

## **Reason in Teaching: Scheffler's Philosophy of Education**

"A maximum of vision and a minimum of mystery"

There is more continuity and connection in philosophy of education in the twentieth century than is sometimes recognized.<sup>1</sup> Reference to a revolution in philosophy in the earlier part of the century, spilling over into philosophy of education in the 1950s, tends to disguise the fact that Dewey, Russell and Whitehead, for example, were dealing in a genuinely philosophical manner with many of the same educational issues and problems which continue to occupy us today.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, one cannot deny that there was growing unease about philosophy of education during the 1940s and with what seemed to be the widening gulf between general philosophy and philosophy of education. Philosophers were beginning to complain about the "elastic generalities and resounding platitudes which constitute so large a part of current educational philosophy."<sup>3</sup> Developments were already underway, however, which would soon start to build the necessary bridges. In 1941, the Philosophy of Education Society was formed in the United States, and ten years later came the journal *Educational Theory*, both of which provided a forum for, and an incentive towards, work of a more definitely philosophical character. Then, in 1953, a committee of the Philosophy of Education Society issued its famous statement on the distinctive nature of philosophy of education, placing the subject firmly within the family of philosophical inquiries.<sup>4</sup>

The time was right for work to appear in philosophy of education which would show "how serious interest in educational concepts and issues may be fused with no less serious concern for philosophical clarity and rigour."<sup>5</sup> The words are those of Israel Scheffler, and looking back now we can see that he not only recognized the need, he himself was to provide the foremost example of such fusion in practice. Appointed to the Harvard faculty in 1952, Scheffler brought to his work the talents of a professional philosopher

combined with an interest in educational issues which was to remain with him throughout his career. If the philosophy of education today is more generally recognized as a genuine branch of philosophy, that is in no small measure Scheffler's achievement. His has been the most significant and sustained contribution to the field in the second half of the century, and his work has set a standard of excellence and relevance which others can only hope to emulate.

Philosophers of education have certainly followed Scheffler's work over the past 40 years with great interest and appreciation. But few philosophers, in any field, become widely known beyond the somewhat narrow limits of their immediate professional circle within which their work may be greatly admired. In the twentieth century, Dewey is probably the only philosopher of education whose name would be universally known among teachers, and even here one hesitates to say how much of Dewey is actually read. Most philosophers of education would hardly be known in teaching circles at all, save perhaps as distant memories from philosophy of education courses in teacher education programmes. So it is no reflection on Scheffler if his ideas are not widely known in the teaching profession, but it is a great pity. I shall try to show what teachers might gain by a closer acquaintance.

### **Scheffler's audience**

First, however, we might ask if Scheffler is writing for *teachers* at all. Certainly, one can say that Scheffler is *not* writing for the kind of teacher who expects philosophy to provide a solution to the practical problems of schooling, except perhaps to show such a teacher why this expectation is unreasonable. Scheffler is adamant that philosophy itself does not offer practical directives, and early on he expresses his impatience with any approach to philosophy of education which attempts to derive "implications" for education from general philosophical positions.<sup>6</sup> Scheffler thinks of the relationship between

philosophy and educational practice as more subtle and indirect but, for all that, there is a connection.

It should also be acknowledged that Scheffler maintains that in doing philosophy of education we are *directly* tackling intellectual problems, not practical ones.<sup>7</sup> The primary objective is to improve our philosophical *understanding* of educational issues, just as our aim in other areas of philosophy - science, art, religion and so on - is to achieve whatever philosophical understanding we can. So that the intended audience must be *anyone* who seeks philosophical illumination. Having said this, however, it is also important to remember that Scheffler emphasizes that the *object* of such understanding is the educational process, and he insists that the linkage of philosophical and practical concerns be maintained.<sup>8</sup>

The person most likely to benefit from such understanding as can be achieved is the professional educator, whether teacher or administrator, and it is no surprise to find Scheffler, in the Introduction to the first edition of *Philosophy and Education* in 1958, calling for serious discussions between the professional philosopher and professional educator. It is also significant that he rejects the idea that the educators have nothing to contribute to the philosophical consideration of their field. Here we have an indication of the kind of person Scheffler wishes to see in the teaching role; not someone who passively receives philosophical wisdom dispensed by experts, but someone *actively* engaged in rational reflection on arguments and assumptions in the context of education.

This, of course, also reflects Scheffler's conviction that philosophical analysis offers the educator not primarily a body of substantive doctrine, but rather a wide variety of methods and procedures which can be *used* to construct one's own educational views.<sup>9</sup> Certainly, the results of philosophical inquiry in various areas may be drawn on to illuminate educational issues, but this presupposes that the relevant educational context is examined critically; there can be no mechanical application of findings from general philosophy. In short, the teacher needs to become something of a philosopher if he or she is

to take up a critical stance with respect to educational practices and assumptions. Scheffler points out too that the distinction between philosophy and other inquiries is not one of persons, and educators themselves may take on the role of philosopher.<sup>10</sup>

An excellent illustration of this general point is Scheffler's suggestion that teachers ought to have thought about the philosophical aspects of the subjects they are teaching. He reports learning with some surprise that the student teachers in his philosophy of education classes were simply unaware that there existed a philosophical literature dealing with their teaching subject.<sup>11</sup> What Scheffler had his students do was to reflect on the nature and character of the subject in question and to relate those reflections to questions about how the subject should be taught. Scheffler argues that "whereas the scientific researcher need not at all concern himself with the process of training others for research, the science teacher needs to reflect on the proper selection and organization of scientific materials for educational purposes, and so to presuppose a general perspective on those materials."<sup>12</sup> In Scheffler's words, the teacher functions "as a philosopher in critical aspects of his role,"<sup>13</sup> especially in explaining and articulating the fundamental nature of the subject being taught.

Recognizing the need for thoughtful educators to engage with philosophy, Scheffler criticizes then prevalent conceptions of teacher education which essentially characterized the process in terms of subject-matter competency, practice teaching and teaching methods. It is regrettable to report that Scheffler's complaints are as timely and relevant today as they were twenty-five years ago. In Britain, for example, the preparation of teachers has once again, after a brief period when educational theory was taken seriously, reverted to teacher *training*, essentially an apprenticeship system supplemented by classes in teaching methods. Student teachers take *no* work in philosophy of education or other foundation disciplines where they might reflect critically on the role they are preparing for. Even if they did, such courses could not be offered by those who have taught philosophy of education at university for the

past several years, since these would be deemed to lack "recent and relevant" classroom experience in schools.<sup>14</sup> Scheffler himself, I fear, would be unacceptable!

Matters have not yet reached this sorry pass in North America, but the signs are ominous. A recent and popular book in Canada calls basically for the British model to be introduced, and explicitly recommends a two-year apprenticeship-style programme in the art and science of the trade.<sup>15</sup> In the United States, influential philosophers have recently come out against the aim of promoting critical thinking in schools and argued that "primary and secondary education will always be a matter of familiarizing the young with what their elders take to be true."<sup>16</sup> I will return later to the conception of education implicit in these remarks, but for now the point is that it is hard to see why, if this is the objective, what Dewey called a machine teacher, or even a machine, would not suffice in the classroom. Rather revealingly, Rorty notes that "the only point of having real live professors around instead of just computer terminals, videotapes, and mimeoed lecture notes is that students need to have freedom enacted before their eyes by actual human beings."<sup>17</sup> Rorty is speaking here only of college professors and higher education, and we may rather easily draw the implication for teaching at lower levels.

When the preparation of teachers is reduced to practice combined with methods, typically a justification is proffered which appeals to the idea of *relevance*. According to Andrew Nikiforuk, for example, most teachers will say that their training had nothing to do with effective teaching. Theory is dismissed as worthless and the call goes out for *practical* experience. We ought by now to have heeded Dewey's warning that "not any and every sort of thing which passes for teaching or for 'experience' will make a teacher any more than simply sawing a bow across violin strings will make a violinist."<sup>18</sup> Philosophy can help us to recognize the insidious danger in the very idea of relevance, where certain outcomes are taken for granted as ultimate.<sup>19</sup> The prevailing conception of education and schooling, towards which our present practices and methods are thought to be relevant, may well need

to be revised or abandoned, hence Scheffler's profound remark that the ideals of free inquiry and rationality must themselves become the chief touchstones of relevance. These ideals, as we shall see, must be grasped by teachers, and their general character can be appreciated by reflecting philosophically on the nature of teaching itself.

### **Scheffler's teacher**

At the heart of Scheffler's philosophy of education is a conception of teaching in which the ideals of free inquiry and rationality are paramount. This conception distinguishes the notion of teaching from other efforts to make the student's behaviour conform to some desired pattern. In Scheffler's account, teaching is not synonymous with acculturation since initiation into a culture might be carried on by way of propaganda, indoctrination, conditioning and other non-rational methods. None of these fall within what Scheffler sees as the standard sense of the term "teaching", and his account of this standard sense reveals that certain normative constraints are embedded in it.<sup>20</sup>

Basic to this account are certain restrictions on the *manner* in which teaching can be conducted. In practice, of course, teachers may at times engage in propaganda and indoctrination, but then they are failing to live up to the ideals which are immanent in the standard sense of teaching. There are two main aspects to the manner in question. First, teachers must be willing to show what their reasons are for believing such and such, and must try to ensure that the students accept those beliefs, if they do, for the reasons given. Second, teachers must be willing to have their reasons challenged; they must allow the arguments they draw on to be reviewed and assessed by the students: "To teach, in the standard sense, is at some points at least to submit oneself to the understanding and independent judgment of the pupil, to his demand for reasons, to his sense of what constitutes an adequate explanation."<sup>21</sup> What Scheffler is doing, I believe, is to wean

teachers away from a preoccupation with skills and techniques towards a greater concern for the *attitudes* which their teaching ought to reveal.

This means that Scheffler must reject that all too familiar image of the teacher as a "minor technician", where the teacher simply attempts to transmit to students ideas which others have deemed essential and whose purposes are beyond critical appraisal. This seems to me to be the conception of teaching which still lies behind in-services for teachers, where the emphasis invariably seems to be on acquiring new techniques. It is not that Scheffler is unconcerned about effectiveness and efficiency in teaching. He comments: "...any improvement in the efficiency with which factual knowledge can be processed and disseminated is, I should think, clearly a good, taken in itself. There is no positive virtue in inefficient teaching of factual materials."<sup>22</sup> The problem with the "minor technician" conception, however, is that it fails to do justice to the idea of the teacher as an autonomous individual who is capable of asking, and stimulating others to ask, *critical questions* about the material being taught, and who is able and willing to enter a rational discussion.

Scheffler holds that teaching has a special connection with rational explanation and critical dialogue; the teacher is, to some extent *risking* his or her own beliefs as the dialogue with students is pursued. These beliefs will only carry the day if the student finds the reasons for them compelling. The false security of the one-way transmission model is abandoned. The teacher, on Scheffler's view, needs to be a certain sort of *person*, someone committed to provoking new ideas, questions, and doubts. He or she must regard the student as someone with an independent mind whose queries must be taken seriously. It is perfectly clear in Scheffler's account that the teacher is working towards the day when his or her students have gained intellectual independence.

All of this means, I think, that the teacher must possess certain *virtues*. For example, the teacher needs that kind of humility which is involved in seeing oneself as open to critical challenge. The teacher must be confident that he or she has something to offer, yet be

prepared to accept that the ideas being presented may fail to stand the test of critical scrutiny. The teacher also needs some courage to face the risks involved in exposing one's views to examination, in being shown to be mistaken or confused. Open-mindedness, which is akin to what Scheffler calls receptivity to surprise,<sup>23</sup> is also a virtue if a genuine dialogue is to occur, for it may well be necessary to revise or abandon one's views in the face of counter-argument. The teacher must also strive to be impartial and not distort the discussion by allowing bias and prejudice to influence the outcome.<sup>24</sup> Scheffler makes the important point that the teacher influences the student not just by what he or she *does*, but by what he or she *is*, and these virtues come through in the very manner in which the teacher engages the students.

Why should teachers be guided by the ideals implicit in the standard sense of teaching? Why not adopt an authoritarian conception of teaching, as some philosophers urge?<sup>25</sup> There are, perhaps, two chief considerations. First, there is the ethical point that teachers must respect the student's mind.<sup>26</sup> The student will have views on the ideas being studied, and these cannot just be dismissed or ignored if the principle of respect for persons is to be honoured. Scheffler refers explicitly to the student's *right* to ask for reasons and to exercise his or her own judgment. Second, there is the epistemological point that the teaching context, like the human condition, is one of fallibility.<sup>27</sup> The ideal of rationality involves recognizing that one may be wrong, and requires that one teach in such a way that this insight is not obscured. Even if the ideas being taught are true, the student could not properly be said to *know* that the ideas are true unless he or she has been able to critically review the evidence which supports them.<sup>28</sup> Elsewhere Scheffler puts the point this way: "New information, in short, can be intelligibly conveyed by statements; new knowledge cannot."<sup>29</sup>

Scheffler is not open, I believe, to the kind of charge now often made against those who favour an approach to teaching which seeks, as his does, to promote critical thinking in

children, namely that this encourages students to think they are capable of making judgments before they possess any real understanding of the issues involved. Anthony O'Hear, for example, castigates what he terms the "current orthodoxy" in education for holding that a young student is able to critically appraise any subject after a cursory introduction: "Reason in the correct sense is not the readiness of any uneducated or half educated person to hold forth on things he does not understand...."<sup>30</sup> Rather than teaching children to criticize their disciplines, he argues, teachers should try to get them to love and respect what they are learning.

O'Hear is not alone in his opposition to teaching conceived as a critical dialogue with one's students where radical questions are welcomed. A number of influential writers today, including John McPeck, E. D. Hirsch and Richard Rorty, emphatically reject the view that schooling should promote critical thinking from the outset. Hirsch and McPeck are prepared to allow critical thinking to make an appearance *later on* in schooling, but Rorty sees no place for it before college. Numerous arguments have been advanced in favour of postponing critical thinking, which cannot be examined here,<sup>31</sup> but one common thread is the belief that a great deal of information must be acquired *first*.

We have already seen that Scheffler is no opponent of the aim of acquiring information; indeed he welcomes improvements in the efficiency with which information is imparted. He states clearly that "as in science and the arts, so in morality, acquisition of the inherited corpus is a base for further sophistication."<sup>32</sup> Scheffler has no difficulty with the view that one central task of education is to introduce students to all the great modes of human experience. In a fine metaphor, he speaks of introducing students "to the many mansions of the heritage in which we ourselves strive to live."<sup>33</sup> So there can be no suggestion that Scheffler is unconcerned about the importance of what has come to be called "cultural literacy". He does not, however, fall into the trap of either/or thinking and set up critical thinking and cultural literacy as at odds with each other: "The issue, in short, is

not whether culture shall be renewed, but in what *manner* such renewal is to be institutionalized."<sup>34</sup> Scheffler's emphasis on the manner in which teaching is to be conducted allows him to transcend the alleged dichotomy, for he is able to claim that critical thinking appears *in the very way in which information is imparted*. Critical thinking is *built into* a certain approach to teaching, one which welcomes questions and tries to provide the student with honest reasons.

Scheffler carefully guards against the objection that young children, and even older students, are not in a position to critically assess what they are learning and, rightly in my view, sees the emergence of critical ability as gradual and progressive; critical judgment, he remarks, grows only through increased participation.<sup>35</sup> The initial questions raised by students will almost certainly be inadequate by mature standards of criticism,<sup>36</sup> but the students are at least starting out on a path which leads to that later accomplishment. Furthermore, the teacher can begin early on to model those virtues and attitudes which characterize critical dialogue, and these can serve as a valuable hidden curriculum which is gradually brought out into the open. In this connection, he observes that "the whole environment of meanings surrounding the lesson is important as potentially contributing to learning."<sup>37</sup>

Moreover, there is no inclination on his part to surrender the authority and greater maturity of the teacher to the whims of the relatively inexperienced student. He points out, for example, that the student's demand for reasons is "not uniformly appropriate at every phase of the teaching interval."<sup>38</sup> The point is rather, as Scheffler notes, that the student is not to be systematically precluded from asking "How?" "Why?" or "On what grounds?"<sup>39</sup> The teacher will have to use his or her own judgment to determine when a question is frivolous or in some way inappropriate, and not simply turn the lesson over to the students.

Scheffler will surely reject as misleading the dichotomy set up by O'Hear between encouraging criticism and learning to love the subject in question. This either/or muddle

only has plausibility if criticism is construed as entirely negative and destructive. In developing the kind of critical outlook Scheffler has in mind, the student is gaining a greater appreciation of the subject, is beginning to see the fascinating complexities which lie just below the surface, and is gradually developing to the point where he or she will perhaps be able to contribute to the subject in question. There is no reason whatever to suppose that the development of such a critical outlook will interfere with coming to love the subject.

Teachers and student teachers, I believe, would do well to read Scheffler if only to acquaint themselves with the ideal of teaching sketched above, an ideal which views teachers as "free men and women with a special dedication to the values of the intellect and the enhancement of the critical powers of the young."<sup>40</sup> This ideal is far from being empty rhetoric; its emphasis on criticism contrasts sharply with the recent advocacy of neutralism and relativism in teaching:

(1) Scheffler presents a more challenging and complex view of teaching than that captured in the "neutral teacher" model where the teacher is precluded from offering his or her own views on controversial material. On this still popular view, the teacher is supposed to be trying to initiate a discussion which he or she can never join. Although equally opposed to indoctrination, Scheffler's view allows teachers to *judge* when they can safely offer their own opinions and it does justice to the importance of *honest* answers.<sup>41</sup> The teacher, Scheffler points out, does not stand "outside the realm of value, but squarely within it,"<sup>42</sup> and is "called upon to reveal, and hence to risk, his own judgments and loyalties in the process of teaching others."<sup>43</sup> This is very different from neutralism.

(2) His view also offers a welcome corrective to that relativism with respect to reasons and truth which passes in many educational circles today as plain common sense. Relativism is lurking, for example, in the guideline which states that when diverse cultural groups are portrayed in textbooks, differences in customs must not be depicted as undesirable and no adverse value judgment about any such differences is warranted.<sup>44</sup> What

these relativists will, or can, say about a culture which *rejects* the view expressed in this very standard is not clear, since the standard forbids any adverse judgment. Scheffler's position encounters no such self-refutation. He maintains that "we are called upon to overcome our initial tendencies to self-assertiveness and partiality by a more fundamental allegiance to standards of reasonable judgment comprehensible to all who are competent to investigate the issues."<sup>45</sup> Reasonable judgment is difficult but not impossible.

### **Scheffler's lessons**

If we imagine a teacher who is attracted by the above conception, and who sees the need in general to adopt a philosophical perspective in his or her work, in what other ways might such a teacher benefit from reading Scheffler? Of course, as Scheffler himself points out, no comprehensive catalogue of methods should be expected, and any methods which are learned will have to be applied with judgment, tact, intelligence and wisdom.<sup>46</sup> What one finds, in fact, is a general approach to educational issues which draws on a wide range of procedures and attitudes called collectively "the analytical temper". This phrase is meant to signify, among other things, an outlook which respects common sense and logical clarity, prefers reason to rhetoric, and refuses to make a virtue of paradox.<sup>47</sup>

There is, as Plato knew, an important distinction between the philosopher and the paradox monger, but the distinction does not mean that the philosopher must not raise a question which *seems* paradoxical or even nonsensical. On the contrary, one central lesson to be learned from Scheffler is to *think the unthinkable*, to call into question what seems obvious and beyond question, and to look critically at what is taken for granted. There is a danger that teachers will fall in too readily with unexamined ideas, thereby missing valuable insights which would enrich their educational practice. A delightful illustration of this general point is Scheffler's discussion of alleged educational vices.<sup>48</sup>

His purpose is to redeem what he labels "the seven deadly sins of education," namely: ignorance, negativity, forgetting, guesswork, irrelevance, procrastination, and idleness. Obviously enough, to take one example, there are occasions when a student is expected to *know* something and should not have to guess. It is not uncommon, however, to generalize from such occasions and leave students with the impression that guesswork as such is reprehensible when, indeed, it is the lifeblood of theory construction and imaginative endeavours. "Not the eradication but the cultivation of guessing is the proper goal of education", Scheffler observes, and no doubt the practitioner will be initially taken aback. Any suggestion of paradox, however, is defused once the *kind* of guesswork needed is clarified and the relevant context taken into account. In thinking more deeply about what is too quickly dismissed as a vice, we become clearer about the value of certain neglected aims of education.

Just as teachers may fail to see the potential virtues concealed in what are typically viewed as vices, so too they may fail to detect the problems and contradictions which lurk within various popular definitions, metaphors and slogans which are used to convey educational ideas and ideals. Scheffler, accordingly, presents various "strategies of logical appraisal" which may be used to *probe for meaning and significance*. One illustration of this lesson is the way in which educational slogans require a dual evaluation which addresses both the literal claim and the practical aim embodied in the catchphrase. Dewey, of course, had remarked much earlier on the slogan-like character of much of the debate between traditional and progressive education. What Scheffler adds is the careful and detailed analysis of representative examples, with the result that, as teachers, we are made more conscious of the nature and function of slogans in education, and gain a more sophisticated grasp of their value and limitations. Along the way, we acquire a technique which we can apply in other cases for, as Scheffler explains, his intention is to offer

examples "not so much for their own sakes as for the sake of gaining insight into the logical anatomy of the species."<sup>49</sup>

If teachers are ever to be the free men and women of Scheffler's ideal, they must be able *stand back from fashionable trends*, which threaten to take control of educational practice, in order to critically appraise such developments. This is enormously difficult when there is well nigh universal enthusiasm for the trend in question and when the slightest hint of caution will brand one a Luddite. It must be done, however, or the ideal will amount to nothing, and Scheffler shows the way in his critical review of the value and the impact of computers in schooling.<sup>50</sup> Teachers must simply refuse to accept that there is nothing to question here, that the educational value of the computer is just a given. To free ourselves from this illusion, we need to insist on asking just what *educational* benefits are to be gained through the use of computers, recognizing that our sense of what constitutes an educational outcome threatens to be diminished by an uncritical emphasis on computers and on computer terminology. We start to define our objectives precisely in terms of what computers can achieve and the result, unless we are careful, is that the means dictate the ends.

The point is brought home when we notice how much is missing from the notion of learning, both the process and the result, if we think only, or primarily, of computing information: "Learning takes place not just by computing solutions to problems, nor even just by exchanging words, but by emulation, observation, identification, wonder, supposition, dream, imitation, doubt, action, conflict, ambition, participation, regret."<sup>51</sup> The idea that teachers need to *retain a broad conception of learning* is a familiar one in Scheffler's writings. Elsewhere, for example, he reminds us that problem *finding* is as significant as problem *solving*,<sup>52</sup> that learning is not only valuable when it is immediately useful,<sup>53</sup> that what is to count as having learned something is complicated,<sup>54</sup> that unlearning old ways of thought is important.<sup>55</sup> And so on. Learning, Scheffler makes clear, ranges beyond

information to include skills and propensities, and also more elusive attainments such as appreciation and understanding. An awareness of these conceptual differences can keep us alive to various possibilities in education. The lesson, in short, is that our sense of what an educational lesson can involve is enriched.

Further to the notion of an adequate conception of education, Scheffler teaches us to *ask searching questions about the curriculum*. For example, he points out that it is all too easy to confuse the principle that "whatever is necessary is justified" with the similar-sounding (but very different) principle that "*only* what is necessary is justified."<sup>56</sup> Confusion here means that we are falling in with a *minimalist* conception of the curriculum of the sort which surfaces when people argue for "the basics". Teachers are liable at this point to forget to ask what the *best* kind of curriculum would look like. Scheffler, moreover, draws a helpful distinction between relative and general justification: "When we decide broad educational issues, we are often asking not merely what jibes with American practice, past or present, but what is generally justified, whether or not it is sanctioned by practice."<sup>57</sup> His point is that a reflective teacher needs to push *beyond* a justification which is merely relative to traditional beliefs about the curriculum and inquire into the justification of the traditional curriculum itself.

No teacher should approach Scheffler's work expecting to find settled answers to these complex questions, though they will find many stimulating suggestions. Teachers need to view the situation as one where they are invited to join an on-going conversation, and to understand that what Scheffler offers them are various strategies to help them get started. Just as the teacher is not in the business of indoctrinating his or her students at school, so too there are no doctrines to turn to to solve our educational problems. If the lessons Scheffler teaches are taken to heart, the teacher will begin to think philosophically about his or her own teaching context, drawing on whatever guidance can be found in the philosophical literature.

### **Concluding comment**

Scheffler exemplifies in his own approach the same manner which features so prominently in his account of teaching. It is consistently a mark of his work that there is a fair-minded review of what can be said for a position with which he is ultimately going to quarrel. His own positive views are offered tentatively, not dogmatically, with his reasons clearly articulated. One might well say of Scheffler's writing, what G. J. Warnock once said of philosophy in the analytical mode in general, that it is characterized by "a clear intellectual air and a low temperature of argument."<sup>58</sup> His work, written with grace and clarity, will continue to be of interest and value to any teacher looking for a sane and balanced view of educational issues.<sup>59</sup>

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- <sup>1</sup> See my comments in "Philosophy of education in Canada", reprinted in my *Attitudes in Teaching and Education* Calgary: Detselig, 1993: 9-26. Also my "Continuity and controversy in philosophy of education", in John P. Portelli and Sharon Bailin (eds.), *Reason and Values: New Essays in Philosophy of Education* Calgary: Detselig, 1993: 1-7.
- <sup>2</sup> The best general introduction is Brian Hendley, *Dewey, Russell, Whitehead: Philosophers as Educators* Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985. See also my "Russell's contribution to Philosophy of Education", in *Attitudes in Teaching and Education* op. cit.: 27-43.
- <sup>3</sup> See Max Black, "Education as art and discipline", *Ethics* 54, 4, 1944: 290-94.
- <sup>4</sup> It was published in *Educational Theory* 4, 1, 1954: 1-3, and is reprinted in Christopher J. Lucas (ed.), *What is Philosophy of Education?* London: Collier-Macmillan, 1969: 111-13.
- <sup>5</sup> Israel Scheffler, "Introduction", *Philosophy and Education: Modern Readings* Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1958: 2. This and subsequent page references are to the Introduction as reprinted in the now more readily accessible 2nd ed., published in 1966
- <sup>6</sup> op. cit.: 2.
- <sup>7</sup> op. cit.: 4.
- <sup>8</sup> Scheffler, "Philosophy and the curriculum", in *Reason and Teaching* Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1973: 32.
- <sup>9</sup> Scheffler, *Philosophy and Education*, op. cit.: 11. This is not to say that substantive philosophical doctrine will not emerge, such as Scheffler's own theory of rationality.
- <sup>10</sup> Scheffler, "Philosophy and the new activism", in *Reason and Teaching* op. cit.: 21.
- <sup>11</sup> Scheffler, "Philosophy and the curriculum", op. cit.: 34.
- <sup>12</sup> op. cit.: 36.
- <sup>13</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>14</sup> For some insights into the changing face of teacher preparation in Britain, see David Carr, "The philosophy of education", *Philosophical Books* 35, 1, 1994: 1-9.
- <sup>15</sup> Andrew Nikiforuk, *School's Out: The Catastrophe in Public Education and What We Can Do About It* Toronto: Macfarlane Walter & Ross, 1993: 113.
- <sup>16</sup> Richard Rorty, "Education without dogma", *Dissent* 36, 2, 1989: 198-204.
- <sup>17</sup> op. cit.: 204.
- <sup>18</sup> John Dewey, "What can psychology do for the teacher?", in R. D. Archambault (ed.), *John Dewey on Education* New York: Random House, 1964:201. (Selection comes from John Dewey and James A. McLellan, *The Psychology of Number*, 1895.)
- <sup>19</sup> Scheffler, "Reflections on educational relevance", in *Reason and Teaching*, op. cit.: 135.
- <sup>20</sup> Scheffler states explicitly that he is *not* offering a stipulative definition of teaching. His explicit concern is to provide an account of the accepted meaning of the term in the manner of a descriptive definition. (See *The Language of Education*, op. cit.: 60.) Perhaps the force of "standard" in his reference to the standard use of "teaching" is to allow that there are certain uses of the word teaching which fall outside the account, but that an account in terms of the appeal to *reasons* to satisfy the student's own *judgment* captures the central features of the concept which serve to distinguish teaching from other methods of controlling behaviour or inducing belief.
- <sup>21</sup> Scheffler, *The Language of Education* Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1960: 57.

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- <sup>22</sup> Scheffler, "Concepts of education: Reflections on the current scene", *Reason and Teaching* op. cit.: 59
- <sup>23</sup> Scheffler, "In praise of the cognitive emotions", in his *In Praise of the Cognitive Emotions* New York: Routledge, 1991: 12-15.
- <sup>24</sup> Inspired by Scheffler, I have explored these and other virtues in my book *What Makes A Good Teacher* London, Ont.: Althouse Press, 1993.
- <sup>25</sup> See Anthony O'Hear, *Education and Democracy* London: Claridge Press, 1991: 35.
- <sup>26</sup> Scheffler, "Concepts of education: Reflections on the current scene", op. cit.: 6.
- <sup>27</sup> op. cit.: 64. Fallibilism is a familiar theme in Scheffler's work. See, for example, *Conditions of Knowledge* Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman, 1965: 53. And "Pragmatism as a philosophy", *In Praise of the Cognitive Emotions* op. cit., where he writes: "The answer to the sceptical yearning for certainty at the outset thus lies in the continuity of fallible inquiries tending toward the fixation of beliefs in the future" (p. 167).
- <sup>28</sup> Scheffler, *Conditions of Knowledge* op. cit.: 12.
- <sup>29</sup> Scheffler, "Philosophical models of teaching", in *Reason and Teaching* op. cit.: 73.
- <sup>30</sup> O'Hear, op. cit.: 29.
- <sup>31</sup> I have reviewed these arguments in "Content and criticism: The aims of schooling", *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 29, 1, 1995: 47-60. Reprinted in *Inquiry: Critical Thinking Across the Disciplines* 14, 3, 1995: 13-27.
- <sup>32</sup> Scheffler, "Moral education beyond moral reasoning", *In Praise of the Cognitive Emotions* op. cit.: 99.
- <sup>33</sup> Scheffler, "Philosophical models of teaching", op. cit.: 80.
- <sup>34</sup> Scheffler, *The Language of Education* op. cit.: 59
- <sup>35</sup> Scheffler, "Philosophical models of teaching", op. cit.: 77. In connection with the adequacy of the student's evidence, he also speaks of "the progressive incorporation, and increasingly autonomous use, of these standards." See *Conditions of Knowledge* op. cit.: 58.
- <sup>36</sup> Scheffler reminds us that "there is considerable leeway in the application of a given set of standards in different contexts." See *Conditions of Knowledge* op. cit.: 57.
- <sup>37</sup> Scheffler, "Educational liberalism and Dewey's philosophy", in *Reason and Teaching* op. cit.: 153
- <sup>38</sup> Scheffler, *The Language of Education* op. cit.: 58.
- <sup>39</sup> op. cit.: 68.
- <sup>40</sup> Scheffler, "University scholarship and the education of teachers", in *Reason and Teaching* op. cit.: 92.
- <sup>41</sup> Scheffler's emphasis on honesty in teaching is reminiscent of Russell's emphasis on truthfulness, though Scheffler himself does not draw the parallel. See, for example, Bertrand Russell, "Freedom versus authority in education," in his *Sceptical Essays* London: Unwin, 1985: 149. (Originally published, 1928.)
- <sup>42</sup> Scheffler, "Four languages of education", in his *In Praise of the Cognitive Emotions* op. cit.: 123.
- <sup>43</sup> Scheffler, "University scholarship and the education of teachers," op. cit.: 87.
- <sup>44</sup> See *Standards for Evaluation of Instructional Materials with Respect to Social Content* Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1986: 3.
- <sup>45</sup> Scheffler, "Moral education and the democratic ideal", in *Reason and Teaching* op. cit.: 142.
- <sup>46</sup> Scheffler, "Introduction to the first edition", in *Philosophy and Education* op. cit.: 8, 10.
- <sup>47</sup> op. cit.: 7-8.
- <sup>48</sup> Scheffler, "Vice into virtue, or Seven deadly sins of education redeemed", *In Praise of the Cognitive Emotions* op. cit.: 126-39.
- <sup>49</sup> Scheffler, *The Language of Education* op. cit.: 103.

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<sup>50</sup> Scheffler, "Computers at school?", *In Praise of the Cognitive Emotions* op. cit.: 80-96.

<sup>51</sup> op. cit.: 90.

<sup>52</sup> Scheffler, "Reflections on educational relevance", op. cit.: 131.

<sup>53</sup> op. cit.: 133.

<sup>54</sup> Scheffler, "University scholarship and the education of teachers", op. cit.: 91.

<sup>55</sup> Scheffler, "In praise of the cognitive emotions", op. cit.: 15.

<sup>56</sup> Scheffler, "University scholarship and the education of teachers", op. cit.: 84.

<sup>57</sup> Scheffler, "Justifying curriculum decisions", *Reason and Teaching* op. cit.: 119.

<sup>58</sup> G. J. Warnock, *English Philosophy Since 1900* New York: Oxford University Press, 1966: 112.

<sup>59</sup> Harvey Siegel provides a useful introduction to Scheffler's ideas on philosophy of education in his talk on the tape *Twentieth Century Philosophy of Education* ed. William Hare, available from Dalhousie University School of Education. I should also like to express my indebtedness to Harvey Siegel for helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper.