobering thought to contemplate that how we do what we do is equally if not more important than what we are teaching.

Hoekema is also clear that students are greatly influenced by the instructors' witness to their understanding of their own vocation. Students “can see the difference between a dedicated teacher and one who is merely earning a paycheck, between an insincere and a genuine commitment to students intellectual and personal welfare. These differences inform students' reflections on their own vocational plans and shape the students' sense of what it means to do one's life work with integrity and commitment.” Webster defines vocation as “a call to enter a certain career, especially a religious one.” A call implies both a caller and at least the possibility of a response.

The idea of witnessing plays a major role in Lonergan's thought as well. Lonergan defines self-appropriation as “knowing what it is to know; why these operations constitute knowing; and knowing the basic outline of what is known when it is known.” (Doorley) “It is self-appropriation that serves as the key to membership in cosmopolis.” Cosmopolis is a notion of Lonergan's that cannot clearly be defined, but as Doorley tells us Lonergan provides us with a number of heuristic qualities that can give us a cleared idea of what cosmopolis might be. The primary focus of cosmopolis is that it appeals to the “innate intelligence of people to achieve its ends. Second cosmopolis aims to make operative the timely and fruitful ideas that otherwise are inoperative. This is achieved by witness rather than by force. Third it is intently concerned with the myths and rationalizations that are created by the powerful to shield their ‘great ideas’ from critique. Fourth cosmopolis must be purged of its own tendencies to follow the general bias of common sense. Fifth and finally it is not easy.”

I first read or attempted to understand Lonergan decades ago and found the fifth descriptor, while the shortest, most apt. Older now and presumably wiser, I can see the great value in rereading, or really, reading *Insight*. I am especially intrigued and happy with Doorley's invitation to the faculty of Seton Hall to form a study group and read and discuss *Insight* together. His rationale for approaching *Insight* in this way is very compelling. He says, “The insight I've had concerns the importance of witness to a particular person taking up the invitation to self-appropriation. The conditioned is that the witness of one or more to the reality of self-appropriation in their own lives is a necessary antecedent to the invitation extended in a book like *Insight*.” Dr. Doorley not only expressed the thought in a compelling manner, he actually witnessed to the role self-appropriation is playing in his own life.

I am very pleased with Msgr. Liddy's response to the challenge in offering to form a

study group to do just that. The value of Mark Doorley's excellent presentation and the insightful questions and responses of the Seton Hall faculty to his presentation will be greatly enhanced by this continuation of the discussion. At the same time the university will be continuing to demonstrate one of the important signs of vitality, namely the discussion of intellectually important ideas across the departments, schools and colleges of the university.

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The Sociological Perspective and the Ethics of Teaching

Anthony L. Haynor

In the faculty seminar, "Teaching as an Ethical Act," Dr. Mark Doorley of Villanova University devoted considerable attention to Bernard Lonergan's notion of "general bias." In this short essay, I would like to present my understanding of this idea (aided by Dr. Doorley's interpretation) and show its connection to the sociological enterprise. I will then consider the process through which such bias can be minimized if not transcended, arguing on behalf of sociology's distinctive role in such a project. The thesis to be advanced is that ethical teaching must involve the transition from "common-sense" thinking to what I call "contextual" thinking, then to "foundational" thinking, and finally to "empirical" thinking. Such a journey, it is argued, needs to be made by both students and teachers.

For Lonergan, "general bias" involves the disparagement of theoretical thinking in favor of "common-sense" thinking. The latter is by definition narrow, focusing as it does on the here and now, on particular situational circumstances. In sociological terms, such thinking is part and parcel of our "taken-for-granted" world. It involves what the psychologist, Jerome Bruner, among others refers to as "narrative" knowledge. In the social problems literature (under the heading of "social constructionism"), narratives are seen as particular versions of the truth that consist of "claims" that we make about reality (the putative causes of events, as well as the interventions that need to be made in relation to those causes in light of any "grievances" that we might have). Social constructionism eschews any inquiry into the validity of the claims that are made. But, what is the source of these particularized accounts of reality? From a sociological perspective, they derive in large part from the "collective consciousness" (to draw on Durkheim's term) of our particular social community of reference. (Sociology recognizes, of course, that the "collective consciousness" is appropriated to different degrees by individual members of the community.) The content of our "common-sense" viewpoint is thus shaped to a significant extent by our "group bias" (to use Lonergan's term).

Our "common-sense" viewpoint is by its very nature "pre-reflective." It is expressed in the form of a life narrative that is assumed to be true. To engage in "common-sense" thinking is to approach reality in a way that disengages one in large part from the "intellectual pattern of experience" (to draw on Lonergan's term), and immerses oneself in the "dramatic pattern of experience." The former seeks more general knowledge about the world, while the latter is content with practical knowledge about the unique circumstances and dilemmas which one finds oneself having to deal. The sociological perspective is well suited to help us make this most difficult and necessary leap from "common-sense" thinking to what I call "contextual" thinking, from the "dramatic pattern of experience" to the "intellectual pattern of experience" from "pre-reflective" consciousness to "reflective" consciousness. By "contextual" thought I mean the process by which one's narrative is juxtaposed with other narratives. This is "reflective" in a double sense. First, we bring our own taken-for-granted reality to the level of self-conscious awareness. We become aware of our own blind spots and see how they are generated by a "dramatic" self-absorption that is supported by a group bias of some kind. In the language of the sociology of knowledge, we begin to appreciate the narrowness of our perspective on reality, and the pivotal role played by our social location (ethnic, gender, class interests most prominently) in sustaining the "plausibility" of this perspective. In Lonergan's terms, we need first to ask the question, "Why do I believe what I believe?" and the sociological perspective can assist us in fashioning an "insightful" response. But, then, this can and should lead to another question, "Why do others believe what they believe?" and once again, the sociological perspective can play a constructive role in our understanding of this phenomenon. (We obviously need to avoid any kind of sociological reductionism. The sociological explanation of why we believe what we believe is not the only one. What those explanations would be cannot be considered in this essay). This would or should lead to a third question, "How does my common-sense view relate to the other

common-sense views?" To draw on the sociological thought of Peter Berger, this involves the *relativization* of consciousness, which occurs when we begin to appreciate the fact that what we viewed at the common-sense level as absolute is in fact one of many possible definitions of reality. It is at this point that we have "contextual" knowledge. One insight at this level of consciousness might be that one person's problem is another person's solution, and vice versa (to draw on the work of the sociologist, Robert Merton). According to the sociologist, Harry C. Bredemeier, understanding (of an intellectual not common-sense nature) is achieved when we begin to realize that the various points of view reflect very different "decision-variables" (character and identity variables).

Possessing "contextual" knowledge as I am defining it can and should lead to a fourth question, "Is there a way to harmonize or reconcile the various claims that are being made in the interest of a viable social order, one grounded in consensus rather than power?" The goal here is to construct together a just social order, rooted in an ethical principle that can be embraced by all parties. If a "common-sense" viewpoint is "precontextual" in nature, which if the right questions are asked can lead to contextualized knowledge, then the issue of harmonization requires some degree of "decontextualization," in which the parties distance themselves from their particular narratives (with all of the blind spots attendant to them) and begin to define their stance as that of the "impartial spectator" (to draw on Adam Smith) or the "generalized other" (to draw on George Herbert Mead) within an inclusive system of action. An agreement on the ethical or justice principle can then lead to an appreciation of how existing social arrangements diverge from it, an insight that can lead to "recontextualization," which brings social arrangements in line with the established principle. This stage in consciousness requires sound "empirical" knowledge so that the appropriate buttons can be pushed to recontextualize the social order. The question to be answered at this stage is: "What means are needed to bring the existing reality more in line with the foundational principle?" From Lonergan's perspective, the question is: "Which 'good of order' is needed to harmonize the 'particular goods' that are reflected in the individual narratives embraced by the respective parties?" The answer for Lonergan

is that the community needs to identify "values" that can underpin the "good of order" that is being constructed.

Let me conclude with a comment or two on the question of who is to take this unsettling yet exhilarating journey from "narrative" knowledge to "contextual" knowledge to "foundational" knowledge to "empirical" knowledge. I would argue that both students and teachers should take it, and that each can assist the other in meaningful ways. Teachers have a moral responsibility to encourage their students to embark on the journey from the narrative to the contextual to the foundational to the empirical; and sociologists in particular have a definite role to play in fostering such a development in consciousness. It is the responsibility of professors to convey to their students that there are in fact four distinct domains of knowledge that can and should be integrated. On the other hand, professors come to the classroom with their own "common-sense" viewpoints that need to be "contextualized," "decontextualized" and "recontextualized." We need to create a classroom climate that would allow students to freely and openly bring to light any blind spots (pedagogical and otherwise) that their professors may have, and to juxtapose them against alternative common-sense viewpoints (including of course those held by the students themselves). Part of the mission of every course is for the professor and his/her students to explore together their respective blind spots (not only with respect to the course content but also with respect to how the course is run) in such a way that the full development of consciousness can evolve for both parties. This needs always to be the central moral imperative driving educational activity .

Teaching as an Ethical Act

Rosemarie Kramer

It has long been believed that universities, both secular and religious are institutions where ethics is not just a concept but a part of their teaching mission. Historically, that has been true. But, what of today?

According to Dr. Mark Doorley, the facilitator for the faculty seminar, that's not so today. In a paper he delivered in Mainz, Germany in 2007, he proposed that, rather than teaching ethics ... "the university has become more a tool of economics and politics than as a center for the pursuit of truth."¹ He cited the above as one of the reasons that he feels "we live in very disturbing times."²

Is there reason for concern? Are not the universities only mirroring the world in which they dwell?

Seeming to echo the concern Dr. Doorley has about the time in which we live, Maia Szalavitz, well-known journalist and Bruce Perry M.D., Ph.D., adjunct professor of Psychiatry at the Northwestern University School of Medicine in Chicago have written a book, *Born for Love* which deals with the lack of empathy in America. And they, too, ask a leading question in their Introduction: "So, why should I care?"³

The two statements basically refer to the same thing plus the question of caring could also be applied to Dr. Doorley's statement.

Although Dr. Doorley was referring to the sad fact that students have lost the desire to know just for the sake of knowing and Ms. Szalavitz and Dr. Perry were referring to the lack of empathy that undermines the interconnectiveness of people in a society, they're both referring to a decrease of morality in our society. How do these two concepts mirror one another?

On the one hand, Dr. Doorley was deploring the trend for universities to veer away from addressing the whole person of the student. Today, universities are traveling down the road of training career professionals and are neglecting

to encourage them to think reflectively. In narrowing the field of knowledge to just what it takes to get a job after graduation, they run the risk of producing students who don't want to think about other people's problems; who rationalize about what they, as individuals can do about society's problems and who eventually give up – become morally impotent preferring to concentrate on their own small worlds rather than address the larger picture.

At the same time, Szalavitz and Perry are stating that our lack of empathy is endangering society as a whole – that "recent changes in technology, child-rearing practices, education and lifestyles are starting to rob children of necessary human contact and deep relationships – the essential foundation for empathy and a caring, healthy society."⁴

The answer to all the above questions is a resounding 'Yes.' And all offer similar solutions: Szalavitz and Perry propose that education is one of the key elements ...

Schools also need to be engaged and helped to become developmentally aware. It is remarkable how many of the elements of Modern education decrease the opportunities for healthy relational interactions and by doing so actually undermine the core mission of education. ...⁵

Szalavitz and Perry are referring to elementary and secondary education. Dr. Doorley focuses on the universities and suggests that they can reverse this trend by returning to their original mission. They can set up conditions under which students become passionate about learning. In an idealistic way, the university could foster the concept that they, the students, as members of society, are responsible for history – the way the world is today and the way the world could be tomorrow. Rather than see themselves as cogs in a wheel, students could see themselves as agents of change.

To begin this process of reversal is to turn

to the group that encounters the students on a daily basis: the faculty. David Hoekema, in his January 24th article for *The Chronicle for Higher Education*, paints a picture of the influence the faculty wield on students:

The first and most prominent group {of ethics experts} consists of the professors standing in front of their classrooms. Whether consciously or unconsciously, whether systematically or haphazardly, they serve as moral guides to students. ... Even if only a few courses explicitly deal With ethical questions, every class is to some degree a class in ethics.⁶

Acknowledging this influence, how does the faculty go about reversing this trend away from ethical teaching? Dr. Doorley proposed what could be titled, for want of a better appellation, “The Lonergan Way.” All through the seminar, he focused on Bernard Lonergan’s works, especially in the area of human consciousness, as guides toward an ethical act of teaching. The following represent some of the guides the faculty should follow to achieve that quality of teaching.

First, we must be attentive: to ourselves – to our senses – touching, seeing, tasting, desires, what we imagine in our fantasies; also, we must be attentive not only to one’s discipline but also to other disciplines – to attempt to break down the “silos of education.” The compartmentalization of disciplines – to see the connectiveness in education; and finally, be attentive to our students – what they are doing when not in the classroom, what is going on in their lives elsewhere on campus.

Being attentive also means being aware of patterns of experience – the day to day occurrences that happen to both professor and student. For instance, a student athlete experiences more physical stress than the average student. That fact could make a difference in how the student interprets the information given in class.

Another guide, or as Dr. Doorley called precept, is be intelligent – in imparting information we must be aware of the various biases everyone has which can get in the way of learning. He noted that Lonergan cited four biases that hamper solving things in the classroom:

1. dramatic bias — some trauma in one’s life that creates a “blind” spot in certain areas; an example would be a student who was adopted and could not overcome the feeling of rejection by her/his birth parents.
2. individual bias — a selfishness, or self-centeredness; an example would be the sense of entitlement which is so prevalent in today’s society.
3. group bias — one group feels it hold a better place in society than other groups; there are many examples of prejudicial feelings toward minorities in society.

The key for educators is to try to offset these biases by setting up conditions so that students gain insight to solve problems or understand the material. Explain your course to the students – all students have acquired certain bits of knowledge about the course but not the whole story. A full explanation helps the learning process.

A third precept is to be reasonable – be alert, familiar with the situation; know one’s own limits. The first step in that process is to be *silent* – to listen to, not just hear, the music behind the students’ words. Then ask relevant questions that will help the students gain insight.

A fourth precept is be responsible – act consistently with what you know and do – of doing the “good”. One “good” is the good of order, which Lonergan cites as the way in which we organize ourselves so that each of us can attain what we desire. A classroom “good of order” is the syllabus: inform the student that this is a contract and going over the syllabus, point by point, gives the students some idea of what is expected of them. Another very practical “good of order” is to learn the student’s names. Still another is to have conversations at the beginning of class.

The final precept and one that is the most important: be loving. Care about students; learn as much as you can about their lives outside the classroom as they feel comfortable in telling you. Get involved with your students.

And, finally, be passionate about what you do. In so doing, you create that passion in your students that is so necessary in learning—a

passion that opens minds; that engages the entire person; that awakens the desire in students to know; that awakens a desire to act consistently with what they know; that awakens the desire to live an ethical life.

It is no coincidence that Dr. Doorley, Maia Szalavitz, and Dr. Perry emphasized the need for love for a society to flourish. They were only echoing what Christ has said: We must love one another.

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The Doorley Seminar and Bernard Lonergan

Richard M. Liddy

Instructions for leading a life.

Pay attention

Be amazed

Tell about it ...

(Mary Oliver)

Mark Doorley's seminar on "Teaching as an Ethical Act" was an occasion for revisiting a pressing topic, that is, how to introduce people to the thought of Bernard Lonergan. Lonergan was a Canadian Jesuit priest (1904-1984) who taught theology at the Gregorian University in Rome for a number of years. He was also my professor. For many, mentioning his name is the occasion for raised eyebrows; for his writings are notoriously difficult - epitomized by his major work of 1957, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*. This intense philosophical text takes off from a minute study of the methods of mathematical physics and the other natural sciences. Presently his Collected Works - 25 volumes - are being published by the University of Toronto Press.

And yet Lonergan's major aim, as he once put it, was to articulate something "rather simple" and at the same time, "quite profound," that is, the appropriation of our own consciousness. Put simpler, his aim was a continuation of the Greek quest to help us get to know ourselves.

And that is why Mark Doorley's seminar on "Teaching as an Ethical Act" was quite interesting to me. For Doorley based the basic structure of his seminar on Lonergan's "transcendental imperatives:" that is, be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, be responsible, be loving. (For an account of these imperatives, see Lonergan's *Method in Theology*, University of Toronto Press, 1996, 5-25).

According to Lonergan, these imperatives come from within ourselves. In fact, in a real way they are ourselves on the various levels of our being. They are the dynamism of our being as we pay attention, ask questions and seek insights; check to see if our insights are correct, make judgments, evaluate courses of action and make decisions. They are not imperatives that in the

first place come from outside of ourselves, from others: they are dynamisms that come from within ourselves and involve the criteria by which we can recognize something as meaningful, true, good, beautiful and worth loving. At our best, we are paying attention, asking questions, checking our answers, evaluating courses of action and allowing ourselves to be open to beauty and to love.

The simplicity of what Lonergan is calling us to recognize within ourselves can be gauged from the few short lines by the American poet, Mary Oliver, with which we began this reflection.

Instructions for leading a life.

Pay attention.

Be amazed.

Tell about it.

Now a pithy quote cannot be paraphrased. The words with their sounds, cadences and meanings have a unity that is lost in paraphrase. Still, one can comment on such a quote and point to its structure that in a way reflects the more detailed structure of Lonergan's transcendental imperatives.

First of all, the lines of the poem are all imperatives - imperatives about living a human life; we might say a "good" human life, a valuable and authentic life. Such an authentic life - an "abundant life" - begins with being obedient to something deep within us that is asking to be respected. And the first such deep imperative coming from within us is "pay attention." It is what teachers constantly say to their pupils, "Now, pay attention!" Pay attention to what is being said, to your own experience and to the world you find beyond you.

Why? Why pay attention? Because, as the poet says, the world is amazing! There is a world that the poet has found by attending and it is truly amazing. In Lonergan's formula, there is a lifetime of learning and loving that goes into knowing about the world—and it is truly worthy

of love and amazement.

Finally, tell about it. Tell other people about what you have attended to and about the amazing world you have found.

So, the structure of Mary Oliver's simple poem reflects the dynamic structure of human consciousness that Bernard Lonergan analyzes in more detail. Lonergan's transcendental imperatives begin with the very imperative with which Oliver begins her poem: Pay attention! For Lonergan that means pay attention not just to the objects of our attending but to ourselves as attending subjects. Understanding ourselves as called to understanding, to reflecting and to evaluating in the light of the transcendental drives of is truly amazing.

And that is worth telling the world about; which is what Oliver and Lonergan are doing in their writing. In Lonergan's case it involves understanding that our human understanding is not just "taking a good look" at what's "already out there now" but rather discovering within ourselves the imperatives of being intelligent - asking questions! and being reasonable - checking your answers - and being responsible and loving. It is a blunder to think that the only reality is "out there to be looked at." There is much more.

To be liberated from that blunder, to discover the self-transcendence proper to the human process of coming to know, is to break often long-ingrained habits of thought and speech. It is to acquire the mastery in one's own house that is to be had only when one knows precisely what one is doing when one is knowing. It is a conversion, a new beginning, a fresh start.

Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 230-240)

Now if there is anything to be amazed at, that is it: that is, the true nature of our own selves, our own consciousness, our own presence to ourselves. To discover that is also to discover within ourselves what Lonergan calls "the question of God:" that is, the question of the mind behind the meaningfulness of the universe, even the scientifically discoverable universe, the absolute truth behind the contingency of all else, the Good at the basis of our moral judgments, as well as the Love and Beauty behind our human search for love and beauty.

In the seminar on "Teaching as an Ethical Act" Mark Doorley also took us down another path into ourselves when he called our attention to what Lonergan calls the various "patterns of experience" or "patterns of consciousness" within which we live our lives. Our consciousness does not just flow; it flows in this direction or that.

We speak of consciousness as a stream, but the stream involves not only the temporal succession of different contents but also direction, striving, effort. Moreover, this direction of the stream is variable. Thales was so intent upon the stars that he did not see the well into which he tumbled. The milkmaid was so indifferent to the stars that she could not overlook the well. Still, Thales could have seen the well, for he was not blind; and perhaps the milkmaid could have been interested in the stars, for she was human. (*Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992, 205)

Patterns of consciousness, then, are the "zones" in which our consciousness flows: a practical-pragmatic zone, an intellectual zone, and the others listed below. Doorley made the point that it is very important for teachers to pay attention to the patterns of consciousness both in themselves and, to the extent that they are able, in the lives of their pupils. Here are some of the patterns in which our consciousness can flow and questions relating to the classroom:

* The **biological** pattern of experience: the pattern of nutrition and other biological functions within our bodily being; the pattern governed by fright or flight. Are we paying attention to this in the lives of our students: are they tired? Are they hungry?

* The **dramatic-practical** pattern of experience: the world of other people; the drama of life in which each of us plays our part, poorly or well; the pattern we are in most of the time: we openly welcome the presence of one person while for another we instinctively turn aside. Have our students experienced some trauma preventing them from healthy functioning in an interpersonal world?

* The **aesthetic** pattern of consciousness: the pattern and patterns found within our very

experiencing of hearing melodies, seeing beautiful forms, experiencing dance, being caught up in a work of literature or a play. Such patterns “free” us from the ordinary dramatic and practical concerns of life; what for? The intellectual? Is there not a genuine role for the arts in a genuine education?

* The **intellectual** pattern of experience: when you are “in the zone” reading a book in the library, intent on solving a problem or fathoming a difficult text: reaching for a more universal perspective on things; transcending the world of common sense and entering into the strange and influential world of “theory.” Are we helping our students to enter into this pattern; is this the key to what we call “critical thinking”?

* The **religious** pattern of experience; the “falling in love” in a quite profound way; “being grasped by ultimate concern,” in the words of Paul Tillich; pointed to by religious symbols and words and experienced in a wordless way by mystics. Are we open to this?

Doorley’s pointing to these various patterns and his invitation to pay attention to these in ourselves and in the lives of our students was truly an invitation to be amazed at what we find in our own consciousness, our presence to ourselves, our interior basis for understanding our students and their presence to themselves. I am glad that he gave me a better way to talk about Bernard Lonergan with colleagues – that is, through talking about the transcendental imperatives and the patterns of experience; and I’m also glad I recently happened upon Mary Oliver’s little poem to help me in that process.

The American Psychological Association Would Approve the 5 “B’s”

Marianne E. Lloyd

The 2010 summer faculty series on “Teaching as an Ethical Act” gave time for contemplating how to improve as a professor both in and out of the classroom. The five “Be’s” (*attentive, reasonable, responsible, intelligent, and loving*) are of further interest in light of the American Psychological Association’s (APA) draft of priorities of an undergraduate psychology education. In my response paper, I address two of the priorities, noting the ways that the *Be’s* from the seminar are applicable. Overall, the framework was helpful in encouraging me to continue many of my current classroom practices and to strive for an increased focus on skills, application, and experiences over facts.

Priority No. 1

Students Are Responsible for Monitoring and Enhancing Their Own Learning

In psychology, we refer to the skills of monitoring as metacognitive in nature. Students need to understand not only what they know, but how they know it and when they do not know it enough. By including specific exercises that encourage metacognitive work, I am being *attentive* to this skill. For example, in my research methods courses students learn to read and write articles that are in APA style. In addition to asking for annotated bibliographies, I also have them write “how-to” guides for other students learning to read articles. This forces a reflection on the process of trying to understand and not just the facts obtained from the article. Although I warn my students that reading is difficult, I have found that asking them to be explicit about the process has helped them to carve out more time for reading in the future.

To help students enhance their own learning I must be *intelligent*. During class time, I strive to present material in a way that is complimentary but not identical to the textbook. I then require students to integrate the two sources of information. Whenever possible, I attempt to bring in examples and research from outside of my specialty (memory) both to improve interest and to help

keep myself generally informed. I feel a stronger obligation to do this because my subfield of cognitive psychology is one of the smallest. Thus, it is unlikely that students will pursue the field that I have chosen. However, because this is the field that encompasses memory, language, and problem solving it is one of great importance no matter what eventual career path is taken. By finding ways to apply the basic research to issues in development, mental health, or business I gain applied knowledge and my students are more eager to learn.

This eagerness was termed “awakening the desire to know” in the seminar. Another barrier to awakening this desire is the sometimes frantic focus on exams and scores. Prioritizing the monitoring and enhancing of learning instead of deadlines for exams and papers is one way to approach the problem. In my courses, I always include some level of credit that is guaranteed so long as the assignments are completed. For example, in cognition, an upper-division laboratory course, students complete metacognitive exercises for exams. These exercises require students to **1.** write out explicit study plans, explain why those plans are consistent with the information that has been learned about memory thus far, **2.** evaluate the performance during the exam, and **3.** reflect on the performance after the exam was returned -- including making plans for future tests. By focusing on behaviors instead of grades, I make it clear that the responsibility falls upon the individual. At the same time, I take *responsibility* to set clear expectations and share strategies that will help to maximize performance and provide opportunities in and out of class to practice them.

Because my specialty is human memory, I feel extra responsibility for this particular APA priority. In addition to work in the classroom, information on my syllabus, and out of class assignments with regards to study skills, I have also presented on this topic to the psychology club, Seton Summer Scholars, and the women’s tennis team. Seeking out further opportunities to use the

intelligence that I have gained from my work in this field would be a *loving* means of helping students to be more successful in their performance.

**APA Priority No. 2:
*Psychology Departments and Programs
Create a Coherent Curriculum***

The SHU psychology department has recently overhauled its curriculum in order to be better aligned with new APA standards. One of the most significant differences in the new major is an explicit requirement of experiential learning. This can be achieved through an internship (field placement), working in a research lab of a psychology faculty member, or participating in a psychology course that has a service learning lab. The skills from these experiences are consistent with the majority of career paths undertaken by our students: social work, HR, counseling, school psychology, and other “helping” professions. The experiential requirement is our way of being *responsible* for creating an environment where students will see the connections between the material in the classroom and the application in reality. Further, including this piece is a way of being *loving* to our students. The full time faculty members in the department have chosen a path that will be followed by few students – life as an academic. For most of us, teaching and research are the parts of psychology that bring joy. However, this is not the case for our students. By putting their best interest before our preferences, we are creating the right priorities.

The new curriculum is also one that is *reasonable*. Students can double major without taking more than four years, the prerequisites have been adjusted so that students will be in upper division courses after obtaining needed skills in previous courses, and there are enough elective credits for students to have flexibility in the subfields to which they are exposed. At the same time, we have maintained the focus on the entire breadth of the field by requiring at least one course in the four major divisions (cognition/learning, biological, social/developmental, and applied) as well as three courses in methodology and research (statistics, methods, and senior seminar).

The setup of the major is also meant to be *intelligent*. Because each faculty member is an expert in a subdiscipline, it can be easy to become

narrow in focus. The structure of the new major forces addressing the field as a whole during advising time because students are required to take courses in all areas. In addition, the experiential requirement should help faculty members to better advise the students on career options. Those who plan to pursue a Ph.D. would be best served by a laboratory course *and* an internship whereas those looking at an MSW would benefit more from a field placement than spending time working in a laboratory. It is not *responsible* for me to only be able to make certain a student can graduate at the end of four years by checking the list of required and completed courses. Rather, it is my duty to help my students to understand the opportunities and limitations of the degree and how to optimally position each of them for postgraduate work or study.

In addition to increasing the degree to which faculty are *responsible* during advising, the revised curriculum also contains a new course that is an orientation to the major. This course will serve to explicitly address career options, the subfields of the major, help students plan their four years of coursework and begin to learn about the opportunities available at SHU. Together with improved academic advising, the new curriculum is *attentive* to the particular student body we teach.

Conclusion

The five “Be’s” are a fine model for making decisions at every level of the teaching portion of my profession. They help to structure a better syllabus, create a more productive classroom environment, write lectures that encourage critical thinking, and create exams that encourage students to feel accomplished. Assuming teaching is indeed my vocation, then using these “Be’s” as a guide will only lead to greater fulfillment.

Reflections on Teaching as an Ethical Act

Tony Loviseck

I have long embraced the idea that the hand that has been dealt to us – for instance, what we inherit genetically from our parents and the environment in which we were reared – may not be as important as the way we play it out. Blending the ethical bent of, say, a modern-day Aquinas with the secular view inherent in the scientific method, I view the Lonerganistic standard of “be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, and be responsible” as a wonderful starting point on “Teaching as an Ethical Act.” Succinctly, I see this phrase as grounded in the search for truth, trying to recognize that it reveals itself in many different colors, shades, and strands. In this respect, I prefer the word “openness” to “attentive,” even when restricting the word “attentive” to being informed of developments in my disciplines of specialty. I may be attentive, but only to the doors I wish to open, not unlike the researcher who looks only for evidence supporting a cherished viewpoint. If I am open, I allow myself the opportunity – the free will, if you please – to keep opening doors. Of course, the risk is that I might open too many doors and, in turn, stray from the path that best allows me to play out my hand. But I believe that is the risk we are called to take; at times even to the point in which we need to, as I recall a homilist stating, “act our way into thinking;” in effect, to be seekers, not settlers.

In addition, instead of the word “responsible,” I prefer “empathetic,” or the act of experiencing another person’s thoughts and feelings. In trying to be so, I have found that it helps me, at least in a small way, to try to connect beyond what I often view as my own bubble world. In turn, and remembering my own personal and professional journey, I have found that it can serve as an effective draw to students – gaining their ear – leading to an engagement that promotes not only discussion, but also a means to uncover and communicate essential “take-away” points. Through empathy, I also think instructors give themselves an opportunity to create a shared learning experience that is often missing in the “push-back” method, in which instructors assume an adversarial position with students. I add, however, that being empathetic does not mean

lacking rigor and/or standards; in fact, it may increase them. One does not have to look deep into the Bible, Torah, or Qur’an, for example, for prophetic evidence.

Across age, gender, race, ethnicity, and culture, while life’s callings are many, I view teaching as having a special place. For one thing, it is directly a helping profession (unlike in, for example, agriculture and manufacturing production). In finance terms, it is all about future value – “delayed gratification,” if I were a sociologist – or the handing off to students a torch that is burning more brightly than the torch I was handed. In other words, the teacher’s role is a critical input among many – arguably *the* input – into the way the next generation leaves its mark on history. I have long wondered how many teachers consciously look at it this way, or do they view their craft as just a way to earn a living? In this respect, how many instructors really know what they wish to accomplish when they enter a classroom of students? A standard response is to want them to know the material. But what does this mean? What does “know” mean, for example? What does “material” mean? How should it be delivered? These are deceptively simple questions to address because a theory of teaching and learning is not well developed, if at all, and empathy often seems in short supply. In addition, it is common for university instructors to have had no training as teachers, only training as researchers. In fact, without research, arguably there is nothing to teach, but without teachers, the research remains silent.

I think teachers need to remind themselves that education is not limited to cognition, as the questions above imply, but also affectation. I remember, for example, a Nobel Prize recipient in Economics, in an interview, recall how his graduate school mentor helped him understand himself, his interest in economics, and his ability to contribute to the discipline. As another and more local example, is affectation not a driving force behind Seton Hall’s core courses of “Journey of Transformation” and “Christianity and Culture in Dialogue”?

If teaching is to be an ethical act, then I believe that instructors, at a minimum, need to do more than just cover the material; they need to empathetically articulate what they want students to take from the course – the intended impact from the course years from now. If they cannot articulate it, then I think their teaching efforts might not bear much fruit, not unlike the hunter who shoots into a flock of ducks with the hope of hitting something, only to end up empty-handed. This is why I believe we need to be chary about making statements such as “students don’t want to learn,” “are only interested in grades,” and “aren’t fit to be at a university.” (In graduate school, I recall an instructor referring to the vast majority of undergraduate students as little more than assembly line workers and coal miners, and another instructor stating that teaching was, and I quote, “a blight on my time.” Not once did I ever hear either instructor admit some degree of responsibility for their apparent frustration.)

Even when teachers can articulate their goals and objectives, and be empathetic stewards, I think they have to be realistic about the way the learning experience manifests itself. It is not uncommon to hear instructors and university administrators bemoan what they perceive as higher education being transformed into a corporate training ground – “more a tool of economics and politics than a center for the pursuit of truth” (M. Doorley, “Spiritual Exercises in Cosmopolis,” Fourth Annual Lonergan Conference, Mainz, Germany, 2007, p. 3.). Is it not possible that the pursuit of truth continues unabated, even flourishes, but not in the manner professors expect or even see? Could it be that by being “a tool of economics and politics” universities are able to more effectively draw students into “a center for the pursuit of truth?” I recall, for example, the Biblical story about Jesus and the Roman centurion. I think it is fair to say that Jesus is portrayed in the Gospels to being quite frustrated in his ability and effort to get his points across to people of his own belief and culture; not even his disciples seemed to understand his story. However, a Roman centurion, a man who is not even a focus of Jesus’ efforts, and certainly not one who traveled in his circles, comes to him with a request to heal his servant, knowing about Jesus and his ministry. Jesus is “floored” – completely surprised – by the centurion’s faith and his understanding of him. This is to say that instructors need to recognize –

again, a key word is openness – that their impact, which may be more affective than cognitive, may manifest itself in surprising ways, and I think this begins by distinguishing between objective and outcome. Poetically translated, as in the planting of a cherry tree seed, all the planter can do is carefully bury it, and along the way when and where possible, water and fertilize the ground. If and when the seed takes hold, how the tree grows, how fast it grows, and when it bears fruit, if at all, is beyond the control of the planter. It is really in God’s hands.

Teaching as an Ethical Act: Designing Courses as a Means of Fulfilling the University's Mission

Elizabeth McCrea

Seton Hall University is a major Catholic University. In a diverse and collaborative environment, it focuses on academic and Ethical development. Seton Hall students Are prepared to be leaders in their Professional and community lives in a Global society and are challenged by Outstanding faculty, an evolving Technologically advanced setting and Values-centered curricula.

Throughout the 2010 Faculty Summer Seminar we explored the many ways we, as faculty, can view teaching as an ethical act, and how we can use our power to better the lives of our students. An important concept that emerged was the idea that—if we are to be perceived as behaving in an ethical manner—we must act consistently with what we know to be the truth. One aspect of acting consistently that did not receive much attention, but which I feel is important, is teaching in a manner that is supportive of the Seton Hall University mission statement. Although the concept of mission statements has attracted its share of cynics and detractors (e.g., Goett, 1997; Sufi & Lyons, 2003), and although mission statements are often derided as meaningless public relations exercises, an enacted mission can be quite powerful. A well-crafted mission statement—one that is embraced by organization members—can unify and inspire people to reach greater heights (Campbell and Yeung, 1991; Ireland and Hitt, 1992). Indeed, I argue that we have an ethical obligation to our students to enact our mission statement and use it to guide our actions.

Although students' selectivity is sometimes derided as "consumerism," many choose the university they attend with care; they "shop" to find a good fit between their personal hopes and dreams for their future, and what a particular intuition offers in terms of reputation, academics, culture, mission, extracurricular activities and other factors. Our mission is one factor that defines Seton Hall University and differentiates us from rival institutions of higher education where students can acquire academic or career-related

skills, but without the *values-centered* environment that Seton Hall provides.

Many prospective students are goal directed, in that they are seeking a school that will enable them to gain the skills, knowledge and connections they will need for their future success. This behavior is sometimes characterized as self-serving or market-focused—the antithesis of the goals of a liberal education. However, this pessimistic view assumes that students have monolithic motivations, that they are driven solely to find a well-paying job after graduation. Although there is certainly a very small minority that fits this profile, overall I have found that my students hold a much more nuanced definition of what "success" entails. They are seeking success on myriad dimensions, including, but not limited to, a financially rewarding career, a satisfying family life, spiritual growth, physical health and community involvement. Our stated purpose speaks to them, in that they truly want "...to be leaders in their professional and community lives in a global society..." (SHU mission statement). Thus, to be ethical, we need to live up to the promises we make to them in our mission statement.

Given the richness of Seton Hall University's mission statement, there are myriad ways faculty can and do enrich their courses to enact the school's mission. For example, some art instructors incorporate instruction related to "*professional lives*" by demonstrating how various artists earn a living through their work. Some nursing faculty, in addition to teaching professional nursing skills, explore the complex ethical issues pervasive in the medical field, and thereby further students' "*ethical development*." A number of science faculty members write grants to purchase the latest equipment and thereby provide their students a *technologically advanced setting* in which to learn and apply scientific principles.

In the Stillman School of Business, several faculty members use service-learning projects to convey discipline related material in the core

Principles of Management class. Faculty also designed this course assignment, though, to encourage students to engage in “*community leadership*,” and to provide them with a context to practice the tools they need to work successfully in *diverse and collaborative environments*. Indeed, at the end of the semester, student reflections on the project learning outcomes included observations regarding the skills they developed relating to management, such as planning, organizing, leading and controlling. However, they also mentioned many mission-related outcomes, even though such learning outcomes were not an explicit part of the writing prompts (although, upon reflection, perhaps they should be an integral part of the assignment).

Students reflected that they learned to better *collaborate* with *diverse* teammates and clients with divergent perspectives, various abilities, and differing levels of motivation. The community aspect of the project was especially relevant for several students. For example, one noted, “The most important thing I learned was, beyond all the planning and thoughts of profits, you can use your abilities as a business person and the benefits you have been given to truly help those in need.” Another learner wrote, “I have learned how important it is to contribute to the community even in a small way.”

The students comments emphasize the need for faculty to keep the schools mission in mind when designing their courses. To be ethical, we need to live up to the promises it makes to prospective and current students. This does *not* mean faculty members should shy away from difficult or controversial material—after all we are grooming leaders for a complex *global society* and students will need to be able to handle these kinds of issues in an intelligent, reasoned way as they take on leadership roles. However, it does mean that we should explicitly integrate mission-related learning outcomes into our courses whenever possible. As noted above, some faculty already integrate professionalism, ethics, community and other mission-related objectives into their courses, but as academics, it is often more natural for us to focus on our students’ academic development. We must be vigilant in keeping the whole mission statement in mind.

Research has shown that the existence of

well-rounded mission statements was “associated with superior performance after controlling for the effect of strategy planning and organization size” (Sidhu, 2003: 444). In addition, research regarding European universities indicates “that [a pre-requisite] for performance excellence [is] the existence of a formal mission statement” (Hammond, Harmon, & Webster, 2007). Indeed, for universities to overcome the challenges faced by an increasingly competitive global market, Cornuel (2007: 87) called for them “to ensure an adequate level of resources to ‘concretize’ their mission statements.” Specifically, he advised that schools allocate sufficient resources to thoroughly revise their curricula, hire qualified faculty, and increase their efforts to internationalize their student bodies (Cornuel, 2007). We at Seton Hall have already taken great strides towards “concretizing” our mission. For example, the university has invested heavily—in terms of time, money and other resources—in the new signature Core Curriculum. However, to truly enact our mission, we must not stop at the Core. Each of us, as faculty members, has an ethical obligation to integrate mission statement objectives in our own work. We regularly make day-to-day decisions about our courses—the types of books we assign, the kinds of assignments we require, the range of topics with which we grapple. We need to use that decision-making power such that we enact the University’s mission.

Many students choose to attend a particular school at least in part based on that university’s mission. For them, they are disappointed when faculty members do not explicitly tie course materials and assignments to the school’s stated purpose. For example, one Principles of Management student noted, “This is the first class I have had, and I am a Junior, that actually lived up to the school’s mission. Why aren’t more classes like this?”

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All I needed to know about teaching mathematics I learned from Bernard Lonergan ... and George Harrison

John T. Saccoman

Not many people would associate the philosophical writings of the Catholic Philosopher, Rev. Bernard Lonergan, and the lyrics of the songs of the late ex-Beatle George Harrison. However, both were nonconformists in their respective arenas; Lonergan chose to treat mathematics and the other sciences, which most Catholic philosophers have not, and Harrison was one of the first in his field to hold a major benefit concert for others, the 1971 Concerts for Bangladesh. I feel that I can learn much from both of them.

Lonergan uses this definition of mathematical logic: Mathematical logic is the investigation of the field of logical relations through the development of suitable symbolic techniques.[1] Even when teaching courses to non-majors, we are still bound by this relatively straight-forward principle. It is as if we are teaching a new language in some sense. However, the ability to think in mathematical terms is probably the greatest gift we can impart to our students, and, in this way, the connections between Lonergan's philosophy and mathematics become evident.

Lonergan posits five "transcendental imperatives" for comprehensive learning. Through comprehensive learning, one achieves "conversion," a condition of self-understanding [2]. I believe that the imperatives are necessary for both the student and the professor. In what follows, a relevant George Harrison quote will give the teacher's reflection, and a Lonergan paraphrase at the end of each is for the student.

Be attentive

"I want to tell you/My head is filled with things to say." [3]

When teaching mathematics, especially at an undergraduate institution, the professor need never worry about having an insufficient amount of material to present. Often, the problem is quite the opposite. Attentiveness in this context means that we should remember that we are teaching students, not "material." In my opinion, the purpose of the class is not to demonstrate how clever

or advanced the professor is; rather, it is the imperative of the professor to help the student grow in the knowledge of the subject and to begin to think analytically, as appropriate to the particular field of mathematics for that class.

However, attentiveness is also required of the learner. It always amazes me when colleagues bemoan students' texting during class or surfing the internet for things unrelated to the current class discussion. This inattentiveness on the part of the student is disrespectful not only of the professor but also of the class as a whole. Now, there are some who would argue that a student should be as inattentive as he or she wishes in the class, as, after all, the student has "paid" for it. In my judgment, this behavior on the part of the student belies a social immaturity and inconsiderateness that we would be remiss if we did not address. As summarized by Jeffrey Centeno in *The Global Spiral*, Lonergan advised, "Look closely, that you may learn." [2] As faculty, we are obliged to provide the means for that learning to take place, even if our head is "filled with things to say."

Be Intelligent

"With every mistake we must surely be learning" [4]

In the Seton Hall application for promotion and tenure, there is a section in which the applicant is required to elucidate on one's teaching philosophy. This is what I have written:

The first aspect of my teaching philosophy has always been that it is our job as professors to impart our students the ability to think. That is coupled with the second aspect of my teaching philosophy, a nine-word statement: "There is no such thing as a stupid question."

Particularly in a discipline like mathematics, where there are often clear delineations between "right" and "wrong" answers, it is reasonable to think that there is a correlation between intelligence and correctness of answers. Not so. In reality, the process is just as important as the answer. In fact, there are many operations that are

easy to perform using a computer algebra system. However, when the solution process facilitates a deeper understanding of the concept and/or enhances problem solving techniques, we include “by hand” analysis. Centeno interprets Lonergan here as advising the student, “Understand thoroughly, that you may learn.”[2] As faculty, we must create an atmosphere where intelligence is not associated with a fear to make mistakes.

Be Reasonable

“I really want to see you Lord/Its takes so long, my Lord.”[3]

Reasonableness in mathematics is found in both teaching and research. The charge to “Be Reasonable” connotes a critical analysis of one’s findings. On the research side, the process of peer review of articles is a major nod to this precept. New theorems proposed must be properly vetted before accepted, and even then, there can be refinements and extensions, not only to the result, but also to the very proof itself. In the classroom, the charge is twofold. In mathematics, we need to convey to students that (1) they should always determine if their answer/solution “makes sense” in the context of the problem, and (2) they are not close to being masters of the subject after one semester of Calculus. In fact, mathematics is one of those humbling disciplines in which the more one learns, the more one realizes how *little* one actually knows. A student could despair very easily in the face of this realization, so the mathematics professor needs to encourage and praise the effort. “Interpret circumspectly, that you may learn,” [2], as Centeno interprets Lonergan’s advice to the student. The faculty member is obliged to have reasonable expectations for how much time this circumspection should take.

Be Responsible

“Think for yourself/”Cause I won’t be there with you.” [4]

Mathematics is a subject in which previous courses lay the groundwork for future knowledge, a “vertical” discipline. However, the knowledge and skills imparted are not always content-based. In most course syllabi that I produce, I state as one objective “To enhance and encourage the student’s ability to break down and

solve mathematics problems, including applied word problems.” This is a skill that I would expect my students to take to later courses, whether they are in mathematics or not. In fact, at a meeting prior to teaching a particular class, I was asked what was my goal for the. My response was, “I hope that I prepare them well enough to receive a grade of ‘A’ in their next math class.” This obligation of the student was phrased by Lonergan through Centeno, “Act truthfully, that you may learn.”

Be Loving

“If you believe in you/Everything you thought is possible, if you believe ... All your love’s reflected back to you if you believe.” [5]

It seems that this fifth precept is one that can tie together all the others. I often tell people that I love my work; rarely am I asked to elaborate. What I love about being a professor of mathematics is that “Eureka!” moment on the part of the student. It can occur at all levels of mathematics, and is that moment of clarity when things seem to make sense. This feeling imparts to the student what Lonergan might have called a “love for learning,” and who knows where that feeling will lead them?

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Do we know how to Teach?

Kelly A. Shea

I contend that many faculty members – at Seton Hall University and elsewhere – do not know how to teach. I don't fault these professors for the situation that they are in. Except for a few graduate school programs – and it may be that these sites might be on the rise – and graduate schools of education, in particular, I do not believe that graduate schools generally teach their M.A. or Ph.D. candidates how to teach.

This is not to say that graduate schools are not turning out excellent mathematicians, philosophers, biologists, nurses, psychologists, sociologists, and so on. Of course many individuals coming out of grad schools are bright, learned, and earnest. But they are not teachers. Sure, they might have been teaching assistants, but did they really teach? They might have worked in small groups with students, they might have worked one-on-one, they might even have been asked to give a lecture, but were they taught how to teach? Sadly, often, no. And, while they have not been taught how to teach – and unless they end up as successful writers, statisticians, scientists, or practitioners in the private or public sectors – they very often become teachers, and, in particular, college professors. Thus we have a group of individuals who are put in the position of teaching undergrad and graduate students, but no one has really ever taught them how to teach! And, sadly, some of them don't even want to teach – their hearts are in their research, not in the classroom.

So what do they do? What did you do? If you were not taught how to teach, I daresay that you thought back to those professors of yours who had engaged you, entertained you, motivated you, who had *professed* their passion for their subjects and *taught* you, and you then tried to emulate their behavior as a professor yourself. And that might have worked – but it might not have. That's because we are not those people, we don't necessarily know what they were doing to make their teaching so rich in your eyes, and it might not have even been effective teaching – perhaps it was just memorable to you. (Do you remember the material or the messenger?) Who knows? Maybe no one taught them how to teach, either! Maybe they were just some of the lucky

few who were natural teachers, who instinctively understood how to motivate and share knowledge effectively and successfully.

And, even though not everyone is a natural-born teacher, people can be taught to teach well. They just have to be open to it, they have to want it, they have to be willing to cast their preconceptions aside – they have to be willing to *learn*, to find their style, to trust themselves, to *trust their students*, and to *love their students*.

If only more graduate programs could be like Seton Hall's M.A. program in English. In our program, we hire (in a competitive process) a group of teaching assistants and teaching fellows who are *trained to teach* and who teach first-year students in our College English I and II courses. They teach, on their own, one or two sections per semester as well as take their own graduate courses. They meet at least once per week with their supervisor, the director of first-year writing, and she approves all of their syllabi, writing assignments, and exams before they are issued to the students. When they first begin to give comments on writing, they run a sampling of their comments by the supervisor before handing drafts back to students. In addition, if any problems arise in their classrooms or with their students outside the classroom, they troubleshoot with the supervisor or faculty in the writing program. They are inexperienced, but they are trained, they are passionate about their subject, and they trust and love their students. They are also, generally, only a few years older than their students – yet it seems that first-years really connect on an intellectual level with these younger teachers.

So how can we be like them? Well, we can't. The problem, of course, is that we are faculty who are already teaching in the university. Most of us have typically not had these kinds of training experiences, these weekly meetings in which they talk with seasoned professors (yet, some not trained!) and with each other about teaching, these opportunities to discuss pedagogy as well as literature, these golden moments of reflection, the ones in which we truly learn who we

are and who we need to be for our students.

However, all is not lost. It's not too late for us. We can learn how to teach. And if we are so-called "trained" teachers, we can learn to be better teachers. Just as we stay abreast of new research and developments in our academic fields, we need to constantly be students of what it means to be a better teacher.

Dr. Mark Doorley, recent Seton Hall seminar leader and author of the accompanying seminar paper, "The Ethics of Teaching," suggests that part of this work could include studying the ideas of Bernard Lonergan in his *Method in Theology and Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*. According to Doorley, Lonergan put forward five principles or precepts of the "ethical" teacher, the teacher who, perhaps unwittingly or unwillingly, is teaching students not only academic content but also "to awaken in students their desire to know" and to be good citizens in the world (Doorley 2010). Lonergan, Doorley says, contends that, toward these ends, we should be attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible, and loving (Doorley 2010). In the seminar and in his resulting paper, Dr. Doorley examines each of these ideas in detail – they are not, indeed, only what they seem. However, they do provide a very interesting way of thinking about what we might be doing with college students to help them to become good citizens. Certainly being intelligent and responsible involves knowing our disciplines well and sharing that knowledge effectively with the students, but we need to be attentive to our own and our students' situations and circumstances so as to create the right environment for learning, we need to be reasonable and critically think about our and other's knowledge, and we need to be loving in how we do this work. To this last point, we don't need to love our students *per se*, but we need to respect them as people and we need to love the enterprise that we are about with them. We need to, as Doorley says, have a "loving attitude" toward students (2010). Strange words, indeed.

Yet as I listened to these precepts being discussed, I was excited about how important and true they were. I also wondered, of course, to what extent I meet these criteria and how I could know whether I do besides taking the occasional furtive glance into www.ratemyprofessor.com or

the even more available but just as mysterious student course evaluations.

Of most interest to me, at the moment, though, is how to share these ideas with other college professors. I have been looking into the history and current state of affairs of faculty development at Seton Hall, and I can see that the opportunities for these kinds of collegial discussions that the ethical teaching seminar afforded us have been rare but are so needed.

So, what I propose, at the very least, are more conversations like the ones that engendered this essay. Let's develop ways to encourage faculty to want to improve their teaching, to become more loving and interested and interesting. Let's become better teachers together.

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Patterns of Experience and of Poetry: Meaning and Beauty in the Universe of Verse

John P. Wargacki

I

*In my room, the world is beyond my understanding;
But when I walk I see that it consists of three or four
hills and a cloud.*

II

*From my balcony, I survey the yellow air,
Reading where I have written,
“The spring is like a belle undressing.”*

III

*The gold tree is blue.
The singer has pulled his cloak over his head.
The moon is in the folds of the cloak.*

“Of The Surface of Things”¹
Wallace Stevens

I just love this very short, early poem by one of my favorite American poets, Wallace Stevens...” This is more or less the way I might begin speaking to an undergraduate or even graduate class about this brief text. Soon after, we will invariably speak of personification, metaphor, natural imagery, tropes, tercets, hyperbole, litotes, Wallace Stevens’ life and times, why the air may be yellow, why the world is beyond the speaker’s understanding, why we read a poem like this at all. If a student is new to Stevens, she may ask, “Are all of his poems like this one?” “Yes and no,” I likely answer. The inquisitive student may nod or shake her head, uncertain if my answer has done anything to clarify the universe of Wallace Stevens.

In our seminar on “Teaching as an Ethical Act,” I pondered more and more the relationship between Bernard Lonergan’s patterns of human behavior and the way in which I try to teach poetry in the classroom. The pattern-seeking numbers exercise² at the start of day two was designed to produce two distinct feelings: first, the confusion that preceded the pattern being solved mixed with a desire to figure out the problem. Secondly, this was followed by a sense of relief or release after the answer is found. This distinction brought me to thinking that the ways in which I approach a poem with students more often resembles the former experience of that exercise:

confusion mixed with a desire to find the answer. For better or worse, it has been my experience, along with poets and teachers of poetry, that there is generally no sense of relief or release at the end of a discussion, a class, or semester in this particular field. Poetry, especially the sort that has survived long enough to be tucked into the category of the canonical, does not lend itself to explication by equation. A strong poem never “means” anything, nor does it lose its omnipresent ability to “tease us out of thought.”³

As such, when it comes to the art of asking good questions and getting our students to follow suit, I realized that one of the oldest and difficult questions about poetry remains one of the best: “Why do we read it?” Now, rather than trying to answer that question directly in this brief space, I prefer to wrestle with it, not head on, as it were, but by attempting to employ Lonergan’s patterns of behavior in such a way as to neutralize it – a way of saying, perhaps, that we would be happy to wrestle to a draw. For this I would like to bring the question into contact with three of the theologian’s patterns in a particular order: the dramatic, the intellectual, and, finally, the aesthetic.⁴

As with many classes from across the curriculum, I find that students approach poetry (perhaps art in general, though I wish to focus on

pattern. They want to know what “it” means; they want to “get it done,” “get through it,” and maybe worst of all, they are just as happy if I were to “tell them the answer.” The poem ceases to be a work of art and assumes the quality of a word game, not far removed from the daily crossword puzzle or other such word games in the newspaper. If they follow the clues and interchange the text with the “right words,” meaning will miraculously emerge. If I would only tell them what Stevens meant in this poem, we could then share a collective sense of achievement: “Ah, ha, so that’s what the poem means!”

Of course if this is how poems work and how they can be read, we need not collect or revisit them, let alone want to write or even read them at all. Literal language, (whatever that means)⁵ will neatly substitute for all the flowery verse and rhymes, while proving far less frustrating to understand in the process. If, however, I want students to understand that a poem does far more than substitute for meaning, a new pattern of experience must replace the dramatic and for this I would suggest the intellectual pattern.

If I understand it correctly, the intellectual pattern of experience exchanges the desire to “get it done” for a “pure and disinterested desire to know.” And if this is the mental shift one can make in reading a poem, then a much more interesting and enriching array of possibilities emerge. First of all, instead of an equation to be solved, the poem may become something to absorb; not something to know by way of acquisition, but rather a knowledge that is predicated upon a type of “diving into” the subject matter.

A student might cease objectifying the Stevens poem and find a way to locate herself within its images, narrative, or theme.⁶ While much more difficult to qualify, this approach offers the opportunity for the third and perhaps most satisfying movement toward a text -- movement into the aesthetic pattern of experience.

Appropriately named, the aesthetic pattern eliminates all of the daunting elements of the poem, from equivocal meanings to rhetorical structure. And while I would be the first to argue that these elements will always remain a necessary part of the study of poetics, too often they block a student’s ability to simply read the poem closely and, at some point, take ownership of why

she values it. “Children at play” is the phrase used to describe the aesthetic and that is what most intrigued me about its role in a poetry class. If the rules become *temporarily unimportant*, as the aesthetic pattern suggests, students are able to “play” with the poem, and a wonderful, exciting possibility is created in that carefree mode: a student may come to grasp that the central reason why we read poetry at all is because all human beings possess the common desire to be in the presence of beauty.

Whether my classroom examples include Homer’s epics, Shakespeare’s play, or Emily Dickinson’s 1,775 poems, a simple truth pervades through them all: meanings and contexts may change, but our thirst for beauty never does. And while all of the other components of poetry (imagery, metaphor, meter, etc.) inundate the center of the conversation, the poles of beauty remain quite fixed regardless of time and place. There will forever be the canons of our personal lives, filled with works of art, music, theatre and literature that we will scarcely tire of. In fact, the opposite is most often the case: we fall more madly in love with them as we re-encounter them throughout our lives. If so, Mr. Stevens’s short poem will cease to be a puzzle or word game but rather would instead be valued as a work of art, beautiful to behold when remembered, perhaps even able to show us something new each time we revisit it. Curiously enough, this simple truth about the presence of beauty is not something that can be taught; rather it often melds into the student’s realm of understand as a gradual epiphany. As such, it seems to me that the aesthetic pattern offers the most fertile ground by which such a central revelation may be take root and grow to its fullest potential.

If I am successful, I might just end our discussion by reiterating my opening to the poem: “I just love this very short, early poem by Wallace Stevens...” Only this time, I am much more confident that the love I feel for this poem would be a shared experience.

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1. Wallace Stevens' "Of The Surface of Things" keenly demonstrates the poet's tendency to both personalize his quest for objectifying reality while manipulating reality through language. It displays a familiar dynamic tension in Stevens by which reality is most immediately understood, not only through language, but by the power of language to recreate reality through artifice. Hence reality, and any semblance of divinity, in Stevens is wrought through the artist's use of what he described as "the Supreme Fiction."

2. On the second day of our seminar, "Teaching as an Ethical Act," facilitator Mark Doorley began with an exercise in which the numbers: 2,3,5,8,22,23, etc., were placed on a poster-board while the attendees were asked to find the "pattern." The answer, according to Doorley, was that none of the numbers on the board had "straight lines." the exercise was designed to establish the distinction between the confusion that precedes the solution and the relief or release that follows it.

3. In John Keats' classic poem, "Ode on a Grecian Urn," the poet addresses the urn, saying: "Thou, silent form, dost tease us of thought." As an object of sublime beauty, the urn, according to the poet, enraptures the human mind.

4. According to Doorley, Lonergan's patterns of experience include: the Intellectual, Dramatic, Biological, Aesthetic and the Worshipful.

5. The debate about the distinction between literal and figurative languages is far from resolved in the field of metaphor, rhetoric and even cognitive psychology.

6. Excellent examples of this technique are found in two children's books by Sharon Creech, *Love that Dog* (Harper/Collins Publishers, 2001), and its sequel, *Hate that Cat* (Harper/Collins, 2008).

Economics: An Important Dimension of Ethics

Yeomin Yoon

Every class is to some degree a class in ethics.

—David A. Hoekema, Professor of
Philosophy, Calvin College.

These simple words of truth are taken from one of the assigned readings for the Faculty Summer Seminar, and inform the foundation of my own approach to teaching economics and finance at the Stillman School of Business.

There is a fundamental problem in how we frame the practice and teaching of economics at our universities today that we as educators must address. It stems from the rising popularity of the interpretation that economics is a science that exists in a value-neutral context.

Economics may be “dismal” but it is not a science, i.e. it is not a science of phenomena that occur independently of human interest, belief and will. Politics, history, and culture including ideology provide factors that become essential structural determinants of the economy. The Aristotelian concept of politics as a master science that comprehends economy and the Enlightenment concept of political economy indicate a more correct and complete understanding of economic and financial phenomena. With Aristotle, I would argue that economics should be a branch of a comprehensive inquiry (i.e., ethics) that posits the *summum bonum* of human society and describes the regional structures of human social existence, including economic regions. Economics is a practice where freedom and necessity are two interacting dimensions of ethics.

It is unfortunate that some educators have conveniently forgotten that economics is a dimension of ethics as envisioned by Adam Smith. I contend that miseducation in economics today has occurred because of the so-called “Smith Problem”— a perceived contradiction between his theories of *self-interest* (derived from *The Wealth of Nations*) and *empathy* (derived from *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*). Self-interest can take one of many forms, one of which may be egoism. An egotist seeks his/her interest with no concern about the impact of his/her behavior

upon others. But Adam Smith’s self-interest is rational egoism that carries assumptions and principles. It assumes (a) that all persons are disposed to act to satisfy their own interests, but (b) that persons are rational enough to realize that they should not do to others what they do not want done to them (a “negative golden rule”) and to agree to social rules that ensure the universal conformance with this principle. Smith’s theory of empathy is compatible with egoism. Empathy is sensing affinity among humans. An egoist, by empathy, recognizes egoism in others. Empathy should not be confused with natural benevolence. Empathy is the source of a sense of fairness that prevents people from harming others out of self-interest, for they by empathy know that others would not want to be so harmed by them just as they want not to be so harmed. Correctly understood, there must be no such thing as the “Smith Problem.”

I feel that academic economists urgently need a root-and-branch examination of economics education, with a serious examination of how ethics can be *organically* incorporated into economics discourse in class. If we teach only “value-neutral” laws of economy, we will produce “value-free” technocrats ill-equipped to make positive contributions to humanity, rather than educated, wholesome human beings. Academic economists, including myself, should constantly keep in mind the words of John Maynard Keynes, the eminent economist of the 20th century: “It needs no proof that neither economic activities nor any other class of human activities can rightly be made independent of moral laws.”

Bernard Lonergan's Patterns of Experience in Science Education

Debra Zinicola

...science has been taught too much as an accumulation of ready-made material with which students are to be made familiar, not enough as a method of thinking, and attitude of mind ...

—John Dewey

What is compelling about this quotation from educational philosopher, John Dewey, is that the situation it describes is as valid today as it was in 1910 when it was written. Science is an approach, or method, as well as a process of looking at the world in an attempt to make sense of it; it is not solely a body of knowledge. Even so, in our nation's schools, science is primarily presented to students as a compilation of terms, laws, principles, and processes to be memorized, instead of in the context of its dynamic, investigative nature. Another common phenomenon is that in K-5 grades it is rare to find teachers that have strong content knowledge or passion for teaching science even though it is part of national and state mandated curricula. The cause of this deficit was revealed in the 2007 TIMSS study of mathematics and science achievement whereby teachers of fourth graders reported little specific training or specialized education in science (IEA). As students proceed through the upper grades without a solid foundation in scientific inquiry from their lower grade teachers, science can be difficult to learn since the many facts and technical jargon do not connect to their prior knowledge and experience. In spite of these obstacles, as a faculty member in the Educational Studies Department, I have been working to reverse these trends, at least among our own teacher candidates, by teaching them how to be more effective teachers of elementary school science.

As a participant in Dr. Mark Doorley's Faculty Seminar, "Teaching as an Ethical Act" this May, 2010, I was able to immediately integrate a few of Bernard Lonergan's ideas in relation to a course I teach in the fall, but was also teaching during the June intersession entitled, "Teaching Science in Diverse Classrooms." While this type of methods class for pre-service teachers may not seem conducive to applying the philosophical ideas of Bernard Lonergan, I started to see the

teaching of this course through the lens of three of Lonergan's five patterns of experience: the intellectual, the dramatic and the aesthetic.

First, let me say that I continuously strive to have the *intellectual pattern of experience* take hold among my students. How wonderful it would be to have them so completely absorbed in the study of science that they would forget to look at the clock or their cell phones for two and a half hours each week. However, I usually have problems achieving my goals. The more theoretical or factual I am in explaining phenomenon well enough so they could teach it to children, the more I lose their interest and attention. Giving tests on the content is only temporarily fruitful, since such knowledge is rarely retained, applied, integrated, or transferred to novel contexts. In addition to increasing the retention of what they are learning, I really want to arouse their intellectual curiosity so they are motivated to study the content of science as future teachers of science.

Another obstacle I face is typically known as "science anxiety," or fear and distaste for science learning. It has an overwhelming influence on most of our pre-service teachers' ability to learn. Through class discussions and the reading of their responses to questionnaires, I see that this attitude can be attributed to the way they have experienced science in elementary school, high school, and college." They are quite familiar with textbooks, learning facts and terms, and taking tests, but not particularly familiar with asking questions, thinking critically, conducting research and investigations, and working collaboratively. Unfortunately, many of our pre-service teachers are coming to the universities and colleges well trained in "textbook-centered or recitation-style teaching," a style of teaching and learning that does not prove effective with K-5 learners (Little 130).

My challenge, therefore, is to shift their cognitive structures from what Bernard Lonergan calls the dramatic pattern of experience ("Let me just get these assignments and this class over with") to the intellectual ("I am thoroughly

engaged and absorbed in learning science”). While there is no easy path to changing someone’s mind about science if they do not like it, let alone an entire group of individuals, I did have some success this summer in diverting my students’ focus from the *dramatic* to the *aesthetic* as a doorway to the *intellectual* pattern of experience. Doorley said the aesthetic pattern is an immersion into “free play of the senses and the imagination.” While a scientist would say that his or her work is certainly not play, Nobel Prize winning physicist, Richard Feynman said of learning science, “Our imagination is stretched to the utmost, not, as in fiction, to imagine things which are not really there, but just to comprehend those things which ‘are’ there” (Feynman). While Feynman asked us to imagine a world where atoms are both attracted to one another and repelled by one another, I asked my students to imagine less complex phenomenon as a springboard to new learning, such as: How can four cups of equal amounts of different liquids have different weights? Which seed, lima or radish, will grow first and why? Why do we see a laser light spot on the wall and why do we not see the beam of the laser? Why does it rain? How do we experience four seasons? Why do we see phases of the moon?

To investigate these questions, students spent a good deal of time thinking about them, writing what they knew, talking to others in their group, then contributing to whole class discussions using their own words instead of using dictionary definitions for technical terms. I ultimately helped them extract those ideas that contributed to a viable concept, and together we discarded those that did not. I brought a good number of physical demonstrations to class to make concepts visible and to stimulate their imaginations. “We cannot see atoms,” I would say, “but if we could, what would they be doing to give us this result?” To learn the reason for the seasons, for example, I brought globes and lamps, for phases of the moon, golf balls and a lamp. We grew seeds on paper towels, watched mealworms transform from larvae to pupa to adult darkling beetles. We forecasted weather with our balloon-jar barometers and witnessed the hydrocycle in plastic bottle terrariums.

The last two days of class was devoted to *their* teaching instead of mine. In pairs, they had to take a concept and help the class generate ex-

planations by observing phenomenon, using their knowledge and imagination, and generating ideas that could be shaped into a correct conception. They modeled my methods, created physical and visual representations, and presented the following questions for exploration: What design makes a balloon rocket go farthest? How does a cloud in a bottle simulate a real cloud? Why does water rise in the stem of a plant (including trees) against the force of gravity? What is the best method for cleaning an oil spill? How do our fingerprints (friction ridges) form, and why are they different, even among identical twins?

Combining concrete examples with abstract instruction is a powerful method of teaching science. Scientific models that are represented with varied illustrations of how they are applied expands knowledge through multiple applications to a more holistic and stable understanding. Such understandings solidify meanings, generate additional examples, and clarify misconceptions. While these teaching methods proved interesting additions to the required tests and assignments, the most effective strategy, in my opinion, was that my students and I played with materials and ideas daily for three weeks. Honoring the aesthetic pattern of experience did, in fact, lead my students to the intellectual pattern of experience as evidenced by their assessments, teaching performances, and unsolicited comments. I also believe their science anxiety was relieved to some degree as illustrated in the following three quotations taken from anonymous course evaluation forms:

This class provided me with more science content that when I was in grade school I now have so much understanding and I look at science in a different light. Science used to make me nervous because I didn’t understand it, but this class was engaging. My desire to learn what was being taught grew each day.

I learned so many concepts and explanations that I don’t remember learning in elementary school. I left class everyday feeling like I understood what was taught and wanted to share it with family and friends

This class proved to me that science needs to be hands-on, experimental, inquiry-based with discovery components. I learned the most I’ve ever learned in a class while I didn’t even realize I was learning.

How did allowing students to play help them learn? What I believe contributed to their perceived success was engaging them in a risk-free environment. It took about four class sessions for students to begin to relax and allow their minds to be free of tension enough for them share freely, to have questions, and to say what they thought even though it may have been or “stupid” as they would tell me. What is also essential about this process is making continuous connections between what I want them to learn and what they already know, what their interests are, and how they best process new material. Making science accessible, relevant, and grounded in meaningful experiences helps motivate students. Allowing them to learn by playing with materials and wondering, like young children do, asking why, using what they know to solve problems, asking for information they need to complete the task, and ultimately being immersed in the aesthetic pattern of experience was a bridge to engaging them in the *intellectual* pattern of experience.

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