INTRODUCTION

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Historically, educational philosophers have been conflicted about the Enlightenment movement. Was it a time of unprecedented and widespread attention to reasoning in the public discourse that advanced thinking in science, ethics, political philosophy and logic? Or were the literati of the age guilty of bifurcated perspectives in ways that were racially and ethnically exclusive, sexist, and elitist? True, the Enlightenment heroically ushered in modernity, relentlessly making a case for the primacy of human autonomy and reason; however, postmodernists have systematically exposed the flaws of the project grounded in linear, individualistic, and phallocentric thinking that failed to take subjectivity into account. In our present political milieu of a contentious clash of ideas, it has become increasingly difficult to find shared moral and political ground that transcends individual beliefs across racial, economic, and religious lines. Therefore, it is more important than ever to critically consider the aims as well as the practical implications of the Enlightenment.

The papers included in this volume represent varied understandings of both the historic Enlightenment and enlightenment broadly conceived. Using forms of analysis such as the critical and analytical, authors explore the meanings of both concepts historically, conceptually, and practically. They also do so with the aim of morally, historically, and philosophically contextualizing 21st century education reform. Thus running, thematically, through these works are attempts to identify, address, and resolve some conceptual tensions that eighteenth century thinkers elicited but did not settle. Below, using a topical grouping, I discuss the organizational sequence of the volume beginning with the presidential address and Phil Smith Lecture.

To begin, Kerry Burch's presidential address, which frames the topic of the inquiry for this volume, documents a very personal interpretation of a quest for a state of being that exemplifies the enlightenment ideal. Emphasizing the contemplative and embodied aspects of this inner journey, Burch's space- and time-bounded quest is an interesting parallel to Plato's lone protagonist in his Allegory of the Cave. Like Plato's inquirer who nobly gropes through the darkness and uncertainty, guided by shadowy clues and equipped only with his inherent cognitive abilities, Burch too must make sense of his experience. He is absent the absolutes that are wanting in postmodernity. In a both lofty and practical account, Burch's narrative of his experience comes to a modest conclusion, appropriately, about subjectivity, specifically the value of the personal essay as a mechanism for "turning the eye toward the soul."

William Ayers constructs the Phil Smith Lecture as a call to action. Grounded in transcendent democratic principles of equality and social justice, Ayers invokes a liberal conception of human worth and the universal right to educational opportunity. It is a devastatingly incisive critique of the passivity of the American polity in the face of Barack Obama's groundbreaking election and subsequent educational policies. Presently, education is the converging point of opposing political forces and ideologies. Ayers references compelling, historical symbols of revolution in the face of tyranny and issues a call to mobilization with the goal of realizing democratic ideals in the broader society and education specifically. The responsibility for enacting a democratic society, writ large and small, lies with each one of us, he asserts. Ayers makes it clear that activism is not merely verbal and scholarly. It is fundamentally to take action.

The next set of papers is directly engaged with Enlightenment epistemic norms and paradigms of inquiry. Two works explore the epistemological tensions around a social versus an individual conception of knowledge or learning. The former view is associated with the Enlightenment's ideal inquirer. It is exemplified in the Cartesian quest for indubitable knowledge in which the search for truth involves a generic and decontextualized knower drawing upon his mental resources to reach conclusions that can infallibly withstand epistemic challenges.

Kevin Currie-Knight's "Rival Visions: J. J. Rousseau and T.H. Huxley on the Nature (or Nurture) of Inequality and What It Means for Education" addresses the vexing social problem of inequality and the root of its proposed solutions in two seminal figures. Currie-Knight weighs the different historical effects of Rousseau's 18th century philosophy and Huxley's 19th century research in light of their opposing accounts of the optimal learning conditions for human beings to flourish. In a distinctively Enlightenment sense, Rousseau lauded education for self-knowledge and mastery. Huxley, in contrast, believed that teaching children how to thrive in community was a valuable aim of education. Doing so fostered skills for developing healthy relationships of natural independence that benefitted all. Currie-Knight aptly shows that the beliefs on which each of their respective educational philosophies rests clearly imply differing senses of the source of, the nature of, and the solution for forms of social inequality.

Joseph Watras' "Should Children Learn to Solve Problems?" deftly navigates two opposing architectures of educational theory in the works of John Dewey and Gregory Bateson, respectively, that represent two very different epistemological constructs. For Dewey, the scientific method was the preeminent method of solving problems and thereby acquiring knowledge that mattered; however, Bateson took issue with both the method and the expansion of its domain beyond the confines of scientific inquiry. He proposed, alternatively, the notion of cybernetics as an overarching meta-theory that

contrasts with the rational linearity of Dewey's method. Cybernetics seeks explanatory integration of particular perspectives in its problem solving within a particular ecosystem or across multiple domains. In this comparative work, Watras' work stands as an intriguing critique of Dewey's primary method.

The next group of papers is more loosely concerned with enlightenment as an idea and the themes, methodology, or obvious exclusions that attend the idea in education and society today. The terms of friendship under conditions of a power differential is the subject of Gregory Loving's "On the Possibility of Friendship between Teachers and Students: The Pedagogical Suspensions of the Amical." In this piece written in dialogue form, a group of students wrestle with whether friendship can exist between teacher and student. Friendship is a means of personal growth, self-knowledge, and understanding of the world, which are all outcomes that an ideal teacher desires for her student. Loving's discussion suggests some of the barriers to this kind of relationship and has implications for the theory and practice of teaching as well as reserving for friendship the distinct qualities of mutual camaraderie.

"Ideological Critique and Ethical Leadership," by Joseph Scalia III and Lynne Scalia, is both a psychoanalytic reading and critique of the current educational policy. They call into question the notion that there is any sort of theoretical coherence in No Child Left Behind (2002) or that it is sufficiently comprehensive to address the breadth or complexity of the inequality and injustice that plague schools today. In their view, schools reflect the prevailing social order and educational policy reflects society's unsettling sense of an existential void where justice and fairness should be. The social pathologies that arise in an attempt to cover up this space and to offer a more complete presentation are akin to a psychological disorder. No Child Left Behind's simplistic emphasis on accountability as a panacea is an example of how this disorder works. In appealing to psychoanalysis Scalia and Scalia are also rejecting other forms of analysis that attempt to supply the missing elements to the political and education discourse by bringing a different lens to bear. What is required is fundamentally coming to terms with the despair of the injustice and then making the resolve to act nonetheless.

In this set is also Kelvin Beckett's paper, "Culturally Relevant Teaching and the Concept of Education." Beckett defends an overarching construct, Culturally Relevant Teaching (CRT), which, he argues, functions as a framework that can accommodate the spectrum of pedagogy in education. This range includes progressive education's student centered and experienced based learning, Peters' normative concept of education, and liberationists' nurturing of student subjectivity and agency. Interestingly, Beckett attempts the kind of totalistic theorizing identified with modernity and so vilified by the subsequent attempts to deconstruct any such all-encompassing project. Beckett does indirectly suggest an intriguing counter to this critique.

The paper offers the pedagogy of African-American segregated schools in the mid-nineteenth century as an exemplar of the proposed meta-pedagogy. At this time historically, teachers aimed to equip students with a dual perspective and attendant critical literacy and thinking. Such teaching emphasized students' equal status as citizens of a democratic society and at the same time fostered the intellectual skills necessary to nurture and advance their racial and ethnic identity group membership. Beckett proposes that pedagogy that treats students as identity subjects and moral and political agents actually fulfills the aims of the spectrum of teaching methods. Beckett offers research as evidence that CRT achieved all three aims for African Americans at a time when they were the beleaguered minority and even today. Thus CRT stands as a model of theoretical integration today.

Akil Houston's "Tasseography: Reading Post-Racial Resistance to Teaching" rounds out this group of papers. Using the practice of tea reading as a clever metaphor for analysis of the Tea Party movement, Houston extrapolates to exploring the tolerance for racial and ethnic equality in society. Tea Party populism functions as a cover for establishing neo-liberal and white, racial supremacy. He writes of the disaffection for progressive social and education policies and the increasing influence that corporations have in legislations and implementing policy. There is a pedagogical value to this analysis in that close study of the role that the Tea Party is playing in the political discourse today is an object lesson of the present state of identity politics in American society. Houston suggests ways that the movement can have pedagogical value in reaching students who have similar beliefs or who come from a similar demographic.

The final set of papers challenges the claims to Enlightenment progress. The first paper in this set explicitly indicts primary thinkers of 19th century Europe. Benjamin Welsh's "The Logic of German Monism and U.S. Public Schools: A Philosophical Inquiry" reads like a sweeping whodunit in the origin of the ever-proliferating moral contradictions in education. Welsh crafts a historically detailed argument for the source being this drive towards theoretical totalization in the form of metaphysical presuppositions about the singular nature of reality. The roots of theorizing originate in the classic and Platonic and Aristotelian traditions and take shape in the period of German Enlightenment. Welsh maintains that the proclivity towards an overarching and conclusive narrative relates to the matter of who wields power in society and who is marginalized. Monism suppresses morally and epistemologically complex ideas and encourages divisions along the lines of temporal factors such as identity. How this metaphysics makes sense of his early experience of being mistreated by his teacher is at the heart of Welsh's work.

Theresa Richardson similarly proposes a critique of John Locke, one highly influential figure and a primary architect of the British Enlightenment. Richardson's paper, "John Locke and the Myth of Race in America:

Demythologizing the Paradoxes of the Enlightenment as Visited in the Present," offers a reading of Locke that makes sense of his political philosophy in light of a politically well-connected financial partnership and political connections. Although Locke was one of the foremost proponents of the primacy of individual liberty, he co-crafted a treatise with Lord Shaftsbury that facilitated the implementation of institutional slavery. Richardson interprets Locke in a way that attributes the gap to an inability to hold his beliefs all the way down, transcending his own prejudices. Her discussion sheds light on the limits to the insight associated with the Enlightenment and emphasizes the distinction between intellectual knowledge and self-knowledge.

Having mapped out a journey, it seems pertinent to ask where these papers take us. I would venture to say that they transport us to the epicenter of forms of conflict around the way we live our lives today. They help us to think differently about these problems and to *see them* in the larger scheme of things.