

4-1-1997

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Recommended Citation

Leiserson, Michael (1997) "Students Are Part-Persons: Can We Educate Whole-Persons?," *Conversations on Jesuit Higher Education*: Vol. 11, Article 4.
Available at: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/conversations/vol11/iss1/4>

Students are Part-Persons: Can We Educate Whole-Persons?

MICHAEL LEISERSON

My title suggests that students are less-than-whole persons and that teaching involves leading them out of that condition toward wholeness. I do not mean to imply that teachers must be perfected first, in order to teach. Fortunately, and amazingly, teachers who are fragmented and partial may still lead students into whole-person education. This is because education, as Parker Palmer says, establishes a space where obedience to truth can be practiced. Such obedience is not slavish. It means facing (*ob-*) and hearing (*audire*) truth. If truth is what one faces and hears, obedience is spontaneous—like a toe tapping to music. Such obedience is the heart of whole-person education, for student and teacher alike. Teachers cannot presume on truth; truth, not the teacher, must be heard. The always-new *scientia* which facing and hearing truth elicits can be corrupted in higher education, just as in religion or politics. But it can be redeemed. “The first scientist was a poet who tried to measure the accuracy of his metaphor.”¹ Each student can be this first scientist.

But this is to anticipate. To understand this conclusion, we must take three steps. First, we set the scene with conversations, probably familiar to readers of *Conversations*, which raise doubts that we are educating our students as whole-persons, which is the goal of Jesuit

education. Next, we look at evidence that we can provide such education, and at explanations of how that works. Last, we measure the gap between evidence (§II) and doubts (§I), and consider how to improve.

I.

This article grew out of conversations with Sue Weitz, the Vice President for Student Life at Gonzaga and author of another article in this issue of *Conversations*. I teach at Gonzaga; Sue and I are about as close friends as an introvert like me is ever likely to be lucky enough to become with an extrovert like Sue. About a year ago, *Conversations*' editors met with Sue to think through an issue on “Who are our students, and are we meeting their needs?” Sue happened to mention her talks with me about this. So I was invited to contribute a faculty voice, in dialogue with Sue's student affairs voice.

Sue and I don't just talk the talk of dialogue, we walk the walk. Working with her has helped make me

Michael Leiserson is professor of political science at Gonzaga University, Spokane, Washington.

¹Norman Mailer's insight in *The White Negro*, based on Arthur Koestler's *The Sleepwalkers*.

understand what “educate the whole person” means. But when it comes to writing dialogue, it turns out neither of us is exactly a Plato. Our spoken dialogue, transcribed on paper, didn’t read as well as we’d hoped. So our contributions here are presented separately.

But I cannot speak about this issue in a self-contained style, as “the voice from nowhere.” What I want to say lives and breathes and has its meaning in relationship, and not only in my friendship with Sue. In Sue’s “student affairs” voice I hear students’ voices.

- Student affairs asks if faculty care about students’ emotions and personal experiences or only their intellects. I hear a student in my Introduction to American Government course some fifteen years ago saying, “Good course, but too much upstairs for me!”

- Student affairs says our students may be incapacitated by problems faculty ignore. I hear a favorite Poli Sci graduate’s voice on the phone recently, saying in my ignorant ear, “I’m at a drug-rehab ‘ranch’ and I’m sober now, but if I go back where I was living with my gay lover she’ll get me off the wagon. I don’t know what to do.”

- Student affairs says faculty appear to care more about our subject matter than about what it actually means to the students, given where they’re coming from, and going to. I hear the silence of many students in my courses who never spoke, performed poorly, and disappeared without my having a clue what “their” failure was really a sign of.

- Student affairs asks if faculty really try to “educate the whole person.” I hear the young woman in my Introduction to Politics course before I came to Gonzaga asking, “Where does God come into this?” and my awkward effort to protect us both from her naiveté: “You won’t find many political scientists who take that possibility seriously nowadays, as political scientists.”

So I think student affairs does faculty a favor. Sue Weitz and her colleagues give voice to uncomfortable but real faculty experiences. We can grow as teachers by reflecting on these experiences. But it helps to re-conceptualize them, as challenging us to consider these four questions:

- Do we teach as if all our students were essentially the same type of person, an “intellectual,” as measured perhaps by Myers-Briggs’ INTP and INTJ types, or the Enneagram’s #5 and #1? Do we help even that type to become a whole person?

- Do we tacitly teach students that “education” is irrelevant to their self-defining personal experiences, by ignoring them or mis-calling them “personal problems” (except when such experiences can be put in the form of deciding to go to graduate or professional school in our field)?

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- Does our teaching presuppose a prior culture of formation, and a future life and vocation, which many of our students lack? Do our complaints that “students aren’t prepared” and “students want vocational training, not liberal education” indicate our dim awareness of this?

- Do we fail to “educate the whole person” because we don’t know how our academic specialty fits into a (any) whole or complete human life? (The link to the fourth memory above is: “God” symbolizes what allows and requires personal wholeness and integrity.)

II.

I’m guilty. Like all faculty I know, I have gone home at the end of the day thinking to myself, “A day’s work done. Not a great day, but at least I did my job,” when—reflection shows—my unconscious definition of the job I had done did not include relating to any student as a whole person.

But on the other hand, I’m not guilty. Like all faculty I know who work at Jesuit colleges, I do try to do justice to my students, and I take for granted that that involves their whole persons.

This seeming contradiction can work out coherently in practice, as the recent, marvelous movie *Shadowlands* illustrates. There, Anthony Hopkins portrays a teacher—C.S. Lewis—who epitomizes a faculty member whom even his fiance at first thinks fails all four of the above questions. When a student comes late to class, Lewis doesn’t ask if a “self-defining experience” detained him, but belittles him for being late. When the student turns out to be unprepared, Lewis’s response suggests he “cares more about the subject matter than the student.” And so on.

Nevertheless, eventually Lewis does “educate the whole person” of his student. Like me and my colleagues, Lewis is trying to do this by means of the subject-matter (literature) which is appropriate in that classroom. But outside, when Lewis happens to see this student steal a book from Blackwell’s bookstore, Lewis does not turn him in. Instead, later on, he gets the student to talk about his situation, his background, and his frustrations with college. Later still, this student becomes a school teacher, and attributes his happy change in part to Lewis’s influence. Isn’t this whole-person education? Watching the movie I spontaneously identified with Lewis, albeit ambivalently; colleagues admit similar reactions.

Again, viewers of Richard Dreyfuss’s recent *Mr. Holland’s Opus* will remember a student, a likable, heavy-

set, African-American boy, whose coach is determined to help him excel in his sport. There’s a problem with grades; Mr. Holland’s aid is sought. “Can’t you get him into the band, somehow?” the coach asks. “But he’s tone deaf!” Mr. Holland replies. “You’ve got to do something!” So Mr. Holland gives the band’s bass drum to the boy, who bangs it with gusto, keeps his athletic eligibility, excels, and graduates. Later, when he’s killed in the Vietnam War, there is no doubt these teachers care for his “whole person.”

What Lewis and Mr. Holland do for individual students is what some AJCU faculty do for some students, as official advisees or otherwise. (Granted, most of our campuses could do better at facilitating such action.) And if we do this spontaneously in our informal contact with students, it suggests we want to do it in our official teaching as well.

Mr. Holland’s Opus shows how whole-person education can happen in classroom teaching itself, twice that I noticed on one viewing. Despite faculty “narrowness,” when it doesn’t exclude compassion for students, and when “narrowness” is simply love’s focused attention on a loved object (subject matter), teachers are led anyway toward whole-person education.

The first experience of this secular transcendence in the movie comes in Mr. Holland’s first year of teaching, shortly after his principal has challenged him to get serious about his teaching in a “shape-up-or-ship-out” confrontation. Mr. Holland is giving clarinet lessons to an earnest and bright, but painfully awkward and inept, red-haired girl. After yet another mistake the girl stops playing, admits she knows she’s no good, but—on the edge of tears—explains she wants to do *something* and can’t do any of the kinds of things at which her siblings excel. Mr. Holland is at his wits’ end, but his intuition tells him this girl can do better than she’s doing; the problem isn’t really technical. Suddenly inspiration hits: “When you look in the mirror, what do you like best about yourself?”

After a pause she replies, “My hair,” and we know she means it.

“Why?” asks Mr. Holland.

“My father says it reminds him of the sunset.”

Like Socrates leading us up out of the Cave to the Sun, Mr. Holland says, “Play that sunset!” The girl looks at him; the expression on her face says, “Are you for real?” But he just waits. She starts to play. And now, she can play.

It may sound corny, described like this, but any teacher knows such miracles do happen, sometimes.

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The movie’s second example of this kind of whole-person education comes when Mr. Holland is directing a musical comedy which the senior class wants to put on to raise money for a class project. The singer, a pretty girl with a lovely voice named Rowena, is nervous; her voice is thin and the song (“[Some day he’ll come along ...] The Man I Love”) lacks feeling and punch. Mr. Holland takes time to work with the girl, helping her project her voice, encouraging her confidence in her talent. He even suggests a little method acting: as she sings she should remember and feel a time she really wanted something she couldn’t have, and longed for it with all her heart. In a bit of dramatic irony, we realize Rowena feels that way about Mr. Holland, though he doesn’t see it yet. (Classically educated viewers may be reminded of Plato’s insight, in the *Symposium*, that Eros can lead human beings by means of their natural desires to transcend their lack of wholeness.)

The movie is realistic about the dangers of such whole-person education. Not only does Rowena develop a crush on him; she becomes his Muse. His creative juices flow, and a composition he’s working on takes off when she sings it with him. We realize how dangerous the situation is when he titles his opus “Rowena’s Theme,” and, when his wife asks him where he got the name, he lies. When Rowena is about to leave for the audition in the Big City he’s arranged for her, Temptation becomes explicit. But Mr. Holland remains loyal to the whole truth of his and Rowena’s inspiration, and so declines Temptation in a way which lets her know that the beauty, truth, and goodness they’ve found is real without sexual love and doesn’t require it.

These illustrations show that educating the whole person is compatible with the “narrowness” of faculty who love their subjects. Perhaps it’s not even possible for a teacher to love his or her students properly without first loving his or her subject. We don’t have to become buddies, or therapists, or leave our subject-matters behind, to engage in whole-person education. It’s true, you can hear—I have heard—a mature teacher say, “I used to teach economics; now I teach students.” But that’s a stage in a process *within* the teaching of economics. It doesn’t mean he isn’t teaching economics any more! Anyone who would short-cut this process, to “teach the whole person” *before* he or she truly submits to the *disciplina* of her or his discipline, can hardly be on the path to being a better teacher.

Of course goodness and beauty are *hidden* within the academic pursuit of truth. For example, the late Karl

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Llewellyn used to begin his first-year class at Columbia Law School by telling his students “to lop off [their] common sense, ... knock [their] ethics into temporary amnesia, ... [their] sense of justice [likewise] ... [in order to] acquire the ability to think objectively, to analyze coldly, to work with a body of material that is given” (cited by Dalton). Llewellyn was taking for granted that the “body of material”—i.e., the law—is already worth doing. He wasn’t literally recommending insanity. He meant that the particular kind of goodness that is intrinsic to law can’t be learned until a person goes into a “training” in a discipline, analogous to an athlete’s training—the *disciplina* which some mistrust as “narrowly intellectual and academic” originally meant precisely that training—an ascetic practice, analogous to what people undergo when they “leave the world” and enter monastic life. This is why “the learned professions”—law, medicine, teaching—have traditionally been regarded as true vocations, analogous to the ministry or priesthood.

Metaphorically speaking, there is a melody in Llewellyn’s song which any faculty member knows by heart. Each discipline has different words for the tune. But to lead the whole person out of Plato’s Cave, you’ve got to know at least one version of the song. Which is not to say a Ph.D. is required, however: the popular singer Enya has her own version, called “How Can I Keep From Singing?”

The way I first learned Llewellyn’s song is typical of many Ph.D.’s. In my first year of graduate school, the teacher of a “Methods” course gave us a page with about a dozen common-sense beliefs about public opinion in American politics. We read them, and agreed: sure, they’re obvious. Then he explained that survey research had shown half of them were false, and challenged us to say which. Needless to say, we did no better than random guessing. The moral? Common sense isn’t worthless, but something else—the *disciplina* we were to learn—is needed to find out when it is valid. In my experience good teachers can tell similar stories of their formation.

In other words, faculty believe our “narrow” training is not simply bureaucratic nonsense, but an initiation into a sort of priesthood of truth-tellers and revealers of beauty. In our darker moments we may despair, but it is this myth which originally motivated us and keeps us motivated as teachers. The role that Plato thought only mathematics could play in leading forth the whole person from the shadows of the Cave to the bliss of the Sun, can also be played by literature and fine arts, languages, history, the

sciences, and the learned professions. Moreover, we know from experience, the glimpses of the Sun which are possible via our *disciplina* are never *only* narrowly intellectual; they always involve the whole person. This is why we persist in believing that teaching our “narrow, academic” disciplines is a necessary part of the Jesuit vision of whole-person education.

This vision depends on the notion that *what is essential to human flourishing* (i.e., satisfying the desire for truth, beauty, and goodness) already potentially *links our students with what we teach*. This is the sense of my title here: students are parts of their potential whole-persons; teaching can lead them out from incompleteness into wholeness.

We are apt to misunderstand this because the phrase “educate the whole person” is ambiguous. Sometimes we use it as if “whole person” means everything about a person, all his or her experiences. But everything about a person isn’t *worth* cultivating, and doesn’t need anyone else’s attention. Parents and therapists don’t focus on everything children and clients talk about; why should teachers? “Whole person” properly means “complete, everything essential.” A “whole person” is not the heap of all the facts about someone. It is a vision of their potential perfection.

This is a matter of experience. It is what made me fall in love with teaching. And as colleagues whom I know well enough that we can do “teachers’ faith-sharing” together have shown me, in some way experiences like those of Mr. Holland and his students are part of the life-story of many teachers. Perhaps we only understand what “educate the whole person” means if we practice “teachers’ faith-sharing” of stories like these.²

In my second year of teaching, at the height of the Vietnam War, I revised a standard departmental offering, “Basic Problems in American Politics.” The topics normally covered were things like voter rationality, the problem of money in politics, and the like. In contrast, I wanted to achieve whole-person education, to lead the students to think deeply about how who they are is connected to our politics. So I restructured the course as a dialogue between me and my Ph.D. dissertation advisor, R. A. Dahl, using his then-recently published introductory text, *Democracy in the United States: Promise and Performance*. Whereas that text criticized the gap between “promise” and “performance” in American politics, I was asking the students to reflect on whether such “promises” meant anything to them, whether they wanted to renegotiate the “social contract” Dahl’s text implicitly took as given.³

After the course was over, a student I hadn’t known personally came up to me in the bookstore, and thanked me for the class. I said something perfunctorily about being glad he liked it. He paused, took a big breath, and asked if I minded him asking me a personal question. I said no, go ahead. He said, “Please don’t take this wrong, but did you ever think of being a minister?” (He meant a Protestant clergyman.) I was stunned: in fact, I had indeed thought as an adolescent that I would become a Methodist minister, but then I lost my faith and with it the vocation. But, “He couldn’t have known that,” I thought; “Does he mean I was ‘preachy’ in this course?!” Apparently he was watching my face, because he anticipated my question. “I don’t mean you were, like, ‘preaching’ to us, in the course.”

So I confessed, yes, I had in fact thought of being a minister. With a big grin, he said, “I thought so.” “How did you guess?” I asked. “I don’t know . . . no one thing . . . it was just the way you made it all seem so alive.” The words were inarticulate, but somehow in that moment, which was truly an I-Thou encounter, I knew what he meant. Even though I had no religious faith at the time, and of course hadn’t mentioned “God,” my course had helped this young man to know intuitively how Holy Mystery appears in the world to and among men and women.⁴ So, I saw, my original vocation hadn’t died as I’d thought, but was still present and alive, if transformed. As other teachers will have experienced, my student had become the teacher: my part-person was led forward to my whole-person.

²Certainly, I would not know these things if Bob Waterman had not practiced such sharing with me for many years, and more recently “the *Exiles* group,” my team-teachers Kevin McGinley and Jim Vaché, and my sabbatical-mate Rose Mary Volbrecht. Volbrecht has written an explanation of why such “vocational faith-sharing” is essential; see “Careful Mutuality,” *Taking Parts*, E. Buker, M. Leiserson, and J. Rinehart, eds.

³In this, I was practicing how to “go on” from Dahl’s work the way he had taught me to do, and as he himself has done. See especially his recent, prize-winning *Democracy and Its Critics*.

⁴Karl Rahner explains how, even without religious faith, human beings can be explicitly aware of Holy Mystery in their experience; the Christian revelation applies “God” to this awareness. See his *Foundations of Christian Faith*.

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Rather than multiply examples, it seems more helpful to explain how such “narrowly intellectual” teaching is able to educate the whole person. Mark Schwehn published an article in these pages last fall summarizing his *Exiles From Eden*, a book that gives such an explanation in the language of virtue ethics. For Schwehn, whole-person education involves cultivating certain key virtues, or qualities of character, which anyone needs to be a whole person. In his book Schwehn takes special care to show that this claim can be explained in secular as well as religious terms. He also explains how faculty promotion decisions can be based on criteria derived from his understanding of teaching.

For myself, the classic image here is Plato’s parable of the cave, in the *Republic*, combined with his account of the essential educational role of Eros, in the *Symposium*. Among the contemporary writers who taught me the real meaning and power of this image are Allan Bloom, Iris Murdoch, and Simone Weil.⁵ To paraphrase: people are conditioned to desire half-baked shadows, and so are not adequately nourished by what they eat. But wholly nourishing soul-food is available. When a teacher can get a student to turn around (what the Gospels call *metanoia*) and see how desirable real food is, the student naturally wants it. So teaching involves “forcing” people to stop being mesmerized by shadows, to see something real and more desirable than they had known before, and to practice moving toward it.

For us at the Jesuit colleges, however, perhaps the most appropriate theory of whole-person education is to be found in the writings of the late Bernard Lonergan, S.J. Lonergan’s key book, *Insight*, offers an understanding of understanding which unites pre-modern Catholic philosophy with modern science and post-modern thought in various disciplines. Moreover, Lonergan shows how the following experiences, which common sense mistakenly divides into “emotional or intellectual,” “academic or experiential,” actually have an underlying unity:

- the personal experience that makes insight-psychotherapy successful;

⁵Bloom’s *Love and Friendship*; Murdoch’s *The Sovereignty of Good* and *Mertaphysics as a Guide to Morals* plus her novels, Weils’s “The Right Use of School Studies” in *Waiting for God*.

- the personal experience involved in scientific breakthroughs;
- the personal experience of seeing how to “go on” beyond what the teacher taught;
- the personal experience of self-appropriation, “owning” the meaning of one’s experience; the personal experience of moral and spiritual conversion.

Loneragan explains how any one of these potentially involves a student’s whole person because of their underlying coherence. And his follow-up work, *Method in Theology*, explains how teachers who have such personal experiences—faculty in various disciplines, and student affairs professionals—could talk with one another as peers, from their different perspectives, without one discipline’s or group’s dominating or claiming a privileged discourse.

The most powerful picture of whole-person education I know is in Arthur Koestler’s autobiography, *Invisible Writings*. Before he became a world-famous writer of novels and nonfiction, as a communist party member working underground in the Spanish Civil War, Koestler was captured by Franco’s forces and held in solitary confinement to be executed. To keep himself from going mad with anxiety and fear, Koestler passed the hours between his friends’ tortures and executions by scratching with a piece of iron spring taken from his mattress, on the wall of his cell, proofs of mathematical theorems he could remember from his earlier education. One day he recalled Euclid’s proof that the number of prime numbers is infinite, and scratched it out:⁶

I had become acquainted [Koestler continues] with Euclid’s proof at school; it had always filled me with a deep satisfaction that was aesthetic rather than intellectual. Now, as I recalled the method and scratched the symbols on the wall, I felt the same enchantment.

And then, for the first time, I suddenly understood the reason for this enchantment: the scribbled symbols on the wall represented one of the rare cases where a meaningful and comprehensive statement about the infinite is arrived at by precise and finite means The significance of this swept over me like a wave. The wave . . . evaporated at once, leaving in its wake only a wordless essence, a fragrance of eternity I must have stood there for some minutes, entranced, with a wordless awareness that “this is perfect—perfect,” until I noticed some slight mental discomfort nagging at the back of my mind—some trivial circumstance that marred the

perfection of the moment. Then I remembered: I was, of course, in prison and might be shot. But this was immediately answered by a feeling whose verbal translation would be: “So what? Is that all? Have you got nothing more serious to worry about?”—an answer so spontaneous, fresh and amused as if the intruding annoyance had been the loss of a collar-stud. Then I was floating on my back in a river of peace, under bridges of silence. It came from nowhere and flowed nowhere. Then there was no river and no I. The I had ceased to exist.

It is extremely embarrassing to write down a phrase like that when one has read *The Meaning of Meaning* and nibbled at logical positivism and aims at verbal precision and dislikes nebulous gushings (351).

And in fact, for the rest of his life, Koestler refused to see any religious significance in his experience. But he readily admits it convinced him that his passionate Marxism-Leninism—in particular, its denial that moral experience is real—was false. After that experience in the cell, he knew, moral experience is real. And this led to his quitting the communist party, shifting his loyalty to the democracies, and discovering a new vocation.

The math teacher who taught Koestler that proof must, I think, have educated Arthur’s “whole person.” How else could it “always” have filled him with “satisfaction” which was “aesthetic” (not purely intellectual, not purely emotional) and had the quality of “enchantment”? And whether or not that be so, surely Koestler’s whole-person education in that prison cell was directly handled by a Master Teacher?

To sum up: the faculty teaching perspective defines the “whole person” very differently from the way he or

⁶Koestler explains: “Primes are numbers which are not divisible (other than by themselves or by 1), like 3, 17, and so on. One would imagine that, as we get higher in the numerical series, primes would get rarer, crowded out by the ever-increasing products of small numbers, and that finally we would arrive at a very high number which would be the highest prime. Euclid’s proof demonstrates in a simple and elegant way that this is not so, and that to whatever astronomical regions we ascend in the scale, we shall always find numbers which are not the product of smaller ones, but are generated by immaculate conception, as it were.”

she may be defined for other purposes, and that different perspective is fundamental to what we do at a university. The “narrow” scholarly disciplines are a means for reaching the whole or complete person in a way that cannot be replaced by non-intellectual kinds of “education.” The whole person whom faculty implicitly invite to join in, in our disciplined scholarly pursuits, is anyone who is open to the desire, the eros if you will, which draws us ourselves onward. And although such openness could lead a person to life-long scholarly pursuits, that is not its point: Koestler and his math teacher did not fail when Arthur became a political activist and writer.

III.

Objections can be raised about my illustrations and explanations of whole-person education, but few teachers doubt that some version of this argument is valid. Even if the version in §II is flawed, most faculty believe that “narrowly intellectual” classroom education *can* educate the whole person. Assuming this, now I want to ask what it means for the doubts raised in §I, whether we “educate the whole person” of our students? Does §II refute those doubts?

To the contrary. For seeing clearly (as §II has tried to do) what is required to educate the whole person, reveals sharply that there is an embarrassing gap between our aspirations (and marketing slogans) and what we actually do most of the time.

Consider the following speculative calculations. Assume generously that ten percent of our majors are transformed by experiences like those described in §II, and are led by this whole-person education to join our scholarly pursuits in graduate studies and careers in our disciplines. Assume equally generously that another fifteen percent enter post-graduate study in the learned professions, “converted” by our whole-person education to live like attorney Atticus Finch (*To Kill a Mockingbird*) or veterinarian James Herriot (*All Creatures Great and Small*). Similarly assume that extra-curricular activities and Student Affairs professionals lead another fifteen percent of our students out of the cave into the light of the Sun, and that divine intervention leads another ten percent to join the Jesuits or live equivalently “converted” lifestyles. (I can’t believe such ratios describe students I know, but of course other teachers may do better.) Even still, some fifty percent of our students would fall through the cracks. And these calculations focus on our graduates; if we remember first-year students, of whom an average of fifty percent

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(varying by campus) drop out before graduation, we must educate the whole person of only around twenty-five percent.

Why? If classroom teachers can educate the whole person, why don't we do it consistently? Granted, some students may simply reject this. But we can do better. At least my own teaching improved when I reflected on these answers to the four questions at the end of §I above.

(1) We *do* tend to teach as if our students are or should be one type of person, an "intellectual." But we *could* devise teaching strategies for other types of students. A few teachers try this on my campus. There are books whose authors love their subject-matter so much they explain it for different types of people. For example, Huston Smith's *The World's Religions* shows how Hinduism's *jnana*, *bhakti*, *karma*, and *raja yogas* fit contrasting personality types (Myers-Briggs "thinking" and "feeling" types, "extroverted" and "introverted" types), and so are for all types of people. (Extroverted and feeling students in my Survey of International Studies course catch on to the significance of this for themselves by themselves; some are ecstatic.) Likewise, Michael's and Norrissey's *Prayer and Temperament* links four traditions of Christian spirituality with four Myers-Briggs personality types. Sheila Tobias's *Overcoming Math Anxiety* teaches math to students whose psychological make-up differs from typical math professors. As Pre-Law Advisor I have analyzed and devised counter-strategies to cope with the way the LSAT confuses and so lowers the scores of non-"intellectual" students who could otherwise be good lawyers. Faculty in any department could do likewise, I feel sure.

(2) We *do* tend to give the impression that "education" is irrelevant to self-defining personal experiences by ignoring them or mis-calling them "personal problems." But a "problem" is only a value looked at from a particular angle. We could link students' "personal problems" with our courses. When C. Wright Mills's *Sociological Imagination* defined politics as the intersection of the personal troubles of milieu with the structural issues of history, he educated the whole person of countless students in the 1960's. Women's and Ethnic Studies have done likewise more recently. It even happened with my own semi-dropped-out but environmentally passionate son: a physics professor showed him that physics understands how to protect the environment, and against all family expectations he majored in physics, took an M.A. in Environmental

Engineering, and now works for the Environmental Defense Fund. (But I admit, this may belong in the divine intervention category.)

(3) Our teaching *does* presuppose a culture of formation which many students lack. For higher education in a democracy, the Pygmalion problem is the rule, not the exception. But we *could* shift from imaging our problem in lower division courses as "unprepared students" to imaging the situation as "teaching foreign students in a foreign country" or even better, "working with the poor." Bill Bichsell, a Jesuit working in "street ministry" in inner city Tacoma, says our students qualify as "the [Biblical] poor," regardless of their parents' incomes, when their pain or lacks incapacitate them from participating in the good things available in their society (personal conversation). Jane Rinehart has explained how we can reach and teach such middle-class but truly impoverished students—an approach hardly more difficult than that already adopted on some of our campuses toward non-traditional-age students. If we could approach our traditional-age "poor" this way, we might reach most of the fifty percent of our students who now fall through the cracks. And I have found some student affairs professionals to be helpful with this.

(4) We *don't* know (most of us) how our academic specialties fit into a complete or whole life. We think of our disciplines as autonomous, separate from any essential larger context of knowledge. And the graduates we produce can hardly be more "whole" (coherent) than our curriculum. But we *could* develop a post-modern, holistic overview of all of human life and knowledge—Cardinal Newman, and even John Courtney Murray, S.J., only a generation ago, had one; Lonergan and other thinkers can provide one—a synthesis which could make our curriculum "whole" and so able to educate whole persons. Jesuit universities should be especially able to do this, because of the Catholic intellectual tradition plus Ignatius's Spiritual Exercises, not just in theory but with educational experimentation leading to practical reforms. But for this, we would require leadership committed to healing the "mission/identity" and academic cleavage on our campuses, without violating academic freedom.

Simone Weil says, "Academic work is one of those fields containing a pearl so precious that it is worth while to sell all our possessions, keeping nothing for ourselves, in order to be able to acquire it." But most of our students have not heard this Good News.

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