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*Phenomenological Pedagogy**

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Pedagogical Theorizing

In addition to our practical pedagogic experiences which involve, in a deep sense, a speaking to children, we also must at times think and speak about children, and about the manner in which we speak to children. The latter activities we refer to as pedagogical theorizing—the attempt to bring to speech the everyday experience of living with children.

The need for theoretical pedagogy rests on the conviction that pedagogics is a necessary requirement for the educator (the teacher, parent, administrator, psychologist) who is pedagogically responsible for children. Pedagogical reflection bestows the adult with the opportunity to be fundamentally accountable for his educative work with children, while it also enables him to be accountable to himself as pedagogue. Indeed, the educator who attempts to be answerable to himself as pedagogue, therefore, is also responsible to that which "lets him be" pedagogue. By "fundamentally accountable" I mean being accountable, responsible, or answerable to the fundamental, that is, to the foundational, the essential, or the recollective. We cannot say anything fundamental unless our speaking speaks to the foundations.

The function of foundational, recollective, or poetic thinking or speaking is to return us to the origin—to remind us as pedagogues of the worth of minding. This does not "merely" imply that as educators (teachers, parents, etc.) we need to care for and take care of the children who are entrusted to us. It means more than that. Our "pedagogic" caring (*eros paidagogicos*) needs to be anchored more deeply than in the loving gestures of wiping Mark's nose or taking Joan aside for extra help

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with her math. Pedagogical theorizing, as minding, is a caring for that which draws us as parents as teachers to children.

Pedagogy

On first sight, we could define "pedagogy" as a certain kind of encounter, a form of togetherness between mother and child, teacher and pupil, between grandfather and grandchild—in short, a relationship of practical actions between an adult and a young person who is on the way to adulthood. But not all social encounters in the lives of adults with children are pedagogic. Sometimes we see parents or teachers who seem grossly inadequate, incapable, negligent, or worse, abusive of the children who are entrusted to their care. We can see instances of this in the parents who seem to care more for the growth of their business or career than for the growth of their children. Or the parents who, unable to cope with the disappointments and stresses of life, take their frustrations out on their children. Or the teacher who is more interested in the scholarly developments of the knowledge he teaches than in the educational developments of the children for whom the teaching was intended.

How should we judge whether in a particular situation a teacher or parent interacts with a child in a manner that we could call "pedagogic?" If we set out to understand pedagogy by separating, categorizing, or sorting pedagogic from nonpedagogic actions, events, and situations, we might soon be involved in discussions and arguments which have more to do with philosophy, politics, or theories of education than with the phenomenon of pedagogy itself. Pedagogy must be found not in the outcome of building an abstracted political philosophy or value theory of education, but it must be found right there in the lived world, where the newly born is first held and gazed at by the new mother, where a father quietly or with admonishment refrains the child from blindly crossing the street, where the teacher winks at a pupil in acknowledgment of a task well completed.

So, "pedagogy" is not just a word. By naming that which directs us and draws us caringly to children, the word "pedagogy" brings something into being. Pedagogy is not found in philosophy, but like love or friendship it is to be found in the experience of its presence—that is, in concrete, real life situations. It is here and here and here, where an adult does something right in the personal becoming of a child. Indeed, if we had to derive the meaning of pedagogy from some philosophic, political, or cultural belief system then the very notion of pedagogic righteousness or goodness would ultimately be reduced to a mere choice of principle. But pedagogy does not derive its fundamental principles from some life philosophy or value system. Rather, the meaning and significance of its principles are immanent to its very ontology. Therefore, Langeveld says that it is in the concrete situation that the pedagogic norm must be found. (Positivism cannot accept this and speaks therefore

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of the naturalistic fallacy when the attempt is made to find the so-called prescriptive elements of pedagogy in descriptive categories.)

So, in spite of what we think parents or teachers do, pedagogy is something that is cemented deeply in the nature of the relationship between adults and children. In this sense, pedagogy is defined not so much as a certain kind of relationship or a particular kind of doing, but rather *pedagogy is something that lets an encounter, a relationship, a situation, or a doing be pedagogic.* All our pedagogic being with children is a form of speaking with them. Even when we quietly listen, raise eyebrows, nod encouragingly, embrace, turn away, or hold a child's momentary attention with a meaningful look, we may do so out of a pedagogic concern. So that in everyday concrete situations where we speak with children, pedagogic being is something that occurs as a showing in our being, in the way we are present to children in space.

From an etymological point of view, a pedagogue is a man or woman who is a leader or teacher (*agogos*) of children (*paides*). But the deep meaning does not unambiguously lie in the example of the watchful Greek slave or guardian, whose responsibility it was to lead the young boy to school. Rather, in the "leading" (*agoge*) or "guiding" there is a "taking by the hand," in the sense of a watchful encouraging: "Here, take my hand!"; "Come and I shall show you the world." That is why education or teaching has been likened to initiation (R. S. Peters) and guidance (Rogers). The pedagogue is the adult who shows the child the way into a world. My world, and yours. I know something about being a child. Because I have been there, where you are now. I was young once. But childhood is something one must grow out of (*educere:* to lead out of). And so my adulthood becomes an invitation, a beckoning to the child (*educare:* to lead into). This is the meaning of leading: going first. And in the "going first" there is the "you can trust me" for I have tested the ice. I have lived. I now know something of the rewards as well as the trappings of growing towards adulthood and making a world for yourself. And although my going first is no guarantee of success (because the world is not without risks and dangers), in the pedagogic relationship there is a more fundamental guarantee: that, no matter what, I'm here. And you can count on me!

The Calling of Pedagogy

Isn't it amazing how, as a parent, one becomes attuned to the sounds from the baby's room? I hear my child stir in his crib. But what do I really hear? Crying? Calling? Does the sound of crying make me rush? Certainly, I may hear my child cry or call. But that is not "deeply" what I hear, when I say, "I hear my child awakening in his crib." There is something more fundamental that speaks through my hearing. It is the power this child has over one who can "hear." Being a child means being with someone who hears and heeds the calling which gathers this child

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and this parent, or this child and this teacher into connectedness, into oneness. The pedagogic calling is that which calls, summons us to listen to the child's needs. Wherein lies the hearing of the calling?

As I listen again I do not hear anything. No crying. No fussing. My son is apparently still asleep. I decide to make sure and check on him. As I quietly push the door open a bit I know how he will lie there, snuggled up, I bet, peacefully in the corner of his crib. But what I do see is a face fully turned upward in surprised anticipation. A radiant smile. Arms stretched out. There he stands! Not a word, not a sound. But how full of calling is this silence! Hands reaching out as if he had been standing there, like that all the while. That's when you know what being a parent is like! And yet how would one even begin to describe it? "So there you are my little man!" As I pull my child out of his crib toward me, am I aware of something that possesses me? A lump in the throat? A feeling? Sure, but it is more than that. An awareness? A thought? Well, as I begin to undo the diaper to assess the damage I don't reflect on all this. He and I, we are too busy with one another to permit the indulgence of such reflection. But now, as I attempt to recapture in writing the meaning of this experience, I do not doubt that at that time I knew the presence of something that was real and which is not difficult to recall.

But what is it that I call forth once again? How can it be that whatever calls on me, calls with such clarity and ease; while I must stumble, pen on paper, and meet such difficulty in apprehending the calling in its source—for what is it, in its essence? What is called in the recalling? Is it simply the feeling of deep affection for my child that I wish to recall? Possibly. But to name what is thus recalled "affection" or "love" is not really bringing anything to light. These terms both say too much and too little. Because what I recall in the experience of what it means to be a parent is itself a calling. What calls in a calling?

A vocation calls. We speak of the calling of a profession. But wherein resides this calling? We say, "the call of duty." And "duty calls with the voice of conscience." "Duty calls me to a task to which I know myself committed." But duty is not something that calls. Rather duty is the way something calls. Just like care and affection is the way I was called at my child's bedroom. How then is this calling experienced? Is it something that I can hear and yet turn away from? As a babysitter might do? a person who looks after children because it is a job (after all, we must eat) rather than a calling? How would a disinterested babysitter have walked into my son's bedroom? How would she have greeted his reaching hands?

We must acknowledge that some people, some parents, some teachers may not heed or attend to the call of pedagogy. We may even acknowledge ourselves of having been deaf to the calling of parenting or teaching. And if we haven't heard its calling, how then can we comprehend its nature? For those who cannot hear, reflecting on pedagogy as a calling is just sentimental nonsense, or at best a useless exercise.

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We should ask: How can we raise the question of the calling of pedagogy in such a way that in the very speaking or writing one gets a renewed sense of its elusive nature. Because to "see" the elusive nature of pedagogy as it shows itself and yet withdraws in the fact of our questioning we *do* gain something: if only a fleeting glance of what pedagogy is in its groundedness. For this we must remain open to the question what it is that we name when we call some behavior pedagogic or when we call ourselves pedagogues. Paraphrasing Heidegger we ask, what lets itself be called? and, what is it that calls for pedagogy in us as teachers or parents? If the question "what calls for pedagogy?" is asking what it is that first of all calls upon us, addresses us, and readies us to act pedagogically in the lives of children then we are asking for something that concerns ourselves. Because it calls upon *us*. It calls upon our very *being* as parents, as teachers. It is *we ourselves* to whom the question, what calls for pedagogy?, is addressed directly. As Heidegger says, we ourselves are in the strict sense of the word put in question by the question.

In the pedagogic experience we surmise to discern the lure of the highest call. But as I reflect on the experience of being called all I can say is that it is the calling itself that calls me. It is the call of the calling that I hear when I say, this is what it is like to be a parent, to be a teacher, in short to be a pedagogue. What calls me to listen in mindful concern is the calling of pedagogy. The call of pedagogy calls me in a manner which I recognize as affection, love, responsibility. But out of what debt or obligation does pedagogy call, so that I feel called upon in the sense of responsibility and parental duty? What do I as parent or teacher owe to pedagogy that it can compel me into hearing its call? But maybe that is asking the wrong question. The essence of the experience of the calling of pedagogy is not that I own something that belongs to it. Rather pedagogy as a calling owns me. Pedagogy is already a request, namely to lead the child, to assume governance. And yet, when pedagogy calls it does not summon us with any specific request. It calls upon us and that is all that we hear. It calls. And as it calls it leaves us with the undeniable sense of having been called. Do we then want to ask, upon its calling, but where to? To what end? No, that is not immediately what we say. Because the hearing of the calling has already made me act—as if I know to what end.

And so the new parent receives the newly born—with trepidation, perhaps, in awe at first, overcome with confusion, haltingly, with reverence or ambivalence maybe. The experience of meeting the gaze of the newly born is not entirely unlike the first meeting a child has with its teacher. The mother's gaze, the teacher's look. The meeting of the eyes confirms the child as a being in its own right in the pedagogic encounter. And as I look and meet the child's eyes (however fleetingly) I know the child already in my hands. And I wonder, whether it was I who embraced the child or whether the child, however helpless, possessed me already in an embrace which I only could complete, with my touch or my look.

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Being Called upon to Educate

Every parent, every teacher, every educational administrator, in short every pedagogue can gain an immediate and intuitive grasp of the ontological category of pedagogy: "the being called upon." Every pedagogue can hear the calling if only he or she is attuned to the logos—to that which gathers pedagogue and child into togetherness. So that a phenomenological or recollective analysis of pedagogy reveals that the ontological dimension of pedagogy consists in a (re)cognition of the "being called upon to educate." This being "called upon" is grounded in pedagogic being and not simply on the basis of family relationships or conventional institutional agencies. Phenomenological pedagogy asks for a recollecting of the grounds of pedagogy as being. We ask, how can we show in our practical activities with children a difference that makes a pedagogic difference? What is recollected in the hearing of the calling of pedagogy is, as Heidegger would say, a strong notion of the difference that is needed.

Our way of "theorizing" or reflecting on our pedagogic lives with children is phenomenological because phenomenology requires a continuously beginning anew, to return to the life world. In the life world of parenting and teaching we go about our business with children in an ongoing manner. Breakfast, feeding baby porridge, going for a trip to the zoo, rescuing the cat from Mark's hands, explaining long division before recess time, reading a fairytale by Oscar Wilde, talking with Jackie about Mom and with Mom about Jackie, letting Jimmy know that he (like everyone in class) is "special."

Phenomenological theorizing takes any pedagogic life world incident or concern as a topic for asking in what way pedagogy shows itself in this situation. In the life world, where we find children with teachers and parents, we do not see pedagogues theorize. Their task is to be a parent, to be a teacher—which requires a constant "speaking" in the sense of talking, listening, showing, doing, withdrawing, and so forth. But in this "speaking" phenomenological pedagogy asks ever and anew what is the isness, the essence of the pedagogic experience. Because it is in the reflective questioning (theorizing) that the essence of pedagogy shows itself.

The question as to the essence of pedagogy does not summon an answer as might be provided in the form of a set of propositions about teaching in a methods textbook on curriculum and instruction. Rather, the question calls for an answer which displays in a responsive manner what it is that the answer attempts to be answerable to. Pedagogic questions call for answers which are responsive, responsible to the calling of our pedagogic being with children.

Pedagogy as a calling discloses itself to the pedagogue in the experience of being called upon to educate. In the re-cognition of the calling, we re-call that which has summoned us to put aside any particular interest we may have in the world in favor of our interest in this child or these children. "You and me, we belong together." It is in the caring

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encounter of the "you my child belong to me" and "I belong to you." But how do we explain the welling up of the unexplainable urge to caringly turn to the child who has made an appeal to us? Whether to me as parent or to me as teacher. It is exactly in the truth experience of this strong impulse we feel for the child that the true nature of pedagogy remains hidden. It is in the being called that we sense both the showing and the hiding of pedagogic being. The clearer pedagogic being presents itself in our lives as parents or teachers the more perplexing its true nature recedes from our intelligibility. There is indeed mystery in the being commanded by the calling to apply oneself to goodness in our lives with children. The newly born comes into the world as an appellation. And so it names us to the vocation of parent or guardian. But more deeply it is the calling (*vocare*) of the vocation which names us. This naming is an invocation to act authoritatively (because authorized by the heeding of the calling) in the personal becoming of the child: to act pedagogically in the lives of children.

The pedagogic calling is universal in the sense that anyone who cares to listen could be called. Not every mother or father has a parental orientation to his or her child. About someone we might say, "He just never grew up and so he does not know what it means to be a father." The same is true for schoolteachers. "I found out that I do not really like children, and so I decided after a few years that I should try my hand at some other career." This is not an uncommon confession among teachers. Of course, some teachers find the prospects of a new job more threatening than getting out of their present one. So they persist and struggle on. Others may never have felt right about the choice of making a career in education, but they keep blaming the Faculty of Education, parents, the administration, or some other culprit (even the children) for their apparent lack of pedagogic dedication.

To be a professional educator is a job. Yes, a vocation. But to be an educator, in a pedagogic sense, has to be more than a job. How do we choose to become an educator? In jest we may cite the long holidays, and short workdays as the principal attraction. Or more seriously we may admit to be drawn to the vocation by our own positive school experiences and outstanding teachers we wish to emulate. And hopefully we choose education primarily because we are deeply interested in children. A young man or woman decides to become a teacher. But to acquire a teaching certificate and stand in front of a class does not necessarily a teacher make. Neither does the biological act of reproduction make, in a deep sense, a mother or a father. We may choose a job. But do we choose the vocation, the calling of pedagogy? It may be more appropriate to say that pedagogy chooses us. It chooses us when it calls upon us to make it our calling. And so when we hear the calling, our hearing may occur to us as a choosing.

One might say that the difference between hearing and deafness or between recalling and forgetting the lure of the calling is a form of devotion, service, or commitment. Like commitment, service, and devotion, being attuned to the calling implies an attentive and responsive

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abiding with that which constitutes the intrinsic authenticity of the calling. A person who lives in responsive attunement to the call of the calling lives a life of devotion. We still think of the person who has a calling as a devoted or committed person, as exemplified in the celibate life of prayer of the religious who is attuned to the call of the divine. And this is especially true also in the serving vocations such as the profession of the physician, the nurse, the minister or priest, the therapist, the political activist, and, of course, the profession of educator and childcare worker. And yet we hear criticism, for example, of medical doctors who pursue their profession, inspired not with a sense of vision of the service of the calling, but with dollar signs in their eyes. Similarly, we must wonder whether teachers still know how to speak of their living with children as an authentic vocation, a true calling. The attempt to overcome the forgetfulness from inauthentic existence is thus a calling back, a re-calling. As it calls the person who had mistaken as authentic pedagogy what was merely a job, it calls back from an inauthentic mode of life to authentic existence. And as it recalls, it cures and restores and elevates.

Pedagogy and Pedagogues

Pedagogy is the most profound relationship that an adult can have with a child. However, this is not a proposition which invites proof, reasoning, or argumentative justification. Indeed, it is not a proposition. Rather, it is an utterance much like a phrase or lore, which is revered because it celebrates something consequential. Lores derive their hermeneutic quality from something self-evident, something gnomic that is revered in the edifying lesson taught by it. It would be inappropriate therefore to attempt to prove the correctness of the statement that pedagogy is the most profound relationship that an educator or parent can have with a child. The truth of the statement has to be sought in the lived experience of situations where pedagogy is present in the lives of adults with children.

But how are we to audit the experience of profundity present in pedagogy? How can we know that pedagogy is largely present or absent in the lives of some teachers (or parents)? Our positivist orientation tends to confuse pedagogy with what teachers or parents do. We judge teachers almost entirely in terms of the ability to demonstrate certain productivity, effectiveness, or the competencies which are presumed to serve these values. Positivism has difficulty discerning whether the contact a teacher has with his children is indeed a "real" contact, i.e., a pedagogic contact. For example, positivism can teach teachers of the effectiveness of eye-contact in the "management of classroom behaviors." And positivism can assess the incidence of eye-contact in empirical situations, by means of categorical interaction analysis systems or other such instruments. However, the function of optimum frequency of eye-contact in the completion of specific learning tasks entirely glosses over the pedagogic meaning of the "meaningful look" between teacher and students.

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So positivism in educational research and theorizing suffers from a certain blindness. It mistakes categorical or operational instances of some rational conceptualization of pedagogy for the "real" thing. It fails to see that we cannot "see" pedagogy if "to see" means to observe operational or experimental instances of pedagogic teaching. It fails to see that the meaning and significance of pedagogy remains concealed behind our inability to approach pedagogy pretheoretically. It remains concealed as a consequence of the theoretical overlays and perspectival frameworks we construct in the paradoxical effort to see more clearly the significance of certain pedagogic practices (usually called "teaching behaviors," "curriculum effects," etc.).

In a mundane sense we confuse pedagogy with what we see pedagogues do. If pedagogy were absent in a particular situation, positivism would not be able to tell the difference. But positivism fails to see, in a deep sense too, the absence of pedagogy. It fails to see the absence of pedagogy by mistaking concrete descriptions or case studies of pedagogy with that which constitutes its ground. Positivism fails to see that in a deep sense pedagogy absents or "hides" itself by virtue of its own activity; in the process of showing itself it also shows its hidden character.

This implies that one can *be* a pedagogue and yet not *have* pedagogy. Pedagogy is not something that can be "had," "possessed," in the way that we say that a person "has" or "possesses" a set of specific skills or performative competencies. Rather, pedagogy is something that a pedagogue continuously must redeem, retrieve, regain, or recapture in the sense of recalling. Every situation in which I must act educationally with children requires that I must continuously and reflectively be sensitive to what authorizes me as pedagogic teacher or parent. Exactly because pedagogy is in an ultimate or definitive sense unfathomable, it poses the unremitting invitation to the creative activity of pedagogic reflection which brings the deep meaning of pedagogy to light.

Pedagogic Competence

Some people bring children into this world and then abandon them. Others hold on to them but do not know how to love. Again others may be well intentioned but they make a mess of it. And so we need laws to protect the child from neglect, or worse, from child abuse. And then there are parents who do love and make an effort but they make a mess of it anyway. The same kind of scenario can be sketched for teachers. It seems easier to talk about pedagogic incompetence than about competence. (We might boldly say that those who do *not* find the topic of competence difficult do not know in a serious way what they are talking about.) What makes it possible for us to speak (theorize) of competence when it comes to raising or teaching (educating) children? It means that we are able to do things in children's lives and that we are *able to do things right.* But modern (positivistic) conceptions of research and theorizing no longer permit us to speak of certain forms or kinds of theories as right or wrong, good or bad, reasonable or unreasonable. Modern con-

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ceptions of theorizing are more often guided by the useful (the manageable, the pragmatic, the efficacious) than by the good. Indeed Nietzsche, Heidegger, and others have shown that our conception of knowledge and rational thinking has been detached from its traditional affiliation with the conception of the "good." And yet it is essentially the "good" we have to understand in order to give content to the meaning of competence when we speak of an adult as a "good" teacher or "good" parent.

We are interested in pedagogic competence because we realize that it is not enough to bring children into the world and to love them, or to accept a job as a teacher and to lecture about history or science. We also have to be able to help the child grow up and give shape to life by learning what is worthwhile knowing and becoming. So we are interested in competence because we want to know what to do: as pedagogues we must act and in acting we must be true to our calling. If we are expected to do the right thing in our pedagogic relationship with children we may require an idea of pedagogic competence which makes pedagogic praxis possible. However, to spell out the conditions of adequate pedagogic performance by formulating a concept, theory, or model of pedagogic competence is an inane endeavor, because it presumes that we know conceptually what is essentially unknowable in a conceptual or positive sense. And yet, we do know in what directions the significance of pedagogic competence must be sought.

On the one hand, pedagogic competence involves an answering to the fundamental existentials of the pedagogic relationship. We see this answering at work in the lives of parents and teachers with children. We see it at work in the mother who engages in playful "conversations" with her infant. Although the little one has not developed a formal vocabulary as yet, he nevertheless knows how to "converse" by way of smiling, eye-contact, kicking and hitting, babbling and silence, and crying of various sorts. Early childhood psychologists who have made microstudies of the "hidden" skills of social initiation, response behavior, mediation, etc., between mother and baby call this interaction "dialogical, interlocutionary, or reciprocity behavior," which is described in terms of six types of maternal techniques: phasing, adaptive, facilitative, elaborative, initiating, and control techniques. Giving names to the fundamental existentials of the pedagogic relationship no doubt is helpful. So we say that a competent parent or teacher knows when and how to provide a child in concrete situations with proper "security," "love," "reciprocity," "stability," "continuity," and so on. But by assigning words to pedagogic existentials we inevitably convert into discrete entities what functions much more dynamically.

Mark is quietly playing on the floor while his mom is reading a magazine. But the little boy has begun to crawl speedily toward the door while chuckling with pleasure. Then he stops, sits up, and looks at his mother who casts a furtive glance. The next moment Mark is back on all fours and now his movements are even faster while his laughter turns into an excited panting. Mark stops again and looks back at his mom.

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The excitement is impossible to ignore and mother tears herself out of her reading and proceeds noisily and playfully into the direction of Mark. The chase is now fully on! And Mark is getting beyond himself with excitement, so that his laughter turns into high-pitched screams. "I'll get you! I'll get you!" laughs Mom and stamps her feet and claps her hands. Mark can hardly control himself. His delighted laughter virtually immobilizes him and instead of crawling faster his limbs now move awkwardly slowly. He just cannot get away from his mother—who'll grab him in her next move. And then she fetches him and pulls him into a playful embrace. "I gotch'a!" This is all too much and the little boy shrieks with pure exaltation. It's good that Mom's kisses are so sweet because one gets the uncanny feeling that Mark's joyful excitement could have climaxed into a confused crying bout. Some more hugging and face-rubbing in Mom's hair and Mark is back on the floor. Mom sits down but she leaves the magazine alone. She knows the next "come and get me" is only a few seconds away.

Are we still talking of pedagogic competence here? But of course. A good mother knows that Mark's so-called "initiation behavior" is really an invitation. An invitation to show that she really cares—enough to drop what she is doing to show the little boy that he cannot get away as yet. And so mother's confirmation of her care turns into an adventurous pursuit. When Mark runs away from his mother his escape experience turns into a primitive mock-up of independence. Although being chased and caught borders on playful fright, it would be more frightening if no one cared enough to come and claim you. Both mother and child are showing each other that they cannot do without each other. So the chase becomes a testing of Mom's dependability. And yes, also "security," and "love," and "independence" are the pedagogic existentials of this relationship. But if these words are to communicate more to us than the theoretic–didactic precepts of child development, then we need to learn that pedagogic competence involves a form of praxis (thoughtful action: action full of thought and thought full of action) wherein the requirements of the pedagogic existentials are actualized in real and concrete situations. Competence means that mother knows when to do what and how, and when to stop the chase game, "because too much excitement is too much!"

And pedagogic competence involves the anticipatory and reflective capacity of fostering, shaping, and guiding the child's emancipatory growth into adulthood: what you should be capable of, how you should have a mind of your own, and what you should be like as a person (Langeveld). The emancipatory interest of pedagogy in the educational development of children does not require that children are "educated" to become like the adults who educate them. Adults themselves are challenged by the emancipatory interest of pedagogy to see their own lives as a potentiality, that is, as an oriented being and becoming.

Pedagogic competence manifests itself not only in praxis, in our concrete relationships, activities, and situations with children. It manifests itself as well in theorizing, where the parent or professional educator

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reflectively brings to speech the meaning of pedagogic thought and actions. This usually happens when the children have been tucked in bed or when the class has been dismissed; then the pedagogic life of parents and teachers finds reprieve. Friends come over for a visit, teachers retire to the staffroom, or join their spouses at home. It is on these occasions that adults talk "kids" with adults—a mundane or occasional form of pedagogic theorizing.

The distinction of pedagogic competence as praxis and as reflective theorizing does not imply that praxis is unreflective. In fact, parenting and teaching are often highly reflective activities. I may deal with a child in a particular situation in a probing fashion (How can I let her realize more deeply the significance of what she had done?); or in an exploratory way (I have tried this, now I'll try that); or in a more routinized manner (Now I come to think of it, I usually have more impact on him by simply overlooking this sort of thing); and so forth.

The positivist notion of practice as the testing ground of theory is maintained in the term "practice teaching." We say, "practice makes perfect." Indeed, practice makes perfect a particular technique or skill—but practice as applied theory in an instrumental sense does not necessarily contribute to pedagogic wisdom. Wisdom is something that does not flow from practice. Our narrow, positivistic preoccupation with methods (witness the so-called "methods courses" in teacher preparation institutions), with teaching strategies and techniques paradoxically has led to obsessive interests in being creative or original in the interpretation or usage of such methods. But to be original is not to be merely different. The originality of creative or novel methods and constantly changing teaching techniques is a vulgarization of the idea of originality, that deprives it of all serious meaning. We could ask, what is it like to overcome the forgetfulness of behavioral objectives or a performance oriented pedagogy which has lost the concern (care) from which the interest in objectives, techniques, and methods in curriculum and instruction originally issued? To be original is to be true to the meaning which originates from our pedagogic relationship with children.

As teachers we use so-called techniques, strategies, or instructional approaches in helping our children learn. But the much abused word "techniques" has a richer history than the simple instrumentalist interpretation of a technique as an instructional means to a curricular end. The etymology of the term "technology" carries the meaning of "producing" or "bringing forth" in the sense of "being responsible for." In this sense the idea of the technical is akin to the Greek concept of truth (*aletheia*): it brings something forth from hiddenness into unhiddenness. The Greek word "*techne*" is connected to "*episteme*," both are modes of knowing, meaning, "being versed in," as well as "modes of disclosure." So rather than a mere skill or procedure, a teaching technique can be understood as the act of ably letting something come into presence, into unconcealment. Why then should in the formulation of the idea of competence, the emphasis on techniques and skills be reprehensible? For sure, it is not the productive relation of didactics as bringing forth in children what belongs to them as possibilities of essential becoming that

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is reprehensible. But it is the transformation into positivistic, objective quantities of bringing forth, as well as that which is thus brought forth, which is deserving of our disquietude.

Subject Matter

We cannot be all things to all children. So when I call myself a math teacher, or a teacher of literature, of history or of science, I declare to have available a vocational range of pedagogic possibilities and responsibilities. But what is the significance of a certain subject matter? The important question is not, do you teach math? or do you teach children? This is a false dichotomy which flows out of one-sided intellectualizations about education. Even those who say, "I teach both," have already slipped into this unfortunate way of thinking, which sees elementary teachers concerned primarily with children and secondary school teachers firstly focussing on the subject matter of their specialization. It is more appropriate maybe to say, "I teach children math." But even this does not clarify much. And yet, as teachers we best declare our range of competencies. And so I may prefer to teach math to younger children or to older ones, because school life with ten-year-olds is different from the life in schools with fifteen-year-old adolescents. But what is it like to teach these children math or history? What is the nature of the subject in the teaching experience? To be a teacher of history or literature may mean that I can tell many stories, or talk endlessly about poetry and the works of great poets. Evidently, to know a particular subject means that I know something in this domain of human knowledge. But to know something does not mean to know just anything about something. To know something is to know what that something is in the way that it is and speaks to us.

In listening and submitting to what it is that something lets us know, we (children or adults) enter a relationship with the things of the world about which we learn. To know a subject does not only mean to know it well and to know it seriously in the fundamental questions in poses. To know a subject also means to hold this knowledge in a way which shows that the knowledge is indeed a subject loved and respected for what it lets itself be known for.

It is probably less correct to say that we learn *about* the subjects contained in the school curriculum than that the subjects let us know something. It is in this letting us know that subject matter becomes a true subject: a subject which makes relationship possible. The subject calls upon us in such a way that its otherness, its it-ness turns into the dialogic Other: the "you." In this way our responsiveness, our "listening" to the subject, constitutes the very essence of the relationship of a student with subject matter.

Bildung constitutes the relation wherein the otherness of subject matter becomes "Other" or "you." This very transformation of subject matter, from object to true subject, is already what we usually call learning. The transformation resides neither in the subject matter nor in me but

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rather in my realization of the potential to be heedful, answerable to what the subject lets me know, and to what it lets me know I ought to do with respect to my realization of being answerable.

It is sometimes thought that it does not matter whether teachers know the subjects they teach well. Good teaching is determined by the "how" (teaching methods of styles) rather than the "what" (the content) so this thinking goes. And so we often see high school physical education teachers in front of an English class or physics teachers teaching history or history teachers assigned to teach math.

However, what people, who adhere to this view, miss is that there is a deeper truth in the statement "you are what you teach." A math teacher is not (or should not just be) somebody who happens to teach math. No, a "real" math teacher is a person who *embodies* math, who lives math, who in a strong sense, *is* math. We often can tell whether a teacher "is it" or "fakes it." We can tell by the way a person stylizes the stuff he teaches. Or we might say that a person who fakes it is incapable of stylizing what he does not embody. When a person says, "that is not my style," he also means, that is not the way I am, that is not me! The way we stylize a certain subject matter is a telltale for the way we hold it. We may possess a certain amount of information with respect to literature, math, or science, but only the knowledge we embody truly has become part of our very being. It does not just mean that an English teacher tends to love reading and/or writing or that he tends to carry poetry under the arm during a coffee break. It also means that such teachers cannot help but poetize the world, which means think deeply on original experience by way of the incantative power of words.

Phenomenology

Phenomenology helps us to bring to light that which presents itself as pedagogy in our lives with children. It is that kind of thinking which guides us back from theoretical abstractions to the reality of lived experiences—the lived experience of the child's world, the lived experience of schools, curricula, etc. Phenomenology asks the simple question, what is it like to have a certain experience? (For example, an educational experience.) An innocent question indeed. We may know that we have a certain experience, that we feel alone, afraid, in love, bored, amused, but we are quickly at wit's end when we are pressed to describe what such feeling consists of. Yet, in the field of curriculum we confidently talk about "selecting, planning or organizing learning experiences." This confidence begs a question—the question whether we really know what it is like when a child "has an experience" or when the child "comes to understand something." Husserl's phrase "back to the things themselves" means that the phenomenological attitude is mindful of the ease with which we tend to rely on a reconstructed logic in our professional endeavors. We read theories into everything. And once a theoretical scheme had been brought to life we tend to search for the principles

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(*nomos*) that seem to organize the life to which the theory was brought. In our efforts to make sense of our lived experiences with theories and hypothesizing frameworks we are forgetting that it was living human beings who bring schemas and frameworks into being and not the reverse.

Some argue that phenomenology has no practical value because "you cannot do anything with phenomenological knowledge." From the point of view of instrumental reason it may be quite true to say that we cannot do anything with this knowledge. But to paraphrase Heidegger, the more important question is *not*: Can we do something with phenomenology? Rather, we should wonder: Can phenomenology, if we concern ourselves deeply with it, do something with us?

The phenomenological attitude towards the concerns of our daily occupation compels us to constantly raise the question: what is it like to be an educator? What is it like to be a teacher as pedagogue? And in order to ask the question what it is that makes it possible for us to think and talk about pedagogy in the first place, we ask, what is it about that form of life (being an educator) which makes a pedagogic existence different from other pursuits? As adults we meet children socially in many situations where pedagogy is not permitted or encouraged to enter. My interest in a child may be primarily for reasons of coaching a sporting event or selling pop records. But to say this challenges the question what difference there is between hockey coach, sales person, Boy-Scout leader, math teacher, or school principal. No doubt there are commonalities between a coach and pedagogue. Both may be teaching the child different things. So that there are essential and inessential differences between those who teach children. To ask how a teacher shows a difference which makes a pedagogic difference is to ask how the essence of pedagogy can be made intelligible. And how the simple and innocent phenomenological question "What is it like?" assumes a deeper dimension. Because now we are led to address the question, what kind of answer would meet the phenomenological requirement of intelligibility? How can we come to a deep understanding of that which makes it possible to say that between this teacher and this child pedagogy is in attendance? What kind of speaking would satisfy such understanding? In phenomenology what kind of speaking counts as an answer? Or, more precisely, in phenomenology what counts as knowledge?

One way of dealing with this question is to theorize about knowledge; to epistemologize our answer by theorizing, for example, about the distinctions between different types of knowledge (such as empirical–analytic and phenomenological–hermeneutic types of social science). But if we wish to remain responsive to the commitment of phenomenology, then we should try to resist the temptation to develop positivistic schemas, paradigms, models, or other categorical abstractions of knowledge. Instead we should refer questions of knowledge back to the life world where knowledge speaks through our lived experiences. We, therefore, wish to ask: *How can we pursue the question of what constitutes (phenomenological) knowledge in such a way that our way of addressing this question may*

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become an example of what the question in its questioning seeks to bring to clarity? In other words, how can we show the what-ness of the pedagogic experience, at once in an iconic and in a recollective sense? From a phenomenological point of view we keep reminding ourselves that the question of knowledge always refers us back to our world, to our lives, to who we are, and to what makes us write, read, and talk together as educators: it is what stands iconically behind the words, the speaking, and the language.

Phenomenology is not propositional discourse. There is no systematic argument, no sequence of propositions that we have to follow in order to arrive at a conclusion, a generalization, or a truth statement, because that would be to see theorizing itself as method, i.e., as a method of demonstrating truth which would be valid by virtue of itself as method. Pedagogical theorizing in a deep sense is the attempt to achieve phenomenological understanding which goes beyond language and description. If pedagogical theorizing finds by means of language the means to speak of the unspeakable, it is because the secret of our calling is expressed by that of the pedagogic work we do with children, which teaches us to recognize the grounds that make the work possible.

Phenomenological pedagogy differs from other so-called methods of inquiry in that it is not offered as a "new" epistemology or as an alternative research methodology which problematizes the topic of children and pedagogy in certain ways (e.g., cognitive functioning, information processing styles, curriculum treatment effects). Rather, the phenomenological attitude reminds us that children are already or mundanely a pedagogic concern to us prior to any epistemological choice point. Phenomenological inquiry is, therefore, not simply an "approach" (alongside other approaches) to the study of pedagogy. That is, phenomenology does not simply yield "alternative" explanations or descriptions of educational phenomena. Rather, phenomenology bids to recover reflectively the grounds which, in a deep sense, provide for the possibility of our pedagogic concerns with children.

The contemporary confusion of educators about that what really matters in curriculum and teaching marks a decaying sensitivity to the pedagogic ground of educational theory and practice. Theorizing for the sake of theorizing, like art for art's sake, is not a superfluous self-serving exercise as it is sometimes supposed. Theorizing is an edifying activity which contributes to one's resourcefulness—not in a simple means–ends or applied, technical pragmatic sense, nor in an attitudinal or subjectivist psychological sense. Theorizing contributes to one's resourcefulness by directing the orienting questions toward the source itself; the source which gives life or spirit to (inspires) our pedagogic life. It helps us to recollect that which already is possessed by us, as it were; and which we recognize as potentialities and actualities of being.

In reflectively bringing their thoughts and actions to speech, students of pedagogy are challenged to formulate their auspices (Blum): what it is that grounds their pedagogic life with children. So, that to theorize is to get to know oneself: Not in the superficial sense of self-awareness

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as reflected in the narcissistic literature of popular psychology, but in the phenomenological sense of anamnesis. To theorize is to struggle to achieve one's limits, to find one's origin, one's grounding in that which makes our pedagogic life possible.

Phenomenological theorizing succeeds there, where it lets us see that which shines through, that which tends to hide itself. And how can phenomenology "let us see?" Phenomenology is heedful of our propensity to mistake what we say (our words) with what we talk about (the *Logos*). Phenomenology is not found in the colorful words of the storyteller, nor in the fanciful phrases of the person with a flair for writing. The words are not the thing. And yet, it is to our words, language, that we must apply all our phenomenological skill and talents, because it is in and through the words that the shining through (the invisible) becomes visible.

The language of phenomenological pedagogy discloses reflectively ("shows" us) how phenomenological knowledge is held and what it is like to know things pedagogically. In other words, pedagogical theorizing requires a responsive reading. One does not read poetry as if it were a mathematical treatise, or a logical argument, or even a story line. He who reads poetry as if it were prosaic discourse misses a full "understanding" of the poem. Similarly, he who cannot see how a phenomenological use of words is a function of the things being described in the words will, therefore, be unable to "understand" the description. For example, the occurrence of dramatic irony in phenomenological language use means that the reader must be prepared to be attentive to what is said in and through the words: What the content of the words may leave unspoken as silence is revealed through their form. Content may be visible as form but for that reason concealed as content, says Rosen. So that attentiveness to form is also attentiveness to content. Phenomenology is like poetry, in that it speaks partly through silence: it means more than it explicitly says.

Phenomenology, like poetry, intends to be silent as it speaks. So, to read or write phenomenologically requires that we be sensitively attentive to the silence about the words by means of which we attempt to disclose the deep meaning of our world. For this reason Norman O. Brown (p. 258) says:

> Speech points beyond itself to the silence, to the word within the word, the language buried in language, the primordial language, from before the Flood or the Tower of Babel; lost yet ready at hand, perfect for all time; present in all our words, unspoken. To hear again the primordial language is to restore to words their full significance.

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