

The only way out of this catastrophe is education. Gershunsky argues for more funding, better equipment and facilities and, over the course of a long and meandering discussion, he cites Thomas Kuhn and calls for a philosophical transformation, “a new paradigm” which will deideologize and humanize education and ground it in a “love of wisdom and the pursuit of truth.” Education must change from serving the needs of the collectivity and be based on the individual needs of students. And this must start now.

That’s how the book ends. It appears that he thinks if you espouse a little bit of something that sounds like individualism you will win your American audience and make your case and perhaps get a few speaking invitations. But “individualizing education” and making the case for individualism are hardly the same thing.

The redeeming feature of the book is its testimony about the catastrophe in Russia, which again shows our progressive educationists the utter havoc and ruination that Marxism (and that is “really existing Marxism”) has wrought. But Gershunsky’s outlook is still rooted in a statist, centralized, and secular vision. There is no mention of private education, church-run education, home-schooling, there is no discussion of the canon or the curriculum, and nothing about values or religion.

Paradigms do not evolve, amend themselves, or change. They get buried with their holders in the grave. So long as Russia does not go through a thorough process of decommunization, in effect burying it, there can be no change.

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William Hare.
WHAT MAKES A GOOD TEACHER?
London, ON: The Althouse Press, 1993.
203 pp., \$20.95.

What makes a good teacher? Everyone understands that good teachers know their material, get along well with their students and make learning fun. William Hare, in his book, *What Makes a Good Teacher*, raises other issues that define “good” teachers. He discusses such virtues as humility, courage, open-mindedness that teachers must have.

This book raises the question of who should teach our children. Hare argues that the moral and ethical values that teachers should have,

need to be addressed by faculties of education which, at present, tend not to teach “values”. He discusses the differences between the mechanics of teaching and the ethical principles that define the way teachers teach. The book devotes individual chapters to each of the virtues of: humility, impartiality, open-mindedness, empathy, enthusiasm, judgment, and imagination, discussing what the terms mean and how teachers display or, in some cases, do not display such qualities.

Hare has raised some very significant points. The best teachers are those who display these virtues and use them to compliment the mechanics of teaching. Therefore, educators should read books like this one that address such issues. Unfortunately, Hare tends to repeat ideas and examples to the point of annoyance. He constantly refers to Socrates as an example of a teacher with the best values, and Jim Keegstra as one with the poorest. While these two people do represent the poles of teaching, the constant referral to them becomes irritating.

Furthermore, readers may have problems with the writing. Hare uses very complex structures, thus often losing meaning. Sentences, such as the following, create comprehension problems:

Her conclusion, namely that feminists who do not take certain arguments seriously should not be dismissed as closed-minded, does not require the view that open-mindedness is only exercised within a certain conceptual framework which is itself, presumably, impervious to criticism. (p. 21)

Such writing occurs throughout the book. Clarity seems to be one of the virtues which Hare has omitted – though “mechanical”, it is as vital as all the others. What a pity that a book that says such important things should be so difficult to read. People who should hear its concerns may never get through it.

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