
THE SIXTIES: THE CALM AGAINST THE STORM, OR,
LEVELS OF CONCERN

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Striving to avoid presentism, staving off some of my own memories, I turned to *Educational Theory* in the decade of the "Sixties." Because of my associations with the unrest of that period, I looked back with considerable expectancy where educational philosophy was concerned. I was sure, somehow, that there would be responses to what seemed to be a variety of philosophical questions inherent in the Civil Rights movement, with its stress upon civil disobedience, nonviolence, and redemptive suffering. There were issues like conscientious objection to a draft occasioned by what seemed to increasing numbers to be an unjust war. It would appear, even from the present vantage point, that appeals to intuition and to the moral law (in tension with rationality and the civil law), while warranted by war or cruel circumstances existing in the South, held implications for the schools. There were the demonstrations, mostly peaceful, some of them not, and odd alliances among those Norman Mailer called "armies of the night."¹ Legislation having to do with educational equality, compensatory education, and sexual equality raised an unprecedented set of problems, some of them linguistic, some arising from generations of discrimination scarcely questioned before. I realize I was looking through lenses partly derived from recollections of participation in the 1963 March on Washington, of taking buses to peace demonstrations, of trying to convince colleagues to take positions on the war in Vietnam. And, of course, there were the three assassinations that shook our faith in political possibility. Somehow in connection with that, I recall what now seems an absurd conviction that America was really undergoing a "greening": a relaxation of constraints; an unprecedented mutuality, even across differences; a devotion to compassion and peace. Few people worked out ways of attaining all this, with or without reliance on the schools. Images of open spaces, communal living, flowers in the muzzles of guns lulled numbers of people into (for a while) a kind of bland complacency. But then the bombings began in Cambodia and Vietnam, and optimism gave way to other modes of protest, some of it focused on the schools.

Some of the buried hopes were stimulated by what was thought of as a more or less romantic criticism of public education. Voices were heard from the domains of the humanities: those of men like Paul Goodman, Edgar Friedenberg, John Holt, George Dennison, James Herndon, and Jonathan Kozol. Echoes of Emersonianism were audible, a pleasant libertarianism, a touch of Rousseau, certain aspects of

1. Norman Mailer, *The Armies of the Night* (New York: New American Library, 1968).

Deweyan thought. Here and there new schools, "free schools," were established. The relative invisibility of African-Americans and women was scarcely noticed. Again, it is difficult for someone with a sense of situatedness in place and time to shrug off the questions implicit in such an open-ended dialogue. It is hard to forget the perspectives opened on bureaucracy, top-down supervision, predetermined curricula. And we cannot overlook, even now, what Kozol made us see with regard to brutality against children and the unashamed neglect of those in a minority. Marxist and neo-Marxist inquiries complicated what we were made to recognize more and more: the role of the "system," of ideology, of capitalism itself. In any case, what I found by looking through those perspectives cannot but feed into the context of the interpretations I come to when rereading *Educational Theory* of the 1960s.

My judgments and the questions I was and am moved to pose were also affected by my having spent some days at Ivan Illich's CIDOC center in Cuernavaca, Mexico. That was where I first heard Paulo Freire speak (actually to an audience of Mexican teachers). At once, I was provoked to consider Illich's notion of "de-schooling" along with novel conceptions of critical literacy (and "conscientization") at the same time. Problems having to do with what Freire called "banking education" and the pressures of ideology on young and old cried out for solution (and, in most instances, were left hanging).² Freire's view of an internalized oppressor was linked (for me) to a new recognition of how persons are trained, by means of assessment and sorting devices, to accommodate to stratified class society. The contradictions involved troubled many educators, even those of us who still believed that the common school can become a site for democratic modes of thinking and being. This, too, becomes part of the context surrounding the schools of the 1960s. Few people can wholly deny the manipulations that go on or the corporatism and technicism that dominate the framing of our purposes. It may be (and I need my readers to be as wary about this as I am trying to be) that my opinions are overly responsive to what I recall about the decade — and that I sometimes look for a sense of outrage where it may be inappropriate.

It is relevant too to say that I was editor of the *Teachers College Record*, beginning in 1966. My rereadings of *Educational Theory* are necessarily influenced by fragmentary recollections of editorial choices made at the *Record*. The readers of our journal, of course, were not representative of any particular discipline; they composed a more or less general audience from the fields of higher education and teacher education. That left me free to publish a great variety of pieces: on art education, on Head Start, on welfare children, on decentralization, on values and morality, on injustice and discrimination. (Looking back, I sometimes wonder whether the editors of the different educational journals inhabited the same world.)

2. Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968), 58.

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No one, it seems evident, could deny that the schools were being attacked as “wastelands,” lacking standards and discipline, neglectful of the substance of subject matter. The Russian rocket, Sputnik, went up only three years before the decade began; and there was, for a time, a great sense of crisis at the realization that the Russians may have been defeating us in the scientific and technological domains. There were talent searches, we recall; government money was invested in “gifted” education and in science and mathematics teaching. There was an abrupt entry of academic scholars on the educational stage, a flood of “teacher-proof” curricula, and presumed reforms in many subject areas, not to speak of reading (which “Johnny” could not do).

The inevitable question for educational philosophers had to do with the connection between philosophy and educational practice. What did the philosopher have to say about the “new” math, or the social studies curriculum that raised so much ire in Congress? What of distinctions among methodologies or what were called different “learning styles?” Did the nature of a philosophic system or point of view affect the conception of education or educational practice under consideration? How did a particular epistemology govern approaches to subject matter?

Most of us recall what we spoke of as the “movements” approach, laying out what were thought to be the significant philosophic movements in the Western tradition. Many of our textbooks were organized by means of those systems: idealism, realism, pragmatism (or experientialism), and (in later editions) reconstruction, analytic and language philosophy, and existentialism. Assigning, say, one Platonic dialogue, a selection from Kant (perhaps *The Metaphysics of Morals*), a sample of Dewey’s work (usually *Experience and Education*), we expected our students to reason from characteristic metaphysical and epistemological generalizations to specific teacher activities and expected learner responses.³ That approach was questioned at length by the prominent New York University philosopher, Sidney Hook, in an authoritative article published in the *Harvard Educational Review*.⁴ He rejected sweepingly all claims that epistemological or metaphysical positions held logical implications for classroom practice. (It is difficult to forget his example of the parochial teacher, trained in neo-Thomism yet teaching like the most experience-oriented, dedicated progressive early childhood teacher.)

In April 1966, Robert Guttchen reviewed what had become a long controversy surrounding the belief that logical implications could indeed be identified. He called instead for attention to different modes of inquiry in their relation to aspects of human action.⁵ Objecting to the idea that philosophers could and should agree on a single methodology for the guidance of practice, Guttchen quite properly called for a clarification of what philosophers actually mean by practice; and he took special

3. Immanuel Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1964) and John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (New York: Collier Books, 1963).

4. Sidney Hook, “The Scope of Philosophy of Education,” *Harvard Educational Review* 26, no. 2 (Spring 1956).

5. Robert S. Guttchen, “The Quest for Necessity,” *Educational Theory* 16, no. 2 (April 1966): 128-34.

issue with the idea there might be a necessary relation between a philosophically sanctioned methodology and educational practice. The search for implications was fruitless, he said: the connection between philosophy and practice remained an open question. Important as it was to shed light on the matter of action in the classroom, I find it odd that Guttchen (like many of his colleagues writing during the 1960s) somehow overlooked the social and ideational context, so full of issues consequential for the schools.

It must be recalled, of course, that the last years of the decade were years of increasing domination by analytic or language philosophy; and with that came a feeling of detachment from classroom life and the perplexities it involved. In many respects, people "doing" educational philosophy resembled the so-called "new critics" in the field of English education. Both sets of practitioners tended to confine themselves to formalist issues: the poem in its autonomy, untrammled by talk of biography or social setting; the classroom or the curriculum examined for its own sake, or solely with reference to the epistemology it was intended to exemplify. Countering what was called "bewilderment," vagueness, or what literary critics called the "intentional fallacy" (meaning the introduction of personal experience into interpretations where it presumably had no place), the impinging systems thought to be the context were set aside. That partly accounted for the preoccupation with logical implications in discussions of philosophy's relation to practice. Rigor, as suggested above, was made possible mainly through detachment from the field under study. This, many believed, would permit the necessary "objectivity," indeed the neutrality required of the dependable observer. (It should be pointed out as well that the "movements" approach, with its reliance on generalizations taken from the great systems of thought, rendered philosophic inquiry impersonal and distanced. Exceptions were to be found, of course, in nonsystematic philosophies — pragmatism, reconstruction, existentialism, not to speak of philosophical analysis. Even in those cases, however, I find little attention paid to the concreteness of events in the classroom or to the commonsense language best equipped to handle them. Similarly, there was little effort exerted to capture the voices and what Guttchen called the "actions" of teachers actually involved in the processes of teaching. But it must be admitted that there was little anticipation of qualitative research or of the importance of multiple points of view.

It seems relevant to note that, in spite of this, a number of us were drawn to the writing of Alfred Schutz, probably best known for his work on the social construction of reality. In one of his essays, he wrote about the mode of understanding called "Verstehen," the way in which "common sense thinking finds its bearing in the social world and comes to terms with it."⁶ "Verstehen" was not to be considered a subjective faculty nor a private affair of the individual. Because human beings are born of mothers, Schutz said, and not concocted in retorts, the experience of other human beings and the meaning of their actions is the first observation they make in

6. Alfred Schutz, "Concept and Theory Formation," in *The Problem of Social Reality, Collected Papers I* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967), 57.

their lives. Schutz's "The Problem of Social Reality" (part of his collected papers from which the above quotation was taken) was published in 1967 and was therefore available; but it needs to be pointed out that, in a largely analytic moment, what was called "continental philosophy" had little impact upon most educational philosophy. It is true that Van Cleve Morris, Donald Vandenberg, Neil Sutherland, and several others (as we shall see) wrote about particular existentialists or particular issues in existentialism and phenomenology; but there was little attempt to apply such thinking to the relation between philosophy and practice. An exception may be found in Vandenberg's review, "Condemned to Meaning What?" of Huston Smith's *Condemned to Meaning* (a title borrowed from Maurice Merleau-Ponty, which I have also referred to many times). Vandenberg quotes Merleau-Ponty's view that existence is indeterminate "insofar as it is the very process whereby the hitherto meaningless takes on meaning."⁷ It is expression, he wrote, that brings meaning into being. In Vandenberg's reading (partly in accord with Maurice Merleau-Ponty), "The only meanings discoverable in experience, however, are those embedded in prior experience, created there through growing up in society wherein there are cultural objects and wherein speech is a cultural object, an institution."⁸ He stressed the way in which Merleau-Ponty related meaning to action and restored the connection of life-meaning with doing. He knew, as Schutz did, that the language of expression is not the language used by the social scientist; and yet it can be and ordinarily is the language of action.

The orientation to action — to practice in the classroom or in the larger world — is difficult to imagine without attention being paid to some context. The persisting hold of analytic philosophy made it difficult for many to see this. Martin Levit, in his presidential address, was one of several, however, who argued for consideration by educational philosophers "of other domains of inquiry and life." Indeed, philosophy as he defined it ought to be understood as "the criticizing, the intellectually and morally controlling discipline."⁹ At odds with such a view, Levit thought, were both analysis and existentialism. What was needed was to go beyond presumably watertight points of view, distanced from the world beyond.

For Levit, the context was to be found in the networks of beliefs and meanings in which philosophies were inevitably entangled. Also, he was taking into account "the cultural forces that so powerfully, often silently, and always pervasively influence the social and formal education of all of us."¹⁰ He wanted to see a reflective examination of what he called "roles and rules," even as he called for more "socially, internationally relevant and comprehensively grounded ethical conclusions."¹¹

7. Huston Smith, *Condemned to Meaning* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965) and Donald Vandenberg, "Review-Article: 'Condemned to Meaning What?'" *Educational Theory* 16, no. 4 (October 1966): 377.

8. Vandenberg, "Condemned to Meaning What?" 377.

9. Martin Levit, "Contexts, Inquiry, and Philosophy of Education," *Educational Theory* 18, no. 4 (Fall 1968): 299.

10. *Ibid.*, 311.

11. *Ibid.*, 309.

Anticipating what we think of as multiculturalism and a recognition of multiplicity of points of view, he emphasized the differences in categories of thought in different cultures. Referring to analytic and ordinary language philosophies, he highlighted the unlikelihood of Chinese thinkers responding to the idea of finding metaphysical truths in what they considered ordinary language. And he wondered about Navajo Indians' responses to claims of a sense of agency. Struck by his awareness of the relations between educational philosophy and the surrounding culture, especially the mode of inquiry that distinguished it, I find myself (in full realization of the lenses through which I look) struck by the absence of concrete referents at a time of so much unrest, uncertainty, and ethical questioning. Responding, Harry Broudy did suggest some concrete policy questions ("What is a defensible criterion of 'good' chemistry, 'good' physics, 'good' literature, 'good' school policy?"¹²). He was interested, however, in the diverse ways people might relate such questions to general epistemology, not in their contingency as questions being raised at a time the public school itself had become problematic in many people's minds.

Those who chose to continue "doing" philosophy in a space apart from the actualities (and often the confusion) of everyday practice undoubtedly feared that so-called "philosophical argument" would degenerate into emotive assertions, unsupported declarations, and sentimental moral pieties. In English classes, there was a fear that excessive concentration on social and cultural surroundings would lead to overlooking the novel or the poem, subsuming it under social or even political categories. When attention focused exclusively on the "work itself," the poem or the fiction was presented as a self-sufficient entity; neither readers' lived experience nor the nature of the historical moment in which the work was created was considered relevant to interpretation.¹³

Of the increasing number of efforts to "situate" educational philosophy without trivializing it, one described by a British philosopher, Nicolas Haines, seems particularly interesting.¹⁴ Haines wrote of the importance of educating secondary school students in the responsibilities of a free society. His point had to do with the school's devoting its resources to the nurture of the democratic way of life. The method used to initiate newcomers into such a way of life "readily promotes interest," wrote Haines, in philosophical problems. Doing so, it might help "reduce the abysmal alienation of academic philosophy from the general education of the people." He used as examples of critical issues psychedelics, subversion, and corruption, all displayed against a background involving Socrates and the Sophists. But he found a place for modern notions of concept and language clarification, as he did for a Deweyan conception of community and democracy.

There was an anticipation here of something quite different from the study of the propositions studding the philosophical tradition. Also there was something that

12. Harry S. Broudy, "Response to the Presidential Address," *Educational Theory* 18, no. 4 (Fall 1968): 314.

13. Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 47-53.

14. Nicolas Haines, "Situational Method: A Proposal for Political Education in Democracy," *Educational Theory* 19, no. 1 (Winter 1959): 17-26.

went beyond the analytic philosopher's concentration on definition, implication, or language games in general. Philosophy is viewed here, not as the governing discipline, but as a way of posing critical questions of moment to the school and the society. The view of situation, like the view of political education, opened the way to an approach to education in continuing transaction with salient issues in the culture. The choices of these issues or of what constituted a situation were to be made reflectively by teachers in dialogue with one another and with at least minimal familiarity with the doing of philosophy. Most important, they were to become the questions of real significance to the community and to the projects teachers might choose for themselves as they moved ahead in their teaching lives.

My own PES Presidential Address, offered earlier, was entitled "Morals, Ideology, and the Schools: A Foray into the Politics of Education."¹⁵ There were some connections with Haines's piece, but I am quite sure neither of us knew of the other's existence. It must be admitted as well that "politics of education" did not mean to me then what it means in the field today. As I recall, my feeling of outrage at the Vietnam War, its immorality, and the ideology I believed was largely responsible for it, moved me to devise my own critique of formalism and detachment in philosophy of education. Like many others, I was convinced that the democratic way of life ought to be nurtured in the schools. I could not imagine how this could happen without a recognition that individuals who chose themselves as spectators, mere passers-by (at the sight of a napalm burned child running down a road) could have no understanding of what it meant to be responsible for other human beings, whoever they were, nor any grasp of the meaning of freedom and its link to responsibility. My views were already being shaped by existentialist writers (unlike Levit and many others), and that may have made it all the more important for me to teach for the wide-awakeness Albert Camus had described, and for the social vision Jean-Paul Sartre said was necessary if people were to become aware of deficiencies in the world and take action to repair them.¹⁶ It took me a while to realize that there were even more complicated questions connected with that war than I had suspected. We experience a painful recognition of them when, for instance, we visit the Vietnam Memorial and realize how few middle-class or college-bred white men and women are listed there, the very ones who organized a peace movement, marched, even went to jail sometimes, but managed to stay out of the war. How were we to justify our positions to, say, women in the school community who had lost their sons (drafted into the army) when our sons and brothers were clever enough (and we would say committed enough) to avoid the draft? Again, in my view teachers and students were so embedded in the life and belief patterns of their communities, the schools could simply not escape the philosophic questions, the desperate, often insoluble questions that keep many people in search and alive.

15. Maxine Greene, "Morals, Ideology, and the Schools: A Foray into the Politics of Education," *Educational Theory* 17, no. 4 (October 1967).

16. Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), 13 and Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1956), 430-45.

The point must be made that there was an increasing interest in the relation between knowing and acting, for all the persisting preoccupation with analysis and, to some degree, with existential thinkers like Søren Kierkegaard, Frederick Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Sartre, and Martin Buber. June Fox wrote about the relation of psychology and epistemology to Dewey's and Jerome Bruner's conceptions of education.¹⁷ She spoke of Bruner's view of learning as discovery, of Dewey's conception of mind and consciousness as relations, as transactions. Like Dewey, she suggested, Bruner saw the point of education in the development of the capacity to act, to affect institutions. Both believed, she said, that the tasks of education cannot be separated from social reform.

It was unusual for the philosophers contributing to this journal to refer back to the 1930s and the haunting question of whether the schools could or should change the social order. Joe Burnett, in his Presidential Address, wrote about the teachers themselves having the power to change the social order.¹⁸ The difficulty he saw was that they did not dare to do so. There was, he thought, a defensiveness among the teachers' unions, and a reliance on the advantages and benefits assured by the unions. Burnett, however, is one of the few who mentioned the "youth revolt." He saw a "new breed of teacher"; but they seemed to him, on the one hand, jaded and, on the other, not inclined to give up the benefits their parents had won for the profession, even though they may have rebelled against those parents. The most memorable point Burnett made was that, for all the notions of social change in such systems of thought as progressivism and reconstructionism, there were too few teachers with an authentic feeling of agency to bring about the changes projected in the texts. At the end, he wrote some sentences of clear relevance to the present moment, when we look about and see the decline of philosophy of education and foundations courses around the country:

Our students and our society want education to be socially relevant today, and what could be more relevant than such things as the concept of community; that of social consensus; that of social conflict and crisis; that of social — as contrasted with political — democracy.... It may be professionally important for us to stress social philosophy of education much more, and this just at a time when the emphasis seems to be on high specialization and fewer general, philosophically oriented courses for teacher trainees. For if we get massive, powerful organization of classroom teachers, it could degenerate into a "racket"...without a set of rich, humane philosophical perspectives.¹⁹

He took, it is clear, much for granted where the relation between philosophy and practice (perhaps, social praxis) was concerned; but he makes a demand many of us would support. Also, his article particularly highlights the change almost no one was anticipating to a technology-dominated culture, the internet, a computerized globalization, distance learning, digitalization, and all the rest. I find no one in the journal issues I have read who even suspected such a change.

17. June T. Fox, "Epistemology, Psychology and Their Relevance for Education in Bruner and Dewey," *Educational Theory* 19, no. 4 (Fall 1969): 58-76.

18. Joe R. Burnett, "Changing the Social Order: the Role of Schooling," *Educational Theory* 19, no. 4 (Fall 1969): 327-36.

19. *Ibid.*, 336.

Yes, there were a relatively few “purely” philosophical discussions like Van Cleve Morris’s Presidential Address, “Détente in Educational Philosophy.”²⁰ Acknowledging that he was drawing on the work of Stanley Cavell, Harry Broudy, and Marvin Farber, Morris claimed that “the two growing edges of educational philosophy are to be found in scientific and analytic philosophy on one hand and Existentialism on the other.”²¹

Certainly Morris did considerable work on what he would call “the choice to be rational” and on the analytic philosopher’s rejection of the notion of “being.” His primary objection to the scientific and analytic philosopher was to what he regarded as their view of the givenness of reason, their exclusivity in ignoring the emotional and the intuitive. Verging on a notion of complementarity, he called for a rapprochement in a situation he created (I am afraid) as dualist. To describe the existentialist view as primarily affective first of all ignores the stress on reflectiveness by a philosopher such as Sartre, or Camus, and (emphatically) Heidegger. It ignores Merleau-Ponty’s idea of our being “condemned to meaning.” And that makes me assert that it is as difficult to generalize about existentialists, as if they were identical, as it is to treat all “scientists and analytic philosophers” as the same or equivalent.

Surely it was important to introduce existentialism into the conversation fostered by *Educational Theory* over the years; but the seriousness of the questions, the problems posed by the various existentialists and phenomenologists seem to me too profound and too significant to be subsumed under a call for what could only be a bland rapprochement. Similarly, the facile identification of “scientific” with “analytic,” the absence of distinctions among the sciences: all this somehow trivializes the problems posed by technicians (certainly not all scientists), and the relations between empiricists and existentialists. And we are left this time with scarcely a mention of the implications of this comparison (if there are any) for the classroom.

In a later issue of this journal, James W. Hillesheim, in an article entitled “Action and Solitude; A Nietzschean View,” shed a different light on what existentialism involves by focusing on the work of a particular philosopher.²² His interest was in presenting Nietzsche’s view of “self-surpassing” as fundamental to education (and, incidentally related to Dewey’s notion of growth). He had in mind the relation between certain kinds of knowledge and certain kinds of action. The following remark might be taken as a response to Morris’s odd identification of existentialism with a rejection of rationality: Nietzsche wrote that “action, to be meaningful and effective, must be guided by knowledge, and knowledge is only gained through reflection and solitude — the very opposites of action.”²³ And then Hillesheim made the point that the self-surpassing individual works for an integration of knowledge

20. Van Cleve Morris, “Détente in Educational Philosophy,” *Educational Theory* 15, no. 4 (October 1965): 265-72.

21. *Ibid.*, 265.

22. James W. Hillesheim, “Action and Solitude,” *Educational Theory* 19, no. 4 (Fall 1969): 357-62.

23. *Ibid.*, 357.

and action, "for an unlimited capacity to learn without any corresponding diminution of capacity for action."²⁴ The idea was to avoid both extremes: idle contemplation and blind activity. Educators erred by encouraging students to concentrate on what was timely, to become so involved in political and economic affairs that they neglected the choice "of their own path." People require moments of solitude, he said, if they are to become effective "men of action."²⁵

As later writers have made clear, existentialism is not merely a matter of subjectivity and emotion; nor does it preach an ethic of closed-in individuality. Still, the questions persist about consciousness, freedom, and being in the world, less and less (as time goes on) in arguments with positivism or the kind of scientific thinking Morris described. There is increasing interest, at the least, in a self-reflectiveness with regard to the scientific endeavor, as there is a turning away from correspondence theories of truth and from authoritativeness and fixity of all kinds.

Neil Sutherland, developing a critique of existentialist treatments of history, raised the interesting point that existentialism, for all its proponents' rejection of determinism (or historicism), ought to be understood as a product of modern Western history. As Sutherland saw it, the philosophy grew out of "a conflict between an emerging sense of self-awareness rooted in the social history of the modern Western world and a feeling that this same world 'depersonalizes' the people who exist in it."²⁶ He attributed this to a mistaken reading of history, an assumption that the human being (somehow untouched by social and economic changes over the years) remained the same from one generation to the other. He saw, however, a connection between history and existentialism. No matter how much data was collected by the historian, no matter how rich the research, the inquirer has at length to decide or to choose what it means. In another sense, the individual, locating herself or himself in history, is required to choose herself or himself in relation to all the causal and determining forces. Saying this, Sutherland may have been taking into account the existential concern for the tension between facticity and possibility — that which defines and limits, that which opens spaces for free choosing. It becomes clear why Sutherland suggested (doubts despite) that education be pervaded by the existential attitude. The community we inhabit has been made possible by existential self-discovery; it may be a truly pedagogic act to build on the "existential moment."²⁷

With pedagogic relations in mind, I cannot but turn to an especially eloquent article by Vandenberg called "Non-Violent Power in Education," in which he contrasts nonviolent power to the kind of violent power that makes dominance-submission the defining characteristic of what is called teaching.²⁸ Nonviolent power, on the other hand, frees both student and teacher to pursue their

24. Hillesheim, "Action and Solitude," 357.

25. *Ibid.*, 358.

26. Neil Sutherland, "History, Existentialism, and Education," *Educational Theory* 17, no. 2 (April 1967): 167.

27. *Ibid.*, 175.

28. Donald Vandenberg, "Non-Violent Power in Education," *Educational Theory* 19, no. 1 (Winter 1969).

own possibilities. The teacher's possibilities may be realized when the pupil (freely choosing to be there, as the authentic teacher freely chooses to be there) attains her or his own possibilities of being for the future and outward to the world. They disclose themselves to one another as they reach beyond themselves; but they must be genuine disclosures with the pedagogic encounter, involving live beings in communication with one another. The hope is for the pupil "to hear the call of conscience and take up responsibility for his own being, which is the beginning of his taking power over his own existence."²⁸ There are intimations of phenomenology here but also remembrances of the communicative situation that was a Deweyan classroom. Vandenberg even dared to say at the end that the kind of respect shown each pupil, if there really is an authentic co-existence in classrooms, we might find leading to the kind of social reconstruction Theodore Brameld had in mind.³⁰

Differences in stress there certainly are; but, when I look through the varied array of articles here, I do find a kind of converging interest in the importance of clarity when it comes to a teacher's ordering her or his thoughts and principles in establishing a pedagogical or a teacher-learner relation, not to speak of an authentic teacher's complex relations with an entire class. By the end of the decade, however, I still cannot find a recognition of the kind of multiplicity that was beginning to confront teachers, for all the slow entry of African-American children onto the broader educational scene. They had always been there, of course, but had been rendered invisible. An exception in the decade of my concern is "Human Rights, Equality, and Education," by W.T. Blackstone, who took an unabashed analytic approach to one of our most challenging problems in educational philosophy, perhaps especially as it plays upon educational practice.³¹ He not only worked to differentiate human rights from legal rights; he dealt with the criteria for being human, relevant for existentialists (who refuse to attempt a definition of "man") and for Dewey, who also thought that the self was created by choice and action. Tracing the consequences of using "need-criteria" and "merit-criteria," he probed the moral use of "need-criteria" in their relation to empirical facts (as in the well-known Coleman Report³²). Blackstone was centrally concerned with finding moral criteria, normative principles that might govern decisions made with regard to equality, justice, and freedom as well. He was responding, I must affirm, to events in the political world when he insisted that fundamental changes had to take place to reduce poverty and "socially hostile-to-education conditions of the home and community."³³ Opposed to a descriptive ethic where equality was concerned, he was working out normative principles in seeking a justification, which could only be pragmatic. Human rights and equality: of all the writers contributing in the decade

29. *Ibid.*, 57.

30. Theodore Brameld, *Education and Power* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1966).

31. W.T. Blackstone, "Human Rights, Equality, and Education," *Educational Theory* 19, no. 3 (Summer 1969).

32. James S. Coleman et al., *Equality of Educational Opportunity* (Washington D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966).

33. Blackstone, "Human Rights, Equality, and Education," 295.

of the 1960s, the analytic W.T. Blackstone strikes me as the one pointing most directly to a future in which human rights and equality become core issues across the world and (we would hope) in every classroom. They cannot be discovered, Blackstone told us; but they become essential to the promise of democracy. I still regret the absence of reference to the real struggles proceeding in the name of human rights in Georgia, Dr. Blackstone's home state. Still, having heard Dr. Blackstone give a version of this essay at a conference in Georgia, I recall the issues impinging on every participant and know how many of them had experienced startling disclosures and, as ordinary citizens, were committed (often passionately) to support of those struggling for civil rights, those engaged in voter registration, those working to break down old barriers and integrate the public schools. The passion rarely appeared in their lectures or panel discussions; and it seems to have been thought by many that, if active commitment were to overcome scholarly detachment and the concern for clarity, philosophy of education might be transformed into ideology and have an even more difficult time than it had already had in finding a place in teacher education curricula.

There are echoes of this in many journal articles that are neither existential nor Deweyan. Probably the best example of a discussion grounded in analytic and language philosophy is one evoked by Robert Ennis's writings on the subject of whether or not neutrality was possible in the public schools.³⁴ The debate had been launched by Jerome Eckstein, whose disagreement seemed based on a distinction he saw between ontological and ethical neutrality.³⁵ Many things school leaders decide (such as a position of passivity or indifference) make no real difference to the life of the school. This is what is meant by ontological neutrality. As for ethical neutrality: it resembles an approach oriented to justice, when decisions are made in accord with the objective merits of particular cases. Eckstein believed, tentatively, that that sort of neutrality, properly defined, could exist in schools. Setting neutrality against "taking a stand," Ennis called, among other things, for a recognition of the presence of intention if the meanings of neutrality were to be made clear. Ennis did make clearer than most what he called "the point of ordinary language analysis." First, it was important to appreciate the ongoing effort to specify the meaning of basic terms as ordinarily used. Ennis wrote,

We do try to get the meaning accurately represented because in our experience we find that so many foolish mistakes result from inconsistent usage of a term and because it is so hard to be consistent in one's use of basic terms unless one uses them in an ordinary way. Basic terms have a complex pattern of implications, if you change one or more of these implication relationships (thus altering the meaning of the term) then you have no guarantee that some of the other implication relationships still hold, implication relationships that did hold when the term was applied in its original meaning.³⁶

34. Robert H. Ennis, "Is it Impossible for the Schools to be Neutral?" in *Language and Concepts in Education*, ed. B.O. Smith and R.H. Ennis (Chicago: Rand, McNally Co., 1961). Also, Robert H. Ennis, "The Possibility of Neutrality," *Educational Theory* 19, no. 4 (Fall 1969): 347-56.

35. Jerome Eckstein, "Is It Possible for the Schools to be Neutral?" *Educational Theory* 19 no. 4 (Fall 1969): 337-46.

36. Ennis, "The Possibility of Neutrality," 351.

It is difficult to see why educational philosophers would object to this mode of search for clarity, so long as it did not claim exclusivity and become positivistic in separating out value statements from empirical claims. In any case, even with an effort not to be “presentist,” one cannot but think of Jürgen Habermas in days to come, and his search for communicative competence and clarity. Nor can one set aside the postmodern emphasis on discourse, on language games, even on semiotics and heteroglossia. Morris’s claim to have found a mode of détente between what he thought of as language philosophy and what he identified as existentialism now becomes thin. We are all, it strikes me, challenged as seldom before, to recognize that we can strive for commitments that feed into reflective action even as we work to keep our arguments clear and defensible.

This partial overview of *Educational Theory* in the 1960s, giving rise (I hope) to some consciousness of what was happening to the history of educational philosophy as project and as discipline, cannot conclude without a mention of John Dewey’s appearances and reappearances in the ongoing conversation.

Probably the most far-reaching essay on Dewey’s work that I have read in *Educational Theory* in the 1960s is Walter Feinberg’s “The Conflict Between Intelligence and Community in Dewey’s Educational Philosophy.”³⁷ A point is made at the start that connects with what troubles many of those who see themselves as progressives — whether they view themselves as carrying on a tradition or returning to it after explorations in Marxism, critical theory, or romanticism. It is the fact that the educational programs Dewey began defining at the end of the nineteenth century have yet to take root in American public schools, particularly where the relations between intelligence and community are involved. One of the requirements for a community to begin to come into being is the existence of a common problem or some shared awareness of “lack,” deficiency. Indeed, this may be encountered as a disruption in experience, calling for the exercise of intelligence. Feinberg emphasized the difficulty of defining a common problem and also the fact that intelligence can be exercised outside of a concern for community. Feinberg pointed as well to what he saw as a discrepancy between Dewey’s notion of the desirable and his ethical theory. There is also the problem of mutuality and whether it is always possible to accept other people’s ends. What remains most significant is Dewey’s conception of intelligence enriching the life of community. Feinberg’s conclusion seems to me to open windows on obligations we who are teachers need to confront as seldom before: “Education,” he wrote, “is the institutional guarantee for the proper application of the method, but the guarantee holds only insofar as schooling is an exercise in community. For the schools, the extended meaning of the concept ‘lack’ means that the teacher has the *responsibility* to develop out of the classroom a community where differences are to be encouraged and varying abilities and skills developed and grounded. Moreover, she has this responsibility not only as the representative of society, which may or may not grant it, but as the representative of the child.”³⁸

37. Walter Feinberg, “The Conflict Between Intelligence and Community in Dewey’s Educational Philosophy,” *Educational Theory* 19, no. 3 (Summer 1969): 236-48.

38. Feinberg, “The Conflict Between Intelligence and Community,” 248.

This too feeds into perspectives on the difficult issue of community in relation to a common school now under attack, and to the charter schools and "small schools," not to speak of privatized schools. The questions remain open; and Dewey's work, itself somehow unfinished, remains in his sense "educative." The other articles dealing with Dewey's work are *startlingly* various, ranging from Richard La Brecque's look at Dewey's relevance to an idea of social planning and his conclusion (after some examination of his epistemology) that "the intent of Dewey's method of inquiry was culture-building,"³⁹ to, in the early years of the decade, Philip Eddy's "On the Statability of Dewey's Theory of Inquiry," responding to an essay on the accessibility of inquiry to logical description and making the interesting point that, for Dewey, indeterminacy was an objective characteristic of situations.⁴⁰ There was an essay on Dewey's literary style,⁴¹ and there were, here and there, echoes of Dewey's work where arguments were raised again on the need to restore courses in social foundations.

It is difficult to make generalizations or to come to an adequate conclusion where the decade of the 1960s was concerned, at least in relation to this journal. A thematic rather than a chronological approach was chosen in part because, as I saw it, there was no visible direction or trend to be found when the journals were examined over the years. Many individual writers — Moritz Schlick, Karl Mannheim, Alfred N. Whitehead, Buber, Kurt Lewin, Herbert Read, Frank Lloyd Wright — were discussed, but there was no particular significance in their connection to the 1960s or to one another, excellent as some of the essays remain. It also must be said that not every issue or every essay received the same attention, and there may well be indefensible omissions. Indeed, it strikes me now that work by many of my deeply admired colleagues was passed over; and I hope this is not seen as a kind of competition for mention. The only conclusion I can reach has partly to do with indeterminacy, with incompleteness, with perpetually open questions — which I have learned to love. The other (despite doubts and caveats) is that there was evidence in the '60s of a burgeoning discipline, sometimes reaching outward tentatively, sometimes folding in upon itself. Because it was and still is in the making, the decade leaves us with a heavy and sometimes intoxicating charge.

39. Richard La Brecque, "Social Planning and the Imperium Humanum: John Dewey, circa 1960s," *Educational Theory* 19, no. 4 (Fall 1969): 363-71.

40. Phillip Eddy, "On the Statability of Dewey's Theory of Inquiry," *Educational Theory* 15, no. 4 (October 1965): 321-26.

41. George Eastman, "John Dewey's Literary Style: Theory and Practice," *Educational Theory* 16, no. 2 (April 1966): 110-27.