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[Book Review of] *Ethics Teaching and Higher Education*, edited by Daniel Callahan and Sissela Bok

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emphatically unaffirms, or rather, disclaims as truly affirming agencies. Why no avowed professional followers of Dr. Baars are worthy of his affirmation, and, on the contrary, have prompted legal action on his part against such pseudo-affirming disciples, is tragic. Those in desperate need who read this book are likely to be referred to his other books or self-help tapes. The suicidal person is quickly requested to buy *Healing the Unaffirmed*. How many people on the verge of suicide will respond to such counsel? Those troubled with the suggestion they acknowledge sexual expression and that it is "not bad to feel this emotion" will also have to invest more money to find out how to do this with a clear conscience by buying more books and tapes of Dr. Baars. One of many contradictions in the book is the author's early admission of the greater impact of the pleasurable emotions, particularly those associated with the generative function, followed later by attributing the predominance of genital pleasure solely to pedagogic preoccupation with it. The postscript especially ranks as one of the most self-affirming pieces one may ever find in print with direct solicitation for his professional services provided one sends a self-addressed stamped envelope — a long envelope — to the identified address.

Baars's conviction that he has helped many people is not so much a credit to the soundness of his theories of mental and emotional health as to the magnificent capacity of man to rise above his suffering, whether caused by himself or another. He wills to be affirmed as a child of God Who loves him unconditionally whereas no one else, not even Dr. Baars, can. Such a love Dr. Baars insists is necessary for a person to be a healthy person who can bear the cross Christ gives rather than one self-made. One's promised happiness in this and everlasting life will then be fulfilled.

— George Maloof, M.D.

Ethics Teaching and Higher Education

Daniel Callahan and Sissela Bok, Editors

The Hastings Center Series in Ethics, Plenum Press, N.Y., 1980, 315 pp., \$19.50.

This scholarly volume contains much of the research on teaching ethics in higher education in the United States which the Hastings Center produced with the help of grants from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and the Carnegie Foundation of New York. Although 11 of the 12 chapters are individually authored, their work reflects two years of intensive study by a pilot group of about 20 persons who met frequently and made use of some 30 papers and independent studies commissioned for this project.

Such a professional and thorough analysis of an issue of increasing importance — integrating ethics into American higher education and allowing ethics to integrate higher education — cannot be ignored by anyone interested in higher education. Much of the book's content will reinforce what readers already know, for example, the increasing interest in college courses in applied ethics, the intriguing efforts of contemporary psychology to uncover the process of moral development, and the wide variety of approaches to ethics as a discipline, to methodologies for teaching ethics, and various ways of evaluating ethics courses.

The volume opens with a historical chapter on the teaching of ethics in the American undergraduate curriculum from 1876 to 1976. The author, Douglas Sloan of Columbia University, begins with the typical course in moral philosophy usually taught by the college president and required of all senior students in many 19th century colleges. This course responded to a need to integrate academic knowledge and relate it to the moral law transcending individual disciplines, cultures, and knowledge systems. The demise of such courses has left a vacuum which still exists and even led to this Hastings Center study on teaching ethics.

Sloan's historical essay points to the way the social sciences separated themselves from moral philosophy and engaged in "value-free" systematization. The general education movement beginning in the 1920s sought to reform American education and reassert the role of moral education within its core content. Yet the tendency to regard only scientific knowledge as genuine has hampered such efforts for lack of a cohesive and integrating principle. Beginning in 1936, Robert Hutchins raised a lonely voice, appealing to metaphysics for that integration.

In the two decades following World War II, the growth of religion departments in many colleges and universities offered new hope for integration through religious ethics courses, but Sloan feels that now, "a religiously based teaching of ethics also appears to have lost the promise it held out for a long time of being able to command the attention and respect of a wide audience" (p. 54).

The subsequent chapters of this book are arranged in four parts: 1) general issues in the teaching of ethics, 2) teaching ethics in the school curriculum, 3) topics in the teaching of ethics, and 4) summary recommendations.

Part one opens with an analysis by Daniel Callahan on goals in the teaching of ethics, followed by Ruth Macklin's long chapter arguing the legitimacy of teaching pluralistic ethics without engaging in indoctrination. Because these are central issues, they will be discussed below in this review. Thomas Lickona contributed chapter 4 on the psychology of moral development, focusing particularly on Kohlberg's work and on the social psychology of moral behavior, highlighting the research which shows how strongly ethical reasoning is affected by the "ecological context" of one's behavioral situation. In the final chapter of part one, Arthur L. Caplan reviews the particular challenges in evaluating successful teaching of ethics and concludes that the traditional means, like papers, quizzes, case analyses, and classroom discussions are more than adequate.

Part two opens with a very useful summary of data gathered by the Hastings Center about the teaching of ethics in current American higher education. A survey of 623 colleges and universities showed 89 with no courses in ethics at all, and the common pattern was one course in ethics in the philosophy department with perhaps an additional course in the department of theology or religious studies. About one-half of the ethics courses could be considered "applied ethics," dealing with a specific area of concern like bioethics, business ethics, or the morality of war. The survey also singled out 19 practical findings about these ethics courses and 10 areas of tension and disagreement.

With regard to medical ethics, the survey showed that of the 110 medical schools in the United States about 90% now offer at least some exposure to medical ethics, although only 31 faculty members were identified in 1974 as having the teaching of medical ethics their primary task. The survey indicates real growth in interest and resources for teaching medical ethics, with comparable enthusiasm but fewer resources available for nursing ethics. This survey also reviewed the teaching of ethics in schools of law, business, social sciences, engineering, journalism, and public policy.

The remaining three chapters of part two consider the teaching of undergraduate ethics courses, the inclusion of ethics in undergraduate non-ethics courses, and professional ethics. Bernard Rosen of Ohio State University discusses the undergraduate ethics courses in chapter 7 and includes various practical questions

like teaching methods and the question of indoctrination. Rosen sees theological ethics as, for the most part, the same as philosophical ethics except for the assigning of a "crucial role to God" in the metaphysical view used to complete the ethical theory in theological ethics. More about this below.

Susan Parr in the following chapter shows convincingly that ethical issues abound in the literature that is read in English courses, and that ethical issues pervade the entire curriculum, although faculty members sometimes "judge ethical questions as being soft and subjective and therefore both unteachable and unworthy of being taught" (p. 197). William F. May of the Kennedy Institute of Ethics concludes part two with a lengthy and profound reflection on the indispensability of the ethical dimension of professional education including a brief comment (p. 214) on the way religious tradition provides a total vision of the context in which an ethical quandary is resolved.

Part three of the volume contains two substantive chapters, by Dennis Thompson and Sissela Bok respectively, discussing paternalism and whistleblowing, two broad ethical issues which stimulate serious ethical reflection. Both issues can be raised in all fields of applied ethics and used to exemplify ethical tensions and quandaries.

Part four presents in only four pages the seven summary recommendations of the Hastings Center project on the teaching of ethics. Three deal with the practical questions of evaluating the teaching of ethics, determining the qualifications of teachers, and providing necessary teacher training. Another speaks of the role of ethics in the curriculum, advocating for every undergraduate student systematic exposure to both ethical theory and applied ethics and at least a one-semester course for every professional school in its own variety of professional ethics. Another recommendation calls for efforts to create a favorable climate for teaching ethics by making known in the university or professional school the purposes and expectations of the ethics courses.

The most critical recommendations, however, are the very first two, on goals in teaching ethics and on teaching ethical pluralism without indoctrination. These reflect the two chapters in part one mentioned above, by Daniel Callahan and Ruth Macklin. They indicate an approach to ethics which many readers will find questionable.

The goals of teaching ethics proposed by Callahan are these: stimulating the moral imagination, developing skills in recognizing and analyzing of moral issues, eliciting a sense of moral obligation and personal responsibility, and learning both to tolerate and to resist moral disagreement and ambiguity. The successful teaching of ethics would seem to depend especially on that third goal, "eliciting a sense of moral obligation and personal responsibility." This reviewer would suggest a more ambitious goal, like "grounding a sense of moral obligation and responsibility in a study of the moral universe and relating it to ethical decision-making."

Callahan interprets this important goal to mean highlighting with students "an internal requirement of ethical thinking: that it calls us to act in the light of what we perceive to be right and good" (p. 66). He suggests rather casually that the broader question, "Why ought I be moral?" is basic and not to be neglected but he seems not to consider it of essential importance in teaching ethics and eliciting moral responsibility. In fact, he is optimistic that as long as "some kind of answer to the question" (emphasis his) of "Why ought I be moral?" is conceded, then the rather mysterious dynamism of moral obligation will emerge with satisfactory strength and the subsequent study of ethics will be equally satisfactory, regardless of *what* answer was given.

It seems to this reviewer, however, that when that basic ethical question has been treated so cursorily, the rest of an ethics course will teach ethical skills but will not "teach ethics" in the sense of teaching a complete and systematic analysis of the ethical dilemmas and challenges of everyday life in the light of transcendent

human goals. Callahan speaks of the questions of freedom and personal responsibility as "heuristic premises" for the study of ethics. To the extent that these considerations involve an attempt to understand human persons in community and the moral order as transcending cultural differences they should be much more than heuristic premises in a basic ethics course. Without these considerations, the rest of ethics can become a purely intellectual exercise, devoid of implications in the real world.

The advantage, of course, in downplaying these questions is the ability to focus on ethical skills and analysis in comparative tranquility, despite widely different world views and philosophical anthropologies. But if the burning question of a universal moral order is defused by this heuristic method, some would consider the subsequent work of ethical analysis a bit like rearranging the deck chairs on the *Titanic*.

The Hastings Center project worries about "indoctrination" in ethics courses. Its recommendation says, "Indoctrination, whether political, theological, ideological, or philosophical, is wholly out of place in the teaching of ethics" (p. 301). Much of what Ruth Macklin says in chapter 3 in opposition to indoctrination rings true and convincing. Surely ethics must submit all value judgments to honest, critical scrutiny. But hopefully, ethics can engage in a study of the various approaches to the basic question (Why be moral?) without indulging in the suspicious practice of "indoctrination."

Ruth Macklin supports teaching ethics within a context of ethical pluralism and replies at length to 12 objections which might link ethics with indoctrination. The question of religion arises in these discussions, almost as if religion and indoctrination were synonymous. The key question seems to be: if ethics includes a theory of responsibility to a moral law and a divine being, does it become "religious" and a form of "indoctrination"?

In replying to one of the objections, Macklin states that ethics is a secular enterprise (p. 90). In this reviewer's estimation, ethics can be secular in the sense of proceeding minus religious revelation and doctrine without being strapped in a position of atheism or agnosticism. Ethics can carefully examine the basic question of "Why be moral?" without either indoctrinating a theistic answer or excluding it. Theological ethics explores this question in the light of religious revelation and faith, but philosophical ethics can also explore this question without becoming either exclusively atheistic or religious in a doctrinal sense.

It seems that the basic question of a world view on person and community must be faced in attempting what Ruth Macklin avoided in her paper: providing "theoretical criteria for indicating what values ought to be included in pluralism" (p. 83). A philosophical world view, whether Marxist or process evolutionist or theist, necessarily influences the selection of human value priorities and the interpretation and analysis of ethical principles in practice. The fact that an ethics course faces these questions and operates honestly and openly within a theistic world view need not constitute the indoctrination which the authors of the Hastings volume wish to avoid.

Apparently they would prefer to see ethics courses function in quasi-independence of a philosophical anthropology and theory of human community in order to focus on commonly accepted ethical principles and the values of justice, integrity, and human dignity. This effort at "consensus ethics" may achieve consensus at the expense of the adequacy and integrity of the ethics course itself. If so, their prescription for inserting ethics into American higher education may not cure the disease for which they have written it.

— Rev. Donald McCarthy, Ph.D.

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