



**‘Wisdom and the Life of Virtue: What should
Discipline be for in Schools?’**

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Abstract

This dissertation addresses the question: what should Discipline be for in Schools? It does so from a primarily philosophical and specifically neo-Aristotelian perspective. Indeed, the thesis would seem to be the first to try to derive an account of the possible purposes of modern day school discipline from Aristotle's works. The discussion also provides an original evaluation of the educational place and significance of Aristotle's intellectual virtues. The thesis proceeds from a conviction that: 1) recent policy and research concerning pupil behaviour in Scottish schools has not clearly enough articulated what *discipline* should be for; and 2) previous theoretical attempts to explain the purposes of school discipline have not been grounded upon sufficiently robust moral and/or epistemological foundations. The most relevant extant treatises of Aristotle are therefore explored in depth, in search of a more justifiable theory of school discipline. In this respect, particularly detailed scrutiny is given to the various traits of character (virtues) that Aristotle believed to comprise human flourishing. During this analysis and discussion, it is argued that educators should try to foster such virtuous habits of thinking, acting and feeling in pupils, in the course of seeking to instil discipline in their schools and classrooms. It is concluded that school discipline should promote pupil virtue and wisdom.

Declaration

This thesis has been composed by me and is entirely my own work. It has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

James MacAllister

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List of Abbreviations

(ACfE)	A Curriculum for Excellence
(BBBL)	Better Behaviour Better Learning
(DP)	De Partibus Animalium
(EE)	Eudemian Ethics
(MP)	Metaphysics
(NE)	Nicomachean Ethics
(PA)	Posterior Analytics
(PHI)	Philebus
(Pol)	Politics
(PrA)	Prior Analytics
(RP)	Republic

When reference is made to *The Ethics* in the main body of the text, it is always the *Nicomachean Ethics* that is under discussion.

Introduction

‘When discipline goes, self-discipline goes as well

...Failure of rule

Is the most destructive thing. Obedience

And respect must be instilled.’ (King Creon in Heaney, 2004, pp 30-31)

The subject of this thesis is the concept of discipline, and more particularly, what it should be for in schools. *Discipline* is the focus of discussion rather than another related, yet importantly distinct concept: namely, *punishment*. While issues of discipline and punishment very often *do* go hand in hand, both in schools and wider society, I think it is crucial that educators are clear in their minds about the differences between the meaning and application of the two notions. Arguably, punishment is more closely connected to *indiscipline* than discipline. Richard Peters¹ suggested that both discipline and punishment should promote ‘the good’ of pupils and classes. However, he maintained that punishment has a much more specific function than discipline. Peters held that: 1) discipline involves a pupil *observing* the rules of a worthwhile activity whereas; 2) punishment is normally only justifiable when a pupil has *breached* the rules of such activity.

The need for issues of discipline to be considered in relation to the wider ethical and epistemological purposes of schooling was not lost on Peters. In this respect, I am generally sympathetic to the liberal theory of education championed by him. Although rules may often in practice support disciplined behaviour, in this dissertation it will be argued there is no *necessary* correlation between discipline and the observance of rules. Indeed, it is probable that important learning opportunities may be missed, if those enacting discipline aim at nothing more than pupil observance of, or submission to rules. It will instead be argued that pupils are disciplined in school when they are

¹ Peters’ views on discipline will be explored in chapter 2.

properly engaged in and committed to (rather than just following the rules of) worthwhile activities. Significantly, it will also be claimed that repeated involvement in such activities might, over time, help pupils to foster virtuous habits of thinking, acting and feeling. It will thus be hypothesised that school discipline should have a broadly neo-Aristotelian² goal: namely, the development of virtue in pupils. The emergence of such desirable character traits plausibly depends, not so much upon the observance of rules, but more on the consistent and active involvement of pupils in intellectually, morally and technically valuable learning tasks.

I would however be inclined to agree with Peters' more general view that punishment has only limited educational application and scope. Punishment need not, and probably should not, be the first response to a *breakdown* in classroom discipline. Indeed, if punishment is only a retrospective tool employed to deal with indiscipline, then it also seems illogical to begin thinking about how to *establish* discipline by focussing on punishment. Throughout this thesis it will therefore be argued that the best way to instil school discipline is to focus on learning, not punishment. This is not to say that some sorts of moderate punishment can never be justified in schools. Detention for example is 'unlikely to represent a deprivation of liberty' (Scott, 2003, p 164) of the rights of the child. However, there are now clear legal-humanitarian restrictions upon the *physical* chastisement of schoolchildren. The prohibition of corporal punishment was originally introduced in Scotland's schools in 1986³, partially in response to cases brought before the European Court of

² Kristjánsson (2007) has suggested that Aristotelian inquiry involves delving deep into Aristotle's texts to work out what he said or should have said about a given matter. Schnaedelbach (1987) indicates that 'reasoning from tradition' is almost unavoidable for the neo-Aristotelian. In an important rejoinder to Schnaedelbach, Passerin d'Entrèves (1987) implies that Aristotle does not offer a prescriptive account of tradition, but a view of tradition as an 'active passing on'. In part one and two of this thesis it will be maintained that the importance of tradition *and* experience in Aristotelian thought render it more balanced than the educational philosophies of so called 'traditionalists' on the one hand and 'progressives' on the other.

³ Corporal punishment is now restricted by the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act, 2000 (Scott, 2003).

Human Rights (Scott, 2003). It was held that educational authorities had a duty to respect the legitimate philosophical and religious convictions of parents in a democratic society; in this case, that their children avoid being subject to punishment in school that would constitute physical assault (Scott, 2003).

Although this dissertation seeks to defend a broadly Aristotelian theory of school *discipline*, I must part company with some of the views that Aristotle expresses in relation to the *physical punishment* of children. While he is, on the whole, committed to the principle that education should be based on fidelity to reason⁴, in the *Eudemian Ethics*, he remarks that children do have some puzzling views that cannot be altered by rational argument. What children need in such instances, he says, is maturity, or correction through flogging (EE, 1214b30-1215a). Aristotle does qualify his opinion of physical correction implying that it should not be cruel but rather ‘for the sake of the person punished’ (Rhetoric, 1369b16-17). However, to the modern eye it is extremely hard to square the idea that the ‘flogging’ of children could in some way be educational, or for their sake. Sherman’s suggestion that Aristotle endorsed ‘gentle methods of external sanction’ (2004, p 164) in education, is perhaps therefore, a little off the mark. However, Aristotle does only seem to have advocated physical chastisement in cases where the rationality of children could not be appealed to. While Aristotle may have implied that the ‘flogging’ of irrational children was justified, his wider philosophy overwhelmingly favoured the employment of reason, rather than force, to foster moral habits in the young, both for their sake, and for that of the wider community.

It should also perhaps be borne in mind that Aristotle hailed from a society radically different to our own. Democracy was still a relatively recent development in Athens when he lived there. Indeed, Sophocles’s ancient drama *Antigone* was frequently performed at this

⁴ For a detailed defence of Aristotle’s commitment to this principle see Curren (2000).

time⁵. This tragedy has for centuries provided audiences and readers alike, with a powerful reminder of the harm that can result when leaders of society equate discipline with obedience, punishment, and absolute conformity to rule of law. In comparison to the tyrannical ruler King Creon (whose comments on discipline⁶ and obedience open this thesis), Aristotle and other famed philosophers of Ancient Athens were rational, humane and progressive in their outlook⁷. As we shall see, Aristotle in particular thought that virtue and wisdom were more conducive to human flourishing than obedience to rule and force.

Leaving issues of punishment to one side, in this thesis it is maintained that school *discipline* ought to promote the development of pupil virtue and wisdom, rather than pupil obedience. Although, policy and legislation specific to the current Scottish educational system is later scrutinised, it is hoped that a broad attempt to formulate a neo-Aristotelian theory of school discipline will also be of wider interest and application. It should be noted that I am not, and do not claim to be, a classical scholar. I therefore depend upon the translations of others when referring to Ancient Greek works. I draw upon these and other texts in order to concentrate discussion upon a question that is, I think, of considerable contemporary educational relevance, namely: what should discipline be for in schools?

⁵ Knox makes this observation in his introduction to *Antigone* (Sophocles', 1984). He also states that Aristotle lived within a century of the first production of *Antigone* adding that the philosopher made frequent allusions to this play in his *Politics*.

⁶ These comments are taken from Seamus Heaney's modern adaptation of the tragedy. In this crucial act of the tragedy, King Creon engages in a passionate discussion with his son Haemon. During this exchange, the King attempts to justify the enforcement of a rule (that no traitor of Thebes will be rewarded with the burial rights due to loyal citizens) on the grounds that it will benefit the polis (city) by instilling discipline and obedience amongst the populace. Haemon in turn implores his father to listen to wise advice, and the will of the polis (the polis would rather see Antigone allowed to bury her brother). Creon however refuses to soften his stance, autocratically insisting that 'the city *is* the king's – that's the law' (Sophocles, 1984, *Antigone*, 825). Creon's determination to implement the rule of law is accompanied by a desire to cruelly punish anyone who breaches it. It is, however, this very cruelty and inflexibility of judgement that lead in the end to the death of Creon's own wife and son.

⁷ MacIntyre (1984) suggests that the philosophers of Ancient Athens initiated a cultural shift whereby human virtue came to be principally understood in terms of *reason*, rather than the Pre-Socratic *heroic* virtue system embodied in the works of Homer.

Thesis Overview

‘Aristotelianism is a condition more than a scholarly position; one acquires the ability to smell out what Aristotle would say on a given issue and then follows one’s scent into the thicket of his writings. If it turns out that one’s scent is mistaken and Aristotle did not really say anything important on the issue, or, worse yet, was mistaken in his view, then the consolation lies in ascertaining what Aristotle *should* have said.’ (Kristjánsson, 2007, p 6)

This dissertation is structured around the question: what should discipline be for in Schools? The main hypotheses set forth, is that the purpose of school discipline should be to develop a range of moral and intellectual virtues in pupils. It is in particular maintained that Aristotle’s theory of virtue may afford new and valuable insight into contemporary debate about school discipline. Thus a vital aim of this thesis is to philosophically analyse the extant treatise of Aristotle so as to explore what he *did* or *should* have said about school discipline. Bearing in mind the foregoing comments of Kristjánsson, this thesis is an interpretive as much as it is an exegetical endeavour. To an extent, it will therefore be assumed that the *a priori* (by which is meant *before* reference to experience and/or scientific experiment) values broadly articulated by Aristotle can go a long way to justifying many of the conclusions that are reached in this dissertation. The justification of claims through reference to the *values* held by a philosopher (in the case of this thesis, Aristotle) rather than *empirical* study is a method of argumentation found in much educational (See in particular ‘The Journal of Philosophy of Education’, Ed. Standish, 2010) and for that matter moral philosophy. Indeed, as we shall see in chapter four, a moral philosopher as esteemed as Kant (2007) maintained that moral values can *only* be derived a priori rather than empirically.

However, I would agree with Peters (1972b) and Macleod (2010) on an important methodological point. Questions relating to education generally (Peters) and pupil behaviour specifically (Macleod) are

probably best answered via a multi-disciplinary approach. The scope of a doctoral study is naturally however, constrained by time, and in depth exploration of one body of worthwhile literature may come at the cost of the neglect of another. While I would certainly not want to deny that empirical investigation could shed considerable light on many of the arguments put forward in this thesis; given the necessary constraints placed on a doctoral study, the approach to and content of this study is largely philosophical. I have not chosen this focus and method of inquiry because I think it can or might provide definitive answers to educational questions, far from it. However, philosophy is arguably a logical *point of departure* for this particular research question. For one thing, there has been surprisingly little recent philosophical interest in matters of school discipline. For another, it is quite possible that ethics (moral philosophy) and epistemology (the philosophy/theory of knowledge) are especially relevant to questions concerning the moral and pedagogical purposes of discipline. It is almost certain, however, that other branches of knowledge, and types of inquiry not explored here, could yield further, deeper and different insight into issues of discipline and behaviour in schools. However, it would seem quite unrealistic to expect a single study to provide a complete understanding of such a thorny problem as the proper nature and uses of discipline in schools. It is nonetheless hoped that this dissertation might make a small contribution to the debate on this large educational matter.

In this respect this is, to the best of my knowledge, the first study to explore in depth the possible benefits of a neo-Aristotelian theory of school discipline. Although no surviving Aristotelian treatise specifically addresses this issue, it is suggested that a theory of school discipline may nevertheless be inferred from Aristotle's various comments on virtue, moral habituation, childhood and pedagogical instruction. With this end in mind, this study is divided into three sections and ten chapters. In the first section entitled 'What should

school discipline be for?’ some well (and less well) known theories and philosophies of school discipline are examined. In chapter one, the key questions are located in the Scottish context. It is argued that surveys carried out in Scottish schools in the past 15-20 years have helped to build up an impressive foundation of empirical knowledge regarding pupil behaviour. However, Scottish educational policy concerning pupil behaviour does not rest on a clear account of what *discipline* is or should be for. It is therefore proposed that a philosophical inquiry might help to provide a clearer and more justifiable explanation of the purposes of discipline in Scottish schools.

In chapter two, ‘traditional’ views of discipline, knowledge and learning are explored. Richard Peters’ liberal theory, whereby pupils are disciplined both *for* and *by* traditions of knowledge is discussed in detail. In chapter three, some ‘child centred’ objections to traditional theories of learning and discipline are documented. Dewey’s and P S Wilson’s accounts of discipline based on pupil interest and experience are subjected to particular scrutiny. It is acknowledged that discipline should involve sustained pupil engagement with the task in hand. Still, while some advocates of liberal education perhaps placed too great an emphasis on developing theoretical knowledge, arguably some ‘child centred’ theorists did not value such development enough. It is concluded that a better long term purpose for discipline in schools might rather be to engender neo-Aristotelian *wisdom* in pupils, as this concept incorporates into it aspects of both practical/experiential and theoretical knowledge.

The second part of this thesis, subtitled ‘Wisdom and the life of virtue’ delves deeper into the ‘thicket’ of Aristotle’s ethics and epistemology. In chapter four and five it is maintained that school discipline should aim to inculcate *virtuous* rather than *rule-following* habits in pupils within a wider perspective of human flourishing. In chapters six and seven, it is maintained that in a neo-Aristotelian

theory of school discipline the focus should be on educating the thoughts, actions and feelings of pupils. It is suggested that a theory of moral development may be extrapolated from Aristotle's texts and that persuasion, imitation, shame, and emulation, are all different motives through which the young can learn. In chapter eight some of the various states of mind that Aristotle analysed in Book VI of his *Nicomachean Ethics* are considered alongside more recent developments in virtue epistemology. It is claimed that: 1) knowledge (in speculative form at any rate) should be defined as *eternally true belief*; 2) Aristotle held wisdom in higher regard than knowledge; 3) Aristotle's intellectual virtues *are virtues* because they directly contribute to or, are constitutive of, human flourishing; 4) as such resourcefulness and understanding are valuable intellectual qualities, but not virtues. It is concluded that the prospects of children becoming educated, and flourishing, centrally depend upon their receiving the right sort of *habituation* and intellectual *instruction*.

In the final section of the thesis called 'Discipline and education for virtue', it is maintained that teacher character, style and curriculum content are influential factors on pupil discipline in schools. At this juncture, aspects of the preceding two sections are synthesised into a range of general pedagogical and curricular recommendations. In chapter nine, consideration is given to how neo-Aristotelian teaching approaches might have a positive impact upon pupil discipline. It is there indicated that broadly conceived processes of instructional encounter and discipline should be central to school education. In discussing such processes it is stressed that their proper promotion presupposes: 1) that teachers *themselves* possess a plurality of moral and intellectual qualities and; 2) that learners *actively* exercise the discipline necessary for each aspect of their schooling. Importantly, it is concluded that discipline has most value when it involves the repeated pupil performance of worthwhile learning activities. It is suggested that such a neo-Aristotelian theory

of school discipline is preferable to Peters' one, on account of the emphasis the former places on: 1) developing character traits most conducive to long term pupil flourishing; and 2) educating the emotions of pupils *in the course of* school discipline. In respect to 2) it is, in particular suggested that discipline may contribute to the development of virtuous affective dispositions, especially if pupils are supported to tolerate and overcome any adverse feelings that occur during difficult valuable learning.

In chapter ten, some attempt will be made to make sense of the proposals underpinning the new Scottish Curriculum for Excellence. It will be suggested that the principal innovation of the policy has been to make the *excellent* pupil the aim of schooling rather than the *educated pupil*. However, it is argued that Scottish educators should seek to promote pupil *virtue* rather than pupil excellence because the virtues are implicated in flourishing human life in a way that other excellences need not be. As such, it is concluded that schools should primarily build learning around worthwhile (intellectual, moral and practical/technical) activities. It is also concluded that school discipline, curriculum content and teaching and learning should all have the long-term purpose of promoting pupil virtue and wisdom.

Part One

What should school Discipline be for?

Chapter 1: Pupil Behaviour, Empiricism and Educational Philosophy

In this chapter, findings from the most recent surveys of pupil behaviour in Scottish Schools will be summarised, and their recommendations critiqued. It will be observed that though these reports have helped build up an accurate general picture of the nature of *pupil behaviour* in Scottish Schools this picture is importantly incomplete. It will be suggested that the main policy to improve pupil behaviour, Better Behaviour Better Learning (BBBL) does not precisely articulate what *discipline* in schools *is*, nor does it provide a coherent and normatively defensible account of what it should be *for*. It will be suggested that philosophical inquiry can help to provide a more justifiable and clear explanation of the purposes that should be ascribed to discipline in schools. It will be argued that educational philosophy has historically had two central tasks: to *analyse educationally salient* concepts so as to resolve ambiguities where they occur; and to *reintegrate* such concepts into a broader account of educational aims. It will be concluded that questions of discipline should not be considered in isolation from the wider aims of education.

1.1 Better Behaviour Better Learning

Since 1992, the Scottish Government has published a series of reports regarding pupil behaviour in schools (Johnstone & Munn, 1992) (Munn et al, 2004) (SEED, 2001) (SEED, 2004) (SEED, 2006) (SG, 2009). Taken together, these surveys provide an impressive dossier of information regarding general perceptions of the behaviour of pupils in Scotland's schools. Three broad trends of *indiscipline* have emerged (Munn et al, 2004): boys are perceived by teaching staff as particularly challenging; low level disruption of teachers by pupils in class is perceived by

teaching staff as the most wearing problem⁸; and reports of violence towards teaching staff remain rare.

The data as a whole suggests that pupil-to-pupil relations are the main locus of serious indiscipline around the school.' (SG, 2009, P 115)

Notably, there is a different pattern in relation to violence between pupils in schools with 1 in 4 primary teachers and 1 in 5 secondary teachers having witnessed pupil on pupil physical violence and aggression within the past week (SG, 2009). However, less than 25% of head teachers thought this violence had a serious or very serious impact on the running of the school (SG, 2009). Examples given of low level disruption are pupils talking out of turn (only 4% of primary and 2% of secondary teachers indicated that this had not happened in their classes in the past week, SG, 2009) or talking to others when the teacher is trying to teach. Recently 61% of secondary head teachers reported that lessons had been interrupted in the past week by pupil use of mobile phones (SG, 2009). More encouragingly 93% of primary teachers and 87% of secondary teachers were confident or very confident in their ability to promote positive behaviour (SG, 2009). 93% of primary teachers and 86% of secondary teachers also thought that all or most of their pupils were generally well behaved. Whereas teaching staff highly value the support they receive with regard to managing negative pupil behaviour and promoting positive behaviour, support staff only reported satisfaction with the training they received (SG, 2009). The pupils themselves were also broadly positive with 81% of primary and 59% of secondary school children indicating that they witnessed their peers participating in all or most lessons (SG, 2009).

Though the most recent survey (SG, 2009) does identify specific examples of both *positive* and *negative* pupil behaviour, there is a

⁸ Over 60% of teachers encountered low level disruption twice a day or more (SG, 2009).

general tendency in the earlier reports to focus on the latter. The reports undoubtedly paint a clear picture of the behavioural problems and *indiscipline* in schools. However, I do not think that sufficient attention has been given to the accurate conceptualisation of good behaviour and *discipline*. Moreover, I do not think that the recommendations to improve pupil behaviour contained in the *Better Behaviour Better Learning* policy (SEED, 2001) are coherent either. Bridges and Watts (2008) stress that policy has an inescapably normative character and that meaningful policy must interpret empirical research data (if appropriate to the enquiry) within a defensible normative framework. They usefully set out four criteria of value judgement and suggest that ‘if policy cannot pass these critical tests it is arguably ill-prepared’ (Bridges and Watts, 2008, p 59).

Firstly, Bridges and Watts ask whether or not the normative principles underlying the educational policy are intelligibly articulated. In this regard, to the credit of the policy makers under present discussion, the answer seems to be affirmative. Arguably, the most promising line of thought in *Better Behaviour Better Learning* is to be found in the following comment: ‘Discipline policy cannot, and should not, be separated from policy on learning and teaching – the two are inextricably linked’ (SEED, 2001, p 8). A similar view is expressed in the *Insight 15* report which advocates that discipline be seen as a means to effective learning: ‘Good discipline, however, is also an end in itself, an outcome of *schooling*’ (Munn et al, 2004, p 1). However, the aim of uniting discipline, teaching and learning would not appear to have been discovered in the course of empirical data collection; it is more in the nature of an *a priori* or conceptual assumption. Indeed, it is arguable that BBBL does not provide sufficiently clear guidance about what teachers should do to engender ‘good discipline’ in their classes because the policy does not say enough about what ‘good discipline’ actually *is*. Beyond identifying discipline and effective learning as desirable, little consideration is given in *Better Behaviour*

Better Learning or any of its follow up publications about what exactly these terms are supposed to mean. As we shall see in chapters two and three, in educational theory, discipline has been conceptualised in a least two very different ways: as a necessary part of a wider initiation into traditional forms of knowledge, and as a child centred educational order. Each of these concepts brings with it divergent practical implications but BBBL does not unambiguously endorse one model of discipline over another.

It is possible that the title of the policy *Better Behaviour Better Learning* might give some indication of how teachers are expected to foster positive behaviour. It seems to imply that good behaviour precedes learning⁹. The title suggests that educators should first learn how to get pupil attention so that they can thereafter help them to learn. In this regard *Better Behaviour Better Learning* and its follow-ups are liberally peppered with the language of classroom management and the reports do advocate this approach. In fact the stated conclusion of the *Insight 15* report is that the ‘picture suggests it is essential to *continue* to focus on behaviour management as a key policy area’ (Munn et al, 2004, p 8). Similarly, the most recent survey indicates that: *Better Behaviour Better Learning* is still seen as foundational to behaviour management in schools (SG, 2009).

It is arguable that *Better Behaviour Better Learning* is ‘ill-prepared’ to meet another criterion stipulated by Bridges and Watts (2008): namely, that the recommended actions in a policy are consistent with the principles that underpin it. In the next section (1.2) it will be suggested that the principle (stated in *BBBL*) of uniting discipline with teaching and learning is at odds with the conclusion that behaviour management should be a focal point for discipline policy and practice. In order to bring learning and discipline properly

⁹ George Head (2007, p 94) makes much the same point, suggesting that the report might be perceived as ‘prioritising behaviour over learning’. He adds that ‘dealing with behaviour as a prerequisite to addressing learning, therefore, may be the wrong starting point’. I tend to agree.

together it would seem necessary for discipline to be conceptualised as something that is *integral to* rather than *prior to*, learning. Behaviour management on the other hand (as 1.2 will explain) has the end of an orderly class, ready to learn, under the *extrinsic control* of the teacher. To try to tackle the main problem identified in the *Insight 15* report (namely persistent low level misbehaviour by pupils that inhibits learning) by focusing on behaviour management seems at odds with the integration of discipline, teaching and learning. Indeed, as we shall see, some philosophers doubt that it is justifiable to regard people and/or a class of pupils as entities that can or should be managed.

1.2 Should schools really aim to merely *manage* pupil behaviour?

Roger Slee (1995) argues that discipline needs to be reclaimed as an educational concept because a paradigm of social control exists in schools whereby discipline is construed as no more than a managerial skill. He bemoans the nature of the literature that dominates the school discipline debate, remarking that it centres primarily on classroom management techniques, techniques aimed not at what might best be done, but rather on what works in managing pupils in, very often, extremely difficult circumstances. Such pragmatic approaches to discipline he says are born from an uncritical acceptance that discipline is a synonym and ‘ultimately a verb, for control’ (Slee, 1995, p 7). He points out that though recent policy has ostensibly changed and become less punitive in nature, these changes are essentially cosmetic: the ‘functional imperative of control has not significantly altered’ (Slee, 1995, p 7). Although discipline complements teaching ‘control assumes a conflict of interest, disagreement concerning goals, and is tangential to the aims of education’ (Slee, 1995, p 28). Slee may have been commenting on discipline policy in Australia but I believe that his observations may be transposed and equally

applied to the current Scottish context and to *Better Behaviour Better Learning*.

Richard Smith (1985), like Slee, is also very sceptical of managerial approaches to discipline affirming that they mask an essentially manipulative treatment of pupils as means to ends and not as ends in themselves, worthy of dignity. MacIntyre (1984) too, has suggested that a manager cannot engage in moral debate because of the ways in which he relates to (or fails to relate to) people in his or her managerial role. A manager, he says, is someone who ‘treats ends as given, as outside his scope’, his ‘concern is with technique’ (ibid, p 30). However, although managers may not engage in moral debate, management itself is far from being normatively neutral. Management, Smith says, is ‘bound up with a way of regarding human relations in which manipulating people into compliant ways of behaving is thought acceptable.’ (Smith, 1985 p 22)

Smith suggests that management gives a misleading impression that its skills will enable teachers to be more detached, rational and ultimately professional. He argues that education ‘is a transaction between persons who have depth, and we ignore at our peril the role of feelings, the affective dimension to that depth’ (Smith, 1985 p 23). I too think that it may be problematic to place impersonal behaviour management techniques at the centre of approaches to improving discipline in schools. As I hope to make clear over the course of the thesis, discipline is just not something that a teacher *can do* to his or her pupils through the use of a repertoire of superficial techniques aimed at establishing and maintaining attention. The personalities and characters of teachers are more likely to help foster a climate of genuine discipline in class¹⁰. Discipline probably most often occurs in school, when focus is placed on education and learning, rather than on what precedes them. Indeed, in this thesis it is instead argued that

¹⁰ I will in particular elaborate on the educational benefit of teachers having desirable character traits and practical dispositions in chapter nine.

discipline should centrally involve pupils consistently engaging in *worthwhile* learning¹¹. At any rate, in regard to discipline, schools must I think aim to do more than merely manage pupil behaviour.

It is notable that reports on pupil behaviour in Scotland have been largely informed by empirical enquiry - by surveys, interviews and focus groups with various educational professionals and school pupils. Slee (1995), Smith (1985), Clark (1998), P S Wilson (1971) and J Wilson (1981) have all insisted that issues of discipline in schools can only hope to be fully understood and resolved through moral philosophical rather than empirical investigation. Clark¹² suggests that much of the unrest in schools can be traced back to teachers not being clear about the distinction between control and discipline more than to the absence of an empirical knowledge base to guide their performance. Smith (1985) similarly observes that teachers should explore the ambiguities of the concepts underlying the discipline problem. He says that any attempt to solve disciplinary problems needs to be *prefaced* by a discussion of concepts. 'Sometimes we may find that in the process of clarification the substantial problem effectively disappears' (Smith, 1985, p 4). I however am unconvinced that such conceptual clarifications could ever resolve discipline issues altogether. Nonetheless, in the remainder of this chapter (and especially 1.4 & 1.5) it will be suggested that educational philosophy is a discipline that has historically involved the careful analysis of educational concepts and that as such, it can provide particular insight into the broader question of what school discipline ought to be for. In the following section (1.3) it will first however be stressed that no educational research (be the methodology largely conceptual and/or empirical) is ever likely to generate final answers to educational problems generally, or school discipline particularly. If

¹¹ Peters' description of worthwhile activities is described in chapter 2 and contrasted with P S Wilson's in chapter 3.

¹² Clark's distinction between *discipline* and *control* is explored in more detail in chapter 2 (at 2.1) and the concepts are discussed in depth in chapter 3.

social scientific and philosophical inquiries cannot provide definitive answers to educational matters, what can they tell us?

1.3 Knowledge and the limits of experience

*Let others creep by timid steps, and slow,
On plain Experience lay foundations low,
By common sense to common knowledge bred,
And last, to Nature's Cause thro' Nature led.'*

*'See skulking Truth to her old cavern fled,
Mountains of Casuistry heap'd o'er her head!
Philosophy, that lean'd on Heav'n before,
Shrinks to her second cause, and is no more.'*

(Pope, *The Dunciad* Book IV, 2008)

Alexander Pope (2008), in his mock epic poem *The Dunciad*, depicts a time at which humanity (or at least London) is presided over by the Goddess of Dullness. Whereas the deities or demigods of Homeric Greece intervened in the lives of mortals for a range of different purposes, Dullness has only one: the stultification of critical thought, of creativity and of imagination, to the end of ensuring that humanity with 'trifling head' and 'contracted heart' knows itself less. Williams argues that the poem is amongst other things a 'thoroughgoing Socratic allegory' (1953, p 810) which warns of the danger of mistaking lowly sense-derived knowledge for true wisdom. From the stanzas above, it would appear that Pope construed experience and the laws of nature and causation as all too often obstructive to the pursuit of higher ideals of wisdom, truth and philosophy. Indeed, Pope's apocalyptic vision of a modern world of dullness suggests that scientific inquiry based on experience alone may no longer identify the truth but actually obscure it while destroying philosophy entirely.

Smith (2008) speculates that art and literary criticism¹³ might inform a more broadly conceived idea of educational research. Putman also indicates that social scientific inquiry might benefit from becoming ‘more “literary”’ (1978, p 77) and Sleight (2011) implies that literature can help to make sense of both the history of and the claims made in science. Griffin (1988) however comments that we do not primarily read Pope for his theory, but for his poetry, and in the context of this discussion there is substantial merit in this point. Indeed, Collier also cites Pope’s poetry and concludes that his views are tantamount to ‘anti-science rhetoric’ (1994, p 238). Thus, it is my view that while imaginative literature might be a source of ideas it is probably not helpful to think of such material as substitute for reasoned argument¹⁴. Indeed, though reasonably frequent reference will be made to poetry in this thesis, the intention of this is not to *evidence* but rather *stimulate thought about* a particular claim or direction of inquiry. With this in mind, it does seem that many educational philosophers think that research in education has more recently neglected theory relevant to the field and focussed too much upon empirical data collection processes.

Three recent issues of the ‘Journal of Philosophy of Education’ (May 2006 vol. 40 (2); Nov 2006, vol. 40 (4) both Ed. by Bridges & Smith and August 2008 (42) S1) were devoted to concerns a little like those expressed by Pope and in particular, the trend towards understanding all wisdom as originating from experience. The function of educational research has, as a consequence, it is claimed, become conceived of, as ‘essentially, or even solely, a matter of discovering what works’ (Bridges & Smith, 2006, p 132). Indeed, for the last fifteen years or more, some philosophers of education have argued that there has been increasing pressure on educational research to provide practical answers and solutions to practical problems. Hammersly (1997, 2006) Pring (2000)

¹³ Smith exemplifies the specific sort of process he has in mind by sensitively critiquing the poetry of Wordsworth and Auden.

¹⁴ I should acknowledge particular gratitude to Professor Lindsay Paterson who has helped my thinking on this matter.

Smith (1987, 2006) and Biesta (2007) all observe the promulgation of this tendency and in their different ways locate as its primary driver a view that knowledge generated by social science can be without difficulty applied to predict and influence human behaviour. Such a simplistic view of educational research, threatens to 'consign to oblivion philosophy, history, much sociology and, in fact, anything that is explicitly theoretical' (Bridges & Smith, 2006, p 132). Hammersly (1997, 2006) Pring (2000) Smith (1987, 2006) and Biesta (2007) all suggest that the arguments of Hargreaves (1996a & 1996b) embody this tendency to think that if only enough empirical evidence was gathered, practical educational problems could be resolved. What though does Hargreaves say about research in education?

In education there is simply not enough evidence on the effects and effectiveness of what teachers do in classrooms to provide an evidence-based corpus of knowledge. The failure of educational researchers, with a few exceptions, to create a substantial body of knowledge equivalent to evidence-based medicine means that teaching is not—and never will be—a research-based profession unless there is major change in the kind of research that is done in education'. (Hargreaves, 1996b, p 3)

Hargreaves asserts that teaching should be, but is not, a research based profession and that unlike medicine it has no agreed knowledge base of evidence to guide it. Establishing a research base of evidence about effective practice should Hargreaves says be 'a singularly important' (ibid, p 1) priority for educational research¹⁵. He maintains that that there is almost no compelling evidence which 'demonstrates conclusively that if teachers change their practice from x to y there will be a significant and enduring improvement in teaching and learning' (ibid, p 5). The lack of powerful evidence about effective practice is, he says, the main reason why educational research ill serves teachers. Education, like medicine, thus needs

¹⁵ Hargreaves does, to be fair, acknowledge that enhancing the effectiveness of teaching can only be achieved by a combination of means (1996b, p 1). He nevertheless does immediately thereafter assert his view that establishing education as an evidenced based profession is the single most effective way of improving practice.

‘evidence about what works with whom under what conditions and with what effects’ (ibid, p 7).

Hargreaves states that the ‘the so-called foundation disciplines of education – psychology, sociology, philosophy and history... are seen to consist of “theory” which is strongly separated from practice’ (ibid, p 1-2). Hargreaves suggests that it is because of this disconnection (between theory and practice) that educational research provides ‘low value...as a guide to the solution of practical problems’ (ibid, p 2). He thus argues that practitioners ought to have a greater involvement in educational research. Indeed, he states that a ‘new partnership between researchers and practitioners must be at the heart of any reform’ (Hargreaves, 1996b, p 5) in educational research. Hargreaves also importantly says that research in medicine, like that in natural science, ‘has a broadly cumulative character’ (ibid, p 2) in that research projects build on previous evidence or theory so as to refine the knowledge base in the field. Hargreaves however adds that much research in education is ‘non-cumulative’. His reasoning here seems to suggest he thinks that researchers in education need to move away from the ‘so-called foundation disciplines’ and instead adopt a more natural scientific approach (and greater practitioner input in any such research process) in order to build up a more compelling body of evidence that can better guide practice.

‘Those who want researchers to cut the theory and simply to say “what works”, forget that what counts as “working” makes many unquestioned assumptions which need to be examined’ (Pring, 2004, p 220).

Pring states that educational research does not fail to provide teachers and policy makers with the answers they want because of an insufficient empirical knowledge base as Hargreaves would have it. The reasons for the perceived failure, Pring indicates, lie elsewhere. He (2000) contends, as has Atkinson (2000) that the true nature of many of the problems that Hargreaves raises need to be recognised for what

they are: as philosophical and conceptual rather than empirical problems.

'Evidence-based policy and practice' are demanded without analysis of what counts as evidence in different kinds of discourse. Certainty is sought where there is no option but to live in a world of uncertainties.' (Pring, 2004, p 7)

Pring explains there are various different notions of what evidence is and that the term has different meanings and associations depending on the 'kind of discourse one is engaged in' (Pring, 2004, p 197). He distinguishes between evidence that governments might seek to support a particular policy and the evidence scientific research can actually provide about social behaviour. He is insistent that evidence should not be mistaken for proof arguing that there 'is always a logical gap between the conclusion and the evidence for the conclusion.' (Pring, 2004, p 199) There is an inherent unpredictability he says in complex social situations like teaching and as such there is a logical limit to which any intervention (evidence-based or otherwise) can ensure a given set of consequences. Hammersley concurs with this, saying that there are serious difficulties in forming conclusive bases of knowledge relating to 'causal patterns in social phenomena' (Hammersley, 1997, p 212). At the core of these problems he says is the degree to which 'we can have a science of human behaviour of the kind that models itself, even remotely, on the natural sciences' (Hammersley, 1997, p 212). Peter Winch, fifty years ago also argued that the core features of our understanding of modern social life are 'incompatible with concepts central to the activity of scientific prediction'. (Winch, 1958, p 88)

The converse view that scientific methods can produce certain knowledge that enables accurate prediction of social situations would seem to be the only¹⁶ philosophical justification for the wholesale adoption of a 'what works' pedagogy. Hammersley has more recently

¹⁶ Albeit, in my view wrong-headed.

been particularly critical of quantitative social science methods being perceived as the research ideal, reiterating that they 'can only tell us what is false, not what is true (Hammersly, 2006, p 275)'. He maintains that when experimental error is considered, even what is false is not certain. Smeyers (2006), in his article on Winch, observes that even if science could tell us what was real in social situations this would not be a view from within science but about science; it would essentially come from outside of science and is as such only verifiable outside of science. However, the criticisms of social science made by Hammersly and Smeyers are probably well wide of the mark as many philosophers of social science have themselves all stressed that the discipline ought to combine empirical data collection with wider conceptual considerations. Putman (1978), Hacking (1981) and Collier (1994) all indicate that rigorous social scientific inquiries do not presuppose that: 1) methodology in social science can be modelled on that by which the natural world is studied, nor that; 2) human behaviour can be invariably predicted through scientific experiment. Putman states that it is 'accepted doctrine in Philosophy of Science that inductive testing of theories presupposes some *a priori* (in the sense of antecedent) weighting of the theories – a weighting *prior* to the checking') (1978, p 75).

For Putman abstract theory and empirical evidence both have a role to play in the formation of defensible theories of social behaviour. Importantly, he suggests that in terms of increasing our understanding of practical knowledge (a category which school discipline would seem to almost invariably fall under) human judgement may be just as important and necessary as formal scientific experiment. Putman states that in scientific investigation, 'it is a feature of *practical* knowledge that we often have to use ourselves (or other people) as the measuring instruments' (1978, p 72). Putman indicates that skilled human judgement probably matters just as much in *natural* as well as *social scientific* inquiry. Collier too makes

clear the view that social science does not and should not exclusively concern itself with establishing social facts (based on either Hume like casual laws or positivist assumptions) that can be used to predict future social conduct. He states that: 'in philosophy as in science, while there can be justified beliefs and there can be progress, there can be no *final theory*, unsusceptible to revision and improvement' (Collier, 1994, p 23). As we shall now go on to see, it seems that many philosophers of *social science and education* actually agree on an important point – that theories (and the evidence which informs such theory) that seek to predict social behaviour cannot be irrevocably proven.

Atkinson (2000) argues that is highly debatable whether educational research can ever come up with final solutions to pedagogical problems. Carr too similarly maintains that 'the questions raised in the context of anything worth calling a moral life are also interminable...and resistant to closure (Carr, 2007 p 402)'. *Better Behaviour Better Learning* does appear to appreciate some of these concerns stating that 'if there was a straightforward answer to the problem of discipline in schools, someone would have discovered it by this stage' (SEED, 2001, p 7). If the reason that no solutions to ill discipline have been found is that there will likely never be any, then it would seem nonsensical to criticise (as Hargreaves has more broadly) any educational research (empirical or otherwise) that fails to provide solutions to problems that cannot by their nature be finally solved. It seems to me that in terms of discipline the best we can hope for is the identification of clear reasons why some approaches are more defensible than others. Empirical evidence may well have important insights into this process but it can only provide part of the picture. It certainly does seem mistaken to hope or think that research into pupil behaviour could yield a body of evidence of final solutions to the many practical problems of discipline that teachers face.

Atkinson (2000) and Biesta (2007) suggest that 'what works' merely records what has worked for some people in specific circumstances in the past. The real duty of research is to look forward 'not to guaranteed improvements, but to the rich potential of critical discourse and the promise of an uncertain future' (Atkinson, 2000, p 328). Similarly, Biesta indicates that educational research should not be used to provide teachers with prescriptive rules for action but rather hypotheses for *their* intelligent problem solving. Reid (1968) also observes that the practice of teaching should be constituted by more than the application of intellectual rules. It should involve, he says, original and intelligent decision making that is influenced by educational theory. Arguably research into pupil discipline should centrally involve a sustained critical discourse for the purpose of assisting teachers to make intelligent, well informed practical decisions.

Better Behaviour Better Learning is it seems to me though very light in terms of such critical discourse. Though the fundamental purpose of Government policy is clearly not to conduct abstract philosophy, Conroy, Davis and Enslin (2008) have recently argued that philosophical investigation should be integrated with empirical evidence throughout policy development. As they put it, 'philosophy helps policy through assisting in the clothing of numbers' (Conroy et al, 2008, p 171). If it is accepted that some sort of philosophical debate is central to the discipline problem and that such debate has not been substantially engaged with anywhere else, it would seem important that educators themselves scrutinise their conceptualisations of discipline. How though might educational philosophy support the practical decision making and problem solving of educators? Indeed, is educational philosophy a discipline that may be entirely conducted by practitioners themselves? Is there such a thing as a philosophic method? In addressing these questions I will suggest that some recent caricatures of analytical philosophy of education have: 1) not done

justice to the diversity of thought within the tradition and; 2) underestimated the clarity *and* insight that such inquiry can bring to bear on matters of educational importance.

1.4 What is Educational Philosophy?

'The philosophy of education must help make clear those factors that are relevant to wise decision making in education. It cannot make them. Yet it must keep the live context in mind.' (Archambault, 1968, p 9)

There has been much recent debate within educational philosophy over what this field of inquiry is, or perhaps, ought to be. Paul Hirst and Wilfred Carr recently engaged in a significant exchange on this subject (Hirst & W Carr, 2005). Hirst affirms that 'philosophy, like psychology, sociology and history, is an abstracting, academic and theoretical discipline' that can significantly aid 'the exercise of practical reason in educational affairs' (*ibid*, p 618). In defining educational philosophy in *theoretical* terms, Hirst rejects the argument of Wilfred Carr, who maintains that educational philosophy is inherently, indeed, exclusively *practical*. Carr says that the 'philosophy of education cannot *inform* educational practice because it is itself a *form* of practice' (*ibid*, p 623). In his rejoinder to Hirst, Carr adds that educational philosophy is 'entirely¹⁷ dependent on the willingness of educational practitioners to reflectively recover the unacknowledged prejudices at work in their practical knowledge and understanding' (*ibid*, p 625-626). Hirst does not soften his overall opposition to Carr's practical philosophy but he does agree that educational philosophy 'needs educational practitioners' (*ibid*, p 630) willing and able to reflect on their own practice. Educational philosophy has, since this

¹⁷ Wilfred Carr makes much the same point in an earlier paper remarking that 'any satisfactory resolution' to the discipline's problems 'will only be achieved by the philosophy of education's proficient and experienced practitioners' (2004, p 70).

exchange, been characterised in a range of others ways that do not descend into a seeming dichotomy, between theory and practice¹⁸.

A recent issue of the *Journal of the Philosophy of education* specifically considered issues of philosophical methodology (Ruitenberg, 2009). A diverse range of articles in this issue are grouped around the general question of what philosophers of education do and how they do it. A variety of different methodological approaches are advocated. Holma (2009) suggests that analysis, synthesis and dialogue ought to be combined. Smith (2009) emphasises the need for attentiveness to those with whom we engage in dialogue about educational issues. Vokey (2009) persuasively argues that dialectical argument can shed light on why one conceptual scheme is preferable to another. He argues that the merit of particular theoretical frameworks can be assessed against four virtues of intelligibility, internal coherence, plausibility and practical success. Bonnet (2009) stresses the role of phenomenological investigation and Biesta (2009) that of witnessing deconstruction. The latter argues that a degree of miscommunication is inevitable in education.

Bingham (2009) suggests that methodology in philosophy should be taken literally and metaphorically. The term 'method', he says, should at least in part 'be taken as just that, a name' (Bingham, 2009, p 416). Educational research that 'names' a philosopher, for example Aristotle¹⁹, gives the reader a clue that the inquiry in question is likely to be shaped by distinctively Aristotelian thought and content. Similarly, Ruitenberg notes that 'research methods in philosophy of education cannot be divorced from content' (2009, p 318). Thus, while there is far from contemporary consensus about the precise nature of

¹⁸ I must confess to finding the views of Hirst much more balanced and plausible than Carr's. The logic of Carr's stance suggests he thinks professional philosophers can offer no insight to educational issues. For a critique of the debate between Hirst & Carr, see Long (2008) who proposes a 'third way' that finds value for both the theoretical, and the practical, in educational philosophy. Importantly, in Chapter 2 Hirst's educational philosophy will be further explored.

¹⁹ I 'name' Aristotle here as his thought significantly shapes this dissertation. Bingham cites Rancière to exemplify his theory.

educational philosophy, there remains widespread recognition amongst most²⁰ of its proponents that content and theory are central to philosophical inquiry. Importantly many educational philosophers also agree that one of their main tasks is to think critically about content and about educational problems, through *conceptual analysis*. In their different ways O'Connor (1957), Archambault (1968), Reid (1968), Best (1968), Peters (1970), Hirst & Peters (1975), Curren (2007) and Holma (2009)) all agree that conceptual analysis is one of, if not the, principal tools at the educational philosophers disposal.

Although diverse philosophers since antiquity²¹ have provided considerable insight into educational problems, the philosophy of education did not really emerge as a distinct discipline until the twentieth century (Archambault 1968, Blake et al 2003 & Hirst & W Carr 2005). D J O'Connor (1957) was one of the first to employ the methods of philosophical analysis to specifically educational problems. He argued that philosophy was an 'activity of criticism and clarification' (O'Connor, 1957, P 4) that could be exercised on any subject matter. The phrase 'philosophy of education' refers to 'those problems of philosophy that are of direct relevance to educational theory' (O'Connor, 1957, p 14-15). The later groundbreaking work of Richard Peters and Paul Hirst²² in the United Kingdom in the 1960's and 1970's, established analysis as the predominant and even paradigmatic style in the philosophy of education (Blake et al 2003). However, the *analytic* tradition has not been without its critics²³. Moreover, a separate *continental* tradition has also flourished alongside it.

Abraham Edel (1972) argued that the British analytic movement had a 'soft spot' (1972, p 132) and had not fulfilled its potential as a

²⁰ Wilfred Carr being a prominent exception

²¹ For example Plato's *Republic* (1987), Aristotle's *The Politics* (1981), Rousseau's *Emile* (1993) and Dewey's *Democracy and Education* (2008)

²² *Ethics and Education* (1970) by Peters and the *Logic of Education* by Hirst and Peters (1975) are paradigmatic examples of philosophical analysis being applied to education. These texts will receive more detailed discussion in chapters 2 & 3.

²³ Wilfred Carr is perhaps the most prominent – however, there are as we shall see others too.

result. He disparaged Peters in particular for drawing too sharp a distinction between linguistic and empirical analysis. Edel suggested that the analytic method either excludes empirical, normative and contextual factors from consideration altogether or it only adds them on at the end after the analysis is over. He stated that the 'remedy would seem to lie in a fuller integration of the empirical, the normative, and the contextual (especially the socio-cultural) *within* the analytic method' (1972, p 132). In the opening chapter of the Blackwell Guide to the Philosophy of Education Blake, Smeyers, Smith and Standish (2003) also argue that analytical philosophy is too dependent upon clarifying obscurities in ordinary language. The analytic movement, they say was furthermore guilty of 'almost wholly' ignoring educational philosophy conducted outside English speaking countries. Whilst English speaking philosophy of education focussed attention on concepts of schooling, the Continental movement primarily considered the transition from childhood to maturity (Blake et al 2003). Significantly however, English speaking philosophers of education have more recently been influenced by Continental thinkers like Foucault and Lyotard, who both reject the possibility of establishing ethical or epistemological foundations (Blake et al 2003) that can have universal explanatory power.

If the search for universal foundations and principles to direct educational practice is abandoned, the 'role of theory begins to look like interpretation rather than explanation' (Blake et al 2003, p 8-9). The Continental tradition, they argue, holds particular promise as a way of engaging in more interpretive educational dialogue. Whilst analytic techniques remain useful, educational philosophers can no longer afford to stand apart and merely clarify concepts like 'Kings in disguise' prescribing and proscribing (Blake et al, 2003). They suggest that the philosophy of education should perhaps prioritise *insight* over *clarity* (Blake et al, 2003). Although it is true that Peters and other philosophers in the analytic mould did perceive linguistic analysis as

a central method of better understanding the field of education, I think the criticisms (of Edel 1972 and Blake et al 2003) glibly misrepresent or misinterpret both the tradition as a whole and the thinkers in question.

Firstly, I think the distinction between insight and clarity is a questionable one. To be sure, clarity need not be insightful and it arguably often does arise without much wider understanding of all the factors that bear on a given matter. However, it seems to me that a central feature of genuine insight is clarity. Although perspicacity may initially be experienced ‘through a glass darkly’, it is difficult to see how a deep insight could remain usefully ambiguous for too long. Importantly, the conceptual clarity achieved by analytic philosophers such as Peters and Hirst has had enduring influence precisely because it retains the capacity to provide rich insight into educational problems. Secondly, Peters (1970) and Archambault (1968) both make clear that the analytic educational philosopher should not be thought of as some sort of masked regent who dispenses instructions from on high. Peters acknowledges that there was a time²⁴ when ‘the philosophy of education consisted in the formulation of high level directives’ (1970, p15). However he emphasises that it is *because of* the analytic revolution in the twentieth century that the vast majority of philosophers no longer ‘think it is their function to provide such high-level directives for education or for life’ (1970, p15). Best is even more emphatic on this point, declaring that the articulation and prescription of ‘educational aims is not, and never has been, the appointed task of the philosopher’ (Best, 1968, p 52).

My principal point of dispute, however, with Edel and the Blackwell Guide is that they treat the analytic movement as if it is of one mind only. They both suggest that analytic philosophers’ of education restrict themselves to being conceptual under-labourers;

²⁴ Archambault and Peters appear to have antiquity in mind here as they both identify Plato specifically.

the labour being the clarification of concepts. D J O'Connor however makes clear in his Introduction to the Philosophy of Education that philosophical analysis 'does not, as is often supposed apply to a single 'school' of philosophy but is used to refer to the work of a very large number of philosophers of widely differing views' (O'Connor, 1957, v). In the opening section of *Philosophical Analysis and Education* (edited by Archambault 1968) Reid and Best present two such alternative analytic perspectives of educational philosophy. Best argues that the educational philosopher should be a mere under-labourer. He thinks the function of philosophical analysis should be the relatively modest one of systematically erasing ambiguous language from educational theory. Reid however articulates a much more wide ranging account and it seems to me that Peters and Hirst's views have much more in common with his.

'Philosophy of education will be the use of philosophical instruments, the application of philosophical methods, to questions of education...both the more analytic emphases of philosophy (with linguistics) and the synthetic ones. This is the "philosophy of education."' (Reid, 1968, p 26)

Reid suggests that analysis constitutes only half of educational philosophy. As he puts it: 'analysis is, in fact, one moment, one emphasis, in the strictly indivisible life of philosophy; synthesis is the other moment'. (Reid, 1968, p 24) The purpose of thinking about concepts (of breaking them down and putting them together) is to cast light upon educational practice. More recently, Holma (2009) has also argued that educational philosophy should involve a thorough methodological process of analysis and synthesis. She argues that the 'process of disassembling and reassembling...is...the way of getting access to a new, more profound understanding of the issue' (Holma, 2009, p 326). What though should educational philosophers be trying to rebuild out of their profounder grasp of concepts? The potential for educational theory to aid practical decision-making has already been noted. Archambault, however, observes that the synthesis also often

leads philosophers to articulate a more coherent set of educational aims.

Reid (1968) conceded that some analytical philosophers had downplayed the significance of their inquiries or neglected to synthesise and reformulate educational aims on the basis of prior analysis (Best being an obvious example). However, I do not think the implication (Blake et al, 2003) that the entire analytic tradition confined itself to under-labourer status is in any way justified. Peters (1970) stresses that educational philosophy should *analyse* concepts *and* apply insights from other relevant theoretical disciplines so as to *synthesise* an account of what worthwhile educational activities are. Peters and Hirst (1975) similarly indicate that individually analysed concepts ought to be considered in relation to other educationally salient concepts. They insist that conceptual analysis must have a wider point beyond analysis itself and they are quite explicit about theirs in the first chapter of *Logic of Education* (1975).

They state that their purpose in *analysing* authoritarian and child-centred pedagogies is to *synthesise* and compose new concepts of education and human development and think through their curricular implications. To be sure, many analytic philosophers have prescribed aims for education but these have generally been quite modest (Archambault, 1968) and certainly not hidden. Contrary to the charges of Blake and others there is nothing *covert* about the aspirations articulated by philosophers such as Peters and Hirst. A central feature of the work of various educational philosophers²⁵ has involved and resulted in the identification of ends and aims for education. Pointedly, the authors of the Blackwell Guide would not seem to disagree with this function; philosophers can and should be motivated to 'engage in explorations of what education might be or

²⁵ See for example Dewey's *Democracy and Education*, Whitehead's *The Aims of Education*, O'Connor's *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (1957), Marples R (1999) *The Aims of Education* and Peters *Ethics and Education* (1970).

might become' (Blake et al, 2003, p 15). The important point seems to be that educational aims should not be thought of as final. Arguably philosophers from *both* the Analytic and Continental traditions have grasped the necessity that any purposes identified for education be subject to a cyclical process of statement, interpretation, criticism, dialogue, appropriate amendment and restatement. Archambault (1968), for example indicates that educational aims must keep the actual, live context in mind. O'Connor similarly argues that though the open and critically minded person often makes up their mind, they do not do so irrevocably (O'Connor, 1957). A central claim of this chapter has been that social science and philosophy can both shed light upon research into education generally and school discipline particularly. However, throughout this thesis it will be maintained that philosophy (and especially that of Aristotle) can offer particular insight into the question of the pedagogical purposes that school discipline ought to be directed towards.

1.5 What is the purpose of school Discipline?

In this chapter, it has so far been argued that key policies regarding pupil behaviour in Scotland do not rest upon a clear notion of what discipline is, or what it should be, for. In particular, it has been claimed that the broad endorsement of managerial strategies to improve pupil behaviour does not seem like the most morally or pedagogically sound way to unite discipline, teaching and learning in classrooms. This thesis will therefore try to articulate a more coherent and justifiable theory of discipline. It will specifically address the question of what purposes discipline ought to be put to in schools. Given the fundamentally normative nature of this question and the conceptual confusion observed in answers given to date, especially in Scottish policy, this inquiry will proceed in a largely philosophical manner. It has been intimated that there are a number of different ways in which educational philosophy may be legitimately conceived.

Arguably however, it has historically²⁶ had two core features: the *analysis* of concepts of educational import so as to resolve ambiguities where they occur; followed by the *synthesis* of these newly clarified concepts into a broader account of educational aims.

The first and second sections of this dissertation will therefore *analyse* the concept of discipline, to better understand the justifiable purposes to which it might be put in schools. Importantly, philosophical analysis of discipline will not be considered in isolation from, but in relation to, other bodies of knowledge bearing on education. I will particularly draw upon epistemology and ethics in this regard. In chapters two and three, it will be maintained that both traditional and child-centred theories of discipline and education, are beset by *epistemic* problems, and in chapter 8 it will be argued that an Aristotelian epistemology is more promising.

In chapters four, five, six and seven, it will be argued that the aspiration to develop neo-Aristotelian habit-virtues in pupils, through discipline, is also more *ethically* defensible than any rule-focussed approach. Crucially, in the third section of the thesis a neo-Aristotelian conceptualisation of discipline will be *synthesised* into a reconstructed framework of wider educational aims. In chapter 9, a definition of discipline will be delineated, and it will be argued that it broadly accords with Aristotle's wider theory of moral and intellectual development. Importantly, the role that the teacher might have in enacting such a concept of discipline will be explored. In the final chapter, Aristotle's ethics and epistemology will be employed to critique the recent Curriculum for Excellence.

²⁶ Wilfred Carr has tried to articulate an 'alternative history' (2004, p 69) of the philosophy of education. He did this to overcome what he saw as the limitations in, and the 'hegemonic dominance' (ibid, p 67) of, the analytic tradition. Carr remarks that although enthusiasm for analytic educational philosophy has waned in some parts, the 'historical understanding of the discipline that it conveyed has not yet been replaced' (ibid, 58). I do not, however find Carr's alternative history very convincing - especially his interpretation of Aristotle. As chapter 8 will show, Aristotle, far from advocating a 'practical philosophy' that had little or no room for 'theory'; actually thought that mans' highest flourishing was realised in distinctively theoretical contemplation.

The philosophical approaches explored over the course of this thesis will arguably have potential to contribute to educational discourse and practice in at least two, important ways. Firstly, the concepts delineated, might help to clarify the values that could, and perhaps should, underpin Scottish policy in regard to the curriculum and pupil behaviour. Secondly, it is hoped that the theory discussed might also inform teachers' practical decision making. Throughout this thesis it will be maintained that discipline should not be thought of as a formula or set of techniques that can be applied to pupils without difficulty to get their attention. It will rather be stressed that discipline ought to be infused throughout the educational process both as a *means to* and *part of* valuable learning. In the second and third parts, it will be argued that Aristotle's moral and intellectual virtues may offer a particularly good framework for such valuable learning. However, the ideas formed in this dissertation should not be thought of as final and complete in themselves. It is clear that the merit and status of educational objectives should be continually questioned and revised where necessary, through criticism, practical reflection and dialogue. Over the next two chapters it will become apparent that discipline in schools has in the past been conceptualised in at least two contrasting ways. To begin with, therefore, a 'traditional' view of discipline and education will be explored in the next chapter.

Chapter 2: Discipline, Traditions of Knowledge and Rules

In this chapter a 'traditional' view of discipline will be analysed. Initially, Clark's distinction between 'traditional order by control' and 'progressive order by discipline' will be outlined. It will be contended that Clark unfairly infers that Peters is a proponent of order by control. Peters rather defends the view that pupils should be disciplined both for, and by, *traditions of knowledge*. Some of the main features of a liberal view of knowledge, culture and education will thereafter be explored. Notably, it will be explained that discipline in a liberal education either prepares the way for or actually constitutes, the initiation of pupils into worthwhile forms of public knowledge. It will be speculated that John Wilson and Emile Durkheim might be better representatives of a traditional theory in so far as they construe obedience as the definitive quality of the disciplined pupil. However, Clark's caricature of traditional order by control does not really fit Wilson or Durkheim either, as both these thinkers emphasise that school discipline must be morally educational. It is concluded that discipline in schools has been paradigmatically conceptualised as the necessary submission of pupils to rules.

2.1 Discipline and Control: Two kinds of School Order

'Controlled children believe in the external value of the directions of the controller at least sufficiently to follow them. Disciplined children, on the other hand, observe the internal value of the activities that they are engaged in because they subscribe to them.' (Clark, 1998, p 295)

In chapter one, class management techniques were criticised for being manipulative and for hinging on the idea that good pupil behaviour must be established before any useful learning can occur. Traditional models of education and discipline have also faced similar accusations. In his article 'Discipline in Schools', Clark (1998) articulates what he takes to be the fundamental differences between two conceptions of educational *order*. He firstly identifies nine criteria

that typically underpin the dominant paradigm of order in schools that he calls *traditional order by control*. He thereafter contrasts this model with a *child centred order by discipline* and he delineates a set of nine features that help to flesh out this concept. Order by control and order by discipline are, he stresses, rival moral traditions that cannot be reconciled²⁷. The dual perspectives he details diverge in a number of ways but perhaps most crucially in relation to their assumptions about human nature and in particular, the nature of the child. Clark paraphrases Peters (1968) and indicates that order by control firmly attaches itself to a view of the child as an uneducated barbarian at the gates of civilization. It is the teacher's responsibility, on this view, to initiate pupils into 'forms of knowledge' and external sanctions and rewards may be employed in this process where necessary. Important learning, on the traditional view, can be forced on pupils. He states that 'children's choices can be overridden in the light of higher considerations known only to the teacher...order must be established before any learning is possible' (Clark, 1998, p 291). Obedience, Clark says, is the central virtue of order by control and such order must be established *prior to* any teaching and learning. Order by control 'prevails where there is a coincidence between the teacher's wishes and what the children do (Clark, 1998, p 291)'; as such all pupil learning can be directly attributed to teacher effort.

'Order by discipline' conversely for Clark, rests on a view of the child as self-reflective and self-directing. Here order arises when children pursue their own interests rather than those of their teachers. Discipline on this model requires pupil submission to the learning they are engaged in rather than to the propositions or instructions of the teacher. As such, he says, order cannot be established before learning begins; the order is *part of and not prior to* the learning in question. Children should select for themselves, or at least assent to, the curriculum they experience and there must 'be the

²⁷ However, Clark is doubtful that pupils who are forced to learn something are being treated morally at all.

possibility of a child veto on teacher initiated curricula'. (Clark, 1998, p 294) The teacher should act as consultant in, rather than director of, the child's life and learning. External rewards should also only be utilised in cases of genuine achievement.

'Educating children morally consists not of insisting on their being moral, but of their learning (and, I think, being persuaded) to become so.' (Clark, 1998, p 299)

I wholeheartedly endorse Clark's sentiment that teachers should persuade children to become morally educated²⁸. For Clark, there is an inherent moral educational dimension to the view of order by discipline that is not apparent in order by control. Indeed, Clark appears to think that order by control is essentially immoral insofar as pupils do not have the opportunity to shape the direction of their own lives; their choices are made for them by their teachers. It is for this reason, he says, that educators often take discipline to be a euphemism for control. By calling control, 'discipline', it is possible for teachers to think that by getting what they want and think best, they are getting what *is* best for pupils. However, Clark implies that if pupils are denied choice with regard to their learning experiences they are being relegated to the status of non-moral beings. 'Each individual child's freedom to conduct her narrative is inviolable on pain of her status as a person being compromised (Clark, 1998, p 294)'.

Clark indicates that pupil behaviour in schools is an arena in which moral education *must* occur. It is incoherent, he says, to make pupils morally liable for their behaviour without making them morally responsible for it. One of the salient distinguishing features of the concepts of discipline and control, he suggests, is that the former is by its very nature morally educational. The latter, however, is not, at least in those moments when teachers compel pupils to do things against their will. It is for this reason, more than any other, that Clark

²⁸ The role of persuasion in moral education will be explored in detail in part 2 of this thesis.

advocates rejection of traditional order by control and the adoption of a curriculum governed by pupil interest. In chapter three PS Wilson's (Wilson, 1971) more clearly articulated philosophy of discipline founded on pupil interest will be analysed alongside Clark's. In this chapter, however, Clark's 'traditional' concept of order by control will be critiqued; his implication that Peters was a traditionalist in this limited mould will also be challenged. At 2.4 it will be acknowledged that Peters did think that aspects of discipline ought to be reinforced *prior to learning* to ensure the minimum order necessary for that learning to be possible. However, Peters endorsed a much broader concept of discipline. He also thought that discipline was a vital *part of learning*. Advocates of a liberal education, of the sort advanced by Peters, invariably believe that discipline should centrally involve pupils coming to comprehend the distinctive point of *disciplines* of knowledge.

2.2 Epistemology and Liberal Education

'Education implies the intentional bringing about of a desirable state of mind.'
(Peters, 1968, p 91)

In *Education as Initiation* (1968) Richard Peters does indicate that a child is a 'barbarian at the gates of civilisation'. However, the meaning of this aphorism seems dependent on the particular conception of 'knowledge' that Peters' develops in this essay. The significance of the epistemic component appears to have been unduly downplayed by Clark as he pays no careful attention to Peters' theory of knowledge. Peters is not arguing that the child is a barbarian *per se*; he is rather making the point that individuals are incompletely developed at the *start* of their formal schooling, at least in part because they have *yet to be educated*. Peters thought that it was only through engagement with specific forms of knowledge that *anyone* could become educated. He believed that children could not fulfil their potential if left to their own devices. He insisted that no teacher

should be indifferent to the nature of human growth. He observed that ‘human beings are not like flowers in having growth as a predetermined end’ (Peters, 1968, p 94). Education is not just a process of natural maturation²⁹, since the ‘teacher has to choose what is worth-while encouraging children in’ (Peters, 1968, p 95). For Peters, the concept of education required initiation into particular forms of knowledge. What forms of knowledge, though, did he have in mind?

It has been argued that Kant is the main inspiration behind the theory of *knowledge* explicated by both Peters and Hirst³⁰. A Kantian influence is, to be sure, apparent in the *ethical* justification of Peters’ notions of worthwhile activities and school discipline. However, in this chapter it will be argued that Peters’ epistemology seems to derive more from Plato³¹. More recently, John White (2009) has also speculated that the liberal education advocated by Peters and Hirst might have been informed by radical Protestantism and the French philosopher Pierre de la Ramée (Ramus 1515-1573). White indicates that Peters’ justification of a largely knowledge-based education is problematic. There are undoubtedly difficulties with Peters’ account of the relation of knowledge to education, but I do not think they are the ones that White identifies. White is in fact in danger of muddying the waters on an important point about the extent to which a liberal education is based upon subjects or knowledge³². Crucially, both Peters, and Hirst argue (I think rightly), that their theory of a liberal education in forms of *knowledge* emerged out of Ancient Greek and specifically, Platonic doctrines. However, given some evident confusion over the epistemological foundations of liberal education, it seems necessary to clarify what is distinctive about Platonic and Liberal theories of knowledge and education.

²⁹ Peters identifies Rousseau and Dewey as growth theorists here but acknowledges that neither philosopher thought education consisted purely in the unfolding of natural potentialities. Rousseau and Dewey’s views of discipline will be explored in the next chapter.

³⁰ See Blake et al, 2003 chapter one p 5.

³¹ See for example *Ethics and Education* (1970) pp 114-116 and especially chapters 5, 8 and 10. More will be said about how Kant’s ethics shaped the thought of Peters’ at 2.4 and in chapters four and five.

³² This element of the discussion will be fleshed out at 2.3.

Epistemology is itself widely considered to be the branch of philosophy concerned with the theory or concept of knowledge³³. It is less well known, however, that it was not until the 19th century that a Scottish philosopher, James Frederick Ferrier, first used the term ‘epistemology’ to refer to the theory of knowledge³⁴. At all events, taking Plato’s *Theaetetus* (1987) as inspiration, knowledge has generally been defined by philosophers as *justified true belief* expressible in propositional form³⁵. However, Plato has Socrates interestingly refute this definition of knowledge at the end of the dialogue (*Theaetetus*, 210a). Plato does however endorse a famous theory of knowledge in book VI of his *Republic* (1987). It is also well known that Plato there argues that ‘the highest form of knowledge is knowledge of the form of the good’ (*Republic*, 505a2-3).

He argues that there are two worlds of possible human acquaintance: 1) the *intelligible* world of ideas and ideal forms and; 2) the *visible* world of appearances (*Republic*, 507a). Plato insisted that the forms were permanent and true representations of reality, only *intelligible* to the mind through intellectual reflection. He argued that human senses such as sight could only ground opinions, in so far as they could observe the *visible* world of change and decay (*Republic*, 508d-509). *The Republic* thus presents readers with a metaphysical ‘epistemic ideal’ (Burnyeat, 1980b, p 187) whereby the mind alone has privileged access to knowledge³⁶. In the simile of the cave (514-521b) Plato hypothesises that it is through education, through a ‘turning of the psyche’ (Curren, 2007) that one can be mentally guided to appreciate such immutable, ideal forms. Significantly, Plato argues that the calculative reasoning of mathematics and arithmetic is extraordinarily effective in leading the mind towards truth (*Republic* 525a-b1).

³³ See for example, the opening pages of Craig 1990, Kvanvig 2003 & Roberts & Wood 2007.

³⁴ Ferrier speculated that knowledge was only possible when there was a union between a person and an object. For a good summary of Ferrier’s theory of knowledge and ignorance see Keefe (2007).

³⁵ A definition noted by amongst others Riggs 2002, Blaauw & Pritchard 2005, & Pritchard 2007.

³⁶ In chapter 8 it will become clear that Plato’s concept of *theoretical knowledge* was broadly accepted by Aristotle. Aristotle’s concept of *wisdom* however, it will be said, is crucially different.

'We must reject the conception of education professed by those who say they can put into the mind knowledge that was not there before...the capacity for knowledge is innate in each man's mind...the mind as a whole must be turned away from the world of change until its eye can bear to look straight at reality...this turning round of the mind itself might be made a subject of professional skill.' (Republic 518b7-518d4)

Plato argues that those (and he is thinking primarily of philosophers) who have apprehended the intelligible world have a duty to return to the cave as community leaders to help and advise the people who dwell there in the 'sensible' darkness of ignorance (Republic 520a-e). Curren speculates that teaching is something like 'an art of turning the student in the right direction' (2007, p 8) in the Platonic epistemic schema. Significantly, it is from Plato's theory of forms that Peters and Hirst claim to derive their 'forms of knowledge'. In *Education as Initiation* Peters argues that 'Plato's image of education as turning the eye of the soul outwards towards the light...emphasised, quite rightly, what growth theorists evaded, the necessity for objective standards being written into the content of education' (1968, p 97). Hirst (1968) too argues that the Greek notion of a liberal education hinged on the (Platonic) idea that the good life is spent freeing the mind from error and searching for knowledge. He similarly adds that it is from these Greek doctrines that 'there emerged the idea of liberal education as a process concerned simply and directly with the pursuit of knowledge' (Hirst, 1968, p 114). Indeed, a fine defence of the epistemic foundations of a liberal education is to be found in Paul Hirst's essay *Liberal Education and the Nature of Knowledge* (1968).

'It is a necessary feature of knowledge as such that there be public criteria whereby the true is distinguishable from the false, the good from the bad, the right from the wrong. It is the existence of these criteria which gives objectivity to knowledge; and this in its turn gives objectivity to the concept of liberal education.' (Hirst, 1968, p 127)

It is stressed by both Peters (1968 & 1970) and Hirst (1968 & 1973), that a liberal education entails the development of the mind through engagement with objective forms of knowledge. However, it is important to note that the less plausible metaphysical aspect of Plato's forms is not invoked by Peters and Hirst. The liberal forms of knowledge aim to understand and make sense of the world of experience too (Peters, 1970 & Hirst, 1968). It is in this regard that Kant's signature can be most keenly discerned in their liberal theory of knowledge. However, Peters explicitly criticises Kant for focusing his theory of mind on the private individual and for failing properly to appreciate the extent to which cognitive development is only enabled through initiation into public traditions³⁷. The impersonal content of knowledge by which experience is structured, is, for Peters and Hirst, enshrined in *public traditions* that have taken mankind millennia to refine. Peters observes that the Ancient Greeks did not really have a concept of private consciousness; the lives of the populace in city states like Athens were invariably conducted in public. Indeed, the Greek word for idiot (*idiōtēs*) 'disdainfully picked out the man who only concerned himself with private matters' (Peters, 1970, p 48). In this regard, it is interesting to note that the Ancient Greek word for barbarian ³⁸(*barbaros*) referred to or identified persons who were non-Greek. Arguably, Peters only characterises children as barbarians because they have not yet had their heads turned towards the light of public forms of knowledge.

It is possible that a liberal education relates more to Platonic than Kantian or religious epistemology. White suggests that there are parallels between Hirst's seven forms of knowledge³⁹ and the academic disciplines identified by Ramus. Hirst, however, remarks that his concept of liberal education as development of the mind derives from

³⁷ See *Ethics and Education* (1970) page 49.

³⁸ I owe this translation to the glossary of *The Politics* (1981).

³⁹ Hirst and Peters notoriously identified seven forms of knowledge and discussed the curricular implications arising from them in their book *Logic and Education* (1975). These forms will be explored in chapter 3.

‘the development by the Greeks of the seven liberal arts’ (Hirst, 1968, p 115). It may be that such connection with Ramus may be due more to the impact Hellenism had on the educational theory of both Ramus and Hirst. Ramus had after all also ‘been brought up in a tradition of Aristotelian scholarship based on Greek texts’ (White, 2009, p 7). Significantly, Hirst cites neither Kant nor Ramus but the nineteenth century poet and schools inspector Matthew Arnold⁴⁰, as a modern precursor of the view that education should involve initiation into public forms of knowledge.

2.3 Culture, traditions and the criteria of Liberal Education

‘The whole scope of this essay is to recommend culture as the great help out of our present difficulties; culture being a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know...the best that has been thought and said in the world, and, through this knowledge, turning a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits’. (Arnold, 2006, p 5)

In his famous essay *Culture and Anarchy* (2006), Arnold expressed concern about the impact of the industrial revolution on society. He argued that mechanisation was in great danger of stultifying the lives of individuals and communities. He stated that individuals had to engage with culture ‘by means of reading, observing and thinking’ (Arnold, 2006, p 60) so that they could become truly fulfilled as persons. Human perfection and the finding of one’s ‘best self’ (Arnold, 2006, p 71) was for Arnold the aim of culture. Arnold lauded Hellenic culture and considered it to represent a highpoint in human history. However, he insisted that the man who only read his own letters or the newspapers also had culture if this reading enabled ‘a fresh and free play of the best thoughts upon his stock notions and habits’ (Arnold, 2006, p 6). The point of focusing upon culture was thus

⁴⁰ Hirst also indicates that Newman influenced liberal education. Bantock (1952) and Mulcahy (2008) agree that Newman’s *epistemology* was broadly Aristotelian. Williams (1992) suggests that: 1) Newman’s scepticism belongs to the naturalist tradition in British philosophy; 2) Newman also in turn influenced Wittgenstein.

not merely to learn *about* it but *from* it; culture was for Arnold a rich moral educational source. Arnold thought that culture could ‘direct our attention to the current in human affairs’ (Arnold, 2006, p 50) in a way that could improve our ‘doings’. The ‘inward operation’ (Arnold, 2006, p 6) of culture was essential to the concept as ideal actions flow out of each person’s best thoughts. Arnold’s conclusion that ‘education is the road to culture’ (Arnold, 2006, p 153) arguably expresses his hope that educators would steer the next generation in that direction.

‘Education, then, can have no ends beyond itself. Its value derives from principles and standards implicit in it. To be educated is not to have arrived at a destination; it is to travel with a different view’ (Peters, 1968, p 110)

The imprint of Arnold appears evident in the work of Peters and Hirst. All three thinkers broadly held that education must introduce the young into inherently worthwhile traditions of public knowledge. Importantly, Peters stressed that the cardinal role of teachers is to help pupils to get on the inside of the traditions and ‘contours of the public world’ so that the pupils can, to a degree, make these traditions their own. Peters remarks that the process of initiation and inner remaking ‘is the process of education’ (Peters, 1970, p 51). I think that Peters’ concept of education thus bears more than a passing resemblance to Arnold’s notion that inward operation is the ‘very life and essence of culture’ (Arnold, 2006, p 6). Peters insisted however, that education involves no *specific* process or activity. As he puts it, ‘education marks out no particular type of transaction between teachers and learners; it states criteria to which such transactions have to conform’ (Peters, 1968, p 102)⁴¹. But what are the criteria of a liberal education?

Peters (1970) and Hirst (1968) both suggest that a liberal

⁴¹ Peters reiterates this view in *Ethics and Education* where he suggests that education picks out no particular activity or process.

education may be conceived of in *broad negative* or *refined positive* terms. A broad liberal education is negative in the sense that its function is to restrict any specialist activities that promote narrowly defined extrinsic ends such as material and economic production or preparation for the workplace. A broad liberal schooling is thus ‘a plea for education rather than vocational training’ (Peters, 1970, p 43). Significantly, however, both Peters and Hirst endorse a much stronger, more positive variety of liberalism. The ‘appropriate label for a positive concept’ Hirst explains, is that education be ‘based fairly and squarely on the concept of knowledge itself’ (Hirst, 1968, p 113). Peters similarly identifies three criteria that he thinks are conceptually presupposed to any educational process, all of which arguably relate to knowledge. These are:

- i) ‘That education implies the transmission of what is worthwhile to those who become committed to it;
- ii) That education must involve knowledge and understanding and some kind of cognitive perspective, which are not inert;
- iii) That education at least rules out some procedures of transmission, on the grounds that they lack the wittingness and voluntariness on the part of the learner.’ (Peters, 1970, p 45)

I think that White’s recent critique of Peters’ views on curriculum formation misses the mark precisely because it downplays (or even fails to recognise) the importance of Peters’ criteria of education. White (2009) begins his article by saying that he was both taught by and has worked with Peters, so he may well have insight into aspects of his thought that are not immediately apparent to any mere reader of Peters’ work. Nevertheless, I suspect that White’s interpretation is confused. He cites from *Ethics and Education* and argues that Peters defended a general education broadly based upon traditional subjects studied for their own sake. White thinks that the contours of Peters’ influential project are, today, hard to fathom and justify.

'Why start with academic disciplines and seek justifications of them? Logically curriculum planning has to start with aims, not with vehicles whereby aims may be realised.' (White, 2009, p 3)

To this reader, however, it seems that Peters did not *start* his project from academic subject disciplines at all. *Chapter 1* of *Ethics and Education* clearly states what Peters takes the criteria of a liberal education to be. None of these criteria suggest that he thought that education must or should be subject-based. When Peters does make his case for curriculum activities (1970, p157-166) his point is not to justify the teaching of subjects, but to defend a concept of education as initiation into worthwhile activities. Peters repeatedly asks the question, why do this activity rather than that? He repeatedly answers that activities are worthwhile when they have a distinctive cognitive content. He does, to be sure, adopt a somewhat restricted concept of cognition that casts serious doubt on the possibility for or value of practical knowledge⁴². But he does not defend the retention of traditional schools subjects per se.

Hirst too, could hardly be much clearer about the relative importance that he attributed to traditional subject disciplines. 'School subjects in the disciplines as we at present have them are in no way sacrosanct...They are necessarily selections from the forms of knowledge that we have and may or may not be good as introductions for the purposes of liberal education' (Hirst, 1968, p 135-6). White, to his credit, does remark that Hirst's thought represents the most original and tightly structured attempt to derive an educational theory, *a priori* from the nature of knowledge itself, since the 'Ramist pedagogical tradition' (White, 2009, p 15) of the sixteenth century. This concession, however, makes his implication that Hirst's arguments overlap those

⁴² This aspect of Peters account of 'educational' activities has come in for particular criticism from Reid (1996a 1996b & 1997) and Carr (1997) who in their different ways dispute the implication that PE is only a 'knack'. In chapter 3 and 10 of this thesis the validity of Peters' rather narrow interpretation of practical knowledge will be questioned.

of Peters all the more puzzling⁴³. A liberal education of the sort advocated by Hirst and Peters is defined by the pursuit not of *subjects* but of *knowledge*⁴⁴ for its own sake. It is really only accurate therefore to portray Peters as being a defender of traditional *disciplines* or *subjects* in as much as he thought that pupils should be disciplined by *traditions of knowledge*. Hirst and Peters both thought that discipline had a crucial role to play in the initiation of pupils into forms of knowledge. As they put it: 'education necessarily involves discipline' (1975, p 125).

2.4 Discipline, Rules and Obedience

'Discipline, etymologically speaking, is rooted in a learning situation; it conveys the notion of submission to rules or some kind of order.' (Peters, 1970, p 267)

Chapter ten of *Ethics and Education* is entitled 'Punishment and Discipline'. However, Peters says surprisingly little about discipline at that point; rather he explores the concepts of authority and punishment in much more detail. Nevertheless, Peters does generally present a considerably more nuanced and broad concept of discipline than Clark implies. Peters indicates that the essence of discipline lies in submission to the rules that inhere in a given learning situation. The rules to which pupils should submit can have a wide variety of purposes and involve a range of different activities. Arguably Peters' rules can be grouped into two categories: those that directly involve the pursuit of knowledge and those that clear the way for the pursuit of knowledge. He argues that rules may pertain to *what* is to be learned or they may be necessary to ensure that something *can be* learned. In the former case discipline involves grasping the rules that govern a particular worthwhile activity or aspect of knowledge. Discipline is here intimately related to the specific thing to be learned (Hirst & Peters, 1975). Hirst and Peters speculate that there is a reason

⁴³ I refer here to White's (2009) inference on p 1 that Peters problematically argued for a general education based on truth seeking traditional subjects.

⁴⁴ And in the case of Peters knowledge developed through participation in worthwhile activities.

why traditional school subjects are sometimes referred to as 'disciplines'. 'Presumably they are so called because the learner submits himself to the rules implicit in them' (Hirst & Peters, 1975, p 127).

However, discipline can also involve pupils submitting to more practical and procedural rules that ensure the order necessary for learning to occur. There must, Peters argues, be minimum conditions of classroom order 'sufficient to let a large number of children work in a small space' (Peters, 1970, p 193). Peters states that teachers may at times need to 'exert pressure on children so that they can master something irrespective of what they want' (Peters, 1970, p 194). Importantly, rules can be self imposed or imposed by someone in authority (Peters 1970 & Hirst & Peters, 1975). Despite their belief that teachers should where appropriate enforce rules in class, Peters & Hirst indicate a preference for self-discipline (Hirst & Peters, 1975). All school rules must have a point; they must be intimately related to what is worthwhile and desirable. If restriction is imposed on pupils 'it must promote what is good' (Peters, 1970, p 195). Arguably, then, the discipline and rules of a liberal education are vital for the promotion of knowledge, because knowledge is 'what is good'. Hirst and Peters also defended the use of appropriate punishment but suggested that it is important to distinguish between discipline and punishment. Punishment is a very specific concept that is normally only justifiable when the rules of a given order have been breached (Peters, 1970 & Peters & Hirst 1975). Discipline is by contrast a 'very general notion which is connected with conforming to rules' (Peters, 1970, p 267). More recently, John Wilson also developed a philosophy of school discipline based on submission to rules. Wilson's concept of discipline, however, is much narrower and ostensibly more 'traditional'.

'If a child did not grasp and act upon the principle of discipline, of obedience to established authority, he could hardly survive at all, and a proper grasp of it is an essential enablement for the child to learn other things.' (Wilson, 1981, p 44)

Wilson (1981) suggests, in a somewhat traditional vein, that one aspect of discipline is the prior establishment of the class order that is necessary for learning. However, he also (agreeing with Clark and his namesake P S Wilson⁴⁵) insists that it is vital to observe a distinction between a *well-disciplined* and a *well-controlled* class. He emphasises that a 'trouble-free' (Wilson, 1981, p 37) and organised class is not a disciplined class if order has arisen because pupils are in chains or under the effects of sedatives. John Wilson, like Peters and Hirst, perceives *the rule* to be the proper compelling force in discipline. However, Wilson thought that school discipline is ultimately a matter of *obedience to the teacher*. But he also held that such obedience is morally educational.

Wilson reasons that discipline is itself morally educational if it is rightly conceived (Wilson, 1981). Notably, Wilson thought that the morally formative potential of discipline lay in the child's dutiful adherence to the authority of rules, precisely because the rules are authoritative. He insisted that a disciplined person should not submit to a rule because it comes from an admired source, or even because the rule in question is a good one. The reason why rules should be observed is so that legitimate authorities can rightly continue to influence practical action. Wilson argues that authority is a necessary foundation for any institution or society. Without it, the only recourse available for getting things done is an 'ad hoc variety of bribes or threats' (Wilson, 1981, p 39). Pupils should dutifully submit to rules in school because such rules provide necessary guidance for action. Wilson emphasises that there is a difference between reluctant or overtly prescribed behaviour⁴⁶ and genuine discipline that is also characterised by a 'disposition to obey' (Wilson, 1981, p 38). Wilson claims that discipline itself has little to do with self-discipline or autonomy. Discipline ultimately requires no more or less than

⁴⁵Incidentally John and P S Wilson were not related.

⁴⁶Wilson gives the example of a soldier who slothfully does what he should whilst muttering under his breath.

obedience. What should be made of Wilson's 'rather austere doctrine' (Smith, 1985, p 40) of discipline?

Wilson's contribution to *moral education* was the subject of a special issue of the 'Journal of Moral Education' ten years ago, (September 2000, Vol. 29, 3) where it was widely agreed that his work has not received as much attention as it merits. Straughan (2000) speculates that Wilson's reluctance to place himself within a particular theoretical tradition may have substantially contributed to the relative marginalisation of his moral thought. Tellingly, even in this special issue, Wilson's views regarding school discipline only receive mention in relation to a wider discussion of authority (Steutel & Spiecker, 2000). The lack of interest, philosophical or otherwise, that educators have taken in Wilson's views on discipline may partly stem from the fact that he conceptualises it (on the surface at least) in an unfashionably limited and illiberal way. Richard Smith, one of the few educationists who has discussed Wilson's notion of discipline in some detail, appears to think as much. Smith (1985) is sceptical of Wilson's tendency to compare military discipline and school discipline. He observes that whilst life and death situations might be common for the soldier on duty, the same can hardly be said of the pupil. If the class is conceived of as a quasi-military group, then there lies a danger that the teacher might repeatedly invoke situations of crisis⁴⁷ to justify 'compliance without consultation' (Smith, 1985, p 46) and obedience without critical thought. Smith implies that Wilson's conception of discipline borders on the authoritarian. But is this implication fair?

'Discipline is concerned with the consistency and strength of those on-the-spot acceptances or cases of obedience to authority.' (Wilson, 1981, p 40)

It may not do justice to the nuance of Wilson's thought to provide

⁴⁷ Smith offers the example of the need to get through a packed curriculum in time for an exam.

a straightforward yes or no answer to this question. When his concept of discipline is viewed in isolation I would be inclined to agree with Smith's implication. Wilson did state that the disciplined class need only be in the habit of *obeying* the rules relayed to them by authority (most often in the guise of their teacher). However, Wilson emphasises that it is only *legitimate authority* that should be obeyed without question and he seems to have believed that such authority should be deeply infused with rationality. In Wilson's picture, discipline is essentially concerned with certain practical matters where immediate obedience is required from pupils and where *now* is probably not the appropriate time to explain the reasons why obedience is justified. However, Wilson seems to have held the view that a necessary part of moral formation involves comprehending (at the proper time) why obedience is sometimes necessary. He does after all make clear that discipline is one concept amongst others vitally connected to a pupil's broader moral education, and moral education for Wilson, centrally involves reason. Reason, he says 'requires sharing and dialogue and that has more to do with desire than obligation' (Wilson, 2000, p 274). Wilson also stresses that the actions of the morally educated person must arise from the right reasons. For Wilson, rule following alone 'is an impoverished view of moral action' (McLaughlin & Halstead, 2000, p 251). If Wilson's more expansive account of moral education is borne in mind then his theory of discipline takes on a less authoritarian flavour⁴⁸.

Wilson held that family and school were the principal influences on a child's moral development. He says that the 'family and the school necessarily form the arena of the child's first encounter with the whole business of rules and authority' (Wilson, 1981, p 44). Wilson

⁴⁸ Indeed, despite the problematic nature of Wilson's *concept* of discipline he does make some pertinent general observations about how student and practicing teachers should be supported (by universities) to foster a climate of discipline in their classes. Perhaps most significantly he suggests that teachers should be clear (and be supported to become clear) in their own minds about the meaning of the concept of discipline.

implies that parents are at least as responsible as schools for administering rules. Although he does concede that it is possible for a person to be disciplined by the rules inherent in certain activities (he cites the example of a person playing chess), he also intimates that it is not really natural to speak of a disciplined individual. Individuals, he says 'are more likely to be described as simply 'disobedient' (Wilson, 1981, p 41). Wilson insists that it is much more appropriate to adopt the term *discipline* when referring to a *group* that has a fairly specific practical task.

Thus, Wilson thought discipline centrally involves being *part of* a social group. However, unlike Durkheim (whose views we will shortly turn to), Wilson did not think that discipline is essentially *for the sake of* that social group. Wilson attests that there is an objective morality upon which all moral rules should be based. He impresses the point that particular sets of social values have nothing to do with moral values. As he puts it, moral education, like education in science or maths, 'means the same at all times and in all places...In particular we cannot derive our aims in moral education from 'society' (Wilson, 1981, p 40). Wilson's view that moral education is and should be rational and cross-cultural⁴⁹represents (as we shall see) a clear demarcation between his moral thought and the social thought of Durkheim.

2.5 Durkheim and Discipline for Society

'This then is the true function of discipline...It is essentially an instrument – difficult to duplicate – of moral education' (Durkheim, 1961, p149).

At the turn of the twentieth century two eminent educationists argued that scientific methods should play a much more prominent role in education. Emile Durkheim and John Dewey were writing from

⁴⁹ Wilson reiterated this view throughout his expansive corpus of work as noted by McLaughlin and Halstead 2000.

different cultural contexts yet in this era both France and America (and the wider western world) underwent unprecedented intellectual, economic and social change (Dill, 2007). These adjustments could be somewhat simplistically caricatured as a shift of the population from agricultural, family based communities to industrialised cities, populated with individualistically minded people (Dill, 2007). Like Arnold before them, both Dewey⁵⁰ and Durkheim saw schools as institutions with potential to enable greater social cohesion in this increasingly complex and fragmented, modern world. Crucially, it was a 'rational, secular morality that would bind pluralistic society together for a common end' (Dill, 2007, p222). Durkheim thought that education should centrally involve one generation imprinting its wisdom and customs on the next (Dill, 2007).

In *Moral Education; A study in the Theory & Application of the Sociology of Education* (1961), Durkheim devoted considerable attention to the subject of disciplining schoolchildren. He identified two distinct stages of childhood: the first stage consisting of the child's life prior to attending school; the second stage commencing when children start their formal education. If, by the end of the second period of childhood, (that is the end of formal schooling) 'the foundations of morality had not been laid they never will be' (Durkheim, 1961, p 18). In the familial stage of childhood, the child becomes attached to his social group (the family) by being gently reproached in a nurturing environment. Durkheim thought that possessing a sentimental attachment toward the social group was an important step in a child's moral development. However, for Durkheim, the function of the *school* is to unite the child with larger society. The role of the teacher is to act as an intermediary between the child and society. Just as the priest interprets the message of God to his congregation, so the teacher

⁵⁰ Although as we shall see Arnold, Dewey and Durkheim all had very different ideas about the nature and purposes of education. Arnold was much more sceptical than Dewey or Durkheim about the potential impact of science on culture and education. Dewey's views will be explored in the subsequent chapter.

must establish and reinforce the values of society (Durkheim, 1961, Dill, 2007). Durkheim insisted that schooling should mark a radical departure from a pupil's home life. It should not, he argued, foster personal attachments similar to those learned in the first stage of childhood, since 'the passions first must be limited' (Durkheim, 1972, p 176). Durkheim was insistent that formal education should remove and suppress *personal* emotion and ambition and rather develop in pupils an *impersonal* respect for societies' broader expectations. The school 'must sustain this feeling for discipline in the child. This is the task the educator must never give up (Durkheim, 1961, pp101-2)'. Durkheim held that dispassionate and objective forces should counter pupil's unruly appetites in schools.

'By means of discipline we learn the control of desire without which man could not achieve happiness.' (Durkheim, 1961, p 48)

Durkheim believed that social cohesion depended on individual desires being limited and controlled. The constraint of desire was also a necessary condition of individual happiness as he thought that man by nature possessed passions that could never be satiated. For Durkheim discipline was a vital part of a child's wider moral education. He speculated that there were three elements to morality: those of discipline, spirituality (which for him consisted in attachment to a social group) and self-determination or autonomy. Discipline was, in a vital sense, the fundamental element of morality that unites the others. Without discipline a person could not hope to attain the other elements of spirituality and self determination. To lead a disciplined life, persons must have a preference for a regular existence; their aspirations must have determinate limits. Persons unable or unwilling to be disciplined would inevitably be doomed by their limitless aspiration and *anomie*⁵¹. Durkheim was of the view that children were especially prone to irregularity and instability and largely driven by

⁵¹ An acute unhappiness and loss of purpose that Durkheim thought was prevalent at the time of the industrial revolution.

primitive proclivities.

A child's disposition is essentially volatile: he 'breaks out in anger and is mollified with the same suddenness. Tears succeed laughter, friendliness displaces hatred or vice versa' (Durkheim, 1961, p130). He believed that childhood curiosity is similarly unstable and fleeting. Durkheim remarks that children can only maintain attention on an object that attracts them for a matter of seconds. He argued that the conduct of pupils was none the less malleable. He thought that externally imposed habits could favourably curb and alter childish inconstancy. The function of discipline for Durkheim was to monitor irregular conduct through the imposition of regular habit. Like Dewey⁵², he did perceive a correlation between discipline and the capacity to establish and reach determinate goals. However, for Durkheim discipline was not in itself indicative of this quality; it rather enabled it. A preference for regularity *prefaces* the emergence of any ability to set targets for one self.

'Morality is a totality of definite rules; it is like so many moulds with limiting boundaries, into which we must pour our behaviour'. (Durkheim, 1961, p26)

For individuals to develop discipline, Durkheim contended that they must first feel the force of authority acting on them, a force to which they must yield. Durkheim claimed that discipline was strongly dependent on authority for its success. He defined the notion of authority as a characteristic, 'with which a being, either actual or imaginary is invested through his relationship with given individuals and it is because of this alone that he is thought by the latter to be endowed with powers superior to those they find in themselves' (Durkheim, 1961, p88). But who, or what, did he think should exercise authority over children? Durkheim contended that the authority to which individuals must yield on moral matters is the rule, the rule

⁵² Dewey's comments on the link between habit and discipline will be explained in chapter 3.

being written over time by the collective conscience of society. A rule is, 'essentially something that is outside a person...it is a way of acting that we do not feel free to alter according to taste...it is beyond personal preference... it dominates us' (Durkheim, 1961, p 28). A rule is an external command that individuals are duty bound to obey. He argued that the act of being disciplined by a rule was essentially an act of duty, duty being prescribed behaviour.

Durkheim believed that a classroom was its own society and that an undisciplined classroom was lacking in morality. The morality of the class society was, for Durkheim, determined by the resolution with which a teacher reinforces the impartial rule. When one considers the rules that a teacher is required to enforce one by one and in detail, it might be concluded that they are useless and petty vexations. However, if these rules are rather perceived as part of a larger, holistic code of conduct 'the matter takes on a different aspect' (Durkheim, 1961, p151). In conscientiously fulfilling the disciplined obligations of the class society, the child comes to embody, 'the virtue of childhood...the only one that can be asked of him' (Durkheim, 1961, p151) at that age and stage⁵³.

'For to teach morality is neither to preach nor indoctrinate; it is to explain...if we do not help him to understand the reasons for the rules he should abide by, we would be condemning him to an incomplete and inferior morality.' (Durkheim, 1961, p120-121)

On top of connecting the child to wider society, Durkheim suggests that the rules externally imposed by the teacher can over time become part of the pupil's internal moral constitution. Although the child does not begin life as master of his or her appetites, discipline in schools can and should enable such self mastery to emerge. Self-mastery of desire and attachment to the social group did

⁵³ The notion that discipline is *the virtue of childhood* is an intriguing (though I think mistaken) one that will be discussed in part two.

not represent moral maturity for Durkheim since the capacity for self-determination was also necessary. However, Durkheim gives surprisingly little indication as to how schools should help to cultivate the final autonomous element of morality (Carr, 1991). Durkheim seems to think that teachers should help pupils to see the *value* of the rules so that they can come to freely desire them on their own terms. Self-determination appears to consist in a sort of rational or 'enlightened assent' (Durkheim, 1961, p120) to prevailing social standards rather than a merely habitual acceptance of them. When one considers in depth Durkheim's remarkable conception of *society* as the moral ideal however, his theory of school discipline swiftly unravels. There are I think, at least three fundamental problems with his notion of society. He firstly insists that *only* actions carried out *for the sake of* society were moral. He secondly, rather implausibly, posited that society was a sort of transcendent or divine being. Thirdly, he argued that morality is an essentially social construct measurable by science.

Durkheim consistently emphasised that if actions only benefit individuals, they cannot be classified as moral. The term moral has *never* been employed, he says, to describe an act that has individual interest as its object (Durkheim, 1951). He maintained that moral acts are always in pursuit of impersonal ends. Behaviour 'directed exclusively towards the personal ends of the actor does not have moral value' (Durkheim, 1961, p 57). Disciplined and moral conduct must be altruistic and it must be so, *for* society. Durkheim stated that if, 'society is the end of morality it is also its producer' (Durkheim, 1961, p86). Durkheim's moral theory was then, like Dewey's⁵⁴, centrally concerned with promoting the good for society. However, Durkheim had a very novel notion of society.

He intimated that prior to modernity 'certain moral ideas became united with certain religious ideas to such an extent as to be

⁵⁴ See 3.2 for an explanation of Dewey's views on social progress.

indistinct from them' (Durkheim, 1961, p 8). The teacher was invested with authority and extra energy because he was, at least in part, 'speaking in the name of a superior reality' (Durkheim, 1961, p 10) of whom the symbolic expression was God. Durkheim however held that morality must become the sacred domain, not theology. He thought that society must strip morality of its religious symbols and replace them with rational substitutes. The rationalisation of morality was perilous however as the very 'character of morality is without foundation' (Durkheim, 1961, p 10) unless it could also be bolstered by a new transcendent power. For Durkheim, the omnipresent force capable of preventing individuals from forever grasping for the infinite was society itself: 'once we rule out recourse to theological notions, there remains beyond the individual only a single, empirically observable moral being...society' (Durkheim, 1961, p60).

Durkheim argued that morality begins with membership of a group (Durkheim, 1951 & 1961, Dill, 2007). Without society there could be no morality. Durkheim believed that society possessed a special, independent quality that rendered it superior to the sum of the individuals that constitute it. 'Human groups have a way of thinking, of feeling and of living differing from that of their members when they think feel and live as isolates' (Durkheim, 1961, p62). A society, he remarks, is qualitatively different to the individual persons that comprise it; it commands individuals because it represents the best part of them (Durkheim, 1951). He insisted that socio-moral commands alone could deliver people to freedom from the blind, limitless and unthinking forces, that otherwise torment them (Durkheim, 1972). However, Durkheim's all important moral rules are effectively social rules. He was fully aware of this, of course, and famously argued that there were moral facts that could and should be understood through empirical science (Durkheim 1961 and particularly Durkheim, 1951). He remarks that: 'I have not found in my researches a single moral rule that is not the product of particular social factors' (Durkheim, 1951, p

56). Carr states that 'serious mischief is done by construing moral facts as *social* facts and only deep confusion lies at the heart of any idea of a 'science of morality' (Carr, 1991, p 121).

It is difficult if not impossible to see how Durkheim's social rules are in fact, moral rules. A rule is arguably distinctively *moral* when reasons can be identified which explain how the rule in question contributes to a better life for some person or group of persons. Durkheim's social rules do not carry with them any such capacity for normative justification. He does not satisfactorily explain how his ideal secular *society* is ethically superior to any other actual or possible society. Nor, for Durkheim, should individuals seek to evaluate the moral worth of their own society as he held that morality essentially entails being socialised into and in time rationally choosing, the values of one's own community. Challenger (1994) argues that the mature Durkheim recognised the importance of individual agency in social life. However, the passage to which Challenger refers (Durkheim, 1951, pp 65-68) does not appear to support this conclusion.

To be sure, Durkheim does acknowledge that a rebellion against traditional morality is justified where such revolt may lead to a society with a higher collective conscience. However, for him, any such rebellion would be brought about by the pre-eminently impersonal and social force of science. Durkheim in this passage even declares that '*individual* (my emphasis) reason has no particular prestige' (Durkheim, 1951, pp 65). Durkheim elsewhere repeatedly insists that different societies may have different moralities; but he stresses that individual people can and should only rationally desire the morality of their own society. Durkheim ultimately thought that moral autonomy involved rational assent to rather than critical questioning of one's social values. Moral autonomy does not consist in taking personal responsibility for one's behaviour either. It involves acquiescence to, and dependence upon, society's' impersonal prescriptions. In

Durkheim's moral theory there is little if any scope 'for the genuine exercise of individual moral reason and judgement beyond what is minimally required to recognise or acknowledge what that group ordains' (Carr, 1991, p 128). Carr concludes that Durkheim's *Moral Education* is an impressive work that is importantly wrong. I would have to agree. Durkheim had a seriously attenuated notion of individual moral agency. His insistence that school discipline is a matter of conformity to rules for the benefit of a 'divinized' society is moreover, more than a little bizarre.

2.6 School discipline as submission to rules

*'It is stormy, and raindrops cling like silver bees to the panes,
The thin sycamore in the playground is swinging with flattened leaves;
The heads of the boys move dimly through a yellow gloom that stains
The class; over them all the dark net of my discipline weaves...*

*I must not win their souls, no never, I only must win,
The brief material control of the hour, leave them free of me.
Learn they must to obey, for all harmony is discipline,
And only in harmony with others the single soul can be free.'* (From *Discipline* by D H Lawrence, 1994)

In this chapter, Clark's characterisation of traditional discipline as a narrow and 'brief material control of the hour' has been delineated. It has been argued that Peters endorses a much broader concept; discipline is both for the sake of, and part of, pupils' engagement with worthwhile forms of public knowledge. Indeed, it seems to me that one of the great strengths of the theory of liberal education articulated by Peters and Hirst is the extent to which the relationship between knowledge and discipline is systematically fleshed out. John Wilson and Durkheim both thought pupils 'must learn to obey' rules as this process is morally educational. Durkheim also believed discipline was the force that enabled individual and wider social 'harmony'. In their different ways Peters, John Wilson and

Durkheim all thought that school discipline essentially required children to submit themselves to *rules*. In contrast to this view, a *child-centred* concept of discipline will be examined in chapter three.

Chapter Three: Discipline and Interest in a Child-centred Education

In this chapter, the concept of discipline will be explored in relation to child-centred theories of education. Initially, it will be argued that Rousseau thought education should be founded on the individual experiences and curiosities of the child in order to foster useful knowledge. Thereafter, the *interest*-based theories of school discipline advanced by Pat Wilson and John Dewey will be analysed. It will be argued that both these philosophers persuasively explain how genuine school discipline may best follow when learning activities are successfully married to pupil interests and experiences. However, it will be concluded that the epistemic positions adopted by Wilson and Dewey are nevertheless problematic. Although advocates of a liberal education may place too great an emphasis on developing theoretical knowledge, perhaps child-centred theorists do not value that development enough. It will be concluded that a better long-term purpose for discipline in schools might rather be to engender pupil *wisdom*, as this concept incorporates into it aspects of both theoretical and practical knowledge.

3.1 Emile, Experience, and Instrumentalism

In the previous chapter, a *liberal* theory of school discipline was delineated. On this view, discipline is either: an instrument whose purpose is to bring about the classroom order necessary for teaching and learning, or; it is indicative of the process of knowledge acquisition itself, whereby pupil effort is submitted to the challenge of making some aspect of worthwhile knowledge their own. It was also argued that the epistemic foundation of a liberal education might be found in Plato's *Republic*. Jean-Jacques Rousseau who is often credited as the founding father of *child-centred education*⁵⁵ also greatly admired the *Republic*. He remarked that 'it is the finest treatise on

⁵⁵ See for example Plamenatz (1972) Darling (1986 & 1993) and Carr (1985, 1998 & 2003).

education ever written' (Rousseau, 1993, p8). However, in his own equally famous treatise on education⁵⁶ *Émile*, he articulated some profoundly un-Platonic views. Whereas Plato explained the role that education ought to play in moulding an ideal society, Rousseau's protagonist Emile is to be educated to live well in, and remain uncorrupted by, existing society. Rousseau thought that the social and cultural⁵⁷ order of his time was generally liable to adulterate the innate and natural goodness of humanity generally and of the child particularly (Plamenatz, 1972). Furthermore, whereas the education in Plato's *Republic* involves a turning of the soul towards the intelligible world of non-empirical forms; the education of Emile is to be firmly rooted in the world of sense experience.

'Give your scholar no verbal lessons; he should be taught by experience alone; never punish him for he does not know what it is to do wrong' (Rousseau, 1993, p 66)

John Plamenatz (1972) attributes eleven educational precepts to the Swiss philosopher in his article, 'Rousseau: The Education of Emile' (Plamenatz, 1972). Plamenatz observes that all these principles are united by one common aim, 'to make the boy self reliant and free... Emile is not to become learned but is to know how to learn' (Plamenatz, 1972, p 181). Plamenatz argues that no *two* precepts are more significant to education than those of *not giving orders to the child* 'and especially not orders backed by threats' and of not providing the child with '*the impression that you are at his service*' (Plamenatz, 1972, p 183). Authority should generally not come to impinge unduly on the individual child because 'he will cease to reason; he will be a mere plaything of other people's thoughts' (Rousseau, 1993, p 156-157). Although children should be prevented from harming themselves or others this prevention should not be brought about through orders or punishments, particularly when children are too young to see the

⁵⁶ Plamenatz (1972) makes the point that *Émile* is as much a work on child psychology as it is on education.

⁵⁷ This also marks a clear demarcation between his thought and that of Arnold (2006).

point of these measures. He insisted that the 'very words *obey* and *command*' should be eliminated from educational 'vocabulary, still more those of *duty* and *obligation*' (Rousseau, 1993, p 62).

Rousseau believed that it was only in adolescence that children enter the 'moral order'. He therefore thought that punishment was entirely out of place for the young until they become capable of distinguishing right from wrong. He believed that children naturally reach a mature state of moral autonomy if they are largely left to their own devices. Rousseau suggests that it is improper to rally children to emulate adult behaviour. Adults should not require children to put on an 'outward show of feelings' (Plamenatz, 1972, p 180) they do not have. It is well known that he thought that 'childhood has its own ways of seeing, thinking and feeling; nothing is more foolish than to try to substitute our ways' (Rousseau, 1993, p 64). Rousseau argues that children learn from their personal curiosity about the concrete world of sense experience. He suggests that educators ought not to teach the child anything or tell them to do anything (Rousseau, 1993, p 169). Our real teachers he says are the conditions of our own experience and emotion. Senses alone provide 'the first workings of reason' (Rousseau, 1993, p 156).

'The man is truly free who desires what he is able to perform, and does what he desires. This is my fundamental maxim. Apply it to childhood, and all the rules of education spring from it.' (Rousseau, 1993, p 56)

Rousseau wanted to produce 'independent learners with resourceful minds' (Darling, 1993, p 32). In *Émile* he makes the extraordinary claim that 'the child who reads ceases to think'⁵⁸ (Rousseau, 1993, p 156). He held that reading can fill one with fantasies about reality. Books (like many of the other influences from wider society) can instil in the child wants that are not within his reach.

⁵⁸ Both Plamenatz (1972) and Darling (1993) note this point too. The former argues this claim is extravagantly disingenuous as Rousseau himself learnt a great deal from books.

Rousseau thought that most of mankind's ills could be traced back to impossible desires. Realism and pragmatism were for Rousseau 'essential for freedom' (Darling, 1993, p 34). Education should provide children with the skills they need to obtain what they want; Rousseau thus advocates children learning a trade (Darling, 1993). He emphasised that knowledge should have practical utility⁵⁹. Although experiential learning may be slower than traditional teaching, Rousseau thought it much more effective at developing useful knowledge (Darling, 1993). It is from their own experiences that children will come to perceive the use of what they learn (Plamenatz, 1972). Rousseau thus held that there is 'no pre-existing curriculum' (Darling, 1993, p32) apart from experience.

The policy of minimal educational intervention endorsed by Rousseau, leads Plamenatz to speculate that by contemporary standards 'Emile might be called a deprived child – emotionally deprived' (Plamenatz, 1972, p 181) because he is so starved of social affection. Rousseau's less well known and conservative account of an education for girls in *Émile* has also been criticised. Darling (1986) suggests it is ironic that a seemingly progressive thinker like Rousseau depicts such a traditional education for Émile's female counterpart, *Sophie*. Sophie should explicitly *not* enjoy the freedom from interference that Emile does. She should rather be schooled for the future purpose of becoming a 'compliant wife, mother and homemaker' (Darling, 1986, p 33).

Child-centred education has been substantially influenced by Émile's legacy. I will continue to refer to *child-centred* rather than *progressive* educational theories⁶⁰. The former term best captures the

⁵⁹ Plamenatz and especially Darling (1993) make convincing cases that Rousseau was in fact a 'progressive instrumentalist'.

⁶⁰ Perry (1967) suggests that the reforms advocated by even the most articulate 'progressive' educators were based upon misrepresentative caricatures of traditional education. Carr (1998) also rightly observes that the terms 'traditional' and 'progressive' are 'variously ambiguous' in that they can be, and have been, used to refer to different features of educational theory, policy and practice. Dewey (1997) and Freire (2001) for example both employ the term 'progressive' but they do so in different

basic idea, generally agreed upon by proponents of such theories, that the *interests* of the child should be placed at or near the centre of the educational project. However, such child-led theory and practice has undoubtedly been interpreted in a variety of different ways. A. S. Neill, Homer Lane, John Dewey and W. H. Kilpatrick all justifiably became associated with the child-centred educational movement of the twentieth century, yet all four had quite distinct (and sometimes contradictory) pedagogical visions⁶¹. Whereas Dewey and Kilpatrick were broadly united by pragmatist views about how knowledge is acquired and the purposes it should be put to, the thoughts of Lane and Neill were much more informed by psychological and therapeutic literature. Arguably, the influence of Rousseau is particularly apparent in the work of Neill and Dewey. Moreover, Neill does little to acknowledge the ‘striking resemblance’ (Carr, 1985, p 55) between his thought and that of Rousseau’s. This may be because he came to study Rousseau late in his life (Darling, 1984). Although Neill was in many respects a radical educator, he nevertheless had deeply conservative views about the processes of teaching and learning themselves.

At Summerhill, where Neill was headmaster, pupils were not obliged to attend any classes: the ‘Summerhill pupil had to make his own decisions about what classes, if any, he would take’ (Darling, 1984, p 160). However, if pupils did opt into a lesson they were expected to participate. The teacher, moreover, largely dictated to the pupils in a traditional manner⁶². Much like Rousseau before him, Neill expressed a certain disdain for books, commenting that they are the ‘least important apparatus in the school⁶³’. Despite this polemical posture⁶⁴

ways. The former sees *progress* in terms of a new focus on pupil experience whereas the latter thinks education should focus on addressing the global effects of western capitalism.

⁶¹ For detailed accounts of the similarities and differences between these thinkers, see (Carr, 1988) and Perry (1967). Perry also discusses the educational thought of Bertrand Russell.

⁶² Both Carr (1998) and Darling (1984) note this point. Darling also documents school inspectors’ surprise at finding very traditional teaching and ‘old fashioned pedagogy’ at Summerhill.

⁶³ This quotation of Neill is taken from Darling (1984, p 159).

however, he did not perceive little or no educational value in books. Neill certainly wanted to re-assert the value of practical activities and creative arts, but he was not opposed to book learning. He just did not believe that the essential task of the school was to facilitate knowledge acquisition in pupils. He ‘rather saw the job of the school as laying the foundations for a happy life’ (Darling, 1984, p 160). Like Durkheim and John Wilson, Neill thought that obedience was central to discipline. However, he had a much more democratic understanding of obedience; the teacher might obey the pupil or the pupil the teacher, depending on the circumstances in the school community. Neill was also vehemently opposed to the physical chastisement of pupils⁶⁵.

Neill’s underlying conviction that the emotional well-being of pupils was as, if not more, important than how knowledgeable they became may also explain his absence of interest in the nature of knowledge itself. Darling observes that ‘while Neill had much of interest to say about the people he was educating, he had little to say about the nature of the stuff they might learn’ (Darling, 1984, p 170). Neill was not alone on this point. Perry (1967) suggests that child-centred educators such as Lane, Russell⁶⁶ and Neill all largely ignored philosophical questions about education. They had more faith in psychology and thought it had much more to say about fundamental problems of education and processes of learning. However, this meant that concepts such as the nature of knowledge and pupil interest were left largely unexplored in their educational thought. Dewey, however, did develop a more coherent and substantial philosophy of education, although his treatment of ‘interest’ was not very sustained (Perry, 1967). In the next section Dewey’s thoughts on interest and discipline will be explored. Then, in sections 3.3 and 3.4, P S Wilson’s more detailed

⁶⁴ Perry (1967) accuses Neill of being an ‘agent provocateur’ and ‘gadfly of reform’. Darling describes his writing as ‘intemperate’ and ‘polemical’.

⁶⁵ See Perry (1967) pp 158-168 for a more detailed breakdown of Neill’s views on discipline and punishment.

⁶⁶ He rightly notes that it is particularly remarkable that Russell did not philosophically analyse educational concepts given that he was a philosopher.

discussion of the two concepts will be examined; and at 3.5 it will be concluded that Peters articulates a more balanced account of the concept of educational interest than either P S Wilson or Dewey.

3.2 Dewey and Discipline *for Social Progress*

‘A person who is trained to consider his actions, to undertake them deliberately, is in so far forth disciplined. Add to this ability a power to endure in an intelligently chosen course in face of distraction, confusion, and difficulty, and you have the essence of discipline.’ (Dewey, 2008, p 156)

Dewey was, like Rousseau before him, critical of the view that society should transmit and communicate ‘habits of doing, thinking and feeling from older to younger’ (Dewey, 1997, p 3). Like Rousseau, he also endorsed an ‘instrumentalist’ theory of knowledge and an education based on experience. Dewey’s famous work *Democracy and Education* contains some pertinent observations on the nature of discipline, particularly in the tenth chapter which bears the title *Interest and Discipline*. There, he firstly explicates the concept of interest. The *interested person*, he says, is simultaneously lost and found in some matter or other of experience. The term interest indicates the ‘engrossment of the self in an object’ (Dewey, 2008, p 153). Dewey argues that, etymologically speaking, interest is that which provides a link between otherwise disparate things.

This aspect of interest, he continues, has important educational ramifications. He states that guiding someone to perceive the connection that exists between the agent of learning and any material to be learned is ‘simply good sense; to make it interesting by extraneous and artificial inducements deserves all the bad names which have been applied to the doctrine of interest in education’ (Dewey, 2008, p 155). However, interest does not terminate when a person comes to understand an object. Interest is the ‘moving force’ (Dewey, 2008, p 156) in a process of broader developing events, whose

fruition is reached in action. To be interested in something *necessarily* involves having wider aims and purposes. Such instrumental interests are in fact a prerequisite feature of Dewey's concept of discipline.

Discipline was for him a *disposition* of persistence and endurance in the face of challenge and difficulty. The disciplined person has the important 'executive' ability to set goals based on their interests as well as the wherewithal to think about what actions are necessary to achieve these goals. The merely obstinate, by way of comparison, carry an action through just because they have started down that road. Their stubborn activity need not bear any relation to their wider ambitions; indeed they need not have any conscious purposes. Discipline, Dewey stresses, is a *positive* quality. It involves the considered *development*, rather than *suppression* of, one's own inclinations and powers. The idea (here hinted at by Dewey) that discipline involves a disposition to consciously foster one's natural capacities is I think very appealing.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Dewey and Aristotle (whose philosophy will be explored in section 2) arguably both share the broad view that people develop dispositions out of repeated experiences. Baldacchino (2008, p 150) suggests that for Dewey the 'power to modify actions' from previous experience is the 'power to *develop dispositions*'. Pring (2007, p 45) similarly notes that the development and internalisation of habits was crucial to growth for Dewey; habits that are used flexibly and critically can help learners to make better sense of new experiences. Dewey did too (much like Aristotle before him) think that education should make use of the 'accumulated wisdom of the word' (quoted in Priestly & Humes, 2010, p 355). However, as we shall see, Dewey and Aristotle seem to have had very different views about the *nature* and *value* of the received wisdom of a culture. Dewey, as we shall see, stated that the instincts and immediate experience of children should form the content and starting point of *all* education; this would seem to conflict (at least in part) with any notion of accumulated wisdom that is abstract and external to the child. Pring does, to be sure, suggest that for Dewey the 'systematised experience of the "adult mind" helps in the interpretation of the child's mind, and shows how it might better do what it is trying to do' (2007, p 100). However, the accumulated wisdom of the world seems to have the function of extending the *experience* of the child (Pring, 2007, p 124). In section 2, I hope it will become apparent that Aristotle had a rich concept of wisdom that meaningfully incorporates into its components of virtue, action, feeling, experience, knowledge, truth *and abstract* theory. Aristotle too, much more so than Dewey, thought that education should involve the active passing down of virtuous intellectual, affective and moral habits from one generation to the next. Frankena (1970, p 34) suggests that Dewey's thought is open to criticism on the grounds that it does not value enough the previous discoveries of others - especially those connected to the good life. Furthermore, to my mind, certain aspects of Deweyian logic are circular and unconvincing. As Baldacchino notes, Dewey maintained that growth is for the sake of further growth and democracy for further democracy. Aristotle in contrast (as we shall see in sections 2 and 3) was clear that education should provide for 1) *wise* democracy and 2) the rich realisation of each person's intellectual and moral potential according to socio-normative standards *and* personal capacities.

However, Dewey's concept of discipline is arguably weakened by its relation to his larger socially instrumental⁶⁸ educational philosophy. Despite his avowal that education should transcend binaries of traditionalism and progressivism, and individual and social need⁶⁹, Dewey favoured the rejection of teaching subjects for their own sake. He ultimately thought that *individual* actions were worthwhile in so far as they *fuelled social development*. Dewey voices his suspicion of disciplinary subjects within chapter ten of *Democracy and Education*. Traditional schooling he implies reifies knowledge that is divorced from experience. The presence of interest, he says, demonstrates that a subject is not 'something complete in itself' (Dewey, 2008, p 158) that can just be learned or known. Although he states that the school should have neither narrowly utilitarian nor narrowly traditional purposes (as in a schooling based on academic subject disciplines), he does seem to place much more importance upon the former. True conceptions of interest and discipline, he argues, should develop the natural intellectual and emotional dispositions of pupils, *but for* the larger purpose of driving social progress. Dewey is undoubtedly more receptive than P S Wilson⁷⁰ to the idea that education and discipline are necessarily social processes. He makes this particularly pellucid in *My pedagogic Creed* where he famously remarked that 'education is the fundamental method of social progress and reform' (Dewey, 1941, p15).

He there reiterated his view that the 'child's own instincts and powers furnish the material and give the starting point for *all* (my emphasis) education' (Dewey, 1941, p15). However, he insisted that individuals can only comprehend and further their interests and

⁶⁸ Carr suggests that Dewey's philosophy of education was 'his own personal brand of pragmatism – which he called *Instrumentalism*' (Carr, 2003 p124)

⁶⁹ For example of this in his thought see Dewey 1997 chapter 1, Dewey 1941, and for discussion of this see Pring (2007).

⁷⁰ Pring suggests Dewey thought that the interests that shaped human growth necessarily occur in social contexts (2007, p 85). Pring adds: 'Above all...Dewey sees the development of discipline to arise through ...cooperative activities, the end of which is of social significance' (ibid, p 106). P S Wilson's much more romantic and individualistic notions of discipline and interest are explained at 3.3 & 3.4.

powers in the social relationships and situations they find themselves in⁷¹. Education is an inherently social *process* for Dewey and it has social improvement as its *aim*. Dewey believed that education could and should enable society to formulate better purposes for itself. Every teacher's calling is to be 'a social servant set apart for the maintenance of proper social order and the securing of the right social growth' (Dewey, 1941, p17). It has of course been well documented that Dewey was critical of the view that the child is a 'passive spectator' in the educational process⁷². Teaching, he says, should not entail the external imposition of static knowledge onto the *passive* child; such an education will not enable the child to shape and control their future experiences (Dewey, 1997). He rather believed that education should foster the *active* powers of the child, for it is these that will be of most profit to society. It is through *immediate experience* that active powers grow. Education he argues 'must be conceived of as a continuing reconstruction of experience' (Dewey, 1941, p12). Dewey insisted that people can only live and learn in the actually occurring moment. He stipulated that students would be best equipped for later life if education enabled them to consistently extract the meaning from their current situations. This he remarks 'is the only preparation which in the long run amounts to anything' (Dewey, 1997, p 49). Traditional subject-based schooling in comparison is 'mis-educative' (Dewey, 1997, p 25) because it prioritises knowledge disconnected from the pupil's present experiences. Dewey thought that teachers should give children greater liberty to shape their own educational experiences.

'The only freedom that is of enduring importance is freedom of intelligence, that is to say, freedom of observation and of judgement exercised on behalf of purposes that are intrinsically worthwhile.' (Dewey, 1997, p 61)

⁷¹ Baldacchino (2008) somewhat similarly indicates that for 'Dewey, the clarity of ideas and understanding cannot be subservient to anything but the truth that we recognise by dint of our own growth' (p 151).

⁷² See for example Biesta (2007), Carr (2003) and Bingham (2009).

Dewey believed that pupils ought to have more choice over their outward conduct so that they can develop the power to perform purposeful, disciplined and intelligent actions. He stated that threats and penalties are futile forms of educating for social progress (Dewey, 1941). He thought that *discipline* in traditional schooling (Dewey, 1997) tended to be socially controlling and overly reliant on artificially engendered teacher authority. Enforcing pupil silence for the alleged sake of decorum puts 'seeming before being' (Dewey, 1997, p 62). He inclined to the view that school discipline prospers when pupil's rightful freedom is balanced by legitimate teacher authority⁷³. Education he explains need not do away with authority entirely but it should re-focus it onto the pupil's active experiences. Bingham (2009) suggests that Dewey wanted education to embrace a different form of authority, one that is capable of directing, shared collective change.

Dewey (1997) does indicate that the teacher should be a 'leader' not a 'dictator' of group activities. He thought that school life should ensure 'continuity in the child's growth' (Dewey, 1941, p 7). He held that authority and discipline in schools should develop harmoniously out of each child's family experiences. There are, to that extent, certain limited parallels between the thought of Emile Durkheim and Dewey⁷⁴. P S Wilson, however, shared many of Dewey's significant concerns and the latter greatly influenced the former. Pring remarks that *Interest and Discipline in Education* 'remains one of the best expositions of Dewey's thinking' (Pring, 2007, p 77); whereas Peters⁷⁵ suggests it explores themes made familiar by Dewey but with more nuance and precision.

⁷³ In their different ways Freire (2001) and Bantock (1952) also argue that discipline arises when the freedom of pupils and authority of teachers can be balanced.

⁷⁴ Both defended a theory of school discipline that had society as an end. Durkheim (as 2.5 explains) however believed that discipline and authority should be arranged in a wholly different way and he developed a rather implausible concept of society.

⁷⁵ R S Peters makes this remark in his introductory comments to, Wilson (1971).

3.3 Needs and Interests

‘What are we going to do now, without the barbarians?

Those people, they were a kind of solution.’ (Cavafy, 2008, p 16)

Like Clark⁷⁶, P S Wilson was very sceptical of the idea that the child is a *barbarian in need* of education. He thought that such a view helped teachers to justify treating their pupils as *non-persons* during their schooling because ‘children, as a matter of ‘fact’, are not ‘really’ persons until they have been educated’ (Wilson, 1971, p 36). Wilson therefore sought to develop a more humane philosophy of education. At the start of his neglected work *Interest and Discipline in Education* (1971) he posed two questions that provided a central focus for this inquiry. He firstly asked why *should* children go to school and secondly, why should they *have* to? The first question is, he says, concerned with accounting for how pupil attendance at school is or can be warranted. In the opening two chapters of his book he considered two different explanations of why schooling is justified; pupils should go to schools because they *need* to (chapter 1) or because it is in their *interest* (literally) to (chapter 2). The second question, Wilson stated, is about educational *compulsion*. It relates to how teachers can compel pupils to go to schools and do certain things as opposed to others with them, when they get there. In effect the first half of *Interest and Discipline* offers a defence of a child-centred education⁷⁷, whilst the second explains how discipline (chapter 3) and punishment (chapter 4) should be arranged within such a pupil-led educational philosophy.

‘What ‘drives’ the individual, whether it is food or independence that he is seeking, is not his ‘needs’ but his sense of what is important and valuable. It is *from* his evaluations that his needs derive, not vice versa.’ (Wilson, 1971, p 21)

Wilson stipulates that a *need* is a prerequisite that cannot be

⁷⁶ Clark’s views of discipline are delineated at 2.1.

⁷⁷ R S Peters concluded as much in his introductory comments to, Wilson (1971).

truly determined before value judgements have been made about aspirations and ends. As he puts it: agreement about needs 'depends upon agreement about values' (Wilson, 1971, p 6). The argument that education should focus upon meeting pupil need is therefore meaningless Wilson reasons, unless consensus is reached about what desirable educational goals are. The 'need' for schooling Wilson specifies can be described in either *societal* or *individual* terms. He argues that each type of need generates a different model of education to serve it. However no concept of instrumental need, he implies, can ever in itself adequately account for why children should be sent to school. Wilson dismisses the argument that children need to be in a safe place during the day so that adults can be liberated for work. He is similarly disdainful of the idea that pupils should go to school because society needs a continuous supply of well-educated or trained adults to make up the labour force. These are hardly he says *morally* convincing explanations of why children should go to school.

'The educative task of teachers is not to give them (pupils) a series of shocks followed by motivational pushes and pulls in directions alien to their own, but to try to help them to see the significance of goals which they already find interesting and take to be of some possible value.' (Wilson, 1971, p 34)

Wilson is also critical of branches of educational psychology that portray learning as a sort of conditioning of behaviour fashioned by the issuing of rewards and punishments. Human learning is not like the manipulation of a machine he says; the former venture *must* have an intrinsic point. Notably, for Wilson, it is *not* intrinsically worthwhile to study something whose principal value will accrue later⁷⁸. Learning, Wilson says rather entails grasping the meaning of an area of one's own immediate experience. Similarly, he states that teaching 'involves something to do with trying to show someone the significance or import of some feature of their experience' (Wilson, 1971, p 23). Wilson not only wanted to offer an alternative to the *traditional*

⁷⁸ Wilson (1971) gives Shakespeare as an example on p 31.

view of childhood and education; he was also keen to distance himself from *progressivism*. The latter refers, he says, neither to the content nor the goals of education, but only to its method. Neither stereotype of traditionalism or progressivism, he adds, has 'any notion of what could be valuable in the child's life here and now and therefore of intrinsic value to the curriculum' (Wilson, 1971, p 32). Wilson therefore argues that it is not *instrumental need* but *pupil interest* that should be the cornerstone of the curriculum.

'Needs are 'reasons for action', then, only *because* someone (and not necessarily the person 'in need') can point to extrinsic reasons *for the needs*. By contrast, although 'interests' are 'reasons for action' too, this is not *because* of any extrinsic reasons which there may happen to be *for those interests*.' (Wilson, 1971, p 64)

In his second chapter, *Interests*, Wilson explains that children's interests provide a substantially better justification for education than individual or social need. However, Wilson has a very specific conception of interest in mind. Children's interests, he notes, are often assumed to be essential to education by progressively minded teachers. But he thought that the notion of interest should not be employed as a caveat by teachers to generate higher motivation for pupil inquiry into 'something otherwise dull' (Wilson, 1971, p 38). The term *interest*, Wilson implies, had become over-used but under-conceptualised by proponents of progressive education in the 1960's and 1970's. He argues that the identification of a child's genuine interest is an extremely elusive and complex business. Simply asking children to state verbally the subjects they are drawn to, is unlikely to make manifest their *interest*. Nor, for that matter is observation of a child's behaviour a reliable indicator of interest.

'Implicit in a child's interest is all that is most personal and unique about him. To claim to have discovered this after a few weeks in a crowded classroom is absurd.' (Wilson, 1971, p 53)

It is clear that Wilson thought that it takes time for interest to be revealed: but how exactly did he think that a child's interest could be revealed? His statements about this are not entirely clear. On the one hand, he argues that 'letting children do as they like or prefer, or as habit inclines them is...not the same things at all as letting them pursue their interests' (Wilson, 1971, p 49). However he elsewhere declares that children's interests are 'fairly settled dispositions which they have to notice, to pay attention to, and to engage in some appropriate activity with certain sorts of things rather than others' (Wilson, 1971, p 43). Significantly, Wilson emphasises that the *appropriateness* of an activity should be determined first and foremost by the child.

Although these seemingly conflicting utterances about habit are open to interpretation, I think Wilson is trying to say that interest is not just *any* disposition but a *particular sort* of disposition. Interest is not a disposition to pay half-hearted attention to any passing whim. Interests in themselves could be a 'perfect rag bag of the trivial' (Wilson, 1971, p 37) that are not actually in that child's or anyone else's interests. *Interest*, he says, is significantly more than spontaneous and indiscriminate fancy. It involves the observation and scrutiny of an object of experience in a sustained and serious way. Interest entails persistence in the task of understanding why something one is attracted to is worthy of attention. To develop an *interest* is to become progressively able to relate to an object of experience in such a way as to locate its intrinsic point. Wilson argues that learning through performance is not the same thing as learning through interest. Teaching should not be a matter, he says, of influencing children to 'take' a subject. He puts it thus.

The, 'only way of engendering interest in anything is through helping the child to see something of its significance...unless there *is* something of intelligible interest in what the teacher is doing nothing of interest is likely to develop. The most that a teacher can do, I think, is try to communicate *his* view of what is interesting

in an *intelligible* way' (Wilson, 1971, p 60).

Some of the general spirit of this is plausible. Most, if not all, good teaching would necessarily seem to involve the pupil coming to appreciate (with the support of the teacher) the intrinsic value of something. However, not all things have intrinsic value. For Wilson the *teacher's* perspective of worth is and can only be based upon a *prior* interest of the child's. Interest and any value in it, *must* start with the child. A child's interest, he says, is always a good reason for engaging in an activity. Indeed, the *sole* educational function of teachers is to aid their pupils' capacities to understand aspects of experience that they (the pupils) are captivated by. There is always value in pursuing such interests, even if what is valued turns out to be 'utterly worthless' and 'positively detrimental to the achievement of other valued goals' (Wilson, 1971, p 66). Wilson pronounces that there is *nothing* apart from a child's interest⁷⁹ that can be *educated*. The philosophy of education that emerges in the second chapter of Wilson's treatise is thus radically child-centred. It comes as no surprise that his philosophy of discipline in schools is too.

3.4 Discipline for pupil Interest

The question of the morality of compulsion lies at the heart of the problem of discipline in schools. Centrally its difficulty stems – as does much of the difficulty which besets educational theory – from the fact that the problem itself is a particular formation or version of a much more general problem, central to moral philosophy. Trying to understand that (as we are now) the morality of compulsion in the particular context of schooling is but one instance of the difficulty of understanding the compulsion in morality in general.' (Wilson, 1971, p 73)

Having argued in the first section of *Interest and Discipline in Education* that children *should* only go to schools if *their* interests can be appropriately developed, Wilson turns his attention to the second issue of why children *have* to go to schools. Wilson's view of

⁷⁹ He notably adds that pupil interests are valuable however ridiculous they may be.

what constitutes proper compulsion in schooling reflects his wider concern to educate interests. Discipline in schools, he stresses, is a moral problem because of the compulsion it involves. Wilson reasons that moral compulsion entails *doing* what one should because one knows that one must. Wilson arguably endorses a theory of moral duty in regard to discipline in schools, albeit a rather unique and peculiar one. He states that the compelling force of a moral imperative originates in the 'interest which one finds in trying to live according to it, rather than anyone's pleasure, happiness or any other 'good' to which it may contingently prove conducive' (Wilson, 1971, p 74). Proper discipline in schools does not entail the following of a code of conduct written by someone else, nor does it for that matter involve any relation to the wider happiness and flourishing of self or other⁸⁰. The morally compelling feature of discipline in schools is rather the pupils own interest.

'In schools, then, the children's discipline must derive ultimately not from empirical considerations or calculations (by the children or anyone else) of the ways in which to obtain or produce goods, but from the moral compulsion implicit in their own interests in the school activities themselves.' (Wilson, 1971, p 74)

Wilson, like Clark after him, contrasts *discipline* and *control*. He states that both are forms of order that necessitate compulsion. However, the compulsion particular to each is quite different. *Control* he says is a way of ordering things to get something done and the compulsion involved can be physical and/or psychological. The compulsion involved in discipline by comparison, is both logical and moral. Interest is a quality that is deeply receptive to being disciplined. An interest could not in fact be a genuine interest if it were not susceptible to discipline. Issues of non-moral compulsion only arise when the *interests* of children are lost from view. He says that such loss can be attributed to the children themselves or to

⁸⁰ This is I think a significant weakness in his theory and one that stands in particular contrast to the thought of Aristotle, whose views will be discussed in depth in part two of this thesis.

teachers. In the former case Wilson implies that it is incumbent on teachers to help *discipline the interests* of children when lost, to refocus them, to educate them and to help them find new ones.

Where teachers themselves lose sight of the interest of children, compulsion can only take on the more sinister form of manipulation. It can only be instrumental: 'a kind of motivational leverage brought to bear upon the child in order to control his behaviour in desirable ways of whose intrinsic value he has no inkling himself (Wilson, 1971, p 75)'. When the discipline of children in schools is external to a child's interest the order is not educational but *controlling* and should not be called or thought to be, discipline. He states that when 'we exercise control over people...we are not disciplining them' (Wilson, 1971, p 78). *Discipline* does not arise when a person or persons are subject to the will and control of others. Discipline comes from immersion in the 'work itself' (Smith, 1985, p 60). Pupil interest is for Wilson the *educative order* that is most worth pursuing. Control is a merely *non educative order*. A child subject to control is perhaps better schooled but they are not better educated. Although discipline is not something that teachers can exercise to establish control over their pupils, Wilson did believe that teacher and pupil alike can enter into a disciplined relationship.

'A disciplined relationship is one in which both parties to the relationship (the teacher as well as the class) submit to the educative order of the task in hand. The discipline is not something which one party to the relationship possesses over or manages to impose on the other.' (Wilson, 1971, p 79)

There is something apposite about this aspect of Wilson's concept of discipline. I think the disciplined pupil or class should be defined in an important sense by their proper commitment to and engagement with the educational activity in question. Discipline in schools should I think entail pupils' endeavouring to 'reach appropriate standards...in a valued activity' (Wilson, 1971, p 79). I am

also sympathetic to his view that a disciplined class, is not disciplined because someone is in control but because all of the members of it share a concern to advance their education. To their great credit both Wilson and Clark appreciate the vital connection that exists between a *disciplined pupil* and a pupil who is *learning something of value*. However, there are, I think, at least two fundamental problems with their view of discipline for pupil interest; these are *epistemic* and *moral*.

Wilson's theory firstly rests on very shaky *epistemological* foundations. *Interest and Discipline in Education* has in fact next to nothing to say about knowledge and how it might be related to all important pupil interest. Wilson arguably recognised this gap in his theory as he attempted to trace the links between interest and knowledge in a later paper (Wilson, 1974). Knowledge of educational value, Wilson controversially argued is precisely and only that knowledge which interests the pupil (Wilson, 1974). He also perplexingly insisted that all actions are instrumental and that *all knowledge* has the instrumental function of enabling the discovery of further knowledge. The educational value of knowledge depends on its capacity to generate more knowledge. His attempt to explain the worth of *knowledge* founded on interest is, I think, less than satisfactory. I do not appear to be alone in reaching this conclusion as this paper 'was dismissed with less than philosophical decorum' (Pring, 2007, p 77) at a dramatic meeting of the Philosophy of Education Society for Great Britain. Wilson was given short shrift it appears because he had subverted the traditional educational aims of initiating pupils into worthwhile forms of knowledge. To be sure, there is little if any room for the received knowledge or wisdom of a culture within Wilson's educational philosophy, a point of which he was fully aware.

He argued that children should only go or be compelled to go to schools if these are the sorts of places in which worthwhile activities

occur. He emphasised that his characterisation of a *worthwhile educational activity* departed from that put forward by Richard Peters. Although Wilson shares the view that educational activities are worthwhile if they are intrinsically valuable (in his later explained partially instrumental sense), he thought that no subject should in itself have a privileged place on the curriculum. He explains his reasoning accordingly: ‘what makes his (the child’s) curriculum educationally worthwhile is not the presence on it of any particular school subject, but the presence *in* it of serious thought about *whatever* he is doing’ (Wilson, 1971, p 86). In this regard, Wilson is I think like White⁸¹; he is guilty of misunderstanding or misrepresenting what Peters actually said about educational activities. Although it is true that Peters thought education should consist of certain activities or bodies of knowledge that are worth pursuing for their own sake, he did not argue that any subject *must be* on the curriculum.

Wilson is also sceptical of the traditional idea that discipline and force should be employed where necessary to ensure that certain inherently valuable subjects can be studied. Teachers who persist in the instruction of subjects irrespective of pupil interest are unlikely to help their pupils uncover the ‘illuminating point in his instructions since there will be nothing in the pupils’ experience for those instructions to connect with’ (Wilson, 1971, p 88). Teaching, he says, that is only upheld by the possibility of physical or psychological sanction is not and cannot be educational. Proper teaching and instruction involves *informing* not *commanding*. Wilson reiterates the contrast between his stance and that of Peters by insisting that the *content of information* shared between teacher and pupil should *not* come from the *teacher’s tradition and culture*, but from each pupil’s.

⁸¹ White’s interpretation of Peters was discussed in chapter 2.

'The pupil's thinking, too, has a tradition, and, unless the teacher begins his instructive communication with the pupil in a language and in relation to experiences and activities which *already* the pupil understands something of the point of, then no conceptual development and no development of interest will result directly from the encounter.' (Wilson, 1971, p 90)

I agree with Wilson's general assertion that new learning must proceed from what is already known⁸². However, his insistence that pupils have their own culture and tradition upon which teaching should be based is I think somewhat paradoxical. It seems to me that a tradition and culture is something that is to an important degree both external to particular individuals and *already* relatively stable and enduring. Matthew Arnold⁸³ certainly construed culture in such terms. He distinctly stated that 'the disparagers of culture make its motive curiosity' (Arnold, 2006, p 32). Arnold, however, emphasises that a cultured person is able to 'see things as they are' and 'augment the excellence' (Arnold, 2006, p 33) of their nature accordingly. He insists that the origin of culture is not to be found in mere interest and curiosity but rather in a love of human perfection. His argument that education should involve individuals *engaging* with the best that has been thought and said seems to me much more defensible than Wilson's. I think there is considerable confusion in the idea that education should almost exclusively entail children developing interests in their *own* personal traditions. Children may not be barbarians at the gates of knowledge, but nor are they fully mature and independent inquirers capable of generating their own *knowledge* from within.

Wilson's conception of discipline as an educative order ultimately rests, I think, on far too romantic and utopian a conception of the child. In this regard, Wilson's educational theory is very reminiscent of Rousseau's. The latter, however, was only concerned to

⁸² This point will receive more detailed discussion in relation to Aristotle's theory of instruction in chapter nine.

⁸³ Arnold's views were explored in chapter 2.

describe the education of an *individual* boy who had a tutor entirely to himself, paid for by his wealthy family (Plamenatz, 1972). Few, if any, schools today have the luxury of being able to match every child to his or her own teacher. Wilson did not, I think, give nearly enough thought to how the competing demands of individuals may often clash in a *class* of pupils. An education and discipline arranged solely around personal interest concedes far too much freedom to individual pupils in their immediate contexts. Teachers can and should take a continuing and active interest in their pupils' interests. They should, moreover, be committed to forging disciplined personal relationships with their pupils. However, a teacher who is convinced that individual pupil interest should determine the entire content of the curriculum, and procedures of class discipline seems to be in the grip of an extremely romantic view of education. It is a view that fundamentally misconstrues the necessarily social nature of school life and learning and it is a view that does not pay enough attention to public traditions of knowledge.

Wilson's philosophy of discipline also rests on a decidedly limited and individualistic view of moral agency. Wilson's argument is after all that pupil interests are the *only* things that can or should be educated or disciplined. All attempts to control ill-disciplined behaviour by means external to pupil interest are for Wilson morally misguided. He argues that there are no ethically or educationally redeeming features of a situation where a child is subject to the controlling features of schooling, no matter what the desirability of the ends may be, for the moral benefits of education lie only in the child's own interest. The sole intervention a teacher is justified in making in their pupils' moral formation is the refocusing of their interests, whatever those interests may be. Wilson's vision of the educated person is, I think, dangerously one-dimensional; the only moral quality he thinks worth pursuing is personal curiosity. Wilson's philosophy of discipline is, I think, ultimately undermined by his

radical, wider philosophy of education.

3.5 Theoretical knowledge, Practical knowledge and Wisdom

‘Sustaining interest is perhaps a greater educational problem than appealing to it’.
(Hirst & Peters, 1975, p 36)

Peters notably devoted a chapter (VI) to the ‘Consideration of Interests’, in *Ethics and Education* (1970)⁸⁴. Far from ignoring its educational importance; Peters arguably develops a more rounded notion of interest than P S Wilson. The term, he says, has both psychological and normative meanings and only the former is similar to Wilson’s. In the ‘psychological sense we speak of what people are interested in...in a more permanent sort of way’ (Peters, 1970, p 167-168). The normative import of the concept in contrast is to be found in what is actually *in* a person’s interests. The ethical appropriateness of interest, Peters implies, requires that a balanced evaluation be made by teachers about *what* it is worthwhile for individual pupils to do in relation to their ability to do it. Interest is normative, he says, because it ‘combines judgements about what is worthwhile or desirable (judgements of content) with judgements about individual capacity and potentiality’ (Peters, 1970, p 171). The notion that teachers need to make balanced judgements about the nature of the educational activities to be pursued in relation to pupil’s current abilities seems to me to be a very sound one⁸⁵. Importantly, Peters also makes clear that the value of individual interests must be considered in relation to more universal public interests⁸⁶. All schools he says have educational and social functions.

⁸⁴ Hirst & Peters (1975) also briefly discuss interest pointing out that many if not all children’s interests are socially acquired. They also imply that indiscriminate pursuit of interest may inhibit the development of the vital ability to complete tasks.

⁸⁵ This is also a notion that will receive more careful scrutiny in relation to the virtue theory of Aristotle in parts two and three of this thesis.

⁸⁶ Peters (1970, p 175) gives the example of un-problematically justifiable rules that prohibit murder, theft and general breaking of contracts.

'Education is not simply for the intelligent. It is not a question of some being capable of it and others not. It is a matter, rather, of how far individuals can progress along the same avenues of exploration' (Peters, 1970, p 178).

He states that the onus on teachers to consider pupil interest is not an excuse 'for duller children' to 'simply be encouraged to build boats, make guitars, do cookery and metal work' (Peters, 1970, p 177) while the more intellectually able pursue less practical activities. Peters' willingness to classify pupils as 'dull' or more 'intelligent' may appear to be a little less than politically correct in the contemporary context. However, his point here is not to label children; he is actually seeking educational equality. Peters thought that all children were, regardless of ability, entitled to an education that might maximise their potential. Peters thought that such an education should involve a thorough engagement with what is most worthwhile: knowledge that helps pupils to understand their world. This philosophy did, however, famously lead him to make some problematic statements about the value of practical knowledge.

In chapters five and six of *Ethics and Education* he expresses scepticism about the educational merit of practical activities such as games and cookery⁸⁷. Skills like swimming and golf too 'do not have a wide-ranging cognitive content...It is largely a matter of "knowing how" rather than of "knowing that", of knack rather than of understanding...what there is to know throws very little light on much else' (Peters, 1979, p159). Hirst and Peters (1975) together cast doubt on the educational status of subjects that do not promote forms of knowledge; they deride games as being essentially 'non-serious'. All seven forms of knowledge delineated in *The Logic of Education* have a distinctively theoretical rather than practical foundation. Hirst and Peters (1975, pp-63-64) argue that education should focus on developing knowledge of: mathematics, the physical sciences, interpersonal and

⁸⁷ Peters does in mitigation argue that whilst activities like cookery should ideally have a cognitive component, if some children cannot find it, then there is no reason to conclude that they have 'no educational value' (Peters, 1970, p 177).

linguistic aspects of experience, morality, aesthetic experience, religion, and philosophy; because all of these forms support objective truth claims. Liberal education as conceived by Peters and Hirst arguably did therefore place too high a premium on theoretical knowledge⁸⁸. To their credit, child-centred educationists such as Lane, Neill, Rousseau and Dewey helped to reassert the educational value of practical activities, but they probably tended to go too far in the other direction. They arguably all underestimated the worth of theoretical knowledge. Should education and discipline be *more* for the one than the other, or is there some middle-ground where both theoretical and practical knowledge can be equally valued? The beginnings of an affirmative answer to this question can perhaps be sought in the educational promotion of wisdom.

In the schools of antiquity philosophers aspired to impart wisdom, in modern colleges our humbler aim is to teach subjects. The drop from divine wisdom, which was the goal of the ancients, to text-book knowledge of subjects, which is achieved by moderns, marks an educational failure, sustained through the ages'. (Whitehead, 1967, p 29)

In his seminal exposition, *The Aims of Education and other essays*, Alfred North Whitehead indicates that the purpose of education ought to be the inculcation of wisdom in pupils. Whitehead maintains that all mental development consists of rhythmic cycles. Each cycle consists of three phases; romance, precision and generalisation. In the beginning the subject matter is vivid and exciting and full of unexplored connections: the 'territory of romantic interest is large and ill-defined' (Whitehead, 1967, p 36). However, Whitehead thought that genuine educational achievement requires both exactness of knowledge and the ability to generalise from this firmly grasped knowledge. At the stage of precision, it must be recognised that there are inescapable facts, 'that there are right and

⁸⁸ However, as we shall see in chapter ten, Peters did maintain that practical activities could be educational when they have either 1) a theoretical component or 2) are pursued to the point of excellence.

wrong ways and definite truths to be known' (Whitehead, 1967, p 34). Although precise knowledge⁸⁹ is one principal aim of education, wisdom is an even more important quality; it is the fruition and culmination of all learning. Wisdom he says is a personal liberation; it is a mastery of the principles that underpin knowledge; 'wisdom is the way in which knowledge is held' (Whitehead, 1967, p 30).

'With good discipline, it is always possible to pump into the minds of a class a certain quantity of inert knowledge'. (Whitehead, 1967, p 5)

Whitehead thought that discipline was a vital part of all educational cycles. He actually introduces the idea that wisdom is the proper end of education in a chapter entitled, *The Rhythmic Claims of Freedom and Discipline*. Freedom and discipline he says are not 'antagonists' in education; no part of learning can do without them. The two concepts, he says, ought rather to be adjusted to match the natural rhythm of the child's life. At the beginning and end of any learning cycle, discipline should be present, but freedom should dominate. Even in the phase of romance, discipline is important for it is 'necessary in life to have acquired the habit of cheerfully undertaking imposed tasks' (Whitehead, 1967, p 35). However, the imposition of tasks must not 'assassinate interest' as interest is necessary for all learning. Whitehead argues that education often fails precisely because the importance of the rhythm of learning has been neglected. It is an all too common mistake of schooling, he says, that mere knowledge is imparted before the stage of romance has been properly completed. Education should rather respond to the 'rhythmic cravings' of pupils. However, he also insisted that discipline should help romance to find its 'due place' throughout the educational cycle. In the stage of precision, it is discipline that is to the fore.

⁸⁹ He argues that to write 'poetry one must have studied metre, and to build bridges you must be learned in the strength of material' (Whitehead, 1967, p 34).

'What we should aim at producing is men who possess both culture and expert knowledge in some special direction'. (Whitehead, 1967, p 1)

I think that Whitehead's theory does in important respects successfully combine central aspects of both theoretical and practical knowledge, and of liberal and child-centred educational theory. His concept of culture is remarkably similar to Arnold's. Culture, he says, has nothing to do with mere bits of information. He defines it as 'activity of thought and receptiveness to beauty and humane feeling' (Whitehead, 1967, p 34). He also insists that the stage of precision must accumulate a store of 'best practice' (Whitehead, 1967, p 34). In a similar way to Hirst and Peters, he thought that possession of objective intellectual knowledge was a necessary attribute of the genuinely educated person. However, he was also, like Dewey and Peters, very sceptical of the value of inert knowledge⁹⁰. He thought education must be rooted in the present yet practically useful for the future. He states that: 'the habit of the active utilisation of well understood principles is the final possession of wisdom' (Whitehead, 1967, p 37). Although I share Whitehead's view that wisdom is superior to knowledge, I do not think that wisdom's pre-eminence is derived from its greater utility. I think Whitehead too highly prized the instrumental application of the knowledge component of wisdom. Thus, in section two, Aristotle's account of the concept will be explored, as he arguably better explains how wisdom can and should have intrinsic value in the theoretical and practical spheres of people's lives. I do nevertheless consider Whitehead's view that school discipline should be for the sake of fostering pupil wisdom to be on the right lines.

⁹⁰ Peters (1973) also makes known his admiration of Whitehead. Peters (1970) includes 'knowledge that is not inert' as a criterion of a worthwhile activity and this may well have been partly shaped by Whitehead's castigation of inert knowledge.

3.6 Discipline, for Wisdom?

The subordinate stiffening of discipline must be directed to secure some long term good'. (Whitehead, 1967, p 31)

In this chapter the role of discipline in child-centred theories of discipline has been discussed. P S Wilson and to a lesser extent Dewey are, it has been alleged, articulate defenders of the fundamentally sound idea that school discipline should centrally involve individuals and classes engaging in worthwhile activities in sustained ways. They also emphasise well the important point that discipline will most likely arise in schools when there is a close match between the individual interests, experiences and capacities of pupils and the proposed learning activities. Unlike Peters, however, Wilson fails to appreciate the extent to which schools are necessarily shared public spaces where the value of one person's interests must be weighed alongside those of others. The wider needs and interests of society must also surely figure in the matter and manner of school discipline.

Dewey did advance a significantly more social concept of interest, experience and discipline. However, the ends that both Wilson and Dewey want school discipline to serve rest, I think, on very problematic epistemologies. Wilson effectively neglects or downplays the merit of all public traditions of knowledge. Dewey, Neill, Lane, Rousseau and to a lesser extent Whitehead, all also valued the useful over what has traditionally been taken to be inherently worthwhile. Peters' view that education should illuminate the human predicament by initiating all children into the knowledge and understanding that can help them to optimise their potential has been noted. It has, however, been argued that neither liberal nor child-centred theories of education satisfactorily explain how *both* theoretical and practical knowledge are educationally valuable. It has been put forward that discipline in schools might be able to help pupils to secure the long

term good of wisdom. A sort of neo-Aristotelian wisdom is, I think, an especially appealing epistemic aim, for education and discipline, because this aim places considerable intrinsic value on both theoretical and practical knowledge. In the second section of this thesis, the virtue theory of Aristotle will therefore be analysed in depth.

Part Two

Wisdom and the life of Virtue

Chapter 4: Kantian Discipline and the Moral Duty of Autonomy

In this chapter and the next, it will be argued that the essential aim of school discipline should be to contribute to the inculcation of *virtuous* rather than merely *rule following* habits in pupils. The moral philosophies of Peters, Kant, and Aristotle will be discussed in order to unpack what is distinctive about an ethics of virtue. Comparison will be made between their respective views on the nature of childhood and moral development. In this chapter, it will be indicated that Peters and Kant were in agreement that virtues of character had at least some normative merit. However, it will be maintained that Peters endorsed a more wide-ranging and pluralistic approach to ethical formation than Kant. Importantly, it will also be argued that both philosophers took moral maturity to reside in the attainment of rational autonomy; as such, *habits* of action and feeling are subservient to rationally formed principles in their respective moral frameworks. Indeed, Kant, in his treatise *On Education* explicitly states that habits ought not to be fostered in children at all. In the subsequent chapter, it will be maintained that an Aristotelian concept of virtue holds more promise as an end for school discipline, as it can better explain how the various principles, feelings, experiences *and* habits that largely comprise moral agency ought to be fostered.

4.1 School Discipline for pupil Virtue?

In the first section of this thesis, two broad accounts of school discipline were analysed and compared. In chapter two it was suggested that discipline in schools has traditionally been conceptualised as the necessary submission of pupils to rules⁹¹, rules that either govern a worthwhile activity or ensure the class order necessary for the pursuit of worthwhile activity. In the third chapter, it was conversely suggested that disciplined pupils ought to be able to

⁹¹ The views of Peters & Hirst and Durkheim were in particular discussed.

choose freely the educational activities they engage in based on their own interests and experience⁹². It was my argument that neither theory of discipline rested on a wholly satisfactory epistemology. Whereas the former view of discipline may not have valued experiential, practical and ‘useful’ knowledge enough, the latter perspective generally veered too far in the other direction to the possible neglect of theoretical knowledge. It was suggested that the epistemic purpose of discipline in schools might rather be for the sake of pupil wisdom, in so far as wisdom (at least from an Aristotelian perspective) successfully combines elements of both theoretical and practical knowledge. In chapter 8 of this dissertation, the nature of *theoretical wisdom* and knowledge will be considered and an attempt made to construct a more favourable epistemology, founded on Aristotle’s intellectual virtues. The rest of the second section of this thesis, however, will first consider the various qualities that the *practically wise* person might be expected to possess. It will also importantly consider how education might best facilitate the development of such qualities in pupils.

Although the narrative of the first section of the thesis focused upon the *epistemic* weaknesses of the accounts of school discipline hitherto explored, there may also be profound *moral philosophical* (ethical) difficulties with both conceptualisations. The ethical flaws in these theories, broadly put, reflect different ways in which discipline may fail to facilitate fully the holistic long term moral education of pupils. Some child-centred accounts are, I think, particularly problematic in that discipline only seems to contribute to moral development if it enables pupils’ interests to be pursued⁹³. The difficulties of the traditional account concern the degree to which compulsion and rules are *essentially* related to the wider moral educational purposes of school discipline. If school discipline is too focused on rules, there may be a danger that the long-term

⁹² P S Wilson and Dewey were identified as articulate exponents of this perspective.

⁹³ This is especially evident in the thought of P S Wilson as was explained in chapter 3.

development of other important qualities that impinge upon pupils' moral actions (and I am thinking here of habits and feeling in particular) might be marginalised. In chapter two, it was noted that Durkheim, Peters and John Wilson all characterised school discipline as primarily involving obedience and/or submission to rules. Significantly, both Durkheim and Wilson thought that discipline was to a large extent *for the sake of* the rules. In so far as this is so their theories are broadly Kantian in spirit⁹⁴. Peters' emphasis on rules however, did not go quite so far and his theory is to that extent more convincing.

Peters did not provide much detail about his particular concept of school *discipline*. It is therefore not surprising that he says very little about the moral philosophy that informed it either. He did, however, elsewhere write extensively about the broader moral formation of persons, so it is possible to speculate that the ethical foundations of his concept of discipline might be found within his wider thought on moral education. The particular value Peters places on rules and necessary order arguably aligns his theory of school discipline within broader deontological⁹⁵ and/or utilitarian ethical frameworks. He did after all state that the 'most promising justification of punishment is provided by the utilitarians' (Peters, 1970, p 270). Although a consideration of the wider interests of the majority of a class of pupils may have influenced his thoughts on the use of *punishment*, Peters does state that the essence of *discipline* involves pupils either: 1) getting on the inside of the rules that govern an activity; or 2) following the rules that ensure the order necessary for that activity⁹⁶. The intrinsic value of rules is, as we shall see at 4.4 &

⁹⁴ Kant's views will be explained at 4.4 & 4.5.

⁹⁵ A deontological ethics is, broadly put, based on the ethical primacy of duty, as will shortly be explained at 4.4 & 4.5. There it will also be noted that Utilitarian Ethics takes the predicted consequences of an action, on the interests of the majority, to be the most salient factor in determining the moral worth of that action.

⁹⁶ See section 2.4 for detailed discussion of his views on discipline. That Peters thought a degree of order necessary for teaching arguably suggests some utilitarian influence on his notion of discipline too.

4.5, central to Kantian moral and educational theory and Peters does discuss Kant at some length in *Ethics in Education* (1970).

But Peters' moral thought was also significantly influenced by Aristotle and in *Moral Development and Moral Education* (1981) he identified four different categories of virtue that he thought schools should promote. However, in this chapter and the next, it will be intimated that Peters' moral educational vision is strictly speaking, neither Kantian nor Aristotelian. Rather, Peters endorsed his own version of 'moral pluralism' that had rational autonomy as its ultimate end. It will be argued that his call for pluralism does not entirely convince for two reasons. Firstly, Peters's plea rests on a broad and rather uneasy blurring of Kantian (rule directed) and Aristotelian (virtue directed) ethical theories. Peters, secondly, underestimates the importance of fostering the emotions in pupils that are proper to each virtue. In chapters four and five (and in particular between 4.4 and 5.4), some significant differences between Kantian and Aristotelian moral philosophy will therefore be explicated. At 5.5 it will be argued that an education in virtues need not be opposed to rules. On the contrary, discipline should involve virtuous adults persuading and enabling the young to follow rules where such rules are likely to lead to the formation of virtuous habits. It will be concluded that the Aristotelian concept of virtue is more persuasive than that provided by Kant or Peters because of its wider scope and long term emphasis on developing excellent habits of thinking, acting *and* feeling.

Appreciation of the features that distinguish the ethical theories formulated by Kant, Peters and Aristotle seems vital as one of the central claims of this thesis (articulated again at 5.6) is that the moral educational potential of school discipline should be centrally focussed on developing *virtuous* rather than merely *rule following*⁹⁷ dispositions in pupils. I do not think that this claim in any way contradicts my

⁹⁷ I include here the 'following of rules' autonomously written by oneself here too. Kant's notion of legislating laws or maxims for the self is discussed in more depth at 4.4.

suggestion in chapter three that schools should try to lay the foundations for a sort of Aristotelian wisdom in pupils. The person who has come to possess the moral and intellectual virtues is, *in virtue of these virtues*, both practically and theoretically wise. For the consistent exercise of the virtues is, in Aristotle's schema, the prime indicator of wisdom. If a type of neo-Aristotelian wisdom is a legitimate aspiration for education, then a disciplined initiation into the virtues in the early years of life would seem to be the surest route to its long-term achievement.

4.2 The plea for moral pluralism in education

In both *Ethics and Education* and *Moral Development and Moral Education*, Peters discussed (amongst others) Kant, Plato, Kohlberg, Freud and Aristotle. In the latter work he attempted to integrate these diverse influences in a general plea for moral pluralism in education. Arguably though, his ethical thought was most profoundly shaped by Kant and Aristotle. In chapter eight of *Ethics and Education*, Peters explored elements of Kantian and Marxist theory⁹⁸. He stated that there is 'much to be said' (Peters, 1970, p 209) for Kant's doctrine of practical reason. He was particularly impressed by Kant's notion of 'respect for persons' which, he says, is derivative from that philosopher's 'respect for law'⁹⁹. Peters considers the possibility that Kantian principles of respect for persons might be viewed through a more fundamental prism of collective kinship. However, he indicates that Marxist notions of fraternity are 'not quite on the same footing as the justification of respect for persons' (Peters, 1970, p 223). Peters states that it is *possible* for 'men and women to live together in society without any clear consciousness of themselves as persons' (Peters, 1970, p 210). However, in a manner not dissimilar to Kant, he suggests¹⁰⁰ that 'persons' are due *respect*, in so far as they are able to consciously

⁹⁸ He also here discusses Freud and briefly mentions Aristotle.

⁹⁹ Kant's notion of respect for law will be explored at 4.4.

¹⁰⁰ Peters' argument is open to interpretation as it is not, I think, entirely clear.

formulate a concept of themselves, as rational beings able to determine their own destiny. Peters also maintained that richer concepts of self are developed in at least partly social circumstances.

He maintains that people only really develop as ‘persons’ when they have a concept of themselves that is ‘taken to be a matter of importance in society’ (Peters, 1970, p 211). He adds that a ‘strong case can therefore be made for saying that concepts of man are culture bound’ (Peters, 1970, p 232). Peters was no relativist however. He believed that rules were central to bringing about a broadly Kantian end that he greatly valued: namely, that of moral autonomy. This is arguably nowhere more apparent than in *Moral Development and Moral Education* where he remarks that; ‘I am a staunch supporter of a rationally held and intelligently applied moral code’ (1981, p 48). However, I do not think Peters can be properly described as a Kantian. The main reason for this is that while Peters held that moral education should inculcate certain habits in pupils, Kant was opposed to *any* habits being fostered in children¹⁰¹.

Peters also held that moral rules as well as concepts of self are formed in the societies and communities we actually live in. He defines a society as ‘a collection of individuals united by certain rules’ (Peters, 1981, p49); but he implicitly criticised Kant for not saying enough about the concrete social conditions which make possible the transition to moral self rule¹⁰². Peters also implies that our status as persons and choosers worthy of dignity is not exclusively dependent upon our individual capacity to rationally generate maxims in the intelligible world to govern our at times unruly behaviour in the sensible world¹⁰³. As will be explained at 4.4, Kant thought that people were only really worthy of respect as persons in so far as they

¹⁰¹ Kant’s dismissal of the role of habit in education will be explored at 4.5.

¹⁰² See pages 226 & 229 of *Ethics and Education* (Peters, 1970) in particular. Peters’ comments seem to refer to Kant’s Moral Law. Kant actually wrote a fairly extensive treatise on education of which Peters may not have been aware. This treatise is discussed at 4.5.

¹⁰³ Kant’s demarcation between the intelligible and sensible worlds will be explained at 4.4.

were capable of being members of the entirely rational *kingdom of ends*.

If Peters was not a Kantian in any strict sense, what did he think that the principal means and ends of moral education were? Haydon (2009) has recently suggested that Peters was more than anything a 'moral pluralist'. In his article *Moral Development: A plea for Pluralism*, Peters did argue that 'monolithic' moral theories of the Kantian or utilitarian kind had 'never quite rung true' (1981, p 83) because they had over-emphasised the role of principles in the moral sphere. He maintained that while principles can be appealed to in situations of moral uncertainty, 'for the most part they enter into our lives in a much more concrete, specific way' (Peters, 1981, p 95). Much moral philosophy, he states, had been 'unconvincing because it had not dwelt sufficiently on the different views about what is morally important' (1981, p 83). Peters suggests that the important role of 'habit' in moral education stemming from the tradition of Aristotle (1981, p 96) had been particularly neglected by the educational theorists of his time. Was Peters then a virtue theorist¹⁰⁴? He certainly does discuss virtues in some detail, in his collection of essays, *Moral Development and Moral Education* (1981).

4.3 Two concepts of Virtue: Peters and Aristotle compared

To summarise, there are (a) highly specific virtues, such as punctuality, tidiness and perhaps honesty, which are connected with specific types of acts, and which lack any built-in reason for acting in the manner prescribed - that is, are not motives, unlike (b) virtues such as compassion, which are also motives for action. There are, then, (c) more artificial virtues, such as justice and tolerance which involve more general considerations to do with rights and institutions. Finally there are (d) virtues of a higher order such as courage, integrity, perseverance and the like which have to be exercised in the face of counterfactual inclinations.' (Peters, 1981,

¹⁰⁴ Haydon (2009) asks this very same question. Saugstad (2002, p 377) somewhat glibly remarks that R S Peters was 'inspired by Aristotle's philosophy'. Whilst Peters does undoubtedly draw upon Aristotle's works, he does not, as we shall see ultimately hold an Aristotelian position.

Peters's most extensive exploration of the virtues is contained in the essay entitled *Moral Development: A plea for Pluralism* (1981)¹⁰⁵. There, Peters takes issue with Kohlberg's notorious dismissal of a 'bag of virtues' approach to moral education and instead proposes four categories of virtue of his own. The aforementioned quotation appears to suggest that Peters thought there were: a) act specific but *motiveless virtues*; b) *motivational virtues* that *are* motives for action; c) *artificial virtues*, that arise in us through socialisation, rather than nature and; d) *higher order virtues* which involve a degree of conflict between a person's principles and inclinations. Haydon suggests that there are 'echoes of Aristotle' (Haydon, p 9, 2009) here. He elsewhere comments that Peters perceived his concept of virtue 'as being in the tradition of Aristotle' (Haydon, 1999, p 99). However, of the four categories of virtue Peters proposes, only one, type b) is, I think, remotely recognisable as Aristotelian¹⁰⁶.

To be sure, Peters, does indicate that 'habitual forms of reasoning can involve intelligence' (1981, p 98). However, he intimates that habits are not sufficient to explain moral conduct generally, or the majority of virtues, as he conceives them, specifically. In contrast, Aristotle's moral virtues *centrally*¹⁰⁷ involve habits of character. On closer inspection, only Peters type a) virtues look anything like habits of character¹⁰⁸. Peters specifies that the concept of habit (1981, p 98-99) cannot get a grip on the virtues he classifies as type b), c) or d). Even Peters' type a) virtues are not habits in any discernibly Aristotelian sense. Peters indicates that type a) virtues are *motiveless* habits *or* character traits. Aristotle in contrast thought the moral virtues were

¹⁰⁵ Haydon similarly remarks that 'his main discussion of virtues comes' there (p 7, 2009).

¹⁰⁶ Aristotle's notion of how virtue involves the right measure of feeling will be further explored at 5.2 and 5.3, and again in chapters 6 & 7.

¹⁰⁷ As we shall see in the next chapter, Aristotle does also specify that the habits of the mature virtuous person will be mediated by practical reason.

¹⁰⁸ Haydon (2009, p 7) also interprets Peters to be saying that only his type a) virtues are distinctively habitual. Steutel & Spiecker (2004, p 541) similarly remark that Peters thought it 'would be wrong to regard the motivational virtues as habits'.

dispositions (NE, 1106a13) that involve the right measure of action and feeling (NE, 1106b15-25). Nor did Aristotle secondly, suggest that there was a class of socialised or *artificial virtues* (the type c) category). Aristotle was clear that though we *are* constituted by nature to receive the moral virtues, we owe their full maturation to habit (NE, 1103a24-26).

Thirdly, in terms of type d) virtues: although Aristotle was like Peters, of the view that courage often would involve conflicting inclinations; Aristotle did not think that *all* such ‘higher order’ virtues *necessarily* had to involve inner conflict. Indeed, the absence of any psychological conflict is the primary difference between the continent and the fully virtuous Aristotelian agent, as we shall see in chapter 6. Furthermore, Aristotle’s most likely candidates for ‘higher order’ virtues, connected to the moral sphere, are probably justice, practical wisdom and great-mindedness¹⁰⁹. Peters does not identify any of these as ‘higher order’. He maintains that justice is an *artificial virtue* whereas Aristotle describes it as the ‘complete’ and ‘sovereign’ virtue (NE, 1129b26-28). Peters clearly does think that the judicious wielding of moral principles in specific contexts is an important aspect of morality and this arguably resembles a sort of practical wisdom¹¹⁰. In his essay *Concrete principles and the rational passions* (1981), Peters implies that it is a ‘rationalistic delusion’ (p 79) to think that moral principles can be properly applied without wise judgement and careful attention to the specifics of the concrete situation. However, Peters does not describe such intelligent moral judgement as a ‘higher order’ process, or as a virtue. The practically wise person in Aristotle’s account would also consider both principles and concrete passions¹¹¹ when forming judgements about their actions. It is practical wisdom, he implies, that enables proper moral goals to be identified and reached (NE,

¹⁰⁹ Kristjánsson (2007, p 16) actually describes great-mindedness as ‘a higher order virtue which incorporates the others’. For a fuller discussion of this virtue see Kristjánsson (1998).

¹¹⁰ Aristotle’s notion of Practical wisdom will be further explored at 5.3 and in chapter 8.

¹¹¹ Carr (2005) also argues that practical wisdom entails wise judgement involving reason and feeling.

1144a6). However, practical wisdom is for Aristotle an intellectual virtue of considerable importance as the possession of it also entails possession of all the moral virtues (NE, 1145a3-4).

Peters is arguably a virtue theorist in a broad sense¹¹², but he is not one in any strictly conceived Aristotelian vein¹¹³. Haydon also acknowledges that while ‘the development of virtues is important to Peters; its importance appears to be in the service of a rational morality’ (Haydon, p 8, 2009). I agree with Haydon’s assessment. Peters after all states that morality is concerned with ‘what there are reasons for doing or not doing’ (Peters, 1981, p 47). Importantly, he specifies that it is a higher order code of reasoned principles that can justify and provide grounds for particular moral actions (Peters, 1981, p 49). Strictly speaking, I think that Peters is neither a Kantian nor an Aristotelian; he appeared to rather advocate a pluralistic approach to moral education whose essential purpose was the development in pupils of a rationally held code of principles. Given this valorisation of rational principles, Peters’ particular formulation of virtues is arguably *more* Kantian than Aristotelian.

Carr and Steutel suggest that although Peters recognised the importance of building moral knowledge through a sort of Aristotelian habituation, ‘he seems not to have recognised the insuperable extent to which an Aristotelian view of practical reason is at odds with any kind of moral deontology’ (Carr & Steutel, 1999, p 143). Peters’ famous paradox of moral education will therefore be discussed in relation to Aristotle’s notion of habituation at 5.3 and 5.4. However, it first seems important to document some of the central differences between Kantian and Aristotelian ethics. In what remains of this chapter (and

¹¹² This seems to be Haydon’s (2009) view. Broad and narrow concepts of virtue will be explained at 5.3.

¹¹³ Steutel & Spiecker (2004, p 541) with good reason maintain, that Peters only thought that the highly specific, motiveless virtues could be acquired through habituation. As we shall see, in chapter 5, this is hardly an Aristotelian view. Aristotle was clear that the moral virtues are acquired through habituation, and that they necessarily involve right feeling.

especially in chapter 5 (4.4 – 5.4) it will be contended that there are at least three.

Firstly, while Kant did look upon the virtues favourably, he maintained that genuine moral action consisted in emotion-free, dutiful adherence to the rationally conceived categorical imperative for its own sake¹¹⁴. Aristotle, by contrast, thought that mature moral action involved interplay of habit, reason, feeling and experience for the wider purpose of human flourishing. Secondly, whereas Aristotle thought that the acquisition of moral precepts (as part of practical wisdom) necessarily involves sense experience, Kant insisted that we must ultimately form our own moral laws through the exercise of autonomous reason. Thirdly, Kant largely¹¹⁵ construed discipline as a negative force and he did not think that moral education should foster *habits* or *feelings* in children. Aristotle, by contrast, emphasised that adults should habituate the young into virtues of thinking, acting and feeling. Unlike Kant, Aristotle was also clear that imitation should play a crucial part in moral learning¹¹⁶.

4.4 The Moral Law and Kantian Deontology

‘Therefore nothing but the *idea of the law* in itself, *which admittedly is present only in a rational being* – so far as it, and not an expected result, is the ground determining the will- can constitute the pre-eminent good which we call moral’. (Kant, 2007, p 73)

In *The Moral Law; Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (2007) Kant famously set about trying to ascertain the supreme principle of morality. Kant saw the final end of morality as residing in man’s rational capacity to formulate universal, action-directing principles. The function of reason in the moral sphere, he says, is to

¹¹⁴ At least he does, as we shall see, in the *Groundwork* (2007) and his treatise *On Education* (2003).

¹¹⁵ I say largely here because Kant, as we shall see, provides partially conflicting stories over the role of imitation in moral formation.

¹¹⁶ Aristotle’s concepts of imitation, emulation and admiration will be discussed in relation to learning in chapter 7.

influence action by producing a will which is good, not as a means to an end, but rather as, an end *itself* (Kant, 2007, p 64-67). In the opening sentence of the text he famously stated that a 'good will' is the only thing that is good without qualification¹¹⁷. The 'will' he says is a power to choose what reason recognises to be good independent of sensory inclinations. Kant thought desires or inclinations from the world of experience often incapacitate the ability to determine the good will. However he argued that *maxims* (self made rules) can liberate the will from the influence of such unruly inclinations.

Our fundamental moral motive, Kant says, is duty which consists in reverence for, and adherence to, the moral law (Kant, 2007, p 68-76). Kantian morality is therefore often described as deontological, stemming from the classical Greek for duty (*Deon*)¹¹⁸. Kant thought that it is only dutiful application of the universal maxim (the categorical imperative) that can ensure that the will is always good. Notoriously, Kant did not consider actions motivated by beneficent feeling towards others to have any 'genuine moral worth' (Kant, 2007, p 73). Rather, he continues, an action done from duty 'has to set aside altogether the influence of inclination' (Kant, 2007, p 73). Kant claimed that there was only a single categorical imperative: 'Act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.' (Kant, 2007, p 97) What does he mean by this? Kant thought that people could only morally justify acting on maxims if such maxims could also be equally applied to all rational beings. The categorical imperative is thus an objective, universally binding moral law. It must also, however, be individually created. A maxim, he says, is a 'subjective principle of volition' (Kant, 2007, p 72), a rule we have written ourselves, that we have a duty to submit to.

¹¹⁷ See Kant (2007, p 61).

¹¹⁸ I owe this insight to Carr & Steutel (1999) chapter one. Hursthouse (2003) and Slote (1995 & 2003) also describe Kant's ethics as deontological.

'The will is therefore not merely subject to the law, but is so subject that it must also be considered as also *making the law* for itself' (Kant, 2007, p 109)

His formula of autonomy (ibid pp-108-109) states that each person is not merely subject to the law; he/she must also be the author of it. Kant argued that maxims could *only* be written by the self in the *intelligible world*¹¹⁹, even though their purpose is to direct action in the *sensible* world. We must, he says, make some sort of distinction between the intelligible¹²⁰ and sensible world (Kant, 2007, p 133). Kant thought that all rational persons have the capacity to transfer themselves to the intelligible world by willing to be free from sensuous influence. Through this process they can develop 'a greater inner worth' (Kant, 2007, p 137). The *intelligible world* he says is a rational or purely intellectual world constituted of *things-in-themselves*. By contrast, the sensible world can only provide us with knowledge of things as they *appear* to us (Kant, 2007, p 133).

Kant stated that regarding ourselves as makers of our own moral law is crucial to the related concept of the 'kingdom of ends' (Kant, 2007, p 111). Kant describes the kingdom of ends (Kant, 2007, p 111-113) as an ideal community, constituted of entirely rational beings that write and live, according to their own maxims, and treat all other persons there with *dignity*. The dignity of persons, he says, consists in their rational autonomy, in their ability to formulate their own maxims (Kant, 2007, p 113-115). Kant thought that all people were capable of having an idea of the intelligible world - but only an idea, as they could have no sensory and physical acquaintance with such a world. Kant therefore endorsed a radically rational theory of moral self-determination¹²¹, grounded in a speculative metaphysical ideal. Kant did not, to be sure, directly discount the moral value of qualities of

¹¹⁹ Although the more usual Kantian word for 'intelligible' may be 'noumenal', the translated text I refer to tends to employ 'intelligible'.

¹²⁰ Kant's depiction of the contrast between these worlds is arguably reminiscent of Plato's famous cave metaphor. Plato's metaphor from the Republic is described at 2.2.

¹²¹ Taylor (1989, p 83) also thinks that Kant 'vigorously' advocates a rational morality, free from nature with self determination as its ultimate goal.

character that were related to a wider naturalist teleology¹²². O'Neill (2003) and Slote (1995, 1997 & 2003) have sympathetically explored the idea that Kant propounded a theory of virtue. However, as the following quotation shows, if Kant did intend to articulate something like a virtue theory, he is quite clear that genuine virtue must be a quality that is entirely devoid of feeling and emotion.

'To behold virtue in her proper shape is nothing other than to show morality stripped of all admixture with the sensuous'. (Kant, 2007, p 103)

Kant also expressed doubt that genuine virtue could ever be found in the world of experience (Kant, 2007, p 81). He maintained that 'making a man happy is quite different from making him good' (Kant, 2007, 122). Moderate passions he says, like 'self control and sober reflection are not only good in many respects: they may even *seem* (my emphasis) to constitute part of the inner worth of a person. Yet they are far from being properly described as being good without qualification' (Kant, 2007, p 64). Without a good will, Kant continues, such affections may make a man 'exceedingly bad'. For Kant, happiness was only an *indirect duty* that required rational conditioning by the good will (Kant, 2007, p 70-71). Slote (1995, 2003) and O'Neill (2003) also both concede that in *The Groundwork*, virtue is presented as an 'imperfect duty'. Indeed, some inclinations towards happiness constituted a 'great *temptation to the transgression of duty*' (Kant, 2007, p 70). Slote (1995) seems right to conclude that in Kantian ethics we have no obligation to pursue our own happiness. Slote (1995) also maintains that Kantian ethics is asymmetric in that the good of others is placed above that of the individual moral agent. Notably, Slote does not think such unsatisfactory moral asymmetry is present in the Aristotelian scheme of virtues.

¹²²*Telos* is often taken to mean 'end' or 'purpose', from the Ancient Greek; see for example *The Politics* (1981, p 493). Aristotle is arguably the most famous exponent of a purposive teleology. As will be explained at 5.2, he thought man's ultimate 'end' was a rich notion of happiness or flourishing.

4.5 Kantian Duty and the Discipline of Children

Kant's less well-known treatise *On Education* (2003) also contains some interesting observations about virtue. These are articulated within a wider account of his views on how the young should be disciplined and morally educated. Towards the end of this text, Kant asks if man is by nature good or bad. He concludes that:

'He is neither, for he is not by nature a moral being. He only becomes a moral being when his reason has developed ideas of duty and law...he has a natural inclination to every vice...He can only become morally good by means of virtue – that is to say, by self-restraint' (Kant, 2003,p 108)

Kant regarded education, properly conceived, in very high esteem. He thought it necessary, indeed fundamental, to our becoming persons capable of mature moral action and reflection. He states that 'man can only become man by education. He is merely what education makes of him (Kant, 2003, p 6). Kant does, to be sure, say that the ultimate aim of education is the formation of character. However, the *moral* qualities that he considers worth educating seem to be confined within the bounds of reason and dutiful human submission to it. Character, he says 'consists in the firm purpose to accomplish something and then also in the actual accomplishing of it' (Kant, 2003, p 98-99).

'A child should always say what's true
And speak when he is spoken to' (Stevenson, 1994, p 7)

Robert Louis Stevenson's verse, *Whole Duty of Children*, arguably expresses well the Kantian view that children should *always* be encouraged to do their duty. Kant after all indicates that children *must* be presented with *duties* they have to perform, for themselves and others, if they are to develop any proper foundation in moral character (Kant, 2003, p 100-103). Kant maintains that the purpose of character formation is to make the child conscious that 'man possesses a certain dignity, which ennobles him above all other

creatures' (Kant, 2003, p 101). He adds that it is the child's duty *not to* violate this 'dignity of mankind'. Kant seems to have in mind here the distinctively rational conception of dignity that he formulated in the *Moral Law*. He after all states that 'everything in education depends' (Kant, 2003, p 108) upon leading children by instruction to correctly established moral principles. Kant even rebuked parents for failing properly to 'form and correct the judgement of children about the worth of things they may commonly adopt as ends' (Kant, 2007, p 90). However, he seems to have drawn a sharp distinction between moral instruction, on the one hand, and discipline on the other. He thought that both virtue and discipline were essentially negative forces whose function was to curb the more unreasonable instincts of pupils.

'It is discipline, which prevents man from being turned aside by his animal impulses from humanity, his appointed end. Discipline, for instance, must restrain him from venturing wildly and rashly into danger. Discipline, thus, is merely negative, its action being to counteract man's natural unruliness. The positive part of education is instruction'. (Kant, 2003, p 3)

Kant suggests that discipline is a vital, if largely restrictive, part of education in the early years. Neglect of discipline he says 'is a greater evil than neglect of culture, for this last can be remedied in later life, but unruliness cannot be done away with, and a mistake in discipline can never be repaired.' (Kant, 2003, p 7) The unruly are, Kant says, independent of law and it is by discipline that men are brought to feel the constraint of law¹²³. The moralising force that Kant appears to have in mind here is rational duty. Children, he says 'ought not to be full of feeling, but they should be full of the idea of duty' (Kant, 2003, p 104). Kant maintains that the moral culture that children should be brought up into 'must be based upon "maxims", not upon discipline; the one prevents evil habits, the other trains the mind to think' (Kant, 2003, p 83). Kant does in two places suggest that moral education

¹²³ Kant (2003) specifies this on p 3. His emphasis on children needing to feel the force of law may well have informed Durkheim's, and John Wilson's ideas of discipline discussed in chapter 2.

might also properly involve elements of *emulation*¹²⁴. He firstly says that duties should be presented to children in the form of rules *and* examples (Kant, 2003, p 100). Secondly, in a correspondence with a Professor Sulzer, Kant responds to the question of what it is that makes moral instruction so ineffective.

‘My answer came too late. Yet it is just this: The teachers themselves do not make their concepts pure, but – since they try to do too well by hunting everywhere for inducements to be moral – they spoil their medicine altogether by their very attempt to make it really powerful. For the most ordinary observation shows that when a righteous act is represented as being done with a steadfast mind in complete disregard of any advantage in this or in another world...it uplifts the soul and arouses in us a wish that we too could act in this way. Even children of a young age feel this impression, and duties should never be presented to them in any other way.’ (Kant, 2007, p 84-85)

Here Kant seems to be saying that teachers should model dutiful behaviour themselves to encourage their pupils to emulate them. However, I think a careful reading of Kant’s *The Moral Law* shows it is far from clear that Kant really intended to endorse imitation and moral example as a desirable method of moral education. For there, he also offers an alternative, more strongly worded, conflicting view that reasserts the rational primacy of the moral law.

‘Imitation has no place in morality and examples serve us only for encouragement – that is, they set beyond doubt the practicability of what the law commands; they make perceptible what the law expresses more generally; but they can never entitle us to set aside their true original, which resides in reason’ (Kant, 2007, p 82)

Kant (2007) also argued that a rule that does not spring from the reasoning part of *that individual* will always be ‘conditioned’ rather than fully ‘moral’. While Kant is ambiguous about the desirability of emulation in moral education he is unequivocal about the undesirability of habit. Children must, he says, ‘be prevented from

¹²⁴ By emulation I mean that pupils could, indeed, should learn from the positive moral example set by adults around them. Aristotle’s concept of emulation will be discussed in chapter 7.

forming any habits, nor should habits be formed in them' (Kant, 2003, p 45). Kant believed that dispositions inhibit a person's capacity for independence and freedom when they become embedded in their nature. As Maxwell puts it; 'Kant is wary of more or less mindless habituation because it is difficult to square with his ideal of rational autonomy' (Maxwell, 2008, p 145). Kant says of habit that it: 'is the result of the constant repetition of any one enjoyment or action, until such enjoyment or action becomes a necessity of our nature (Kant, 2003, p 44)'. This concept of habit per se, is reminiscent of Aristotle's. However, Aristotle was unlike Kant, *in favour of* fostering habits of action and feeling.

4.6 Should discipline be grounded in Deontology or Teleology?

Teleology views nature as a kingdom of ends; ethics views a possible kingdom of ends as a kingdom of nature. In the first case the Kingdom of ends is a theoretical Idea to explain what exists. In the second case it is a practical Idea to bring into existence what does not exist but can be made actual by our conduct'. (Kant, 2007, p 115)

On the basis of the preceding passage Kant certainly seems to discern a difference between his moral theory and teleological accounts of morality; but how exactly do these ethics differ? Slote (1997) plausibly suggests that the differences between deontological and teleological ethical theories have often been overstated¹²⁵. He rightly notes that there are, nevertheless, very different points of emphasis in each approach. I have suggested there are at least three. Firstly Kant, unlike Aristotle, thought that morality and virtue ought to limit feeling as much as possible. Secondly, Kant thought that

¹²⁵ Maxell claims that Kantian scholars and commentators now 'increasingly reject the notion that Kant's ideal of the mature moral agent as steely eyed calculator in favour of interpretations that show that Kant had in fact a rather rich appreciation of the affective side of moral life' (2008, p 103). Carr (2000) (in a book review for the *Journal of Moral Education*) indicates that Munzel's largely exegetical (1999) work explains that while there are certain irreconcilable differences between the two ethicists – their views do not diverge as radically as has been supposed by many. Kant and Aristotle did to be sure both think that principle, virtue and affect were involved in morality, and for that matter, a proper education. However, they disagreed it will be argued, in chapter 5, about which of these concepts had *ethical primacy*.

moral principles were ultimately established through rational reflection, whereas Aristotle thought they could only be revealed through sustained engagement with the world of experience. Thirdly, Kant's theory is not a naturalist teleology whereas Aristotle's is. As we shall now go on to see, in Aristotle's teleological theory, the normative value of an action is *not* essentially weighed by itself or in relation to a rational principle to be followed. The moral worth of an action is rather measured within the context of an entire life; actions are always inextricably linked to their ultimate purpose or end (*telos*). In chapter 5, it will be argued that such a long-term teleological view presents a more defensible foundation for school discipline.

Chapter 5: Disciplined Habits and Moral Virtues

In the previous chapter, it was suggested that practices of discipline in school should aspire to more than merely encouraging pupils to follow *rules*. In this chapter, it will be said that discipline should instead focus on helping children form Neo-Aristotelian *habits* of thinking, acting and feeling. Initially, it will be noted that Aristotelian virtue theory can be differentiated from the moral theory of Kant and Peters particularly on account of its teleological emphasis. Aristotle's virtues are both necessary for, and constitutive of, mankind's ultimate ethical purpose (*telos*); namely flourishing (*eudaimonia*). Importantly, it will be argued that virtue ethical approaches to moral education need not lead to paradox and that the adoption of rules need not be precluded from a Neo-Aristotelian account of school discipline either. Far from it, rules can and should inform the habits that teachers help pupils to acquire. However, there is a crucial difference between a discipline that *is for*, and a discipline that *involves* rules. It will be contended that rules do matter in virtue ethics in so far as they can help to habituate the young into the more fundamentally important character traits that comprise moral virtue. It will be concluded that children are capable of forming virtuous moral dispositions and that schools can play an important part in this process. The acquisition of complete virtue, however, is altogether more exacting.

5.1 Modern Moral Philosophy

In 'Modern Moral Philosophy' (1958) Elizabeth Anscombe argued that concepts of moral duty and obligation should be jettisoned altogether from moral philosophy¹²⁶. Anscombe thought that the ethical enquiries of her time had failed to recognise the contrasting ways in which ancient and modern philosophers characterised the

¹²⁶ Zagzebski (1996) Slote (1997) (Crisp, 2003) & Carr & Steutel (1999) all also take Anscombe's paper as the starting point of their enquiries into virtue ethics.

term 'moral'. 'Should' and 'ought' she said, indicate an absolute verdict of 'right' and 'wrong'. Anscombe notes, however, that Aristotle intended the term 'moral' to refer to states of persons that involve actions and passions¹²⁷. She attributed the dominance of notions of obligation and law in modern morality to the rise and fall in influence, of Christianity. Even after the belief that God was a divine law giver had been 'given up it is a natural result that the concepts of "obligation", of being bound or required as by law, should remain' (Anscombe, 1958, p 6).

She was rather disdainful of this turn to rational and rule-governed, 'law conceptions of ethics' (Anscombe, 1958, p 5). She described Kant's notions of 'legislating for oneself' as 'absurd', and she was similarly dismissive of utilitarian ethics. She favoured a return to the ancient tradition of moral and intellectual virtues advanced by Aristotle. Although she did not go into much detail herself, she maintained that the subject matter of moral philosophy 'is completely closed until we have an account of what *type of characteristic* a virtue is' (Anscombe, 1958, p 5). If Anscombe intended to give a shot in the arm to modern moral philosophy, it is probably fair to say in hindsight that she succeeded, as there has been a growing momentum of interest in Aristotle and virtue ethics in the sixty years since the publication of her influential paper. This scholarly interest has manifested itself in both philosophy¹²⁸ and education¹²⁹.

Iris Murdoch in *The Sovereignty of Good over other Concepts*

¹²⁷ More will shortly be said about Aristotle's definition of a virtue. The importance of a virtue being a state of a person involving action and feeling will also be explored.

¹²⁸ See for example Von Wright (1963) Murdoch (2003) Rorty (1980b) Macintyre (1984) Slote (1995) (Crisp, 2003) & Zagzebski (1996). The collection of *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics* (Rorty, 1980b) explores the philosophers thought in impressive exegetical detail.

¹²⁹ David Carr has made numerous insightful contributions to the debate on the relationship between Aristotle's virtues and education. See for example *Educating the Virtues* (1991) and *Virtue Ethics and Moral Education* (1999) edited with Steutel J. Frankena (1970) Burnyeat (1980) Peters (1981) and Carr (1991) were among the first to consider the educational import of Aristotle's virtues. Curren (2000) Steutel & Speicker (2004) and Kristjánsson's (2007) more recent inquiries have significantly added to understanding of this area of Aristotle's thought.

(1970)¹³⁰ also noted that the ‘Kantian Man God’ (2003, p 78) had too long dominated the horizon of modern moral philosophy. She suggested that it is more morally praiseworthy to be good than dutiful. Charles Taylor (1989, pp 79-83) similarly argued that ethics should pay more attention to ‘who it is good to be’, rather than what it is ‘right to do’. However, Murdoch’s brief attempt to define the virtues somewhat muddied the waters over whether she thought duty or goodness should supervene over moral conduct. She stated that ‘virtue is good habit and dutiful action’ with a background awareness of the ‘world as it is’ (2003, p 89). Von Wright’s earlier *Varieties of Goodness* (1963) contained a more promising chapter on virtues that correctly identified Aristotle’s concept of virtue as centrally concerned with *traits of character*. However, Von Wright’s account does not really fit with Aristotle’s either, as the former seems to have thought that the virtues should govern or control the ‘unruly passions’¹³¹. This arguably gives Von Wright’s virtues a mostly Kantian and/or Platonic¹³² hue. Philippa Foot in her essay *Virtues and Vices* (1981) similarly suggests that the virtues are excellences of the will that can act as ‘correctives’ to human nature. However, Aristotle himself allocated many virtues a much more positive and fundamental role in ethical life.

5.2 Aristotelian Teleology and the Moral Virtues

‘Happiness, then, is found to be something perfect and self-sufficient, being the end to which our actions are directed.’ (NE, 1097b, 20-22)

Whereas Kant thought that the fundamental purpose of ethical inquiry was to construct moral principles for a possible rational world, Aristotle perceived the essential benefit of such inquiry to lie in our feelings and conduct in the actual world. He famously remarked that

¹³⁰ Though it was first published in 1970, the edition I refer to was published in 2003.

¹³¹ Carr (1991) in chapter 9 makes this point in a sensitive critique of Von Wright’s account of virtue.

¹³² Plato’s moral theory will be discussed in the subsequent chapter.

we study moral philosophy, not so that we may 'know what goodness is', but so that we may 'become good men' (NE, 1103b, 28-29). Aristotle therefore emphasised that ethical inquiry is specifically concerned with 'human goodness' (NE, 1102a14). He understood ethics to be inherently practical (Sherman, 1999) and maintained that the highest of all practical goods is happiness (NE, 1095a15-30). However, Aristotle had a particularly rich notion of happiness or (more accurately) flourishing (*eudaimonia*) in mind. Flourishing, he says, is a supreme and final good that is always worth pursuing for its own sake (NE, 1097a29-1097b). Aristotle qualified this concept of flourishing by arguing that a person's happiness can only be properly measured over a complete lifetime (NE, 1098a18-22). His theory is thus often described¹³³ as teleological because he thought that a deep kind of well-being and prosperity was the proper end of all human action. But what did he think such happiness consisted of?

Aristotle defines the truly happy person as 'one who is active in accordance with complete virtue, and who is adequately furnished with external goods...throughout a complete life' (NE, 1101a15-18). Aristotle acknowledged that happiness requires the possession of certain external goods and resources (NE, 1099a32). A life is hardly felicitous, he says, if it is spent without friends or children, or worse, with worthless friends and children (NE, 1099b3-6). However, the attainment of the goal of long-term happiness was for Aristotle to be centrally achieved through the active performance of virtue. Aristotle indicates that the happy man will spend the majority of time in virtuous conduct and contemplation (NE, 1100b16-19). He adds that no human operation is more permanent than virtuous activity (NE, 1100b13-14). Happiness he says 'is an activity of the soul in accordance with perfect virtue' (NE, 1102a5-6¹³⁴). It has been suggested that Aristotle could not imagine any real human fulfilment without the

¹³³ See for Example Steutel (1998) Carr & Steutel (1999) & Dent (1999).

¹³⁴ Aristotle defines happiness in an almost identical way in the *Eudemian Ethics*. There he says that 'happiness must be activity of a complete life in accordance with complete virtue' (EE, 1219a38-39).

sustained exercise of the virtues (Carr & Steutel, 1999). Kristjánsson similarly states that the ‘virtues are at once conducive to and constitutive of *eudaimonia*’ (2007, p 15). Given that Aristotle places the virtues at the very centre of his account of what a human being can do to prosper, it seems necessary to flesh out his definition of virtue.

‘Let this be assumed; and about excellence, that it is the best, disposition, state, or capacity of anything that has some employment or function’. (EE1219a1-3)

Aristotle suggests that a given thing’s excellence is intimately related to the optimal performance of its function (EE, 1219a-1219b & NE, 1098a8-18). He takes the view that the function or purpose of each thing is to aim at excellence. A ‘thing and its excellence have the same function’ he states (EE, 1219a19-20). A ‘cloak has an excellence - and a certain function’ he says and the ‘best state of the cloak is its excellence’ (EE1219a2-4). The excellent shoe-maker has the purpose of producing excellent shoes and is capable of doing this consistently (EE1219a21-24). The function of a harpist, he similarly says is to play the harp, whereas the function of a ‘good harpist’ is to play the harp ‘well’ (NE, 1098a8-18). Both the *Nicomachean* and *Eudemian Ethics* are inquiries specifically concerned with human excellence (*anthropine arête*).

Human excellence he says is a matter that ‘belongs to the soul’ (EE 1219B26-27). Aristotle famously divided the soul into two parts: the rational and non-rational (EE1219b25-1220b2 & NE1102a25-1103a10). However, he emphasises that both parts of the soul have a share in reason, albeit in different ways. He states that ‘one’s nature is to prescribe and the other to obey and listen’ (EE1219b30-31). He similarly adds that there is in the irrational soul a faculty that is ‘receptive to reason’ (NE1102b12-13). In both ethical works Aristotle maintains that there are two varieties of human excellence, intellectual¹³⁵ and moral,

¹³⁵ He makes this discrimination in the *Eudemian Ethics* at (EE, 1220a5-6) where he describes the moral virtues as habits or ‘virtues of character’. He similarly separates the intellectual and moral

that correspond to the two parts of the human soul. The intellectual virtues pertain to the rational part of the human soul, whereas the moral virtues are excellences of the partially irrational part of the soul.

'Human excellence will be the disposition that makes one a good man and causes him to perform his function well' (NE1106b22-23).

In his ethical treatises Aristotle indicates that the moral virtues relate to stable dispositions or habits of character (*hexis*)¹³⁶ that have been refined to the point of excellence (*arête*). To be sure, he does specify that the virtues are not *essentially* feelings or faculties but dispositions (NE1106a12-13). However, he later crucially adds that 'moral goodness is considered to be intimately connected in various ways with the feelings' (NE, 1178a15-16). Virtue, he elsewhere says, is a sort of disposition produced by the soul's best processes *and* feelings (EE, 1220a29-33). Indeed, in one of the most frequently referred to passages of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle declares that moral virtue aims to hit the mean or middle ground, in regard to actions and feelings¹³⁷ (or *praxis kai pathe*).

'But it is in the field of actions and feelings that virtue operates; and in them excess and deficiency are failings, whereas the mean is praised and recognised as a success: and these are both marks of virtue. Virtue then is a mean condition in as much as it aims at hitting the mean' (NE, 1106a23-28)

Aristotle does not anywhere in his corpus provide us with a definitive list of moral virtues (Kristjánsson, 2007, p 17-18). However, he does employ his famous doctrine of the mean¹³⁸ to explain how various actions and emotions can err by way of excess or deficiency

virtues at the start of Book 2 in the NE at (1103a). His intellectual virtues will be discussed in detail in chapter 8.

¹³⁶ I borrow this translation from Kristjánsson (2007, p 15).

¹³⁷ Kosman (1980) Irwin (1980) (Macintyre, 1984) Sherman (1999) Steutel & Spiecker (2004) Carr (2007b) & Kristjánsson (2007) all for example note that the virtues are states of action and feeling. Kosman and Irwin refer to actions (*praxis*) and emotion (*pathe*).

¹³⁸ See NE in particular (1106a27-1106b35) for an explanation of the doctrine of the mean (NE 1107a30-1108b10) and Book 3 for a more detailed discussion of particular virtues.

(See NE 1107a30-1108b10 in particular). Courage for example is a virtue, whereas rashness is a defect of fear, and cowardice an excess of it (NE, 1107b1-5). He similarly says that patience is a virtue; the irascible, however, feel anger too much and the spiritless not enough (NE, 1108a5-8). Other moral virtues that Aristotle discusses are: temperance, generosity, magnificence, great-mindedness, right ambition, friendliness, truthfulness and wit¹³⁹. Aristotle also provides a list of virtues and their excesses in the *Eudemian Ethics* (1220b25-1221a15) where he again reiterates his belief that ‘virtue of character is concerned with certain means and is itself a certain mean state’ (EE1220b34-35). The extremes of each moral virtue discussed by Aristotle are presented in tabular form at Appendices I & II. Although Aristotle is not always entirely clear about the precise relation between action and feeling (Kristjánsson, 2007, p 17-18), his virtues nevertheless *are* dispositions, crucially requiring both activity *and* proper feeling from mature moral agents. That emotions are constituent elements of complete moral virtue is vital in at least two respects. Firstly, it means that any proper initiation into the virtues can and must involve educating the emotions. Steutel & Spiecker (2004) rightly maintain that developing sentimental dispositions is both a ‘necessary’ and ‘significant’ task for moral educators¹⁴⁰. Secondly, it further serves to distinguish Aristotle’s account of virtue from the accounts provided by both Kant and Peters, for neither of these philosophers thought that proper feeling was a necessary feature of *all* complete virtues. Indeed, arguably, both Kant and Peters were more interested in moral agency than moral virtue.

Carr and Steutel (1999) maintain that virtue ethics can be *broadly* or *narrowly* conceived. A broad virtue ethics, they suggest, is

¹³⁹ I owe this summary to Kristjánsson (2007, p 16) who has compiled a helpful table detailing all the means and extremes of character that Aristotle discusses in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

¹⁴⁰ The discipline and education of the emotions will be the subject of detailed discussion in subsequent chapters.

‘concerned simply with the promotion of virtues’ (1999, p 4). Kant¹⁴¹ and Peters could both be classified as virtue ethicists according to this general criterion. However, both philosophers also construe rational autonomy to be the main mark of moral maturity. Arguably, this emphasis on rational freedom means that neither Kant nor Peters should be classified as virtue ethicists according to the more stringent criteria. A more narrowly conceived virtue ethics would place the end of autonomy in subservience to the virtues held by moral agents¹⁴². Sorabji (1980) Slote (1995, 1997 & 2003) and Carr & Steutel (1999) have all noted that an Aristotelian ethics of virtue is principally concerned with promoting excellent dispositions and traits of character. The latter three philosophers argue that Aristotle articulated an agent focussed¹⁴³ aretaic (derived from *arête* for excellence) ethics. Conversely, a deontic ethics such as that advocated by Kant is primarily concerned with dutiful adherence to objective rational principles. Individual actions are evaluated as right or wrong, rather than persons as virtuous or vicious, across a lifespan (Carr & Steutel, 1999).

Virtue ethics can also be distinguished from other forms of teleological ethics, such as trait utilitarianism. Whilst trait utilitarianism is concerned with the promotion of happiness, this is a collective happiness that aims for the good of the greatest number of people. However, a utilitarian ethics only ascribes merit to virtues to the extent that they instrumentally produce such majority human benefit. Aristotelian virtue ethics, by contrast, rates the normative merit of an action not in terms of its actual or projected consequences, but by reference to the character traits of agents¹⁴⁴. The character

¹⁴¹ Carr & Steutel (1999, p6) themselves acknowledge that Kant could be classified as a virtue ethicist in this broad sense.

¹⁴² Indeed, Aristotle had no concept of autonomy in the modern sense of the word, as will be explained at 5.5.

¹⁴³ See Slote (1995, 1997) Carr & Steutel (1999). They distinguish an agent focussed from an agent based ethics. Slote (1997) speculates that Plato may have formulated a more agent based ethics where the character of the agent is the only criterion determining the worth of an action.

¹⁴⁴ Carr & Steutel chapter one (1999) and Slote (1995, 1997 & 2003) provide sound accounts of the differences between virtue ethics, deontological ethics and utilitarianism.

traits at the core of Aristotle's virtues importantly also involve significantly more than habitual and mechanical performance.

5.3 Practical Wisdom and Habituation

'So virtue is a purposive disposition, lying in a mean that is relative to us and determined by a rational principle, and by that which a prudent man would use to determine it.' (NE, 1107a1-3)

Aristotle regarded all mature moral virtues as habits determined by a rational principle. However, what principle did he think should be employed to establish the good for each person? It is well-known that Aristotle thought that the virtue of *phronesis* (prudence or practical wisdom) involved the judicious and sensitive application of general principles to the particularities of moral experience¹⁴⁵. It is practical wisdom that provides virtuous agents with knowledge of, and insight into, the principles that govern moral agency and action. In Book VI of his *Ethics* Aristotle specifies that *phronesis* is an intellectual virtue¹⁴⁶ that takes time and experience to acquire (NE, 1142a14-17). Aristotle states that the first principles of practical wisdom 'are grasped only as the result of experience' (NE, 1142a18-20). Aristotle's theory of moral knowledge can thus be further differentiated from Kant's; the former but not the latter believed that we must derive moral principles from experience. For Kant, what matters most *morally*, is the rational forming of the categorical imperative in the intelligible realm. However, what matters most *morally*, for Aristotle, is not knowledge of any noumenal realm, but

¹⁴⁵ See for example Dunne (1993) Carr (1991, 1996, 2003) (Kristjánsson 2007) (Haydon 2009) and indeed MacIntyre (1984).

¹⁴⁶ The relationship that *Phronesis* has to the other intellectual virtues will be discussed in chapter 8. There it will be argued that Aristotle classifies practical wisdom as an intellectual virtue at least partly because of its connection to the eternal realm. Aristotle arguably there also supposes that there is such a thing as objectively praiseworthy moral behaviour. Such universally valid moral conduct can be exemplified in the concrete form of a specific person; the *phronimos*.

acting virtuously in the sensible realm¹⁴⁷. Acts are virtuous, he says when the agent: 1) knows what he is doing; 2) chooses the act for its own sake¹⁴⁸; 3) acts from a stable disposition (*hexis*) (NE1105a26-1105b). Although Aristotle makes clear that moral knowledge is a *constituent* part of virtue, such knowledge plays a marginal or negligible part in the acquisition of virtues (NE1105b1-3). How, then, did Aristotle think that the virtues are developed? In answering this question I will try to bring out the important distinction that (Aristotle implies) exists between moral habits and moral virtues.

In a word, then, like activities produce like dispositions. Hence we must give our activities a certain quality, because it is their characteristics that determine the resulting dispositions. So it is a matter of no little importance what sorts of habits we form from the earliest age – it makes a vast difference, or rather all the difference in the world.’ (NE, 1103b, 20-26)

Aristotle thought that the acquisition of moral habit was an inherently practical and experiential affair. He intimates that ‘anything that we have to learn, we learn by the actual doing of it’¹⁴⁹ (NE, 1103a32-33). It is well-known that Aristotle thought we become ‘morally good’ through the repeated performance of moral actions in a process of habituation¹⁵⁰ (*ethismos*). He famously remarked that although mankind is fitted by nature to receive the virtues, ‘their full development in us is due to habit’ (NE, 1103a24-26). The moral habits we form are, he says, ‘supremely important’, because it is ‘from the repeated performance of just and temperate acts that we acquire virtues’ (NE1105b4-6). Given that our habits make all the *world of*

¹⁴⁷ It has thus been argued that whereas in virtue ethics principles *regulate* moral life, in deontological ethics, obligations to principles, *constitute* moral life (Carr, 1991b, Carr 1996, & Steutel 1998). I would add that in virtue ethics, principles are also constitutive of moral life, just not *wholly constitutive* of it.

¹⁴⁸ More will shortly be said about how the virtuous ‘choose’ acts.

¹⁴⁹ Aristotle is not being entirely perspicacious here. This comment, made towards the end of book one is followed by another at the start of book 2 (NE1103a) which makes clear that he thought we develop the intellectual virtues not through action and doing but instruction. The significance of this comment on instruction will be discussed in relation to the intellectual virtues in chapter 8. I interpret his comment here to mean, any *practical knowledge* that we have to learn, we learn through doing as he goes on to cite the example of a builder learning to build through practice and doing.

¹⁵⁰ See for example Sherman (2004) Dunne (1999) Spiecker (1999) Curren (1999 & 2000) Steutel & Spiecker (2004) (Fossheim 2006) & Kristjánsson (2007).

difference, it is surprising that¹⁵¹ Aristotle has ‘remarkably little to tell us about just what kind of process’ habituation is (Dunne, 1999, p 58).

It is true that Aristotle’s texts are not very informative about the precise nature of habituation in the early years of a child’s life¹⁵². Had we known more about Aristotle’s own views on habituation, objections that they give rise to a moral educational paradox may not have surfaced. It is to this alleged paradox that the present discussion now turns. In the course of this process, four potentially damaging objections to Neo-Aristotelian ethics will be rejected. It will be argued that: 1) Aristotle’s virtues are not *self centred*; 2) Aristotle does not present an irresolvable moral educational paradox; 3) the intellectual virtue of *phronesis* does provide moral agents with a principled, albeit flexible and general, *procedure* for determining virtuous action; 4) that this decision procedure need not preclude prescribing more specific rules to the less than virtuous. Given that rules have often been perceived as necessary features of school discipline, both in theory and practice, the third and fourth arguments are especially important in the context of this thesis.

5.4 The moral educational paradox & four objections to Virtue Ethics

‘Onely a sweet and vertuous soul,
Like season’d timber, never gives;
But though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives.’ (Herbert, 1975, p 103)

It has been noted by Solomon (2007, p 74) and Kristjánsson (2007, p 16) that virtue ethics has attracted criticism for being *self-centred* and insufficiently other-regarding. Kristjánsson and Solomon observe

¹⁵¹ Kristjánsson (2007, p 33) shares Dunne’s view that Aristotle’s works do not tell us much about habituation. More will be said about the habituation process in subsequent chapters.

¹⁵² Both Tress (1997) and Kristjánsson (2007) speculate that a lost work on childhood might have proved instructive. They cite an allusion Aristotle makes (*Politics*, 1335b5) to a treatise on child rearing.

that adherents to an ethic of virtue are alleged to be more interested in pursuing their own virtue than the virtue or welfare of others. Herbert's point, in his poem *Vertue*, however, is not that the virtuous person 'never gives' to others, but that they never *give in* or *up* in the face of worldly challenges and difficulties. Aristotle and Herbert maintain that the virtuous are steadfast and resolute. In any case, Aristotle seems to have been clear that the virtuous agent *necessarily* considered the interests of others and acted in accordance with those interests. In fact, he maintains that 'virtue consists more in doing good than in receiving it' (NE, 1120a12-13). Indeed, many of Aristotle's individual virtues are directed towards improving the welfare of others. Some commentators on Aristotle have classified his virtues under self, other and publicly regarding categories¹⁵³. Crucially, Aristotle most highly prizes the other regarding virtues, those that are 'necessarily...most useful to others: justice, courage and generosity¹⁵⁴ for instance' (Kristjánsson 2007, p 16). Furthermore, in his extensive treatment of friendship in Books VIII and IX Aristotle indicates that it is impossible to live a truly happy life without virtuous friends¹⁵⁵ (NE1170b17-18). Importantly, he there suggests that friendship involves putting the needs of friends before one's own, or at least on a par with one's own, when morally appropriate. Friendship he says, consists 'more in giving than receiving affection...more in loving than being loved' (NE1159a27-36). I therefore think that scrutiny of the *Nicomachean Ethics* reveals that the self-centred objection does not ring true. What, though, of the other objections to virtue theory?

The business of moral education consists largely in initiating people into the 'language' so that they can use it in an autonomous manner. This is done largely by introducing them to the 'literature'. And so we come to the paradox of moral education.' (Peters, 1981, p51)

¹⁵³ See for example Von Wright (1963) and Carr (1991) for self and other regarding and Slote (1995 & 2003) & Taylor (2003) for self, other and publicly regarding, classifications.

¹⁵⁴ For an illuminating discussion of Aristotle's views on generosity and of an education into it, see chapter 9 (Kristjánsson 2007). This discussion brings home how Aristotle's virtues are anything but self centred.

¹⁵⁵ Stocker similarly says that 'human life without friendship is hardly human life' (2003, p 173-4).

Peters ostensibly criticises Aristotle in his chapter entitled *Reason and Habit: The paradox of moral Education*¹⁵⁶. There, he states that ‘Aristotle...was led into a paradox about moral education which resulted from his attempt to stress the role both of reason and habit’ (Peters, 1981, p 45). Peters’ argument is that it is paradoxical to try to develop *rational* autonomy in children through primarily *irrational* and habitual means¹⁵⁷. He stated that the ‘brute facts of child development’ (Peters, 1981, p51) militate against any genuinely rational initiation of children into ‘content’ that would enable them to lead independent moral lives. Peters thought that in the ‘most formative years’ of development, pupils are ‘incapable’ (Peters, 1981, p51) of the intelligent and autonomous application of moral principles. Indeed, he notoriously remarked that the young ‘must enter the palace of reason through the courtyard of habit and tradition’¹⁵⁸ (Peters, 1981, p52).

However, Peters indicates that the apparent dichotomy between reason and habit is resolvable. He thinks it is empirically observable that the habits of children can and do evolve into more critical capacities, no matter how mystifying this transformation may appear to be. Kristjánsson (2007) shares Peters’ conclusion that the paradox is resolvable and that psychologists and teachers may have more to say than philosophers about the nature of this development from irrational to rational agency¹⁵⁹. Steutel & Spiecker (2004) and Kristjánsson (2007), provide illuminating discussions of the alleged moral educational paradox. Steutel & Spiecker theorise that there may

¹⁵⁶ This chapter is found in *Moral Development and Moral Education* (1981).

¹⁵⁷ Haydon (2009) forms a similar impression of the alleged contradiction, indicating that although Peters saw rational morality as a major goal of education, he also held that educators could not directly appeal (initially at any rate) to their pupil’s rationality, in order to develop it. Kristjánsson too suggests that Peters appeared to perceive an ‘inevitable opposition between habituation and intellectual training’ (Kristjánsson, 2007, p 31).

¹⁵⁸ This is reminiscent of his utterance that children are barbarians at the gates of civilisation, noted in chapter 2.

¹⁵⁹ Kristjánsson (2007, p 23) points out that learners do not undergo a metamorphosis when acquiring the virtues. Learners rather repeatedly act in virtuous ways until these actions become ingrained in the character of the learner. The habituation process is thus more like a refinement of nature and realisation of potential than outright transformation.

be two dimensions¹⁶⁰ of paradox; the motivational and epistemic (2004, p 535), both of which can be rebutted. The former paradox rests in only seeming ambiguity between, on the one hand: the capacity to *acquire* virtuous motivations for actions, when on the other, a virtuous motive is itself a *precondition* of virtue. Steutel & Spiecker suggest that people can be virtuous in a ‘thin’ sense if they act correctly, but not from a disposition of choice. Virtue in a ‘thick’ sense, they acknowledge, must be chosen¹⁶¹. The *epistemic* dimension of paradox relates to how one can learn ‘to become’ practically wise when virtue requires that ‘one needs to be’ practically wise (Steutel & Spiecker, 2004, p 536). As we shall go on to see at 5.5, Steutel & Spiecker are probably right to imply that children can act from correct principles if they are appropriately guided by their tutors.

Peters does to be sure argue that moral habits need not be in themselves irrational. There is, he says, ‘no *necessary* contradiction between the use of intelligence and the formation of habits’ (Peters, 1981, p57). He seems to think that habits are intelligent when applied more creatively in particular situations in accordance with a principle. Peters observes an explicit distinction between principles and rules¹⁶².

‘A man of principle is one who is *consistent* in acting in the light of his sensitivity to aspects of a situation that are made morally relevant by a principle. But this does not preclude adaptability due to differences in situations’ (Peters, 1981, p 67)

Peters takes issue with Ryle’s¹⁶³ characterisation of habit as inherently inflexible and non-cognitive. A habit designates an action as a being of

¹⁶⁰ Kristjansson (2007) suggests two related but different dimensions of paradox – psychological and moral/political.

¹⁶¹ More will shortly be said on the need for complete virtue to be ‘chosen’.

¹⁶² Haydon (1999, 2009) also thinks this is an important discrimination.

¹⁶³ Ryle in his *Concept of Mind* (2000) famously differentiated between habits and intelligent capacities. Habits he suggests are only ‘single track dispositions’ whereas intelligent practices are ‘multi-track dispositions’. He explains his reasoning as follows. It is of the very ‘essence of merely habitual practices that one performance is a replica of its predecessors’. In the case of intelligent practices however ‘one performance is modified to the next. The agent is still learning’. Habits he adds are developed ‘by drill, but we build up intelligent capacities by training’ (Ryle, 2000, p 42). More recently Spiecker (1999) has suggested that children can be initiated into intelligent multi-track habits.

a particular sort, Peters observes. It is something that someone has done before and will probably do again (Peters, 1981, p55). Peters suggests that actions done from ‘force of habit’ do not entail thought. However, he also suggests habits can exhibit intelligence when they are adapted to concrete circumstances in a manner that reveals an understanding of the reasons that morally justify the relevant action. Peters indicates that a ‘principle is that which makes a consideration relevant’ (Peters, 1981, p66). Haydon provides some helpful clarity regarding what Peters might mean here. For Peters, ‘rules tell one what to do, or not do; principles enable one to judge whether the rules are justified’ (2009, 6). Moral principles in other words provide explanatory grounds for an action. A rule, on the other hand, is a more specific piece of guidance that can be followed without background awareness of the reasons that justify that rule or the resulting action.

Peters acknowledges that children can be, and often are, drilled to follow rules without intelligence. However, if a child ‘has really learnt to act on a rule, it is difficult to see how he could have accomplished this without insight and intelligence’ (Peters, 1981, p57). Arguably, the implication here is that children who *act on* rather than *according to*¹⁶⁴, rules have over time come to develop a principled grasp of the reasons that justify their actions. Peters’ explanation of the man of principle bears more than a passing resemblance to Aristotle’s man of practical wisdom. However, for Peters, habits only seem to be morally valuable when accompanied by a principle that is understood by the agent in question. In contrast, Aristotle appears to have thought that habits *are* morally valuable (if not constitutive of complete virtue) when accompanied by a principle that has not been chosen or wholly comprehended by the agent in question.

For some, Aristotle’s notion of acting from general principles,

¹⁶⁴ This distinction is not mine but Peters (1981, p 57).

sensitively applied to moral situations, seems impossibly vague. Hursthouse (2003, pp25-28) Solomon (2007, p 74) and Kristjánsson (2007, p 16) all note the *action-guiding objection*¹⁶⁵ which suggests that a virtue ethical framework fails to provide sufficient practical guidance in the forms of rules and procedures for situations of moral perplexity. One such critic, Rachels (1999, p 190-193), says that virtue ethics should not be regarded as a complete moral philosophy in its own right because it does not offer any obvious advice to help moral agents decide ‘what they should do’ in the face of particular moral problems. MacIntyre, in his influential *After Virtue*, remarks that ‘the most obvious and astonishing absence from Aristotle’s thought’ is that there is ‘relatively little mention of rules anywhere in the ethics’ (MacIntyre, 1984, p 150). It is arguably because MacIntyre perceives an ‘absence of rules’ in Aristotle that he concludes that the virtues could never provide a ‘complete’ account of moral life (MacIntyre, 1984, p 151). MacIntyre does think that the virtues should be central to morality in any community, but he suggests that rules and laws are required to ‘supplement’ any such virtues¹⁶⁶ (MacIntyre, 1984, p 151). Does Aristotle’s theory of virtue, then, neglect rules as MacIntyre says?

To be sure, Aristotle does concede that any account of moral ‘conduct must be stated in outline and not in precise detail’ (NE, 1104a, 1-2). He elsewhere remarks that the moral excellence of human beings essentially involves activity of the soul implying a principle (NE, 1098a7-9). However, Aristotle later clarifies why he does on occasion employ the (admittedly rather vague) term ‘imply’ in relation to principles. He takes issue with the Socratic view and argues that virtue does not always involve *only* the general principle of practical reason (prudence). Virtue is not merely, he says, ‘a state in conformity with the right principle, but one that implies the right principle. Whereas

¹⁶⁵ Kristjánsson actually describes this as the action/emotion guiding objection.

¹⁶⁶ Much of the thrust of this argument I derive from Haydon (2009, p 11) who interprets MacIntyre in a similar fashion. Carr (2003, p 256) I think rightly observes that MacIntyre’s credentials as an Aristotelian virtue ethicist are questionable.

Socrates thought the virtues are principles...we say they imply a principle' (NE, 1144b26-30). He continues by saying that the person of natural virtue might be good in certain respects, but only the person of practical wisdom is 'good without qualification' (NE, 1144b33-1145a3). Why is the person of practical wisdom (*phronimos*) good in an unqualified sense?

I think part of Aristotle's argument is that conformity to principles or rules is not enough for 'virtue in the full sense'¹⁶⁷. The practically wise must themselves choose the correct immediate target (*skopos*) that will enable them to reach the long term goal of flourishing (*telos*)¹⁶⁸. Practical wisdom, he says, issues orders that 'make' us 'perform the acts that are means towards' the end of happiness (NE1145a5-12). *Phronesis* is arguably intrinsically good because it is the quality that discerns what practical steps are required for morally desirable action. Kristjánsson puts it thus: *phronesis* 'helps the moral virtues to find their right ends'¹⁶⁹(Kristjánsson, 2007, p17).

Although Aristotle argues that the mean is *relative to each person*, he does specify three *rules* to guide its practical implementation. Everybody should: 1) avoid extreme deviations from the mean; 2) be conscious of the moral lapses to which they are prone; 3) remain particularly vigilant with regard to pleasure and pain (NE1109a30-1109b14). He states that by 'following these rules we will have the best chance of hitting the mean' (NE1109b14-15). These rules are admittedly rather general and it has also been plausibly argued

¹⁶⁷ The other necessary parts of an act done from practical wisdom would seem to be that it is chosen and performed from a stable disposition, with proper feeling.

¹⁶⁸ Annas (2007) argues that the overall aim of life is happiness (*telos*). She maintains that moral virtue is the practical 'skill of living' (p 21) that enables the correct immediate goals (*skopos*) to be reached. She says that the stoics were clearer than Aristotle about this. I do not think Aristotle however would classify moral virtue as a 'skill'.

¹⁶⁹ Kristjánsson (2007, p 17) here also provides an illuminating interpretation of Aristotle's problematic, unity of the virtues thesis. He says that the 'sense in which the virtues are inseparable, then, is the sense in which *phronesis* correctly oversees all the virtues and judges when and to what extent each virtue applies in each case'.

that the doctrine of the mean is less well suited to overseeing *other-regarding* virtues¹⁷⁰. Although Aristotle believed that the fully virtuous should apply general principles sensitively to particular experience, in pursuit of moral ends, this does not mean he thought more specific rules had no place in moral life; far from it. Aristotle rather seems to be of the view that rules can guide the moral action of less than mature agents, including, indeed especially, children. Arguably, he thought that rules should be employed to ensure that children form *habit-virtues*.

5.5 Aristotle's Child: Habit-Virtues, rules and discipline

'Virtue ethicists want to emphasise the fact that, if children are to be taught to be honest, they must be taught to prize the truth, and that *merely* teaching them not to lie will not achieve this end. But they do not deny that to achieve this end, teaching them not to lie is useful, even indispensable...virtue ethics not only comes up with rules...but further, does not exclude the more familiar deontologists' rules.' (Hursthouse, 2003, p 27)

Aristotle suggests that there are two praiseworthy qualities of moral character, 'natural virtue and virtue in the full sense; and of these the latter implies prudence' (NE, 1144b16-18). I think that this is a vital distinction. Aristotle says that a naturally virtuous disposition '*resembles* virtue' (NE, 1144b14). However, he adds that agents require intelligence and insight into the 'moral sphere' in order to turn this natural disposition into virtue in the 'full sense' (NE, 1144b10-15). Burnyeat (1980) characterises the distinction of natural and complete virtue as being one of 'that' and 'because'. Burnyeat implies that the person of full virtue understands *why* an action is good; the naturally virtuous only have a belief *that* it is good. Sorabji (1980) interprets the *Ethics* in a similar way. He thinks there are 'habit virtues'¹⁷¹ that are indicative of right opinions that agents may possess before they have

¹⁷⁰ See for example Carr (1991) and Slote (1995).

¹⁷¹ Spieker develops Sorabji's point and says that 'the habits acquired in early childhood, are not complete virtues but habit-virtues' (Spieker, 1999, p 216).

knowledge of their goal (ibid, p 213). Sherman (2004) similarly argues that the process of choosing goals begins not with each individual person, but from a common and shared view.¹⁷²

Aristotle may not have developed a theory of freedom¹⁷³, but he did discuss at length the notion of choice, compulsion and voluntary action in Book III of the *Ethics*. There, Aristotle suggests that the power to set proper ends for oneself on the basis of principles is central to the complete possession of virtue and happiness. He states that ‘choice implies a rational principle and thought (NE 1112a 15-16)’. However, he argues that ‘both children and animals have a share in voluntary action...but not in choice’ (NE, 1111b 5-10). Complete virtue does to be sure require that an act be chosen by the person so acting, but what matters more is that the act be ‘morally informed and proper’ (Kristjánsson, 2007, p 178). Aristotle arguably thus believed that issuing laws to children was justified because they are *not yet* capable of *choosing* to act for the sake of virtue from a position of principle.

‘But to obtain a right training for goodness from an early age is a hard thing, unless one has been brought up under right laws...For this reason upbringing and occupations should be regulated by law, because they will cease to be irksome when they have become habitual’. (NE1179b30-1180a)

In Book X of the *Ethics* Aristotle indicates his preference for a public system of education¹⁷⁴ (NE1179b30-1180b28). In the aforementioned passage, he arguably suggests that laws and rules can serve to develop desirable habits in children. This interpretation is, I think, given further credence by Aristotle’s earlier suggestion that rightly formed laws bid us to do brave and temperate things

¹⁷² Importantly both Sherman and Sorabji assert that habituation need not be ‘mindless’. Not all commentators agree on this. Curzer (2002) for example has argued that habituation is inherently ‘painful’. Kristjánsson (2007, chapter 3) provides an informative overview of different theories of habituation and I will expand upon this subject in chapters 7 & 9.

¹⁷³ Kristjánsson (2007, p43-44) explains that Aristotle could not have had a modern conception of freedom to avail himself of; for Aristotle ‘being free basically meant not being a slave’.

¹⁷⁴ Aristotle of course goes into much more detail about the nature of public education in the *Politics*. For an insightful commentary and interpretation on this subject see Curren (2000).

(NE1129b19-26). Curren seems to take something like this view. He intimates that laws 'provide a kind of instruction in the varieties of acts performed by virtuous and vicious people' (2000, p 86). Aristotle elsewhere states that children's dispositions are 'apt to be harmful' without intelligence (NE, 1144b8-10). Taking these comments together, Aristotle arguably construes rules as potentially educative, in so far as they can direct those with incomplete moral reason to act rightly. He seemed to think that rules can help to ensure that the habitual actions of children are intelligently directed to proper rather than harmful ends. Although actions performed in accordance with principles determined by others cannot be classified as virtuous in the 'full sense', because they are not chosen, they are arguably at least 'naturally' virtuous. He elsewhere remarks that we should listen to our elders 'because they have an insight from their experience which enables them to see correctly' (NE1143b13-14). Aristotle also indicates that children should follow the prescriptions of their tutors¹⁷⁵, because the former are not yet capable of complete virtue and happiness.

For children...live as their desires impels them, and it is in them that the appetite for pleasant things is strongest; so unless this is rendered docile and submissive to authority it will pass all bounds...and if these appetites are strong and violent, they actually drive out reason. So they must be moderate and few, and in no way opposed to the dictates of principle – this is what we mean by docile and restrained...the child ought to live in accordance with the directions of his tutor.' (NE, 1119b6-13)

¹⁷⁵ It should be observed that there may well have been more than one type of tutor whose directions children should follow. Although Aristotle holds that education is best conducted by the state, he remarks that individual tuition is superior to the public sort (NE1180b8-10). Curren (2000, p 233) notes that *paideia* may have originally referred to childrearing - however it most likely referred to formal schooling by the time of Plato. A tutor would in one sense formally instruct within schools. However, there was arguably another type of tutor who had even greater influence on the young child's moral development. Each boy (*paid*, *pais*) or child (*paidion*) was accompanied by a slave (*paidagogos*) who was responsible for leading (*ago*) them to and from their more formal school lessons (ibid, p 12). The slave was also thus arguably a tutor of sorts. Indeed, Curren (ibid, p14) implies they had much more influence on moral development of the young than tutors of group lessons. Curren also notes the perversity of entrusting the moral formation of children to slaves, perverse because the latter were not deemed fit to rule themselves as citizens. He (2000, p 84) later indicates that Aristotle thought children should be kept out of the company of slaves as much as possible.

Aristotle maintains that no child can truly flourish because age debars them from virtuous activities (NE, 1099b25-1100a5). He states that ‘if children are so described, it is by way of congratulation on their future promise...happiness demands not only complete goodness but a complete life’ (NE,1100a3-5). However, Aristotle’s view of children is not as pessimistic as it at first sight appears¹⁷⁶. Aristotle did think that children were capable of attaining full virtue and happiness in the future under the guidance of virtuous adults. In the *Politics* he indicates that the deliberative faculty in the soul is ‘present but undeveloped’ (Politics, 1260a13) in the child. The child already has the irrational part of the soul that is amenable to reason, but in *unfinished* form.

‘Nurture and discipline are the acts that convey the potentiality for the child’s own eventual actualisation as ethically complete’. (Tress, 1997 p 74)

Tress observes that Aristotle’s corpus of work nowhere contains a sustained discussion of childhood (Tress, 1997). However, he maintains that Aristotle’s assorted comments on the subject in the *Generation of Animals*, the *Ethics* and the *Politics* permit extrapolation of an integrated view. The ‘common defining feature’ of the three works, he says, is ‘that the child is “unfinished” in relation to human telos’ (Tress, p 66). Tress argues that the term *unfinished* implies that the potential of children has not yet been unlocked and realised; it will be in the future, however, so long as they receive the ‘right upbringing and supervision’ (NE, 1180a1). On top of the correct nurture and discipline¹⁷⁷, young persons must also, Aristotle continues, ‘keep on observing their regimen and accustoming themselves to it even after

¹⁷⁶ Aristotle makes a number of complimentary remarks about the ‘young’ in the *Rhetoric*. The young are, for example, hopeful (1389a20-22) and optimistic (1389a33-35) and they prefer doing the noble to what is in their interest (1389a35-1389b). They similarly enjoy their friends for their own sake and not as means to their own interests (1389b1-4). Kristjánsson rightly observes that these ‘are hardly the views of a thinker uninterested in childhood’ (2007, p 26). Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* will be further discussed in chapter 7.

¹⁷⁷ Crucially Tress’s translation and interpretation of the passage (NE1180a1) refers not to ‘upbringing and supervision’ but ‘nurture and discipline’. Nurture, involves providing ‘affection, shelter and sustenance for the child’ (Tress, 1997, p 76).

they are grown up' (NE, 1180a1-3). Aristotle's child is thus 'always human' (Tress, 1997, p 65) but as a *potentiality*. Aristotle moreover, thought that it was schools and parents that should 'nurture and discipline' the moral potential of the child into mature actuality. Discipline, it seems, is integral to the process of preparing children in, and for, the life of virtue. Tress also maintains that the household (*oikos*) is the main locus for ethical formation. Schools largely prepare children for civic life, though they can also have a share in moral development (ibid, 1997, p 79). Although many habits are undoubtedly cultivated in the home and outside of school, schools may also importantly influence the discipline and nurture of children.

5.6 Discipline, for Virtuous Habits

In this chapter and the previous one, it has been argued that schools should try to help pupils' foster virtuous, rather than merely rule-following habits. It has been concluded that a neo-Aristotelian account of virtues is preferable to a Kantian one. Whereas Kant conceived of virtue *as* a rational principle devoid of emotion, Aristotle insisted that moral virtue is a disposition of moderate action and feeling *mediated by* a rational principle. Kant and Aristotle also conceived moral ends rather differently. Kant defended the ethical primacy of the categorical imperative whereas Aristotle emphasised human flourishing. Peters was also inclined to the Kantian view¹⁷⁸ that moral maturity resides in rational autonomy. In Peters' pluralistic theory of moral development, virtue rather plays second fiddle to principles and rationality.

It has, however, also been contended that a virtue ethical account of school discipline in no way prohibits the adoption of rules. Rules¹⁷⁹ can and should play an integral role in helping children

¹⁷⁸ Though not the strictly conceived Kantian view; Peters unlike Kant, emphasised that some habits ought to be educated and that habits can be intelligent and adaptable.

¹⁷⁹ As Hursthouse (2003, p 27) and Sherman (1999, p 38-39) both imply.

develop habit-virtues. However, rules are not ends in themselves in virtue theory; they serve the more fundamental goal of shaping virtuous dispositions. I think that the aspiration to promote such virtuous dispositions in pupils through various means, including discipline, is a realistic one that reflects the spirit of Aristotle's concept of virtue. Aristotle thought that children were 'capable of a portion of goodness' but he did not think they could fully grasp the principles necessary for complete virtue. Children rather needed guidance from their tutors. Aristotle may have been like Peters, something of a moral educational pluralist¹⁸⁰.

'We should probably be content if the *combination* of all of the means that are supposed to make us good enables us to attain some portion of goodness.' (NE 1179b 17-20)

Haydon (1999) has more recently suggested that education should promote a widespread understanding of moral norms that are publicly shared. He, like Aristotle before him, implies that relatively modest moral educational aims may, for some, be the best that can be hoped for. Not everyone, he says, may be capable of deep understanding, of such public norms; 'some trade off between depth and breadth may be inevitable' (1999, p 102). However, Haydon's position is also more Kantian than Aristotelian. Although he acknowledges that it might be *possible* for a society to establish a general moral consensus, employing a 'language of virtues', he thinks that rules would provide a firmer basis for these public norms.

I also think that Aristotle had a more positive concept of childhood than either Kant or Peters. Aristotle's young person is by nature rich in potential. He or she is *not outside* the palace of reason. Children rather require support from the outset from *inside* the palace, so that they can in time learn to navigate more independent

¹⁸⁰ In that they both philosophers seem to think moral development may be aided in more than one way. Indeed, in chapter 9 it will be argued that instruction and habituation were both necessary processes in a neo-Aristotelian education for virtue.

paths of their own. Furthermore, for Aristotle, in the moral realm at least, reason is not really a palace at all without proper habit and emotion. Aristotle thought that adults should guide children towards ethical maturity by initiating them into morally praiseworthy character traits of thinking, acting and feeling. Children may not yet be capable of exercising the choices that characterise virtue in the full sense, but they can, with appropriate nurture and discipline, form virtuous dispositions.

‘Discipline consists, on the one hand, in continually discouraging the child’s “wildness”, i.e., the free action of the passions and desires, and on the other, continually encouraging positive acts of virtue that by habituation will form a virtuous character’ (Tress, 1997, p 74)

Whereas Kant construed discipline as largely negative, Aristotle appears to have thought it could have both positive and negative functions. A neo-Aristotelian theory of school discipline should arguably be tasked to properly moderate both excessive *and* deficient feelings in pupils. As we shall see in chapter 7, Aristotle may even have thought that the seemingly negative aspects of a proper nurture and discipline ought to be evaluated as ‘overall positive’¹⁸¹ too, in virtue of their potential long-term benefits. The discussion in this chapter has largely focussed on a *prima facie* negative component of discipline, on how rules can help to direct the moral conduct of the young. However, the acquisition of the virtues (in the natural and full sense alike) involves considerably more than the following of rules designed to moderate excessive feelings. More will be said, in subsequent chapters about how proper ‘sentimental dispositions’¹⁸²

¹⁸¹ I borrow this phrase from Kristjánsson (2007, p 51) who suggests that so called ‘negative emotions’ might be more helpfully broken down into four different categories. I will consider how painful emotions can be pleasurable overall in chapter 7 and how discipline may often involve overcoming painful emotions in chapter 9.

¹⁸² I borrow this phrase from Steutel and Spiecker’s (2004). This paper and that of Tress (1997) also informed my broader argument, that school discipline should be tasked to order both excessive and deficient feeling.

might be developed, particularly in cases where the feeling in question is not excessive, but rather deficient.

Chapter 6 Platonic Emotions: Controlled & limited pleasures & pains

In this chapter and the next, it will be argued that Platonic and Aristotelian moral philosophy can be distinguished by the greater focus of the latter on educating rather than rationally controlling or limiting feelings. Initially, in this chapter, Aristotle's important discrimination between the continent and fully virtuous person will be explained. It will be suggested that the virtuous, unlike the continent, *necessarily* experience little in the way of conflict between their moral principles and affective dispositions. Next, Frede's argument that Aristotle restated a theory of emotion, first articulated by Plato in the *Philebus*, will be considered. It will be suggested that if Plato develops a *general* theory of emotion at all in the *Philebus*, it is a very narrowly conceived and rationalistic one, one that significantly excludes the possibility that sensory pleasures and pains can lead to true judgements. However, in chapter 7, it will become apparent that Aristotle thought emotions just are judgements that can be properly informed by perceptions of pleasure and pain. Aristotle also emphasises that emotions are open to persuasion and alteration in discussion with *others* in a way that Plato does not. It will be concluded that appreciation and maintenance of these distinctions is not merely of exegetical but of pedagogical significance. If school discipline was based upon Platonic moral theory, pupils need not (and arguably it would be best if they did not) feel anything; they need only follow the dictates of reason. However, in a neo-Aristotelian account of discipline, attempt must be made to help pupils to act, think *and* feel in the right way.

6.1 Educated pleasures and pains: The continent and fully virtuous

'For it is with pleasures and pains that moral goodness is concerned....Hence the importance (as Plato says) of having been trained in some way to feel joy and grief at the right things: true education is precisely this'. (NE, 1104b9-14)

In this significant passage of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle indicates that genuine education involves training the young to *feel* happiness, pleasure, sadness and pain in and towards the correct objects. He also explains why it is so important that people learn to feel sensations proper to each circumstance. Pleasures and pains are, he says, the very standards that shape and regulate all our actions (NE1105a1-3). Indeed, the ‘whole concern of morality...must be with pleasures and pains, since the man who treats them rightly will be good and the one who treats them wrongly will be bad’ (NE1105a1-3). The good man is, for Aristotle, none other than the man of virtue as was explained in the previous chapter. It is virtue that ‘disposes us to act in the best way in regard to pleasure and pains’ (NE1104b27-28). Educating the young into proper habits of feeling is, it seems, at the very heart of an Aristotelian education. Without such dispositions children will have little or no chance of later developing virtues in the fullest sense; they will only be capable of continence¹⁸³. Aristotle also alluded¹⁸⁴ to Plato’s views on the importance of early years training and education. However, Aristotle’s philosophy can be distinguished from Plato’s in terms of the value the former places on inculcating proper feelings in the young.

‘Then I must surely be right in saying that we shall not be properly educated ourselves...until we can recognise the qualities of discipline, courage, generosity, greatness of mind and others akin to them’. (Republic, 402b8-11)

In the *Republic*, Plato suggests that a proper education requires recognition of, and allegiance to, the dictates of reason. Plato says that education in early childhood is ‘crucial’ as it is this that will help the young to be in ‘conformity with beauty and reason’ (RP401d1-5). Through being appropriately trained to perceive beauty¹⁸⁵ in ‘works of art or nature’, the child will ‘grow in true goodness of character’

¹⁸³ Aristotle’s concept of continence will shortly be compared to his depiction of full virtue.

¹⁸⁴ He does so in the aforementioned extracted passage (NE, 1104b9-14).

¹⁸⁵ The training would also help to reveal the shortcomings of inferior works.

(RP401e1-402e2). Plato adds that even though the young cannot yet understand why art is beautiful, or conduct good, 'when reason comes he will recognise her and welcome her as a familiar friend because of his upbringing' (402b2-4). Plato implies that the essential quality of the morally educated is the capacity for rational recognition and true perception of things and their representations (RP402b2-402c-8). Plato also suggests in the *Republic* that pleasures and pains are illusory¹⁸⁶. Plato's belief that pleasure and pain did not reliably yield true perceptions of the world, seems to have informed his view (to be explored here) that the phenomena were to be avoided or controlled rather than educated. Aristotle, in contrast, insists that education necessarily involves some training of felt pleasures and pains. Aristotle stressed that mature moral virtue involved right action, feeling and reason¹⁸⁷. Why did Aristotle, unlike Plato, think that we ought to be educated more broadly, to *feel* pleasure and pain in the right ways? The most probable answer can be found within their respective conceptions of goodness and virtue. For Plato, goodness and virtue ultimately arise through *knowledge*; for Aristotle goodness and virtue entail action, feeling *and* knowledge¹⁸⁸.

The normative import of feeling appropriate pleasures and pains becomes particularly apparent when Aristotle's distinction between the *continent* and *virtuous* person comes into view. Aristotle grants considerable moral status to the continent agent who, though not fully virtuous, is nevertheless morally good in significant ways. To be sure, Aristotle does twice suggest in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that virtue and continence might be classified together (NE 1145a17 & 1148a14-15) because they are both concerned with the same things. He does also in the *Eudemian Ethics* declare that 'continence rather than incontinence is a virtue' (EE1223b11). However, continence does not

¹⁸⁶ These views will be explored at 6.2.

¹⁸⁷ This was explained in the previous chapter.

¹⁸⁸ In Chapters 1 & 2 of *Educating the Virtues* Carr (1991) contrasts Plato's view of virtue as knowledge and Aristotle's, as virtue as character.

seem to be a virtue in any very significant or complete sense. Continnence, he says, 'is not to be regarded as altogether a virtue, either; it is a sort of combination of virtue with something else (NE1128b11)'. While the actions of both the continent and virtuous never deviate from the right moral principle, the former has 'bad desires' whereas the latter does not (NE1151b27-1152a3). Continnence is to be regarded as a good thing (NE1151b29), but the continent agent is not good without qualification.

Aristotle states that 'not all continnence will be good' (NE1146a14-15). *If* continnence is also accompanied by strong desire, it is not compatible with the virtue of temperance (NE1146a10-15). The former feels pleasure, but does not 'get carried away by it', whereas the latter takes no pleasure 'in anything contrary to his principle' (NE1151b34-1152a3). Aristotle adds that the feelings of the virtuous, unlike those of the continent, are 'in complete harmony'¹⁸⁹ with reason (NE1102b23-28). The final point is crucial as this is, arguably, the main difference between the continent and the virtuous. Whereas the feelings, habits and dispositions of the fully virtuous are at one with each other, the continent experience a degree of conflict and discontinuity between their feelings and principles. The continent, are, nevertheless, morally praiseworthy; just not *as* praiseworthy as the fully virtuous. The continent can discern what virtue requires and they are able to exercise the will power necessary to act in accordance with moral principles. Significantly, in the *Ethics*, the soul of the continent but not that of the incontinent is described as 'receptive' and 'obedient' to reason. However, the soul of the virtuous man is 'presumably more amenable' to reason (NE1102b23-28). What distinguishes the continent from the incontinent is that the former acts upon choice, not desire, while the latter acts on desire not choice (NE1111b14-16). The continent

¹⁸⁹ Aristotle does however indicate that some virtues (anger and courage especially) might involve mixtures of pleasure and pain and/or a small degree of conflict between feeling and principle, as we shall see in the subsequent chapter. Carr observes that 'no coherent conception of virtuous agency should exclude the kind of emotional complexity in which both pleasant and painful emotions are mixed in the usual human proportions.' (Carr, 2009, p 42)

always chooses to act in accordance with the principle of practical wisdom; the incontinent never does¹⁹⁰.

‘A virtue ethics in the fullest sense must treat aretaic notions (like “good” or “excellent”) rather than deontic notions (like “morally wrong,” “ought,” and “obligation”) as primary, and it must put greater emphasis on the ethical assessment of agents and their (inner) motives and character traits than it puts on the evaluation of acts and choices.’ (Slote, 1995, p 89)

Aristotle’s notion of continence importantly distinguishes his account of virtue from those of Kant, Peters and Plato. Of these philosophers, only Aristotle held that ‘inner motives’ and feelings had to be shaped in certain ways as a prerequisite for genuine moral maturity. In section 4.4, it was noted that Kant regarded properly conceived virtue as devoid of emotion. In section 4.3, it was also observed that Peters did not think that proper emotions and motives were a necessary feature of *all* virtues either. His type a) virtues are entirely motiveless, whereas his type d), are higher order virtues that *have* to be exercised in the face of contradictory inclinations. Importantly, in the subsequent sections of this chapter, it will be argued that Plato thought that pleasures and pains are not to be educated, but rather rationally controlled (see 6.2 & 6.3) or limited (see 6.4 and 6.5). Aristotle by contrast, thought that complete virtue requires that both actions *and feelings* accord with moral principle.

Aristotle’s requirement for the virtuous to act and feel rightly, in tune with moral understanding, has vital educational implications. It has been suggested that continence might be understood as a developmental stage on the path to becoming fully virtuous¹⁹¹. In the next chapter this idea will be discussed further. There it will be argued

¹⁹⁰ Aristotle specifies that there are two types of incontinence: impetuosity and weakness. The weak deliberate correctly about what to do but ‘then under the influence of their feelings fail to abide by their decisions; others are carried away by their feelings because they have failed to deliberate (NE1150b19-23) Kristjánsson (2007) incorporates just this distinction into his Aristotelian theory of moral development. This theory is discussed in the subsequent chapter.

¹⁹¹ See Burnyeat (1980) Curzer (2002), Kristjánsson (2007) and Carr (2009).

that the young should not only be *educated in* proper feelings, but also that they might *learn through* such feelings. However, since Frede has argued that Aristotle's theory of emotion is directly borrowed from Plato's *Philebus*, it would first seem advisable to give this hypothesis some scrutiny, not least because Aristotle broadly defines emotions as alterations of judgement concerning pleasures and pains (Rhetoric1378a20-22). If Aristotle did in fact resuscitate a Platonic theory of emotion, it would have considerable implications for the viability and coherence of his account of moral education. If Frede is correct, Aristotelian emotions also require limitation rather than education.

6.2 Aristotelian Inconsistency and Mixed Emotion?

'What is characteristic of all emotions is a single feature: namely thought or belief as the efficient cause.' (Fortenbaugh, 2008, p 116)

In the opening pages of his influential text, *Aristotle on Emotion*, Fortenbaugh (2008) chronicled a period when members of Plato's academy, including Aristotle, conducted a groundbreaking inquiry into the emotions. The investigation culminated in a theory, fully articulated in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, according to which thought and/or belief came to be construed as 'efficient causes' (Fortenbaugh, 2008, p 12) of emotion. Fortenbaugh suggests that the Academy's investigation of emotion was first evident in Plato's *Philebus*. Fortenbaugh claims that the *Philebus* raises questions about the emotions, but it is Aristotle who directly addresses and answers these questions in the *Rhetoric*. A significant feature of Aristotle's account, Fortenbaugh argues, was the creation of a new educational theory of the emotions. Frede (1996, footnote 15, p 280) however, indicates that Fortenbaugh does not give due credit to the subtlety of Plato's own analysis of emotions in the *Philebus*. This chapter and the next will therefore have three main tasks: to document the nature of the accounts of emotion in the *Philebus* and *Rhetoric*; to ascertain the extent of influence of the former on the latter; and to consider the educational implications of

the Academy's exploration of emotions.

'If it is a sign of a truly great mind not to be excessively concerned with consistency, then Aristotle displays this kind of greatness of mind to a very high degree.....It is from inconsistencies in great minds that we learn.' (Frede, p 279, 1996)

Dorothea Frede in her essay *Mixed Feelings in Aristotle's Rhetoric* (1996) posits that Aristotle provides contrasting accounts of the emotions in the *Rhetoric* and the *Nicomachean Ethics*. In the *Rhetoric*, she says, Aristotle accepts or essentially restates the 'remedial' or 'mixed' account of the emotions described by Plato in the *Philebus*. Frede argues that most of the emotions described in the *Philebus* and the *Rhetoric* are mixed,¹⁹² because they contain a mixture of pleasant and painful components. She states that no 'such emphasis on their mixed nature is found in his treatment of the emotions in his ethics' (Frede, 1996, p258). In the *Ethics*, she says, Aristotle 'roundly rejects' the mixed or remedial theory of emotion and 'argues that pleasure is tied to perfect activities of the soul' (Frede, 1996, p259). Such 'blatant disagreement' as to the nature of one of the main sources of human motivation, she argues, requires explanation. Much of chapter 7 will be concerned with such an explanation. Importantly, in section 6.3 of this chapter, it will first be said that it is far from clear that Plato develops any theory of emotion, mixed or otherwise, in the *Philebus*. In section 7.2, it will be acknowledged that Phileban and rhetorical theories of *pleasure* do somewhat resemble each other; but in section 7.3, it will be argued that Aristotle's emphasis on persuasion renders his account of *emotion* significantly different from Plato's. Before the discussion goes any further, however, it would seem important to unpack exactly what Frede means by a mixed theory of emotion.

¹⁹² Frede concedes Aristotle did not himself employ the word mixed.

*'pleasure and pain are merely surfaces
(one itself showing, itself hiding one)
life's only and true value neither is'* (E. E. Cummings, 1997, p 63)

Frede's description of the Platonic account of pleasure and pain as mixed in nature is best exemplified in the *Philebus*. However, in the *Republic*, Plato also explores the possibility that pleasure and pain are mixed. There (RP583b-588b), he suggests that there is an *intermediary state of rest* between pleasure and pain that is itself pleasurable. Neither sensation is directly felt, but is rather a residual effect of a resolution of sorts between the two. Under this interpretation, pleasure consists in the absence of pain, after a moment of pain has passed. Pain conversely consists in the absence of pleasure, after the latter felt experience has run its course. However, in the *Republic*, Plato ultimately decides that such an intermediary state of mixed pleasures and pains is an appearance of, rather than a pure pleasure.

The state of rest must *appear* pleasant by contrast with previous pain or painful by contrast with previous pleasure; but judged by the standard of true pleasure, neither *appearance* can be genuine, but must be some sort of conjuring trick.... So we must not let ourselves believe that pure pleasure consists in relief from pain, or pure pain in the cessation of pleasure' (Republic, 584a6-c2)

Frede states that the Platonic notion of two kinds of pleasure in the *Republic* is unsatisfactory as it 'avoids a clear pronouncement as to whether the specious pleasures are pleasures or not (Frede, 1996, p 261)'. Indeed, Plato only seems to be confident of the philosopher's ability to experience real pleasure (RP583b-588b). Frede and Waterfield (1980) consider this to be a weakness of Plato's view in the *Republic*. However, they both argue that he resolves this issue more satisfactorily in the *Philebus*. 'There he presents us with a truly magisterial solution to the whole problem, a unified account of pleasure and pain that is free from all such flaws (Frede, 1996, p 261)'.

Waterfield and Gosling and Taylor (1982) maintain that the *Philebus* is probably a later dialogue than the *Republic*. Although modern readers should not be completely confident in this dating (Waterfield, 1980), Frede also adheres to it.

'Whoever has any pleasure at all, however ill founded it may be really does have pleasure, even if sometimes it is not about anything that either is the case or ever was the case, or often (or perhaps most of the time) refers to anything that ever will be the case... And the same account holds in the case of fear, anger, and everything of that sort, namely that all of them can at times be false.' (*Philebus*, 40d5-e2)

Plato devotes considerable attention to pleasure and pain in the *Philebus* (31b-59d). Unlike in the *Republic*, he emphasises that though pleasures may arise in us through false judgement, all pleasures are nevertheless *real* (Frede, 1996, Letwin 1980). Moreover, pleasures and pains are presented, Frede says, as *intentional* states 'defined by what they are about' (Frede, 1996, p262). The notion that pleasures and pains have a substantive content that can be 'subject to moral evaluation' (Frede, 1996, p262) is crucial, she says, to Plato's explanation of complex emotions in the *Philebus*. Crucially, Frede thinks that this mixed or restorative theory of pleasure and pain can be extended to explain the emotions. She suggests that the passage (PHI47c-50e) of the *Philebus* represents a fundamental point of agreement between the *Philebus* and the *Rhetoric*. In both texts, she says, it is found that 'mixed emotions are desires to remedy an injury or disturbance combined with the pleasant expectation of restoration' (Frede, p263). Before the question of whether or not Aristotle adopted a Phileban theory of emotion in the *Rhetoric* can be answered, it first seems necessary to consider in detail precisely what the *Philebus* had to say about pleasure and pain. It is to this task that the discussion now turns. Specifically, it will be argued that Frede is correct in saying that pleasures (or at least some of them) are intentional and therefore apt for moral appraisal in the *Philebus*, but that she is only correct in a qualified way. Plato seems really to be of the view that it is our *desires*

and memories that are intentional and susceptible to normative evaluation, and he has a very particular conception of desire (literally¹⁹³) in mind.

6.3 Mixed Pleasures & Desire in the *Philebus*

In the *Philebus*, Plato supposes that there is a natural state of harmony in all living creatures that disintegrates when they experience emptiness (*Philebus*, 31d-32c). It is painful, he says, to suffer the decay and destruction of this natural state (*Philebus*, 42c8-d3). However, the emptiness brought about by the disintegration of the natural state can be removed by the filling up of whatever has been lacking. Crucially, Plato actually *defines* pleasure at this point as such a restoration to the natural state. As he puts it, ‘when things are restored to their own nature again, this restoration, as we established in our agreement among ourselves, is pleasure’ (*Philebus*, 42d5-6). There would appear to be sound textual evidence, then, in support of Frede’s declaration that Phileban pleasures are ‘always the restoration of some disturbance or the filling of a lack’ (Frede, 1996, p 262). However, further scrutiny of the text reveals that Plato’s theory of ‘mixed pleasures’ is not quite so straightforward or all encompassing. For one thing, Plato offers an alternative, quite different, model of how pleasures arise in the human soul (Letwin, 1981). For another, Plato explicitly states that there is a class of pleasures that are ‘pure’ precisely because they are not mixed with any pain. The rest of this section, however, will be concerned with unpacking the complex ways in which Plato says that pleasures and pains are involved in the restoration process.

Although Plato defines pleasure as a resolution to the natural state it is not obviously the case that he intends this resolution to be a singular process, for he specifies that there are three different ways in

¹⁹³ I say literally here as Plato specifies in the *Philebus* that desire is an entirely mental event.

which mixed pleasures can arise¹⁹⁴. It is possible, he says, for there to be mixtures *confined to the body*, mixtures that exist *only in the soul* and mixtures that are a *combination of pleasures and pains in soul and body* (Philebus, 46b6-46c3 & 50c8-50e). Plato does not clearly explain how all of these different combinations of pleasure and pain restore beings to their natural state. However, he does at least discuss each in turn, so it is possible to interpret the dialogue in such a way as to make sense of his declaration that pleasures do return living creatures to harmony. Arguably, it would be clearer if these pleasures were classified as those of *non-perception*, *perception* and *mental-self representation*. As will become apparent, Plato thought that the pleasures of perception involve, and should ultimately be governed by, *preserved perceptions*. Recognising that some of Plato's mixed pleasures are *exclusively mental* events and some are *exclusively bodily*, is crucial to assessing the validity of Frede's assertion that pleasures and pains are intentional and apt for moral evaluation.

Plato firstly and briefly alludes to an account of how it is possible for there to be mixed pleasures of *non-perception* that are *confined to the body*. He says that it is possible for some mixtures of feeling to extinguish themselves in the body before they reach the soul, whereas others penetrate through to the soul. The pleasures that remain in the body are not perceived in the soul and are, Plato says, pleasures of 'non-perception' (Philebus, 33d-34). Pleasures of non-perception, it seems, work themselves out in our bodies, restoring us to the natural state, before our minds (need to?) become aware of them. In order to explain how the pleasures limited to the body differ from those that do not, Plato thereafter details his understanding of perception, memory and desire.

'And wasn't it the soul that had desires, desires for conditions opposite to the actual ones of the body, while it is the body that undergoes the pain or pleasure of some

¹⁹⁴ The view that pleasures are presented in this threefold way is shared by Gosling 1959, Gosling & Taylor 1982, Fortenbaugh 2008 and Miller 2008.

affection.' (Philebus, 41c3-6, p 46)

The first actual example of the process of restoration discussed by Socrates and his interlocutor is hunger, where the emptiness of not having eaten enough recently is attended with pain. Pleasure in this instance, Plato implies, is or has the potential to be two-fold: pleasure in the expectation in the *soul* of the hunger being satiated (Ibid, 32c) and pleasure in the actual *bodily* experience of the emptiness of hunger being filled. The latter pleasures, Plato says, are the 'most ordinary and well known cases' (Ibid, 31e-32). Hunger and thirst, then, would seem to be instances of mixed pleasures that involve the *soul and the body*. Importantly though, the pleasures of the body and those of the soul are qualitatively different. The pleasure in the soul is one of *rational expectation*, whereas the somatic pleasure is one of *bodily gratification*. Plato arguably defines desire as this rational expectation. Desire is central to the Phileban account of pleasure as a restoration to the natural state; for it is desire that drives the restoration process (Ibid, 35c12-13).

Socrates: 'But do we maintain that he who has a desire desires something?

Protarchus: Necessarily.

Socrates: He does, then, not have a desire for what he in fact experiences. For he is thirsty, and this is a process of emptying. His desire is rather of filling.

Protarchus: Yes.

Socrates: Something in the person who is thirsty must necessarily be in contact with filling.

Protarchus: Necessarily.

Socrates: But it is impossible that this should be the body, for the body is what is emptied out.

Protarchus: Yes.

Socrates: The only option that we are left with is that the soul makes contact with the filling, and it certainly must do so through memory.' (Philebus, 35b1-35c)

In the account given in the *Philebus* desire is *preceded* by a

bodily pain or pleasure, but *it is not* the bodily pain or pleasure. Desire, he declares, 'is not a matter of the body' (Philebus, 35c6). People experience the physiological pain of hunger in the body and a rational desire or expectation for that emptiness to be filled subsequently follows. This rational expectation in the soul, moreover, takes the form of a memory. In order to make fuller sense of memory and its role in desire, it seems necessary to consider Plato's construal of perception; for he defines *memory* as the 'preservation of perception' (Philebus, 34a8). Plato states that *perception* is the motion of soul and body being jointly 'moved by one and the same affection' (Philebus, 34a2-3). However, he crucially states that it is through *recalling* and comprehending as fully as possible the perceptions of *pleasures of the soul without the body*, that the nature of pleasure and desire in general is revealed (Ibid, 34c4-7). Plato seems to think that it is the *preserved* element of any *perception* that ensures a truthful judgement.

Desires are revealed to be essentially 'mental events' (Letwin, 1981) that occur in the soul, that are driven by memories of bodily perceptions of filling from the past (Philebus, 34b5-34c7). It is not therefore perceptions of current particular bodily pleasures or pains, *in themselves*, that make a return to bodily harmony possible; the vehicle for restoration is rather the rational desire in the soul. In a crucial passage, Plato says that it is memories that direct every living creature to the objects they desire (Ibid, 35Cc9-d2). Frede indicates that the point of Plato's careful analysis is to demonstrate that pleasures and pains are 'intentional (object directed) states, since all involve memory' (Philebus 1993, Frede footnote on p 37). Moreover, she adds that it is 'the soul that is responsible for determining a pleasure's intentional object, what that pleasure is *about* (Frede, 1993, xliv)'. Letwin (1981) similarly takes Plato to be suggesting that pleasures are essentially mental events. I take Goldie's definition of intentionality to be

instructive here¹⁹⁵ and, because of this, agree with Frede and Letwin, but only up to a point.

'Intentionality is the mind's capability of being directed onto things in the world.'
(Goldie, 2004, p 3)

All *desires* are portrayed as intentional states in the *Philebus*, involving as they do mental events (memories) about perceptible worldly objects. However, given that Plato specifies that at least some mixed pleasures arise in the *body alone*¹⁹⁶, it is hard to accept Frede's point that *all* mixed pleasures *are* intentional states, since not *all* mixed pleasures involve memories. It is also hard to accept her view that Plato's analysis was *intended* to establish that all pleasures are intentional states. Plato himself clearly states that it is *memory* that directs each creature to the object it desires (*Philebus*, 35d1-2). The pleasures that are intentional would seem to be so, largely because of their dependence upon memory and desire. Moreover, Plato has Socrates state different reasons for discussing memory and desire; his 'argument has established that every impulse, desire and the rule of the whole animal is the domain of the soul' (*Ibid*, 35d2-3).

In suggesting that the soul should rule over the whole animal, Plato is arguably referring to his ontology (discussed at 6.5 and 6.6) and the need for the rational soul of human beings to impose some limit on pleasure. Arguably, he has been trying to explain how memories should be construed as crucial components of the rational soul, crucial, because it is such *preserved perceptions* that can enable moral judgements to be made about how to properly limit current *perceptions* of bodily pleasure.

¹⁹⁵ Goldie's definition is to be sure, a rather figurative, phenomenological one.

¹⁹⁶ As I have already noted at 46b6-7.

6.4 Real, and False pleasures and Phileban Emotions

‘And if a mistake is made about the object of judgement, then we should say that the judgement that makes that mistake is not right and does not judge rightly....As to pleasure, it certainly often seems to arise within us not with a right but with a false, judgement.’ (Philebus, 37e1-10, p40-41)

There has been considerable disagreement over whether or not Plato intended to formulate a single theory to explain the nature of pleasure in the *Philebus*. Frede (1996) and Tuozzo (1996), in their different ways, conclude that the dialogue does contain a general theory applicable to all cases of pleasure. However, Gosling & Taylor’s (1982) view is that *anticipatory pleasures* constitute a class distinct from those of *replenishment*. Letwin (1981) similarly argues that Plato provides readers with not one but two theories of pleasure in the *Philebus*. Although the *Philebus* is open to interpretation I would incline to agree with Gosling & Taylor and Letwin.

Plato states that all pleasures are *real*, though they can nevertheless be accompanied by *true* or *false judgements* (Ibid, 37a-b). To illuminate this point and explain how judgements about pleasures can be true or false, Plato employs a simile. He argues that the soul of each individual is comparable to a book. He imagines that two craftsmen live within our souls (a scribe and a painter) who respectively write the words and paint the pictures that enable us to gather information about the sensible world that we live in (Ibid, 38e10-39d). Importantly, these artisans provide us with a subjective impression of the world that is not necessarily a picture and description of the world as it actually is. These impressions, Plato makes clear, are based on *both* memories (*preserved perceptions*) and *perceptions* (Ibid, 39a1). He says that the *judgements* that determine the truth or falsity of a pleasure are also based on a combination of memory and perception (Philebus, 38b5-38c). Gosling remarks that in the *Philebus*, ‘anticipation is shown to be a desire consequent on a

memory stimulated by a present want' (Gosling, 1959, p 46). Gosling implies that the pictures painted in the soul are assessments of our own prospects of pleasure to come. Critically, then, Plato is *not* arguing that falsity is an attribute of pleasure itself or of the *sensation* of pleasure. He is rather making the case that our *predictions of future* pleasures can be mistaken (Gosling, 1959).

Plato does briefly also explain how false judgements about pleasures can arise from a current sense perceptions or impressions. He says that a man may mistake another man in the distance for a statue, with this perception turning into a mistaken judgement that the man *is* a statue (PHI38c2-38c2). However, Plato is largely concerned with how a false judgement may arise from *preserved perceptions* and *desires*. The mixed pleasures that exist in the soul alone, he says, are anticipatory, future pleasures. The writings and paintings in the soul concerning these pleasures are similarly future-directed (Ibid, 39d-e5). Plato adds that the future-directed images and words of the wicked man are usually false, whilst those of the good man are normally true (Ibid, 39de9-40c). Frede (1993) construes this to be the point at which Phileban pleasures reveal themselves to possess moral content, with the fool or wicked man's pleasures representing a distorted view of life. I would agree that the *Philebus* therefore indicates that a person's *desires*¹⁹⁷ contain a moral element that can be normatively evaluated as better or worse. However, this moral element is only apparent when the rational soul (and specifically the *preserved perception*) is involved in pleasure. No mention is made of how a person's *perceptions* might be deemed *morally* praiseworthy or otherwise, only that they might be true or false (Phielbus, 39c3-4).

Contrary to Frede, Gosling (1959) suggests that anticipatory pleasures are right because they hit the mark of true perception; it is less obviously the case, he thinks, that rightness has any connection

¹⁹⁷ That is, their *future directed rational pleasures*.

to the moral sphere. Letwin similarly comments that neither model of pleasure¹⁹⁸ in the *Philebus* is able to account for moral activity. One view, he says, ‘provides a theory of conceptual analysis which is inapplicable to particulars, and the other explains our knowledge of particulars without any way of analysing concepts’ (Letwin, 1981, p 199). I agree with his point in general. Memories can play *no* part in any analysis of pleasures confined to the body and *only* memories (whose content is about *preserved* rather than current *particulars*) can properly account for pleasures confined to the soul or mixed in the soul and body. After all, as we have seen, it is the desires that are most divorced from the body that reveal the truth of all pleasures (*Philebus*, 34c4-7). Letwin, however, appears to have overlooked Plato’s quite plausible view that it is possible to have future ambitions that can be subjected to normative interrogation. It seems to me that many general hopes may be judged as better or worse without their needing to be directed at a particular object. A general future intent to become, for example, a contract killer is surely more morally reprehensible than that of becoming a teacher. I need not have a particular ‘mark’ or class in mind before I can determine which desire is more ethically defensible.

Plato, in the dialogue, thereafter attempts to explain the nature of pleasures confined to the soul and it is at this point (*Philebus*, 47c-50e) that Frede thinks Plato develops a theory of mixed emotions. Although it is perhaps in the *Philebus* that Plato provides his most detailed account of the passions (Letwin, 1981), it is far from clear that it is Plato’s intention to present readers with a *general* theory of these as mixed pleasures in this dialogue. When Plato discusses the passions, he tends to name particular ones; the occasions on which he actually employs the general term (pathos) emotion in the dialogue are relatively rare.

¹⁹⁸ Letwin (1981) refers to either: restoration to the natural state, or; the soul’s impression of perception and preserved perception.

'The case, a common one, where the mixture is a product of affections within the soul itself...Take wrath, fear, longing, lamentations, love, jealousy, malice and other things like that; don't you regard them as a kind of pain within the soul itself.'
(Philebus, 47d7-e2)

As the preceding quotation shows, in the passage in the *Philebus* to which Frede refers, it is indeed stated that it is common for there to be a mixture of feelings of pleasure and pain produced within the soul. Letwin (1981, p 197) agrees with this element of Frede's analysis of the passage (Philebus, 47c-e), for he describes the passions as being made up of contrasts between pleasure and pain. However, the fact that these affections are produced 'within the soul itself' appears to be very significant. It seems to me that such feelings belong to the earlier mentioned class of pleasures that are 'confined to the soul' (Philebus, 46c1), those I have classified as pleasures of *mental-self representation*. The pleasures of the 'soul itself', Plato earlier stated, depend 'entirely on memory' (Ibid, 33c4-5); they are all, he says, concerned with future hopes and expectations (Ibid, 39d5-39e5). As I hope to make clear at 6.5, the conception of the soul that Plato endorses in the *Philebus* is not one that involves a bodily aspect.

If Plato did intend to develop a general theory of the emotions in this section of the *Philebus*, one of its distinctive features would seem to be that emotions are *free* of bodily feelings. Letwin concurs with this reading of the passage and observes that passions are occurrences that are 'psychological rather than physiological in character' (1981, p 196). Crucially, Frede herself states that Plato *does not* adopt the term 'pathos' as a generic term for the emotions; he rather describes psychological states that should be called *pleasures or pains*, depending on which of these feelings is dominant (Frede, 1996, Footnote 13, p 280). Plato does not define emotions as mixtures of pleasure and pain, for he does not say that passions *are* a mixture of pleasures and pain in the soul. He argues only that it is possible for there to be affections in the soul alone that involve a mixture of

pleasure and pain.

Plato's main example of a mixed pleasure in the soul is laughter mixed with weeping. Importantly, what is of interest to Plato during his discussion of comedy on stage is the 'state of mind' that people are in when they laugh maliciously. For people's states of mind, he says, can contain a mixture of pleasure and pain (*Philebus*, 48a). Plato does not mention the somatic sensations involved in weeping and laughing here. Nor does he say that physical instances of laughter and weeping can restore mental pains or pleasures to their natural state. In fact, Plato ends the passage by making the same point that he had at the start of it. He has Socrates state the reason why he has just discussed the mixture of mental pleasures and pains stimulated by a comedy. His purpose has been to show 'that there exists the possibility, for the body without the soul, for the soul without the body, and for both of them in joint affection to contain a mixture of pleasure and pain (*Philebus*, 50d3-5)'. That Plato *might* not have convincingly shown that laughter and weeping bring with them mixed pleasures of the *soul alone*¹⁹⁹ does not alter the fact that this is what he was trying to do. Irrespective of his declared purpose, if Plato did present a theory of emotions in the *Philebus* what is most interesting about it is that they are portrayed as entirely cognitive judgements, as essentially mental events. These cognitive pleasures and pains are also exclusively future-directed (*Philebus*, 39d5-39e5). They are about imagined 'things present in time but not in place'. (Gosling, 1959, p 51)

'To gaze at the comic stage, accordingly, is to be given a *double* sight: the external spectacle of others, there on the stage before us, and the inner sight of ourselves evoked by comparison.' (Miller, 2008, p 271)

Tuozzo (1996) and Miller (2008) argue that the pleasures and pains involved in the emotion of malicious laughter are caused by

¹⁹⁹ For both laughter and weeping would seem to invariably involve physical manifestations of some sort.

entertaining certain cognitions and images about ones self. When we observe comic characters who are deluded about their personal qualities, our own self-knowledge, relative to theirs, is ‘the cause of malicious pleasure’ (Tuozzo, 1996, p 511). It is highly problematic to conclude that the self-knowledge in question has much genuine moral import, however; ‘comedy seems only to flirt with self-knowledge’ (Miller, 2008, 273). People who truly know themselves would not allow their self-images to be so dependent upon comparison with others (Tuozzo, 1996).

Miller implies that the restoration to harmony brought about by laughter is a return to a state of ignorance in the *soul*. Socrates explains to his interlocutor that the laughable ‘is the sight of another who thinks himself wise when he is not. The opposites in play here are ignorance and knowledge’ (Miller, 2008, 273). The moral significance of the passions, Miller intriguingly concludes, resides in our desire and capacity to experience *discomfort* rather than *restoration*. For it is when we are in a state of envious distress that our own ignorance is revealed. Miller suggests that Plato’s termination of the *Philebus* with a promise to continue the discussion with Protarchus tomorrow, is his way of inviting us to discover more about ourselves. It is only if we revisit and learn from any theatrical unmasking of our own ignorance that we might come to possess wisdom and self-knowledge. Although Miller’s postulation is intuitively appealing, Plato is not entirely clear about this. He does after all specify in the *Philebus* that the pleasures of learning are pure precisely in so far as they are not accompanied by any pain (Philebus, 66c5-6).

The *Philebus* certainly makes clear that Plato saw an intimate relationship between emotion and cognition. But it fails to make this relationship clear...Further clarification was necessary. (Fortenbaugh, 2008, p 11)

If Plato did at least hint at a theory of intelligent emotions then it would seem to be of historic importance to the philosophy of

emotion; Bedford (1956) Peters²⁰⁰ (1962) and more recently Solomon (1993) have all broadly claimed that emotions *are* at their core cognitive judgements. The foregoing scrutiny of the *Philebus*²⁰¹, however, arguably renders doubtful the argument that Plato was there intending to present readers with a *general* theory of emotions as mixed pleasures. Moreover, Frede's failure to discuss in detail the different types of mixed pleasure seems to have prevented her from recognising that the 'Phileban emotions' differ fundamentally from those mixed pleasures that *do* involve the body. Miller (2008) correctly suggests that the latter are concerned with bodily health and well-being, whereas the former are concerned with the well-being and virtue of the soul.

As the remainder of this chapter will show, Plato held that reason should prescribe the normative limit for *bodily* pleasure. In contrast, the *passion* (malicious laughter that excludes the body) actually discussed in detail in the *Philebus* seems to derive its moral value from the element of *discomfort* in pleasure. It is after all the *pain* of *malicious envy*²⁰² that reveals our own ignorance. The person who is relieved by malicious laughter is restored to a state of ignorance, but such a state cannot be morally desirable in Plato's normative schema. Plato repeatedly stresses that the life of knowledge is most worthwhile, as will become apparent at 6.5 and 6.6. I agree with Fortenbaugh; Aristotle's elaboration of themes hinted at in the *Philebus* was entirely necessary for the development of a more complete, clear and coherent theory of emotion. The purpose of the *Philebus* was not to discuss emotion, but to ascertain the relative merits of pleasure and knowledge as candidates for ends in the best human life, as Plato himself makes clear.

²⁰⁰ Peters' concept of emotion and his thoughts on the education of the emotions will be discussed in the subsequent chapter.

²⁰¹ Particular focus has been placed on (PHI47d-50e).

²⁰² The fact that Plato focuses on 'malicious envy' in comedy rather than 'emulation' arguably serves as a further point of contrast between the accounts of pleasure and pain in the *Philebus* and *Rhetoric*. In chapter 7, it will become clear that Aristotle thought emulation was a moral emotion, whereas envy was not.

6.5 The unlimited nature of pleasure in the *Philebus* and *Phaedrus*

Socrates: *'We declared the life that combines pleasure and knowledge the winner. Didn't we?'*

Protarchus: *We did.*

Socrates: *'Should we not take a look at this life and see what it is and to which it belongs?...it is not a mixture of just two elements but of the sort where all that is unlimited is tied down by the limit.'* (Philebus, 30d.)

The principal concern²⁰³ of the *Philebus* is to better understand whether a life spent pursuing pleasure or knowledge is more worthwhile. Plato draws the conclusion²⁰⁴ that the best *human* life is one that involves the pursuit of both pleasure and knowledge. However, Plato's verdict is a qualified one; if it were possible for human beings to eradicate somatic pleasures entirely, then a life spent without these would be better. As we can see, it is knowledge that is responsible for qualifying pleasure and finding its 'right limit'. Frede notably concurs with this point.

'Pleasure is an unlimited but somehow necessary ingredient; knowledge is the cause of all good mixtures, and is therefore in charge of determining the right limit of pleasure' (Frede, 1993, xl)

Plato states that pleasure is exceedingly complex (Philebus, 12c3), and the content of the text certainly bears out this complexity. Barnes nevertheless suggests that microscopic 'scrutiny of Plato's words is a prerequisite for understanding Plato's thought' (Barnes, 1980, p 193). Engaging with the often perplexing detail of Plato's analyses of pleasure therefore seems crucial to a proper understanding of his theory. Indeed, it seems to me that Frede (1996) has erred in her interpretation of the *Philebus*, precisely in so far as she reduced his anatomy of pleasure to one model. Pleasure, Plato asserts, is by its very nature insatiable and unlimited (Philebus, 28a & 31a8-10) and it is

²⁰³ This is stated by Socrates in the initial stages of the dialogue at 11d.

²⁰⁴ This is revealed by the foregoing exchange involving his mentor Socrates.

this unquenchable nature that means that knowledge must *limit* the extent to which human beings satiate pleasures in their lives. In the passage that describes the ‘four-fold ontology of all beings’ (Ibid, 23c-27c), Plato ranks four different states of being in order of importance, with the unlimited (the class to which pleasure belongs) being the poorest. These states are: firstly, the unlimited; secondly the limit; thirdly that which is the mixture of unlimited and the limit; and the fourth and most important state that is the cause of all things.

Socrates emphasises to his interlocutor that their digression into ontology is not an idle one (Ibid, 30d6). On the contrary, reason has been declared as the cause of all things (Ibid, 30e1) and eternal ruler of the universe (Ibid, 30d8). It is reason, a sort of incorporeal order (Ibid, 64b), that is both the source of and final arbiter in any harmonious order established in human bodies. Plato’s position is that ‘thought is the creative force of the universe’ (Letwin, 1981, p188). It is further suggested by Plato (Philebus, 26b-c) that it is not so much mortal but divine reason that limits unlimited pleasure. He suggests that it is a Goddess who divinely imposes order on boundless mortal desire (Ibid, 26c). In this regard, Frede (1993, p 29) and Letwin (1981, p 188) both interpret Plato to be saying that human reason may enable the harmonious imposition of rational limit on unlimited pleasure, by virtue of its source in and at least partial similarity to divine reason. This point is important to the extent that it supports my earlier suggestion that it is human memories (preserved perceptions) that limit current perceptions of pleasure. There are arguably parallels here with the *Phaedrus* where Plato also explored the need for pleasure to be limited by reason. In the *Phaedrus* he figuratively proposes that the souls of gods and men alike may be compared to a charioteer and two horses.

‘Now in the case of the gods, horses and charioteer are all both good in themselves and of good stock; whereas in the case of the rest, there is a mixture.’ (Phaedrus, 246b)

Only gods occupy the realm of 'being which really is'. Their minds (and hence their souls, their souls *being* all mind) are nourished by and possessed of knowledge that is true and unmixed with earthly concerns (Phaedrus, 247c5-e5). The equine allegory is further developed and human life is likened to a chariot race (Ibid, 248a7-d). Mortal beings, he says, strain to reach above themselves towards the gods, but failing²⁰⁵, they are instead drawn into a race in which they jostle to get ahead of each other. Those engaged in the race 'with great labour depart without achieving a sight of what is and afterwards feed on what only *appears* to nourish them. (Ibid, 248b4-6)' In the *Phaedrus*, then, Plato reasserts his belief of the *Republic*; that the sensible world is capable of revealing only appearances of what is, rather than reality itself.

The soul of man, like those of the gods, is also made up of a charioteer and two horses, but the natures of the two horses are opposed. One horse is god-like and led by reason to be 'good'; the other horse is licentious and bent on desire (Ibid, 253d). The rational part of the soul²⁰⁶ has observed the divine realm, of things as they really are, but few can recollect these memories and those who can are driven mad by them (Ibid, 250a). When the licentious horse encounters a beautiful god like face: 'there is *no limit* to the trouble it causes' (Phaedrus, 253b3), this again reinforcing Plato's view of the unquenchable and unlimited nature of pleasure. The rational horse and charioteer are placed in a state of conflict with the non-rational horse and its unrestrained urges. In the end, the powerful desire for beauty forces the parts of the soul in contact with the divine to yield to the part that is not (Ibid, 254b1-4). The beauty that inspires erotic desire offers the charioteer the illusory prospect of reconciliation with the divine realm (Ibid, 254b5-7) – illusory since it can only ever lead men to earthly or mortal pleasures. The charioteer and rational horse must

²⁰⁵ The failure is due to the charioteers' incompetence.

²⁰⁶ The rational part being the horse obedient to the charioteer.

therefore exert firm control (Ibid, 254d-255) over the licentious one so as to tame it and bring it in line with reason. Frede concludes that the *Philebus* differs from the *Phaedrus* because the soul in the former is nowhere presented as a battleground of conflict between its three component parts of horses and charioteer. She notes of the *Philebus* that 'no tri-partition is ever mentioned' (Frede, 1993, li). As such, the troublesome dark horse is not so much to be *limited* by reason as *controlled* by it. Where the *Philebus* seems to differ most from the *Phaedrus* is that the former dialogue indicates that it is possible for mortal feelings and appetites to be guided by reason from the divine realm.

6.6 Divine Knowledge and Unlimited Pleasure

It is perhaps in the final ranking of the goods (*Philebus*, 64c-67b) that Plato makes it most clearly known that he somewhat reluctantly admits knowledge *and* pleasures into the best *human* life. After all, Socrates had earlier reminded his interlocutor that the main concern in their discussion was *human* reason rather than divine or true reason (Ibid, 22c). However, pleasure is by no means placed on an equal footing with knowledge in the final rating of goods. Knowledge remains 'far superior to pleasure and more beneficial for human life' (Ibid, 66e2). Thus, he states that that which is 'connected with measure' (Ibid, 66a8) is the highest good. Frede (1993) suggests that measure here is that which *determines* the limit or harmony in human life. The items that actually *have* the right measure and proportion are ranked second (Ibid, 66b1). Reason and intelligence are ranked third (Ibid, 66b3-4), with fourth place going to the arts, sciences and opinions (Ibid, 66b6-66c3). Pleasures are ranked last, in fifth place (Ibid, 66c5-6). Significantly, the pleasures assigned to fifth place are 'pure pleasures', and Plato has earlier specified that only the pleasure of learning belongs to this class (Ibid, 52b 5-9). The pleasure of learning is pure precisely because it is not accompanied by pain (Ibid, 66c5-6); because it does not, as Frede

notes, 'presuppose a felt lack' (Frede, liii, 1993). The Phileban assertion that only the 'very few' can attain pure pleasure is reminiscent of the view in the *Republic* that only the pleasures of the philosopher are worthwhile or true²⁰⁷.

Mixed pleasures do not feature in the final ranking of the goods; there is still no place for bodily pleasure in and of itself as a good. Frede's description of mixed pleasures as remedial is apt, then, in the sense that they can only restore the body to a pure state of harmony. It is precisely because they are mixtures of pleasure and pain that they cannot be pure. As Plato himself puts it, pleasure is a process of generation and becoming for the sake of something else and, as such, it belongs in a lower class than that which is good in itself (Ibid, 54c). Pleasures may be unlimited, but they do belong to a category of things that really (ontologically) exist. Still, although pleasure is no longer ontologically suspect it remains inferior to knowledge (Frede, 1993). Gosling and Taylor similarly remark that Phileban pleasures cannot be criteria of worth, as it is 'intelligence that produces the right ordering that makes life good. Pleasure has no such role'. (Gosling & Taylor, 1982 p 132) Pleasures do not therefore merit pursuit for their own sake, because 'that would mean the cultivation of incompleteness' (Frede, 1993, lvi).

In sum, Plato's metaphysics in the *Philebus* arguably substantiates an idea also explored in the *Phaedrus* and *Republic*; namely, that the source of any correct moral judgement actually comes not from the sensible but from the intelligible or divine order of things. Bodily feeling and perception is reason's handmaiden in the *Philebus*; all the former can do is eternally feed and empty in obedience to the latter. All the latter can do is limit the former, and so restore and maintain harmony for as long as possible. Arguably, what most distinguishes the accounts of pleasure and pain in the *Philebus*

²⁰⁷ However it could be inferred (as Frede does for example 1993) that Plato is broadening the field of candidates for pure pleasures to include non-philosophers.

and the *Rhetoric* is the nature of the process by which judgements come to be made by people with regard to them. Plato inclines to the view in the *Philebus* that any judgement about bodily pleasure and pain is more like an adjudication, or ruling by divine reason, with the purpose of limiting pleasure. For Aristotle in the *Rhetoric*, by contrast, many pleasures and pains are capable of being altered or educated in social experiences. It is to Aristotle's views on the nature (and education of) pleasure, pain and emotion that the discussion now turns.

Chapter 7: Aristotelian Emotions: Learning through pleasure & pain

In this chapter it will be argued that schoolchildren can and should be guided in their pleasures and pains: firstly, because appropriate feeling is necessary for *moral virtue*²⁰⁸; secondly because children can *learn through* their affectations. Initially, it will be observed that feelings are, in themselves, distinctively *reactions* to circumstances, rather than experiences that are actively chosen. However, it will be suggested that the virtuous can be properly responsible for directing their actions and feelings if they have formed the right sort of dispositions. It will thereafter be maintained that Aristotle's account of emotion is consistent across his texts, contrary to Frede's assertion. The different emphases that Aristotle places on *pathos* (passion), in the *Rhetoric* and *Ethics*, can be explained by the fact that he was concerned with discussing *virtue* in the latter, and what good use understanding of the emotions could be put to by the *aspiring orator*, in the former. Moreover, his emphasis on emotional appeal and persuasion in the *Rhetoric* is educationally salient. It will be concluded that a theory of moral development can be extrapolated from Aristotle's texts, and that imitation, shame, and emulation, are all different motives which the young can learn through.

7.1 Emotional Reactions and Virtuous dispositions

'Again, when we are angry or frightened it is not by our choice; but our virtues are expressions of our choice or at any rate imply choice. Besides, we are said to be moved in respect of our feelings, but in respect of our virtues and vices we are said to be not *moved* but *disposed* in a particular way'. (NE, 1106a 2-7) (Italics are my emphasis)

Arguably, a central point of distinction between Platonic and Aristotelian thought is the respective ways in which mature moral

²⁰⁸ The requirement that the fully virtuous agent be able to act, *feel* and reason in the manner appropriate to the circumstances, was explained in chapter 5 and at 6.1.

agents might be said to be both altered by, and responsible for, their feelings and emotions. Aristotle, unlike Plato, appears to have thought that the virtuous can be both favourably influenced by, and at least partially responsible for, their feelings. The virtues are, after all, among others things, dispositions to experience pleasure and pain in specific, morally proportionate, ways. However, the feelings of the virtuous and virtue itself are 'not chosen in any simple sense' (Kosman, 1980, p 111). The factors that inform each virtuous act are not just related to an isolated episode or event. As was made clear in chapter 5, the virtues are rather performed in the context of a life lived as whole.

To be sure, feelings and emotions *per se* are characteristically for Aristotle, Plato and Peters, more like reactions to current circumstances than choices. *Pathos* (passion or emotion, taken from the verb to suffer or experience), Konstan suggests, 'looks to the outside stimulus to which it responds (Konstan, 2007, P 4)'. Arguably, when we *suffer* emotions, the object of those feelings is, at least in part, acting on us. To suffer an emotion is arguably to become aware of an object of experience²⁰⁹, in a particular way. As Kosman puts it, if 'I am afraid, something is frightening me; when I am angry something is angering me. When, in general, I am experiencing an emotion or feeling of the sort Aristotle would call a *pathos* something is affecting me' (Kosman 1980, p104-105). The source of each emotion is, in an important sense, *outside of agents*. Emotions act on us, in so far as they are our felt reactions to external events and circumstances. Importantly, the felt component of an emotion is, for Aristotle, a cognitive²¹⁰ response (though not exclusively so), as we shall see at 7.3. We are at least partly passive with regard to passions and it is the

²⁰⁹ Sartre (1971) Bedford (1956), Kenny (1961) Nussbaum (1996) Pugmire (1998) and Goldie (2000) amongst others suggest that our emotions are 'intentional' in that they are, at least in part, mental states directed at, or about real world objects.

²¹⁰ Carr (2009) also indicates that Aristotle adopts a cognitive theory of emotions and Goldie (2000) suggests that Aristotle was one of the first to do so. Kristjánsson (2007) similarly describes Aristotle as the 'forefather' of cognitive theories of emotion.

aspect of passivity that takes them beyond the realm of what we can *wholly* choose.

'Emotions, like the weather, come over us and one of their main functions is to distort and cloud judgement. Indeed, if we say that a judgement is an expression of emotion we are suggesting that it is a pretty poor sort of judgement.' (Peters, 1962, p 119-120)

Peters (1962) also maintains that our emotions are cognitive judgements about objects of experience. His article, 'Emotions and the Category of Passivity' provides extensive treatment of the subject. Peters there states that 'we naturally use the term "emotion" and its derivatives to pick out our passivity' (1962, p121). But though the emotions are defined by their passivity, he observes they can on occasion also lead to action. As he puts it, 'we can act *in* as well as *out* of fear (Peters, 1962, p 121)'. Peters is probably correct in saying that emotions are 'contingently' not 'necessarily' related to action. Like Plato,²¹¹ however, he is rather sceptical about the accuracy of appraisals that arise from standard emotions. Emotions, he says, are typically more like blind and indiscriminating wishes²¹², than reasoned motives²¹³ for action (Peters, 1962, p 128-9). He states that there is 'no conceptual connexion between being subject to an emotion and wanting to do whatever is appropriate' (Peters, 1962, p 129). Given Peters's view that emotions tend to skew judgement, it is not surprising that he claims that the one of the most important tasks of emotional education should be to ensure that people form objectively true appraisals on their basis²¹⁴ (1972b, pp 476-477).

²¹¹ Plato in the Republic, if we recall from 6.1, thought that our real world sense perceptions are illusory.

²¹² Peters repeats this suggestion, of relation between emotion and wild wish at (1972b, p 473).

²¹³ He elsewhere similarly suggests that there may well be "a conceptual connection between 'emotion' and 'passivity' and between 'motive' and 'action'" (Peters, 1972b, p 471).

²¹⁴ Peters (1972b, p 480) remarks that greater awareness of the conditions that lead to the formation of more settled sentimental dispositions (settled to achieve true emotional appraisals that is); could significantly improve our understanding of emotion education. Peters also explicitly defends the education of the emotions in both *Ethics and Education* (1970) and the *Logic of Education* (1975). In the latter text, he similarly suggests (in, as we shall see, a distinctively Aristotelian manner) that education of the emotions consists largely in the social development of reliable appraisals of judgement

'Although we may in some narrow sense not be responsible for our feelings, we are responsible for character as the dispositional source of those feelings.' (Kosman, 1980, p 112)

Unlike Peters and Plato, Aristotle seemed to think that our emotions can dispose us to act virtuously²¹⁵. Kosman (1980) and Kristjansson (2006 & 2007) both suggest that moral virtue often entails a certain reciprocity between passionate reaction and action (*pathos and praxis*). Kosman maintains that Aristotle developed a 'doctrine of passive potentiality' (1980, p 107), whereby fully developed moral virtues are capacities of discrimination; the virtues admit and indeed require the experience of appropriate feelings, but they also help us to avoid inappropriate feelings. To be sure, people may suffer emotions in that they are centrally passive with regard to them, but *dispositions* of feeling need not be passive. We do not perhaps choose to become angry about something in a specific moment, or during an affective episode, but we can shape how we respond to things more broadly, through the habits of feeling we acquire. Sherman & White (2007) have recently suggested that we are more than merely 'indirectly responsible' for our emotions, in so far as we choose our dispositions. Our emotional habits, they say, are open to revision in social interaction with others. They think Aristotle did *not* hold the view that people are essentially passive in regard to their emotions. This perspective Sherman & White, say, is implicit in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*.

In this chapter, therefore, Aristotle's detailed analysis of the emotions (*ta pathē*) in the *Rhetoric* will be unpacked. At 7.2, it will be acknowledged that Aristotle's concept of pleasure resembles its Phileban predecessor in certain respects. However, at 7.3 and 7.4, it

(Peters, 1975, p 49-52). However, in chapter 9 it will be maintained that Peters' emphasis on 'transcending' (1972b, p 481) false appraisals results in his account of sentimental education being too focussed on the rational element of emotional experience.

²¹⁵ See chapters four, five and six for explanation of how neither Plato nor Peters think proper feelings are necessary for virtue. Peters does to be sure identify compassion as a 'motive virtue' but it would not seem to be a dispositional one.

will be argued that Aristotle does not offer an inconsistent account of emotion and that his concept is significantly different from that attributed to Plato in the *Philebus*²¹⁶. It will be maintained that the different emphases that Aristotle places on emotion in the *Rhetoric* and *Ethics* can be explained by the fact that he was concerned with discussing *virtue* in the latter and what good use *understanding of the emotions* could be put to by the *aspiring orator* in the former. At 7.5 it will be argued that persuasion and emotional appeal can be educational and at 7.6 it will be suggested that shame and emulation are emotions particularly characteristic of young learners.

7.2 Pleasure and Pain in the Rhetoric

'Let us then suppose pleasure to be a certain process of the soul and specifically an instantaneous sensory resolution to the natural state, and pain the opposite.'
(*Rhetoric*, 1369b36-38)

Striker (1996) remarks that it is patently clear that Aristotle's definition of pleasure in the *Rhetoric* is borrowed from the *Philebus*. There are unquestionably profound similarities between the two. Firstly, in his discussion of pleasure in Chapter 1.11, book V (*Rhetoric*, 1369b-1372a2), Aristotle agrees with Plato in stating that it is generally pleasant to have an inclination toward the natural state, but particularly so when this natural state has been lost (*Ibid*, 1370a2-4). Pleasure, for Aristotle, seems to be at its most intense when it entails a resolution to the natural state. Whilst he does not explicitly state in his definition, that pleasures generally contain a mixture of pain (and vice versa) he does remark that it is 'pleasant to make good lacks' (*Ibid*, 1371b27). He also thinks that some *individual* pleasures currently being experienced carry with them the potential for pain in the future. For example, being in the company of, or remembering, a loved one is pleasant whilst their absence is painful (*Ibid*, 1370b16-26). Secondly, like

²¹⁶ In the previous chapter, it was of course, argued that it is doubtful that Plato intended to articulate (or convincingly succeeded in) a concept of emotion in the *Philebus*.

Plato in the *Philebus*, he specifies that objects of appetite are perceived as pleasant (Ibid, 1370a15-17) in so far as they bring with them the promise of a return to the natural state. Furthermore, objects of memory and expectation are also pleasant. As Aristotle puts it: 'all pleasant things must be either in the perception of things present or in the recollection of things past or in the expectation of things to come' (Ibid, 1370a31-33).

Frede's claim, then, that Aristotle accepts a Phileban *definition* of pleasure in the *Rhetoric* is well supported by the content of each text. However, there are also important differences between the Phileban and Rhetorical accounts of pleasure; the most significant of which (at least for this thesis) relates to the feelings typically experienced by learners. Although Aristotle states that learning is pleasant for the most part, 'for in learning a resolution to the natural condition occurs' (Ibid, 1371a 43-44); he is also of the view that learning can, and often does, involve pain²¹⁷. This is quite different from the *Philebus* where Plato stresses that the pleasures of learning are pure because they do not involve pain²¹⁸. Aristotle also discusses at least three other aspects of pleasure that Plato does not mention and this provides his outlook with a broader purview.

Firstly, Aristotle observes that 'habit makes things pleasant' (Rhetoric, 1370a12) and there is no such mention of the role of habit and pleasure in the *Philebus*. Aristotle suggests that habit makes things become like nature in an unforced way (Ibid, 1370a 10-12) and this would seem to concur with the ethical naturalism of the *Ethics*²¹⁹. Secondly, it is not obviously the case that Aristotle thinks that all pleasures are accompanied by pain. He says, for example, that

²¹⁷ This will become clearer at 7.6.

²¹⁸ See previous chapter for an account of the pure pleasures of learning in the *Philebus*.

²¹⁹ Aristotle's concept of habit as a sort of second nature is similar to that provided by Kant and to a lesser extent Peters (see chapters four and five respectively for explication of their concepts of habit). However, Aristotle greatly valued actions that were from second nature whereas Kant emphatically did not. Peters also *only* thinks habits are morally valuable when they are performed flexibly in accordance with principle.

laughter is pleasant (Ibid, 1371b39); but, unlike Plato, he does not mention any pain that it might involve. Thirdly, Aristotle emphasises that some pleasures are very public in nature in a way that Plato does not. Friendship is ranked by Aristotle as a pleasure (Ibid, 1371a23-26), as is love of another (Ibid, 1370b16-26), and winning in competitive games (Ibid, 1371a2). While all of these pleasures would seem to require the presence or company of others, Plato does not consider such interpersonal pleasures in any detail. In emphasising that habit and friendship are pleasant, Aristotle is arguably paving the way for the more central role he allots to them in his ethical works. At the very least, he would not appear to be saying anything that would engender major inconsistency between his texts.

Crucially, in his discussion of pleasure in the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle also states that there are two different types of appetite: *irrational* appetites and those *accompanied by reason* (Ibid, 1370a18). The irrational appetites resemble their Phileban²²⁰ counterparts in being natural, as they are and present in the body (Ibid, 1370a19-21). Of the appetites that are accompanied by reason, Aristotle maintains that: 'we have (them) from being persuaded, since men have an appetite to see and possess many things from hearing and being convinced (Ibid, 1370a25-7).' Although Plato does in the *Philebus* divide his theory of pleasures into different kinds, he does not say that there are pleasures that are amenable to rational persuasion by others. As Letwin (1981) notes, Plato leaves unanswered in the *Philebus*, the question of whether or not the pleasures of the soul alone (those pleasures that Frede takes to be constitutive of emotions) are essentially *private* events or *public* ones specifiable in a shared community of discourse. Aristotle's emphasis on persuasion in the *Rhetoric* therefore marks a significant departure from the Phileban view of pleasure and emotion.

²²⁰Well the first two types of pleasure Plato discusses in any case. The third category of pleasure for Plato, does not involve the body, as was discussed in chapter 6.

7.3 Emotions, Persuasion and Judgement in the *Rhetoric*

In the *Rhetoric* Aristotle discusses in depth a range of emotions: anger, calm, friendship, enmity, fear, confidence, shame, favour, pity, indignation, envy and emulation. To be sure, at least some of these emotions appear to be aiming at a measure of restoration. Calmness, for example, is defined as the ‘suspension and placation of anger’ (*Rhetoric*, 1380a8-9). However, there are at least three reasons why Frede's argument that Aristotle borrows a Phileban theory of emotions fails to convince. Firstly, Aristotle himself provides a very different structural model to explain his emotions. Secondly, the potential scope of judgements involved in rhetorical emotions is much broader than in any supposed Phileban counterpart, largely because they are not limited to being *about* rational wishes for the future. Thirdly, Frede seems to have underestimated the import of Aristotle's wider purposes for analysing the emotions in the *Rhetoric*.

A number of the emotions described by Aristotle in book VI of the *Rhetoric* quite clearly fail to fit into the restorative model. Frede herself admits that neither friendly feeling nor hatred fit into the structure of emotion as a disturbance of the soul in need of appeasement (Frede, 1996, p 271). Indeed, both friendly feeling and hatred seem to be more like enduring traits of character than short lived desires. Significantly, Aristotle himself offers a quite different model for the emotions. He suggests that understanding emotions requires examination of the *particular* personal, social and moral conditions under which they arise. He stipulates that *three* elements must be present for an emotion to become manifest. He takes the example of anger and says that it must be established: *what state* persons are in when they are angry; *who* they are angry with; and in *what circumstances* (*Rhetoric*, 1378a). He says anger would be impossible if one of these conditions is missing. Crucially, the other emotions that Aristotle discusses in the *Rhetoric* also require this threefold

structure. Aristotle says that: 'it is the same with the others' (Ibid, 1378a) and Cooper comments that 'we get this tripartite structure presented in every chapter, in virtually the same language each time'(Cooper, 1996, p 243)²²¹.

There is no consensus among more recent commentators about precisely how Aristotle intended to portray the emotions in the *Rhetoric* and the apparent divergence of views tends to suggest that Aristotle was not as clear as he could have been on this matter. Amelie Rorty's edited collection *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric* (1996b) contains no fewer than five contributions centring on the subject²²². In these papers, the emotions are variously interpreted as: appearances (*phantasia*); opinions (*endoxa*); beliefs (also *endoxa*); or some combination of these; about objects of pleasure or pain that somewhere along the way entail a change in judgement. Prior to teasing out some of the different insights that Leighton, Cooper, Striker, Nussbaum and Frede contribute to the debate about rhetorical emotions, it should be observed that they all seem to agree on at least one thing: that the most sustained and detailed account that Aristotle provides of the emotions is to be found in the *Art of Rhetoric*.

Cooper suggests that Aristotle does not provide an in depth analysis of the emotions anywhere in his ethical works, and Striker quite sensibly concludes that we should look to the *Rhetoric* to supplement the lack of detail provided about the emotions in the *Ethics*. Konstan observes that Aristotle's ruminations in the *Rhetoric* represent 'the most sophisticated and detailed analysis of the emotions to come down to us from classical antiquity' (Konstan, 2007 p 41). However, Aristotle is not mainly concerned with *emotions in themselves* in this text either. As will become clear, he rather analyses

²²¹ It should be noted, however, that neither friendly feeling nor hatred, fit into Aristotle's own structure either.

²²² See Leighton, Cooper, Frede, Striker & Nussbaum all 1996.

the emotions in depth with a view to enabling aspiring orators to induce certain emotional responses and judgements in their audience. That different interpretations of Aristotle's account of emotion in the *Rhetoric* have arisen is perhaps unsurprising, given the ambiguity of his definition of such experiences.

'Emotions are those things by the alteration of which men differ with regard to those judgements which pain and pleasure accompany, such as anger, pity, fear and all other such and their opposites.' (Rhetoric, 1378a24-26, p 141)

I interpret Aristotle's definition of emotion as follows: 1) emotions must involve the alteration of a person; 2) this alteration of a person is reflected in their judgement; 3) the sorts of judgement altered are those caused by and/or result/resulting in, pleasure and/or pain. Arguably, Aristotle has at least two tests that require satisfaction for a personal state to be classed as an emotion. Firstly, emotions must precede or be an alteration in judgement. In other words, an emotion must either be *constitutive of*, or, a *consequence of*, a change of judgement. Secondly, the change of judgement *must* also be *accompanied* by pleasure or pain or some mixture of both. In relation to the latter point, Leighton observes that a particular pleasure and/or pain must attend each particular emotion by conceptual necessity. Without pleasure and/or pain there would be no emotion. 'The pleasure or pain is part of the concept of emotion....they complete the emotion.' (Leighton, 1996, p 220) Leighton concludes that Aristotle is well equipped to explain how the process of an alteration of judgement unfolds²²³.

What is particularly significant about Leighton's reading of the *Rhetoric* is the compelling answer he provides to the important question of why Aristotle discussed the phenomena of appetite (*epithumia*), pleasure (*hedone*) and pain (*lupe*) in a separate chapter

²²³ Leighton (1996) argues that at least four convincing explanations as to how emotions alter judgement can be inferred from Aristotle.

(Book V) to that in which he discussed emotion (*pathos*) (Book VI). Cooper (in what he himself admits is conjecture) wonders if Aristotle had merely already said all he needed to about appetite, pain and pleasure in Book V and saw no need to repeat himself later. Leighton, however, suggests that Aristotle *deliberately* omitted pleasure, pain and appetite from his discussion of the emotions. He argues that in the *Rhetoric* Aristotle is attempting to explain how emotion is distinguishable from the other elements of a person's inner life. Emotion may well entail a combination of sensation, desire, thought, perception, attitude, pleasure and pain and yet still be identifiably different from each of these. Leighton holds the view that Aristotle is trying to show how emotion and desire are separate concepts in the *Rhetoric*.

Emotions, he argues, 'have a much more wide ranging aim. Through expectation, they alter the way we put things together. Moreover they require judgements that are subtle and complex in structure (Leighton, 1996, p 225)'. Desire (*orexis*), he says, is not one 'homogenous, all encompassing domain: rather it includes 1) spiritedness (*thumos*); 2) wish (*boulesis*); 3) appetite (*epithumia*) (Leighton, p 222)'. Of the three, only spiritedness is demonstrated by Aristotle to be an emotion, as only it involves a change of judgement relating to pain and pleasure. In epithumetic desire, the alleviation of hunger or thirst and the attendant pleasure do not, or at least *do not have to*, constitute a change of judgement (Leighton, 1996). At most, it would seem to involve a *simple* judgement or adjudication from reason, similar in kind to the Phileban model of mixed pleasures combined in the soul and body²²⁴.

Crucially, Leighton thinks that *boulesis* should not be confused with emotion because wishes only involve pleasure and pain incidentally and not by necessity. Wish is more like a thought, he

²²⁴ See previous chapter for an account of Phileban pleasures,

says, and 'while pleasure and pain may attend my thoughts, there is no necessity to it' (Leighton, p 221). Indeed, Goldie (2000) and Frede (1996) actually define *boulesis* not as wish, but as *rational desire*, and note that *thumos* and *epithumia* are the *non-rational desires*. In the previous chapter, it was said that the Phileban 'pleasures of the soul alone', are essentially wishes or rational desires about the future. As such, they seem to have more in common with Aristotle's account of rational desire than with emotion. Striker (1996) notes that though the Aristotelian account of desire and pleasure in book V of the *Rhetoric* resembles its Phileban predecessor, his discussion of emotions as influencing judgements in Book VI does not. For Aristotle, the emotions are open to persuasion by reason in a way that desires cannot be. We give grounds for emotion, but: 'only causes for thirst and other *epithumai*...the former but not the latter, is, in this sense, conquered by argument' (Leighton, 1996, p 227).

'The things, then, by which the emotions are engendered and dissolved, from which come the related proofs, have been given.' (*Rhetoric*, 1388b)

The key to understanding the significance of Aristotle's analysis of the emotions is to be found, I think, in the sentence with which he concludes his discussion of them in the *Rhetoric*. In summing up, he states that rhetorical speech creates and removes emotions in the audience in such a manner as to establish the truth of the orator's argument. The purpose of Aristotle's emphasis in *some places*, on engendering and dissolving emotions in the *Rhetoric*, is less that he can restate the *general* Phileban restorative model of the emotions (as Frede would have it); and more that he can explicate the *specific* role of emotions in political or legal proofs. In Book I of the *Rhetoric* Aristotle remarks that there are three forms of rhetorical proof: those residing in the *character* of the orator; those occurring when the audience is persuaded into certain *emotional states* by the orator; and those of the speech itself (*Rhetoric*, 1356a1-24). I would have to agree with Cooper's conclusion that in the *Rhetoric* 'it is mostly in

connection with the first and *especially* the second of these objectives that Aristotle provides information about the emotions' (Cooper, 1996, p 239). For me, the commentators who have most convincingly scrutinised Aristotle's analysis of emotion in the *Rhetoric* are those who have not lost sight of his broader purposes *for* the analysis. Indeed, it seems to me that Frede's view (that emotions are processes of restoration to the natural state) misses the mark, at least in part, because she has not paid sufficient attention to the role of judgement and persuasion in the *Philebus* and the *Rhetoric*. She possibly concedes this much herself (Frede, 1996, footnote 18 p 280-281) in saying that Aristotle's emphasis on persuasion may make her theory of the *Philebus's* influence on the *Rhetoric* more indirect than she makes it sound. I would have to concur. What though should be made of Frede's additional claim of Aristotelian inconsistency between the *Ethics* and *Rhetoric*?

7.4 Emotions in the *Ethics*

'By feelings I mean desire, anger, fear, daring, envy, joy, friendliness, hatred, longing, jealousy, pity and in general all conditions that are attended by pleasure or pain.' (NE, 1105b 21-24, p 38)

The most obvious discrepancy between the definitions of emotion that Aristotle provides in his *Rhetoric* (see 7.3) and *Ethics* is that emotions in the former involve an alteration of judgment, whereas in the latter they do not. However, the sentence immediately preceding the definition (of sorts) of feelings in the *Ethics*, stipulates that feelings are a modification in the soul (1105b21, p 38). This is arguably similar to Aristotle's point in the *Rhetoric* that emotions alter (or have the capacity to alter with) judgement. Moreover, in both texts, Aristotle states that at least some irrational feelings or appetites belong to the part of the soul that is not based on, but can be persuaded by, reason (NE, 1102b & *Rhetoric* 1370a). Similarly, in the *Eudemian Ethics* (1220b) Aristotle says that character traits are susceptible to feelings and he

defines affections as 'such things as anger, fear, shame, desire - in general anything which, as such, gives rise usually to perceptual pleasure and pain.' In all three definitions, we have lists of various states of feeling that are accompanied by pleasure and/or pain. Given these similarities why does Frede suggest that Aristotle offers inconsistent accounts of emotion in the *Rhetoric* and the *Ethics*?

To recap, Frede thinks that an emotion is 'mixed by definition', according to the *Rhetoric*, due to its being accompanied by a combination of pleasure *and* pain. However, she says that Aristotle in the *Ethics* drops his rhetorical theory of mixed emotions, principally because he develops a different account of *pleasure* there (Frede, 1996, p 272). In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, she says that Aristotle now construes pleasure as a '*perfection*' of activity rather than a *process of it*. Her logic seems to imply that emotions should now be classed as 'perfect activities' in the *Ethics*, perfect because they are completed by feelings of pleasure. Frede certainly thinks that emotions in the *Ethics* no longer entail a mixture of pleasure and pain. In her defence, Aristotle does advance the idea in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that all activities are completed by their pleasures and this is different to his discussion of such phenomena in the *Rhetoric*.

'As pleasure does not occur without activity, so every activity is perfected by its pleasure.' (NE, 1175A 20-22)

Aristotle spends a considerable amount of time discussing pleasure in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and he famously offered two, seemingly contrasting, accounts of it. Rorty (1980) and Annas (1980) agree that in Book VII pleasure is conceived of as 'unimpeded activity', whereas in Book X, pleasure is presented as 'perfecting activities'. It clearly appears to be the book X account that Frede is basing her claims on. Annas notes that whilst some of the detail in these accounts differs in certain respects, Aristotle is consistent in his view

that pleasure has a place in the good life. As she puts it, books VII and X 'agree in rejecting the theses that pleasure is in itself a bad thing' (Annas, 1980, p 287). Rorty suggests that these different accounts of pleasure actually complement one another. She seems to be of the view that exercising intellectual virtue is central to the pleasant completion of all activities. As was noted in chapter 5, the moral virtues require the right measure of feeling but they also require principled determination by practical wisdom. Annas suggests that *theoria* (I take her here to mean *phronesis*), properly conceived 'completes and perfects the practical life (Rorty, 1980, p 377)'. However, she also observes that *theoria* (I take her here to mean *sophia*²²⁵) is also 'the self-contained activity par excellence' (Rorty, 1980, p 378). In Book X, Aristotle does indeed state that the life of contemplation is the *most pleasant* in so far as it is the highest form of activity (NE, 1177a20-21) and the only one conducted for its own sake (NE, 1177b1-2). So Frede is right in saying that Aristotle's conceptualisation of *pleasure* has shifted between the *Ethics* and the *Rhetoric*. However, she seems mistaken in both her claim that Aristotle has dropped his theory of *emotion* from the *Rhetoric*, and in her statement that Aristotle makes no mention of conflicting pleasures and pains in his discussion of emotions, in the *Ethics*.

Many, if not all, of the moral and intellectual virtues require completion by proper feelings; but this does not mean that the virtues *are* such feelings. Aristotle is in fact clear that the moral virtues are not feelings (NE, 1106a12), but dispositions determined by a rational principle that entail the right measure of feeling (1107a). Aristotle does not discuss the emotions in depth in the *Ethics* because they are not his main concern there (Striker, Leighton & Cooper all 1996). His purpose is rather to explain the nature of virtue and its role in the flourishing life. However, just because he does not analyse the emotions in depth in the *Ethics* does not mean that his thinking has radically shifted on

²²⁵ Aristotle's concept of *sophia* (theoretical or speculative wisdom) will be explained in the subsequent chapter.

the subject. Indeed, it seems to me that there is ample evidence in the *Ethics* to support his analysis of emotions in the *Rhetoric*. A close reading of Book VII surely reveals that he did not think that all pleasures were perfect. What is distinctive about the licentious, the *akratic* (weak-willed) and the continent agent²²⁶ is that they all have feelings that conflict with those of the virtuous. Similarly, in Book I Aristotle observes that though virtuous actions must be pleasurable in themselves (1099a21-22), 'most people find that the things which give them pleasure conflict (1099a12-13)'. Furthermore, Aristotle is clear that the feelings involved in some virtuous activities are not pleasant and that some emotions entail conflict between pleasure and pain.

It is not true, then, of every virtue, that the exercise of it is pleasurable, except in so far as one attains the end.' (NE, 1117b, 15 -17)

In the *Nicomachean Ethics* some emotions (courage, fear and anger are examples that Aristotle gives) involve a mixture of pain and pleasure. Aristotle actually defines anger as involving both pleasure and pain; pain in the anger itself, but pleasure in the retaliation and expiation of this anger (NE, 1117a6-7). Frede's earlier noted statement that no indication of the mixed nature of the emotions is given in the *Ethics*, seems increasingly suspect in this light as this is virtually identical to the account of anger Aristotle provides in the *Rhetoric* (1378a). Frede's partial concession that there is the 'barest hint' of a mixture of emotion here (Frede, 1996, footnote 2, p279) does not do justice to the similarity between the definitions. Similarly, in the *Ethics*, Aristotle indicates that courage involves a combination of pleasure and pain (NE, 1117a29-1117b17). It predominantly involves pain brought about by fear in the attendant circumstances, but it can involve pleasure if one successfully overcomes fear and acts courageously. The courageous²²⁷ man, he says, endures pain because it is the fine

²²⁶ This was explored in the previous chapter at 6.1.

²²⁷ At 9.6 it will be suggested that school discipline may contribute to the development of courage, when learners are supported to endure and overcome difficult feelings associated with learning.

thing to do (NE, 1117b 6-9). In the case of courage, not only do pain and pleasure conflict; this very conflict is a *necessary* part of the virtue. Moreover, the fact that the emotions of the virtuously courageous or angry person are dependent, at least in part, upon the conditions they find themselves in (that is, the virtuous agent gets angry at a particular person for a particular reason in a particular place) hardly represents a serious departure from the *Rhetoric*. There, the emotions discussed²²⁸ are, as we have seen, described as adaptive to change according to the particular conditions in which agents find themselves. Aristotle, then, seems to have been consistently of the view that emotions are, or at least have the potential to be, cues to virtuous action.

There are some things at which we actually ought to feel angry, and others that we actually ought to desire - health for instance and learning...irrational feelings are to be considered no less part of human nature than our considered judgements. It follows that actions due to temper or desire are also proper to the human agent.' (NE, 1111a31-1111b4, p 54)

It has been well documented²²⁹ that Aristotle held a favourable view of the emotions; he thought that 'they were supposed to be part of our way of viewing the world (Leighton, 1996, p215)'. He saw them as both a proper part of human nature and as constitutive of the flourishing life. As we can see from the often-cited foregoing passage, Aristotle thought it impossible to be properly human, let alone fully virtuous, without feeling, thinking and acting in the manner appropriate to the particular circumstances. Aristotle stated that it is sometimes the *perception* of the particulars of a case that enables a sound moral decision to be made (NE, 1109b13-27). Sherman therefore remarks that emotions are the 'medium by which we discern the particulars' (Sherman, 1999, p 40). Striker (1996) and Sherman (2004) are of the view that emotions have the same capacity to provide

²²⁸ There are notable exceptions of friendly feeling (*philia*) and hatred (*misos*).

²²⁹ See for example Leighton, Striker both 1996, Sherman 2004 & 1999 & Stocker 2003.

understanding of particulars. The emotions can importantly direct 'one's attention to the practically or morally relevant features of a situation' (Striker, 1996 p 298). Stocker goes further and argues that right emotional judgements have *epistemic value*²³⁰; emotions, he says can actually constitute forms of 'evaluative knowledge' (2003 p 182).

Although I would accept Frede, Leighton and Striker's observation that Aristotle is not as clear as he could have been about whether or not the emotions are mixed or perfect in the *Ethics*, this slight ambiguity in no way supports Frede's assertion that Aristotle's account of the emotions is inconsistent. Markedly, both Leighton and Striker conclude that the differing details concerning emotion that Aristotle provides in the *rhetoric* and the *ethics* ultimately support and complement each other. Leighton even states that Aristotle skilfully, subtly and knowingly employs different elements of emotion to demonstrate particular points in different arguments. 'In the *Rhetoric* Aristotle develops a notion of emotion to which he turns elsewhere. As well as coming to this notion, he isolates those features that set emotion apart from other elements of the human soul' (Leighton 1996, p 230-231).

7.5 Persuasion as Emotion Education

If Aristotle had essentially restated a Platonic theory of emotion in the *Rhetoric* then this would have considerable implications for the education of the emotions. A logical consequence, after all, of Plato's views on the emotions is that they are in important ways uneducable. Emotions are for Plato, not so much to be educated, as rationally

²³⁰ He adds, however, that his argument is made irrespective of, 'whether or not it is Aristotle's (Stocker, 2003, p 185). In chapter 8, it will be argued that practical wisdom can yield a form of moral knowledge derived from experience. However, it is far from clear that Aristotle thought that emotions *per se* can generate knowledge. Arguably it would be the necessary *principle* rather than the *passion* component of moral virtue that most contributes to any moral knowledge.

controlled or limited²³¹. One of the great strengths of the revival in interest in Aristotelian thought within education, it seems to me, is the reclamation of emotions as not only educable but as vitally requiring education for the full development of virtue in persons²³². Fortunately, the foregoing discussion has demonstrated that Aristotle does not recapitulate a Phileban model of emotion. For Plato, in the *Philebus*, bodily pleasure is unlimited and reason alone can determine its proper limit. Perceptions of pleasures and pains in the body cannot in themselves provide us with reliable cues to virtuous action. Emotions that are not wishes are to be *limited not educated* by reason. Unlike Plato, Aristotle holds that our perceptions of pleasure and pain can provide us with accurate information about the world; information moreover that can assist virtuous behaviour. An emotion is a judgement about pleasure and pain and true judgements can and should involve current perceptions (as opposed to only remembered ones). Importantly, these judgements are susceptible to persuasion under the wise advice of others. Emotions do not need to be controlled or limited by reason; they can be educated under the proper instruction and guidance of others. This is where I think that Aristotle's discussion of emotions in the *Rhetoric* assumes particular pedagogical significance.

It seems to me that Aristotle regarded persuasion as a quite legitimate educational tool²³³. To be sure, the *Rhetoric* does not find Aristotle explicitly stating that persuasion is a means that *should* be used to aid the development of virtue, in the less than virtuous. However, Aristotle's discussion of the role of emotional appeal, in political and legal settings, strongly suggests that he held that

²³¹ In the previous chapter it was argued that Plato thought pleasures and pains should be rationally controlled or limited. A similar rational view of emotions has also been attributed to Plato by Carr 2005, 2009, and Kristjánsson, 2000, 2006, 2007.

²³² For compelling accounts of this point see for example Carr 2005, 2009, and Kristjánsson, 2000, 2006, 2007 & Steutel & Spiecker (2004).

²³³ Konstan (2007, p 97) and Kristjánsson (2007, p19) also interpret the *rhetoric* in a similar light. Maxwell (2008, p 132) suggests that educating the moral emotions should involve teacher *requests* to pupils to *imagine, imitate and re-appraise* their emotional responses so as to make them normatively proper. This theory is further discussed at 7.7, and again in chapter 9.

persuasion *could* improve the judgements of the less than virtuous. Reeve (1996) is of the view that Aristotle thought rhetorical persuasion could, in the right hands, 'be a powerful force for good, counteracting distorting feelings and emotions' in others, so as 'to move a city towards genuine *eudaimonia*' (Reeve, 1996, p 203). The good orator would employ emotional appeal to correct the emotions and desires of the less than virtuous; as he puts it, 'persuading the bad to pursue the good involves corrective deception'(Reeve, 1996, p 203). Aristotle, in the *Rhetoric*, importantly depicts the character of the young as being largely appetitive and as such less than fully virtuous (1389a-1389b16). The young are exactly the sort of agents, in other words, that he seems to think can and should be²³⁴ correctively persuaded towards right judgements.

Halliwell (1996) also notes that judgements in 'rhetorical contexts involve an interplay between audience and rhetorician...Aristotle appears to assume that the main determinant of it (the judgement) will be the skill of the orator (Halliwell, 1996, p 178)'. Arguably, the skilled teacher could and should similarly help to determine the judgements of the pupils in their classes. More than this, if teachers are the right sort of persons, they will by Halliwell's logic be in an excellent position to significantly influence such judgements. But what are the traits of the skilled orator? These traits would, after all, seem to be ones that prospective educators of emotions should have. Aristotle, as we have seen, thought that the skilled orator would himself be virtuous. As he puts it, 'character contains almost the strongest proof of all' (*Rhetoric*, 1356a12-13).

The skilled orator must therefore have some sort of reflective grasp of virtue (*Ibid*, 1366b), and a comprehension of what virtuous emotions are and how to engender them in others too (*Ibid*, 1356a25-26). In order to be persuasive, arguably the good teacher should be

²³⁴ This will I hope become clear at 7.6.

virtuous and possess emotional insight with regard to both herself and her pupils²³⁵. Persuasive teachers would also probably need to cultivate positive relationships with their pupils, given Aristotle's assertion that people judge differently in relation to those they love and hate²³⁶. Striker (1996) suggests that if rhetoricians are of virtuous character (as they ought to be in Aristotle's terms), then their influence of argument upon the emotions of their audiences may be exactly what such audiences need to see things in a moral light. The argument that *teachers* should correct the distorted emotions of the young to help them to see what they should see may go beyond what Aristotle says, but it is consistent with his general reasoning, in the *Rhetoric*, and elsewhere.

Persuasion Konstan (2007) notes was central to how ancient Greeks understood emotions, and scrutiny of other Aristotelian texts bears out this observation. In the *Politics*, Aristotle indicates that it is the capacity for language that differentiates people from animals. Although other animals have *voice*, man alone has *speech*. Animals feel pleasure or pain and they can use their voices to express pleasure or displeasure. However, it is speech that helps humanity to articulate its definitive attributes – and particularly moral character. Aristotle states that speech can indicate what is 'just and unjust...the real difference between man and other animals is that humans alone have perception of good and evil' (*Politics*, 1253a13-16). Whereas the good man in the *Philebus* seems to derive his character from a divine source, Aristotle reaffirms in the *Politics* his view that we can learn about moral matters in conversations with others. This is a view he further alludes to in the *Poetics*.

²³⁵ Stocker (2003, p 183) maintains that we will not be able to fully understand the lives and activities of others, or for that matter our own, if we cannot, too, grasp their and indeed our, emotions.

²³⁶ Aristotle actually says that 'things do not seem the same to those who love and those who hate, nor to those who are angry or those who are calm, but either altogether different or different in magnitude. For to the friend the man about whom he is giving judgement seems either to have committed no offence or a minor one, while for the enemy it is the opposite (*Rhetoric*, 1177b31-1178a2, p 141). More will be said about the nature of the pupil-teacher relationship in chapter 9.

'The discussion of reasoning can be reserved for my *Rhetoric*, since it has more to do with that field of enquiry. Under reasoning fall those effects which must be produced by language; these include proof and refutation, the production of emotions (eg pity, fear, anger etc), and also establishing importance or unimportance.' (*Poetics*, 56a19-56b)

In this passage, Aristotle reinforces, I think quite unequivocally, the significance of his treatment of emotions in the *Rhetoric*. The emotions, far from being irrational, are actually forces that may be harnessed in the service of reasoning itself. The speech-acts of the skilled orator (skilled in part because of his own virtue) can engender emotions in the audience that are in themselves (the emotions that is) forms of reasoning. He declares that the *Rhetoric* is importantly concerned with reasoning, and that reasoning must be mediated through language. Such reasoning is said to be a consequence of both proof and emotional appeal. Significantly, the reasoning produced by rhetorical language can establish the importance or otherwise of a given subject matter. Aristotle does not explicitly state in the *Poetics*, what might qualify as important or unimportant. However, I do not think it would be too much of a stretch to suggest that the virtues would fall into the category of the important, given Aristotle's well known view that the virtues are vitally important for human flourishing. If this is the case, then language and the ability to persuade would seem to be a necessary tool for the development of reasoning, balanced emotions and ultimately virtue, in all human agents. A teacher's ability to so persuade should, it seems, be grounded in his or her own good character and in a keen and articulate understanding of their own emotions and those of their pupils. Whilst the young may arguably *learn through* emotional persuasion, it may well be the case that *very young* children learn first through other feelings.

7.6 Aristotelian Moral development: Is it inherently painful?

‘For it is the nature of the many to be ruled by fear rather than by shame, and to refrain from evil not because of the disgrace but because of the punishments...but of that which is fine and truly pleasurable they have not even a conception, since they have never had a taste for it. What discourse could ever reform people like that? To dislodge by argument habits long embedded in the character is a difficult, if not impossible task.’ (NE, 1179b10-18)

In the foregoing passage Aristotle holds that argument and persuasion will not be able to move the majority of people to noble actions. This extract is preceded by a similar implication that discourses are generally not sufficient in themselves to ‘make people moral’ (NE1179b3-7). Certain habits need to be in place before reasoned argument, and emotional appeal will have any moral educational effect. Although some of the young, and the liberal-minded, may be fortunate enough to be naturally endowed with these habits²³⁷, arguments ‘are incapable of impelling the masses towards human perfection’ (NE1179b7-10). The ‘many’, it seems, do not yet, and may not ever, possess such habits. As a result, Curzer (2002) says external punishment and fear are rather required to motivate ‘the many’ into moral action.

Curzer takes the same passage (NE1179b7-13) and the parts that precede it, as a starting point for the construction of an Aristotelian theory of moral development in his article, ‘Aristotle’s Painful Path to Virtue’ (2002). There, he suggests that five different stages of moral development can be inferred from Aristotle’s ethical treatise. Firstly, there are the ‘many’ (hoi polloi) who are ‘moral beginners’ (2002, p 154), who nevertheless have the potential for full virtue. Adults and children belong to this category, from which most people ‘simply fail to move up’ (Curzer, 2002, p 155) and progress beyond²³⁸. The second stage is

²³⁷ Kristjánsson similarly indicates that some children may possess certain morally desirable habits from birth (2007, p 22).

²³⁸ Kristjánsson makes much the same point (2007, p 20).

that of the ‘generous-minded’ (eleutherios) (Curzer, 2002, p 154), who have elected to pursue the life of virtue but are confused about how to achieve it. Thirdly, come the ‘incontinent’ who have the ability to determine which acts are virtuous but are nevertheless prevented from acting virtuously, by their wayward passions. Although the ‘incontinent’, generous minded and ‘many’ are united in lacking the habits of action and feeling necessary for virtue, the incontinent are ‘more morally advanced than most people’ (Kristjánsson, 2007, p 21) because they do have correct opinions, at least hypothetically, about what it is best to do. The incontinent may, fourthly, proceed to ‘continence’, when they are able to consistently act in accordance with the moral principle and resist their baser impulses.

‘Moderate tasks and moderate leisure,
Quiet living, strict-kept measure
Both in suffering and in pleasure –
 ’Tis for this thy nature yearns.

But so many books thou readest,
But so many schemes thou breedest,
But so many wishes feedest,
 That thy poor head almost turns’. (Arnold, p 49, 1898)

Matthew Arnold in his poem, *The Second Best*, arguably provides a fine illustration of the sorts of feelings, principles, intentions and temptations experienced by a person at the ‘second best’ stage in an Aristotelian theory of moral development; that of continence. The continent aspire to moderation (both in suffering and pleasure) but they do on occasion experience feelings that give rise to inner conflict²³⁹. However, continent agents are not ‘turned’ to vicious action by these appetites. For Curzer and Kristjánsson, the final stage of moral development is, unsurprisingly, full virtue wherein the agent has the ‘tall order’²⁴⁰ of consistently thinking, feeling and acting in the

²³⁹ This was explained at 6.1.

²⁴⁰ I borrow this phrase from Kristjánsson (2007, p 21).

morally correct manner. Kristjánsson also attributes a sequential theory of moral development to Aristotle²⁴¹. However, he proposes six stages of progress, rather than five. Kristjánsson subdivides the generous-minded into the ‘soft’ at stage two, who ‘are easily overcome by pain’, and the ‘resistant’ at stage three, who can ‘hold out’ over painful appetites, but cannot yet control their inclinations for pleasure (Kristjánsson, 2007, p 21). Kristjánsson, I think rightly, observes that though Aristotle does not himself articulate a ‘comprehensive stage-theory of moral development similar to that, of say, Kohlberg²⁴²’ he does nevertheless ‘devote considerable space to describing people at different levels of moral excellence’ (Kristjánsson, 2007, p 20).

Curzer also draws another significant conclusion concerning the ‘many’ and ‘generous-minded’. He states that the ‘many’ are habituated into virtue through punishment and threats of punishment, whereas the ‘generous-minded’ are habituated through the pain inherent in shame (*aidōs*²⁴³) (Curzer, 2002, p 158). Curzer therefore opposes the well-known argument of Burnyeat, maintaining that learners come to desire virtue for its own sake, through pain and fear of punishment rather than pleasure (Curzer, 2002, p 159). Burnyeat (1980) himself implied that habituation was a two stage process whereby learners are first conditioned into the ‘that’ of morality, before being later instructed about the ‘because’²⁴⁴. Sherman (2004) and Sorabji (1980) take the opposite view to Curzer, indicating that habituation is, at least partly, a rational process from the very beginning. However, both Curzer’s and Sherman/Sorabji’s perspectives seem rather extreme and probably not representative of Aristotle’s own position²⁴⁵. To be sure, Aristotle does state that

²⁴¹ See Kristjánsson (2007) pages 19-25 for full explication of his theory.

²⁴² For an insightful critique of Kohlberg’s theory see Carr (1996).

²⁴³ As we shall shortly see, I do not think Curzer is employing the correct term for shame here.

²⁴⁴ I briefly try to explain what Burnyeat might mean by the ‘that’ and ‘because’ of morality in chapter 5. I must credit Kristjánsson’s work (2007, p 34) for helping me to arrive at this interpretation of Burnyeat’s argument.

²⁴⁵ Kristjánsson indicates that both Curzer and Sherman are ‘guilty of an overly radical either/or way of thinking’ (2007, p 36).

'learning brings pain, and while children are learning they are not playing' (Politics1339a27-29). Furthermore, habituation may not, in itself, constitute a '*truly* critical practice' (Kristjánsson, 2007, p 36) either. However, I do not think that early learning is, as Curzer suggests, a process that is *exclusively* driven by fear and pain, a view that becomes particularly apparent upon consideration of Aristotle's concept of imitation (*mimêsis*).

7.7 Education through imitation, shame and emulation

'Imitation comes naturally to human beings from childhood (and in this they differ from other animals, i.e. in having a strong propensity to imitation and in learning their earliest lessons through imitation): so does the universal pleasure in imitations.' (Poetics48b6-9)

In his *Poetics* (1996), Aristotle states that people first learn through imitation and he stresses that imitative acts are pleasurable²⁴⁶. This directly contradicts Curzer's assertion (2002, p 161) that pleasure does not play a role in the development of either 'moral beginners' (the many) or the 'generous-minded'. Although much of the *Poetics* discusses representative imitations in art and drama, Aristotle states that mimesis²⁴⁷ is generally of people. As he puts it: 'those who imitate, imitate agents; and these must be either admirable or inferior' (48a1-2). Aristotle continues by saying that the character of the people being mimetically copied may be defective, similar (to the agent copying that is) or excellent (48a2-5). Tragic dramas present agents of

²⁴⁶ Fossheim (2006) also interprets this passage in the same way.

²⁴⁷ In another important contribution to the debate on the education of the moral emotions, Maxwell claims that *imitation* involves 'requests to modulate one's emotional response so as to achieve the normatively required measure and proportion of emotional response which a situation calls for' (2008, P 141). Whilst I agree with Maxwell, when he later says that 'imitation seems intimately linked with the Aristotelian tradition' (2008, P 143), I am not at all sure that Maxwell's concept of imitation is, strictly speaking, Aristotelian. *Mimesis*, does not, it seems to me, involve rational requests or implorations to alter the emotional response of another it is rather - as Aristotle himself says - the copying of other persons, good or bad. As such, as we shall see, Aristotle seems to have thought that mimesis per se is essentially non-moral, and that shame and emulation retain considerably more *moral educational potential*, than imitation. Given the emphasis placed on *verbal request*, Maxwell's concept of imitation might be better explained, at least in an Aristotelian scheme, as an example of emotional *persuasion*. Maxwell's broader theory of emotion education is nonetheless, most worthy, and it will receive further discussion in chapter 9.

admirable character, whereas comedies portray people of deficient character (48a16-18). Aristotle later adds that character 'is the kind of thing that discloses the nature of a choice' (50b10-11). In the *Poetics*, Aristotle arguably alludes to how the young may begin to learn to choose an act for its own sake, in a way that is pleasurable rather than painful (Fossheim, 2006).

'Hence mimetic desire ensures that, whatever the learner fastens on, relating mimetically to it will at the same time mean relating to it as something to be savoured for its own sake. Thus an action which might otherwise be done in order to receive a reward or to avoid a punishment will, if it is instead performed mimetically, be done without ulterior motives.' (Fossheim, 2006, p 113)

In *Habituation as Mimesis* (2006), Fossheim maintains that habituation first takes the form of imitative association with and of others. He argues that imitation allows learners to focus on the pleasure in the performance of the imitation itself, rather than on any consequent pleasure. Fossheim suggests that repeatedly performed imitative actions are character forming, in line with Aristotle's scheme of moral development. He rightly implies that the concept of imitation also carries with it the need to protect the young from less than admirable models and representations. The motive to imitate is after all 'the general human desire to become (to be like) *whatever* is presented as an option for *mimesis*²⁴⁸' (Fossheim, 2006, p 116). The young have as yet no clear understanding of *what* is vicious or virtuous, or of *why*, and this is what makes their 'protection so important' (Fossheim, 2006, p 116). Similarly, Fossheim (2006, pp 113-114) acknowledges that a

²⁴⁸ Tsuji, in an exploration of Benjamin's concept of *mimesis*, has recently suggested that when we learn through imitation we generally do so by replicating 'models that embody the values of our own society, culture and institutions' (2010, p 127). Tsuji's article is an interesting one that may well do justice to Benjamin's concept. However, it presents Aristotle's concept of *mimesis* in a figurative and rather confused way. Tsuji states that Aristotle speaks of imitation being an *ateleological* 'transformation in our way of living' (2010, p 131). Tsuji qualifies this, saying that in the article on Benjamin's *mimesis*, *ateleological* is intended to mean *without fixed aims* rather than *without any aims* (2010, p 136). Aristotle however suggests that imitation has a specific and arguably fixed purpose, namely, the taking of pleasure in the accurate copying of the agent to be imitated. Aristotle even specifies that if one observes something they have not seen before, the pleasure will *not* be a mimetic one (*Poetics*, 48b19-21). He moreover implies that it would be erroneous to deliberately set out with the intention of *not* accurately recreating the subject of any *mimesis* (*Poetics*, 60b17-24).

merely mimetic replication, of even an admirable action, cannot be performed for its own sake in the same way that a fully virtuous action may be. I have to agree with Kristjánsson's (2006b) point that moral education should aim at considerably more than imitation²⁴⁹.

A mimetically good (in the moral sense) action is only partially praiseworthy as it is not accompanied by comprehension on the part of the agent performing it about what it is that makes that action good. However, learners are arguably, through mimetic performance, beginning to develop habits of action proper to the moral agent. Moreover, they may also be taking pleasure in these actions. While pain undoubtedly plays a role in learning, Curzer's argument that habituation is *inherently* painful²⁵⁰ must be rejected. As Kristjánsson puts it, 'Aristotle probably saw a place for both pleasure and pain in the habituation process' (Kristjánsson, 2007, p 36). Furthermore, there are also two 'semi-virtues' that are typical of young learners: namely shame and emulation²⁵¹. Significantly, both these emotions seem to involve aspects of both pleasure and pain.

'And since shame is an imagination connected with disrepute, and felt for its own sake and not for its consequences...one must needs feel shame before those whom one *holds in regard*'. (Rhetoric, 1384a31-34)

Aristotle maintains that shame (*aiskhunê*²⁵²) is a type of pain felt when one's reputation is being, or might be, sullied (Rhetoric

²⁴⁹ He makes this point in the context of a critique of character education programmes, not of Aristotle's concept of *mimesis*. Kristjánsson (2006b) pp40-41 insightfully draws upon Nietzsche and suggests that the 'true role of a moral exemplar is to waken yourself to your "higher self"... you cannot take someone as your exemplar simply by undertaking to imitate him'. Seen in this light, emulation, to which I shall shortly turn, is a much richer concept than imitation. It may also be the case that Tsuji's (2010) argument would have been more persuasive had Aristotelian emulation rather than imitation been linked to the work of Benjamin.

²⁵⁰ It should be observed that Curzer, in footnote 39(2002, p 162) concedes to Kristjánsson (1998) that pride, the positive corollary of shame, may after all have some role in moral development.

²⁵¹ Kristjánsson (2007, p 25 & 106) indicates that shame and emulation are virtues that seem to be specific to the young.

²⁵² Konstan convincingly maintains that that it is *aiskhunê*, not *aidôs*, that Aristotle chooses to analyse in the Rhetoric' (2007, p 96). Konstan implies that where the former concept can be felt both prospectively and retrospectively, the latter is typically only felt in regard to future pains. Aristotle is

1383b11-15). Shame is at its most acute moreover, when one's behaviour is witnessed by others (Rhetoric, 1384a43-b), especially those that one admires (ibid1384a35-36&1384b37-39). Thus, shame is arguably a distinctively moral²⁵³ emotion that is intimately connected with public standards or norms of acceptable behaviour. Konstan notes that in modern times there has been a tendency to deride shame for being only a primitive form of guilt. The modern argument maintains that whereas shame is a response to the judgements of others, guilt is an 'inner sensibility' of morally autonomous agency (Konstan, 2007, p 91). Kristjánsson similarly observes that a Kantian moral outlook is one that construes moral failure to reside in guilt rather than shame (2007, p 108). However, he adds that Aristotle's view of moral development is essentially non-autonomous.

Konstan similarly maintains that Aristotelian shame is not a mere response to a perceived ill. It rather arises from specific states or events, whether committed or intended, that *should* bring about disgrace in the eyes of others (Konstan, 2007, p 100-101). Shame is not therefore an emotion that one ought to feel, or be encouraged to feel, indiscriminately. It is rather only appropriate (and indeed morally so) in certain conditions. Crucially, Aristotle says that it is 'shameful not to have a share of... education to the appropriate extent and similarly with the others' (1384a15-17). Therefore, shame is arguably an emotion that can and should spur one to become better educated when one has not yet reached their full potential. Burnyeat interprets shame in something like this light, remarking that it 'is the semi-virtue²⁵⁴ of the learner' (1980, p 78.) Kristjánsson similarly adds that whilst shame would not be felt by the fully virtuous, (who would not by definition have anything to be properly ashamed of), 'it is a virtue of moral

clear in his definition, that shame is felt 'whether present, past, or future' (Rhetoric 1383b13) disrepute is at hand. I would therefore be inclined to agree with Konstan.

²⁵³ Konstan remarks that shame has a fundamentally ethical character (2007, p 104).

²⁵⁴ Though I agree with the classification of shame as a semi-virtue Aristotle does in the Eudemian Ethics categorise shame as a virtue (1221a1) in that it is a mean state between shamelessness and thin-skinnedness.

learners' (2007, p 55). Shame is arguably a more developmentally mature motive of action for its own sake²⁵⁵ than imitation. The former, unlike the latter, requires a degree of awareness of the moral worth of one's own actions or capacities in relation to more public standards.

Emulation²⁵⁶ (*zêlos*) is also arguably a semi-virtue of the learner²⁵⁷ marked by even greater moral maturity than shame. Aristotle defines emulation as a pain felt towards someone who has valued goods that the emulous person lacks (Rhetoric1388a32-39). Notably, Aristotle distinguishes between emulation and envy (*phthonos*). Envy, Aristotle says, is 'base' because the envious want to deprive their neighbour of valued goods (Rhetoric1388a36-39). Emulation however, 'belongs to reasonable men' because it motivates them to attain the valued goods for themselves (Rhetoric1388a32-39). Kristjánsson provides some useful clarification here: 'through emulation...we simply express, with admiration, the desirability of being like *B*²⁵⁸ in some respect, or having the same thing as *B*, without wanting to take anything away from *B* (2006b, p 42). Importantly, Aristotle identifies the virtues as examples of such valuable goods. He specifies that the virtues 'must be' proper objects of emulation (1388b13-16). He adds that it is clear that we ought to emulate men 'who have acquired...courage, wisdom and rule' (1388b13-16).

Emulation is arguably a motive worthy of higher praise than shame, because the former involves considerably more awareness of the goods and virtues that one lacks. Emulation also *requires* that one take active steps to obtain these admirable qualities, allied to a

²⁵⁵ Aristotle does after all specify that shame is 'felt for its own sake' (Rhetoric, 1384a32).

²⁵⁶ Konstan suggests that emulation rather than jealousy is the correct translation of *zêlos*. The term jealousy (*zêlutopia*) he says, appears only once in Aristotle's 'corpus, in the late compilation *On Marvellous tales* (2007, p 222).

²⁵⁷ Kristjánsson (2006b & 2007, chapter 7) provides a persuasive case for emulation being regarded as a virtue of the learner.

²⁵⁸ B here represents a person in possession of valued goods.

capacity to realise such qualities in the end. This is not to say, of course, that shame cannot be a motive for self improvement; one would hope that it would be. It is rather to say that in the case of emulation one *must* try, and be able to, better one's character. As Kristjánsson puts it, one cannot be emulous 'without making an effort to acquire the admired qualities' (2006b, p 44). Aristotle implies that the 'young' are typically emulous in two ways. They both think themselves worthy of, and are able to procure, valuable goods (*Rhetoric*, 1388b1-4). Kristjánsson suggests that Aristotle must mean that the emulous perceive 'themselves as the *kind of people* who would be able to actualise the relevant qualities or actions and, *as a consequence*, come to deserve the fitting goods' (Kristjánsson, 2006b, p 44). Kristjánsson theorises that emulation is so complex as to involve four separate components: 1) pain at the goods one lacks; 2) the zeal to make efforts to deserve them; 3) true self understanding in the sense of being able to direct oneself towards obtainable goods; 4) and a striving for these morally *appropriate* goods. Emulation, as a semi-virtue of the young, is when so construed both educationally important and morally and intellectually demanding.

7.8 Learning is Pleasurable overall

In this chapter, it has been maintained that Aristotle does not advance a Platonic theory of emotion in the *Rhetoric*. Aristotelian emotions do not as a class possess a reductive or singular purpose, be it restoration to the natural state or anything else. Aristotle is rather clear that different emotions have different purposes and objects. Far from being inconsistent, Aristotle is throughout of the view that the emotions can, may and should be educated. Arguably there are two compelling and distinctly Aristotelian reasons in support of educating moral emotions. First, as proper emotions are *necessary* for complete virtue, it would seem vitally important that teachers try to habituate pupils into such feelings as best they can. As Steutel & Spiecker put

it: as ‘the proper aims of moral education cannot be achieved without sentimental education...a considerable part of our moral educational efforts should be devoted to cultivating the child’s sentiments’ (2004, p 532). Secondly, Aristotle also suggests that the less than fully virtuous (and he includes the young in this category) can actually *learn through* their pleasures and pains - a view he alludes to elsewhere in the *Ethics*, *Politics* and *Poetics*. It seems that the experience of appropriate shame can be educational, as can imitating, emulating and listening to exemplary adults. Steutel & Spiecker appear to share the view that children can *learn through* their sentiments. They indicate that proper emotional dispositions are a ‘prerequisite for effectively promoting other mental qualities, particularly those involved in the intellectual virtue of practical wisdom’ (2004, p 532).

‘Also learning and admiring are for the most part pleasant. For admiration contains the appetite for learning’ (Rhetoric, 1371a41-42)

Aristotle also appears to have thought that learning in and through our emotions is pleasant, rather than painful, overall. Although the semi-virtues of shame and emulation are felt as pains in the short term, the potential for moral development that they bring in the long term arguably means that they are pleasant, in a more fundamental sense. In chapter 9, an attempt will be made to explain how children in school can be helped to develop moral habits through both pleasure and pain. However, it first seems necessary to consider Aristotle’s intellectual virtues. He does, after all, specify that ‘the mind of the pupil has to be prepared in its habits if it is to enjoy and dislike the right things’ (NE1179b25-26). And, practical wisdom is not the only intellectual quality Aristotle thinks worth acquiring either; far from it. As we shall see, he seems to have been of the view that a range of distinctively intellectual and theoretical activities actually constitute the highest form of human flourishing. In the subsequent chapter, Aristotle’s intellectual virtues will therefore be analysed in detail. This analysis will importantly come to impinge upon the Aristotelian theory

of pedagogy, discipline and instruction that is articulated in the third part of the thesis. There, it will also become apparent that Aristotle's intellectual virtues have aroused relatively little recent in depth interest in educational theory and philosophy. This is surprising given that Aristotle allots them a vitally important place in his framework of worthwhile human living.

Chapter 8: Aristotle's Intellectual Virtues

The intellectual virtues have been the subject of much recent epistemological debate. This discussion has, broadly put, suggested that epistemic evaluation should focus upon traits of *persons* rather than qualities of *propositions*. Zagzebski has argued that the intellectual virtues are *motivations* for knowledge and she defines knowledge as an *act of intellectual virtue* rather than the traditional explanation of *justified true belief*. Whilst she has indicated that her position is essentially derived from Aristotle's *Ethics*, it will be argued that this claim is doubtful. Her theory involves a collapse of the distinction between the moral and intellectual virtues. Aristotle however, was clear that these two types of virtue are acquired differently and contribute to the flourishing life in contrasting ways. The purpose of the moral virtues is to realise the good in action; the intellectual virtues in contrast aim at *truth*. After exploring some of the various states of mind that Aristotle analysed in Book VI of his *Ethics* it will be proposed that: 1) knowledge (in speculative form at any rate) should instead be defined as *eternally true belief*; 2) Aristotle held wisdom in higher regard than knowledge; 3) Aristotle's intellectual virtues *are virtues* because they directly contribute to, or, are constitutive of, flourishing; 4) as such resourcefulness and understanding are valuable intellectual qualities but not virtues. It will be concluded that the prospects of children becoming educated and flourishing centrally depend upon their receiving the right sort of *habituation* and intellectual *instruction*.

8.1 What is Virtue Epistemology?

The literature pertaining to virtue epistemology has in a relatively short space of time become too vast and various to admit to comprehensive review within a single chapter. The aims of this chapter are therefore less ambitious and mainly twofold. In the fourth

chapter, it was argued that the theories of discipline described up to that point were all, in different ways, beset by epistemic weaknesses, weaknesses that I argued Aristotle's theory is well placed to overcome. In chapter three, it was similarly suggested that education (and any discipline that is part of it) should be something that assists pupils to develop, amongst other things, practical *and* theoretical knowledge and wisdom. This chapter will therefore firstly aim to explain the nature of these concepts as conceived of by Aristotle. The chapter will secondly provide an overview of recent developments in virtue epistemology, as some scholars in this field claim their theories are of Aristotelian lineage. It is to the second task that the remainder of this section (8.1) now turns. What is virtue epistemology and what is it that distinguishes it, from other branches of the theory of knowledge?

In order to elucidate the main concerns of *virtue epistemology*, it may be prudent to briefly restate²⁵⁹ the principal concerns of *epistemology*. There are arguably three central questions of epistemology that are intimately related but importantly distinct. Firstly, what is the *nature of knowledge*? Secondly, what conditions must be satisfied before it can be said with confidence that a particular person *knows* something? Thirdly, what is it about knowledge that makes it more valuable than true belief or, what is it that generally gives knowledge *value*? *Virtue epistemology* provides, I think, different answers from *traditional epistemology* to each of these questions. However, the former is most easily distinguishable from the latter on account of the answers it provides to the third of these questions. The question of why knowledge is more valuable than true belief has until recently been given surprisingly little attention in epistemology (Zagzebski 1996, Riggs 2002 & Pritchard 2007). Much *virtue epistemology*, however, addresses the *value question* (Riggs, 2002) in ways different to traditional epistemology. Indeed, Pritchard indicates that virtue epistemology has given rise to a certain '*rapprochement*

²⁵⁹ For a discussion of a traditional epistemology, within the context of education, see chapter 2.

between epistemology and ethics' (Pritchard, 2007, p 1). Roberts and Wood (2007) suggest that the field is concerned with philosophical reflection upon the intellectual virtues. It has been claimed²⁶⁰ that the intellectual virtues can resolve some of the internal tensions in epistemology revealed by Edmund Gettier. But what do they mean by this? A brief consideration of the first two questions I have argued are central to epistemology should, I think, provide illumination here.

A central aim of the first question (what is the nature of knowledge?) is to establish a satisfactory definition of knowledge. Near the beginning of enquiries into epistemology, it is often²⁶¹ stated that it is the branch of philosophy concerned with the theory or concept of knowledge. Taking Plato's *Theaetetus* as inspiration, knowledge has traditionally been defined by philosophers²⁶² as *justified true belief*. Answers to the second question have traditionally taken the form of statements about the conditions *necessary* and *sufficient* for a particular person *knowing* a given proposition²⁶³. These statements have often been expressed in formal, partially algebraic terms, where *S* (the subject or knower) is said to 'know that *P*' (the fact expressed by the proposition) when such and such necessary and sufficient conditions are satisfied. Historically, the necessary and sufficient conditions for a person knowing a proposition have been held to be that they have a justified true belief about it, justified in the light of sound supporting reasons.

However, Edmund Gettier in his famous brief paper, '*Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?*' (1963), argued that there can be instances when someone does not possess knowledge of a proposition, even though they have a justifiable true belief about it. In the cases Gettier explored, Smith holds a true belief, and he has solid evidence to

²⁶⁰ See for example Zagzebski 1996, Greco 2007 and Roberts and Wood 2007.

²⁶¹ See for example, the opening pages of Craig 1990, Kvanvig 2003 & Roberts & Wood 2007.

²⁶² A point noted by amongst others Riggs 2002, Blaauw & Pritchard 2005, & Pritchard 2007.

²⁶³ A point also made by Taylor, 1990, Gettier, 1963 & Kvanvig, 2003.

support his true belief. However, Smith's belief is true for entirely different reasons to those that he entertains. Gettier argues, in effect, that a person cannot *know* a proposition is true if it is mere *luck* rather than the capacities of the agent that are responsible for generating the true belief. After Gettier, knowledge was defined by some²⁶⁴ as *non-accidentally true justified belief*. However, Zagzebski (1996) has argued that precluding justified true beliefs that have been accidentally struck upon from the category of knowledge, does not add much, if anything, to the correctness of any epistemic account. Thus, in section 8.3, Zagzebski's attempt to explain *why* exceptional cases of justifiable true belief are inferior to knowledge will be noted. In section 8.2, John Greco's more plausible account of the higher epistemic status of knowledge, over luckily obtained true belief, will first be elucidated. At section 8.4, it will be intimated that Aristotle's *epistemology* (if it can rightly be called that) can satisfactorily resolve Gettier type problems of epistemic luck, but not for the reasons that virtue epistemologists have until now supposed.

In summary, epistemologists have taken considerable recent interest in the intellectual virtues. A brief survey of some of the literature²⁶⁵ of what has come to be known by some as *virtue epistemology* reveals that the virtues have been employed in diverse ways to explain the nature and value of knowledge and knowing. These interpretations of the intellectual virtues do nevertheless seem to have at least two core common features. Firstly, as already indicated, virtue epistemologists have been especially concerned with the question of *why* knowledge is valuable. Secondly, virtue epistemology 'has come to designate a class of recent theories that focus epistemic evaluation on properties of persons rather than properties of beliefs or propositions' (Zagzebski & Fariweather, p 3, 2001).

²⁶⁴ A point noted by both Zagzebski 1996 and Taylor 1990.

²⁶⁵ For instructive introductions to the subject see for example, Pritchard 2007, Roberts and Wood 2007, and especially the edited collections by Zagzebski & Fairweather 2001 & Depaul & Zagzebski 2007.

Virtue epistemologists have allotted primary relevance to a person's intellectual qualities, in at least five different ways. These may be classified (albeit somewhat reductively) as dispositions towards: *reliability* in obtaining truth; *motivation* for truth; personal *responsibility* for obtaining reliable truth; proper *regulation* of truth seeking inquiries; and a *teleological* valuing of knowledge and truth. It should be noted that some individual proponents of virtue epistemology are clearly concerned with more than one of these categories. In the next part of this chapter the key features of the first four views will be considered.

8.2 What Virtue Epistemology?

Ernest Sosa was the first to suggest that the virtues of *persons* could be important in epistemology. Towards the end of his influential paper 'The Raft and the Pyramid' (2000 though first published in 1980) he intimated that the *intellectual virtues* should become the primary source of justification for true beliefs. He thought of the intellectual virtues as stable dispositions that vitally contribute to the *reliable* formation of true beliefs. Agents should only be described as knowledgeable, Sosa stated, if they *are reliable* sources of information. Importantly, he also noted that moral and intellectual virtues need to be carefully distinguished. As we shall see, this point seems to have gone unheeded by Zagzebski, whose theory has encountered problems as a consequence. Virtue epistemology began as a theory of *reliabilism*²⁶⁶. In such epistemology, the intellectually virtuous agent will have a reliably high success rate in achieving truth and avoiding falsehood.

Montmarquet (1987) also explored the possible relation between knowledge and value and between what he called *epistemic virtue* and justification. He alluded to what he saw as Aristotle's legacy in relation

²⁶⁶ A point made by both Depaul & Zagzebski 2007 and Pritchard 2007.

to the virtues - that they are of such importance that we want them to be ingrained in our character. The epistemic virtues will invariably be possessed, he implies, by agents who desire truth as a matter of habit. Anyone who seeks after the truth, he argues, just is seeking *virtuously formed true beliefs*. A belief cannot be held virtuously, he adds, unless an agent's epistemic character has played some role in explaining why they now believe *that p*. Montmarquet distinguishes his virtue epistemology from reliabilist varieties on the grounds that his view only requires that 'epistemic character traits be suitably connected to the *desire*, not the likelihood, of attaining truth (Montmarquet, 1987, p 495).' Montmarquet is arguably the first *motivation-based* virtue epistemologist. The theorist who brought wider attention to the idea of a motivation-based virtue epistemology, though, was undoubtedly Linda Zagzebski.

'In the form of virtue theory I call motivation based, the value of reliability rests on the value of the motive for knowledge.' (Zagzebski, 1996, p 312)

For Zagzebski (1996), reliability in obtaining true beliefs *per se* has no special value or disvalue (Riggs 2002, Pritchard, 2007). Successfully *obtaining* knowledge is less important for Zagzebski than the *motivation* for knowledge. The superiority of the *desire for* knowledge over the *possession of* knowledge in her virtue epistemology is revealed by her declaration that 'the goodness of the reliability component of an intellectual virtue derives from the goodness of the motivational component (Zagzebski, 1996, p 209).' Unlike Montmarquet however, Zagzebski is also a *reliabilist* in an important sense for she frequently stresses that intellectual virtues are *success terms*. Success is measured by a capacity to generate knowledge reliably, or as she puts it: a reliable ability to realise the 'aim of the motivation specific to that virtue' (Zagzebski, 1996, p 247). The motivation for knowledge is at the very heart of Zagzebski's account of the intellectual virtues²⁶⁷.

²⁶⁷ This will be more fully explained in section 8.3.

‘When we attribute knowledge to someone we imply that it is to his credit that he got things right. It is not because the person is lucky that he believes the truth – it is because of his own cognitive abilities.’ (Greco, 2007, p 123)

John Greco (2001) argues that the Aristotelian virtues combine elements of reliability and *responsibility*. He opines that knowledge should only be attributed to an agent when they deserve *credit* for a true belief on account of their intellectual efforts and abilities (Greco, 2007). He thinks that there are both *subjective* and *objective* conditions that are necessary for a person to be described as knowing something. He puts it like this: ‘a belief *p* is epistemically justified for S if and only if S is both subjectively praiseworthy and objectively reliable in believing *p*’ (Greco, 2001, p 138). He similarly argues that a person only knows *p*, if their believing the truth of *p* reveals their reliable cognitive character (Greco, 2007). A person is *subjectively* justified in believing a proposition, Greco says, if they have manifested dispositions characteristic of a person trying to unveil the truth about it. The same person is *objectively* justified in believing that proposition if their *dispositions* ensure they are reliable at discovering the truth of *p*. Greco implies that the intellectually virtuous are those who are habitually and *subjectively responsible* for establishing knowledge in this objectively reliable way. He observes that ‘getting the truth as a result of one’s virtues is more valuable than getting it on the cheap’ (Greco, 2007, p 134). A great strength of Greco’s theory of knowledge is that it successfully circumvents Gettier-type concerns of accidentally justifiable true beliefs.

Sosa’s later writings on the intellectual virtues (Sosa, 2001 & 2007) also explore the possibility that reliability in ‘hitting the mark of truth’ (Sosa, 2007, p 164) is not the only or fundamental epistemic value. Sosa intimates that the person who is not directly *responsible* for procuring a true belief through their own intellectual efforts might have a truth of potentially limited epistemological value. He may well be, Sosa

states, (2007) like a puppet dancing to the rhythm of a puppeteer. Sosa thinks it preferable for true believing to be attributable to a person's *own doing* rather than the passive reception of external or externally imposed influences. Sosa rightly notes that Aristotle gave pride of place to truth obtained through the exercise of intellectual virtue. However, in the subsequent chapter it will become clear that his implication that true beliefs obtained with help from others are possibly less valuable than *knowledge* accumulated on one's own seems profoundly un-Aristotelian.

Riggs (2002) implied that the person in a state of *knowing* is more worthy of epistemological attention than the abstract justification of *knowledge*. Hookaway, Riggs and Roberts & Wood (all 2007) similarly contend that the real promise of the intellectual virtues is to be found in the ways that they can extend epistemology beyond its traditional preoccupation with knowledge and its justification. They all argue that intellectual virtues should be employed to redefine the main concerns of epistemology. As will become apparent, it only really makes sense to speak of a genuinely *Aristotelian epistemology* if the value of *all* the intellectual virtues is scrutinised. Hookaway maintains that it is mistaken to conceive epistemology in such a way as to preclude from the start the possibility that knowledge might be less important and valuable than has been historically supposed. He does suggest a definition of knowledge broadly similar to those of Zagzebski and Montmarquet. He characterises it as: 'virtuously acquired true belief' (Hookaway, 2007, p 192). He is also, like other virtue epistemologists, of the view that epistemic success depends upon virtues of character. However, he argues that epistemic success or reliability should be measured differently. He states that the primary role of the intellectual virtues should be to *regulate* our intellectual lives, deliberations and inquiries. The intellectual virtues should help to ensure true belief formation, but the value of any such process of inquiry is to be found in the fact that it has been regulated by the

virtues. Knowledge and justified belief, he indicates, might be better thought of as a *conclusion* rather than the *focus* of epistemology.

A similar view, that the virtues should first and foremost *regulate* truth seeking practices has been fleshed out in more detail by Roberts and Wood (2007). They argue the intellectual virtues have enormous potential to broaden the scope and importance of the theory of knowledge. They claim that the English speaking epistemology of the twentieth century was *analytic* in nature, focusing on analysing and defining concepts of knowledge, justification and rationality. They also declare that ‘*all* (my emphasis) of the virtue epistemologies of the last twenty five years have been attempts to turn the intellectual virtues to the purposes of analytic epistemology’ (Roberts & Wood, 2007, p 20-21). Whilst there has undoubtedly been a marked tendency in this direction (affirmed by Riggs, Pritchard & Hookaway all 2007), the work of Hookaway and Riggs (significantly first published in 2003) demonstrates that not *all* recent virtue epistemologists have focussed on analysing justification and knowledge.

Notwithstanding their overstated claims to originality, Roberts and Wood do provide some insight into the debate about how the intellectual virtues might be acquired (as also to her credit does Zagzebski, 1996). Taking Locke, rather than Aristotle, as their inspiration, they argue that the virtues should *regulate* the intellectual habits of agents and help eliminate deficiencies in their epistemic inquiries, methods and practices. They state that we ‘need not rule-books, but a *training* that nurtures *people* in the right intellectual dispositions (Roberts & Wood, 2007, p 22)’. Responsibility for the formation of such excellent intellectual habits in persons, they say, is ‘clearly the business of schools and parents...They are the chief educators of character’ (Roberts & Wood, 2007, p 23). In briefly detailing the nature of some of the virtue epistemologies that have evolved to date, it has not so much been my intention to demonstrate the superiority of one approach over

another. My interest in the subject stems rather from a desire to make clear both those ways in which Aristotle's intellectual virtues are related to the flourishing life, and the approaches by which such qualities may be fostered. The pedagogical implications of virtue epistemology, and especially of Aristotle's intellectual virtues, will therefore be postponed until chapter 9. However, it is to the philosopher who has most explicitly modelled her virtue epistemology on Aristotelian thought that the discussion now turns.

8.3 Is the desire to know the primary intellectual value?

There is little doubt that Linda Zagzebski has been a major influence on contemporary epistemological debate about the intellectual virtues. I would echo the sentiments of Annas (2007) who suggests that epistemologists and ethicists alike owe Zagzebski gratitude for the exciting paths of inquiry her seminal text *Virtues of the Mind* (1996) has opened up. In that book, Zagzebski claims to be the first person to have closely modelled an epistemology on Aristotle's virtue theory. She certainly has interpreted his *Ethics* in a bold, interesting and innovative way. Despite the importance of her contribution, however, Zagzebski has not been without her critics. Although Blaauw & Pritchard (2005) describe Zagzebski as a neo-Aristotelian epistemologist, at least four of her innovations of the *Nicomachean Ethics* are questionable and only doubtfully Aristotelian: 1) her *definition* of knowledge; 2) her identification of *love of knowledge* as the *primary* intellectual virtue; 3) her insistence that her theory is *non-teleological*; 4) her *modelling* of intellectual virtue on *moral* virtue. To be sure, my argument is not that Zagzebski completely misunderstands Aristotle on all these points, for *Virtues of the Mind* suggests that she does broadly grasp Aristotle's conception of the intellectual virtues. My claim is rather that Zagzebski has so fundamentally *re-imagined* the intellectual virtues that they are no longer recognisable as Aristotelian; and that it is therefore inaccurate

to describe her epistemology as Aristotelian.

Zagzebski (1996) firstly argues that her normative epistemology is well placed to resolve Gettier-type difficulties. It can do so, she implies, by shifting focus from *qualities* of propositions to the *virtues* of persons. The standard notion of knowledge as propositionally expressed justified true belief has become mired she says, in a seemingly intractable debate between *internalists* and *externalists*. An internal account of justification suggests that the holder of a belief must have personal cognitive access to the evidence that grounds that belief (Zagzebski 1996 & Roberts and Wood 2007). By contrast, an externalist account of knowledge requires that the 'most important or salient justifying features are typically inaccessible to the agent's consciousness (Zagzebski, 1996, p 5).' An Aristotelian epistemology however, she says, possesses both *internal* and *external* aspects²⁶⁸. Though I find Zagzebski's notion to be a little unclear, I take her to mean that whereas the *motivation* to seek knowledge supplies the *internal* feature of her theory, *reliability* in procuring knowledge provides the *external* feature. This interpretation is supported, I think, by her general conceptualisation of knowledge²⁶⁹.

Zagzebski states that the *component of motivation* is cognitively accessible to the virtuous agent. Successfully realising the goal of the motivation (that is, actually being reliable in forming knowledge) is the external feature of her epistemology. She emphasises that the aim of the intellectual virtues is to be *knowledge*, rather than merely *truth* conducive (Zagzebski, 1996, p 190). Knowledge for Zagzebski is more valuable than true belief because genuine knowledge has been driven by a personal quality (of desire or emotion) that has intrinsic value; namely, the love of truth (2007). Motives and ends she argues are not the same thing. A person who accidentally arrives at a given truth may lack the *desire* to know that truth. The cognitive activities of the

²⁶⁸ This interpretation is also taken by both Audi 2001 and Hookaway 2007.

²⁶⁹ See in particular Zagzebski, 1996, p 290-299 and Zagzebski 2007.

person who *knows* the truth are characterised by their deeply felt care for the truth (2007). She defines knowledge as ‘a state of cognitive contact with reality arising out of acts on intellectual virtue’ (Zagzebski, 1996, p 298). She claims her definition defeats Gettier-type cases of epistemic luck because ‘whatever knowledge is in addition to truth entails truth’ (Zagzebski, 1996, p 299). She appears to think that the *motive* to know ‘guarantees’ that the intellectually virtuous agent *will know* the truth of the matter at hand. Although she later defines knowledge more simply as ‘an act of intellectual virtue (Zagzebski, 2007, p 153)’ I find her logic in each case to be circular and unconvincing.

In section 8.4, it will be maintained that her portrayal of knowledge is very far removed from Aristotle’s discussion of it in his *Ethics*. Roberts and Wood share my scepticism and point out that ‘defining the justifier’ (2007, p 14) of knowledge in such a way as to guarantee that he or she obtains the truth is not a strategy that is open to other epistemologies attempting to work through Gettier issues. It is one thing to suggest that people properly exercising intellectual virtues are *generally reliable* truth seekers. It is quite another to argue that they are *invariably infallible* truth seekers in virtue of their *motivation*. I believe that Greco²⁷⁰ provides a more persuasive account of how a virtue epistemology may account for instances of lucky knowledge.

Zagzebski, secondly, identifies *love of, or desire for knowledge* as the highest or primary intellectual virtue. Roberts and Woods appear to agree with this remarking that love of knowledge is ‘a virtue that is basic to the whole of intellectual life’ (Roberts & Wood, 2007, p 73). It involves, according to them, a general disposition of excitement at the prospect of learning about and/or understanding reality. They imply that it is both a virtue in its own right and a virtue that is associated with or active in other virtues too. However, they do not seem to share

²⁷⁰ Greco’s view was explained at 8.2.

Zagzebski's view that love of knowledge is a *motive* that essentially involves *desiring* knowledge. They develop a considerably more nuanced and detailed concept. They argue that it is possible to love knowledge for a variety of reasons: intrinsically and instrumentally and virtuously and non-virtuously. An intrinsic desire to know, they say, is a *good in itself*. Some knowledge that has no actual practical application just is nevertheless deeply enriching and valuable. Instrumental motivations too need not necessarily be non-virtuous, but 'there is something intellectually immature, to say the least, about somebody who seeks the kind of knowledge in question for solely instrumental reasons (Roberts & Wood, 2007, p 173)'. Significantly, they point out that a scrutiny of the individual intellectual virtues reveals that they are diverse in structure²⁷¹. Each virtue tends to have its own motivation, and 'the motive characteristic of a virtue is in no case, or almost no case, the desire to have the virtue' (Roberts & Wood, 2007, p 77). I agree with Roberts and Wood on this point. However, I do not accept their wider view that love of knowledge is the primary intellectual virtue that unifies the others²⁷².

Both Roberts and Woods and Zagzebski attempt to justify their stance by reference to Aristotle's famous dictum that 'by nature all men long to know' (MP, Alpha 1, 980a). Zagzebski claims that the 'intellectual virtues can be defined in terms of motivations arising from the general motivation for knowledge and reliability in attaining the aims of these motives.' (Zagzebski, 1996, p 166) She clarifies her position by stating that *all* the intellectual virtues are grounded upon a *primary*, but not exclusive, desire for knowledge. She thus opens up the possibility for intellectually virtuous inquiry to be directed at something other than knowledge. To her credit, one of the main strengths of her interpretation of Aristotle's intellectual virtues is her recognition that he did not neglect, but greatly valued, wisdom and understanding. However, in remarking that the motive to know

²⁷¹ A similar point is made by Annas 2007.

²⁷² My reasons for thinking this will become apparent at 8.5.

incorporates the motive to understand (Zagzebski, 1996, p 184) she again reinforces her view that knowledge (or rather the desire for it) is the virtue of highest value.

Aristotle clearly did think that wanting to know is a natural human appetite. He also certainly moreover thought that *possession* of knowledge is an intellectual virtue. However, he did not appear to hold the view that *desire for knowledge* is. Even if desire for knowledge is somehow granted the status of a full intellectual virtue (and I do not think the *Nicomachean Ethics* in any way supports this reading) Aristotle would not have regarded it as the most important one. He did, after all, declare that 'those who possess knowledge pass their time more pleasantly than those still in pursuit of it' (NE, 1177a27-28). As will be explained at 8.4, he is clear that the most complete intellectual virtue is wisdom (*Sophia*).

Zagzebski, thirdly, insists (1996 & particularly 2007) that her account is *non-teleological* because it is based on motivation, rather than any conception of human flourishing. However, her claim to have developed a non-teleological epistemology on the basis of Aristotle's *Ethics* is surely paradoxical. As will become apparent at 8.4, for Aristotle, the real value of knowledge and the other intellectual virtues was to be found within a teleological framework. This point has more recently been noted by Sosa (2007) and Roberts and Woods (2007), and it has been especially well pressed by Annas and Riggs (both 2007). Zagzebski further differentiates her account from Aristotle's, by devising a new list of intellectual virtues (as do Roberts & Wood). She indicates that the intellectual virtues include 'intellectual carefulness, perseverance, humility, vigour, flexibility, courage, and thoroughness, as well as open-mindedness, fair-mindedness, insightfulness and the virtues opposed to wishful thinking, obtuseness, and conformity' (Zagzebski, 1996, p 155). She says that intellectual integrity and originality are particularly important additional intellectual virtues,

remarking that 'we value intellectual originality and inventiveness more than knowledge learned from others' (Zagzebski, 1996, p 155).

'Virtue then is of two kinds, intellectual and moral. Intellectual virtue owes both its inception and its growth chiefly to instruction, and for this reason needs time and experience. Moral goodness on the other hand, is the result of habit'. (NE, 1103a14-17)

Aristotle (as the foregoing quotation shows) famously argued that whereas the intellectual virtues are largely taught, the moral virtues are acquired by habit. Most curiously, however, Zagzebski (fourthly) argues that Aristotle's division of the virtues into two kinds is not important. The intellectual virtues, she says, ought to be understood as a class or 'subset' of the moral virtues. She states that 'epistemic evaluation is a form of moral evaluation' (Zagzebski, 1996, p 6); the former derives from the latter. Later in her book (1996), she puts the point more emphatically, stating that it 'greatly distorts the nature of both to attempt to analyse them in separate branches of philosophy. Intellectual virtues are best viewed as forms of moral virtue' (Zagzebski, 1996, p 139). The intellectually virtuous life, she argues, often entails hitting the mean of virtue and avoiding the contrary extremes of vice. Practical wisdom is required to play the mediating role of determining the mean of the *intellectual* as well as the moral virtues.

Zagzebski is not a lone voice amongst virtue epistemologists in this²⁷³. Audi (2001) similarly explains the intellectual virtues, in

²⁷³ Similarly, some philosophers concerning themselves with educational questions have also maintained that the intellectual virtues are a sub-class of moral virtues. For an interesting discussion of how Scheffler (though he refers to intellectual virtues as rational passions), Dearden and Quinton are inclined to construe the intellectual virtues as a sub-class of moral virtues see Steutel & Spiecker (1997). Steutel and Spiecker argue that whereas the intellectual virtues are unified by a 'concern and respect for truth' the moral virtues are united by a 'concern and respect for persons' (1997, p 64). They claim this distinction shows (better than the philosophers' views they critique) that the intellectual virtues are 'in certain respects' (ibid, p 65) moral virtues too. I agree with their logic that the intellectual virtues can have an important bearing on moral life when persons respect other persons by appealing to their rationality. However, I do not think this discrimination reveals that intellectual virtues ought to be classified as a sub-class of moral virtues, or that the intellectual virtues *are* in some ways moral virtues. It only shows that the concerns of the two different types of virtue often overlap.

reference to the moral ones, arguing that people can conduct their intellectual lives well (virtuously) or poorly (viciously) in the same way that they can their moral lives. More recently, however, Annas (2007) has insisted that neither the intellectual nor moral virtues should be perceived as a sub kind²⁷⁴ of the other. I wholeheartedly agree. While it might be *logically* possible to model the structure of the intellectual virtues on the moral ones, this was not Aristotle's position. Annas correctly points out that 'Aristotle's intellectual virtues in the *Nicomachean Ethics* VI are highly diverse (Annas, 2007, p 20)'. Zagzebski (1996) is of course aware of the distinction that Aristotle draws between the moral and intellectual virtues, but in considering this to be unimportant, and in merging the two together, I believe she is guilty of a 'category mistake'²⁷⁵.

Despite the allusion Annas makes to Book VI of the *Ethics*, somewhat remarkably, no-one claiming to be a virtue epistemologist (at least in the literature I have come across) has to date undertaken a systematic analysis of the intellectual virtues discussed by Aristotle there. Roberts and Wood complain about the 'paucity of analysis of particular virtues' (Roberts & Wood, 2007, p 67) in epistemology and Riggs (2007) makes a similar point. It is to this exegetical task that the present discussion therefore shifts. In the course of this, it will be confirmed that Aristotle's intellectual virtues have neither uniform structure nor spheres of concern. If anything, however, his moral virtues are at the service of the intellect, not the other way around. Zagzebski's theory therefore rests upon a central misreading²⁷⁶ of the relationship between the moral and intellectual virtues and the respective parts they should play in the flourishing life.

Aristotle's virtue of phronesis was after all an *intellectual virtue* concerned with correct thinking in the moral sphere. And as we shall see, Aristotle seems to have thought that the moral virtues serve the intellectual virtues.

²⁷⁴ Carr (1991, p 57) also made a similar point about the crucial distinction between the moral and intellectual virtues.

²⁷⁵ I borrow this phrase from Professor David Carr who used it to describe Zagzebski's work in a conversation with myself and Dr. Gale Macleod.

²⁷⁶ Misreading in the sense that she has failed to appreciate *how* important the distinction between Aristotle's moral and intellectual virtues is.

8.4 A Teleological Epistemology: Aristotle's Intellectual Virtues

'Thus the attainment of truth is the task of both of the intellectual parts of the soul; so their respective virtues are the states that will best enable them to arrive at the truth.' (NE, 1139b10-12)

As this quotation shows, Aristotle appears to define the intellectual virtues (in general) as mental states whose function is to arrive at truth²⁷⁷. However, near the beginning of the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle famously remarks that the trained mind only expects a precision in truth to the extent that each subject matter will admit (NE 1094b19-26). The full significance of this statement emerges upon consideration of his discussion of the intellectual virtues in Book VI of his *Nicomachean Ethics*. There, Aristotle makes clear that there are some matters that admit of certainty and some that do not. To properly understand Aristotle's intellectual virtues it is necessary to identify both their general and respective spheres of concern. The general provenance of the intellect, Aristotle remarks, must be ultimate or particular things (NE1143a28-29). He correspondingly subdivides the rational part of the soul into two parts; *scientific/theoretical* and *deliberative/practical* (NE1139a5-11).

Aristotle indicates that the best state of each of these theoretical and practical parts will be their virtue (NE1139a16-18). Virtue, he adds, is after all related to the proper functioning of each thing (NE 1139a18). The notion that intellectual virtue is characterised by the optimal functioning of each part of the rational soul clearly reflects the broad virtue epistemological view, that it is possible for one's intellect to function well or badly when in pursuit of truth. However, as will become clear, truth production is less important for Aristotle than a flourishing (*eudaimonia*) life. The scientific part of the rational soul contemplates *ultimate* things, 'those things whose first principles are

²⁷⁷ Curren (1999, p 67-68 & 2000, p 202) also interprets Aristotle's intellectual virtues to be essentially truth orientated.

invariable' (NE1139a8). The practical part of the rational soul, by contrast, deliberates over *particular* things that *are variable* (NE1139a9). Aristotle therefore specifies that there are two varieties of intellectual virtue, the theoretical and the practical, distinguishable by their respective concerns with ultimate and particular things²⁷⁸.

'Intellectual excellence is itself of two kinds, theoretical and practical, the former identical with a systematic grasp of objective truth, the latter consisting in the systematic capacity to realise in action correct (i.e. true) conceptions of what should be done or brought about'. (Taylor 1990, p 117)

In the case of the theoretical intellect right and wrong, Aristotle says, *just are* truth and falsehood respectively (NE1139a26-28). In the case of the practical intellect, correctness requires thought, but it must additionally correspond to right appetite and *action* too (NE1139a26-35). At 8.5, it will be explained that a component part of all of the faculties of the *practical intellect* is that they must involve some sort of action, choice, deliberation or judgement in the realm of particular things. Truths reached by the purely theoretical intellect, in contrast, are not contingent upon any such action and calculation towards states of affairs in the finite realm. Indeed, what is arguably distinctive about truths afforded by the theoretical intellect is that they *cannot* affect or be affected by any practical action.

'Let us assume there are five ways in which the soul arrives at truth by affirmation or denial, namely art, science, prudence, wisdom and intuition.' (NE, 1139b 15-17)

Aristotle indicates there are five states of mind - *scientific knowledge; art; practical wisdom; intuition; and wisdom* - that can help the intellectually virtuous person to arrive at or realise truth. He also discusses two other mental abilities pertinent to this discussion; *understanding* (which can lead to right judgement); and

²⁷⁸ Saugstad (2005, p 353) somewhat similarly remarks that there are two different categories of knowledge: 'the theoretical that exists out of necessity and the practical that admits variation'. Whilst I agree with Saugstad's general view here, it is important to note that Aristotle speaks about virtues of the theoretical and practical intellect, rather than theoretical and practical knowledge.

resourcefulness (which aims at a sort of correct thinking). The five states he appears to have regarded as virtues each aspire to a different variety of *truth*. Only one of them has scientific knowledge (*episteme*) as its target. It is thus noteworthy that Aristotle's intellectual virtues all aim at *truth* rather than specifically *scientific knowledge*. *Episteme* in the *Ethics* is only one type of truth amongst others.

'What we *know* cannot be other than what it is...Therefore it is eternal, because everything that *is of necessity* in the unqualified sense is eternal.' (NE1139b20-24)

Aristotle suggests that scientific knowledge (*episteme*), intuition (*nous*) and wisdom (*Sophia*) pertain to the theoretical intellect whereas practical wisdom (*phroneses*) and art (*techne*) belong to the deliberative or practical part of the soul. His usage of the word knowledge (*episteme*) in the *Ethics* suggests that he intended it to refer to the class of ultimate things that the human mind could know with certainty. The object of scientific knowledge, Aristotle says, is *necessity* (NE1139b23). Necessity refers to the class of eternal things that are unqualified and unchanging and 'what is eternal cannot come into being or cease to be' (NE1139B24-25). The *necessary truths* at which *episteme* aims, are thus ones that admit of no exception. A truth can be an *epistemic truth*, if and only if, its sphere of concern is the eternal and unchanging.

Furthermore, for Aristotle, theoretical knowledge must *always* be correct. He puts it thus: 'there is no such thing as correctness of knowledge, since there is no such thing as error of knowledge' (NE1142b10-11). Aristotle also re-states the unchangeable nature of *episteme* in his *Posterior Analytics*. There, he states that 'scientific knowledge cannot be other than what it is' (2009, p 8). For Aristotle, theoretical knowledge is infallible because its subject matter does not,

and cannot ever, alter²⁷⁹. Scientific knowledge can therefore arguably be defined in a traditional way as *eternally true belief*. Scientific knowledge, Aristotle explicates: ‘consists in forming judgements about things that are universal and necessary’ (NE 1140b30-31). The necessary and sufficient conditions of a person so knowing can therefore arguably be expressed as follows:

S theoretically knows that P if i) *P* is a necessary universal truth
ii) *S* has formed a correct judgement
about *P*

This definition of knowledge is markedly different from the one inferred from Aristotle by Zagzebski. *Episteme* (theoretical knowledge) is not, as Zagzebski puts it, *an act of intellectual virtue*. It is rather an intellectual virtue that *cannot entail action*²⁸⁰. It was not, moreover, a necessary condition of scientific knowledge for Aristotle that one must grasp *why* a given proposition is true, only that *it is always* true. Indeed, the first principles of scientific truths *cannot* be properly judged by scientific knowledge itself; and the same is true of art and practical wisdom (NE 1140b33-35). *Intuition* is rather ‘the state of mind that apprehends first principles (NE1141a8-9)’. Intuition seems to be the intellectual virtue that makes comprehension of theoretical knowledge possible. The necessary and sufficient conditions of intuitive knowledge might be articulated as follows:

S intuits that P if *S* grasps the principles that justify *P*'s eternal truth

The Aristotelian intellectual virtue of greatest import, however, is *wisdom*, which Aristotle declares to be ‘the most finished form of knowledge (NE1141a15-16)’. Wisdom has explanatory value, as the wise

²⁷⁹ Kristjánsson similarly comments that ‘*theoria* refers to knowledge of *necessary* (non-contingent) things that cannot be other than what they are. It is *a priori* knowledge of the unchanging’ (2007, p 163). Saugstad (2002 & 2005) also observes that the subject matter of *episteme* is eternal and certain.

²⁸⁰ At least that is action in the sensible world.

agent both knows and understands first principles (NE1141a16-18). Wisdom might therefore be defined as *justified eternally true belief*. The necessary and sufficient conditions of the wise agent on this account would be that;

S is *wise about P* if S i) knows that *P* is eternally true and
ii) S intuitively understands the principles
that justify *P*'s eternal truth.

Significantly, wisdom has normative import *because of* its subject matter. Aristotle himself refers to wisdom as 'scientific and intuitive knowledge of what is by nature most precious' (NE1141b4-5). Riggs notably defines wisdom in a similar way remarking that if knowledge is important, 'wisdom entails understanding the things that are most important (Riggs, 2007, p 221)'. Riggs suggests that wisdom would rank most highly in any hierarchy of virtues because of its particular *teleological* value and capacity to engender flourishing (*eudaimonia*) over the span of a person's whole life. Wisdom (*Sophia*), Aristotle says, does not directly *study* happiness, for this is the concern of practical wisdom (NE1143b20). However, wisdom does *produce* happiness for the person who possesses and exercises it (NE1144a3-5). Aristotle confirms the teleological primacy of the intellectual life in Book X.

'We ought, so far as in us lies, to put on immortality, and do all that we can to live in conformity with the highest that is in us...Indeed it would seem that this is the true self of the individual...Therefore for man, too, the best and most pleasant life is the life of the intellect, since the intellect is in the fullest sense the man. So this life will also be the happiest.' (NE 1177b35-1178a10,)

Aristotle, in Book 10 also states that *eudaimonia* is constituted by contemplation²⁸¹ (NE, 1177a18). I take him here to mean, contemplation of eternal matters, since he says that contemplation is

280 Curren (2000, p 67) also attributes to Aristotle the view that the life of contemplation is best.

the only activity that is always performed for its own sake (NE, 1177b1-2). By way of contrast, he also comments that we expect to benefit from activities that involve practical actions (NE, 1177b3-5). Purely theoretical virtues, then, are all concerned with truths that are in some way *eternally valuable*. The person with theoretical *knowledge* need only know that a given *p* is eternally true. The agent of intuitive virtue need only understand *why* that *p* is eternally true. The person of *wisdom* must *know* and be able to explain *why* *p* is eternally true. What distinguishes the *intellectually knowledgeable* from the *intellectually wise* agent is precisely this ability to know the *factual principles* of eternal matters and comprehend the *intuitions* that govern these facts. Crucially, though, the purely theoretical virtues are virtues because they enable the contemplation that constitutes the highest human flourishing. Indeed, the teleological value of any truth is determined for Aristotle by the extent to which it constitutes or contributes to flourishing. Truth is, to be sure, the *aim* of the intellect. However, truth is a target because of its particular relation to the end that supervenes on all others, that of happiness. To subvert Blackburn's (2001) aphorism: truth is *virtue's* handmaiden, as virtuous theoretical contemplation is the key component of flourishing.

The virtues of the *theoretical* intellect have the epistemic merit of defeating Gettier problems. Epistemic luck does not impinge upon the purely theoretical virtues because they only refer to a sphere in which luck, chance and change cannot occur. However, the problem with this eternal schema is that truths of genuine epistemological status are few and far between. Like Plato²⁸² before him, Aristotle seems to have thought that mathematics is one of the few forms of inquiry that can directly study eternal verities²⁸³. He suggests this by implication when he remarks that maths, unlike philosophy and natural science,

²⁸² At 2.2 it was indicated that Plato thought mathematics was extraordinarily effective at turning the soul towards truth.

²⁸³ In book 6, at any rate, he does not appear to identify any others. However, he does, as we shall see *imply* that practical wisdom, and arguably natural science, can generate necessary truths of a different sort, through systematic engagement with objects of experience.

‘deals with abstractions, whereas the first principles of the latter two are grasped only as the result of experience (1142a15-20)’. Taylor argues that *episteme* and *nous* appear ‘to be very special kinds of cognitive state, constituting at best only a small fraction of our total body of knowledge’ (Taylor, 1990, p 121). Taylor also suggests that Aristotle’s portrayal of theoretical knowledge in the *Ethics* is strictly limited to universal and necessary truths²⁸⁴. Taylor adds, however, that we often take ourselves to *know* truths about perceived objects that are neither universal nor necessary. Crucially, he states that Aristotle’s discussion of the intellectual virtues in Book VI precludes the possibility of there being any such type of perceptual knowledge. While I shall go on to dispute this aspect of Taylor’s argument, I agree with his other conclusion that Aristotle *elsewhere* unequivocally pronounces that human beings can have knowledge of perceptual objects.

In the *Posterior Analytics*, for example, Aristotle indicates that the repeated experience of sense-perceptions²⁸⁵ can bring forth natural scientific knowledge of objects in the world (PA, 2009, p 75). Aristotle also contrasted a sort of perceptual knowledge, with theoretical knowledge, in Chapter V of *De Partibus Animalium* (DP644b20-646a). There, he intimates that the investigation of eternal and imperishable objects brings great pleasure and value, but concedes that we ‘are better equipped to acquire knowledge about the perishable plants and animals because they grow beside us...and information about them is better and more plentiful (DP644b28-645a2)’. Seeking perceptual knowledge of human beings and other animals is not without value either (DP645a26-28). The study of natural things can also grant enormous pleasure (DP645a15-17). The idea that Aristotle reverses this tendency - that he neither recognises the possibility of,

²⁸⁴ Kristjánsson seems to agree with Taylor. He remarks that ‘Aristotle considered *theoria* to be incommensurable with practical (contingent) matters’ (2007, p163).

²⁸⁵ He calls this process ‘induction’. The pedagogical importance of learning by induction will be explored in the next chapter.

nor values, perceptual knowledge in the *Ethics* - must seriously undermine the legitimacy and usefulness of any epistemology constructed on the basis of this treatise. In the following section, it will be argued that Aristotle did imply that it was possible to have a type of knowledge of contingent matters in Book XI of his *Ethics*.

8.5 'Knowledge' of the contingent and the Practical Intellect

Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not for ever with thy veiled lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust.
Thou knows't 'tis common: all that lives must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.
Ay, madam, it is common. (Hamlet Act 1, Scene 2, Shakespeare 1992, p 9)

In this dramatic exchange, Gertrude, Queen of Denmark, implores her son Hamlet to both relent in grieving for his father and remain in the country. She also implies that it is commonly possible to have *knowledge* of finite and particular objects. Is it possible to draw the same conclusion from Aristotle's *Ethics*? He is, admittedly, far from clear on this matter. However, I think his utterances in Book VI regarding perception and knowledge of particulars warrant a more generous interpretation than that offered by Taylor. To start with, as Taylor himself acknowledges, none of Aristotle's major works specifically set out to address the nature of knowledge. Taylor concedes that issues of knowledge and its justification were of peripheral concern to Aristotle.

'On the whole, he does not seek to *argue* that knowledge is possible, but, assuming its possibility, he seeks to understand how it is realised in different fields of mental activity and how the states in which it is realised relate to other cognitive states of the agent.' (Taylor C, 1990, p 116)

I wholeheartedly agree with Taylor's sentiments. Indeed, on the basis of them, it is mildly perplexing to find him attributing to Aristotle's *Ethics* such a sceptical view of perception. It is apparent from Book VI that Aristotle's priority is to explain the value of various mental states in terms of the contributions they can make to *eudaimonia* rather than to knowledge formation. However, I also think that in Book VI Aristotle makes it quite clear that he 'assumes the possibility' of perceptual knowledge in at least two ways. First, when discussing political science (which is itself a variety of practical wisdom) he states that 'knowing one's own interests will be one species of knowledge, but it is widely different from the other species' (NE1141a35-NE1142a). Since Aristotle specifies that political science 'deals with particular circumstances' (NE1141a25), I think that it is fair to infer from this that Aristotle assumed that *knowledge* of particular things was possible. Theoretical knowledge of necessary truths is one type of (particularly valuable) knowledge, but there appears to be another: a sort of perceptual or practical knowledge of particular things and people. Secondly, on the basis of Aristotle's account of practical wisdom, I think there can be little doubt he thought that some sort of perceptual knowledge existed. Knowledge of particular things is arguably a necessary component of practical wisdom. It is to the mental states that make up the practical intellect that the present debate will now focus.

The practical intellect, Aristotle says, can *only* deliberate over things that do admit of exception. Aristotle argues that it is impossible to *deliberate* about eternal things, about things that are 'necessarily so' (NE1140b2). On the basis of the intellectual virtues examined so far, Aristotle seems to restrict theoretical knowledge (*episteme*) to a narrow class of things that human beings can know and comprehend, if not change. Contemplation of such knowledge might realise the highest human good, but people effectively remain impotent to *act* in the world on the basis of such knowledge. Aristotle does after all say that

wisdom is marvellous and profound, but practically useless (NE1141b6-8). It is practical wisdom that is concerned with human goods – wisdom (*Sophia*) itself is not (NE1141b9). He confirms the limited scope of the theoretical virtues by remarking that 'no process is set going by mere thought - only by purposive and practical thought, for it is this that also originates productive thought (NE1139a35-1139b)'. Only the *practical* part of the intellect, then, can initiate action²⁸⁶. It can do so, in part, because it has a much wider range of concerns than the theoretical intellect. Practical wisdom seems to require *knowledge* of both particular as well as ultimate things.

Aristotle pronounces that practical wisdom 'involves knowledge of particular facts, which become known from experience' (NE, 1142a15-16). Indeed, practical wisdom is *especially* concerned with knowledge of particular circumstances (NE, 1142a21-22). Practical wisdom and art are, as we have seen, states of the practical intellect that are truth directed. Both are concerned with variable rather than unchanging things. He describes *practical wisdom*, as: 'a true state, reasoned and capable of action with regard to things that are good and bad for man (NE 1140b5-7). *Art (techne* or technical skill) is defined as 'a productive state that is truly reasoned' (NE, 1140a20-21). In stark contrast to scientific knowledge, all art is the practice of bringing 'into being something that is capable of being or not being' (NE, 1140a13). Aristotle explains that the person practising art *causes* their product to exist. Natural objects have their origin in themselves (NE, 1140a10-16). The necessary and sufficient conditions for art might be expressed as follows:

S is *artful* if, they i) reason truly so as to

ii) bring into being particular object P

²⁸⁶ Saugstad similarly states that while man 'has no influence on the theoretical area...the practical area is affected by human action' (2005, p 353).

iii) where P is important and valuable²⁸⁷

However art, Aristotle says, unlike practical wisdom, can be neglected or forgotten. 'Whereas there is an excellence in art, there is no such thing in prudence...prudence is a virtue not an art' (NE, 1140b20-30). Why might Aristotle have wanted to so distinguish *techne* and *phronesis* here? There are, I think, at least two plausible explanations, both of which relate to his teleological conception of reason. Aristotle declares that the functions of art and practical wisdom do not include each other. 'Action is not production, nor production action'(NE 1140a5). Practical wisdom and technical skill aim at truth *and* action or production respectively, in the *finite realm*. However, the former is concerned with right or true *moral action* whereas the latter aims at true *production* or bringing into being. Practical wisdom consequently inherits a broader teleological role than technical skill, in at least two ways. Firstly, the moral actions that arise from proper exercise of practical wisdom are themselves necessary features of the flourishing life. Secondly, practical wisdom is the only part of the practical intellect that seems to involve an aspect of man's chief good, i.e. contemplation of eternal things.

While the conduct that is a necessary part of any moral virtue occurs in the realm of particulars the intellectual aspect of practical wisdom must take account of both *universals* and *particulars* (NE1141b15-17). Significantly, it is a sort of *perception* that enables practical wisdom to apprehend the ultimate particular (NE1141b26-30). Although the idea of an '*ultimate particular*', strikes one as being somewhat abstract, Aristotle does, I think, offer a plausible explanation of its meaning. He states that 'it is from particular

²⁸⁷ Spangler says that 'art is a good habit of the mind whereby the intellect has the firm disposition to be able to direct the making of things in a reasonable fashion' (1998, p 29). Kristjánsson (2007, p 158) similarly remarks that, the good state of *techné* is 'worthy products'. He adds that *techné* itself is 'correct thinking' based on a plan or design (*eidos*) that issues in making or production (*poesis*). This is probably the case, but it does also seem important to emphasise that the virtue of *techné* would not be complete without the element of production. Correct thinking in itself is not sufficient for the virtue as Aristotle specifies that *all* art is concerned with bringing into being.

instances that general rules are established. So these particulars need to be perceived; and this perception is intuition' (NE1143b3-5). I take Aristotle to mean that in moral matters there are certain unchanging principles that belong to the category of necessary truths²⁸⁸. The person of practical wisdom will with time and experience in the particular realm become able to apprehend the moral principles of the ultimate realm (NE1142a14-16).

The partial concern of practical wisdom with ultimate things is important as I do not think either Zagzebski or Roberts and Woods have properly accounted for it in their treatments of the intellectual virtues. Zagzebski²⁸⁹ and Roberts and Wood²⁹⁰ both indicate that *all* of their intellectual virtues just are, in a vital sense, manifestations of practical wisdom. Practical wisdom is 'theoretically necessary to make sense of morally right action and justified belief in a virtue theory' (Zagzebski, 1996, p 220). Roberts and Woods similarly indicate that practical wisdom involves pursuing knowledge²⁹¹. Zagzebski and Roberts & Wood seem to think that practical wisdom is a little like the master regulator of our intellectual inquiries. Zagzebski reasons that thinking itself is a form of acting. This may be so, but the thoughts and judgements she construes as actions from practical wisdom do not share the same concerns and qualities as the thoughts and purposes Aristotle ascribed to these.

To be sure, practical wisdom may provide knowledge of particular things but it ultimately expresses a sort of *moral* rather than theoretical knowledge²⁹², the value of which depends on proper

²⁸⁸ Kristjánsson (2007 p 162) seems to agree with this reading. He suggests that Aristotle endorses a 'universal ethical theory' where practical wisdom produces natural and normative generalities. Saugstad also remarks that '*phronesis* builds on two kinds of knowledge, knowledge of general and knowledge of particular matters' (2002, p 381). Dunne similarly indicates that *phronesis* can generate 'a type of universal knowledge' (1999, p 51).

²⁸⁹ See especially Zagzebski (1996 p 217-231).

²⁹⁰ See Roberts & Wood (2007) - especially their final chapter.

²⁹¹ Though the knowledge Roberts and Wood have in mind need not be rigorously defined or even necessarily obtained, as they explain in their final chapter (Roberts & Wood, 2007).

²⁹² Taylor (1990) also interprets Aristotle in this way.

moral action. Aristotle emphasises that the aim of the *action* component of practical wisdom is true *moral action* not true *epistemic* belief. The major function assigned to practical wisdom by Zagzebski and Roberts & Wood therefore appears to have more in common with the mental capacities Aristotle describes as *understanding* and *resourcefulness*. Although these states resemble practical wisdom they have at least four important differences. Firstly, actions out of practical wisdom, unlike those from resourcefulness and understanding²⁹³, *must be* distinctively moral. Secondly, practical wisdom involves deliberation about particulars *and* contemplation of absolutes (NE1141b15-17). The concerns of resourcefulness and understanding, in contrast, seem to be restricted to the realm of particulars. Thirdly, resourcefulness and understanding do not appear to be virtues. Aristotle, fourthly, fell short of saying that they could generate knowledge.

While he nowhere describes resourcefulness and understanding as *virtues*, Aristotle nevertheless implies they can have intellectual *value*. *Resourcefulness* is an intellectual quality that closely resembles practical wisdom as they both involve true and proper deliberation of particular things. What seems to distinguish these forms of deliberation is the connection the former, but not the latter has, to absolute ends and human flourishing (NE 1142b28-36). Aristotle states that resourcefulness *is* successful deliberation or inquiry (NE 1142b2-5) that involves reason and correct thinking (NE 1142b14-16). Indeed he defines it as ‘correctness in estimating advantage with respect to the right object, the right means and the right time’ (NE1142b26-28). It is not resourcefulness if the right particular end is achieved by false means (NE1142b23-25). Given this emphasis on correct thinking and inquiry and success in obtaining particular objects and ends in true ways, resourcefulness would seem to be an intellectual quality of considerable practical value. It would also seem to me to be of

²⁹³ And for that matter *cleverness* see (NE 1143b24-30).

particular interest to theorists like Roberts and Wood who after all think that the intellectual virtues just are habits that should regulate truth-seeking inquiry and thought in human affairs. At least some of the intellectual states they describe as *virtues*²⁹⁴ might be better classified (at least in terms of Aristotle's epistemology) as qualities of *intellectual resourcefulness*. However, for Aristotle, practical wisdom has a more fundamental purpose than the regulation of epistemic inquiry. It partly determines the *action* necessary for moral virtue and it partly constitutes the *wisdom* that is our highest human flourishing. I would therefore distinguish practical wisdom and resourcefulness accordingly.

S is *practically wise* if i) S correctly deliberates over p and
ii) P is a particular and eternal *moral* truth
iii) and S *acts*²⁹⁵ *appropriately* from this
wisdom

S is *intellectually resourceful* if i) S correctly deliberates over P when
ii) P refers to a particular matter and
iii) S properly obtains the end of P

Understanding is also concerned with variable rather than eternal things, but its aim is neither action nor production (NE 1143a4-6). Understanding and prudence share concerns but they 'are not the same, because prudence is imperative (since its end is what one should or should not do), and understanding only makes judgements' (NE 1143a8-10). I interpret Aristotle, moreover, to intimate that understanding effectively refers to good or *right* judgement about another person's account of *finite* (rather than necessary) matters (NE 1143a12-19). I infer this meaning from Aristotle because he compares

²⁹⁴ And I am thinking specifically here of the intellectual virtues they imply can have instrumental ends.

²⁹⁵ Again Kristjánsson (2007, p 158) would seem to agree on this point. He indicates that the good state of practical wisdom is wise action.

understanding to the process by which we develop scientific knowledge of eternal matters (NE 1143a13-14). When the subject matter is 'within the scope of prudence' (NE 1143a14), however, the 'act of judging is called understanding' (NE 1143a16-17). Understanding does seem to involve a mental process similar to that which occurs in the intellectual virtue of intuition (*nous*). However, understanding is concerned with particular and changing, rather than necessary and eternal, matters. Therefore it can be said that:

S understands that P if i) S forms a right judgement about P

ii) on the basis of an another's exposition of P

iii) when P refers to a particular matter

In summary, in book VI of the *Nichomachean Ethics* Aristotle explores a broad constellation of intellectual concepts that have a diverse range of concerns. I interpret Aristotle to be of the view that two types of knowledge are possible: scientific/theoretical; and perceptual/practical²⁹⁶. The former seems to be more valuable on account of its essential relation to necessary and ultimate rather than particular and contingent things. Aristotle could undoubtedly, however, have been more pellucid in regard to perceptual knowledge in Book VI. I think that problematic interpretations of his concept of practical wisdom would not have arisen had he unambiguously stated that traits like resourcefulness and understanding could generate a sort of practical or perceptual knowledge. His utterances do suggest that he *assumed* this view. In the subsequent section, the discussion will move to consider how resourcefulness, understanding and other desirable mental qualities ought to be educated.

²⁹⁶ In the subsequent chapter, possible educational ramifications of this interpretation will be explored.

8.6 Education as instruction and discipline?

'Prudence (*phronesis*) does not exercise authority over wisdom or over the higher part of the soul...for it does not use wisdom, but provides for its realization; and therefore issues orders not to it, but for its own sake.' (NE1145a7-11)

Over the course of this chapter, it has been put forward that the intellectual habits that matter most are those that generate different forms of knowledge and truth within a wider framework of human well-being and happiness. Aristotle's epistemology seems to have had such a distinctively teleological emphasis. Contrary to Zagzebski's schema (which places *practical wisdom (phronesis)* at the heart of all *epistemic* inquiry) I believe that Book VI reveals that *wisdom (Sophia)* is the intellectual virtue around which the others gravitate. Indeed, if the foregoing quote is indicative of Aristotle's general view, it seems fair to conclude that he thought the moral virtues (to which practical wisdom issues orders) are ultimately at the service of the intellectual virtues²⁹⁷. I therefore do not think that the distinction between the moral and intellectual virtues should be so readily dispensed with in the way that Zagzebski proposes.

On the basis of what Aristotle had to say about the seven mental aptitudes explored in sections 8.4 and 8.5, I think that only five of them (scientific knowledge, intuition, theoretical wisdom, *techne* and practical wisdom) can be confidently described as full intellectual virtues. Aristotle seems to have reserved the title of intellectual virtue to those mental states that directly contribute to flourishing through the attainment of truth. Whilst resourcefulness and understanding do not appear to be *virtues*, they are probably mental qualities Aristotle thought well worth fostering. As such, I think that teachers should try to help pupils acquire resourcefulness and understanding as well as the five better known intellectual virtues. How, though, did Aristotle

²⁹⁷ Spangler (1998, p 11-12) similarly holds that intellectual virtue is man's chief good although the moral virtues are necessary for the acquisition of intellectual virtue.

think that these numerous intellectual capacities ought to be developed? What are the *virtues* that teachers might need to promote them? Are there virtues in educational processes of teaching and discipline? What sort of curriculum moreover, might best enable pupils to form the character traits necessary for a life of intellectual *and* moral virtue? These are important questions that will be addressed in the final section of this thesis. In particular, it will be argued that education should centrally involve instructional encounter *and* pupil discipline.

Part Three

Discipline and Education *for* Virtue

Chapter 9: Instructional encounter and Discipline in Education

In this chapter, consideration is given to how neo-Aristotelian teaching approaches might positively influence pupil discipline. It will first be said that though much good teaching should *involve* virtuous *praxis*, teaching is not *per se* a virtuous *praxis*. In this respect, Aristotle appears to have thought that some desirable intellectual capacities could be proficiently taught without the *necessary* exercise of moral virtue. He also seems to have believed that instruction could help the young to form knowledge, intuition, wisdom, understanding and resourcefulness, as well as true moral and perceptual beliefs and technical skills. It will be argued that Aristotelian teaching should entail instruction and habituation. In discussing these processes, I hope to make clear that their virtuous pursuit presupposes: 1) that teachers' *themselves* possess a plurality of intellectual and moral qualities of character; and 2) that students repeatedly exercise the discipline required for each aspect of their learning and schooling. Importantly, discipline will be redefined in broader terms as an active process that can and should foster the development of virtue in school pupils. It will be argued that discipline may help pupils to form virtuous sentimental dispositions, especially if they are supported to overcome difficult feelings during worthwhile learning.

9.1 Is teaching itself a virtuous *praxis*?

'You say that teaching is itself a practice. I say that teachers are involved in a variety of practices and that teaching is an ingredient in every practice. And perhaps the two claims amount to very much the same thing; but perhaps not.' A. MacIntyre²⁹⁸ (MacIntyre & Dunne 2002, p 8-9)

When Alasdair MacIntyre and Joseph Dunne engaged in a philosophical 'dialogue' a few years ago (MacIntyre & Dunne, 2002), they

²⁹⁸ Dunne (2003) opens his further response to MacIntyre by discussing this very passage. It is not surprising that he does so, as I think MacIntyre has here articulated the essential differences between the two.

disagreed about whether or not teaching is, *per se*, a practice. When Dunne directly posed the question to MacIntyre, the latter maintained that ‘teaching itself is not a practice, but a set of skills and habits put to the service of a variety of practices’ (MacIntyre & Dunne, 2002, p 5). Dunne responded, stating ‘that teaching *is itself* a practice’ (MacIntyre & Dunne, 2002, p 7 & Dunne, 2003). Why do these philosophers reach the divergent conclusions that they do? There appear to be two principal reasons. Firstly, MacIntyre construes teaching as an activity whose goods are distinct from the actions that constitute it. Dunne, in contrast, thinks that the goods of teaching are part of the activity of teaching. As such, MacIntyre secondly insists that at least some subject disciplines are necessary for teaching, whereas Dunne does not. Put broadly, for MacIntyre, subject disciplines are the ‘goods’ of teaching whereas for Dunne teaching itself is²⁹⁹. Which philosopher holds the winning hand in this particular debate? It first seems necessary to briefly consider MacIntyre’s characterisation of a practice.

In his well-known work, *After Virtue* (1984), MacIntyre suggested that a *practice* is a complex activity concerned with the promotion and realisation of human goods (ibid pp 187-203). The pursuit of a practice, he said, depended on the goods in question being ‘internal’ rather than ‘external’ to the practice in question. MacIntyre appears to think that teaching cannot have goods internal to it, because it is only a ‘means’ to some further end, namely, student learning. As he puts it: ‘all teaching is for the sake of something else and so it does not have its own goods’ (MacIntyre & Dunne, 2002, p 9). What is the ‘something else’ here? MacIntyre indicates that the end of education, at which teaching aims, is the ‘development of its student’s powers’ (MacIntyre & Dunne, 2002, p 7). Importantly, MacIntyre suggests that some subject

²⁹⁹ MacIntyre does to be sure clearly hold teaching and especially education in high regard even if he does not think the former has its own goods. Dunne in turn is clear that teaching is not the only good in education. Indeed, as we shall see, he perhaps implies that the goods of teaching actually serve the more fundamental task of forming pupil virtue.

disciplines are necessary for such development of student powers; he thinks that some subjects ought to be part of a core curriculum. MacIntyre says that ‘there are some things that every child should be taught...Mathematics...English language and English literature...but also including at least one Icelandic saga...and a good deal of history together with...civic studies’ (MacIntyre & Dunne, 2002, p 14).

Dunne attempts to refute MacIntyre’s position in two ways. In conversation with MacIntyre, he firstly isolates aspects of MacIntyre’s notion of ‘practice’ and ‘tries to show’ how teaching can be included within its range (MacIntyre & Dunne, 2002, p 7). Notably, Dunne says that teaching (especially primary teaching) can be conceived of as a practice, because it has its own internal standards of excellence. He states that ‘the excellence of teachers is extended through greater realisations of excellence in their students’ (MacIntyre & Dunne, 2002, p 7). He secondly, in a later paper, adopts a different tactic and instead critiques MacIntyre’s ‘impoverished’ (Dunne, 2003) conception of teaching. Although Dunne eloquently brings to light some integral features of *good teaching*, I am not ultimately convinced that either of his strategies proves that teaching necessarily has *its own goods*. Dunne seems to imply³⁰⁰ that the goods he perceives as internal to teaching actually find deeper value in an end that is external to teaching: namely, the acquisition of virtues by pupils. Dunne says that what ‘makes teaching a distinct practice...is neither subject-matter *per se*, nor solicitous caring...what good teaching especially aims at is the kind of enablement in one practice that can bear on other practices, so that through all of them students acquire intellectual and moral virtues that are goods in their own lives’ (Dunne, 2003, p 368).

³⁰⁰ Dunne appears to here indicate that it is ‘through’ practices that pupils acquire virtues. Though it is perhaps not his intention to do so, this arguably gives rise to the conclusion that practices ‘lead’ to virtues. Virtues are (for Aristotle at any rate) more valuable than practices. A virtue, as we saw in chapter 4 involves action (*praxis*) and feeling for its own sake – *praxis* is only part of a virtue as we shall shortly see. Dunne certainly does suggest here that subject disciplines are not a necessary part of teaching (good or otherwise).

Although I remain unconvinced by Dunne's critiques, I will leave unanswered the question of whether or not teaching is a practice according to MacIntyre's formulation of the concept³⁰¹. What will become apparent, I hope, is that there are at least two reasons for thinking that teaching is not an Aristotelian³⁰² *praxis* (action). Firstly, nowhere in his corpus does Aristotle indicate that *praxis*³⁰³ is at all related to the activity of teaching. Secondly, Aristotle's comments on *praxis*, instruction and habituation, taken together, do seem to make it difficult to see how teaching could be, in and of itself, a form of *praxis*. In this chapter, I will therefore explore Aristotle's concept of instruction, through demonstration (at 9.2) and through induction (at 9.3). At 9.4, it will be explained that pupil reason must be actively engaged in such instruction if they are to become educated. Importantly, at 9.5 it will be suggested that teachers with virtuous personal qualities and practical dispositions are more likely to promote disciplined engagement with learning than those who rely on more technical and managerial approaches. At 9.6, I will argue that school discipline has most value when it: 1) constitutes successful intellectual instruction; and/or 2) centrally contributes to the habituation of children into morally virtuous dispositions. I will first turn to Aristotle's notion of *praxis* in the remainder of this section.

'Where there are ends distinct from actions, the results are by nature superior to the activities...the ends of the directive arts are to be preferred in every case to those of the subordinate ones, because it is for the sake of the former that the latter are pursued'. (NE1094a5-6)

³⁰¹ However, I would be inclined to sympathise with Carr (2003b). Carr suggests that MacIntyre's notion of practice involves 'a public project with a socially defined point or purpose' (ibid, p 261). Importantly, Carr thinks Aristotle's virtue theory better explains (than MacIntyre's practice), the forms of 'moral association' involved in the project of good teaching. For a nuanced account of why Dunne and Wilfred Carr are mistaken to construe teaching as *praxis* and excellent teaching as *praxis* guided by *phronesis*, see chapter 11 of Kristjánsson (2007).

³⁰² Kristjánsson (2007, p 172) I think rightly observes that MacIntyre's notion of practice 'coincides only partially with Aristotle's *praxis*. MacIntyre's concept is broader than Aristotle's. They do however, as we shall see, both seem to agree that the goods and goals of teaching are often external to it.

³⁰³ I owe this insight to Kristjánsson (2007, p 170).

The preceding passage from the opening paragraph of the *Nicomachean Ethics* may help us get right to the nub of Aristotle's notion of *praxis*; and to the question of whether or not teaching is itself a mode of *praxis*. What should perhaps be drawn from this is that *praxis* has 'an end in itself (namely good ethical conduct)', (Kristjánsson, 2007, p 170). The end of action (*praxis*), as Aristotle puts it 'is merely doing *well*...with regard to things that are good and bad for man' (NE1140a7-8). However, *praxis* as such, should not be confused with virtue³⁰⁴. In chapter five, it was established that the moral virtues are states of action and feeling (*praxis kai pathe*) performed for their own sake. *Praxis* is the action component in a virtue; it is the realisation of the good in action. But *praxis* is not morally virtuous when it is unaccompanied by right feeling and/or reason. Thus, the performance of virtue is always for its own sake, whereas the performance of *praxis* need not be. In subsequent sections, it will become apparent that whilst teaching is often a 'directive art', it need not be a virtuous *praxis*.

9.2 Aristotelian Instruction I: Deductive Demonstration

Although Aristotle's moral virtues have been the subject of much fruitful discussion in contemporary educational philosophy, relatively little interest has been shown in his intellectual virtues³⁰⁵. That the intellectual virtues have not aroused much curiosity in education might in part be explained by the fact that the *Nicomachean Ethics* offers us an epistemology with particularly exacting criteria that some³⁰⁶ have claimed excludes the possibility of perceptual knowledge. However, as we saw in the last chapter, Aristotle's references to knowledge of particular things in the *Ethics*, and especially in the *De Partibus Animalium* and *Posterior Analytics*,

³⁰⁴ MacIntyre also distinguishes virtue from practice (1984, p 187). He emphasises that his 'argument will not in any way imply that virtues are *only* exercised in the course of what I am calling practices'.

³⁰⁵ Dunne 1993 & 1999, Curren 1999 & 2000, Spangler 1998, Steutel & Spiecker 1997, Steutel 1998, Saugstad 2002 & 2005, Kristjánsson, 2007 being some notable exceptions.

³⁰⁶ See for example Taylor (1990).

suggest that he assumed there were two varieties of knowledge, both of which had value. Indeed, in the last chapter it was argued that Aristotle's epistemology emphasised the significance of a wide range of intellectual qualities.

In the remainder of this chapter, we shall now see that a coherent account may also be inferred from the same Aristotelian works³⁰⁷ of how such intellectual qualities (including theoretical knowledge, true perceptual and moral belief, and productive reasoning) can be fostered in the young. Although there is not an Aristotelian treatise specifically devoted to teaching (Spangler, 1999, p 4) I think that it is reasonable to ascribe four main pedagogical imputations to him on the basis of these three texts. The proficient teacher must: firstly, possess knowledge or true reason regarding the subject in which they are to instruct in; secondly, be able to discern the current intellectual qualities of his or her pupils; thirdly, be able to advance these same qualities, often through shaping the judgements of pupils; fourthly, be able to help students form the habits of thinking, acting and feeling, required for right moral action.

In Book VI of the *Ethics* Aristotle specifies that 'all scientific knowledge is supposed to be teachable and its object capable of being learnt.' (NE, 111139B24-26) Aristotle adds that 'scientific knowledge implies the ability to demonstrate' (NE1140a33-34). Indeed, instruction is so central to the possession of *episteme* that Taylor (1990) in places defines it as *demonstrative*, rather than scientific or theoretical knowledge. Arguably, possession of scientific knowledge requires the wherewithal to demonstrate it to, and advance its development in, others. Spangler seems to agree with this interpretation³⁰⁸. In relation to theoretical knowledge, she states: 'Aristotle holds that the teacher must know' (Spangler, 1998, p 18) adding that 'the activity of teaching is

³⁰⁷ That is the: *Ethics* and especially in the *De Partibus Animalium* and *Posterior Analytics*.

³⁰⁸ Craig (1990) also famously suggested that the concept of knowledge arose in Ancient Greece in the first place to identify those people whose testimony could be trusted.

a sign of his knowledge' (ibid, p 19). Suggesting that teachers ought to possess aspects of *episteme* is perhaps not as speculative and abstract as it sounds. Mathematics and geometry do after all seem to have been important aspects of this form of knowledge³⁰⁹. Teachers (at least primary school and maths) would seem to require such mathematical knowledge if they are to properly teach it. However, as we shall see in the subsequent chapter, it is a matter of concern that many Scottish primary school teachers report either: a lack of confidence in; or are mistakenly confident about, their ability to foster learning in science and Maths.

In the previous chapter, an important distinction was observed between the virtues of the theoretical and practical intellect. In discussing each part of the intellect, it became apparent that (Aristotelian) theoretical knowledge (*episteme*) referred to a narrow range of unchanging things. Importantly, however, it was also argued that it may be possible to have a different sort of knowledge, of objects of perception. Can this perceptual knowledge, like *episteme*, also be demonstrated? Aristotle is not explicitly clear about this, but he seems of the view that it can be. He says that 'demonstrations may be either...universal or particular' (PA, 2009 p 37), but concludes that universal demonstrations are better because they yield greater knowledge³¹⁰. Barnes states that Aristotle does not restrict his theory of demonstration to mathematical disciplines: 'on the contrary, he strongly implies that he is talking of scientific knowledge and the sciences in general' (Barnes, 1969, p 137).

Aristotle says that the first principles of natural science and philosophy, unlike those of mathematics, are only grasped through

³⁰⁹ As we saw at section 8.4, maths and geometry appear to be the only disciplines of *episteme* that Aristotle explicitly identifies in book VI of his *Ethics*.

³¹⁰ This is of course broadly consistent with his epistemology from the *Ethics* where he appeared to value theoretical truths more highly than practical ones because of the certitude that they carry. Incidentally, Spangler (1998) is also of the view that demonstration is a method that can be used to develop knowledge that is less than certain.

experience. He states that the young can ‘repeat the doctrines’ of natural science ‘without actually believing them’ (NE1142a18-22). Arguably, Aristotle is here suggesting that *knowledge* of material matters depends on sustained experiential engagement with them³¹¹. Although the young cannot yet *know* the first principles of objects of experience, they can arguably form and restate true beliefs in regard to them, on the basis of the teaching of others. Aristotle’s only says after all, that the young *need not* believe the doctrines that they repeat; he does not say that they *cannot* believe them. His utterances regarding the potential of the young to reproduce doctrines of natural science and philosophy suggest to me that they could have true beliefs regarding real world objects, if they have received ‘true’ teachings.

It is certainly plausible to hold that while pupils may not yet be able to justify some true beliefs in the rigorous way required for knowledge, they can still form true beliefs based upon the reliable expositions of others. A solid case can therefore be made for saying that teachers must have some knowledge of the subjects they plan to teach so that they can help pupils to arrive at true beliefs about them. How, though, should such new knowledge be introduced? In the *Ethics*, Aristotle suggests that arguments must proceed from what is known by learners (NE 1095a30-1095b5). Indeed, for Aristotle, the necessary starting point of all instruction is knowledge that is already grasped by the learner. This view becomes particularly evident upon scrutiny of his *Posterior Analytics*.

‘ALL instruction given or received by way of arguments proceeds from pre-existent knowledge...The mathematical sciences and all other speculative disciplines are acquired in this way...for each of these...make use of old knowledge to impart new’.
(*Posterior Analytics*, 2009 p 3)

In the *Posterior Analytics*, Aristotle prescribes that instruction must employ what is known, so as to make known, what is not. He

³¹¹ He certainly makes clear that this is his view in the *Posterior Analytics*, as we shall shortly see.

explains that new knowledge can be generated from old in two ways. He states that ‘we learn either by induction or demonstration’ (PA, 2009 p 29). He adds that ‘demonstration develops from universals, induction from particulars’ (Posterior Analytics, 2009 p 29). He says that what we know (epistemologically), ‘we do know by demonstration’ (PA, 2009 p 4). He broadly defines such demonstration as a ‘syllogism that proves the cause’ (PA, 2009 p 39) of a given matter. Aristotle’s explanation of demonstration (*apodeixis*) in the *Posterior Analytics* may strike the modern reader as more than a little obscure³¹². Comprehension of his theory is not helped by the fact that Aristotle does not, anywhere in his corpus, provide a single unambiguous example of a demonstration (Barnes, 1969). Despite these challenges however, it does seem possible to bring out the pedagogical import of this concept. Aristotle suggests that demonstration is a specific type of logical, step by step, deductive movement from known to unknown (Barnes³¹³ 1969 & Spangler 1998). Aristotle defines deduction (*sullogismos*) as follows:

‘A *deduction* is a discourse in which, certain things having been supposed, something different from those supposed results of necessity because of their being so’. (Prior Analytics 24b18-20)

In the *Prior Analytics*³¹⁴ Aristotle suggests that deductions involve three related terms (PrA25b32) or premises that affirm or deny something (PrA24a15-16). He says that a deduction is ‘*complete* if it stands in need of nothing else besides the things taken in order for the necessity to be self evident’ (PrA24b23-24). Thus, deductive demonstrations arguably involve the use of two propositions that are known to be true by learners to generate a third proposition which up

³¹² Barnes (1969) makes much the same point at the start of his article devoted to Aristotle’s theory of demonstration.

³¹³ Aristotle says that ‘a demonstration is a kind of deduction, but not every deduction is a demonstration’ (Prior Analytics 25b30-31). Barnes explains that a demonstration is one out of fourteen types of deduction delineated by Aristotle.

³¹⁴ Smith, in his introduction to his translation of the *Prior Analytics* (1989), indicates that there has been much controversy regarding the dating of this work and its relationship to the *Posterior Analytics*. However, Smith remarks that; ‘I take the *Prior Analytics* to be what Aristotle says it is: a theoretical preliminary to the *Posterior*’ (1989, xiii). As such, this would seem to be a sensible point of reference when trying to understanding Aristotle’s theory of instruction.

until that point had been unknown to them³¹⁵. An example might help here. If in a previous mathematics lesson, a class had established that 2 plus 2 of any x , always equals four of that x , it could be subsequently demonstrated that Paul will have four tickets to a football match, if it was also previously known that he: already had two; and is given two extra by his brother.

- 1) (previously known premise) $2x + 2x = 4x$
- 2) (previously known premise) Paul *had* two tickets ($2x$) to the football match and *has* been given two more ($2x$)
- 3) (new knowledge) Paul *now* has four tickets to the football match³¹⁶. This may also be expressed as: $2x + 2x = 4x$

Such demonstrations are highly formal: deductive, rather than experiential, proofs. It is not necessary for Paul or the football tickets to be present in the class in order to demonstrate that he now has (in theory) four tickets; the truth of this becomes evident through logical inference. Aristotle does, however, emphasise that we cannot generate new truths from old, without some sort of prior reference to the world of experience. Aristotle says that ‘since it is possible to familiarise the pupil with even the so-called mathematical abstractions only through induction...it is consequently impossible to grasp universals except through induction’ (PA, 2009 p 29). Aristotle’s reasoning seems basically sound here. In the infant classroom children often seem to grasp abstract numbers by first counting, subtracting and adding with concrete blocks, or even their fingers. But though demonstration requires previous experiential knowledge, it does not as a process

³¹⁵ Barnes (1969, p 148) Smith (2007) and Spangler (1998, p 6) all describe deduction/demonstration in more or less this way. I would however be inclined to disagree with Spangler’s view that deduction involves a movement from two known general truths to an unknown particular one. It seems to me that deduction involving epistemic content may also remain at the universal level.

³¹⁶ While the example of a deduction given here may not precisely conform to any formulated by Aristotle in the *Prior* or *Posterior Analytics*, it is hoped that it will help to show that *deductive* demonstrations typically involve two related premises (at least one of which is necessarily true) being used to generate new knowledge. The new knowledge here is not a new necessary truth (for $2x + 2x = 4x$ was already known) but a particular one, pertaining to the number of tickets now in Paul’s possession.

employ experience, but logic. Aristotle specifies that syllogistic demonstration cannot, in the end, be generated by or from, sense information. He informs us that ‘scientific knowledge is not possible through the act of perception’ (PA, 2009 p 4). But how did Aristotle characterise inductive learning from perception and experience?

9.3 Aristotelian Instruction II: Inductive and experiential learning

In explaining the process of induction (*epagôgê*), Aristotle says that we ‘must start by observing a set of similar...individuals and consider what element they have in common’ (PA, 2009 p 69). He continues his discussion with an example, saying that if inquiring into ‘the essential nature of pride...we should examine instances of proud men we know of to see what, as such, they have in common’ (PA, 2009 p 69). He implies that an ‘inferential movement’ from particular to general may be made on the basis of these observations, with certain common traits of pride becoming apparent in the process. This reasoning also implies that any inferred conclusion may be more robust, if observations of ‘several’ (PA, 2009, p 69) proud men are made.

Later in the text, Aristotle more clearly indicates that he perceived a correlation between giving objects of experience sustained attention, and the development of reliable natural scientific knowledge and/or true artful reasoning. Aristotle states that ‘out of sense perception comes to be what we call memory, and out of frequently repeated memories of the same thing develop experience’ (PA, 2009, p 75). He immediately thereafter implies that when certain actions or perceptions are repeated, stable universal truths can arise in the soul. He says that it is ‘from experience again’ that ‘the skill of the craftsman and the knowledge of the man of science’ (PA, 2009 p 75) originate. Aristotle’s choice of the word ‘experience’ seems especially significant here, as it connects with his earlier noted assertion that it takes time and experience to acquire natural scientific knowledge

(NE1142a18-22); and, for that matter, practical wisdom (NE1142a14-16). It also makes clear that Aristotle thought *techne* (art) was acquired in a similar way – with time and repeated experiences. In the final chapter, Aristotle’s view that that all *good* craftsmen must develop their productive skills under the guidance of a teacher³¹⁷ (NE, 1103b7-12) will also be discussed.

Barnes concludes that Aristotle’s theory of demonstration was not intended ‘to guide or formalise scientific research: it is concerned exclusively with the teaching of facts already won...it offers a formal model of how teachers should *impart* knowledge’ (1969, p 138). Barnes therefore says that the main function of induction, like that of demonstration, is to instruct. Put broadly, Aristotle’s theory of instruction seems to have involved both formal reasoning through logic (demonstration/deduction) and more regular and habitual exposure to the deliverances of sense experience (induction). On this view, it seems that one cannot grasp universal knowledge without at least some engagement with the world of experience. The purpose of Aristotelian instruction is to help learners use the reason and experience that they have, to develop intellectual qualities they (prior to the teaching), do not. Particular intellectual qualities that would appear to be thus teachable include: wisdom, true perceptual and moral belief, and true artful production.

Arguably, Aristotle thought that there are various valuable intellectual qualities that can only be truly developed by different means³¹⁸. Moreover, though instruction was not a unitary process, his account of demonstration significantly implies that he thought teaching was not so much *praxis* (action) but rather *poesis* (making);

³¹⁷ Sherman also interprets this passage in the same way. She remarks that ‘since the capacities are not latent excellences a teacher must be on hand to direct the progress’ (2004, p 180).

³¹⁸ Saugstad (2002 & 2005) at first sight similarly suggests that Aristotle broadly endorsed employing different instructional methods to suit different bodies of knowledge. Saugstad’s (2002) argument that Aristotle developed a broad theory of knowledge does not in any way however reflect Aristotle’s view. As we saw in the previous chapter, Aristotle in his *Ethics* rather developed a very narrow theory of knowledge (*episteme*) within a nuanced discussion of different intellectual virtues and qualities.

and, in particular, the production of new knowledge and intellectual qualities in learners. Kristjánsson (2007, p 172) similarly suggests that Aristotelian teaching is more like a process of making than action. He states that: 'the goods of teaching are *only* understandable independent of the practice, because the end of that practice – the production of moral and/or intellectual virtue in the student – is a product beyond the activity' (2007, p 171).

Spangler (1998, p 29-32) actually describes Aristotle's concept of teaching as *poesis*, not *praxis*. In her systematic discussion of Aristotelian pedagogy, Spangler says that Aristotle 'maintains that teaching is a process which must be built on the knowledge possessed by the student...the teacher cannot instruct his pupils if he proceeds from ideas unfamiliar to them (Spangler, 1998, p 4)'. In order to instruct properly, it seems that teachers must be able to assess reliably the current state of pupil knowledge. What character traits might help them to do this? From an Aristotelian perspective, it is arguable that teacher discernment of current pupil knowledge and aptitude, would involve (ideally) practical wisdom, but at least, intellectual resourcefulness. As was explained at 8.5, a sort of practical wisdom may engender knowledge of people³¹⁹.

Ideally, then, teachers ought to be practically wise enough to be able to assess³²⁰ the existing knowledge of their students, so as to impart new knowledge. However, the quality of intellectual resourcefulness might also support proficient instruction, particularly so, if teaching is narrowly conceived as the forming of new knowledge

³¹⁹ At the passage (NE1141a35-NE1142a) Aristotle suggests that political science is a species of practical wisdom that enables knowledge of particular things and people. The perceptual knowledge in question is here distinguished from epistemic knowledge of the unchanging.

³²⁰ Teachers would in this respect also need to work in a climate where formal pupil assessment is consistent and valued. In the next chapter we shall see that curricular developments in Scotland may undermine rather than promote a teachers capacity to reliably assess some pupil knowledge/and or skills.

in others³²¹. As we saw at 8.5, resourcefulness is an intellectual quality that may enable correct thinking of a means to end sort. Arguably, such thinking may equip teachers with sufficient awareness of their pupils' current intellectual qualities for instruction to proceed successfully. Kristjánsson remarks that 'there need be no logical connection between a teacher's morality and the goodness of the product of teaching' (2007, p 171). *Instruction* ought to involve moral virtues, but it seems that it logically need not³²². Still, while some *instruction* need not in itself require virtue from teachers at 9.5, I will try to show that proper *habituation* into moral virtues does necessitate teacher possession of such character traits. In the following section, I will first consider some of the qualities of the *pupil* who is, or can be, successfully educated through instruction.

9.4 Understanding, intellectual authority and instructional encounter

In relation to every study and investigation, humbler or more valuable alike, there appear to be two kinds of proficiency. One can be properly called knowledge of the subject, the other as it were a sort of educatedness. For it is characteristic of an educated man to be able to judge what is properly expounded and what is not. This in fact is the kind of man that we think the generally educated man is'. (DP, 639a1-11)

Given that 'the entire *De Partibus Animalium* is a contribution to general education' (Reeve, 1996, 193)³²³, it is surprising that it has been largely neglected in recent educational philosophy. As the foregoing passage from this text illustrates, Aristotle distinguishes between those who have a deep knowledge of a subject and those who are more

³²¹ Spangler (1998, p vii) for example restricts her Aristotelian account of teaching to 'the explaining of a given subject matter'. However, at 9.5 I will maintain that this does not reflect the spirit of Aristotle's wider ethical thought.

³²² Possession of the intellectual virtue of episteme appears to be a prerequisite for mathematical demonstrations. However, as we saw in the previous chapter Aristotle does not seem to have classified knowledge of particular matters as an intellectual virtue. As such, it seems *logically* possible to instruct without the necessary involvement of virtue, intellectual or moral.

³²³ Reeve also points out this text is a study of natural science too. Whilst the text does offer rich insight into Aristotle's views on education it does seem to have natural science rather than education as its principal focus.

generally educated in respect of it. He indicates that *educated persons* are largely defined by their ability to correctly judge the accounts of matters presented to them by other people. Learners would seem to have the best possible chance of becoming educated, if the delivery and content of expositions that they listen to is both true and aptly pitched. Moreover, in *De Partibus Animalium*, Aristotle also makes clear that it is possible to have two different types of knowledge: eternal/universal and contingent/particular³²⁴. Arguably, Aristotle's texts³²⁵ taken together, suggest that he thought that exposition, demonstration and induction could advance various intellectual qualities in the young, and so help them become educated, if not fully virtuous.

Although scientific knowledge and wisdom belong to a restricted class of ultimate things, Aristotle emphasises that it is possible for the young to 'develop ability in geometry and mathematics and become wise in such matters' (NE1142a13-14). Thus, Aristotle thought that young persons could attain not only aspects of knowledge, but *wisdom*. This is so, he says, because the principles governing mathematics are not hard to see (1142a20-22). In chapter 8, it was noted that it is *intuition* that enables comprehension of the reasons that justify scientific knowledge. As such, intuition would seem to be an intellectual virtue that is especially important to cultivate in pupils (at least in mathematics teaching), as it is this quality that enables wider understanding of scientific knowledge. Arguably, wisdom (*Sophia*)³²⁶ should be developed through a combination of deductive

³²⁴ Though Aristotle does not speak of the hypothetically necessary in the *Ethics* his general logic in *De Partibus Animalium* is, I think, entirely consistent with the two types of knowledge he alludes to in his *Ethics*. He says that there is a necessary cause for all natural and eternal things, but states that this cause is not present in the same way in each (DP639b20-25). 'The *absolutely necessary* is present in what is eternal, but it is the *hypothetically necessary* that is present in everything that comes to be' naturally (DP639b24-26) He reiterates that it is the practical intellect that investigates particular matters because 'none of the abstract objects can be studied by natural science' (DP641b12-13). Conversely, the pure 'intellect has the intelligibles as its object' (DP641b1). For further discussion of this treatise see previous chapter.

³²⁵ I refer here specifically to the *Ethics*, the *Posterior Analytics* and *De Partibus Animalium*.

³²⁶ Wisdom, as we saw in the previous chapter necessarily contains knowledge and intuition. It is worth mentioning that Aristotle also seems to have perceived contemplation of the stars as a form of

demonstration and inductive inquiry. However, Aristotle's virtues of the theoretical intellect only refer to a narrow range of cognitive activities. For the purposes of education, pupils should therefore also be initiated into other bodies of knowledge and be encouraged to experience a range of intellectual challenges, during their schooling.

In the last chapter, 'understanding'³²⁷ was defined as the capacity to judge properly someone else's account of contingent matters. Given Aristotle's previously noted remarks in the *De Partibus Animalium* about the educated man being able to judge correctly what is expounded, understanding would also seem to be an intellectual quality of paramount educational importance. Understanding is arguably necessary for, and even distinctive of, being generally educated - for it is understanding that would seem to enable prospective learners to grasp the meaning of the utterances of others. Indeed, Aristotle implies that those who exhibit understanding are good at learning. He remarks that we 'often say understand instead of learn' (NE1143a17-20). The process of becoming educated seems to hinge: firstly, on the truthfulness and reliability of the pronouncements of those who know, and; secondly, on the listener's ability to actively engage with, rightly judge, and learn from, those pronouncements.

Richard Peters (1973) argued that teachers are put in positions of 'provisional authority' for school based learning, because they have 'qualified' as authorities in their subjects. While teachers *begin* the teaching process as knowledgeable authorities in their subjects, their purpose is to guide those they are teaching to a similar position of knowledgeable authority. This is what makes the teacher's authority only provisional. The role of the teacher is manifestly not, he says, 'to stuff the minds of the ignorant with bodies of knowledge' (Peters, 1973, p

theoretical wisdom (NE1141b1-3). The ability to so contemplate heavenly bodies of stars may not be easily fostered by either induction or deduction.

³²⁷ I articulated the necessary and sufficient conditions of understanding at 8.5.

47). Authoritative teachers must rather make use of their knowledge and experience to help pupils get on the inside of a subject. Similarly, whilst Aristotle's theory of *demonstration* does *prima facie* resemble the sort of formal and traditional pedagogy much criticised by child-centred educationists³²⁸, there are at least two ways in which his theory of instruction may (taken as a whole) overcome any such objections.

'The problem of education is twofold: first to know, and then to utter...and the best of teachers can impart only broken images of the truth which they perceive...all speech, written or spoken, is in a dead language until it finds a willing and prepared hearer'. (Stevenson³²⁹, 1914, p 3)

First, as we saw at 9.2, even logical demonstrations require teacher comprehension of both the subject to be taught and the current level of knowledge of students. Furthermore, current pupil knowledge must have been, somewhere along the way, derived from experience. Crucially, demonstration does not involve pupils merely 'passively receiving' knowledge either. Far from it; for though the teacher may instruct pupils in the content of a particular subject, it is the pupils who must, ultimately, *move themselves* towards new knowledge. Pupils must actively listen and reflect in any instructional encounter, if their intellectual capacities are to be truly furthered. As Spangler puts it: 'without this active principle, the teacher could not achieve his purpose...the teacher...must depend upon the light of reason within the student' (1998, p 17). *Secondly*, induction would seem to be an instructional process whereby learners are repeatedly required to engage with a given skill, or subject of experience, under the guidance of teachers.

On this view, good instruction can be broadly conceived as a

³²⁸ Traditional and child centred theories of teaching were explored in chapters 2 and 3 respectively.

³²⁹ Robert Louis Stevenson's interesting essay, *Lay Morals*, suggests he thought education was a matter of considerable moral importance. Moreover, the general tone of the essay has both Christian and Aristotelian hues.

dynamic rather than passive educational encounter, relying upon the mutual effort of teacher and pupil alike. The teacher must be conversant with a subject and be able to communicate it to pupils in such a way that the intellectual powers of the latter may be enhanced. Pupils must also in turn try to make known their current interests, experiences and aptitudes, so that the teacher can ensure that pupil engagement in learning is appropriately directed. One may thus define Aristotelian instruction generally as any educational encounter in which a teacher deliberately guides the active development of students' intellectual capacities³³⁰. Sherman has suggested that Aristotle's theory of instruction is at least partly dialogical in character. She says that education is 'a matter of bringing the child into more critical discriminations' (2004, p 172) through spoken exchange about the matter at hand. Whilst Sherman's interpretation of instruction probably goes beyond what Aristotle says about it in the *Posterior Analytics*, I see no reason to question her conclusion. Teachers should be authorities³³¹ in their subject or subjects. They should be able to know and utter; but they must, at the right times, be prepared and able to listen to their students' utterances too. How, though, might teachers support more active pupil engagement in learning? What are the personal qualities of the good teacher?

9.5 The virtuous teacher and the disciplined pupil

In order to establish discipline and authority with a class of variously motivated and potentially unruly teenagers, teachers need to acquire or have acquired a range of qualities of personality and character more than any of the peg management skills' (Carr, 2003b, p 261)

³³⁰ This definition is influenced by Hirst's and Peters's general characterisation of teaching as 'the teacher intending to bring about learning' (1975, p 78). Pring has similarly argued that to 'teach is to engage intentionally in those activities which bring about learning' (2001, p 105).

³³¹ For excellent accounts of the concept of authority see especially De Jouvenel (1997) but also Winch (1967). De Jouvenel defines authority as 'the faculty of gaining another man's assent' (1997 p 35). Whilst both authority and power are concerned with getting one's proposals accepted, De Jouvenel stresses that authority is very different from power. Authority entails voluntary association whereas power involves intimidation and threats or actual, recourse to force. For other important discussions of the role of authority in education see Peters (1967, 1970) and Smith (1985).

In his article 'Character in Teaching', Carr suggests that teaching proficiency is significantly enhanced by the 'possession and exercise of personal qualities and practical dispositions that are not entirely reducible (if at all) to academic knowledge or technical skills' (2007b, p 369). Some particularly praiseworthy character traits that he identifies include: trustworthiness; respectfulness; fairness; patience; loyalty; discretion; conscientiousness; good humour; wit; optimism; self-restraint; persistence and liveliness. Notably, he suggests that learning and class discipline may often break down, not so much because of a failure of pedagogical or managerial technique, but more due to underlying shortcomings in the personal character of the teacher. Carr implies that authentic pupil involvement in learning is most dependent on teachers being able to make practically wise and context specific judgements that promote the delivery of interesting and relevant lessons. While 'behaviour incentive schemes...can go some way to restoring order...teachers may forfeit the attention of pupils because their lessons are insufficiently stimulating' (ibid, p 380). However, the ability to capture student imagination and convey the educational importance of a given subject is not the prime reason for supposing that teachers ought to be certain sorts of people rather than others. Virtuous character is, Carr says, an end in itself, rather than just a means to pupil learning. Teachers who are virtuous would, in short, seem well placed to find flourishing and fulfilment in their own lives too.

Teachers who have friendly and agreeable relations with students are also probably more likely to bring on their learning, than those with awkward and/or adversarial approaches to association and communication. Kristjánsson³³² actually classifies agreeableness as a moral virtue of teachers. Agreeableness, he says is a sort of 'social glue that binds relationships and communities. By exuding likeability,

³³² See (Kristjánsson, 2007, chapter ten) for account of this argument.

positivity and good manners, the agreeable person strengthens that glue, and thus contributes to *eudaimonia*' (2007, p 142). At all events, good teaching probably does most often involve a considerable degree of personal give and take, and dialogue³³³ between teacher and pupil/s. Both parties must share a commitment to the learning at hand. Moreover, teachers who themselves possess commendable character traits may well be able to inspire and guide the development of *morally* virtuous dispositions in pupils.

'Aristotle's favoured teaching methods are those of habituation and direct instruction'. (Kristjánsson, 2007 p 171)

So far, discussion in this chapter has focused on how instruction in schools might help to bring on the *intellectual* aptitudes of learners'. However, I now want to briefly consider how teaching might also deliberately set out to shape the *moral* formation of students. Whilst Spangler implies that Aristotelian teaching should be narrowly directed towards developing intellectual virtues, I think that the scope of his theory should be broadened to encompass education of the moral virtues too³³⁴. In the second section of this thesis, it was after all made clear that Aristotle placed much stock on initiating the young into proper moral habits. What role might schools have in any such *habituation*? Pupils will inevitably bring with them to school a host of habits acquired outside of school. However, I think that schools can, should and actually do set out to positively influence the habituation of young persons.

³³³ Oakeshott famously characterised education as a conversation between generations of mankind. He says that 'As civilised human beings, we are the inheritors, neither of an enquiry about ourselves and the world, nor of an accumulating body of information, but of a conversation, begun in the primeval forests and made more articulate over the course of centuries. It is a conversation which goes on in public and within each of ourselves... Education, properly speaking, is an initiation into the skill and partnership of this conversation.' (Oakeshott, 1959, p 11)

³³⁴ Aristotle himself implies that education must develop both the intellectual and moral talents of the young. He says that 'we must not forget the question of what education is to be, and how one ought to be educated... for there are no generally accepted assumptions about what the young should learn... nor yet is it clear whether their education ought to be conducted with more concern for the intellect than for the character of the soul.' (Politics, 1337a)

Arguably, subject content, teacher character and style, and attitudes to discipline are factors that particularly impact upon the habits pupils acquire; at least pupil habits in school. As such, it seems highly desirable for curricula, teacher character/styles and disciplinary approaches to be centrally directed towards helping pupils to develop habits of thinking, acting and feeling that are conducive to their long term flourishing. Indeed, I think that the main purpose of discipline in schools should be to enhance the moral and intellectual capacities of students as far as circumstances allow. Whilst teacher authority may well contribute to pupil discipline, the process of discipline itself may also help to lay the foundation for such intellectual and moral progress. What sort of quality, though, is discipline?

9.6 Discipline as intellectual development and moral habituation

A case could perhaps be made for saying that discipline is a semi-virtue of the learner, a little like shame or emulation³³⁵. Aristotle does, after all, in the *Eudemian Ethics* define ‘endurance’ as a virtue (EE1221a9). However, that is not the line of argument I want to pursue here. It seems to me that discipline is rather more like imitation³³⁶. If a person exercises discipline often enough in *any* activity, then habits may well follow; but such habits need not be intellectually or morally praiseworthy. One could for example be disciplined in respect of an activity that has no inherent worth, or worse, one that is just downright vicious³³⁷. Thus, arguably, the normative and epistemic value of discipline is irrevocably linked to the quality of the activities in which one is being disciplined. That is why it is necessary for activities in schools to be humanly worthwhile. That is why it seems too much of a stretch to describe discipline, in and of itself, as a virtue. Discipline is rather a process that has significant potential to

³³⁵ I discussed shame and emulation in detail in chapter 7.

³³⁶ I also discussed imitation in detail in chapter 7.

³³⁷ Ryle (1972) for example, speculates that Fagin’s disciples learned vices from him.

contribute to the development of intellectual and moral virtue. A neo-Aristotelian theory of pupil discipline can therefore, arguably, be defined in broad terms as follows.

School discipline has most value, when pupils repeatedly³³⁸ perform worthwhile activities, where each performance is accompanied by: 1) the right exercise of intellectual qualities for; and 2) feelings proper to, that activity.

I think such a neo-Aristotelian concept is preferable to Wilson's theory of discipline, as child-centred interest³³⁹. To be sure, the current interests of prospective learners are no doubt often of value and vital to the success of educational encounters; accomplished teachers are therefore rightly employed in monitoring them. However, our curiosities and interests are probably in the vast majority of instances at least partially outcomes and developments of interactions with others. Wilson's theory is radically individualistic; it places no onus on pupils to learn or be disciplined with others. It is arguable that the responsibility for school discipline should rather be shared between teacher and pupils. While it is incumbent on teachers to ensure that pupil discipline is directed in pursuit of worthwhile ends, it is also incumbent on learners to actively³⁴⁰ engage in activities that promote these ends. Teachers need not always select each school activity; but they do need to ensure that each activity is worthwhile and pitched at the appropriate level for all prospective learners.

This notion may also encompass within its range the value of

³³⁸ The repetition I have in mind here is not of the sort where the *same* activity is undertaken over and over again. Rather, pupils ought to be challenged with *a range of* worthwhile activities that are repeatedly matched to improve their current intellectual, moral and technical potential. This point will receive further discussion in the final chapter.

³³⁹ Importantly, I do think it is apt to describe this concept of discipline as Neo-Aristotelian. Frankena (1970), for example, broadly suggests that Aristotle thought the good life is realised when activities that are in good in themselves, are pursued to the point that they become dispositions of excellence. For a full critique of Wilson's theory see chapter 3.

³⁴⁰ In the final chapter it will be emphasised that the active engagement of pupils ought to be most often, cognitive.

pupils being disciplined: 1) intellectually, through engagement with a theoretical or practical subject; and 2) morally, through acquiring virtuous habits of thinking, acting and feeling, under the care and tutelage of their teacher. A neo-Aristotelian theory of discipline does therefore bear some resemblance to that proposed by Richard Peters³⁴¹. However, I think that the former has three distinct advantages. Firstly, unlike Peters' account, it is clear that practical as well as theoretical activities can have genuine educational value³⁴². Secondly, the purpose of a neo-Aristotelian discipline is not merely to learn the rules that govern an activity, or to restore class order, as Peters would have it³⁴³; it is rather to develop habits conducive to pupil flourishing in their schooling and beyond. If disciplined order is restored in the right sort of way, it may be that this is, in and of itself, also a type of worthwhile activity that can be morally educational in the long term. Thirdly, whereas Peters did not seem to advocate the fostering of virtuous dispositions of feeling during school discipline³⁴⁴, a neo-Aristotelian concept would seem to require that teachers make a concerted effort to so educate and order the sensibilities of the young.

It is worth emphasising here that the 'appropriate feelings' of disciplined pupils' would not be the same as those of the fully virtuous. As was noted in the second section of this thesis, whereas adults in possession of mature virtue tend to have well ordered and moderate sensibilities, the less than fully virtuous may often experience conflict between their feelings and principles. With this in mind, ideally learners ought to have such ordered harmony of reason and feeling when engaging in worthwhile activities. However, since

³⁴¹ Peters's concept of discipline was discussed in chapter 2.

³⁴² In chapter 2 it was noted that Peters dismissed many practical activities as knacks. In fairness to Peters, in the next chapter it will be noted that he suggested practical activities can be educational when they are not pursued for entirely instrumental reasons. Aristotle is in contrast clear that technical production is an intellectual virtue worth pursuing for its own sake.

³⁴³ These are the two central functions Peters ascribes to discipline, as noted in chapter 2.

³⁴⁴ Peters was, to be sure, very much in favour of educating the emotions (see 7.1 for discussion of this). He just did not seem to think that 1) discipline had much potential role in this and 2) that the felt component of pupil emotion ought to be shaped in a more dispositional sense. Peters' focus in emotion education seems rather to have been on developing accurate rational judgements from feelings.

most (if not all) mortals are at times less than fully virtuous, it seems unrealistic to expect pupils to always engage in their learning in such a rich and balanced way. Thus, teachers often have to, where necessary, encourage and cajole struggling³⁴⁵ pupils to persevere with the school-work at hand. By habitually persevering in challenging but profitable tasks, young persons may over time learn to take appropriate pleasure and pride in such tasks. It is possible that such overcoming of *prima facie* negative feelings may in the long term contribute to the development of the virtue of ‘courage’. Aristotle does after all specify that the courageous man endures pain because it is the fine thing to do (NE, 1117b 6-9). It is therefore arguable that discipline should be a process where teachers support pupils to gradually master: not only the content of worthwhile activities; but also, the range of painful and pleasurable emotions that occur during such valuable learning. In this respect, it may be that particularly close educational attention ought to be paid to the emotional life of pupils experiencing failure and/or the fear of it³⁴⁶. It is perhaps during such moments that learners have an especially high likelihood of giving up and/or rejecting the particular educational encounter.

I think that Maxwell’s (2008) formulation of ‘compassionate empathy’ may offer some insight into the complex network of judgements that teachers might have to make to help pupils overcome obstacles to learning. Maxwell broadly characterises compassionate empathy as a moral emotion that has *affective* and *cognitive* components³⁴⁷. It arises, he says, when one person correctly *reacts* to

³⁴⁵ The word ‘struggle’ is not used here euphemistically. I do not mean that pupils who are struggling in some sense have a habitual tendency to produce ‘poor’ school work. I rather use struggle to refer to a particular task a pupil is finding it hard to do. However, it may well be that pupils who are not adequately supported in a succession of particular struggles end up acquiring a more dispositional tendency to struggle with learning. If this is the case it only reinforces the importance of teachers taking very seriously the difficulties pupils have with particular tasks.

³⁴⁶ In this regard, in the final chapter, the inevitability of assessment and failure in education will be considered.

³⁴⁷ He emphasises that the cognitive component precedes and overlaps the affective component. As he puts it: ‘the operation of the latter is a precondition of experiencing the former in that one can hardly have aversive feelings *about* other people’s suffering unless one is first aware that they *are* suffering’ Maxwell (2008, p41).

and shares the distress felt by another. Importantly, upon rational recognition of the suffering of another, the compassionate person is *moved to act* in order to assuage it. Maxwell also indicates that such empathy may not be moral if a person misjudges the pain of another or if they do not act in the right way in response to genuine suffering. He states that such compassionate empathy is potentially richer in scope than Peters' view of emotion education. The latter approach only requires a 'rational scrutiny' of the conditions underlying a 'student's feeling of shame after failing a maths test' (Maxwell, 2008, p 71).

It is arguably therefore preferable for teachers to be able to: 1) imaginatively perceive the correct inner state and/or plight of the particular pupil; 2) in response to this shared feeling experience the motivation necessary to alleviate the suffering of the pupil; and 3) possess the judgement to know what specific advice and direction to offer the pupil to help them re-engage with their learning. In some instances, teachers may focus most on the affective distress of young people experiencing temporary educational setbacks. Perhaps more often, however, the core business of teaching will involve specific academic and/or practical advice about the steps pupils need to take to overcome their particular learning difficulties³⁴⁸. Indeed, arguably the most important practical action that teachers may need to take, to prevent pupils encountering *too steep* a learning curve, is to ensure that each task is properly matched to pupil ability from the outset.

Although Steutel & Spiecker (2004) make the sound point that it is at first sight hard to comprehend quite how habits of feeling might arise from the repeated performance of actions, they do nevertheless argue that it is possible to develop appropriate sentimental dispositions³⁴⁹. They suggest that a sentimental education should

³⁴⁸ Indeed, in the final chapter it will be maintained that long term pupil confidence is most likely to emerge from such specific teaching.

³⁴⁹ Ryle (1972, p 443) somewhat similarly indicates that we can be schooled to 'feel amused, indignant or penitent'. Steutel and Spiecker (2004, p 538) are right however to suggest that Ryle (1972) presents

focus on developing³⁵⁰ proper affections, whilst also trying to temper improper ones. I think that discipline in school can and should have this dual focus. Thus, while the relationship between proper feeling and habitual action may remain somewhat difficult to pin down, I do think that there are at least three general ways in which teachers might seek to educate the feelings of their pupils in the course of trying to establish discipline in their classes. Firstly, teachers should aim to counsel and support pupils who exhibit an excessive tendency to *prima facie negative* affections like anger, so as to moderate and educate such emotions³⁵¹. Secondly, as has been suggested, it would seem important for pupils to possess emotional resilience, at least to the extent that they are able to persevere in tasks they find challenging³⁵². Judicious and context-appropriate teacher intervention might help pupils develop such resilience. Indeed, the emotionally educative aspect of discipline may centrally entail the sensitive encouragement of pupils to overcome the feelings of frustration that learning often brings.

Thirdly, teachers must arguably both embody³⁵³, and in their communications make clear, the standards of thinking, acting and feeling they want to instil in pupils. As suggested in the previous section (9.5), teachers should have certain intrinsically valuable traits of character: they should themselves be intellectual *and* moral authorities³⁵⁴. Such personal qualities would seem necessary for

a muddled account of moral virtue and skill. Indeed, Ryle muddles the difference between the intellectual and moral virtues too. He appears to think that *all* virtues are moral virtues.

³⁵⁰ Kristjánsson (2007) and Steutel & Spiecker (2004) have both discussed the potential impact of fostering *positive* pupil feeling, through service learning. In service learning pupils are, supported by schools to engage in charitable actions in their communities, in the hope that they will amongst other things, eventually come to take pleasure in such charitable actions.

³⁵¹ See Kristjánsson (2007) for an excellent account of teaching justified anger.

³⁵² Dewey to his credit emphasised the importance of perseverance to discipline, as noted in chapter 3.

³⁵³ In this regard I agree with Kristjánsson who says that ‘for Aristotle, standards for proper action and emotion are followed by the *phronimos* because they are morally appropriate, and not that they are morally appropriate because they are followed by the *phronimos*’ (2007, p 168).

³⁵⁴ Aristotle remarks that the ‘man of character... is a sort of standard and yardstick of what is fine and pleasant (NE, 1113a 29-38). It seems to me that the teacher should aspire to be a sort of ‘moral yardstick’ so that their pupils might learn ‘proper feelings’ from them. Similarly, in chapter 7 it was explained that shame and emulation are semi-virtues of the learner; semi-virtues that may only become manifest in pupils if teachers are worthy of emulation in the first place.

sensitive and consistent teacher communication of moral standards that pupils may need to keep, or set them, aright. Maxwell (2008) implies that teachers often *do* successfully employ ‘speech acts’ (ibid, p 141) of emotional persuasion³⁵⁵ when attempting to establish and maintain disciplined learning in their classrooms. Common teacher expressions such as *please do not be angry, play nicely, stop sulking* or *I am disappointed in your behaviour*, are he says, ‘injunctions to make one feel what one does not at present feel’ (ibid, p 141). He adds that such educational pleas may help pupils to moderate their ‘emotional reactions so as to achieve the normatively required measure’ (ibid, p 141). Thus good teachers arguably can, should and actually do, make use of personal example, judicious judgement and appropriate communication to discipline and morally educate the emotions of pupils.

9.7 Discipline, for Pupil Virtue

‘knowing how little will make the difference,
that a single letter lost or doubled ruins
not just the manuscript but the whole school?’ (Paterson D, 2003, p 7)

In this chapter it has been argued that broadly conceived processes of instructional encounter and discipline should be central to education. The hallmark of the *educated* person just was for Aristotle, the ability to critically engage with the teachings of others. The intellectual quality of *understanding* (of being able to receive and actively form, judgments proper to each matter) therefore appears to be of paramount importance to the whole endeavour of school-based education. As such, it seems vital that pupils in schools receive ample

³⁵⁵ Maxwell suggests a threefold teacher strategy of re-appraisal, imitation and imagination. He stresses that speech acts intended to encourage pupils to feel what they do not should not be regarded as manipulative. He provides an excellent example of a nursery teacher who tries to prevent Carol from destroying Larry’s tower of bricks by asking her how she would feel if Larry were to do the same to her. ‘What she is inviting Carol to do, in other words, is to imagine how she would feel if her brother were to destroy her tower (Maxwell, p 135, 2008)’. For a detailed discussion of Aristotelian emotional persuasion in education see chapter 7.

opportunity for development of their understanding of the world, through instruction. Aristotle also identified a range of other valuable intellectual qualities that instruction should foster in pupils, including: resourcefulness and the intellectual virtues of knowledge, wisdom, intuition and art. It has here been maintained that a coherent theory of instruction can be extrapolated from the *Ethics*, the *Posterior Analytics* and the *De Partibus Animalium*. Aspects of Aristotle's theory do nevertheless strike the modern reader as highly formal. Instruction has thus been more broadly defined as any educational encounter wherein a teacher intentionally oversees the active student development of valuable intellectual qualities.

Moreover, Aristotle seems to have held the view that *instruction* and *habituation* are both legitimate forms of teaching. It has therefore been indicated that teaching should develop the intellectual *and* moral capacities of students. It has been argued that instruction can, but need not, be a virtuous activity. The practically wise and the intellectually resourceful are both capable of *proficient instruction*. However, only practically wise teachers are *virtuous* on account of their capacity to both comprehend and act from general moral principles. Instruction is arguably virtuous when the teacher exercises one or more virtues during the process. Furthermore, it has been argued that the proper habituation of moral virtue in students requires that teachers possess at least some measure of moral virtue themselves. But at all events it seems generally fair to conclude that *teachers* should be moral and intellectual authorities.

Discipline is arguably the quality in *pupils* that can most significantly foster their engagement in worthwhile activities. As such, enacting discipline in schools in the right way seems to be of considerable pedagogical importance. Indeed, discipline should, I think, be arranged with the long-term purpose of pupil virtue and flourishing in mind. Pupils ought to be encouraged to develop the

right sorts of *habits* of thinking, acting and feeling in schools over time and under the (ideally) wise counsel and inspiration of their teachers. In this regard, it has been suggested that pupils may acquire the virtue of courage if they are consistently helped to work through any challenging or painful feelings that arise during meaningful learning. Generally, it has been argued that the success of instruction and discipline in schools largely depends upon: 1) the character and mutual effort of teacher and pupil alike; and 2) the content of the curriculum. Therefore, in the final chapter, the possibility that curricula ought to be geared to the promotion of pupil virtue will be further considered. In particular, it will be argued that if careful attention is not given to the promotion of *worthwhile* activities, the curriculum educators are now being tasked to construct in Scottish schools, might instead contribute to a ruin of learning there.

Chapter 10: A Curriculum for Virtue?

In the final chapter of this thesis, the *four capacities* that underpin the Scottish curriculum for excellence will be scrutinised through a neo-Aristotelian lens. Initially, some of the key features of the policy will be explained and it will be suggested that the principal innovation has been to make the *excellent* pupil the aim of schooling, rather than the *educated* pupil. The aspiration to support all pupils to reach their potential may be laudable in intent but it remains far from clear: 1) what might be meant by excellence; 2) how excellence might be educationally valuable; 3) quite how pupils might be supported to realise excellence. It will be argued that educators should seek to promote pupil *virtue*, rather than pupil excellence, through the consistent promotion of worthwhile activities. With reference to the philosophy of Richard Peters and Aristotle, it will be maintained that learning activities are especially worthwhile when they develop the intellectual, moral, and productive capacities of pupils. It will be concluded that the emergence of such intrinsically valuable human excellences (virtues) may depend most on the ‘active passing on’ of collective wisdom through well planned processes of instruction, discipline and assessment.

10.1 The Curriculum for Excellence

In 2004, Scottish Executive³⁵⁶ ministers accepted the proposed changes to the Scottish national school curriculum presented to them by the curriculum review group and enshrined in the policy, *A Curriculum for Excellence (ACfE)* (Scottish Executive, 2004). The desire for change seems to have been motivated by a belief that previous curricula had not been adequately enabling all pupils to reach their potential. The report of the review group states that; ‘although the current curriculum has many strengths, a significant proportion of

³⁵⁶ The Scottish Executive is now referred to as the Scottish Government.

young people in Scotland are not achieving all that they are capable of (ibid, 2004, p 13). It was thus argued that a new curriculum would better prepare Scotland's young for entrance into, and employment in, a society rapidly changing under various global, social, political and economic influences. The report also adds that with the advancement of new technologies, a better comprehension of how children learn and a wider range of adults involved in school based learning, the 'educational process itself is changing' (ibid, 2004, p 13). The recommendations in this and subsequent reports³⁵⁷ are significant and indeed potentially far reaching. What specifically are these?

Briefly, the new curriculum is to be the first in Scotland to encompass provision for the entire period of schooling from 3-18 (Scottish Executive, 2004). It is claimed that this unifying development may de-clutter the curriculum, provide greater continuity for pupils during their formal education and achieve enhanced integration between academic and vocational experiences (ibid, p 13). The report of the review group indicates that learning 'will' be based on well-planned 'experiences' that are more active and include both 'subject-based studies and activities which span several disciplines' (ibid, p 16). Furthermore, schooling should also provide pupils with greater personal choice over their learning (ibid, p 17). Significantly, the overarching purpose of the curriculum is to enable *all* young people to develop four capacities of excellence, namely: successful learning; confidence; responsible citizenship; and effective contribution³⁵⁸.

However, ACfE has not been received without controversy. Professor Lindsay Paterson has been one prominent local critic. He has maintained that the proposed reforms are 'vague to the point of confusion on too many matters to be a proper basis for new

³⁵⁷ For a helpful summary and commentary on the various government reports published in relation to ACfE, see *SPICE's Briefing Curriculum for Excellence* (Kidner, 2010) and Priestley & Hume (2010).

³⁵⁸ See Appendix III for full documentation of the four capacities detailed in (Scottish Executive 2004).

educational practice’ (Paterson³⁵⁹, 2007). Paterson argues that one significant problem relates to the lack of debate about the value of human knowledge traditionally made available to pupils through subject disciplines. With regard to traditional subject disciplines he states that the curricular reforms ‘threaten to destroy an inheritance by ignoring it’ (Paterson, 2007). Paterson suggests that a discipline³⁶⁰ is more than a ‘mere arbitrary collection of facts, despite what is often implied by the fashionable orthodoxy. It is indeed a deep foundation of factual knowledge’ (2009, p 11). Graham Donaldson, the Chief of Scotland’s schools inspectorate³⁶¹ has tried to refute these claims. He insists that the aims are not vague, but rather non-prescriptive, claiming that the reforms ‘build from subjects rather than the reverse’ (Donaldson³⁶², 2009). He adds that ACfE ‘is not a rejection of the child at the centre or 5-14 or standard grade. It stands on the shoulders of these reforms’ (Donaldson, 2009). To be sure, *some* more precise detail has been provided since the publication of ACfE (2004). However, it remains far from clear quite how a curriculum can both ‘build from subjects’ and retain the principle of the ‘child at the centre’ of learning.

It has been confirmed that as of 2012/13, pupils will undertake national qualifications in literacy and numeracy, during the ‘senior phase’ of their secondary schooling, from 3rd year onwards (Kidner, p 3, 2010). Educators have also been told that the following academic session will see ‘National 4’ and ‘National 5’ qualifications replacing standard grade general and credit exams. Furthermore, eight broad curricular areas have been identified, namely: Numeracy and Literacy, Sciences, Expressive Arts, Social Studies, Languages, Religious and

³⁵⁹ Paterson (2007) made these comments in an article published in the Times Education Scottish Supplement. As I accessed this article online there is no page number to accompany the quotation.

³⁶⁰ The notion of a subject discipline being founded upon distinct knowledge is arguably similar to the liberal view of Peters and Hirst explored in chapter two.

³⁶¹ Donaldson since these comments has in 2010, retired from his position as chief schools inspector.

³⁶² Donaldson’s comments are extracted from an article in the Times Education Scottish Supplement from 13th November, written by Buie E (2009) and accessed online – which explains why there is no page number.

Moral Education, Technologies and Health and Well-being (ibid, 2010, p 9). Significantly, there is to be an emphasis on inter-disciplinary rather than discipline-based study in the areas of literacy, numeracy and health and well-being (ibid, 2010, p 9). Given, that implementation of *all* the curricular areas is also referred to in terms of ‘experiences and outcomes’, it is difficult to discern how the curriculum might ‘build’ from subject disciplines. Notably, in May 2009, the Scottish Secondary Teachers’ Association (SSTA) voted to delay the introduction of the curriculum for a year due to concerns that the National 4 qualification might be devalued through not being externally assessed (Kidner, p 14, 2010). Although *ACfE* is now being implemented in Scottish schools, the fact that the SSTA considered holding a further full ballot over industrial action in August 2010 because of ‘huge’ concerns ‘about the lack of information about a curriculum for excellence’ (Ballinger³⁶³, 2010) arguably further shows that Paterson’s (2007) initial scepticism may have been justified.

It has recently been maintained that the ‘historical amnesia’ and ‘lack of theoretical sophistication’ (Priestley & Humes 2010, p 359) displayed by the architects of the new curriculum has resulted in conceptual muddle. Priestley and Humes claim that the policy simultaneously construes knowledge as: 1) ‘something that is constructed by learners on the one hand’ (ibid, p 358); or 2) pre-specified content ‘to be acquired and tested on the other’ (ibid, p 358). They conclude that although initial curricular documents offered promise that the ‘constraining mould’ of Scottish education could be broken, more recent documents have regrettably ‘constrained this aspiration, potentially reducing the freedom and creativity of teachers and learners, and rendering classrooms predictable, limited and uncreative’ (ibid pp 358-359). I share Priestley and Humes’ concern that the new curriculum might not, as it stands, provide a solid foundation for all learners to reach their potential. However, in this chapter, I

³⁶³ These comments were made by Ann Ballinger, SSTA general secretary to the Scotsman Newspaper in Macloed F (2010).

shall broadly defend the merit of ‘curriculum as content and education as transmission’ (ibid, p 346). Priestley & Hume³⁶⁴ seem to prefer a conception of ‘curriculum as process and education as development’ (ibid, p 346). In this respect, I would agree that ‘development’ is a proper and important end for education. However, it is my view that the *active transmission* of collective wisdom may be a proper route to *valuable development* and, specifically the development of pupil wisdom and *virtue*³⁶⁵. It is arguable that the wisdom and virtue in question: 1) ought to be enshrined in both curriculum content and teacher character; and 2) should be actively promoted, over time, through the mutual effort of teacher and pupil alike³⁶⁶.

At all events, it seems that considerably greater clarity about the purposes and content of ACfE is still required before teachers may be sure about how they might go about trying to bring it to life in their schools. In this chapter, some attempt will therefore be made to explore the meaning and possible educational value of the concept excellence. At 10.2, some important differences between notions of education, excellence and virtue will be elucidated, since the reforms do seem to require that teachers refocus their efforts to make pupils *excellent* rather than *educated*. It will be maintained that for the sake of clarity, it might be preferable for educators to refer to things that pupils: 1) have potential to do, but cannot yet as *capacities*; 2) are able to do as *abilities*; 3) can do to an optimal standard as *excellences*.

³⁶⁴ Priestley & Hume (2010) critique ACfE using three curricular archetypes identified by Kelly. Namely curriculum as: 1) content; 2) product; 3) process. They suggest that curricular documents showed most promise in the early stages when they had ‘an implicit emphasis on process’ (ibid, p 358). Whereas my analysis (sections 10.2-10.7) of ACfE focuses more on the concept and educational value of ‘excellence’, arguably Priestley & Hume focus more on the concept of curriculum.

³⁶⁵ Priestley & Hume (2010, p 355) do to be sure also suggest that the curriculum ought to be based on the ‘accumulated wisdom of the world’ citing Dewey in this respect. However, they do at this point also seem to suggest that this shared wisdom should contribute to the development of the *four capacities*. It is my view (as we shall shortly see) that the wisdom of a community should rather be employed to enable the development of pupil virtue. As was suggested in Part one of this thesis; Dewey and Aristotle seem to have had very different ideas about the nature and value of the received wisdom of a culture.

³⁶⁶ See previous chapter for more detailed discussion of issues of teaching, learning and discipline within a neo-Aristotelian scheme

Consideration will thereafter (10.3-10.6) be given to the educational worth of each of the four capacities of excellence. In the process, it will be suggested that *valuable* abilities and virtues are most likely to develop if pupils' learning experiences are intellectually, technically and morally challenging and consistently so. What, though, are the qualities of an excellent as opposed to an educated person and what distinguishes virtue from excellence?

10.2 Education for Excellence: Capacities, abilities and Virtues

A perusal of the Oxford (OED, 1991) and Chambers (Chambers-Cambridge 1998) English Dictionaries suggests there are at least three different ways in which a person may exhibit 'excellence'. Excellence may involve a person: 1) surpassing *others* in performance³⁶⁷; 2) surpassing *one's own*³⁶⁸ previous performance; 3) having good personal qualities (virtues) in high degree³⁶⁹. Each of these notions of excellence may well have their own educational merit. The first perhaps has the least promise however, in so far as it appears to require that schools or students be pitched in competition with each other in search of excellence³⁷⁰. If the primary criterion of excellence is that of being able to surpass others in a given activity, then not all pupils (and perhaps too few) would seem capable of achieving excellence. I will instead argue that the second, and especially the third, meanings of the word may better explain how all pupils might be supported to reach their full potential. What then might it be to educate for excellence?

³⁶⁷ The (OED, 1991) states that the word excellence, derives from the Latin root *excellere* – meaning to surpass or lofty. The state of excelling thus means to surpass in merit or quality. The (Chambers-Cambridge, 1998) specifies that being excellent involves surpassing *others* in good quality.

³⁶⁸ The (OED, 1991) states that excelling oneself involves surpassing ones own previous performance.

³⁶⁹ The (Chambers-Chambers, 1998) suggests that a person of great virtue has good qualities in high degree.

³⁷⁰ This is not to say that competition is inherently non-educational; far from it. Students may well strive for higher standards at least in part because of a desire to emulate or better the performance of a peer. Indeed, later in this chapter it will be maintained that excellence must be associated with high standards of performance. However, it will also be stressed that the most valuable human excellence (virtue) involves the genuine fulfilment of one's own potential over the span of life.

“Education”...suggests passing on the ultimate values of a community, so that the individual can make them his own. “Education” suggests not only that what develops in someone is valuable but also that it involves the development of knowledge and understanding. Whatever else an educated person is, he is one who has some understanding of something’. (Peters, 1972, p 3)

In *Education and the educated man* (1972) Richard Peters suggested that educated persons are, in an important sense, defined by their ability to *understand* a given matter. Peters’ notion of the educated man is in this respect reminiscent of the one that Aristotle³⁷¹ arrives at in *De Partibus Animalium*. Peters explains that the modern concept of the educated person arose in the nineteenth century and came to differentiate those who had been trained in some specialist skill or knowledge from those who had been broadly educated. He states that ‘we distinguish educating people from training them because for us education is no longer compatible with any narrowly conceived enterprise’ (Peters, 1972, p 10). He specifies that the ‘educated’ necessarily come to understand not just anything but: 1) *knowledge*; that is 2) of *value*. Peters suggests that the ‘educated’ can give reasons to explain why they ‘know’ something: their knowledge is based on more than intuition (ibid, p 6). In particular, he maintains that the concept of an educated person involves depth of knowledge, breadth of knowledge and knowledge of the good³⁷² (ibid, p 13). Importantly, the *value* of such knowledge relates to its having been pursued ‘for its own sake’ (ibid, p 11). For Peters, education especially involves the idea of a community passing on knowledge that is more than instrumentally valuable. Educational activities must, in other words, have *more than* functional or vocational ends. The educated person, Peters says, has engaged in reflection of a more theoretical character and come to develop a special regard for clarity, correctness and truth (ibid, p 12).

³⁷¹ As we saw in the previous chapter Aristotle argued that the educated man is none other than he who is able to *understand* the pronouncements of others.

³⁷² Peters appears to have distinctively moral knowledge in mind when he speaks of knowledge of the good.

As we shall further see at 10.6, Peters does seem to suggest that education is particularly concerned with promoting learning (certainly theoretical but perhaps also practical learning) that is directed towards standards of excellence in an activity. Indeed, in an often overlooked aspect of their work, Hirst and Peters suggest that ‘human excellences... could surely be regarded as aims of education as well as culminating points of development’ (1975, p57). However, they add that a person may demonstrate a particular excellence whilst lacking the breadth of knowledge indicative of the ‘educated’. Conversely, they also recognise that a person can be broadly educated without having acquired any specific excellences (ibid, p 58). Perhaps, then, the *educated* have attained a certain *breadth* of knowledge and/or skills. By contrast, *excellence* might be ascribed to the person who has a particularly deep grasp of a more *specific* body of knowledge, or the ability to perform a particular practical task with great precision and care. Hirst and Peters imply that excellence is most evident when ‘rational capacities’ are developed ‘to the full’ (ibid, p 53).

‘Yet, if the good life includes excellent activities and if education for it includes the formation of dispositions to act in accordance with standards of excellence, then education for the good (as well as for the moral) life entails some kind of teaching and learning of standards’ (Frankena, 1970, p 36)

Perhaps it is Aristotle, though, who provides us with most insight into how educational processes might help to foster human excellences. In chapter 5, it was noted that he broadly defined excellence as: the optimal performance, or best state of, a given thing³⁷³. Aristotle crucially suggested that human excellence (*anthropine arête*) involved the habitual exercise of a broad range of intellectual qualities and moral character traits. When these virtues (*arête*) are consistently performed for their own sake and to an optimal standard, then the person so performing them, will in effect be in the process of realising his or her potential for deep and lasting

³⁷³ See 5.2 in particular.

happiness³⁷⁴ (*eudaimonia*). Aristotle thought that people have a natural capacity (*dunameis*) for moral virtue that requires habit for its full development (NE, 1103a24-27). Significantly, the virtuous dispositions that frame ‘the good life’ thus consist ‘of actualisations, not of potentialities’ (Frankena, 1970, p 20). Aristotle implied that the natural potentialities with which nature endows each person, can only become mature excellences through repeated performance of the actions indicative of that excellence³⁷⁵ (NE, 1103a27-1103b2). Importantly he emphasises that moral virtues and craft-type technical skills only develop over time and if their habitual practice is also accompanied by teaching (NE, 1103b9-15). Similarly, he specifies that it also takes time, teaching and experience to develop the intellectual virtues (NE, 1103a14-17). Sherman concludes that in so far as Aristotle’s ‘capacities are not latent excellences, a teacher must be on hand to direct the progress’ (2004, p 180). As we saw in the previous chapter, both types of virtue arguably take disciplined learner effort and instruction (from a person already proficient in that activity) to reach mature fruition.

It seems to me that Aristotle’s distinction between natural capacity (*dunameis*) and full virtue (*arête*) can shed considerable light on an aspect of the Scottish Curriculum that seems troublingly ambiguous: namely, the difference between pupil capacities that *have been* realised, and importantly those that *have yet to be*³⁷⁶. The word ‘capacity’ may be employed in at least two, very different ways: as potential, and as actual, ability³⁷⁷. A tutor might, for example, quite

³⁷⁴ Frankena (1970) similarly observes that for Aristotle intrinsic interest and cognitive involvement are necessary for excellence in an activity. However he suggests that the excellence of an activity is realised *most* by reaching a certain level of performance. As he puts it: ‘what makes playing the flute well intrinsically good is not just the pleasure involved but also the fact that it is excellent by the standard appropriate to flute playing...It is not the fact that cognition is present that makes such playing good...but the more general fact that excellence...is present’ (Frankena, 1970, p 27).

³⁷⁵ Aristotle specifies that the excellence of building, of the musician and of the just and brave person all arise through repeated performance.

³⁷⁶ More will be said about the assessment of capacities in the subsequent section.

³⁷⁷ The Times-Chambers English Dictionary states that you ‘have the capacity to do something when you are able to do it, or able to learn how to do it’ (1997, p 147). The Advanced Oxford English Dictionary (2010) also notes the difference between a capacity ‘to contain’ something and an ‘ability to do’ something. The Online Dictionary (2010) distinguishes between ‘actual’ and ‘potential’ capacity. Winch (2008) also notes confusion over the meaning of the terms capacity and ability in recent

legitimately say that Karen has the capacity (in the *potential* sense) to master Spanish in the future, because she has a willingness to learn it and a keen ear for languages. Conversely, Karen might fairly say that she has the capacity (in the *actual ability* sense) to speak fluent German because she has already successfully undertaken a degree in the subject. But, from an educational perspective it seems important that Karen (and her Spanish tutor) appreciate the difference between her capacity *for learning* Spanish and her capacity *to speak* German³⁷⁸. Although the term has this dual meaning, I think Scottish educators might do well to only employ the word ‘capacity’ to refer to what pupils could (potentially) learn in the future. On the other hand, when a pupil ‘is able to’ do something, already, then the word ‘ability’ is perhaps more apt.

‘The first thing that can be said about a virtue is that it is an excellence, although not every excellence is a virtue.’ (Zagzebski, p 84, 1996)

Aristotle’s account can perhaps also help to make clear the difference between ability, excellence and virtue. While a person with *ability* can do something, a person possessing *excellence* can do that something to an extremely high standard or optimal level. In Aristotle’s philosophy, the intellectual and moral *virtues* were particularly important excellences. The virtues were for him intrinsically worthwhile character traits that both contribute to, and constitute, *human flourishing*. Carr has put it thus: for the virtuous ‘the virtues are not just a means to a flourishing life, but what a flourishing life *means*’ (Carr, 2007, p 379). As we saw in part 2 of this thesis, Aristotle held that *wisdom* (in theoretical and practical form)

educational dialogue. He implies that whereas capacities are innate, abilities are rather acquired. Cigman (2001) has implied that a *weak* sense of capacity exists when pupils have potential to do something and a *strong* sense when they have the actual ability to do something.

³⁷⁸ Gilbert Ryle similarly says that the words ‘can’ and ‘able’ are used in different ways. He gives the example of John Doe who ‘can’ swim because he *has* learned and Richard Doe who ‘can’ swim because he is *willing to learn*. As he puts it to ‘say that something can be the case does not entail that it is the case (2000, p 122)’.

represented the culminating point and purpose (*telos*) of each person's intellectual and moral development.

'For Aristotle, full virtue requires practical wisdom – and wisdom clearly requires (what might nowadays be called) lifelong learning' (Carrb, 2007, p 384)

Significantly, the standards by which virtue and wisdom are measured are in one important sense relative³⁷⁹ to the natural capacities of each person (NE, 1106a33). A person is virtuous if they *truly do* realise their *own* potential and lead a consistently worthwhile life. Carr suggests that the cultivation of virtue is a 'matter of non-instrumental self-perfection' (Carr, 2003b, p 262) in the long term. Thus, while some pupils may be capable of developing *intellectual* virtue by the end of their schooling, the emergence of mature moral virtue will in all probability take much longer³⁸⁰. However, it would seem realistic for schools to aim to foster morally virtuous dispositions in pupils³⁸¹. In sum, I think that the virtues are excellences of character that are especially worth educating. However, are the four capacities of ACfE equivalent in value to 'virtues'? How, moreover, might intrinsically valuable human excellence(s) be engendered in the communities we live in, today?

10.3 Successful learners

The capacity to learn must, in many cases, it seems, be supplemented by *specific abilities* to do certain things if it is to be effective' (Winch, 2008, p 651)

What is it to be a successful learner? Is 'learning how to learn' a distinct capacity that is prerequisite for excellence in learning in other

³⁷⁹ Each person's potential for virtue may be limited by their natural capacity, for it. However, at 10.5 it will be stressed that assessment against valid criteria of performance ought to nevertheless be an integral part of helping all pupils to acquire genuinely valuable excellences. To recognise that different people have aptitudes relative to their nature is not to argue that there are no more general criteria of excellence that all should reach for too.

³⁸⁰ This point was of course, explained in the previous chapter.

³⁸¹ In chapter 5 it was argued that the young could be supported to develop habit-virtues, if not complete virtues.

areas? Christopher Winch (2008) has recently addressed the latter question. He argues that 'learning how to learn' is not a general mental power. Winch puts it thus: 'if I do have a capacity for learning, I won't need an ability to learn, let alone an ability to learn how to learn' (Winch, 2008, p 651). He concludes that it is rather such *specific abilities* as literacy, numeracy, speaking, listening and moral virtue that are transferable and can 'be put to work in a variety of contexts in order to assist further learning' (Winch, 2008, p 651). Aristotle, centuries before, made much the same point³⁸². He specified that the young must learn to read and write, as these qualities 'are often the means to learning yet further subjects' (Pol,1338a39-40). In this respect it is encouraging to note that ACfE states that successful learners will be 'able to use literacy, numeracy and communication skills' (Scottish Executive, 2004, p 15). However, it is more difficult to comprehend quite how educators should work towards two other central recommendations for teaching and learning contained in ACfE; namely: 1) 'active' learning (Scottish Executive 2004, p 16); and 2) the enhanced integration of academic and vocational learning (Scottish Executive 2004, p 13).

First, it is important to note that 'active learning' need not be of only one kind. Indeed, if active learning is to be successful, then pupil activity arguably must vary according to the particular demands of each learning task. It certainly seems mistaken to suppose that active learning *must* involve physical or bodily movement. The form of activity required for much cognitive development would rather be *activity of the mind*³⁸³. If it is accepted that one of the key mandates of education is to facilitate the intellectual progress of pupils, then the form of activity most often required for learning must be largely

³⁸² Indeed, as has Paterson in a recent address to Scottish Educational professionals. He says that one cannot 'learn thinking skills in the abstract, but only in the context of a discipline' (2009, p 12).

³⁸³ For example, whilst one might well learn a great deal by physically acting out scenes of Shakespeare on stage there is a vital sense in which learning must here centrally involve activity of the mind. To act out any such scene pupils must surely be able to commit to memory, or be able to at least read, the relevant words. Hopefully engagement with the text would also help pupils to understand some of the emotional complexities of the characters and maybe their own lives, now, and/or later, too.

mental rather than physical³⁸⁴. As was noted in the last chapter, successful teaching and learning encounters often depend upon ‘the light of reason’ in students. This is not, of course, to dispute the fact that valuable learning will often involve many physical movements. Physical and technical education spring to mind, in this connection. But even here, genuine excellence would also seem to necessarily involve complex mental engagement on the part of pupils.

Second, ACfE stipulates that schooling should more effectively integrate academic and vocational learning (Scottish Executive, 2004, p 13). Controversy over how to balance academic and vocational subjects is of course, far from new. In ancient Athens, there appears to have been much debate about whether education ‘should be directed at things useful in life, or at those conducive to virtue’ (Politics, 1337a33-1337b). Aristotle suggested that young people should receive both liberal³⁸⁵ and vocational instruction. He says that though there are some useful things that the young must learn, ‘they must not learn *all* useful tasks’ (Politics, 1337b4-8). Carr³⁸⁶ has more recently concluded that young ‘people do not need vocational learning *instead* of liberal learning; they need *both*’ (2010, p 99). But it also seems that provision of quality academic and vocational learning need not *necessarily* require integration of the two. It is arguably more important that learning consistently involve *worthwhile pupil activity*.

³⁸⁴ Indeed, as was noted in chapter 2, Peters suggests that an essential criterion of educational *activities* is that they have a cognitive perspective.

³⁸⁵ Aristotle does not, to be sure, speak of a liberal education but rather an education for leisure. He puts it thus: ‘In order to spend leisure in civilised pursuits, we do require a certain amount of learning and education...and these subjects studied must have their own intrinsic purpose, as distinct from those necessary occupational subjects which are studied for reasons beyond themselves.’ (Politics, 1337b54-60) However, as the central focus of a liberal education and an education for ‘leisure’ is on the study of things for their own sake I think it is quite natural to view the two as broadly similar. Although Aristotle stipulates that citizens should not be constantly asking what is the use of something (Politics, 1338a44-47), he does stress that there are some ‘useful things too, in which the young must be educated’ (Politics, 1338a37-38). He elsewhere remarks that the virtues of leisure can function in periods of work too as ‘a lot of essential things need to be provided before leisure can become possible’ (Politics, 1334a19-21).

³⁸⁶ In this paper Carr refutes the post-modern notion that education is itself a contested concept.

For Aristotle and Richard Peters, worthwhile learning activities seem to have characteristically involved theoretical challenge and the pursuit of wider standards of intellectual, moral or technical excellence. Aristotle generally stressed the importance of young people being initiated into the received *wisdom* of their community. For him, habitual and reasoned engagement in virtuous activity (both intellectual and practical) was valuable because it actually constituted living well. It is thus arguable that Scottish educators will not be able to promote learning of lasting worth unless sustained effort is made to help pupils develop forms of distinctively *theoretical* understanding and excellence in knowledge-based and/or intellectual, moral and practical/vocational activities.

‘For tradition, properly understood, means tradere, an active passing on, a living transmission of the resources of the past into the present so as to enable us to consciously shape the future, not a passive acceptance or re-endorsement of everything that is merely given’. (Passerin d’Entrèves, 1987, p 241)

Passerin d’ Entrèves (1987) suggests that Aristotle does not offer a prescriptive account of tradition, but rather a view that traditions are to be ‘actively passed on’. Carr, too, indicates that great cultural traditions are concerned less with engendering broad acceptance of current social convention and more with a continual search for *truth*. And such search for truth in Aristotle’s ethical theory is especially concerned with the active development of one’s potential: it is ‘above all a matter of making *myself*’ (Carr, 2003b, p 259) more virtuous. However, if teachers are to help pupils to actively develop virtue and wisdom, it seems important that they too possess something of these qualities. In a recent address to educational professionals in Scotland, Paterson claimed that teachers must have deep knowledge of subject disciplines if they are properly to guide pupil learning, whether interdisciplinary, or otherwise. It is in this respect concerning that he cites evidence from the *Trends in International Maths and Science Survey* (TIMMS, 2007) that suggest that primary teachers are especially lacking

in such discipline-based knowledge (Paterson, 2009 pp 14-16). Paterson notes that teachers have consistently overestimated pupil achievement in science, and a majority of primary teachers report lacking the necessary confidence to teach well in this area. Despite the 91% report of confidence of P 5 teachers to instruct well in mathematics, pupils actually performed well below average for developed countries (12th out of 16). Furthermore³⁸⁷, successful pupil learning would here seem more likely if teachers are the sorts of people who can convey the educational significance of maths or science in an ‘authentically engaging’ (Carr, 2003b) manner. The educational goal of pupil wisdom rests on teachers themselves being wise and widely educated (Carr, 2007b).

10.4 Responsible Citizens

In Books VII and VII of his *Politics* (1981), entitled *Education for Citizenship* and *Education as a Public Concern*, Aristotle suggested that all Athenians should be qualified for a share of rule *after* they had participated in some sort of liberal education³⁸⁸. He implies that in so far as *scholē* (leisure) is the best end of a community, citizens ought to be prepared, through their education, with this end of leisure in mind. However, Aristotle emphasises that leisured learning is not play. Whereas the main benefit of play is relaxation from the stress of work, leisure contains its own pleasure (*Politics*, 1337b34-50). Aristotle does, however, advocate supervised play and games, for children under six years of age, so long as these experiences do not interfere with natural

³⁸⁷ A similar point was also stressed in the last chapter.

³⁸⁸ He states that a ‘good citizen must have the knowledge and ability both to rule and be ruled. That is what we mean by the virtue of a citizen’ (*Politics*, 1277b9-16). Aristotle famously in this passage also maintained that ‘it is not possible to be a good ruler, without having first been ruled. Not that good ruling and good obedience are the same virtue’. Aristotle states that ‘education must be one and the same for all, and that the responsibility for it must be a public one’ (*Politics*, 1337a25-27). While an Athenian liberal education was undoubtedly elitist in that it seems to have been restricted to wealthy males, it was, within these admittedly narrow parameters, arguably committed to a form of progressive social justice - through equality of opportunity for education, and for rule in the state. Aristotle does after all take seriously the view that the collective judgements of a whole community might be at least as good as those of the wise few, even when many individuals in that community do not themselves possess the qualities to rule alone (*Politics*, 1281a39-1282b14). For an excellent account of how Aristotle was one of the first to argue for an equal public education for all see Curren (2000).

growth. Up to this age he says ‘it is not a good plan to try to teach them anything’ (Politics, 1336a23-37). After the age of five, however, children ought to receive lessons (ibid, 1336b35-37). Aristotle indicates that four things are to be taught³⁸⁹ to children in their preparation for a life of future citizenship and civilised leisure: reading and writing; physical training; music; and drawing (Politics, 1337b23-26). He specifies that ‘children can be called citizens only in a hypothetical sense: they *are* citizens but incomplete ones’ (Politics, 1277b). This old idea³⁹⁰ that children must be educated in distinct liberal subjects and practical enterprises as preparation for their eventual membership in a community, runs contrary to a view, prevalent in recent debate about citizenship education, namely, that: children are citizens ‘now’, rather than ‘in waiting’³⁹¹.

But, merely asserting that children are citizens ‘now’, rather than citizens in ‘waiting’, is probably vacuous unless serious consideration is given to how children can in fact be citizens now in and/or out of schools. Arguably, the best way in which whole schools might promote some sort of active citizenship is through approaches to discipline and moral education that seek to develop *virtuous habits* of thinking, acting and feeling in pupils over the long term³⁹². Given the noted emphasis on inter-disciplinary learning in ACfE, it is somewhat surprising that little importance appears to be attached to fostering either pupil discipline or moral education in any such whole school way³⁹³. While responsible citizens are expected ‘to develop

³⁸⁹ In the previous chapter it was noted that Aristotle advocated two forms of instruction; formal/deductive and more experiential/inductive. It was thus argued that instruction might be helpfully defined as any encounter where a teacher intentionally guides student learning.

³⁹⁰ Miller (2007) provides an interesting discussion of ‘the old idea of a liberal education’.

³⁹¹ Ross et al (2007, p 251) interestingly found that whereas primary schools tended to see their role as developing citizens for the future, ‘secondary school discourse tends not to see the purpose of participation as something that lies beyond the school’.

³⁹² The notion of discipline for such dispositions has of course been substantially discussed in previous chapters.

³⁹³ This is certainly true of *SPICE’s Briefing Curriculum for Excellence* (Kidner, 2010, p 9) which only stresses that literacy and numeracy and health and well being are to be taught across the whole curriculum. Whilst health and well being does mention mental and emotional learning, learning that is distinctively moral does not get much if any mention at a whole school level. Indeed, it seems that religious and moral education is to be pursued as a discrete experience/ outcome (ibid, p 9).

informed, ethical views of complex issues’ (Scottish Executive, 2004, p 15), no mention is made of the desirability of developing habits of moral *action* in pupils in, or out of³⁹⁴, school.

In an interesting paper, Ross et al (2007) interrogated teacher understanding of active citizenship in 14 Scottish case studies. They note that ‘some schools have chosen to understand active participation and citizenship in terms of pupil decision-making per se³⁹⁵ and others in terms of involvement in pupil decisions about their learning’ (Ross et al, 2007, p 244). It is revealing, however, that in the case studies there ‘is little evidence that participation...is intended to develop critical political literacy, as applied either to society...or to the school³⁹⁶ as institution’ (ibid, p 254). However, as we have seen, in ancient Athens, attainment of citizenship depended upon people developing a certain criticality of mind through their education that would enable them to understand and actively engage with matters of importance in their lived communities. If approaches to education for citizenship do not focus on providing pupils with sustained opportunity for both intellectual challenge and moral action, it is difficult to perceive quite how ‘pupil-citizens’ can be active, now or later, in anything other than an attenuated sense.

10.5 Confident Individuals

‘For confidence is the opposite of fear’ (Rhetoric, 1383a16-17)

In order to explain his definition of confidence, as the opposite of fear, Aristotle remarks that it arises in people in one of two ways: ‘either by not having been put to the test or by having protections, as,

³⁹⁴ It may be that programmes of service learning (briefly discussed in previous chapter) may be a possible way to promote active citizenship in the wider community.

³⁹⁵ They record that the school council was by far in a way the most commonly mentioned mechanism of pupil participation (Ross et al, 2007, p 244).

³⁹⁶ They note that active participation did not in the vast majority of cases challenge existing school structures. Indeed, ‘responsibility and greater levels of participation tend to be skewed towards older pupils’ (Ross et al, 2007, p 249) and over generalised concepts may ‘obscure the fact that participation may be confined to particular groups of pupils’ (ibid, p 250).

with the dangers at sea, those unfamiliar with storms are confident for the future and those who have protection because of their experience' (Rhetoric, 1383a32-36). It seems likely that the latter person will be more deeply 'confident' than the former as a result of having successfully overcome testing circumstances. Ruth Cigman (2000, 2001 & 2004) has in the last few years built on this basic observation of Aristotle's and attempted to locate the possible educational merit of fostering pupil confidence³⁹⁷. She suggests that the confidence of adults is different from that felt by children. Ethical confidence is, she says, a 'composite³⁹⁸ virtue' that arises in pupils when teachers 'patiently' (Cigman, 2000, p 655) help them to experience appropriate doubt. Moreover, the doubt she has in mind here appears to have both ethical and intellectual aspects³⁹⁹. But how should pupils be intellectually and ethically challenged to experience appropriate doubt? Arguably, pupils can both learn and become more confident through having been consistently challenged by worthwhile tasks.

Pupils with enough *basic* self-esteem will, Cigman says, experience the "feeling 'I can' in a multitude of directions" (2001, p 568), providing them with confidence to act. This 'basic self-esteem⁴⁰⁰' will also provide a 'bulwark against all kinds of failure' (ibid, p 568). Cigman maintains that the task of educators is to engage with the basic feeling, 'I can', in ways that become 'increasingly realistic⁴⁰¹ as pupils grow older' (ibid, p 572). *Reflective* self-esteem will gradually form in

³⁹⁷ Like Aristotle before her she says that we 'talk about confidence in those areas where doubt, fear, uncertainty are appropriate...Confidence and doubt are interconnected, which means that they are appropriate or inappropriate together'. (Cigman, 2000, p 656)

³⁹⁸ Though Cigman does not herself explain quite what she means by the term 'composite', I infer her to mean that confidence is a little like a semi-virtue that can aid other learning. As we shall see, if this is what she means, her stance is very dubious.

³⁹⁹ She states that it is 'particularly important that teachers think for themselves. How can they teach children to do so otherwise?...What we want for teachers is...the kind of confidence which is consequent on thinking *well*, and knowing that one thinks well' (Cigman, 2000, p 645).

⁴⁰⁰ Smith (2002) has also claimed that whilst self esteem should not be a chief aim of education it may be one aim to be valued among others.

⁴⁰¹ Cigman elsewhere remarks that teachers' often 'do not expect creative confidence to be grounded in too much reality: they praise children's paintings indiscriminately. Of course this changes when children get older...In ethics, the situation is different. It is vitally important that children learn what is right and wrong, and we do not expect ethical confidence in what is not grounded'. (2000, p 655)

pupils, she implies, when they develop confidence in their ability to actually do specific things well. Testing pupil ability to perform specific tasks more or less well does, of course, bring with it the threat of or actual experience of failure. However, as Aristotle noted, learning ought not to be thought of as amusement, since it inevitably ‘brings pain’ (Politics, 1339a26-29). A temporary educational setback may well lead to both deeper confidence and eventual success in a particular activity, if it is accompanied by sensitive and supportive teaching. Cigman expresses this as follows: ‘helping the child to *fail well* needs to be a real objective of the teachers work’ (ibid, p 573). She concludes, however, that the currently prevailing educational climate ‘stresses the avoidance of failure rather than its inevitability’ (2001, p 575).

The educational salience of a concept of ‘basic’ or general self-esteem that equips pupils with confidence to act in all manner of different contexts is, however, somewhat dubious. For one thing, there is good reason to believe that: ‘confidence gained in one area is not automatically transferable to another, confidence in reading does not equate to confidence in doing long division, for example’ (Winch, 2008 p 661). For another Kristjánsson’s (2007a) extensive scrutiny of social scientific studies on the matter reveals that there are only weak correlations between low global self-esteem and low educational achievement. Nor is ‘high self-esteem connected to long-term educational success’ (Kristjánsson 2007a, p 256). In fact, ‘high levels of global self-esteem may engender feelings of invulnerability, which in turn encourage risk-taking’ (ibid, p 256). Kristjánsson says that teachers should rather help pupils to: 1) set worthwhile goals in school work; 2) measure their achievements correctly; 3) take proper pride in their achievements (ibid, p 258). Teachers, it seems, should try to promote ‘justified’ confidence⁴⁰² by focusing on pupil learning in domain specific tasks.

⁴⁰² Kristjánsson (2007b) actually speaks of ‘justified self-esteem’ but I think that Winch is correct to observe that confidence is very often domain specific too. Ferkany (2008) has taken issue with Kristjánsson’s dismissal of having general self-esteem as a viable educational aim. Ferkany advances

Whilst any curricular ambition to foster pupil confidence may be appealing at first sight, the central aim of ACfE to reduce assessment (Kidner, p 16) may well, over the course of time, inhibit rather than enable such justified confidence. Paterson has recently welcomed the announcement that ACfE ‘tests of literacy and numeracy are now to be absorbed into the disciplines where they belong, English and mathematics’ (2010c, p 8). However, he expresses a legitimate concern that the new assessment structures may be inferior to the old ones. He theorises that the internal assessment method of the new national 4 course may lead to both lower standards and lower student motivation. Meaningful assessment, he stresses, has to be demanding (ibid, p 16).

If different pupil aptitudes are not subject to formal examination in specific and appropriate ways, then perhaps only a weak kind of confidence may result. A stronger sense of confidence is arguably more likely to arise when all pupils are consistently tested and challenged and when they are adequately supported by teachers to overcome any identified failings and weaknesses⁴⁰³. Indeed, in the previous chapter, it was stressed that school discipline may often hinge on the ability of teachers to help pupils persevere in the face of difficulty and setback. Arguably, nothing breeds more confidence in one’s ability to do something than previous success in *that task*. Such success would seem to rest on the experience of having actually been put to the test.

an ‘attachment account’ of self-esteem where one has a ‘disposition to take a certain attitude towards the self’ (ibid, p 123). He claims that it is important for educators to foster self-esteem, especially in specific domains of Physical education and the arts, where lifelong engagement, rather than high achievement, may be the aim of teaching. Although Ferkany sets himself in opposition to Kristjánsson I actually think one of the main arguments of the former endorses rather than challenges the view of the latter. Ferkany does after all agree that instruction in specific domains can improve confidence/self-esteem.

⁴⁰³ The basic principle of a more sustained union of assessment and learning is to be sure evident in another recent Scottish policy: namely, Assessment is for Learning (AIFL, 2005). However, my concern echoes that of Paterson’s (2009) and relates specifically to the possibility that some students may no longer be presented for formal examination in subject areas where they used to be, as a result of the proposals of ACfE. Success in a nationally moderated exam is arguably more likely to bring deep confidence and value than success in a locally moderated one.

10.6 Effective Contributors

It is also supposed in ACfE that effective contributors will have an ‘enterprising attitude, resilience and self reliance’ (Scottish Executive, 2004, p 15). However, it is perhaps the case that truly effective contributors will not so much need an *enterprising attitude*, but rather specific abilities. One need only watch an episode or two of the popular BBC2 programme ‘Dragons Den’ to realise just how important it is that budding entrepreneurs have a sound head for figures, astute business acumen, polished communication skills and of no less importance – a good product to sell. Furthermore, what is not directly stated in suggested criteria for the fourth capacity⁴⁰⁴ is exactly *what* learners may be expected to effectively contribute to. One might speculate that the driving force here is a desire to best prepare pupils to make *effective economic contributions to society* upon their eventual entry into it. If this is the case⁴⁰⁵, questions should be raised about the curricular and pedagogical functions that schools might be expected to have in preparing pupils for the world of work.

It has already been noted that education ought to include both liberal and vocational elements. However, wherein might the distinctive educational value of a seemingly employment-focused capacity be located? As already mooted, the sorts of abilities promoted by the subject disciplines of maths, English (for communication⁴⁰⁶), business studies and accounts would seem especially relevant to effective entrepreneurship. Recently, however, Hodgson (2009) has argued that teachers should revisit Peters’ question of who the educated person might be. In seeking to establish who the educated

⁴⁰⁴ At least within the aptitudes identified as indicative of effective contribution (Scottish Executive, 2004, p 15 & Appendix III).

⁴⁰⁵ And I see no reason to doubt the general idea that *economic* and *employment* related contributions figured prominently in policy makers’ minds. The capacity of responsible citizenship does after all ostensibly delineate the need for pupils to develop the ability to bear different *social responsibilities*.

⁴⁰⁶ It must be stressed that I do not think that the study of English should be restricted to fostering formal skills of communication – far from it. A central aim of English must, it seems to me, involve promoting sustained pupil engagement with a canon of literature.

person is today, she claims that Peters' 'account does not take seriously enough the current role of the economic imperative' or the entrepreneurial self⁴⁰⁷ (2009, p 110). However, whilst Peters does question the educational merit of *purely* instrumental activities, I am not sure this criticism is entirely fair⁴⁰⁸.

Although Peters may have⁴⁰⁹ questioned the extent to which some practical activities might stimulate cognitive development, in *Education and the educated man*, he actually specifies that a liberal education need not preclude practical activity. He concludes, in fact, that practical activities may be educational too when they are not 'pursued under a solely instrumental aspect' (1972, p 12). He suggests that a practical activity can be educational when: 1) it is 'transformed by theoretical understanding' (1972, p 12) or; 2) when the person pursues the activity in a skilled way according to 'the standards which are constitutive of excellence in his art' (ibid, p 12). Peters' point seems to be that a person is not really educated if they are *only* performing a task for instrumental, or for that matter economic, gain⁴¹⁰. However, any person who accrues economic benefit from an act, or who acts *partly* from instrumental motive, may also be considered educated, if they perform the *task itself* well with theoretical understanding, and/or in accordance with wider standards of performance. Arguably, a key role of schools might therefore be to ensure that pupils are initiated into more instrumentally valuable vocational activities in

⁴⁰⁷ Hodgson cites Foucault and appears to suggest that the entrepreneurial self is one who comes to be aware that they exists in conditions of 'permanent economic tribunal at every level' (2009, p 114).

⁴⁰⁸ Hodgson's brief treatment of Peters' *Educated person* is I think, somewhat confused. She prefaces her criticism that he does not take seriously enough the economic imperative by saying that 'Peters does not view education as restricted to instrumental purposes' (2009, p 110). Indeed he does not, far from it. He rather thinks that instrumental activities are only educational when they have an element of intrinsic engagement to them. Even more perverse is Hodgson's insistence that her discussion of what it means to be educated 'differs markedly' (ibid, p 122) from Peters' exploration, because of her focus on language. Peters in fact actually *begins* his analysis of the educated man by considering dictionary definitions of the word and how its meaning changed in the C19th. It seems to me that Peters spends much longer discussing the linguistic meaning of the word 'educated' than Hodgson.

⁴⁰⁹ In his discussion of the value of practical activities here, Peters is somewhat contradicting his well known position from the *Logic of Education* (1975), discussed in chapter 2, where he and Hirst dismiss at least some practical activities as 'knacks'.

⁴¹⁰ As was noted in Chapter, 8 Roberts and Wood (2007, p 173) suggests that the person who only seeks useful knowledge is intellectually immature.

such a way, that they appreciate, and come to reach for, the theoretical and practical standards proper to it.

Aristotle's virtue of *techne*⁴¹¹ (art) may perhaps also offer an explanation of *how* more practical skills can be refined to the point where they may be legitimately described as excellent. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle explains that *techne* is a form of correct thinking that is necessary for successful making (*poesis*). It is, he says, an intellectual virtue needed for true production (NE, 1140a20-22). Technical excellence requires not only correct thinking but also a degree of pride and pleasure in performing the task itself well. Thus, while a person might be economically contributing to society if they can build houses proficiently, they are perhaps not making a *virtuous* contribution, if they do not demonstrate the mode of thought characteristic of technical excellence or if they are *only* working to make money. As noted in previous chapters, Aristotle also indicated that technical excellences, like that of building, are learned through repeated practice accompanied by teaching (NE, 1103b, 7-13). The notion that one may best learn a craft through practice under the supervision of a person already well versed in it need not, it seems to me, be restricted to traditional trade skills either.

For example, in our modern global economy, there are undoubtedly many emerging technological skills which can also be performed with more or less diligence in accordance with publicly comprehensible standards. The vital pedagogical point seems to be that schools ought to try to ensure that pupils learning skills or taking subjects of a more work-related bent are properly supervised and supported to: 1) develop the *mode of thought* characteristic of excellence in each practical activity and; 2) develop *skills* that measure up to accepted standards of production/performance in these activities. This supervision might be carried out by teaching

⁴¹¹ For a more detailed discussion and definition of *techne* see chapter 8.

staff (for example the teacher of computing or design and technology); or it may perhaps also occur in apprenticeship schemes of work experience. However, if teaching and learning in more vocational and practical areas is not conducted in a rigorous way, then the opportunity to bring out and reinforce the intellectual interest and challenges of such activities may be lost. If pupils are only encouraged to perform vocationally orientated tasks for instrumental reasons, they are not arguably being supported to become effective, let alone excellent contributors.

10.7 Communities of Collective Wisdom

‘Wise conduct is the key to happiness’ (Heaney, 2004, p 56)

In this thesis I have sought to defend the view that education should have the ultimate aim of cultivating *virtue* and *wisdom*. As such, I believe teaching and learning, pupil discipline and curriculum content should all be structured with the end of pupil virtue and wisdom in mind. In this chapter, it has been suggested that the four capacities of the new Scottish Curriculum are laudable in intent but ambiguous in detail. There would appear to be nothing questionable about the basic aspiration to help all school pupils to reach their highest potential. However, questions must be asked about how schools ought to go about shifting focus from pupil education, to pupil excellence. It is far from clear that the four capacities of excellence are equivalent in value to virtues. It has therefore been argued that Scottish educators should seek to promote pupil virtue rather than pupil excellence, as the virtues are intrinsically valuable character traits that each person has the capacity to realise relative to their own nature⁴¹².

⁴¹² While the circularity of the broad aspiration for education to enable all pupils to reach their potential is far from overcome by neo-Aristotelian theories of teaching and learning, it does seem plausible to maintain that pupils might meaningfully develop their natural capacities by being supported to habitually engage in worthwhile and challenging learning tasks.

It has been emphasised that schooling should be especially concerned with fostering virtuous intellectual, moral and technical character traits in pupils. According to Aristotle, the development of mature virtues hinges on the notion of pupils repeatedly engaging in intrinsically worthwhile activities that: 1) are intellectually and/or morally challenging and; 2) have identifiable standards of excellence. Moreover, the pursuit of virtue would appear to be much more arduous if pupil activity and progress are not carefully supervised by adults who are themselves virtuous, wise, knowledgeable and/or skilled in the task at hand. However, recent Scottish curricular documents have so far been far from clear about the need for sustained activity-specific instruction and assessment, especially beyond the traditional subject disciplines of maths and English. Furthermore, concern has been expressed that lack of, or mistaken, teacher confidence in mathematical and scientific knowledge may lead to the content of these traditions being watered down, in the crucial early years of schooling.

It has also been maintained that 'confidence', 'effective contribution' and 'learning how to learn' are *not* general abilities that can or should be educated. It is not easy to appreciate quite how pupils might ever truly be sure that they *are* successful learners, if their mastery of knowledge and/or technical skills, has not been formally measured according to valid criteria of performance. If pupils are not helped to identify what they are *really* able to do well and what they are not yet able to do, then schooling is not likely to instil in them the sort of confidence that is realistically grounded and likely to have meaning in school or, for that matter, in the world beyond. A deep sense of confidence is more likely to grow in pupils who have achieved specific educational successes and/or who have been properly supported when they have failed. In the *Politics*, Aristotle suggested that communities of collective wisdom were most likely to arise when citizens were encouraged to participate actively in them,

and importantly made ready to do so through their education. He seems to have thought that guided and systematic instruction in worthwhile activities was vital to the flourishing of individuals and communities. Pupil potential might be best advanced by the new Scottish curriculum if teaching, learning and discipline, are 'built' on this ancient insight.

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**Appendix I: Aristotelian Moral Virtues discussed in the
Nicomachean Ethics**

<u>Deficiency</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Excess</u>
Cowardice	Bravery	Rashness
Insensibility	Temperance	Intemperance
Stinginess	Generosity	Wastefulness
Niggardliness	Magnificence	Vulgarity
pusillanimity	Great-mindedness	Vanity
Under-ambitiousness	Right Ambition	Over-ambitiousness
Impassivity	Mildness (of temper)	Irascibility
quarrelsomeness	Friendliness	Obsequiousness
Self-deprecation	Truthfulness (about oneself)	Boastfulness
Boorishness	Wit	Buffoonery

The contents of this table are reproduced from Kristjánsson (2007, p 16). The only difference is that Kristjánsson characterises ‘stinginess’ as ‘ungenerosity’ and ‘impassivity’ as ‘inirascibility’.

**Appendix II: Aristotelian Moral Virtues Listed in the
Eudemian Ethics**

<u>Deficiency</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Excess</u>
Impassivity	Gentle temper	Irascibility
Cowardice	Bravery	Foolhardiness
Thin-skinnedness	Shame	Shamelessness
Insensibility	Temperance	Intemperance
(unnamed)	Fair-mindedness	Envy
Disadvantage	Justice	Gain
Meanness	Liberality	Prodigality
Mock-modesty	Truthfulness	Boastfulness
Churlishness	Friendliness	Flattery
Unaccommodatingness	Dignity	Servility
Imperviousness	Endurance	Softness
Meanness of spirit	Pride	Vanity
Niggardliness	Magnificence	Extravagance
Unworldliness	Practical Wisdom	Unscrupulousness

The virtues listed in the table are extracted directly from the Eudemian Ethics at (EE, 1220b36-1221a12)

Appendix III: The four capacities of the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence

Purposes of the curriculum from 3-18... to enable all young people to become:

Successful learners

with

- > enthusiasm and motivation for learning
- > determination to reach high standards of achievement
- > openness to new thinking and ideas

and able to

- > use literacy, communication and numeracy skills
- > use technology for learning
- > think creatively and independently
- > learn independently and as part of a group
- > make reasoned evaluations
- > link and apply different kinds of learning in new situations

confident individuals

with

- > self respect
- > a sense of physical, mental and emotional wellbeing
- > secure values and beliefs
- > ambition

and able to

- > relate to others and manage themselves
- > pursue a healthy and active lifestyle
- > be self aware
- > develop and communicate their own beliefs and view of the world
- > live as independently as they can
- > assess risk and take informed decisions
- > achieve success in different areas of activity

Responsible citizens**with**

- > respect for others
- > commitment to participate responsibly in political, economic, social and cultural life

and able to

- > develop knowledge and understanding of the world and Scotland's place in it
- > understand different beliefs and cultures
- > make informed choices and decisions
- > evaluate environmental, scientific and technological issues
- > develop informed, ethical views of complex issues

effective contributors**with**

- > an enterprising attitude
- > resilience
- > self-reliance

and able to

- > communicate in different ways and in different settings
- > work in partnership and in teams
- > take the initiative and lead
- > apply critical thinking in new contexts
- > create and develop
- > solve problems

All the information in Appendix III is directly quoted from *A Curriculum for Excellence* (Scottish Executive, 2004, p15)