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**Unearthing the Seeds of Oppression and Injustice within Education: Using Intuition,
Care, and Virtue to Guide the Educative Process and Cultivate Morality.**

Master of Arts Thesis
Practical Philosophy and Applied Ethics
University of North Florida

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Chapter 1: Description and Analysis of the Conception of Justice According to Liberalism	
And the Schema that Serves as its Support.....	8
I. The General Aim of Liberalism, Justice, and Equal Distribution	
I. The Problem of Generality, Autonomy, and Injustice	
II. Outlining the Liberalist Structure Reflected in Public Education	
Chapter 2: Challenging the Static Notion of Justice and the System that	
Operates to Generate and Reinforce Inequalities	16
I. Inverting the Prescription of Liberalism as a means to Uncover its Specific Consequences	
II. The Formation of the Social World Through Power and Knowledge	
III. The Transference of Power Relations into the Sphere of Public Education	
IV. Responsibility for Education: Applying Young to Understand the Degeneration of the Public Education System	
Chapter 3: The Manifestation of Oppression within the Public Education	
System through its Alignment with the Larger Social Apparatus.....	33
I. The Appearance of New Horizons Through a Recognition of the Self as Defined by the Other Within the Teacher/Student Relationship	
II. The Existential Condition and the Move towards Bridging the Gap between the Subject and Object: An Existential Analysis of the structure of Experience.	
III. Ethical Intuitionism and its Practical Application	
Chapter 4: Dewey and the Educative Process: Assessing the View and its Initial Framework	
And it's Unification with the Structure of Experience	64
I. Dewey on Education: A Presentation of Education as an Active Process Requiring a Corresponding Pragmatic Approach	
II. The Current Challenges faced by Educators and the General Outline of a New Approach.	
III. Applying Hermeneutics to Education to Promote Progression through the Channeling of Thought	
Chapter 5: Virtue, Care, and Intuitionism as the Foundations for a Method Allowing\for	
The Actualization of the Educative Process.....	79
I. The Virtues of Education and the Classical Model of Virtue Ethics	

II.	The Contemporary Development Known as Care Ethics: Reinterpreting the Classical Model in Light of Modern Concerns.	
III.	Considering Objections to the Care Perspective	
IV.	Care and Intuitionism Framing the Teacher-Student Relationship through Virtue	
	Works Cited.....	98

Introduction

The aim of the project that will follow is should be understood as twofold and thus functioning in two senses, one being broader in scope, and the other providing a more specific example to capture the broader sense that is being disclosed within the context of the articulation of the more specific sense; the former functions at highest level of social organization, while the latter is concerned with how the understanding of the generally accepted social system works within the context to shape the immediate relations present between individuals. 1) To be more specific this project will be concerned with arguing for a *care ethics approach that is guided by intuition* as a way of thinking about *morality and ethical concerns* in a way that should provide us with an ethical approach that is *practically applicable* within the context of *any situation* that is of moral concern. 2) As such, this approach is also that which can provide the teacher with the best starting point from which they can begin to *cultivate the moral character* of students through the above mentioned approach being *applied in the transmission of information* to those students that the teacher is in relation with.

What will be discovered through the unfolding of this work as the information is disclosed will be an increasingly *noticeable connection between subject and object, self and other, and as such teacher and student*. Further, the presence of this very connection is that *which allows for our experience to be a possibility*, and it is the appearance of this connection within each

moment that we experience that *serves as the source for our intuitions* regarding moral action. Each particular moment is composed of unique social circumstances, and our perception of those situations *carries within it* an intuitive understanding that serves as a guide towards acting morally given our consideration of the present circumstances. Further, it will be shown that this intuition can be more precisely located if we consider the present situation through the framework of a *care based model of virtue ethics*.

In order to achieve the stated goal of this work we will begin with an analysis of the standard Liberalist view of political organization and the distribution of resources and opportunities that work through the institutions that are utilized as means for this distribution. The Liberal political perspective is largely motivated by the way in which the influential political thinker John Rawls and his Justice as Fairness model for social organization is applied by those institutions. The political theory of Liberalism will be our starting point due to its being the standard model used for understanding how to organize political institutions, and understand the notions of justice and equality in the contemporary era. The view of Rawls is prescriptive in its articulation as it is presented as something that seems to express a truth about society, that has improperly been understood in a way that seems to suggest that it was present prior to our experience taking place within that society. In order to illuminate this aspect of the Liberalist perspective of the Justice as Fairness model it will be contrasted with social formation as it is explained by Michel Foucault, who starts from what appears as that which is *actually present* within society, as opposed to that which is an *imaginary construct concerned with what society should aim* for. Thus, Foucault is looking to describe the effects of social formation through *an inversion* of the prescriptive approach that seeks to show us how the way in which society actually comes to be structured entails a manifestation of that which seems to be contrary to the aims of justice, fairness, and

equality at the level of actual human relations. What will be shown is that Foucault's method destabilizes the understanding of how we can best promote justice and equality through social institutions, and since the schematic articulated by John Rawls is being applied in a way that ignores the need for a pragmatic view that can allow for the aims of politics to become something we always have to work our way towards is transferred into the sphere of education, it follows that the destabilizing of those ends transfers over as well. In other words it will be shown that justice, equality, and opportunity are not something already present in the world, but rather they are goals that we have to move towards through our direct relationships to others, which will then set the stage for the promotion of a new approach that can assist in our efforts to move towards an understanding both of how public education has gone astray, and also how we can work to overcome the obstacles we have discovered within the domain of public education by illuminating how education can be dispersed in a more adequate fashion through the relationship between the teacher and student.

In explaining how the larger social model transfers over to shape the schema taken up by the public education system, the illumination of the role played by the institutions within the social world in the *reinforcing of social inequality, and injustice shall be discovered*. . Establishing this connection between the two will expose the ways in which the spheres of the political, economic, and educational operating within the scope of the social domain come together in a way that *generates a similar* hierarchical structure from one generation to the next, with those at the low end of the spectrum experiencing *oppression and injustice* unimaginable to many of us. What shall become evident is that the primary *source of injustice* is that the *notion of justice* as it is commonly understood, presupposes the *individual alone is responsible* for taking advantage of available opportunities and achieving success.

The typical Liberalist *interpretation of the political organization* sketched out by Rawls actually *works against* what the view of Rawls is trying to endorse through the continued emphasis on individual responsibility, which entails that no other person is responsible for the inability of another to perceive and take advantage of the opportunities present within the social arrangement. What follows is the notion that just the individual is to blame for their status within society, absolving *all other persons* from blame. In order to clarify the problem in general I will suggest that we adopt an understanding of responsibility that takes into *account the reality* of human connections *established through language and impacted by actions*, that further allows for the recognition of the positions each person comes to be situated within in the social sphere, through the relationships that actually establish a connection between those positions as opposed to the disconnect that people typically believe is the case. Our understanding of these relationships will shed light on a sense that *we are always at least in part responsible* for the situation of another, with the level of responsibility we should take on being discovered through the *corresponding immediacy of the relation*. This maps onto the institution of public education, and thus applies to the particular relationship between the teacher and the student. From within the context of this relationship the teacher pulls from the common understanding present within the larger structure, and thus the teacher works to maintain that structure's emphasis on personal responsibility in her efforts to educate each student.

Through our awareness of our connection to others and the responsibility we all share as a result, we move on to assess experience at the existential level to uncover the pattern upon which thought moves. At this existential level we find within the subject an objective ground that must be present for any human experience to be possible, and thus we find that which serves as a uniform foundation that is common to all human beings. Further, through our assessment of the

dimension of language we discover the domain through which we connect to the external world. The connection to the external world that is established and maintained through language is thus where our experience is shaped through our participation in the world of others. It is here where we also discover the presence of the will, which is that phenomenon which allows for our ability to be the cause of our choices and actions. The choices and actions that are available as possible ways to respond in the immediate situation is conversely where we discover our intuitions pertaining to morality. Since, it will have already been shown that any reference to already established knowledge is merely a reference to instances that have taken place in the past, and thus not directly applicable in the present, we will have to approach ethical decision making in a way that channels our thought and actions in a way that is in accordance with the present circumstances, and the potentialities found within the present which are a result of that which has already taken place in the past *influencing* the present conditions as we are moving towards the openness of the future within each moment.

From here it will be shown that the care ethics frame in conjunction with our intuitions pertaining to morality is the best available means to approach understanding how to apply ethics in a way that is consistent with what we find within the present moment and its uniqueness. The acceptance of the ethical approach presented further entails that the teacher utilize an approach that is similar, and yet still particularly suited for the more specific social context set up within the teacher/student relationship. Since public education concerns itself with providing useful information to assist the student in becoming a successful adult it is imperative that the teacher work to assist the student in developing a character aimed at doing right by others, which conversely will also assist in making something that is working towards a more diverse understanding that is as close to just and fair as possible. We will see that the establishment of

this concrete connection is made through our consideration of the philosophy of John Dewey in relation to the discoveries made up to this point in the inquiry.

I ask that the reader approach their engagement with the work carefully, as what is developed relies upon connections being made between several different philosophical perspectives. This is done for a particular reason that is motivated by the very foundation of the work; the work is arranged such that it is a demonstration of that process which must be present in order to have any possibility for our being genuinely concerned with ethics and the distribution of morality. We begin by setting up two contrasting views that explain the social world as far as what we should aim for and what is actually the case, and within that contrast another more particular point of tension is uncovered and is operating between the relationships present between individuals, and this dialectic pattern takes us down to the existential level where through the connection to the objective from within we then shift our focus to what is present before us, and conversely possible courses of action that are found after shifting our focus towards that which is actually happening. Since thought is moving forwards in time along with the body that it takes place within, acting morally requires something that accounts for change while still channeling our thought and actions in a way that is close to the proper direction given the circumstances as they are occurring. If those reading this should accept that what has been articulated throughout the work that follows seems like a reasonable way of understanding morality, and its applicability in the practical sense, then it follows that it should be adopted as a means through which the ideas of John Dewey pertaining to education can be understood in a way that allows for his view to function in the pragmatic sense as it was intended.

Chapter 1

Description and Analysis of the Conception of Justice According to Liberalism

And the Schema that Serves as its Support

I. The General Aim of Liberalism, Justice, and Equal Distribution

There are two key claims central to the Liberalist perspective on social arrangement which according to John Rawls, the foremost thinker of the contemporary Liberalist notions of justice and equality, would be accepted by all within the context of a hypothetical state of equality: 1) Each individual is to have *equal access* to the largest scheme of primary equal liberties that are compatible with a similar scheme for others, and 2) the social and economic inequalities should be organized in such a way that they are to be *to the advantage* of everyone while also being attached to positions and offices that are open to all those living within that society (Rawls, 699). So, what is established here is first the open access to an agreed upon schematic of liberties adequate for every individual, which can further allow for guidance in our establishment of a socio-economic structure that would be to the advantage of all those living within that structure. According to the model of Rawls the least privileged would, in the ideal sense, have the same opportunity to succeed as those who are the most privileged. Thus, the social structure is presupposed to be made up of two distinct parts, with the first principle establishing a social

system that secures basic rights of liberty, while the second applies to how we should understand the arrangement of social and economic inequalities that are to exist within that structure (Rawls, 700).

What is noticeably evident in the Liberalist perspective is that its foundation is established on the notion of equality in the *distribution of resources and access to opportunities*, with the society established off of that foundation being such that inequalities are present. For the proponent of Liberalism the inequalities are necessary to allow for the pursuit of various gains that would provide each individual with the opportunity for ascension from the lower classes into the sphere of the higher classes (Rawls, 701). As a result, the notion of inequality is meant to take on the character of being to the advantage of the least advantaged by way of the least advantaged having access to the same opportunities as those individuals that make up the upper classes (Rawls, 701). Justification for this particular model is provided by Rawls in the form of a bi-conditional formulation which synthesizes the *principle of equality in opportunity* with the *difference principle* (Rawls, 702). The formulation says that assuming the institutional framework necessary for equal liberties and fair equality of opportunities is reasonable for us to accept, the higher standard of expectations of those making up the higher classes are just *if and only if* they operate within a scheme that improves the expectations of those that are considered the least advantaged (Rawls, 702). In other words, those who are in the highest sphere of the social structure are necessarily required to provide more than those occupying the lowest social sphere such that those who find themselves in that position, that being the lowest sphere, can have their expectations elevated by way of their having the same opportunities made available to them as would be available to those individuals found within the higher classes.

Rawls further explains that the inequalities that are present, and the position we might find ourselves within that structure of inequalities is essentially a matter that transcends that which we control (Rawls, 703). For example, certain people are endowed with specific naturally given capacities that dictate their role within the structure. Further, the particular class standing that one might find themselves in initially is going to be dictated by conditions that were present prior to their coming into existence (Rawls, 703). Given that the position one is in is defined by that which is beyond their control, society has to be structured in a way that allows for the equal distribution of those capacities and wealth such that they are accessible and beneficial to everyone that makes up the society in question (Rawls, 703). If we accept that the above mentioned inequalities do in fact exist, and that they are beyond the control of each individual, then according to this perspective, we should be inclined to accept the principles of justice mentioned above as our starting point for organizing the social structure and the various institutions that it is composed of.

II. The Problem of Generality, Autonomy, and Injustice

Rawls notes that some may be skeptical about the view of justice he has outlined and wonder what the justification for its acceptance would be. In addressing this matter Rawls introduces the thought experiment he refers to as *The Veil of Ignorance* (Rawls, 704). The view of Rawls described up to this point is all meant to be established from what Rawls refers to as “the original position” abstracted away from actual circumstances that are present within society, and as such he is assuming that the principles are being derived from a state in which each individual is unaware of what their position within society actually is (Rawls, 704). Only in this situation can we perceive and establish the principles of justice that are to serve as the foundation of society, as in this state the individual has no knowledge of particular facts regarding their own situation

(Rawls, 704). More specifically, they would not know their class position, they would be unaware of any natural talents or skills that they might possess, and they would also be ignorant of what their own conception of what is right may be (Rawls, 704). In this situation everything is reduced to a state of equality where no distinctions exist between individuals and parties that exist within society, with their state of ignorance leading to the rational establishment of the universal principles of justice mentioned earlier (Rawls, 705). The assumption is that if one were not to know their position within society they would naturally be compelled to accept the notion that society should be set up in a way that benefits those that are the least advantaged as they could fall within that category themselves (Rawls, 705).

What seems to be quite noticeable within the schema of the Liberalist social model is that it only provides us with vaguely defined generalities that are presented in a way that seems to acknowledge the problem of inequality, and also gives us some idea of how the social world should be arranged if we are to work towards justice. However, the view does not move beyond an acknowledgement of how things actually are largely due to Rawls leaving the actual practice of dealing with inequalities and injustice to those working within the political system, meaning it is their responsibility to find the various ways that we can go about overcoming the problems that are already present within society. Essentially, this is a consequence of the presumptions regarding what exactly justice is and likewise what we mean when we talk about equality, as both of these appear to be understood as if they were already present in the external world apart from our experience that takes place within that world, although Rawls does acknowledge that in actuality this is not the case as reality tells us that inequalities are in fact present and it is up to those working within the various political institutions to deal with this problem.

One major hurdle situated before us as far as working towards something closer to what is suggested by the Liberalist model is the *principle of autonomy*. The understanding of selfhood commonly accepted is specifically the most problematic cultural aspect that must be overcome in order for movement to occur in a more fluid way within our social arrangement, as this static understanding of the subject maintains the illusion of a self that *remains disconnected* from the world the subject interacts with. In chapter two we will begin to see how this understanding of one's own experience functions to prevent the individual from having access to the justice that Rawls, and more specifically the Liberalist interpretation of his theory, are seeking to distribute throughout the social order. Thus, we need to call into question; *1) Our acceptance of the complete autonomy of the subject which predominates in our society, and conversely this 2) will show how this understanding of the subjective experience reinforces divisions through the notions of equality and justice due to their presupposed understandings, and their attachment to the notion of pure autonomy within the minds of individuals, which implies only an emphasis on an individual's responsibility to perceive and take advantage of the opportunities said to be available to them.*

The consequence of the Liberalist outline is that it has been constructed from a position disconnected from its intended object which are the individuals existing within the social world, with that rift being maintained throughout the entire explication of the view. This does not necessarily mean that what Rawls is trying to promote is wrong as justice in the form of the equal distribution of opportunities does seem to be correct, but the lack of a practical suggestion as to how precisely we are to go about achieving this means that there are limitations if we start from how Rawls formulates his theory, which *he does acknowledge* is the case, and so it is up to individuals existing within the social world and working within its political institutions to ensure

that the ends of the Liberalist socio-political model are being worked towards. In the following section I will explain how these same concerns come to be transferred into the domain of public education, and thus serve as the primary source of the tension that is adversely impacting education within the classroom.

III. Outlining the Liberalist Structure Reflected in Public Education

Given that the Liberalist socio-political model has come to be the fundamental frame through which political institutions have modeled themselves, it would follow that the public education system is modeled on this perspective and its understanding of how best to promote the ideal of justice as equality. Education is an essential resource necessary for the acquisition of available opportunities within the social dimension, and therefore education would be distributed in the same way as other resources are being distributed within society. The importance of education as a resource can be located within the meaning captured by the idea of public education, which works to *distribute the foundational elements necessary for the promotion of justice*. The importance of education becomes evident when we consider the fact that the very notion of ascension is directly tied to an elevation of an *individual's economic status*, with that elevation only being realized by those that have *attained the fundamental intellectual tools* provided to them by the education that they receive. The extent to which one can ascend within the social world is related to a demonstration of the individual's level of mastery, with those operating at the highest level being presented with a *greater amount of available opportunities* than those at the lowest level. The public education system is thus supposed to be performing its function within the social framework through an established organization of State supported schools that offer the same information and resources to the greatest extent possible. The education system

thus is intended to promote the hypothetical ideal of justice as understood within the context of the equality thesis as it has been interpreted within Liberalism.

However, the education system carries within it the intrinsic flaws that are associated with the notion of political organization as it is presented within the context of Liberalism. The problem is that the view is *entirely abstract in its formation* as it utilizes understandings of justice, equality, and fairness that form thought in a way that can only at best allow for the *acknowledgment of the actualities* present within the social fabric. The view offered by Liberalism is presented in a universal sense, and as such the view and its principles are accepted as justifiable principles to serve as a foundation for the liberal notion of social organization. Closer examination of the education system itself exposes the presence of the inverse consequences of those same Liberalist principles that serve as the ground for accepting the theoretical frame that we are trying to put into practice. These inverse consequences are the result of the framework operating upon, what appears to be a fixed understanding of the concepts of justice and equality that are derived out of a consideration of already determined past occurrences, which does not allow for the recognition that their establishment *entails a relation to actual forms of injustice and inequality* present within the social world currently. More precisely, *injustice and inequality arise when justice and equality are defined apart from consideration of the actualities present within society*, and then impressed upon that society *as if* the past could provide a *definitive truth in the present moment*. For example, consider the meaning encapsulated within the notion of public education; on the one hand it promotes the education of all, and as such assumes the responsibility of creating an environment conducive to making the distribution of education to all a possibility. On the other hand the public education system promotes the idea of the individual student, and the family of that student, taking up sole

responsibility for any success or failure that might be achievable, due to the public education system functioning in a way that is reinforcing the notion of the pure autonomy of the distinct and detached individual.

Since the public education system has been modeled in a way that mirrors the political system of Liberalist society, the system also assumes that political organization is reducible to individual responsibility, and the unifying of the social fabric through an acceptance of general principles of justice and equality as preexisting standards within the social world that are present apart from our interaction with that world. When examining this particular aspect of the view we can clearly see where it breaks down at the level of various social relations in the demarcation of the self from the social world that the subject exists within, creating a situation where the individual that is shaped by the conditions of injustice finds that this immutable understanding of justice is not adequate when applied to their particular experience. Given this, the same injustice is reflected within the public education system, and thus the system operates as a mechanism to reinforce the larger political structure, and thus the social hierarchy. This will become more evident through a detailed analysis of *general knowledge and subjugated knowledges* and their affect on the subjective experience of students.

Since the Liberalist perspective is founded upon notions derived from a purely imaginative state, and yet is understood as something that would be directly applicable to each instant, it works to reinforce the illusion of a separation being present between justice and the actuality that is found within the circumstances of the present. The consequences of understanding what is just and equal prior to any reference to the actualities of the experiences of individuals are such that they quite often produce actualized unjust and unequal responses to the situations they are applied to. In other words we know what our aims are, but we need to develop a practical

understanding that will allow us to *actualize our progression towards those aims*. A more detailed description of why justice and equality work in this way shall become more evident in the following chapter when considering the social dimension from the perspective of Foucault and Young. Once we have uncovered how the above mentioned perspective on justice and its role in producing injustice both within society itself, and conversely the domain of public education, we will discover where the problem is being reinforced in the immediacy of the relationship existing between the teacher and the student.

Chapter 2

Challenging the Static Notion of Justice and the System that Operates to Generate and Reinforce Inequalities

I. Inverting the Prescription of Liberalism as a means to Uncover its Specific Consequences

As was presented in the conclusion of the preceding the chapter the perspective of Liberalism cannot adequately achieve its ends, as its ends are presupposed principles found within a state of abstraction that does not appear to allow for a precise recognition of the actualities of presently occurring social relations. There is no place within the bounds of the Liberalist perspective to account for the multitude of particular circumstances that the system suggests it accounts for by providing a structure that addresses the concerns of each. Even so the view of Liberalists, which is suggesting something that accords with our intuitions as far as aiming for justice and equality, in many respects has come to be adopted and internalized by those within our society based only on these intuitions apart from actual circumstances. The

proclamations of the Liberalist view and the consequences of its acceptance becomes especially problematic as a result of the view only offering something that is appealing to us in theory, yet lacking any sort of practical applicability. *Individuals come to understand the social and political dimensions from a state that can only be understood as removed from their own experience leading to a belief in something beyond the scope of their experience. Further, they elevate it to a status of superiority thus subsuming their experience under the seemingly overarching system, and trusting that it will produce the desired results according with the notion of justice as it is presented within the Liberalist perspective.*

The view of Liberalism thus takes on a Platonic essence through its use of presumed understandings of what justice, ethics, and equality are, and thus further produces the corresponding assertion that these understandings are always the case in every situation. Essentially, the Liberalist model is composed of constituent categories typically associated with what is 'right', 'normal', or 'acceptable', which entails the presumption of their binaries that operate as a justification for the 'correctness' of the positive categories and their very broad understandings. The very general understanding of justice captured within this perspective cannot possibly be an adequate form through which the uniqueness of the subject's particular experience can actually relate to. However, most individuals seem to accept it as saying something relatable even though the distribution of justice in the form of equal opportunity does not become an actuality for them as the Liberalist model would appear to suggest.

In the following section I will apply the methodology of Foucault to better illuminate the ways in which the model put forth by Liberalism works to adversely impact the individual, and conversely the social world that arises out of the views application to political institutions and our understanding of various social relations. Through the lens of this application we will

discover that the view presented by Liberalism is constructed out of categorical assumptions consistent with what Foucault would recognize as *general knowledges*. All knowledge that does not fit within that which is found within the general knowledge comes to be subjugated and pushed to the margins, leaving those whom identify with the *subjugated knowledges* in a state of alienation, despair, frustration, and anger. Coming to an understanding of this phenomenon will help shed light on the core problems existing within the sphere of public education, and ultimately it will assist in the discovery of the fundamental source of concern within the relationship between the educator and the student.

II. The Formation of the Social World Through Power and Knowledge

In the opening lectures of “Society Must Be Defended” Michel Foucault attempts to explain, in as clear a way as possible, the nature of his method of critique and its aim. Foucault would claim that his approach is not a philosophical approach in that Foucault is trying to avoid this traditional application of the universal to the particular by removing the cloak of categorical assumptions found within our commonly utilized frames. These frameworks are used by political institutions, and the individuals that make up the social world in their effort to organize people into groups. Various roles are attached to each group, and we come to understand those groups in very specific ways based on the presumed roles that each group comes to be attached with within our understanding of the various aspects of the social system. As such, Foucault’s method is characterized by an inversion of the traditional practice of prescription, and instead seeks to both critique common understandings to thereby expose their flaws, while also providing a way for us to explain the development of these understandings. More precisely, Foucault is attempting to expose the various ways in which these common understandings function within our experience, and allow for an alignment of our experience as an individual

with various political institutions that work to organize the social dimension in a certain way. Specifically, Foucault is attempting to show us how the tension arising out of the relation between binary categories works between the two sides to produce a state of conflict that operates beneath the surface of what is perceived by those who appeal to one side of the binary or the other. .

Foucault utilizes two approaches to uncover the development of the above mentioned tension and state of conflict: 1) Foucault utilizes the *Archeology* approach which is applied to analyze the historical development of different strands of dialogue pertaining to various social concerns , and 2) he applies the *Genealogical* approach which is aimed at observing the actuality of human relations and the way in which power operates within these relations (Foucault, 10). Foucault's understanding of power is of critical importance in the apprehending of the project being undertaken, as the common understanding and application of power as it is related to the social dynamic is very different than his understanding. In the sense that power is presented by Foucault, power is to be understood as a *neutral force that extends through each individual and operates both within individuals and the relations that are present between people* existing within the social dimension (Foucault, 29).

Two forms of power relations developed through discourse have produced knowledges that are of particular importance in our coming to understand the state of affairs we find ourselves. The first is the notion of the *Sovereign Power* and the second is referred to as *Disciplinary Power*. Power itself is not either of these as they are merely structures that work to channel power in a way consistent with the overarching theoretical structure that works to organize people in a way that is not uniquely their own, while still functioning within the individuals experience in a way that cultivates the belief that it is just that (Foucault, 26). The former type of

power arises out of the discourse that concerns itself first with the justification of the King's rule and right to lay claim to a group, with this same fundamental structure eventually being transposed in different ways over the top of what appears to us as a more participatory societal framework that seems to suggest that our opinions have value.

However, even the contemporary social model still works to reinforce the continued justification of our acceptance of a structure that makes use of the notions of sovereignty, and the roles assigned to certain groups of individuals through those roles being defined by institutions of authority, although it does this in a less overt way through its coming equipped with grounds *for the acceptance of a belief* that we have an opinion that matters, and provides us with the ability to challenge these authorities. The latter type of power that arises out of the discourse concerning discipline also was derived from very overt displays situated in past occurrences, taken from time periods where these events were observable to all those willing to view. However, the operation and use of discipline also becomes more subtle and less overt, while at the same time maintaining a *constant presence* through that very subtlety that allows for it to *remain outside of our awareness* except when it *appears necessary* for us to consider it. The sovereign authority maintains that role through the sovereign laying claim to the individual's rights; the authority makes use of the commonly held *general understandings of rights*, with the authority conversely assuring individuals of the *protection of those rights*, and that protection is then being used to *justify the establishment of laws*.

The establishment of laws allows the authority to make use of disciplinary power as a means to align the actual behavior of individuals such that most act in a way that conforms to the standard established within each law. The mechanisms of discipline and punishment also extend beyond this more formal political sphere to operate in a way that reinforces certain behaviors,

thoughts, and beliefs in the form of cultural norms that come to be understood as related to certain groups that are *sectioned off and distinguished from one another* within the social sphere (Foucault, 38). The institutions that are found within the domain of the social sciences have come to function such that they seem to aid in reinforcing the continued presence of the two forms of power through their claim of authority over certain domains of knowledge pertaining to different social groups. Individuals working within these domains of authority have carefully constructed canons of knowledge that take bits of information pertaining to certain common human behaviors to construct further categories out of the larger overarching body of knowledge relevant to the entirety of the social sphere. Those who fall outside of the subcategory that is used to capture the most typical behaviors of individuals come to be pushed to the margins of society, while the subject *conversely internalizes the role* that is associated with the marginalized category, and the *correlative identity* it promotes as an accurate description of their own experience.

The divisions that are created and used by political institutions are a means through which the institutions can continue to justify their claim of authority over the information from which the categories aligned with each institution were constructed, making it seem as if these authorities know more about our experience than we ourselves do. The manipulation of power through the sovereign and disciplinary dialogues work together in a way that manipulates the direction of power such that it aligns with the interests of those institutions that claim authority over knowledge, and thereby they work to promote the institutions presentation of that information to others as “truth” (Foucault, 50). The inclination of the individual is to then internalize this “truth” thereby leading to their attempting to understand who they are through an understanding of their own experience that was impressed on them from an external source

without any reference to the subject's actual experience. While these constructed identifying categories work to form the individual's experience of themselves, the economic mechanism functions in a way that further reinforces roles within social structures through the practices of producing, buying, and selling material goods. The economic dimension makes use of an environment that seeks to control the time and labor of individuals, while conversely generating a hierarchical structure characterized by those who acquire the most occupying the positions at the top, and those with the least finding themselves at the bottom.

The economic structure discussed above often conforms to the other social spheres mentioned above, and thus appears to assist them in the reinforcement of the acceptance of the understandings they have generated as a means to encapsulate, monitor, and control the behaviors of the individual's existing within the social body. *Working beneath this is the constant threat of conflict which is always present in the tension that exists between the largely accepted canons of knowledge and the subjugated knowledge that has been sectioned off, isolated, and set in opposition to that which is understood as "normal". The tension becomes manifest in the material world in the actualized form of various externalized conflicts* (Foucault, 58). Foucault's explanation of the development of bodies of knowledge and how they operate through individuals existing within the social dimension provides us with a very unique way of understanding the current state of affairs we find ourselves in. It seems evident that once we make the attempt to detach ourselves from those general understandings to observe the actual behaviors from which the core of each understanding was constructed, we do see that the meaning underlying the various identifying categories is derived from only the most common of those behaviors, and this serves as the basis for accepting a pure theory that assumes it represents a direct mapping onto the social world as it actually appears to us. This explanation of social

formation exposes the complexities the theory offered by Liberalism is not able to address. It is *the recognition of the complexity of human relations, and the complexities of the individuals as subjects that most immediately define any particular relation*, and as such this recognition clearly calls into question any presumptions about how things *ought to be* prior to the relationship coming into being.

As such, the critique Foucault's method affords us seems to be a more plausible approach to understanding the pitfalls of public education and the deficiencies that are reinforced through an understanding that provides little options for one to perceive paths to more effective approaches. This is the unfortunate byproduct of the assumption that the prescriptive formula that we apply can correct a problem on its own apart from the material it wants to provide organization to. Specifically, the assumption that the theory is something thought of as an externalized presence in the world that has already been discovered, conversely produces the notion that any sort of reflection that would reveal better paths towards approaching relationships from within the context of the teacher/student relationship are not necessary. This entails that the shortcomings of both educators and those who are to be educated will not be recognized by those that need to be able to see these shortcomings in order to develop better methods and approaches to overcome them.

III. The Transference of Power Relations into the Sphere of Public Education

If we take Foucault and apply his description of the formation of society through its political institutions to be at least close to accurate, then it appears we can begin to critique the methods of the public education system and expose its shortcomings in a more precise manner. As I see it the system utilizes all of the mechanisms operating within the social framework in a way that can only assist in the reinforcement of the social structure; through the manipulation of power

being consistent with maintaining the preexisting established order found within the social system it works to promote. We can certainly perceive the presence of authority and discipline within its schema, as it claims to both possess knowledge and thus understand the truth regarding the transmission of academic resources to students. Thus, it comes to be revealed as another formal institution that meets the criteria that Foucault illuminated for us when he stated that:

“The plague as a form, at once real and imaginary, of disorder had its medical and political correlative discipline. Behind the disciplinary mechanisms can be read the haunting memory of ‘contagions’, of the plague, of rebellions, crimes, vagabondage, desertions, people who appear and disappear, live and die in disorder....The plague (envisioned as a possibility at least)is the trial in the course of which one may define ideally the exercise of disciplinary power. In order to make rights and laws function according to pure theory, the jurists place themselves in imagination in the state of nature: In order to see perfect disciplines functioning, rulers dreamt of the state of plague. Underlying disciplinary projects the image of the plague stands for all forms of confusion and disorder...” (Foucault: Discipline and Punish)

The above passage translates into the present inquiry when considering it in reference to the dimension of public education. What is stated becomes evident within the walls of each school, as the authority maintains itself through the construction of rules and an assumption that the system allows for an understanding of the preexisting rights of each student, and thus the institution makes use of the disciplinary form of power on the basis of its authority in prescribing those rules, and its claiming to understand the rights of students prior to any consideration of the student and their particular needs. The ‘principles’ conveyed through these rules and the presumed rights they claim to protect are to be understood as necessary conditions

for the possibility of learning, with any action in violation of these principles being met with disciplinary procedures. The foundation for this model extends into the economic sphere to further the systems manipulation of power, which is brought to the fore when viewing the system from the macro level. In general schools in higher income brackets appear to receive a greater amount of financial support than the schools present within the lower income brackets.

The inequality in the distribution of financial support is typically attributable to the funding each school receives being derived from property taxes, or an assessment of student performance, with the higher income areas generating more income through the collection of taxes, while also having an advantage within the area of student performance based on the socio-political system used to organize social institutions being tilted in their favor as it tends to align better with the lifestyles of those within the higher social classes. However, there is no justifiable reason why school districts cannot distribute the finances collected from more affluent regions, and then distribute those finances across the district in the best way possible to ensure that all schools acquire something close to an adequate amount of financial support. This reflects Foucault's established connection between the ever-present plague and its attachment to certain lifestyles that fall outside of the social theory's scope of inclusion, as the schools that are generally the most adversely affected are also those that are found within areas that are inhabited by groups that would fall outside of what is considered 'normal' or 'desirable' within the context of the Liberalist theory of social organization, as these schools would be servicing the social classes placed towards the bottom of the social hierarchy.

If this is the case then it seems as if the actuality that is public education is very different than the Ideals of Justice and Equality it models itself after, as this has to be the case in order for those that use the system to justify the presupposition of these Ideals the system promotes and

utilizes improperly as a schematic for organization and distribution. The socio-political system works for some but not for all, and it appears that the people it works for are those that find themselves shaped by better living conditions, with the quality dropping as we descend through the income brackets, rather than promoting upward movement as the advocates of this system claim that it does.

The social system instead works to reinforce the social hierarchy through its determination of the proper distribution of resources appearing to be dictated by socio-economic standards derived from a certain perception of the world that is inconsistent with many of the cultural backdrops that many public schools find they are situated within. In effect, the system operates in a way that maintains the power relations that are in place through the understanding the system promotes appearing to be unable to allow for the discovery of new understandings in itself that map onto more particular experiences, and thereby also fail to illuminate potential opportunities for every person. The development of an understanding that allows for the consideration of particularities is of essential importance if we truly value justice, fairness, equality, and ethics, as in order for us to be able to understand why these notions are important requires that we be able to see the actual forms of injustice, unfairness, inequality, and the immoral that are the consequences of our attempting to understand what justice, fairness, equality, and morality are, and how we should bring them about prior to any consideration of the unique situation and person that these standards are being projected upon in our reaction to a situation.

The purpose of incorporating Foucault however was not to reject and discard the intuitions of Liberalism, but rather it was to illuminate why Liberalist intuitions about the achievement of social equality cannot be realized through a prescriptive theory alone, which is constructed out

of an acceptance of preexisting principles that are presented as if they were *immanent* in the social world in its present state. The acceptance of these falsely assumed externally located principles can only reproduce the same hierarchical structure to shape the various dimensions of the social fabric from one moment to the next, and by extension one generation to the next. The political institutions that organize the social world through their claim of authority over the bodies of knowledge they have utilized to manipulate the power relations that are working between individuals, can only work towards reinforcing the oppression which justifies the social system and the institutions that operate within the sphere of the system that utilizes the Liberalist model to maintain their relevance, with public education being an essential aspect of this overarching phenomenon. As such, those who accept the structure as it is understood in the abstract without considering its applicability fall victim to the same inability to consider the particular circumstances they attempt to grapple with. In the following section we will look to Iris Marion Young's description of structural injustice to outline a more precise perspective inspired by Foucault's understanding of how power is manipulated by social institutions.

IV. Responsibility for Education: Applying Young to Understand the Degeneration of the Public Education System

In the previous sections of this chapter the groundwork for understanding the failures of public education in a democratic society has been laid out through the application of the descriptive method of Foucault. In our investigation the application of this method led to our uncovering a way in which that structure of the social world and the formation of "knowledge" appears to undermine the prescriptive formula presented by Liberalism. Given this discovery, it seems requisite to push further with the analysis in an effort to gain a deeper insight into the actual conditions that have continued to reproduce injustice within a framework that allegedly

promotes, and takes aim at, the ideal of justice in the form of the equal distribution of resources. The goal of this work entails that we understand the bifurcation present within the relationship between teacher and student, and further the illusion of the apparent divisions that persist throughout all social relationships present within a society that promotes the notion of the pure autonomy of the individual. As will be detailed in a more specific way below, the notion of pure autonomy entails an acceptance of the notion of individual responsibility for one's actions which actually works against the domains of ethics and morality that require one to assume responsibility for the others they are in relation with in a society.

Achieving an adequate articulation of this phenomenon of pure autonomy, the isolation of individuals and groups, and the large scale problems these understandings create across the social fabric and thus within the domain of education as well, is of primary concern if we are to begin overcoming the obstacles present before us. In order to do so we will appeal to the view presented by Iris Marion Young and her illumination of our inability to perceive the *background conditions* that are not recognized from the perspective of the larger structure we have already outlined and subsequently critiqued above. This critique led us to the conclusion that the Liberalist structure only allows for the consideration of a very limited set of generally understood conditions that are associated with the social sphere and that do not allow for an adequate degree of specificity in the frame for consideration that it offers us. Further, Young's emphasis on the diversion of responsibility through the acceptance of the purely autonomous individual will be of great value within the context of the overall project of this endeavor, which is an attempt to establish and promote a better way of understanding social relations that will lend itself to our conversely accepting a better way of considering the aims of ethics and how we should go about moving towards those aims.

At the outset it was discovered that the theory of Liberalism seems to maintain an emphasis on the individual's responsibility for taking advantage of opportunities present within the social world. However, the Liberalist view does not seem to put consideration into whether or not those opportunities are perceptible to all those that are present within that world it aims to organize, yet there appears to be an assumption within the view that suggests that individuals are responsible for recognizing those opportunities without providing any suggestions as to how they can be recognized or understood in a way that is beneficial. The absence of a consideration of suggestions related to the views applicability is largely due to our typical consideration of individuals as *singularities* that are responsible for their own choices. Further, the view of Liberalism seems to be presented in an externalized sense that entails the justice as fairness model produces the inclination to think that the system will somehow work *itself* out to illuminate the range of options that are available within the structure, even for those situated within the disadvantaged position (Young, 18).

In other words, the structure and the individual who finds their experience defined by it are considered separately, thus producing an *isolating* means to project blame on individuals through the lens of the structure without acknowledging the tension the system sets up, and the conditions which arise out of that tension. The *state of contrariness* the social system needs for the justification of its acceptance by individuals relegates certain individuals to the negative side of the binary, which entails the state of subjugation to the other that is understood as the positive. The knowledge needed to take advantage of the opportunities according to the general understanding of social organization is not readily available to those that are in the state of subjugation within the social arrangement, meaning that this view of justice as fairness actually works against the aim of ethics, which requires we understand our experience as connected up

with the world of others and thus responsible for the effects of our actions and their impact on those others (Young, 18).

It will be helpful to understand the position of Young in conjunction with the earlier consideration of Foucault's perspective on the manipulation of power through the acceptance of general strains of knowledge. The presence of what appear to be rigid divisions that work to marginalize particular groups function within individuals with no justification of their acceptance being found externally apart from the subject's experience. The illusion of a separation between the particularity of the subject, and the source that subject refers to for answers, does not allow for the cultivation of an understanding that suits that person's uniqueness. However, as was explained above, the binary categories which work as a source of identification that is imbedded with a presumed role that appears to the subject as something external, as well as fixed in place within the imagination, leads to the continued acceptance of that role one finds their existence defined by. In actuality these binaries are always in relation to the larger structure they are subsumed under, as Young puts it, "*a person's position in structural processes usually carries with it a specific degree of potential or actual power over those processes that produce the outcomes*" (Young, 144). In other words, the subject who feels as if they are defined by that structure also carries within their experience the ability to harness the power internally and thus see how what is within the individual experience has been manipulated by the institutions present within the socio-political world. Given that this is the case, the generally accepted structure can be broken down and rebuilt in a way that is more beneficial to the particularities of each individual, which by extension lends itself to a more inclusive social world through the subject's recognition of their connection to others being revealed.

The public education system reflects the narrowness of the social system and thus has been limited to only being consistently useful for those shaped by standard background conditions that are presumed within the schematic of the social system prior to any interaction taking place between the educators and the educated that are attempting to function within it. As such, the social system and educational system that are modeled according to the Liberalist political system, shapes the thought of individuals in a way that works to justify the prejudices the social system promotes when one utilizes it as a means to consider deviations from the set of normative behaviors, beliefs, ideas, and knowledge taken up and deemed acceptable according to that socio-political system (Young, 106).

Within the education system the student that is situated within the position of subjugation often feels as though they are being pushed to conform to very different background conditions that are inconsistent with the actuality of their experience outside of the academic environment. Specifically, the educational system if taken as is entails an acceptance of normative standards related to the student's behavior, cultural identity, gender, and sexuality that are derived from the socio-economic system. The standards as they are set forth by the teacher that uses the general educational model to approach the student are seen as standards that conflict with the person the student feels that they actually are in many cases, or the student simply adopts the behaviors and identity associated with the presumed "self" that is being projected on them from the other at some point. *It is my contention that many of those who participate in the system, and are also charged with seeing over its operations, should be able to better recognize the systems flaws, and thereby see the ways in which they are responsible for aiding in the reinforcement of the adverse circumstances produced throughout the network of schools that make up the public education system.* Those working within this structure can never adequately

deal with these adverse circumstances to cultivate a greater appreciation for education if an approach that directs those that are functioning within the dimension of education is not applied in a way that brings that appreciation out of the student consistently through the adoption of an emphasis on forming that approach in a way that takes the unique experience of the student into account consistently. In order for this to be possible those working within education must be able to perceive the role the system plays in creating the situations it also seeks to overcome before moving towards overcoming those problems.

The above is a result of the teacher taking up the understanding associated with the general knowledge pertaining to education as it is understood from the macro level of the Liberalist notion of justice, and its association with the equal, and thus fair distribution of resources. However, the student in most cases is attempting to understand the teacher and her motivations from the perspective of some strand of subjugated knowledge that arises out of the more particular circumstances produced within the cultural backdrop that operates to shape the student's day to day experience outside of the academic institution. The specific tension at work between the two result from the very general understanding seeming to be far removed from the circumstances that have shaped the experiences of what is a diverse group of students. As we have seen within the frame of the general understanding that contains the notion of the detached autonomous individual; the individual is seen as the source of responsibility entirely without that frame being applied in a way that allows for much, if any, flexibility to make sense of the outside cultural factors that are at work in the shaping of the student's everyday experience, thus a state of conflict will ultimately arise. If coming from this position the teacher helps to reinforce an environment that seems to the student as a denial of the set of actualities that have shaped their experience as an individual. Thus, the result as we shall see in more detail

in the following chapter is a situation that is characterized by the *student's inclination to push back* what they see as an attempt to *deny and assume control of* their individuality.

It will be shown in the following chapter through an analysis of the more immediate relationship between the teacher and the student as subject and object, that the essential point where we can begin to overcome the obstacles hindering academic and personal growth is present within the intimacy located between the two ends of the binary. The possibility of perceiving our responsibility for education and its application as something *shared by all* those present within the academic structure can then allow for the educators within that dimension to better understand the student as always capable of learning, and out of this a more personal understanding of each student the relationship can allow for the educator to better perceive particular ways of going about accessing the potential found within each student. The teacher's acceptance, and subsequent application of a range of approaches that are meant to bring the world of the student into the larger world of academics and society is of the utmost importance if our goal is to guide each student towards success. Now that we have a better understanding of how the larger social arrangement comes to be reflected in the school system, and works through the dialogue working between the teacher and the student, we can move on to look at this problem in a more specific sense.

Chapter 3

The Manifestation of Oppression within the Public Education

System through its Alignment with the Larger Social Apparatus

I. The Appearance of New Horizons Through a Recognition of the Self as Defined by the Other Within the Teacher/Student Relationship

Within the classroom two *prima facie* distinct and seemingly opposing worlds come into conflict. It is in this setting that we find, for lack of a better term, our battleground which arises within the context of the relationship between the teacher and the students she works to educate. The teacher tends to play the role assigned by the larger social structure while the student that is the aim of her efforts arrives as the product of an experience shaped by the background conditions that are often excluded from the scope of consideration that the preexisting structure allows for. The teacher represents *justice and equality* in opportunity, while the student's existence is often shaped by the *injustice and oppression* produced out of understanding these binary relations through a categorical framework that is embedded with presumptions regarding the student's position as that which is subjugated to the position of the teacher the student stands in relation to. As a result, the teacher attempts to project the information they are charged with transmitting through a framework established according to an acceptance of the preexisting principles adopted by the education system onto a *collective* of students that understand the world through the lens of subjugation, characterized by a consistent observance of an actualized form of injustice being present within their immediate perception of the present moment as it is defined by the teacher/student relationship. These moments of interaction with the teacher appear to suggest that the student submit to the will of the teacher and the expectations she tries to impress upon them.

From either the perspective of the student or that of the teacher, the identity that is applied within the reflection of the subject can only be formed through the presence of a relationship to another (Butler, 35). Judith Butler, drawing from Hegel, poses the question “*am I even thinkable without that world of others*”? (Butler, 35) This question illuminates the *synthetic principle* that is necessary for abstract thought, as it is the *apprehension of the relation* to the other that allows for the possibility of *encapsulating* our experience as that which is distinct from the other. However, the identity that we apply to ourselves in the abstract is derived from a set of allegedly “true” and fixed binary categories of identification, with those that most adequately map onto our immediate observations being those categories that have the greatest influence on how we choose to understand our own experience.

However, each one of the identifying categories we apply to ourselves is justified through the presence of its negative counterpart, with these binary forms needing the other for their own establishment. Each side operates within each subject such that they channel the individual’s motivation towards an acceptance of beliefs, behaviors, and dispositions that are dictated by the *normative assumptions* that have come to be associated with each side of any social relation. Each side *implies a certain role* within itself *apart from* the person at either side of the binary who then assumes the role as it is given, while also understanding the identifying categories in a static sense thus falsely assuming that they are immutable, and as such detached from the negative counterpart that the category is actually in relation too.

The tendency is to perceive the tension found between binaries as something which divides one side from the other, thus the initial inclination is to deny and then reject the other, and ultimately exclude that other from that which fits within the normative standards the individual assumes are true. Generally, the *quantity of subjects* that accept an identity that is consistent

with a *selected set* of generally accepted behaviors, beliefs, customs, and knowledge are the source of an ascribed positive value that is used to set the standard for all. This operates as a unifying structure that *aligns experiences* with one another on a large scale, but also produces an alignment of the experiences that fall within the subcategories subsumed under the categories that seem applicable to a larger group of people. Each group comes together to form a sphere of the social hierarchy that pulls from a structure that is a step removed in its relation to the highest level of the system, with the lowest level in the overarching social structure *being shaped* by a categorical field that is *the inverse* of the categorical field of the highest level. This is transferred onto the organization of the education system, and the roles it assigns to the teacher and the student, with each role being embedded with certain expectations *associated with* the normative assumptions attached to those roles.

The typical role of the teacher within the system is to *transmit knowledge* to students, but this requires that the student be equipped with a *preexisting* internalized framework that allows for receptivity. In situations where this is not present within the individual being addressed by the teacher, she will find that there are few options available to her to deal with the various manifestations of “disruptive” behavior she will be presented with. The student’s reaction is an effort to work against what is seen as something separate from the understanding they have taken up as a result of the particular instances that have shaped their experience thus far. In situations such as these the teacher appeals to *authority and discipline* in an effort to ingrain the *externalized standard* onto the student’s internal experience, and thus the teacher forcibly manipulates the student’s thought in a way that aligns with the teacher’s ends that are outlined by the rigid understanding they have been trained to use. It is my contention that this approach is actually the central problem that is causing the break down within the educator/educated

relationship due to the teacher attempting to *assume control* instead of demonstrating within their disclosure of information the *connecting points* found within the binary relation that effectively communicates the *dependency* that works between teacher and student.

The result is the creation of an expanding schism that grows through a seemingly perpetual state of conflict, with this leading to a scenario that works against *the genuine* recognition of the other as a *unique* subject whose experience is also *dependent* upon others. Further, as Judith Butler notes, each attempts to *apprehend and control* the other *without recognizing* them as a unique subject in most cases, thus they are unable to establish an understanding of their connection that allows for the illumination of the dependency present within the relationship at work between them (Butler, 6). The teacher may think they have a certain degree of understanding of the background conditions that have shaped the student, but often the understanding they have adopted is one that is not derived from a consideration of the particular student and their unique situation. Instead, the understanding the teacher adopts is often one that is formed out of *prejudicial assumptions* related to socio-economic status, racial stereotypes, sexual orientation, gender stereotypes, etc. If these presumed understandings of various social categories are what is forming the teacher's recognition of the student then it is actually not any recognition at all due to its not being formed out of the consideration of the unique person that is the student, and it is this that should be the teacher's primary reference in their attempt to recognize and understand the student. It could be argued that these social categories and the stereotypes associated with them are precisely the source from which most teachers pull in their effort to recognize and relate to the student.

Thus, the teacher who really wants to reach the student's, and often times genuinely cares about their well being and bringing out their potential, must establish a way of finding a

common ground. This requires that the connection between the two sides of the relationship be articulated in a way that actively works within each moment to maintain an *awareness* of the connection between the two sides. This is achievable through the disclosure of the dependency *immanent within* the relationship, which thereby emphasizes a strong sense of caring and concern that follows from an awareness of the dependency present from either perspective presently engaged in the relationship. This is of particular importance in situations where the students have been shaped by adverse social conditions that are working to shape their experience beyond the confines of the classroom in ways that public education has not been able to adequately account for. For some of these students the teacher may very well be the one adult that demonstrates a genuine sense of care and concern for their well being and potential for future success.

The analysis up to this point has revealed the tension at work between the two fields of understanding that are used in our framing of the relationship between teacher and student. The teacher/student relationship has, for the most part, been a relationship that reinforces a consistent struggle for genuine recognition that comes to be disclosed through the observed behaviors associated with each side of the binary relation. In order to show in a more precise way, both how the relation comes to be understood in this way, and conversely how we can work to alter this understanding we can look to the hermeneutics of Gadamer. The problem at hand is one produced by the *meaning* framed within this binary framework being understood as fixed in place, and immutable due to the understanding being *constructed out of past occurrences* that represent only a *small portion of the entirety* of occurrences that actually took place, and since it is derived out of the *determined past it cannot be directly applicable to the present moment* before us. The *mediating linguistic model* that is *shared* by a populace is the

dimension of experience where this understanding of the structure of social relations is found. The illusion of a fixed meaning being ascribed to these social categories through a *shared language* results from our perceiving the meaning as something captured *within its symbolic representation*, but what will become clear is that although the symbolic representation might remain the same, the way in which we understand the meaning associated with that representation is mutable or fluid, and thus flexible.

These symbolic representations that are *tied together* within a language capture and organize a *shared meaning* that is present prior to our coming into existence. The preexisting dimension of meaning that is contained within the structure of the linguistic categories is the *fore-structure of understanding* that serves as our most immediate source from which we extract symbols and an understanding of the corresponding meanings they have taken on. We then apply these symbolic categories to ourselves in an effort to make sense of the *various mental states* present within our experience. These symbols also work in the inverse direction to serve as the means through which we *express our internal* experience *outwardly* to others (Gadamer, 236). Our central problem arises out of how the meaning contained within this linguistic framework generates two *contrasting* worlds that come into conflict as a result of how each shapes the perception of the individual's relation to others.

Overcoming the initial struggle has to begin with the setting aside of the prejudices contained within the meaning subsumed under the social categories present within the linguistic medium by attempting to first achieve a *state of openness* (Gadamer, 236). From within this state of being the meaning operating within the linguistic model can be *interpreted* in more *particular* ways that are better suited to the immediate situation at hand. Essentially, through the *interpretative act* one finds the capacity to deconstruct the meaning that is working beneath the

categories present within the dimension of language. Once the breaking down of the immediately given meaning is achieved the reconstruction of a meaning that more adequately suits the situation becomes possible (Gadamer, 237). In other words, this process of deconstructing the *a priori* meaning subsumed beneath the categories we apply to organize the social dimension, allows us to progress to the stage of reconstructing those understandings in a way that more precisely frames the immediacy of the moment. Further, it was shown how this preexisting organization impacts the very particular relationship present between the teacher and the student through an exposure of the problems being the result of an internalizing of falsely assumed static understandings of vaguely defined social categories that are attributed to each side of the relationship.

If it is accepted that the argument given thus far seems to be an adequate analysis and description of the inherent flaws found within the public education system as reflected within the relationship between the teacher and the student, then the foundation for the reconstruction of that relationship has been uncovered. The teacher should set aside the prejudices contained within the structure that serve as their source for perceiving their position and its function within the socio-political/educational sphere. Once this state has been reached the teacher will then be able to interpret and conversely progress towards understanding each class, and each student she is confronted with as particularities that are each unique in kind. .

In order for a higher rate of success to be possible, the teacher has to move beyond simply attempting to impress information upon the student. Instead, the teacher must be able to find various *modes of expression* that will allow for the education being transmitted to be channeled in a way that reflects a more *constructive* meaning to the student through an emphasis on the dependency present within the relation. “I” as a teacher am only possible through a relation to

the “other” that is the student, and as such “we” are all *defined through our relation* to one another. The recognition of this connection clearly shows that the teacher’s success is dependent upon the success of the students she attempts to teach. Since we are all defined through our relation to the other, then it follows that the achievements of one side are always intimately connected to the achievements of the other. Through the teacher’s consistent emphasis on this actuality the bonds that hold the binary categories together can be further illuminated. As a result, the student that finds their existence shaped by the conditions of injustice that are the consequence of our understanding justice through a pre-established standard is provided with a means through which they can construct new ways of understanding social categories such that they better account for the unique experience of each person. Working towards understanding the relationship to the student could potentially redirect the power operating within the social sphere in a direction that better addresses the student’s particular concerns, due to the student’s recognition that they are capable of directing power from within and moving outward.

Throughout the course of this endeavor it has been discovered that the theory that serves as the foundation upon which society is formed through political institutions is an inadequate tool for achieving the ends that Rawls wants to promote. Further, public education should be considered as one of those social institutions, and thus has been modeled in a fashion consistent with the larger schema adopted by the Liberalist. Both the teacher and the student take on an identity through the understanding of their role in its relation to the presumably detached larger social structure, thus they each fail to recognize the constructive aspects of the more immediate relationship that is present within the classroom, which conversely is the best possible source for finding the more precise answers that are desired as far as reforming the education system is concerned, which has to be the primary concern for the teacher at all times. She should attempt

to approach the teaching of each class from the state of openness so that the dialogue that ensues within the context of the relationship always is consistently highlighting the need for one another through the communication of that connection. If something that promotes equality in opportunity is what is truly desired, then it must be illuminated within the meaning that is developed through the dialogue that is working towards the continued development of the recognition of connections, and the promotion of a progression from one moment to the next.

II. The Existential Condition and the Move towards Bridging the Gap between the Subject and Object and Thus the Teacher and Student

In the previous section of the present chapter the emphasis has been on articulating the ways in which the subject comes to be shaped by its object within the context of the teacher-student relation. The advantages of developing a new understanding of this relationship through the application of hermeneutics was also a point of emphasis that is essential for the overall goal of this inquiry. Given that the articulation of the problem and the proposed method for moving towards overcoming the tension arising out of the binary relation as it is perceived at the level of the particular experience, it will be of use to consider the existential foundation that works beneath human relationships. This will provide us with a deeper insight into the movement of thought and the dialectic process. Also, an analysis of this sphere will provide the ground from which the incorporation of ethical intuitionism will appear as something both clearly recognizable and practically useful.

Through the explication of the fundamental logic at work beneath the surface of the relation between subject and object one can better apprehend the pattern of thought. As such, this section will be concerned with presenting the existential condition as it is articulated according to Jean-

Paul Sartre and Nietzsche. It is my contention that this will be of benefit as far as our understanding of the movement taking place between the two experiences at either side of the relationship is concerned. Also, it will be of use in illuminating how power is channeled from that which is outside, while also allowing for the inverse operation that redirects thought towards the external from within experience. Further, the existential analysis will also assist in forming the presentation of a more useful understanding of person-hood that will be of great assistance in capturing a more firm connection with the world of others and will serve as the ground for the development of a method that is easier to apply to the educational relationship.

Essentially, the existential view postulates that *existence precedes essence*, or to put it another way, there is no immediately understood human nature that defines who we are prior to our coming into existence (Sartre, 86). Thus, the core principle is that our existence is shaped and defined by how we live in the world and there are two specific modes of existence: 1) *Being-in-Itself* and 2) *Being-for-Itself*. The first mode is characterized by *immanence*, or our objective character and the second mode entails transcendence, or the ability to move beyond our determined objective existence, i.e. freedom (Sartre, 89). According to Sartre our existence is always characterized by *both* of these things at any given moment such that we are always both subject and object, which further entails that we can never transcend our determined existence completely and this produces *Bad Faith*, which is his term for the phenomenon of *self-deception* that is produced by way of our failing to perceive that we retain some degree of freedom at all times which entails that we see ourselves as completely determined (Sartre, 89).

The above mentioned formulation of the human condition has the consequence of producing an apparently rigid conception of the self as wholly determined, thus absolving the self of any sort of responsibility. The manifestation of the determined self consequently produces what

Sartre calls Bad Faith which arises through an association with the notion of *Being-for-Others* (Sartre, 203). *This notion can be defined as the conjunction of ourselves with the other whom is the object of our desire as it comes to be understood within the context of specific types of relationships that form our intentions in particular ways* (Sartre, 203). The desire to have this sort of relation arises out of the very conditions that produce the conception of the self, which necessarily requires that we first perceive our existence as being such that it is in relation to the existence of others. In short, the concept of the self is only possible through the realization of its relationship to selves that are separate from it (Sartre, 203). This relation amounts to the negation of the other with that negation being requisite for the establishment of our own distinct sense of self, conversely that very same operation is taking place within the other that is being negated (Sartre, 203). So, in general the self/other relation rests upon a double negation that is produced by the conjunction of two individual perspectives, *but the negations do not cancel each other out due to their not being symmetrical by way of each perspective involved in the relation being defined by its own distinct qualities* (Sartre, 204).

What should be recognizable at this point of the inquiry is that although the movement of thought does appear to function upon a relation present between negations, *this does not entail that we have to accept* the extreme understanding of either end of this relationship. In fact the above illuminates very good reasons for us to reinterpret the understanding of each side of the relation so that we can establish a firmer connection between the *internal experience and the world of others* that our existence takes place within (Satre, 59). It would be unreasonable to think that we could actually experience what the other experiences in the most literal sense, due to this entailing the formulation of a belief that we could somehow move beyond the confines of our embodied state, and enter into the experience of the other such that we actually come to see

the others perspective as they do. This would result in the dissolving of our own experience into that of the other making our experience indistinguishable from the other (Sartre, 57). What follows from Sartre's scheme is the recognition of the implausibility of the way in which connections between two particular internal experiences occurs. This should motivate us to shift our focus towards the dimension of language in our effort to construct an understanding of experience that holds the subjective and the objective dimensions together, thus always allowing for an awareness of the immediacy of the moment.

Essentially, experience is a product of the *synthesis* of the dimensions of the subjective, linguistic, and objective. *Each is only made possible through its unification with the other two dimensions, with the linguistic dimension being that mode of our experience which both allows for us to shape ourselves subjectively, while at the same time allowing for the projection of an expression of the internal process through an attachment to the physical activity of speech.* Further, within the scope of the relational categories a shared meaning arises that suggests that certain observable physical traits are associated with a standard set of behaviors, levels of intelligence, and speech patterns, etc., that are only understood as belonging to the group to which it is applied. However, as we move forward it will be shown that we in fact give the words meaning as we take them up within our subjective experience. Further, we are the *source of our own* choices and actions as the actuality is that we exist between the determined past and the openness of the future and its possibilities, although the set of possibilities is limited by objective conditions. *Therefore consciousness is located between and therefore we are free to act according to the potential options found within the present.* The recognition of this requires that we apply something to our thought process that will allow for us to see within the moment those

possibilities that are available, and more importantly allow for us to see how we can come to perceive the options available that seem the best in the moral sense.

The effects of our presumed understandings of relational categories were articulated in the application of Foucault's methods of inquiry. Specifically, the parts that come to form the *general knowledges* are nothing more than the the most general understanding of our social categories. In turn this knowledge works from within the subjective experience and functions internally to promote an acceptance of an ideology that works to elevate some groups as close to the purely positive end of the spectrum as possible, while isolating the groups that do not fit within these positive generalities into categories that presume an extreme detachment from those positive categories. Those left out fall into the negative classifications and thus they are pushed to the other extreme of the binary relation. Aspects such as physical characteristics and/or behaviors which appear as not consistent with the "Moral/Good" standard are placed close to the "entirely negative" that has to be posited, and thus they come to be situated as far away as is possible from the "Moral/Good" at the "purely positive" end. The groups of individuals placed closest to the "Immoral/Bad" end come to be understood through negative categories, with these being strung together to form *subjugated knowledges*. Since either end comes to be understood through its *proximity* to the other it follows that the presumption of a division be present within our understanding. The understanding that is formed out of these categories operates to deter movement by placing positive and negative categories as close to either extreme as is possible, with the distance between them being thought of as so great that it makes it nearly, and in some cases almost entirely, impossible to perceive the relationship with their binary counterpart to establish a firm recognition of their connection (Sartre, 59).

As Sartre points out however the positing of the “Moral/Good” is something we should not reasonably think is an actuality due to its requiring the “Immoral/Bad” to be posited in order for it to be thought. *This requires the elimination of the purely positive resulting from the dissolving of any ability to be distinguished from the entirely negative side of the relationship due to the purely positive having to be the source of the creation of the entirely negative side* (Sartre, 55).

Once this is removed from the understanding as something that is making reference to an actuality that can be located in the world as it appears to us, then movement towards the establishment of a categorical framework that allows for the recognition of our connection to the other becomes a possibility. It follows from the above removal of trying to understand the world and our experience through the Ideal, that progression becomes possible as our focus is brought back down to the level of our experience of the present. At this point we are positioned such that the ability to create new linguistic frameworks that are better suited for the articulation of our relation to others is something realizable.

The removal of this boundary entails something even more important for the social dimension of our experience, as just beyond this obstacle we discover our ground for the *intuitive* approach that will be elucidated later on in this chapter. The first step is to set up the boundaries at the furthest extremes of the imagination by placing the *Being-for-Itself* on the purely positive side of the relation and *Being-for-Others* on the side of the entirely negative (Sartre, 338). After setting up this frame we can actually work our way through the imagination to that furthest extreme *for-Others* that is set in contrast to the *for-Itself*. The latter is thus brought up to the foreground of consciousness with the former being subordinated underneath the state of awareness. *Self-consciousness* and the *subconscious* which awareness emerges out of, makes up the entirety of the phenomenon of *consciousness* (Sartre, 339). In other words, awareness arises

out of the negative side of the circular pattern upon which our thought process moves. Starting out from the state of awareness we can work our way towards an absence of all distinction through the imagination (Sartre, 341). The path taken could be understood as something like a labyrinth and the movement as we work our way upwards through the *imagination* brings us closer and closer to a point where the subjective and objective sides of our experience would be in their closest relation to one another. This point marks our *transition* into the Negative hemisphere of the mind, at which point we will begin working our way back outward continuing our ascent towards the Other/Negative side of the relation present between the two poles.

If we continue to work our way upwards we will gradually move further and further away from the reflection of ourselves, eventually passing beyond that other, and we find the subconscious state that is required for *any awareness of our experience* to be possible. Beyond this threshold we lose any ability to capture our own experience encountering *the detachment from awareness* in the *dissolving* of the subjective into the objective ground (Sartre, 341). This pure state which is accessible if we *transcend the state of awareness* through our imagination reveals the common ground from which any experience whatsoever would be possible. In other words, it is here where we encounter the dissolving of all distinctions and thus discover the undifferentiated ground from which any experience can be possible (Sartre, 341). Within the instant this is revealed we discover the point at which the many existential perspectives projected outward into the world from the state of awareness intersect. As a result we are able to see that which makes all of us *distinctly and purely human* with the total absence of any divisions. This appears as the foundation for an understanding of morality that requires *no presupposed formulas* in order to channel our thought towards acting in a manner that is consistent with the genuine and purely understood respect for any human being we might engage in relations with.

As we reconnect with the state of awareness we have discovered that which appears to be the universally applicable source for the possibility of any experience whatsoever. This allows for a total synthesis of the intuitions of *time*, *space*, and our *individual experiences* with the objective world from which we have thought of our internal experience as something divided from (Sartre, 341). As this understanding is brought to the fore-ground the dimensions of *time and space collapse into the instant* that we are experiencing from within the state of awareness. This allows for a much greater sense of *relatedness to others* due to our now perceiving our *being-in-the-world* in the fullest sense. Now that we have located our experience within the present moment the illumination of the subject/object connection is clearly seen, and thus the student/teacher connection also comes to be seen in a more concrete way, allowing for a clearer understanding of the other as having an experience that is unique in its existential state of being, while still arising out of a *common objective* experience that produces their *unique subjective* state. What is also revealed is a source for the intuitions we have as far as our relation to others are concerned. They arise out of the recesses of the subconscious along with the sense data being taken in and processed within the moment we are experiencing as we move towards our future possibilities.

Another quite interesting discovery is made when considering the passage through the sphere of the imagination necessary to see that *internal state of sameness* which we as humans share in common. What came into awareness after being abruptly thrust back into the foreground of experience was that perhaps the problem with the more abstract philosophical theories was our assumptions that they should be engaged, understood, and then *projected outwardly* to capture how things should be arranged *as if* the views had *already existed* in the externalized sense prior to their being articulated. What seems to be evident is a pattern that revealed something very clear upon the discovery of this *objective ground* within the internal experience. Perhaps we

should have been thinking of these highly lofty Ideal structures as a means to climb our way upward towards a realization that was located just *beyond* that boundary where the all encompassing *Ideal* was situated by various philosophers. Maybe these were not meant to be applied outwardly, and instead were simply a type of *pattern we could follow internally* and utilize to ascend through the imagination and *move beyond* the subjective to see that which was *revealed beyond the Moral/Immoral boundary*.

Out of the objective ground discovered within our internal experience outlined above we discover the will, or the phenomenon found within our state of awareness that allows for the subject to take control of the movements of the body that the phenomenon of mind is found within. For Nietzsche the will arose out of a *plurality of sensations*; a) The sensation produced from leaving a particular condition, b) the sensation of moving towards another condition, and c) the muscular sensation that is experienced while actually moving from one state to the next (Nietzsche, 227). Further, these *feelings* and a variety of others are the various ingredients of the will. In other words, they are the parts that come together to produce the entire nature of the will as it is experienced internally (Nietzsche, 227). The act of thinking also is considered an ingredient of the will, as there is a commanding thought that necessarily accompanies every action taken (Nietzsche, 227). On this view, the will is composed of *these particular ingredients and we should understand them as that which allows for the phenomenon of the will to be something perceptible within experience*.

An analysis of Nietzsche's understanding of the *human condition* will do much to clarify the above articulation of the will that he provides us with. Essentially, for Nietzsche the human being is composed of various conflicting desires or drives (Nietzsche, 61). These conflicts are

taking place outside of our awareness within the subconscious. What comes into our awareness is the outcome of the conflict that was working beneath the state of awareness (Nietzsche, 61).

The desires that win out and make their way up to the state of awareness are essentially the building blocks of what we call knowledge as it is represented in the practices of metaphysics, mathematics, epistemology, morality, religion, etc. (Nietzsche, 60). Through the *power we ascribe* to these bodies of knowledge, we subordinate other desires, typically associated with what is consistent with our particular experience, that lost out in the battle of desires that took place within the subconscious (Nietzsche, 63).

Further, our need to communicate with one another leads to our attempting to capture these desires that have ascended up to the point of awareness within words that we attach to each desire in an effort to hold onto the sensations they produce, making it seem that they take on a universal or eternal nature that we assume everything in existence is subject to (Nietzsche, 64). Out of the acceptance that these bodies of *knowledge* should somehow be accurate descriptions of reality we have ascribed truth to them as was detailed earlier in our presentation of Foucault and Young. However, as was previously discovered, we cannot locate any truth in these bodies of knowledge by pulling them out of the imagination and attempting to directly apply them to the experience of the moment (Nietzsche, 65). Instead, what we have developed is a means by which we can interpret and gain *power* over the environment that we are interacting with, and knowledge, which is derived out of our reflection on past occurrences, cannot provide us with direct access into the environment shaping our present state as there is nothing about reality that would suggest that it need be the way we have come to understand it. In other words, knowledge of past occurrences cannot provide us with any truth regarding the in-itself. We have mistakenly assumed that we could somehow derive some sort of truth about all human beings from a state of

imaginary pure objectivity. The view of Liberalism and justice is another attempt to describe how things “ought to be” from the imaginary state of pure objectivity.

What is typically referred to as the “freedom of will” essentially arises out of the “emotion of superiority” felt by the one who subjugates another (Nietzsche, 227). The person who wills believes that they are commanding something within their experience that has to obey as a result of the synthetic principle of “I” that arises out of the wills synthesis of the subjective and objective experience. This synthesis produces a scenario that gives rise to the experience of the subjective side *commanding our objective side to act in a particular way, and obeying the command given and thus acting accordingly* (Nietzsche, 227). As such, in willing our bodies to perform certain activities the sensation of power is produced and the experience of the connection between the thinking of the command, followed by the giving of the command, and finally leading to the action produced, allows for the person to attribute their success to the will itself (Nietzsche, 228). In effect, the idea of the freedom of will boils down to the sensation of power produced as a result of perceiving that when “I” command the “other” must obey (Nietzsche, 228). Thus, the pleasure produced from the sensation of power that is felt necessarily leads to an urge to continue to extend that power, and it is this precise urge that underlies all of existence, in other words it reduces down to the drive to increase our power by way of its extension, or the *will to power*, but we can only embrace this reality by first *rejecting outside influences* to rediscover our connection to the external world *within* the moment. Noticeably in Nietzsche’s articulation of the will to power we discover the presence of the “other” only through first looking inward to discover it within our internal state.

Specifically, the problem created by the outside influence of bodies of knowledge that are thought of as existing truths present outside of the mind leads to the mistake of overlooking the fact that the power we feel is *not such* that it should lead to a justification for one to subordinate another person. The reality is that we are *only justified in our commanding* of our own experience, and not that of another as we are never able to know precisely what is best for another due to our not being able to access their internal state to gain any actual insight into what would be best given their unique experience. Therefore, the extension of power should be understood as that which we embrace within our subjective state, and allows for us to shape our own character from one moment to the next, and further is the common factor present within each moment experienced. Therefore, we are able to utilize this ability to shape our own experience according to what is perceived from within the situation we are experiencing.

The uncovering of this internal connection of an objective source within the subjective experience exposes the reason why we mistake that which is given to us from the other as that which is the negation of our experience; This is merely a byproduct of our bypassing the consideration of the will as it operates within the mind, which leads to an assumption that a division is present. It follows that this presumption of separation becomes embedded within the dimension of meaning captured within the language we apply within our internal experience as well as the outwardly projected dialogue with others. The utterance of the other initially appears to only take on a positive value from the perspective of the other that is in relation to the perspective of the subject at the other side of the relationship. However, what is overlooked is that once the information is taken up by the subject to whom it was directed, an inversion of what was understood as a denial of their experience can be actively understood as that which is an affirmation should the subject choose to *alter its meaning* in a *constructive* way. The subject

actively interprets, deconstructs, and reconstructs the negative as a positive, and thereby projects it back outward towards the other that was its source in a way that can better illuminate this same ability as something that is present within the others' experience as well. This underlying dimension of meaning working within the linguistic model utilized for communication and understanding, is alterable if we elect to look into that which is immediately given for understanding, as opposed to that which is *no longer present* within the context of the reality of the present moment, although the latter can be of use as a guide in our efforts to reach some level of understanding. Once this is recognized it allows one to alter their perception of something that appears as a denial of their experience in a fashion that instead allows them to perceive the positive that is set in contrast, yet still dependent upon, its negative counterpart. The cultivation of an ability to understand what is given from the other through the positivity of the activity of interpretation found within the subject is essential for the progression of the subject's understanding of the other through the framing of a dialogue that is working towards the positive through acknowledging the negative. Essentially, one has to give the meaning to what has been articulated by the other, yet we have developed the habit of *assuming that the other* should provide that meaning for us *apart from* our involvement in the interaction with that other.

The primary problem is that the symbolic medium is a dimension composed out of a series of *determined* meanings that come to be strung together through their relation to our consideration of past experiences, and the abstracting away of the more obvious generalities that are found in our consideration of the past are then appealed to as a source of judgment. Thus, we attempt to apply these fixed understandings rooted in the past to our *immanent* state which is already *moving towards* future possibilities. The presupposition is that language will allow for a direct reference to the present and will supply us with the "Truth" regarding the present state of affairs,

but it can never provide us with any complete certainty as a result of our being situated in the present that is always moving further away from the past where “Truth” is usually being sought. Being that we are always within a state of change entails that we consistently aim at the reinterpretation of the prior meaning attached to language in a way more suitable to the present conditions.

Thus, the connection between thought and action requires that we use language as a guide that assists in the channeling of thought towards the action that seems correct. At this point, we have come to realize that language is not actually to be understood as providing a path to morality in the social sphere directly, but perhaps we can instead think of the meaning captured within language as fluid and apply it as a mechanism for channeling our intentions towards that which seems to be right given the particular context of the social situation we find that we are in. This will assist in illuminating our ability to perceive our intuitions that arise out of our perception of the circumstances we are confronted with. Language is still a useful practical tool that can be used in a way that assists in our efforts to promote progression as long as we do not look to language and its presupposed meaning for *a direct reference* to what is true within the *actuality* that is this moment we are experiencing. We instead can refer to the state of reflection and imagination for potentially valid references if we understand these states as providing assistance as opposed to truth.

Specifically, entering into the state of reflection is useful as a means to a) recall the causal series from which the conditions we face in the present are formed out of, b) in the broader sense we can also, once we have acquired enough adequate information regarding historical events, come to *see the present through a more precise lens* that allows for a stronger understanding of

the *development* of the social and cultural backgrounds that motivate certain behaviors that others exhibit within the moment, and c) specifically trace our own experiences up to the present with a critical approach that allows us to recognize what seems like our worst responses in relation to others, so as to set up the contrast with the responses that seemed the closest to that which was correct at the time they occurred. However, what we should not look to reflection for is that which can actually be the case regarding how we should act in the present due to the already specified reasons outlined earlier.

Further, the consideration of future possibilities that are found in the projection of ourselves into the future from within the present can set up a frame through which the possibilities available to us can be perceived. We should look to see those routes most consistent with the series of determinants leading up to the point in the past that occurred just prior to the actuality found in our experience in the present. Although these can only appear to us as a set of possible routes we will not be able to find the single best route to take there either. *However, we can utilize our reflection on past events in conjunction with our imagining of future possibilities to channel thought towards the proper action to take in the present given the conditions as they actually are.* This will be of essential importance in the effort to develop a framework for understanding how the teacher can, despite what is working against her, still promote progress through her ability to promote the *educative process and the democratic Ideal* through understanding experience as *communicative* or as the result of experience being a product of our relationship to a *community of others* as was articulated by John Dewey.

What has been developed up to this point in the inquiry should provide sufficient reasons for us to reject the widely accepted notion of pure autonomy associated with the positing of an isolated self. Even those who benefit from the continued acceptance of this belief are only failing

to recognize, or choosing to ignore, that everything they have accomplished has only been made possible through the efforts of others with whom one finds themselves in relation too. Further, it seems evident that a person's actions are in fact a product of the complexities of the social world, and in light of the *preceding line of reasoning are largely directed towards the ends of those perceived as authorities and conveyers of "knowledge" rather than what seems right in reference to their own experience.* However, an awareness of our dependency resulting from our interrelatedness to the experiences of others was illuminated through an analysis of the educator in relation to the educated, and the subsequent existential investigation. It is essential for the purpose of this inquiry that an understanding of our being as that which maintains its connection to the world it finds its existence taking place within is firmly established.

In order for this understanding of the subject/object connection to be thought of as a possibility an acceptance of our consciousness as *something embodied* and present within the natural world is required. The perspective of the subject is always connected to the world it seeks to understand, and thus must be willing to alter their experience in a way that is able to adapt to the changing conditions it is presented with from one moment to the next. The understanding of personhood that has been described is one that gets at the actuality that is our experience. What has been laid out above has provided us with the foundation for developing an understanding of how ethical intuitionism can function to assist us in acting appropriately with what appears as those options for action that seem the closest to being the morally correct options.

III. Ethical Intuitionism and its Practical Application

In the prior sections the analysis of experience revealed an external connection to the other through the medium of language, while also leading us to establishing the connection to our

objective experience internally through the spheres of imagination and reflection. What followed from these realizations was the discovery of the *a priori* source that must be present for the state of awareness to be possible. What is of great importance for the promotion of ethical intuitionism is that the source is *devoid of distinctions*, and as such that which has to be *common to humanity*. It is from this recognition of the objective side of experience being accessible from within the subjective experience that we find the source from which ethical intuitionism emerges into the state of awareness. In the further consideration of the phenomenon of the will we discovered the appearance of the force that pushes information up to the state of awareness, and accompanies that information which is given to us from the external world. Once the information being taken in comes into our awareness we are able to utilize the faculty of the will that works between the subject and the object. In other words, the situation we are in is organized within the subconscious and then rises up into our awareness containing within the perception given the force which brought it up to the stage of awareness. Just as we are given the social complexities found within our perception, we are *likewise given control* over the will which we then *use as our guide* to act according to our choice of one of the possibilities that appeared within the perception of the situation.

The will itself was discovered to be the product of various sensations related to different aspects of what the moment is impressing upon us in that instant. Different sorts of sensations, or instincts, that are produced out of our basic biological needs at particular times come into our awareness, such as hunger and thirst, which lead us to a desire to alleviate those fundamental biological necessities. However, higher order sensations that arise from the complexities of our social interactions in the form of desires are also present when we are in a social context. There can be several different desires that are excited through what is given to us from the external

social context, each of which contains the potential to be the motivation for the action that we choose to take given the circumstances. What is always present behind these desires however is the intuition of our shared objectivity with the other, or others, we are interacting with. Some of the desires we perceive will contain a stronger intuitive appeal due to their being closer to that which will guide us towards the correct response to the social situation we are currently experiencing. In other words, some desires will seem to be only beneficial for us apart from the consideration of others, while other desires will appear to us as that which is morally correct through their alignment with the recognition and consideration of the others that will be affected by our action.

Michael Huemer provides us with a more precise way of understanding how these instincts and desires available for us to choose from can be perceived as far as the action motivated by them is concerned. Basically, the suggestion is that we are not always motivated by our personal desires alone as some opponents of morality seem to suggest (Huemer, 161). Huemer distinguishes four types of motivating sensations from one another; a) *Appetites* which are instinctual motivations, b) *Emotional Desires* such as love, fear, hate, etc., c) *Prudential Motivations* which are motivations to either pursue or avoid something in an effort to further, or avoid setting back, one's own interest, and d) *Impartial Reasons* which are defined as motivations to act in a particular way based on the recognition of that which is considered good, honest, right, etc. (Huemer, 162). The appetites and the emotional desires would operate closer to the subconscious level, and the prudential and impartial would be the more precise intuitive forms arising in the state of awareness along with the subconscious sensations.

This distinction in motivations rests on the understanding that some of the sources of our motivations are directed inwardly, and appear as only subjectively desirable actions, while other

motivations are both subjectively and objectively desirable, as they seem connected with what is beneficial to us by way of what it is that seems right by others. Appetitive and emotional responses are such that they motivate us in a direction only subjectively desirable as they are introverted responses to our situation. The other two higher stages arise through our relation to the objective social domain, and thus are discovered through the presence of a subjective *synthesis* with the objective world of relationships that we partake in. The distinction made between the different sorts of desires is justified by it seeming as if there are many situations where our appetites and desires are suggesting we act in one particular way, with our being able to ignore those in favor of another motivation that seems more directly applicable according to the particular situation we find ourselves in the objective social sense, making it seem necessary to perform some action that runs contrary to the motivations that appear as only subjective concerns.

Out of the above mentioned distinctions Huemer begins to develop his position on the hierarchy of beliefs, claiming that the domain of morality assumes a higher position than the domains of the three lower motivational sources of action associated with emotions, appetites, and prudential concerns. As already explained, the first two fall under what we consider the most basic of human motivational sources, as they typically arise as an initial response to some sort of stimuli only found internally, while the latter two categories refer to those motivations that require one to take into account the subjective experience through its connection to some set of particular objectively given conditions. Essentially, in light of Huemer's distinction in motivations, morality will claim a role of authority over the other domains due to this level of motivation encompassing within it the entire set of motivational sources, thus appearing as the most important due to the desires associated with this domain pushing us to move beyond the

subjective to the recognition of a connection to the objective world, and thus they are concerned with the well being of others apart from us.

The move to this conclusion starts from the understanding that our reason for taking a particular course of action is sometimes derived from only a pure desire associated only with our own experience, and other times they are formed out of a “cognition of facts” that are found within the conditions we are presented with (Huemer, 185). Those reasons for motivating action that are derived from a cognition of the facts are either going to be prudential or moral in nature, with both of these appearing within our perception of the moment. The course of action that produces the best consequences for only the subject in the long run are based only on a consideration of one side of the social interaction and as such would be a prudential reason. The course of action that would best promote the *good* is given as an impartial moral reason, thus it is motivated through our taking into account the objectivity of the subjective. In other words, these impartial reasons are discovered by taking into account how the action taken will impact others that one finds they are in relation to (Huemer, 185). These reasons sometimes conflict and therefore it is necessary that we establish some sort of means by which we can determine the best course of action. This leads us to the understanding that, given this necessity, a sort of hierarchy should be established between the above mentioned domains. Ultimately, morality assumes the position at the top due to its being *the most rational decision because it appears as the best moral decision available* (Huemer, 185).

This determination is made because on Huemer’s view properly formed prudential judgments take into account the *subject’s present desires* alone, whereas properly formed moral judgments must take into account *both the subjective desires and thus the subject’s prudential concerns* along with the *impact an action taken* will have on the other. It follows that moral

considerations are always impartial in that they are those considerations which must *encompass both* the internal *and* external state of affairs, and as a result assume the position that supersedes the fundamental appetitive instincts and the prudential motivations (Huemer, 186). Moral actions require the subject to take both *the persons desires* into consideration as well as *their own interests*, while at the same time putting *consideration into the impact an action will have on others* before choosing the best course of action to take. Even in situations where the moral judgment runs *contrary to our own interests* a consideration of *our own interest is required* in the formulation of the decision, as we are subjects that are always connected to our objective surroundings (Huemer, 186).

We will see later on once we consider the care/virtue ethics dimension of the present endeavor that one taking a certain disposition that is consistent with the virtuous person will allow for seeing these intuitions, and further distinguishing the moral reasons from the other motivational sources. In order to perceive that which needs to be seen within each moment, it will be required that we put ourselves in the state of openness by setting aside our presuppositions regarding the various students we are interacting with. The teacher will have to set aside these presuppositions, and the prejudices that follow, if they are to see each student, and group of students, for the person and people that they are to the highest degree possible. Since moral action is based off of the *cognition of the facts* that are presented in the moment, and since moral action requires a *consideration* of the others, then better seeing the best actions available to us will require that we have cultivated the ability to see the moment as it is in its actuality in the present. We have to utilize the information we have available to us regarding the others we are interacting with in order to see these morally significant intuitions that are directly given out of that which is provided by the others, and thus the best possible actions are always going to *be*

particular to the situation and the *various mental states and dispositions* that are present within it at that time.

In considering how what has been discovered thus far will function within the domain of education through the relationship between the teacher and the student, it would be helpful at this time to list some concrete connections to the particularity of that relationship prior to introducing Dewey in the following chapter. Dewey's view on education rests upon three main principles, each of which follows from the other: 1) *Experience is communicative*; in the opening portion of the chapter we found that given the generally understood meanings associated with each side of the relationship between teacher and student conflict arises out of the tension between the two, with this state of conflict being overcome by looking to the dimension of language to see the external connection at work between the two. 2) Out of the realization of experience as communicative we find the location of the *democratic ideal*; applying hermeneutics to place emphasis on the connection to the other provided one layer of how to bring about something close to the democratic ideal through the promotion of approaching relations to others from a position of openness so as to allow for one to engage in an unbiased interpretation of the information given by the other.

Later a deeper level was unearthed in our consideration of the internal structure of the subjective experience where we uncovered an objective ground which has to be present in order for the subjective experience to be possible. The discovery of this objective source, in conjunction with the understanding of the will that followed showed that we possess the ability to actively engage and take control over the objective side of our experience and therefore led to a more precise justification for our acceptance that the state of openness and the interpretive act are in fact applicable within our social relations thereby showing that the progressive dialogue

promoted by the *democratic ideal* is something that can be applied within the moment. 3) Given that Dewey's democratic principle appears to be something that can be applied to social interactions it follows that all relationships are *educative and should aim at promoting the progression of education from one moment to the next*.

So, if we understand how to interpret what the student projects towards us from the state of openness and through our doing so guide them towards this ability as well, then we discover that progress in education requires that we apply this approach as consistently as possible in our interactions with our students. Further, this requires us to both assume the position of teacher in order to educate, while also assuming the position of the student in order to come to an understanding of how we can best approach educating the student according to their particularities. Immediately present within the acknowledgement of the above points leads to the inference that *morality is necessary for the actualization of the educative process due to the dependency at work between the two sides*. We have already discovered an intuitive guide to assist us in finding more precise determinations regarding moral action, and after the more detailed assessment of Dewey's view on education we will combine it with the care based model of virtue ethics to demonstrate, in a more robust fashion, how the teacher can incorporate morality into their approach to educating by simply treating the student with the same level of respect, care, concern, and attentiveness that should be the starting point from which we attempt to approach any social interaction.

Chapter 4

*Dewey and the Educative Process: Assessing the View and its Initial Framework
And it's Unification with the Structure of Experience*

**I. Dewey on Education: A Presentation of Education as an Active Process
Requiring a Corresponding Pragmatic Approach**

In the previous chapter an inquiry into the more specific point of tension between the teacher and the student was undertaken. It was shown to be a result of the general social schema as it comes to be manifested within the institutions of public education through the tension present between the worlds of the teacher and the student. Although it is true that a restructuring of the system of public education is in order, we should not think that this is something that can be remedied with any sort of immediate solution. This project is meant to provide the teacher with the means to work within the boundaries of the current model in a way that still allows for the providing of relevant information and adequate tools for the cultivation of moral characters and the transmission of relevant information to the students that are being taught. Although there are a great number of restrictions that work against the educator within the current setup of the education system, we have already seen previously that there is always a range of possibilities available within the immediacy of social relations, and the relationship between the teacher and the student is fundamentally the same although it takes place within a more particular social context.

Many of Dewey's core ideas have been taken up by administrators and teachers working within public education, and there has been a strong push on the part of many in this group to bring the philosophy of Dewey back to life within schools and classrooms. Although this is a

good movement to champion the reality is still far from what Dewey had in mind while he was formulating his understanding of how education should be put into practice. It is my contention that many of the ideas presented by Dewey have only been taken up in a fragmented sense with very few, if any, of those who look to him for guidance possessing anything close to a full understanding of his work within this area. Further, I would also contend that Dewey himself fell short in providing a precise enough methodology that would allow for an application of his approach to be utilized in a consistent fashion, some of these problems were already dealt with to some degree at the end of the previous chapter. Below, we will consider Dewey's philosophy in greater detail in order to set up the rest of our practical approach to education.

The philosophy of education developed by Dewey was largely motivated by his acknowledgment of the failings of what was the common structure of public education in his era. The predominant method was what is typically referred to as the *classical approach to education*, which was characterized by the teacher as the *active* conveyor of knowledge and the student as the *passive receptacle* of the information being communicated. In other words, the method implies that the teacher impresses knowledge upon the mind of the student while assuming the student must be in a passive state in order for this to occur. In the preceding chapter our analysis and reinterpretation of the teacher/student relationship illuminated the sense of detachment from the education being both provided and received from the perspective of the teacher and the student within the context of the relationship between them. Further, it was shown that the curriculum referred to by the teacher in approaching the student is derived out of the particular organization of the social domain as it is formed by the Liberalist socio-political system resulting in the reinforcement of oppression and injustice within the educational dimension of that social framework. The student will eventually find their existence taking place

within the larger social world, as such educators must approach the student in a way that is disclosing to the student a sense that the two sides of the relationship are working together within the domain of education.

The classical perspective suffers from its emphasis on dividing education into categorically distinct units as a result of a falsely assumed disconnect of the subjective from the objective, and therefore leads to an approach to teaching that does not allow for an understanding of how to synthesize these categories in a way that demonstrates their relevance in relation to one another (Dewey, 221). Applying this understanding entails the manifestation of an approach that works to section off the teacher from the student, and further subsumes the student into a position of subjugation, as it does not work to incorporate the experience of the student into the educative process (Dewey, 221). As such, a means through which an understanding that works to establish the connection existing between the two sides of the relationship is of central importance. Dewey sees this connection as something that can be established through the incorporation of morality into the curriculum, and immediately given through the educator. As was articulated at the end of the previous chapter we have already outlined a concrete connection that is present within any social relation, thus it is also present within the student/teacher context as well.

Morality concerns itself with attempting to develop an understanding of how one should act given the present circumstances one is confronted with in the social domain, with this understanding *entailing the consideration* of how the action will impact the others that will be impacted by the action taken, due to their also experiencing the relationship from their own perspective. This requires a respect for the relationship present between our experience and that of the others that we are in relations with at any given point in time. The general purpose is to maintain and strengthen the relationships that come together to form the larger cultural and social

domains working to *hold all of society* together (Dewey, 222). This is something noticeably absent from the classical approach which makes no room in its general form to consider what is best for the student that is being taught. As such, it becomes essentially useless due to its failure to be conformable to the particular experience of the student (Dewey, 223).

However, the other extreme which tilts the scales towards an emphasis on the experience of the student is also problematic due to its inability to provide the student with a sufficient amount of information pertaining to the larger world of human relationships, thereby leaving the student ill equipped when entering into that world. The result of this sort of extreme alternative could likely produce a strong *sense of superiority* over others within the student, and as a result *work against* their ability to cultivate their moral character. Through the incorporation of an emphasis on mutual respect within the approach taken by the teacher, their approach will work to promote an understanding of the relationship that encapsulates the consideration of the experiences of both sides. The approach should also operate to cultivate a framework that will allow the student to better understand the nature of human relationships in general, which will be of great assistance to the student as they enter into adulthood (Dewey, 226).

Essentially, the perspective offered by Dewey is concerned with providing an understanding of the connection present between the student and the teacher that allows for the teacher to understand the student in a way that is consistent with that of *any other* human life, and thus *worthy of the same level* of respect given to any other person one might interact with. Further, the incorporation of a consideration of the particularities of the student's experience into the teaching approach entails by extension a consideration of the parents of the student by virtue of the parents often being the most immediate influence upon the student, although there are many unique circumstances that the educator will be faced with involving the backgrounds of various

students that may not have much in the way of guidance being provided from other adult figures apart from those the student interacts with at school (Dewey, 240). In the contemporary world the educator cannot reasonably expect the parents or guardians of a student to provide the student with a strong sense of morality. Therefore, Dewey's distinction between informal and formal moral education is not something the teacher should assume should be the case. Informal education is that type of education that is assumed should be provided by the parents or guardians of the student, while the formal type is the education received by the student within the academic environment. Many students do not come from stable households or have parents that are actively involved in the success or struggles of their children, therefore the teacher has to make a stronger effort to provide as much guidance as is possible, and work to communicate a stronger sense of *caring* into their approach to the students they are seeking to inform.

What the above sheds light on is the need for the development of a system of public education that is able to incorporate a sufficient degree of respect for the choices of the students that rely on it as a source of information that is aiming to provide them with the means for success in the future. Further, the choices of the parents as far as the teacher's determinations pertaining to the type of education received also must be taken into consideration in cases where the parents or guardians are apt to influence the decisions of the student (Dewey, 273). In other words, for the education provided to be something that takes the whole experience of the student into account it has to incorporate both the recognition of, and respect for, the impact of the parents in the shaping of that experience (Dewey, 273). Therefore, the educator has to extend their scope of consideration beyond just the immediate relationship with the student to consider the background circumstances at work outside of the academic environment. The system applied to organize and distribute State provided education must also reflect this sort of approach applied

by educators by emphasizing the importance of reaching out to the larger community it is servicing to better adapt to the social conditions at work in the surrounding area.

By adaption we mean that educators, and the schools located in these areas, must work to gain insight into the obstacles of injustice and oppression as they are found within the surrounding environment so as to better ensure that the same injustice and oppression is not being reinforced within the school, the classroom, or the relationship between the teacher and student. The individual school, the district that it is a part of, and the model implemented at the State level, must also emphasize flexibility within each level of organization. If this flexibility is to be incorporated by the larger system it has to first become a possibility that is actualized within the context of the relationship between teacher and student, and as a result the teacher must be trained in a way that assists them in their developing an understanding of how to be creative and flexible in their approach,. The teacher must be able to communicate this while still being able to *maintain balance* within the relationship, and thereby communicate the importance of acting in a way that promotes progression and aligns with the educative process at work.

For Dewey all social interactions are educative and as such each of the individuals involved should treat any social situation as educational in some way. Therefore, education for Dewey is just a *condition* that naturally arises out of being a member of the social world and *participating* in the various forms of relationships that are present therein. On this view the educator *also becomes* the educated, as the educator has to begin from a position of openness in order to perceive the particularities of each student, and adjust their approach to provide those students with quality instruction. This entails that both sides of any relationship taking place in the social world operate in a way that is at least close to consistent with Dewey's *democratic Ideal*. This key aspect of Dewey's view essentially suggests that the person, or people, at either side of any

relationship within a community must put themselves in a position to be receptive to the views of others. Further, the other side has to be willing to do the same in return, as it is this way of approaching relations within a community that will lead to it opening itself up to align with the progression promoted by the democratic Ideal in the proper way.

II. The Current Challenges faced by Educators and the General Outline of a New Approach.

Although Dewey's view appears to be a more than adequate way of understanding how education should operate, it is still stuck attempting to adjust too many of the same issues that Dewey was addressing several decades ago. In the contemporary era there has been an increasing effort to associate education with monetary value through the growing emphasis on the subject's individual gain, which is motivated by the amount of money accumulated. This phenomenon is a result of a misinterpretation of what it means to be a productive citizen according to the democratic process, as such it is a narrow conception of value that reduces the worth of human beings to the assessment of the dollar amount they bring in per year, thus working to promote a growing sense of separation from others to such an extent that they come to be seen as almost *purely instrumental*. Hence, this is why it is custom in our culture to ask upon meeting someone "what do you do for a living?" The students for which public education is supposed to work for begin to see themselves through the lens of this same standard, and thus let it define their experience accordingly.

This feature of the modern academic climate is troubling as it operates to cultivate within the student's subjective experience an understanding that reinforces the social hierarchy and the injustices that are the consequence of its structure. Essentially, given that the social model is

working upon vaguely defined and falsely assumed immutable principles. The best that social model can do is work to continuously promote a new version of this structure from one generation to the next. The structure's inability to account for changing conditions in an adequate way leads to an expansion of injustice within the social world that *pervades the entire structure*, but becomes more prevalent at the lower levels. In general, the system functions in such a way that it works to *isolate individuals* one from the other due to its emphasis on the importance of *individuality*. In other words, the "system" works to cut off the subject from an *awareness of communicative* routes through which a realization of their own potential located within their experience can seem like an actuality. Further, the extreme individualism that the understanding at work here promotes necessarily leaves little room for any sort of moral considerations that would be of use since this would require respecting the other as you would respect your own experience. At the same time the understanding it puts forth seems to suggest that there are in fact moral standards and these are of *great importance*, but the amount of money you make is *more important*.

The understanding that has come to be typically deployed by educators mirrors the divided categories that represent the areas of "knowledge" that have been deemed useful. The way in which the current social model and the chosen categories of study function to shape the understanding of both teacher and student, implies a sense of detachment from the other that is *not actual*. This makes it seem as if the subject-matter that is being communicated within each area is also detached from the other areas that make up the entirety of the education received by the students. Each area has its own material that has been selected and deemed that which is most relevant according to the system that defines it, and the teacher is tasked with communicating that information to the students they are required to educate.

III. Applying Hermeneutics to Education to Promote Progression through the Channeling of Thought and Communication towards Morality

Through the framework of the perspective offered to us by Dewey the importance of capturing the notion of education in a way that promotes progress both within the experience of each student and within the larger social world is essential. In general, it seems as if the way in which Dewey is suggesting education be formed would be more in line with that which would be necessary for us to overcome the oppressive states that arise within the model of the social world as it is commonly understood and transmitted within the context of the academic environment. Clearly, being able to put into place something which can help shape thought in a manner consistent with this becoming a possibility is of great importance. Dewey gives us some idea of what this structure should look like and what it should produce, but he offers us a somewhat vague description of what sorts of practical tools we might need to utilize in our efforts to educate in a fashion that will strengthen the bonds found within the social world through overcoming the oppression indicative of the divisions that individuals falsely assume are embedded within it. As we have seen the relationship operating between the teacher and the student comes to be the location of the reinterpreting of what education should aim for, as well as a foundation for the reconstruction of a practical understanding. This understanding should direct the approach of the teacher through the incorporation of a consideration of the student into the determination of how best to act given the conditions that are present.

The primary concern with the view as Dewey presents it is that it appears to offer us little in the way of suggestions as to how this can become actualized by the educator through their emphasis on the relationship with the student. We have already begun answering this question but a more developed understanding of the application of hermeneutics as a means to assist in

the actualization of education as Dewey presents it is highly essential. As was articulated earlier in the work it is through the dimension of language that an external connection with the other is established. It is through the lens of a *hermeneutical* understanding of relationships that we find a path towards specific ways that the relationship between teachers and students can be shaped in a sense that is more consistent with the approach promoted by Dewey (Rorty, 430). Language is the source from which we pull in the activity of applying to form the subjective representation that we associate our experience with, while conversely serving as the medium through which we project our particular experience out into the world for others to interpret.

Within this dimension of language we discover the presence of a *shared meaning* that is relevant to all those which utilize it for the purpose of communication, as it is the presence of this generally accepted meaning that allows for the communicative process to be possible (Rorty, 430). The addition of the hermeneutic application to detail the shape of our experience, both internally and in terms of the movement towards its externalization, through making reference to our use of the linguistic model allows for the ability to construct an understanding of the relationship existing between the teacher and the student through our deconstruction of the initial prejudices captured by the *a priori* meaning most typically associated with the teacher/student relationship (Rorty, 430). Through the application of the *interpretative act* we can reflect upon the meaning captured within the language that operates between the two sides of the relationship, and bring into our awareness the particular prejudices that are intrinsic to the initial structure we are beginning from. The awareness of the presence of these prejudicial meanings captured within language is essential for the reconstructing of an understanding of the relationship that is aligned with the democratic principle and the educative process of Dewey.

Before moving into the more specific discussion concerning the deconstruction and reconstruction of meaning, it would be a good idea to distinguish the prejudices of the larger overarching *tradition* from more particular forms of *colloquial* prejudices that are also at work within the social fabric. The former type of prejudices are found within the more *general meaning* captured within a shared language, with that meaning being more closely related to the *larger tradition* that has been developed within a society *throughout history* and is thus thought of as something *distributed across* the entire populace making up that society. *Colloquial* prejudices are those prejudices associated with *particular sub-cultures* of a particular time period that arise within the larger society. In other words, certain social groups that are found within the social fabric come to develop their own meaning that they attach to the shared language working within a society, and as such they come to develop their own particular prejudices that are associated with each group. The teachers understanding of the shaping of their own experience and the prejudices associated with the forming of that experience, along with her level of understanding of the prejudicial dimension that has shaped her students, will be of great importance in her efforts to adapt to the needs of her students and their particular circumstances.

Being able to recognize those prejudices that are harmful versus those that are essentially harmless will be of significant importance in our effort to deconstruct the already existing meanings that need to be altered in the reconstruction of our understanding (Rorty, 432). Any prejudice that upon reflection appears to be such that it is *harmful* to the other given the general or the colloquial meaning associated with it must go. We have already uncovered many of the more prevalent prejudices operating within the relationship between the teacher and the student. The core prejudicial aspect of our common understanding of this relationship that needs to be restructured is the *active dominant position the teacher* assumes in relation to the passive

receptacle that is the student. Reinterpreting this as we have described above would be the first step, with the teacher reconstructing their understanding of the relationship in a way that is actively working to *bring the student into* the educational process and thus allowing the student to take on a position that is *influencing the teachers approach* to communicating with the student. Establishing this promotes a dialogue that works between the two sides which allows the teacher to be *active when needed* while also *assuming the passive position* as the student assumes the active position, and is thereby given the opportunity to have an impact on the education they are receiving within the classroom.

Having established this sort of understanding we now must consider those prejudices associated with various students and the various backgrounds their experience have been shaped by. For instance, the teacher should not assume anything pertaining to a student's ability to learn the required information based on presumptions about the student that are associated with *race, sex, sexual orientation, cultural backgrounds, socio-economic status, religious affiliation, and so on*. In most cases the only reason why these have ever been considered meaningful prejudices was only the result of the teacher using these assumptions to justify making *less of an effort* for certain students while putting forth more of an effort for other students that seem to come from a place that is similar to the conditions that shaped the teacher. Unfortunately, educators that utilize prejudices such as these are still far too prevalent within the domain of formal education, and this affects the student's chances of success in the most direct way. The expectations as far as effort and contributions are concerned should *be set high for all* students regardless of their situation. They will not all be able to achieve success at the same level or in the same way, but what is important is that *there is improvement and that improvement is significant* when considering where the student started out at the time when the teacher began working with them.

Since each one of the above set of prejudices comes equipped with *certain assumptions regarding behaviors, levels of intelligence, work ethic, character, etc.* it is of course imperative that the teacher does not make judgments according to these prejudices that cannot adequately lead to something true regarding the student that the judgment is impacting. Even if a student does have problems in one of these areas we *should not think* it is because they are part of some group or because they have some label attached to them by others. The teacher has to base their approach off of what is *disclosed to them* by the student first and foremost. Being able to make this happen entails their consistently maintaining the state of openness from one moment to the next so as to always have their focus on the immediacy of the relationship with their students while they are engaged with them, and thereby maintaining an awareness of each student's uniquely shaped experience as it is disclosed to the teacher in her relationship with the student. This will allow the teacher to *locate the strengths and weaknesses* that each student appears to have, and this can assist in forming an approach best suited for the student and their particular needs.

Finally, once these harmful prejudices are deconstructed and disposed of the dialogue between the teacher and the student *can operate more freely* due to it actually taking the shape that a dialogue between two sides of a relationship should take on. The teacher projects an initial understanding of the topic to be discussed, and then begins to encourage the involvement of the students within the process of the education they are receiving. It is important that the teacher be willing to approach their students in *a genuine way* that allows for the students to have a sense of understanding who the teacher is as a person. This should have an increasingly *strong influence* on the students which will lead to them feeling more comfortable, and conversely they likely will be more apt to show the teacher *who they are* as people. This works

to cultivate a greater sense of connection being present within the context of the relationship, and as such allows for the teacher to utilize the *intuitive sphere* to motivate their actions with increasing efficiency by illuminating the *caring aspect* produced by understanding the relationship as that which is characterized by *dependency, responsibility, and interrelatedness*.

The acknowledgment and removal of the prejudices such as those mentioned above provides additional pragmatic support to the perspective offered within Dewey's view of the educational process. Hermeneutics provides a more specific means through which we can both understand how the relationship comes to be as it is initially perceived, and thereby approach the reinterpreting of the relationship between the teacher and the student in a more proactive way that illuminates the preexisting motivational sources for the teacher, while also providing us with a way of setting aside the presuppositions present within the initial understanding, which we can clearly see are working against us in our attempts to educate the student's we are responsible for. We should admit the pitfalls of this pre-given understanding and set them apart from the present moment we are confronted with so that we can reconstruct our understanding in a way that takes into account that which is present before us in our relation to the student (Rorty, 435).

The teacher should avoid relying upon any sort of preconceived notion of what the "right" thing to do is as has been detailed above. The goal as far as our efforts are concerned is to assist the student in the cultivation of their moral character in our approach to communicating with them in the present moment. That being said we still need to have something to capture and distinguish each part of the present situation from the other parts making up the whole. The framework we apply must take into account as many of the particularities operating within the state of affairs that are present before us so that a range of potential responses consistent with

what is currently happening can be uncovered within the moment we are experiencing. This emphasis on seeing what is correct in the present moment entails that the ethical method we choose to apply be able to capture and represent the moment in a fashion that in-itself suggests no pre-given determinate claim to always motivate the correct response.

The way in which our experience unfolds clearly suggests that any attempts to seek a path towards something correct apart from any consideration of what we can perceive within the particularities of the present moment before us is only going to guide us towards an inadequate response, resulting from the application of a some general moral principle that is not able to address what is actually in front of us. The presence of our moral intuitions that is specifically associated with, and arises out of the connection between the subjective with the objective world we are engaged with has already been discovered, and the intuitions arising out of the acknowledgement of this connection implies that *we care* about the other we are interacting with. More precise moral intuitions are discovered through the teacher's consistent effort to *understand each student* to the greatest degree possible, with the intuition that appears as the most *consistent with that understanding* of the student likely being the one pointing the teacher towards the response that is the closest to the correct one. However, we need to apply a framework to the situations that come about in the classroom that will allow for us to take on a disposition that works to assist the teacher in *better perceiving* the moral intuition clearly as it comes up into our awareness, so that it can *provide assistance to guide* the direction of our thought and the action it leads to in a more concise way, with the *precision of our choices* regarding how best to act in responding to the student becoming increasingly refined as we consistently are working within this frame from one moment to the next.

Chapter 5

Virtue, Care, and Intuitionism as the Foundations for a Method Allowing\for

The Actualization of the Educative Process

I. The Virtues of Education and the Classical Model of Virtue Ethics

Towards the end of the previous chapter the usefulness of the hermeneutic approach within the context of Dewey's philosophy of education was illuminated for us. Located within the section that detailed specific prejudicial aspects of the linguistic dimension related to the relationship between the teacher and the student we also find the main qualities that we should aim at as educators coming from a position of virtue that is of the caring sort. First, the ability to position ourselves within the moment and thus in a state of *openness* is that from which everything else must follow. Second, we must maintain our *attentiveness* of the classroom environment so that conversely the students will recognize that the educator is on top of the activities of each student that is in the classroom. Third, the consistent attention of the teacher will demonstrate to the students that the teacher is genuinely *concerned* with the progress of each student through the educator always being *available* to provide assistance when it is requested by one of the students. Finally, the teacher must be *flexible* and try to take different approaches for particular students should they require a different path to understanding the material they are engaging with on a particular day.

Should the teacher work on developing these traits then their ability to *communicate* with the students will be greatly enhanced. In order for the teacher to work on the continuous

development of these core qualities of the caring disposition, they will need to set aside time outside of the classroom to devote to *reflecting* upon their approach and acknowledge what has not worked for them, so that they can better see what will potentially be more useful in the future, while also looking to reflection in order to develop a more acute understanding of each of their students characters in an effort to *empathize* with each student through gaining a deeper insight into who their students are as people. Based on what has been discussed up to this point these appear to be the essential aspects of the virtuous teacher that is coming from a position of care must develop and demonstrate within the context of the relationship with the students. *Thus, openness, attentiveness, concern, availability, flexibility, reflection, and empathy are those primary aspects the teacher has to project through their approach.*

It is the cultivation of these qualities that will assist the teacher in seeing the moral intuition that is present within each moment. The intuition will always be *something unique* within the context of any set of circumstances given within the experience of the teacher, which is why the teacher should not presume any response that is uniform in kind no matter how much past experiences suggest that this should be the case. Each student, just like any other person, is always in a *state of change* which therefore requires we frame our thought in a way that allows for us to take account for this change, and adjust according to whatever situation we are in so that we are letting that situation, and its corresponding moral intuitions that are correlative with the range of potential moral actions discovered within the context of the situation, direct our choice and the corresponding action that follows. In other words, seeing the moral intuition within our cognition of the facts *presently given* within the situation we are in requires that we remain open to understanding the information being given by the others we are in relation with *that particular point* in time.

Understanding our experience in the above mentioned way allows us to consistently maintain an awareness of the *dependency, responsibility, and interrelatedness* that defines each moment experienced, which conversely allows for us to better perceive and distinguish those intuitions that are of *moral/impartial* concern versus those that are of only *personal/prudential* concern. We cannot know precisely what that intuition will look like or what action is going to be best due to our experience being situated in the present moment, therefore we have to *cultivate* a disposition that will allow us to see the intuitions associated with the state of affairs we are in by conversely seeing the range of options that are available to us as far as actions are concerned given our seeing the moment from the state of openness. Those closest to the morally correct actions available to choose from will be those which most closely correspond to the intuitions arising into our awareness along with the information being given to us from the external conditions.

In order to develop our ability to better see these intuitions we must refer to the state of reflection *consistently* so as to ensure that we are working towards understanding each student, and thereby each group of students, in a way that is as consistent with the particular experiences of each individual as is possible. This requires that the teacher regularly reflect upon the information that has been disclosed to them by the student's throughout the duration of the relationship that establishes the direct connection that has been present between the educator and the educated. The choices that are available before us arise out of the series of past occurrences that led to the production of the present situation as it appears to us, therefore seeing the moral intuitions requires that we conversely are continuously working towards understanding the past in relation to what is actually happening. Therefore, the qualities that have been previously mentioned as those which should be developed and adopted by the virtuous caring educator are

conversely essential for developing the capacity to *continuously refine* the ability to see the moral intuitions that are arising are associated with each moment.

The ability to react in *increasingly effective and thus productive ways* requires that we develop an understanding of each student that is rooted in their unique character, and the known circumstances that have had the most *immediate influence* over the shaping of the student's experience. Also, the teacher should take time to consider how these past influences have been produced *through their connection* to a larger more general understanding that is typically applied to all in the form of a situated understanding. In other words, understanding what has occurred in the past in the *proper way* by considering past instances in a way that merely *assists* the teacher in perceiving the student as they are in an increasingly precise way, also entails the cultivation of an understanding of the *sources* located in the past that are *most directly* influencing the choices and actions of the student in the present. Since we are not using these as a source of judgment, but *rather as a guide for framing the situation* as it is in the present, we can both better perceive our moral intuitions through the development of our understanding of each of our students, while also utilize this understanding to guide us in how we speak and interact with those students. Further, developing this sort of approach to each student will also allow the teacher to better understand how best to see and react according to intuitions that arise out of *situations consisting of the multiplicity of experiences that are intersecting* with one another in the group that is currently being interacted with.

With what has been stated in the opening of this chapter in mind we will proceed to look at the primary aspects of the original view of virtue ethics that was established by Aristotle before moving into the specifics of the care based model. What should be made visible is the valuable nature of the care approach as it is applied to the teacher's relationship with their students.

Further, as we have already discussed the care based approach combined with our intuitions arising in response to the present can be applied to increase our ability to see the moral action within the complexities of the state of affairs we are confronted from one moment to the next. With this in mind we will move into the explanation of the classical view below.

Aristotle's initial virtue based approach to ethics was developed out of his recognition of the social world as something distinct from the rest of the natural world due to its heightened level of complexities and its variability. It was evident to Aristotle that the ability to make certain moral determinations was not something possible, and as such the way in which social relations were approached required an understanding that *guided one towards* something close to the moral action. Within the domain of reason Aristotle's ethics is connected with the *virtue of character* which is distinguished from the *virtue of thought*, or that which is cultivated over a long period of time and experience. The virtue of character is developed through habit, and this virtue is cultivated out of the *consistent demonstration of actions that are virtuous in relation to the conditions present* (Aristotle, 18). The person who is virtuous would have the ability to act in the proper way given the situation reflexively without any need for further consideration due to this ability being firmly ingrained within their practical reasoning faculty (Aristotle, 19). In order for the subject to cultivate the virtuous character they must start from a position that is situated in the moment, as mentioned above, and *maintain an awareness of their connection* to the external sphere. It has been shown already that this is the actuality of our experience, thus the virtue model works well with what has already been developed throughout this project.

There are a set of potential modes of action that are associated with the ethics of virtue, with these being perceived as a range of possibilities that are present between two extremes. *That action which conforms to the virtue as it is defined by the situation are always going to be the*

actions that conform to the possibilities present around the center that exists between the two extremes. In order for the action to be truly virtuous in its nature the action must be aligned with a virtuous character. Thus, the actions and the qualities associated with the virtue determined by the situation can only be that which is virtuous by way of its synthesis with the actor that is in the virtuous state (Aristotle, 23). This state is a state of decision that conforms to reason through a relation to the mean between two extremes (Aristotle, 27). Further, we can break down virtue into various categories based on the circumstances of particular situations, as we have shown at the outset of the chapter. Those able to align their action the closest to the proper mark present within the spectrum of possibilities with the most consistency are those who possess an excellent character (Aristotle, 29). Although Aristotle did present an original set of virtues he did not relegate the set to only those that he initially mentioned. His acknowledgment of the variability and change of the social dimension led him to conclude that the set should be left open for expansion, as what is virtuous only arises in each moment that we experience, and since we cannot know definitely which virtue will appear within the moment beforehand it follows that the subject be prepared to perhaps encounter something completely different from anything found in prior instances. This led to the development of the care based model of virtue ethics that has become increasingly influential in the contemporary era.

II. The Contemporary Development Known as Care Ethics: Reinterpreting the Classical Model in Light of Modern Concerns.

Aristotle's ethics was defined by that which is virtuous operating like a *guide to discovering* something that could come close to arriving at proper action, without having to make any determinate claims as to what that action should be. The view is not concerned with what a person *ought to do* as every situation one is confronted with will present to us a *different set of*

options found within the particularity of the moment. As such, the emphasis is on the *cultivation of the character* of the subject through the demonstration of a consistent ability to act in accordance with the middle ground found within the spectrum of potential actions present before them. The classical model leaves us with a great deal of flexibility in this regard as its guiding feature is open to expansion due to its admitting that a full set of virtues is likely yet to be discovered, as previously unknown situations could present us with previously unrecognized virtues.

As a result ethicists have taken to expanding upon Aristotle's foundation with our emphasis being on the expansion of the view to incorporate the caring dimension. Thus, we are aiming to provide an understanding of virtue that requires the contrasting of *different sources of motivation* relevant to the particular individual and the unique situation that is presenting them with a certain spectrum of options relevant to, and dependent upon that uniqueness. The Classical view understood virtue and the virtuous character only in their relation to a human beings rationality while ignoring some other very important factors that inspire action. For our purpose however this aligns nicely with the intuitive aspect of the moral position that has been presented, which also consists of different sources of motivation with the sources related to the domain of the impartial reasons being where the moral intuition can be seen. Also, our awareness of our connection implies we acknowledge our dependency and interrelatedness with others, which suggests that we care about how our actions impact other people, so therefore the moral intuitions will rely upon our caring about the others who will be affected.

The foundation for the Care Ethics movement was inspired by the research of Carol Gilligan and her publication of the findings of her research found within her work entitled *In a Different Voice*. The research in question, which is the subject matter Gilligan uses to justify her

conclusion, involved setting up various types of situations of a moral nature and asking female subjects to respond to the situation, and later asking them to explain the motivating principle behind the action they chose (Gilligan, 23). The findings suggested that there are at least *two distinct sources* of motivation for the subject with one being *justice* based and the other being *care* based (Gilligan, 25). The former, as was also quite prevalent in the discussion of Rawls and Liberalism at the outset of this work, was an *equality* based view that is presented as something already present in the world apart from individual minds, and further that this principle can be applied in our consideration of social dilemmas and lead us to the proper action. The care perspective however is characterized by an emphasis on the relationship of the subject to others *through the recognition of the subjective experience only being possible through those relationships*. The justice view maintains a conception of the subject as a “self” that is separate from the world of relationships with other individuals.

The findings of Gilligan led her to the postulation of a useful distinction between the two forms of motivation to action provided by the contrasting perspectives. The *justice* perspective requires that the subject proceed from an entirely abstract consideration of a hypothetical situation by asking *whether or not an action is just*. The *care* perspective on the other hand is concerned with how a person should, *not ought to*, respond given the immediate perception of the situation (Gilligan, 23). The conclusion arrived at by Gilligan was that subjects are able to derive a decision pertaining to a situation from *either perspective* in a rational manner. The reason why this conclusion was, and still is, so groundbreaking is directly related to the fact that up to that point in time the justice approach was, for the most part, the only angle accepted within the world of ethics. This aspect of Gilligan’s proposal is almost identical with the view of Huemer which arose out of the consideration of the internal form of our experience. In order to

more clearly see the intuitions associated with the impartial reasons the subject has to find that intuition within their cognition of the information given to perception, and further requires the subjects to possess the ability to do this through the acknowledgment of their connection to the objective world.

The care based approach works well with the actuality of our experience due to both the justice and the care dimensions being of use. Justice would be something considered within a state of reflection on past occurrences, which is useful for the purpose of continuing to cultivate a better sense of how something that seems just could be located within scenarios of varying types. The care dimension of this version of virtue ethics would be derived more directly from the *a priori* subconscious dimension, and thereby appeal more to the intuitive domain that is *synthesized* with the imagination where justice is considered. In other words, our understanding of justice can never be thought of as a preexisting principle. Instead it is merely a frame for us to *hone in our intuitions* which are being understood through our sense of *responsibility, compassion, and respect* for the other whose experience is only possible through the same phenomenon that allows for our experience to be a possibility.

Given the above, care comes to be incorporated into the set of virtues first presented in the classical view. It is of the intuitive type and thus arises out of the most basic foundational principle of the recognition of the possibility of the generation of any sense of understanding of the individual's own experience, and that experience is always connected with the other sitting in relation at the contrasting end. It is through the recognition of this connection that allows for us to set up our frame to channel our thought towards that action which appears as something close to virtuous. The main problem with the commonly used justice perspective is that it seeks to maintain that schism between subjective and objective if used apart from the consideration of

care. It makes it difficult for the subject to recognize that the very ability to have any personal experience entails a dependence on their relations with others, whereas the care perspective moves beyond this isolated position such that the subject can look into those relationships to see something that gets us much closer to that which is correct morally.

Relations of caring can be understood as taking three distinct forms: 1) *Caring for*: this is characterized by an immediacy being present within the relationship which involves the recognition of liking, or being attracted to, the thing or person in question. 2) *Having Care Of*: This would be defined by a situation consisting of one taking on the responsibility of looking after that which is entrusted to them by another. 3) *Caring About*: For one to care about something one has to see the other which is the object of one's care as that which is of importance to the subject (Timmons, 283). Where Timmons falls short in his definition is that he *fails to fully explain the notion of caring about*. It is actually more than seeing the other as that which is "important to the self" as this would reduce care ethics to a self centered foundation which it is not. Caring for, having care of, and caring about, are *all actually about* seeing the other as connected to the subject with the experience of the subject only being a possibility through that relationship to the objective.

All three of the above forms of caring are imbedded with varying strengths through which the care present within the relationship is experienced, and these would correspond with the intuitions given within our experience of the present moment. It is evident that the first two types of caring mentioned above see the relation from a more detached position, while the third type represents a situation where the relationship is of primary importance, and thus essential to one's own well being (Timmons, 284). Thinking about care in terms of virtue it seems that all three forms can allow for the possibility of discovering a proper mode of action through a respect for

the other being present within each mode to a varying degree. Understanding relationships to others from the position of care could be useful as a guiding methodology in our decisions about how to act, however the way in which the care is distributed through the act being considered will assist in determining whether or not we have strayed too far from that middle ground being sought. Thinking about moral dilemmas in a caring fashion thus allows for an expansion of the set of virtues based on its ability to allow for the rational consideration of situations in a way previously not considered.

III. Considering Objections to the Care Perspective

In the understanding of both classical virtue ethics and its contemporary model of care ethics it is clear that neither view espouses to provide us with a specified theory of right conduct. In other words, neither form of virtue ethics wants to claim that every situation of moral concern suggests that there is one right way to act in response to that situation. Instead, both maintain that each situation presents us with a set of potentialities to direct our action and that there may in fact be multiple ways to respond to the particular situation that would all be consistent with virtue as the mean. However, Timmons attempts to derive a theory of right conduct out of these ethical perspectives anyway.

Both the classical and contemporary models of virtue ethics accept the principles that state that 1) all things are aiming at the good when they act, and 2) that which is good for human beings is characterized as happiness, and more specifically flourishing corresponds with any action that aligns with happiness and flourishing is that which is virtuous. Timmons derives two possible theories of right conduct from these principles and their relation to virtue: a) Happiness and flourishing thus are what make a virtue intrinsically good, and further an action then must be

an example of right conduct if it aligns with the virtue associated with the moral dilemma an agent is confronted with, or b) we can understand happiness and flourishing through the lens of the virtue to define what it is to do right and thus good (Timmons, 281).

Based on these general derivations from the classical version of virtue ethics, Timmons constructs a formulation of right conduct specific to the care version of virtue ethics. Every action is *obligatory, wrong, or optional* with the obligatory action being that action that a caring person would not fail to perform (Timmons, 285). The care model of virtue ethics operates in a similar way to the version proposed by Aristotle with the exception being that care is inserted as the foundation, or cardinal virtue, from which all of the other virtues are consistent with. As such the theory of right conduct constructed by Timmons is meant to reflect that standard of care ethics, however it is *more likely* that his thesis pertaining to right conduct in relation to the care perspective is only being added so that he can judge virtue ethics *according to his own criteria* for assessing moral theories. We do not have any reasons for assuming that a proponent of care ethics would want to accept any sort of rigid theory of right conduct, as it would dilute one of the major attractions found within the perspective.

Specifically, what is very attractive to most who take up the care ethics position is the fact that the view is extremely flexible thus allowing for *more possibilities* for action and further allowing for an adaptation to new situations that might arise. There is a sense in which the incorporation of a theory of right conduct suggests that there are actions that are always specifically right and actions that are always specifically wrong, and that we can somehow know what these are precisely. If the view of Timmons was accepted, it would appear to narrow the virtue perspective and take away from its ability to adapt to the multifarious situations one will be confronted with. Further, as has been explained at previous points throughout this work, any

attempt to presume the existence of a standard such as specific principles of right conduct is generally problematic, and to this point Dewey would most certainly agree as his view of moral education distinctly attempts to avoid this sort of problem.

Certainly, there appears to be forms of care that can have adverse consequences on both the acting subject and the objects of their concern. As such, it does appear that care ethics as it is does need something to assist the subject who utilizes this perspective. Fortunately, when we consider the care based methodology in relation to our ethical intuitions the virtuous state was something that seemed to be attainable. This was clear because the moral intuitions imply caring due to their moving beyond simply the subjective to allow for the objective to furnish our awareness with the options for potential actions, along with the intuitions that correspond to each source of motivation. The ethical approach that has been developed thus is consistent with the objective that is experienced from within the subjective, with their coming into alignment with the moral intuition that arises in the given perception of the moment prior to the action. It should also be noted that *neither ethical intuitionism nor care ethics allows for the claim of complete certainty regarding the moral value of our choices*. Both care ethics and ethical intuitionism do acknowledge that there is something morally true within each moment experienced, but neither view suggests that we have the ability to see it clearly and with complete certainty. What each does suggest is that should we elect to apply these practically to guide our efforts to act morally they can allow us to get somewhere very close to that which would be the best. The ethical approach that arises out of the application of both *justice and care* appears to be the best lens through which we can promote moral cultivation due to the *absence* of any predetermined formulas and principles that suggest that they will produce the single best action to take in any moment in which we may be. As such what is proper as far as how we choose to act falls

between the bookends of *justice and care with our intuition* guiding us closer to the correct response given the information located within specific conditions that come together to guide our will towards those actions that appear to us as those which are the closest to that which is the morally correct action.

IV. Care and Intuitionism Framing the Teacher-Student Relationship through Virtue

It seems that in order for education to operate in a manner that emphasizes and promotes the cultivation moral character within the student, that the care based ethics discussed in the previous section is the best route given the way in which we are constituted, and our only ability to perceive what lies ahead of us being extremely limited. In order to initiate change within the social world, we as teachers must attempt to emphasize valuing other human beings according the fact that they are human and thus a member of group of individuals that make up humanity. We have a responsibility to make every effort to promote the continued progression towards better forms of social organization that allow for injustices to be done away with as quick as possible once they are recognized. Given what has unfolded up to this point it seems that we have found an ethical framework that is practically applicable within the context of the teacher/student relationship. Through this frame the educator can transmit moral education through an approach that is being applied in an effort to communicate with the students the educator is engaged with.

The teacher discloses their experience from the caring point of view and opens their experience up to continuously extend outwardly to bring the students into the educative process. The challenge for the teacher is to use this ethical structure in various ways that

seem relatable to as many of the students they are connected with in the classroom environment. Being able to apply the structure in these different ways requires that the teacher clearly demonstrates within their speech and their actions towards their students those virtuous qualities that were listed in at the opening of this chapter. Essentially, it is up to the educator to initiate the care ethic approach, and actively promote reaching out to one another so that the person on each side of the social interaction becomes more aware of the caring dimension with each successive moment that passes throughout the course of their direct relation to one another.

At this point in our assessment we have many useful guides that we can utilize in our efforts to assist the student through using *encouraging* language, showing them the *same level of respect* that we would provide any human being, and providing the student with an example of how much *we as educators need them* through our efforts to overcome even the most extreme obstacles (Noddings, 388). The dimension of language is of course of huge importance due to language establishing the external connection between the internal states present at each end. The emotional states that arise out of this recognition of dependency can function such that they can a) be a source from which the teacher pulls from in her efforts to promote involvement on the part of the student, and b) later serve as a source to point to when a student needs a more personalized form of motivation. The teacher that is able to be aware of these sorts of particularities can later use that source as a way to communicate with the student in a more personalized way that provokes the student to increase their efforts because they can see that you have been willing to do this for them. The teacher that can perceive and make use of this type of information has a greater chance of inspiring an

increase in the effort given by the student with their understanding increasing accordingly (Noddings, 388).

In general it appears reasonable to suggest that the more information that the teacher discloses about their own experience will eventually inspire the same from the students, and further the consistent ongoing disclosure of one another in their particularities will also continue to reinforce the motivations towards increasing the amount of effort which will correspond to a better quality education being provided (Noddings, 389). It is through the lens of the caring dimension of social relationships that we can see the lines of communication become clear through our efforts to remain in a state of openness and responsiveness to what is being disclosed. With this in mind we can see how the caring approach to educating, which gives us something which is able to account for both sides involved, can be extremely useful if applied correctly and consistently.

Recalling the information in previous chapters will help to illuminate this in greater detail. What became clear through the analysis that unfolded, and has been maintained throughout the course of this work is that experience is a *product of the synthesis* of the experiences of others. It follows then that it is never the case that we are only responsible for ourselves as 1) there is no reasonable way for us to make sense of the reality of an entirely detached subjective experience in a clearly understood way, and what follows is 2) that the actuality of our experience is always connected to the world of others. This entails that we are *responsible for one another* due to our dependency upon those others, and it is this dependency that an ethics of care is rationally grounded in. The teacher thus must set all obstructions that are not going to be adequate guides apart from the present situation, and place themselves in the moment thereby bringing their experience into the educative process

along with the experience of the student. Being able to achieve this in an increasingly effective way will require the teacher to take into consideration past circumstances related to their students, the various background conditions that are impacting each student, and the generally accepted prejudices that impact how we relate to others in order to adequately achieve this incorporation of the students experience. However, these are only points of reference that will assist the teacher in seeing the best routes in the present moment through the lens of the causal series that produced the particular state of affairs that is being experienced.

Once the teacher has moved to situate their experience within this space they can more adequately work on channeling their behaviors and words in ways that will function to bring out the same from their students. As was explained earlier the *real* is found within the space *between the determined past and the non-determined future*, and it is *within the present* that Dewey's educative and democratic process can become actual. This is the space where the teacher must attempt to place themselves consistently within their experience in order for her to best meet the standards that appear as equivalent to the level of care she has for her students. Although the teacher is restricted by a multitude of obstacles present within the public education system, she will find that the challenges can be overcome through her ability to see what is in front of her through the lens of her understanding of how the past has shaped the present situation, and her using it as means to perceive the intuition arising within the present moment through the frame of virtue/care.

One of the largest problems that has infected the world of public education has been the steady increase of educators that have simply given up on their students due to the presence of larger problems they feel completely prevents them from successfully educating their

students. But, just as it is with any practical trade, you have a responsibility to put forth your best effort each day and you do the best you can with what is available to you. Providing a quality education to your students can be achieved even if the resources at your disposal are the bare minimum, you simply have to be creative enough to envision the potentialities present before you.

Now this is not a downplaying of those obstacles by any means, and we should still set out to overcome the larger systemic obstacles that plague public education, but we also have to keep in mind that the educative process is still at work even though those restrictions are working against the educator and the educated. Since the individual teacher cannot do anything on her own to remove these larger systemic concerns, it is unreasonable for her to use them as an excuse for failing the students present before her each day. Therefore, she must both put herself into the process and conversely bring her students into that process as well utilizing whatever means available to achieve this goal. Although it is not often thought of in this manner, the teacher should always at the same time understand that they have to learn from the students just as the students seek to learn from them. Figuring out what the most adequate response to a given situation is requires the attentiveness of the teacher as she must let her understanding of each student guide her actions. This means that she has to be acutely aware of each of her students unique dispositions so as to best understand how the variety of dispositions present within the classroom will come together to give rise to the overall conditions each will experience within the context of that environment.

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