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Preface

Clinton Tompkins provides a compelling resolution of one of Heraclitus' classic paradoxes. In doing so, he provides a framework for reinterpreting Heraclitus.

Mar McKenna argues against liberal feminism by showing that the state can work only towards the oppression of women.

Ari Collins analyzes examples of two major traditions in philosophy of education, and proposes a synthesis between them.

Olivia Camacho builds upon the work of Saul Kripke and David Lewis and creates a new way to conceptualize fictional names.

Collected here are four very fine essays written by undergraduates at Wisconsin institutions. I invite the reader to consider these works thoroughly, as every one provides a vantage point the reader can use to challenge themselves. I hope the reader will find them as useful and interesting as I have.

With thanks,

Harold Windsor

Editor

Heraclitus' Puzzle on Death

Clinton Tompkins

The facts of Heraclitus' life are almost entirely a mystery. It is known that he was born to Bolson, a member of an aristocratic family, and that he lived in Ephesus around 504—501 B.C. (Kahn, 1). Heraclitus was known for the difficulty of his writing, and was given the titles “The Obscure” and “The Riddler” (Barnes, 48). Diogenes Laertius, a biographer of philosophers, recounts this tale of Heraclitus' book:

They say that Euripides gave [Socrates] a copy of Heraclitus' book and asked him what he thought of it. He replied: ‘What I understand is splendid: and so too, I’m sure, is what I don’t understand - but it would take a Delian diver to get to the bottom of it.’ (Diogenes Laertius, 22)

While this is likely fictional, it shows his reputation for serious and complex philosophical writing. Unfortunately, no complete copies of Heraclitus' book *On Nature* survived, leaving us only with fragments and quotations from other scholars. One of these fragments is the stanza below:

Immortals are mortals,
mortals immortals:
living their death,
dying their life. [B62]

This fragment left by Heraclitus offers an intriguing puzzle. In the first two lines, Mortality and Immortality are compared as equals, despite being strict opposites. This immediately seems to be a paradox. The last two lines don't appear to explicitly teach us anything. Like many of Heraclitus' other puzzles, this fragment requires a different understanding or perspective to solve. For example, another of Heraclitus' fragments: "The path up and down is one and the same" [B60]. This fragment challenges the reader to think about how a path can look completely different when walking it in different directions, yet is still one path. Without understanding and thinking about the difference between the physical reality and the perceptions that people have, the puzzle cannot be solved. This raises the question, what deeper knowledge must we possess to understand the immortals puzzle?

The parallel structure offers an insight into the puzzle, however the writing is still vague. In other fragments of his work, especially [B1], Heraclitus uses context-driven wording that makes it unclear upon casual reading. For example, in this section, it is unclear who the highlighted "they" is referring to:

"For although all things come about in accordance with this account, **they** are like tiros as **they** try words and deeds of the sort which I expound..."

Given that Heraclitus is prone to convoluted writing, it is reasonable to question whose death and life he is referring to in "living their death, dying their life". In addition, it is unclear if "their" is referring to immortals or mortals in [B62]. Taking these two questions together, we now have four possible combinations of interpretations for each of the two latter phrases.

Line 3: “Living their death”

1. Mortals are living mortals deaths
2. Mortals are living immortals deaths
3. Immortals are living mortals deaths
4. Immortals are living immortals deaths

Line 4: “Dying their life”

5. Mortals dying is mortal’s life
6. Mortals dying is immortal’s life
7. Immortals dying is mortal’s life
8. Immortals dying is immortal’s life

Here we can begin to shave away interpretations. This fragment has a parallel structure that is immediately obvious, with lines one and two (Immortals are mortals, mortals immortal) sharing an identity focused noun structure and lines three and four sharing a verb based structure. Due to the parallel structure, it is extremely likely that section one, “Immortals are Mortals”, is connected with section three, “Living their deaths.” This eliminates interpretations 1 and 2 because “Immortals” is the subject of the third line. The same can be done with lines two and four, which similarly eliminates interpretations 7 and 8. Our new list now looks like this:

Line 3: “Living their death”

3. Immortals are living mortal's deaths

4. Immortals are living immortal's deaths

Line 4: "Dying their life"

7. Mortals dying is mortal's life

8. Mortals dying is immortal's life

Here our puzzle is clearer, yet it is not immediately obvious which of each pair of possible interpretations to choose. To gain a clearer picture of which line to favor, I will turn to an examination of immortals. Immortals could be explained as a reference to the gods of Greek myth. Some scholars have translated this passage in this way: "Gods are mortal, men immortal, living their death, dying their life" (Heraclitus, Homeric Questions 24.3-5). However, we find that this translation oversteps when we return to the original Greek. We can see that in the beginning four words, the same word ἀθάνατοι is used, meaning immortal or deathless (Oxford Reference, 2024).

ἀθάνατοι θνητοί, θνητοὶ **ἀθάνατοι**,

ζῶντες τὸν ἐκείνων θάνατον, τὸν δὲ ἐκείνων βίον τεθνεῶτες.

Due to this, we cannot say for certain that ἀθάνατοι is referencing the gods, only the deathless. Some scholars, like Jonathan Barnes, make this assumption and believe that Heraclitus is explicitly making a logical paradox by equating immortals and mortals (Barnes, 52). I find this unlikely due to the reputation that Heraclitus had, and I have found a much more robust

explanation for the passage. In this fragment, Heraclitus is writing about a religious or metaphysical idea, metempsychosis.

We are still left with two pairs of interpretations for lines three and four. Understanding why Heraclitus is discussing metempsychosis requires a bit of understanding about Heraclitus' thoughts on nature, and the prevailing religious ideas at the time. Heraclitus is fascinated with the cycles of things, claiming that elements flow in a cyclical pattern, constantly morphing into other elements while preserving the whole [B31a,b][B90]. He believes that all things are ultimately made of the element fire [B49a][B10]. This was a relatively common type of belief to have—that there was an *arche*, or primal element that all things were made from. From this we get strong evidence that Heraclitus was open to ideas involving cyclical structures, especially if they also showed that apparent disunity was an illusion.

Next we must examine the idea of metempsychosis, which is the Greek concept that the immortal psyche travels to the underworld after death and, after some time and perhaps change, is returned in a new body to the mortal realm (Keith, 576). Though the psyche has subtle distinctions from the soul, the concepts are similar enough to be interchangeable in this context. Souls would retain much of their memories and personality from life during this transmigration, and might possibly bring that memory (in some limited way) into their next life (Keith, 576). Metempsychosis is an idea often identified with Pythagoras of Samos, a c. 570–c. 495 BC philosopher who founded a religious group known as the Pythagoreans: a group that sought communal living and harmony with nature. (Cornelli, G., & McKirahan, 168). It is possible that this belief may have spread into this area via the Egyptians, and was later picked up by the

Pythagoreans (Cornelli, 10). Regardless, Pythagoras and his followers were holding these beliefs in Samos and later Croton around the time that Heraclitus was living in Ephesus (Riedweg, 6). Additionally, Orphic cults, cults that proclaimed to have knowledge and magic given to them by Orpheus, commonly held metempsychosis as a core belief (Mackay D., 2021, para. 7). Metempsychosis is also present in Plato's *Phaedo*, showing that the belief persisted and spread even after Heraclitus' time (Cooper, J. M. (Ed.), *Phaedo*, 72a).

Given these facts, Heraclitus' fragment now lines up eerily well with the concept of metempsychosis. Let us go through the fragment one more time, line by line.

Immortals are mortals,
mortals immortals:
living their death,
dying their life. [B62]

The first two lines are meant to show the unity between mortals and immortals. All mortals are immortals, and all immortals are mortals. This is not because the physical state of the two is the same, but because the person is the same. Moving on to line three, we see that the correct interpretation is 'Immortals are living mortal's deaths'. If I die, I stop being a mortal being and have a "birth" into immortality, that is, I am no longer an entity that can die. I exist and live in the underworld as an immortal soul. In the same way we can decisively understand line four to mean 'Mortals dying is immortal's life'. For the immortal soul—its birth into this world, being assigned into a new body—would be a death from its current perspective. Heraclitus

highlights the cyclical nature of the soul, emphasizing that though we are in the process of living, we are still the same person as that which is dead and will die again. To the immortal soul, we are living their death, and to the mortal soul, our death is their birth, explaining “dying their life”. This distinction explains the difference between the usage of death and dying in the original Greek. Death refers to the continual state of “being dead”, while dying refers to the act of passing from life to death.

This argument for Heraclitus’ fragment B62 has shown that he is not discussing a logical paradox, but instead is transmitting valuable religious insights in a bite-sized package. Through an analysis of Heraclitus’ other fragments and the original Greek, I have shown that previous interpretations were lacking in rigor of their analysis of all possibilities. Digging deeper into the fragment, we find that the religious ideas referenced were spreading where and when Heraclitus lived. Heraclitus, though a difficult writer, wants the reader to focus on the singular identity of the soul, and on how the soul remains as one person when transmigrating between the mortal coil and the afterlife.

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Anarcha-Feminism, Liberal Feminism, and How the State Fails Women

Mar McKenna

Liberal feminism takes women's rights to be both viable and necessary under a democratic state. If certain laws and regulations are emplaced to benefit women, we can achieve a society under which women are respected and treated as equals to men. This is not the case, though. The state inherently relies on patriarchal structures. No matter what laws are put in place and no matter who has authority, the state will always rely on the degradation of women for its power. Therefore, women can only truly be liberated in a stateless society.

To critique liberal feminism, I shall consider Susan Moller Okin's *Justice, Gender, and the Family*. Okin focused on heterosexual relationships in her discussion, so in response to her, I will do the same. In this book, she argues that society and mainstream political philosophy do not consider the struggles of women, such as a lack of opportunity and less access to earnings than men. She thinks that certain laws and state regulations could remedy this—like equal parental leave, on-site daycare in workplaces, equal access to marital earnings, and alimony payments should people get divorced—but this is not so. If we adopt her suggestions, women are denied autonomy and liberation in ways that differ from how they are refused these rights currently, but nevertheless, they are still denied them. This is because the state is inherently a patriarchal structure, and there are no reforms that can change that.

1.

One of Okin's concerns is inequality in opportunity for women. Women will work all day and then be expected to go home and look after the children and do housework, not being given fair access to opportunities outside of the home because of this expectation (5). One way that she considers to remedy this is for the state to emplace equal parental leave and on-site daycare in

the workplace. In doing so, the responsibility to care for children will not fall solely on women. Fathers will also be forced to care for their children through having longer paternity leave, and other caregivers will look after the children at daycare (22).

This does not allow women more autonomy, though. They simply have more opportunities to be exploited by an employer rather than a husband, and it is most likely the case that they will be exploited in both the public and private sphere under these policies.

In the workplace, people are expected to work overtime, do more than what is in their job description, and be fully devoted to a company that treats them as disposable (WK Editorial Staff, 2025). Women are expected to do even more than their male coworkers. They are often dismissed initially due to their gender, so they have to prove themselves to be competent to an extent that men are not expected to do (Sebring, 2019). Furthermore, they are expected to perform unpaid emotional labor. Many people feel comfortable unloading their burdens onto their female coworkers, not because they see them as friends, but rather, as motherly figures (Martin, 2021). If women refuse to meet these expectations, they risk losing their job (Sebring, 2019). Their autonomy is sacrificed to their employer, being forced to take on roles beyond their job in order to stay in said position.

Similarly, at home, women sacrifice their autonomy to their husbands. It is understood, generally, that men are the heads of the household regardless of the work that women do both inside and outside of the home. For example, when a couple goes to buy a car or a home, the salesperson or real estate agent tends to speak more to the man because it is assumed that he makes familial decisions (Blankenship, 2025). Women internalize this societal assumption and will take on a submissive role whether or not their husbands actively enforce traditional gender norms (Ali, et al., 2020). This role includes doing the unpaid and unacknowledged labor of

housework and childrearing, which is why Okin's suggested reforms are not sufficient for women's freedom. As Emma Goldman explains, if women are not actively working to dismantle this structure and demonstrate their autonomy, they can never truly be liberated. (Kowal, 274). Other people can look after the children throughout the day, but that does not change who the primary caregivers are: mothers. Women are not only expected to take on this role, but many embrace it because of their internalization of societal norms.

No matter what laws and regulations that Okin suggests, women can never be free until they're granted full autonomy, and so long as they are being controlled within the workplace, the home, and society at large, they will never be granted full autonomy.

2.

Okin also discusses the economic inequalities within families. Women are expected to care for children when they are young, so they frequently either have a part time job or no job at all. Once the children are old enough to no longer need constant supervision, women can get full-time jobs. Because they spent so many years out of the workplace, though, they usually end up with low-paying jobs. Meanwhile, their husbands have been rising through the ranks at their job, and thus, will be making significantly more money. Because of this, women often feel trapped in their marriages; if they leave, they will have a substantially lower household income (5). To this, Okin suggests that marital income is divided fairly and alimony laws are emplaced to insure women have the option to leave unhappy marriages (22).

This, once again, neglects the idea that women are not granted the same autonomy as men. Even if money was not an issue, many women would stay in unhappy relationships because of the inherent power imbalance (Ali, et al., 2020). Louise Michel has expanded upon this: "How

marvelous it would be if only the equality of the sexes were recognized, but while we wait, women are still, as Molière said, ‘the soup of man’” (Kowal, 269). If someone is “the soup” of another person, surely they will stay with that person for a higher social status. Thus, women will stay in unhappy marriages because of the social position being wives put them in. Furthermore, as mentioned in the previous section, women internalize societal norms. Just because they have the opportunity to leave an unhappy marriage does not mean that they will. Women have been socially conditioned to believe that marriage is the ultimate goal, so once they achieve it, they do not want it to slip away (Wiser, 2016). So long as they hold on to these shackles of social conditioning, women cannot be liberated.

3.

Liberal feminists believe that women being exploited by the state and having less autonomy than men in ways that Okin’s suggestions cannot remedy are the fault of society at large, not the state. We cannot look to the state for remedies for every societal problem, and inequalities within society do not necessarily mean that the state must be abolished.

What they fail to consider, though, is that the state establishes and enforces hierarchies that demand women to be subservient to men. The state structure is such that government officials are the most powerful authority figures, with the second most powerful figures being wealthy business owners (the bourgeoisie, in Marxist terms), and then law enforcement. The least powerful group within the state structure is the common people. The state enforces this power structure with violence and threats. Laws are passed by government officials, but wealthy business owners are given a voice in what those laws are and how they should be enforced. The law enforcement then is in charge of making sure the rest of society follows those laws. Many

people follow them because they do not want to pay a fine or end up in jail, but for certain laws and certain people, that is not enough. Some people will not obey the laws regardless of the threats, and there are some laws that most people will break in spite of the threats. For example, many people go a few miles over the speed limit even though they know that they could be pulled over by a police officer and receive a fine. When a person breaks a law, law enforcement frequently responds with violence; I have seen many peaceful protesters forcefully grabbed and shoved by police officers. These actions deter people from breaking laws in the future and deter other citizens from breaking laws.

Men enforce their power over women in the same way. In the most extreme cases, they threaten and use violence to get women to submit. This is not always the case; usually, the threat is purely social. If women do not obey men, they could lose their social standing. A loss of social standing is detrimental to women. In general, people are far less forgiving of the mistakes of women as opposed to those of men (Sebring, 2019). Thus, to lose her social standing can cause a woman to lose everything she has worked for in both the public and private sphere. Just as the police do not have to verbally threaten a person every time they desire to get them to obey, so too do men not have to verbally threaten women to force them into submission. Rather, it is through an understanding of power and the inherent threat that men and law enforcement pose that causes women and citizens to comply.

The state is an inherently patriarchal structure, enforcing its power over citizens in the same way that men enforce power over women. To rid society of gender inequality, we also must do away with the state.

Liberal feminists also believe that we could change the structure of the state, but we do not have to do away with it altogether. Suppose we put women in positions of power and change how the police enforce laws. Women in positions of power will not exploit other women in the same way men consistently have, and a non-violent police force will not reinforce patriarchal violence. With these changes, the state doesn't have to be patriarchal.

To the first reform, having women in positions of power, changes nothing about the structure of the state. Women who work for the state are government officials before they are women, and thus, they are just as capable of enforcing patriarchal norms as men. To get such a high status, one has to work through the ranks. If one becomes a member of law enforcement, they have betrayed the working class and only bend to the will of the state. If one was born into the class of wealthy business owners and become one themselves, they profit off of the exploitation of the working class. Women who benefit from the suffering of other women cannot be trusted to undo patriarchal structures. Said structures work in their favor, and thus, they have no reason to dismantle them.

Secondly, if we change how the police enforce laws, the best that can be done is a removal of violence. Supposing that a society completely erases police violence, there is still the threat of what could be done to them should they break the law. Perhaps violence is not a threat anymore, but that does not mean that citizens will feel safe around the police. Instead, people will only feel the constant threat of fines and prison time for breaking the law. Those constant threats are just as looming and just as based in the patriarchal structure discussed in section three as the threat of violence.

State reforms would benefit women; a society in which no violence is normalized will create one in which women may experience less domestic violence. For the reasons previously given, though, under no state are women truly free.

5.

Liberal feminists also believe that we need a state. Without one, men will perpetuate more violence because they are not threatened by the laws for their violent actions. Thus, domestic violence rates will rise, and women will be even more oppressed than they currently are. Even if the state parallels the patriarchy, it still is needed to protect women.

In saying this, though, the liberal feminists have only further proven that the state reflects patriarchy. There was a time when people thought women needed men to protect them. It was important for women to go from being in their father's home to their husband's home for their own sake, but feminists fought for women's independence and liberation from these men (Anathswamy, et al., 2018). The liberal feminists are perpetuating this idea once again: that women need a structure that is harming them for their own wellbeing.

To truly consider this, though, without a state, two things would be the case. One would be the absence of one patriarchal structure that only furthers men's violence. Men learn to be violent because it is what they are taught by society and the state (Ali, et al., 2020). They are taught that they have power over women, and the state normalizes violence in utilizing it against the citizens they have power over. No longer having that structure, it is less likely that men will be violent. Secondly, in the state's absence, communities will foster. People will learn to depend on each other because they are not taught to bend to the state's will, to look to it for the answers to moral dilemmas, and look to it for guidance in their time of need like it is some sort of deity.

Instead, they will have each other they can look to for support, and in doing so, they will build stronger communities and bonds. When people have strong bonds with each other, they don't tend to want to hurt the people they are in community with. Because of that, a lack of state will make men less violent. There will always be some cases of violence, though, and instead of relying on the state to punish the perpetrator (which it may decide not to do), victims can depend on their communities to help them out of said situation.

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Liberal feminists ignore the inherent patriarchal grounds on which the state stands. They cannot rely on it to better the lives of women; it only further oppresses them. Every patriarchal structure, the state included, must die before any woman can relinquish her chains. So long as the state crushes the working class, so too will men crush women.

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Oppression and Logic: The Divide between Critical and Analytic Philosophy of Education

Ari Collins

Introduction

Educational theorizing is a vital part of the advancement of educational research and practice helping researchers, policy makers and educators to answer essential educational questions -- analytical, conceptual, and normative. Investigations include what the aim of schools should be, how education should take place, and what it means to *teach* someone something. Those theorists who help us to answer these second-order questions I call philosophers of education. The philosophy of education tradition has an often-described dichotomy between two distinct schools of thought: the critical school and the analytic school. These two traditions are rarely used in conjunction or put in dialogue to answer educational questions. This gap, I argue, can be bridged to offer more holistic conceptual tools and better equip those in educational spaces to answer difficult questions.

In this paper I analyze two texts that are paradigmatic representations (in some, but certainly not all, ways) of their respective traditions: Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and P. H. Hirst and R. S. Peters' *The Logic of Education*. These books were selected for their similar publication dates (1968 and 1970) and the impact on their respective traditions. I begin by outlining what the distinctions between analytic and critical traditions are supposed to be. After that contextualization I analyze the two texts, clarifying the traditions' respective projects, aims, methods, and style. Finally, I suggest how the two texts and two traditions can be used in conjunction, with the critical and analytic approaches each filling a gap the other misses.

Analytic vs Critical

What is the supposed divide between analytic and critical traditions? A first glance at the division between analytic and critical traditions suggests a geographical and linguistic divide. With the critical tradition coming from non-English (mostly German) speakers from the Frankfurt school and the analytic tradition being primarily English with authors like Wittgenstein. The theorists themselves are less important than the methods they used and the questions they tried to solve.

Methods and aims outline the strongest distinction between the two traditions, this distinction is described well by Kile Jones:

“The heart of the analytic/continental opposition is most evident in methodology, that is, in a focus on analysis or on synthesis. Analytic philosophers typically try to solve fairly delineated philosophical problems by reducing them to their parts and to the relations in which these parts stand. Continental philosophers typically address large questions in a synthetic or integrative way, and consider particular issues to be ‘parts of the larger unities’ and as properly understood and dealt with only when fitted into those unities,” (Jones 2009).

This distinction between the specificity and clarity of the analytic tradition and the broader scope of the critical tradition is reaffirmed by Kerdeman and Phillips in their article that criticizes the critical tradition of lacking clarity and rigor, and the analytic tradition for being sterile and disconnected from normal life (Kerdeman and Phillips 2014). To add to this distinction in method, I also suggest analytic theories are grounded in formal logic, truth and falsity, while the critical tradition is grounded in dialectical logic of contradiction. Additionally, the critical tradition is often associated with normative claims while the analytic tradition usually produces

more descriptive claims. Given this outline of the critical analytic divide, in our textual comparison we should expect to see similar themes of specific, rigorous, and descriptive vs broad, dialogical, and normative.

An Analysis of Pedagogy of the Oppressed and the Logic of Education

First, we will consider the projects of PO and LE to clarify what aims the authors have in mind. Freire's book centers around the topic of liberation of learners through a process of 'problem posing education' in which they come to understand their world, their place in it, and the structures that constrain them. "As they locate the seat of their decision in themselves and in their relations with the world and others, people overcome the situations that limit them" (Freire 1968, p.99).

The project of the book is two-fold, first to criticize the traditional 'banking model' of education, in which students are treated as receptacles for information handed down by an authority, and second as supporting a liberating education which humanizes students by giving them agency in their education and in their world.

For Freire, being humanized involves escaping the alienation and objectification that comes as the result of non-problem posing, authoritarian education. He describes the way in which education is used as a tool of those in power to "manipulate [people] by a series of myths" (Freire 1968 p.147). This manipulation and non-dialogical education disallows individuals from making their own decisions, thus objectifying them; "to alienate human beings from their own decision making is to change them into objects," (Freire 1968, p.85).

Now, although many of the themes in PO seem normative in nature, I argue that Freire is not intending to make normative claims, only descriptive ones. Throughout the book he seems to be attempting a descriptive exposition of the state of education and of educational projects. Freire rarely uses terms like good, bad, should, or ought. Instead, he chooses to describe the relationship between education and freedom, liberation, alienation, and objectification.

There may, however, be many implicitly normative claims in Freire's project. For example, when he describes the banking model of education, he frequently uses terms like alienation, oppression, objectification, and authoritarian. Each of these terms, doubtless, has negative normative connotations; however, our intuitive response to these terms does not, in and of itself, guarantee that Freire's project is normative. While it is probably the case that Freire views oppression negatively, he spends none of PO describing or arguing for any normative claims about oppression or liberation.

Turning to LE, Hirst and Peters are somewhat clearer in the aims of their book; they attempt to clarify the meaning of concepts like education, teaching, learning, and development. Through this clarification they hope to give teachers a framework to help them analyze and answer key questions about the aims and methods of education. Additionally, they hope conceptual clarity will resolve some of the tension between 'subject-centered' and 'child-centered' approaches to education.

The method they employ to achieve this aim is termed 'conceptual analysis'. This is the process of taking a concept and making explicit the implicit conditions within the concept. The conditions conceptual analysis uncovers are the logically necessary conditions of a concept, those conditions that without which the concept would not be the same.

Take, for example, when doing conceptual analysis on ‘education’ Hirst and Peters determine that a necessary condition of education is some development in knowledge and understanding. They argue that if this condition were not a necessary aspect of education, then one could rightly speak of an educated dog, rather than simply a well-trained dog (Hirst and Peters 1970 p.23). This, they suggest, is one logically necessary condition of the concept ‘education’ is that it involves knowledge and understanding.

Hirst and Peters argue that this conceptual clarity will aid teachers; “it is our conviction that the philosophy of education is an indispensable part of the equipment which the teacher needs in order to form a clear, better informed, better reasoned opinion about most of the [educational] matters under discussion,” (Hirst and Peters 1970, p.2). LE does not offer much in the way of normative advice; instead, it gives conceptual clarity necessary to answer important education-related questions.

Returning to our critical vs analytic assumptions, LE fits quite well into the analytic picture, taking strictly non-normative stances and only dealing with concepts and the use of language to clarify issues, with the process of conceptual analysis sticking with the clear and logical form associated with the analytic tradition. PO, while mostly sticking to the critical picture with a broader scope and slightly clearer terms, strays from our initial assumptions by not offering any normative arguments.

Style and Method

Now that we have a picture of each book and its general aims, let’s turn to an analysis of each book’s style and method. PO has a more narrative style which stems from the evidentiary base used to write it. “Thought and study alone did not produce *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*; it is

rooted in concrete situations and describes the reactions of laborers (peasant or urban) and of middle-class persons whom I have observed,” (Freire 1968, p.37).

These concrete situations and anecdotes generate much of Freire's illustration and analysis.

“They used to say we were unproductive because we were lazy and drunkards. All lies. Now that we are respected as men, we’re going to show everyone that we were never drunkards or lazy.

We were exploited,” (Freire 1968, p.64). From experiences like this, Freire provides readers with an explanatory theory of the observed developments. He explains how a 'problem-posing' education develops individuals' understanding of the world around them in a way that the 'banking model' does not. Freire's explanatory theory serves as a conceptual resource, or lens, through which one can think about educational methods and their effects in new ways.

LE, by contrast, doesn't engage in social scientific observation; instead, it uses a method of formal logic and conceptual analysis. They take terms like 'teaching', consider plausible conditions for the concept, and consider objections to their claims, before landing on some conclusion about the logically necessary conditions of a term. This, they argue, is “important in the context of other questions, which we cannot answer without such preliminary analysis,” (Hirst and Peters 1970 p.8). As such, the style is direct and clear in its aims and methods.

When thinking about each of these books, we can now consider if they fit into the analytic vs critical paradigm that was suggested in the introduction. In at least one significant way each title fits well into the category set out for it. LE is certainly analytical with a narrow scope, and strictly non-normative analysis. PO also fits into its paradigm by being a broad project which is argued in the context of broader educational approaches. These texts and traditions, however, are not so distinct as I argue in the section below.

Not so Different

Hirst and Peters and Freire both essentially engage in practical analysis of the world. Hirst and Peters do so by considering our use of language and the concepts underlying that language, to ultimately clarify the logically necessary conditions of our concepts. These concepts are not simply a fabrication of Hirst and Peters but are rather created by communities of speakers. As Hirst and Peters put it “Whose concept are you analyzing? The first answer, obviously enough, is *our* concept,” (Hirst and Peters 1970, p.8). It is the communitarian nature of Hirst and Peters’ argument that makes it useful for thinking and thinking *with* others productively about central questions about education.

Similarly, Freire considers his observations of education projects to produce an explanatory theory of education. This explanatory theory can be used as a lens or a clearer concept about the effects of educational methods on freedom and critical thinking, and awareness of the world.

As we’ve discussed, PO and LE come from different traditions and are both stylistically and methodologically distinct. Despite that divide, the practical improvement produced by each project seems to be relatively similar. Both PO and LE are explaining something about the world in hopes that it improves educational practice (or praxis).

They also, at times, seem to share similar commitments about the nature of education and the importance of the learner in education. Freire repeatedly pushes the idea that anything that is to be learned must start from the learners’ world, the things they see and know every day. Hirst and Peters also suggest that education must be done *with* the learner and that the learner must both understand that they are being taught and allowed to think critically about what they are being taught. If the criticality of the learner is missing, Hirst and Peters would describe the process as

training or indoctrination rather than education (Hirst and Peters 1970, p.85). This is a point Freire would strongly identify with and perhaps add to by suggesting that the authoritarian structure is what makes something indoctrination rather than education.

If I am right in saying that they share this commitment to the critical thinking of the learner and both engage in producing concepts for those interested in educational problems to use, then that suggests significant potential for the dialogue and conjunction of these texts and traditions towards the end of educational problem solving.

Combining the Traditions – How to Improve Upon Philosophy of Education

I have argued that the distinction between the tradition of analytic and critical philosophy of education is both real and represented in PO and LE, but that there exist some shared commitments to critical thinking and overlapping aims in producing concepts for educators and researchers to use. Given that both traditions offer something of value in answering educational questions, it is helpful to see how the traditions might be used in conjunction. In this section, I will describe some potential confluence between PO and LE before trying to take some more general conclusions about potential for conjunction between the traditions.

First, we might think that the conceptual clarity offered by Hirst and Peters would be a boon to Freire's project. Although I do have some conception of 'liberation' and 'alienation', it is not entirely clear *exactly* what the Freire means by these terms. Becoming clearer with those concepts would allow for a deeper inspection of educational practice and the effects of those practices. For example, does teaching a small child that $2 \times 4 = 8$ through rote learning mean that the child is alienated from herself? Specific questions like these are hard to answer without specific concepts and perhaps necessary conditions of terms like 'alienation.'

Hirst and Peters also miss something that can be provided by PO. Although their text may help us understand what our discussions entail, they give us little by way of direction to answer the questions their analysis points toward. For example, they argue that education entails bringing about desirable developments, but what counts as desirable is left unanswered. For this, we might turn to Freire's more distinctly normative concepts that entail individual decision making as essential for being humanized. Freire's concept might then allow us to determine that an aim of education should be to develop people's decision-making capacities. Of course, more specific arguments would have to be made for this particular conclusion, but this functions as an outline of how critical and analytic traditions of educational theory can be used in conjunction to produce more complete, accurate answers to vital educational questions.

Although these particular suggestions are helpful for understanding the critical-analytic synthesis possible between PO and LE, it will be instructive to consider a broader conjunction of the traditions. That is, how can we, in general, use the methods and ideas from both critical and analytical traditions to advance the work done. What value is to be gained by combining both traditions and how is it to be done?

The core part of critical theory is its grounding in experience; in fact, this is one of the distinctions this paper began with. We see through Freire that essential to his conclusions about educational practice were his firsthand observations and experiments. This suggests that in philosophy of education more generally we shouldn't be satisfied with merely describing what the term education really means, but we must also aim to discover what it really *looks like*.

This, for those coming from more analytic traditions, might mean attempting to integrate more empirical techniques and sociological methods. These methods can help advance normative

claims into practical applications. While I'm not here suggesting philosophers of education should be the one stop shop for all educational research, I do think that integrating empirical considerations will help to inform and reconnect what can sometimes be esoteric claims from philosophers.

I don't think, however, we ought to disregard the merits of the analytic tradition. Although critical theorists may be more grounded in experience, their explicit meanings are not always easy to understand. The lack of clarity in language and the broad usage of terms (like alienation) without more particular definitions can be difficult to parse and see exactly what the argument is. Beyond a simple suggestion that the banking model of education will lead to alienated students, it would be helpful to understand exactly what features of the banking model cause alienation to occur and what features of alienation are harmful and why.

The combination of these two traditions will look something like the framework of 'non-ideal theory' in which philosophers attempt to take the normative judgments from 'ideal theory' and place it in the context of our actually existing world and society. The exact project of non-ideal theorists is varied; however, it frequently takes into account the real experiences of individuals and the 'facts on the ground' of our society. Further, it takes these considerations as vital to the project of understanding what we ought to do in a world like our own. These projects, although utilizing empirical data, remain pointed towards a high level of conceptual clarity and specificity in argument, often focusing on one part or one institution of our non-ideal world. This, I think, provides us with the best existing model to combine the best elements of both traditions without also taking the least effective parts of each tradition.

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Fictional Names and Abstract Reference: Beyond Kripke and Lewis

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It seems intuitive to assume that when someone speaks of the characters “Sherlock Holmes” or “Harry Potter,” they are not intending to speak of a real person in the world, but what is it that they are referring to? Do those names have a referent at all? Speaking of characters such as the aforementioned Harry Potter and Sherlock Holmes are apparently meaningful, as most people can grasp the message trying to be conveyed despite the false nature of the characters and the surrounding context. When someone states “Harry Potter attended Hogwarts,” the audience likely understands the sentence, can assign meaning to the claim, and even assign it a truth value, despite Harry Potter and the school, Hogwarts, not actually existing. Some philosophers such as Saul Kripke argue that such statements with fictional referents actually *fail* to refer to anything at all, and would argue that no such Harry Potter or Sherlock Holmes exist. Meanwhile, other philosophers such as David Lewis claim that, while fictional names do not refer to anything in actuality, real or abstract, they do refer to an entity in a possible world. While it seems intuitive that such fictional characters do not exist in reality as asserted by both philosophers, it can be argued that fictional characters do exist abstractly once the idea of them is conjured up by a real person. Such characters are not concrete individuals in the *actual* world, but in the possible worlds created by authors through imaginative, intentional construction and later sustained through language. I propose that these qualifications allow us to consider such characters as abstracta with real, imaginative existence. By examining Kripke’s theory of vacuous names alongside his rejection of descriptivist accounts, and considering Lewis’s possible worlds framework, we can better understand the philosophical significance of fictional names, and evaluate the existence, reality, and reference associated with such names.

Kripke’s theory of vacuous names centers around the notion that fictional names do not

have a referent, real or abstract. Names work by referring directly to real-world objects such as “George Washington” referring to a specific historical figure. However, when someone says “Harry Potter,” they are likely to be understood, despite there not actually being an object that “Harry Potter” refers to. Kripke explains that fiction works by *pretending* that such names refer to something even though they do not. This is called a pretense principle, and it allows for fictional names to be understood meaningfully without an actual referent. Kripke asserts that existence and subsequent reference is tied to a specific object, rather than a cluster of properties as descriptivist philosophers such as Russell and Frege may argue. To Kripke, asking “Did Harry Potter exist?” is not equivalent to asking “Was there a wizard in England who attended Hogwarts?” By Kripke’s theory, descriptions do not guarantee reference as someone could satisfy the description by coincidence without being the intended referent. Someone could (theoretically) be a wizard in England who attended Hogwarts and meets all the other descriptives of Harry Potter without *being* Harry Potter. An important note in Kripke’s theory is the concept of causal-historical chains. This principle differentiates the rules of fictional names from mythological names. For example, while many biblical stories may be factually untrue, the names of characters in the Bible *do* refer, as their name (supposedly) originates from an actual person. Harry Potter does not fit this criterion as that fictional character was invented by J.K. Rowling with no referent to an actual being. Moses from the Bible, however, *does* refer to someone, as that name was originally given to an actual person. Even if stories evolve over time and we do not have the full and complete concept of Moses, the name still refers to the original person given that specific name. Kripke grounds this in what he calls “a historical chain of communication in which the name...has reached us, leading back to the man.” In summary, Kripke’s main argument is that fully fictional names do not have a referent at all, real or abstract, and descriptive theories should be rejected.

Similar to Kripke, Lewis also takes the stance that fictional names fail to refer to anything real or abstract, but he asserts that the reason these names still feel meaningful is by appealing to possible worlds and counterpart theory. Lewis says that the reason saying “Harry Potter attended Hogwarts” feels meaningful is because the speaker is appealing to a possible world in which Harry Potter does exist, even though he does not. We are essentially treating fictional statements as existential claims about whether something could be true in some alternate possible world. So, while there is no real or abstract object that “Harry Potter” refers to, we can conceptualize a possible world in which such an object *does* exist, and we can use that conceptualization to assign meaning to fictional statements where “Harry Potter” is the subject. Lewis’s counterpart theory states that objects do not exist in more than one possible world, but rather have *counterparts* in alternate worlds. As Lewis explains, each thing is “world-bound,” in that it “belongs wholly to one single world, and never appears at any other world,” though it may have counterparts elsewhere united by resemblance. So, if we say “George Washington could have been the 2nd president instead of the first” we are not speaking of George Washington from the actual world doing something different in another world, but rather the possibility of a *counterpart* George Washington existing in another world with slightly different properties. This means that there is no cross-world identity, only cross-world similarity between objects. This ties into fictional names as the names we are speaking of are describing the role of an object that exists in another possible world. It may be the case that “Harry Potter” does not exist in our world, and speaking of that object fails to actually refer to something, but it is still meaningful to us because we can imagine at least one possible world where there is a counterpart version of the character that *does* exist. Lewis’s main argument is that fictional names do not actually refer to something, but by assigning names to these characters, we are able to describe and talk about possible world scenarios.

Both Kripke and Lewis have strong arguments as to why fictional names fail to refer to anything real or abstract, but their explanations as to why such names are still meaningful differ. Kripke's principle of pretense argues that fiction pretends to refer and that is why we can meaningfully understand statements rooted in fiction. This argument reflects how many people perceive fiction, which is "make-believe" or pretend, and seems very appealing intuitively. Kripke's theory does not require significant metaphysical comprehension and can likely be understood by the average person. However, a significant drawback of his theory is that it fails to address fictional truths and falsities. Why does it seem false to say that Harry Potter is from America if Harry Potter does not exist? There is no clear answer to this based on Kripke's theory. As for Lewis's theory of counterparts and possible worlds, he asserts that fictional names describe the counterpart of an object in an alternate possible world even though that object does not exist in the real world. Lewis's argument is strong in the sense that it provides a detailed semantic framework for truth-condition in fiction, which is something that Kripke fails to explain. While Lewis's theory is still intuitive and appeals to common-sense, it requires more metaphysical understanding. While both theories offer valuable insights, neither fully captures the abstract existence that fictional characters achieve through the creative acts of real individuals, a view which better accounts for the lasting reality of fictional worlds.

While I do agree with Kripke and Lewis that fictional names do not refer to any real-world object, I propose that they do refer to real-world *ideas* and therefore do have an *abstract* referent. Utilizing the framework of Lewis, we can assume that other than logical contradictions, almost anything can be true in some possible world. However, it can be inferred that because there are infinite possible worlds, they have not all been imagined or conjured up by a human mind in the real world. Lewis treats possible worlds as metaphysically real, but in this paper, the term should be interpreted more modestly as a

framework for abstract fictional worlds. For example, it is totally acceptable that in some possible world there is a boy named Larry Trotter who attends unicorn school. However, that possibility remains just that—a possibility—until someone actually imagines or thinks of that world. When that imagining occurs, the contents of that possible world become real contents of the human mind, and therefore exist as abstracta. In the case of fictional names, an author actually mentally develops one such possible world and brings those possibilities into abstract existence. Interestingly, Kripke himself gestures toward this when he acknowledges that fictional characters can be understood as "abstract entities which exist in virtue of the activities of human beings," although he does not further develop this into a theory of reference. For example, J.K. Rowling actually developed the world in which Harry Potter exists abstractly, and this world goes beyond a mere character concept; it includes a structured fictional universe. Harry Potter has the essential quality of being magical, so he could not exist as his true concept in a world without magic. However, in the possible world conjured up by J.K. Rowling, magic *does* exist and so do Harry Potter and the other properties belonging to that world. We can not physically see, touch, or otherwise experience this world, but it *does* exist abstractly and can be discussed, imagined, and explored through thought. Because these abstract worlds are structured and coherent, they allow for internal truths and falsities. Within Rowling's abstract world, it is true to say Harry lives in England and false to say he lives in America, despite neither being true in the actual world — as Harry does not exist. Some may argue that fictional characters cannot exist abstractly, for how can "Sherlock Holmes is a human" be true if this Sherlock Holmes is a mere idea? I propose that the property of being a human *does* belong to the abstract idea of Sherlock Holmes, because the complete concept of him includes the quality of being a human within that abstract structure. A statement pertaining to a fictional character should be evaluated as true or false relative to the abstract fictional world created by the author. This fictional world should be

considered as a mental construct that exists in the actual world as abstracta, not in a separate, metaphysical possible world. The possible worlds that Lewis refers to are where these abstract fictional worlds originate from, but my proposal is that once such worlds are intentionally constructed by a human mind, the content of those worlds now exist in the real world as abstracta. The characters do become *real*, but not in a flesh and blood sense, but rather as an idea of a real person that exists abstractly in these fictional worlds. When we use a fictional name in language, we are referring not to a concrete person, but to an abstract structure or a network of essential traits situated in a fictional world imagined by a real person. In summary, of the infinite possible worlds, those that a human mind chooses to imagine or entertain are brought into abstract existence, and therefore the fictional characters that exist within that possible world are also brought into abstract existence. So, while I agree with Kripke and Lewis that fictional names fail to refer to something real, I propose that they do refer to something that exists abstractly and is grounded in real human imagination and mental capacity. This theory offers a middle path between pretense and possibility while preserving reference, truth conditions, and the reality of creative, mental human thought.

One might object that my proposal commits a category mistake, and to say that Harry Potter instantiates the property of being a young British boy, or that Sherlock Holmes instantiates the property of being human, seems obviously wrong, because there is no real object *doing* the instantiating. Property-instantiation, on this view, requires a concrete referent, and since fictional characters have none, attributing properties to them, even within an abstract framework, is a conceptual error rather than a meaningful philosophical claim. I think this objection, while intuitive, proves too much. Consider mathematical objects for example. We say without hesitation that the number two is even, that a triangle has three sides, and that pi is irrational. None of these are concrete objects, yet we do not call it a category mistake to attribute

properties to them. What makes such attributions meaningful is not that there is a *physical object* instantiating the property, but that the property *holds necessarily* within a coherent, abstract structure. I propose that fictional worlds, when intentionally constructed by a human mind, function similarly. Within Rowling's abstract structure, Harry Potter instantiates the property of being magical in the sense that the structure is incoherent without it. Remove that property, and you no longer have the same fictional world at all. The properties are *real features* of the *abstract object*, even if the abstract object is *not* a concrete person. Furthermore, the objection, if taken seriously, would undermine even Kripke's own concession that fictional characters are abstract entities, for Kripke himself states that "there was a fictional detective who lived on Baker Street," which attributes a property to something he explicitly denies has a concrete referent.

It seems intuitively correct to assert that fictional names do not refer to any concrete object in the real world, as both Saul Kripke and David Lewis argue. However, both Kripke and Lewis further claim that fictional characters do not exist in an abstract sense either, though their explanations differ as to why we can understand sentences regarding the characters meaningfully. Kripke's stance centers around the principle of pretense, or that fiction requires us to pretend such objects exist, while Lewis asserts that fictional characters are represented as possibilities in possible worlds. Building off of Lewis's possible world proposal, I argue that by imaging a possible world and the characters within it, those concepts are brought into abstract existence, and therefore when we speak of such fictional characters, we are referring to an abstract object that meaningfully represents that character. This view not only bridges the gap between pretense and possibility but also highlights the philosophical significance of imagination in shaping the abstract aspects of reality. Recognizing fictional names as referring to abstracta helps illuminate the powerful connection between language, thought, and the worlds we create.

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