Stud Philos Educ (2012) 31:61–76
DOI 10.1007/s11217-011-9269-0

The (In)vocation of Learning: Heidegger's Education in Thinking

Jonathan Neufeld

Published online: 5 October 2011
© Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2011

Abstract Emerging research shows that undergraduate students are searching for a deeper meaning in their lives from their university studies. Leading students forth into this kind of meaningful action is the primary responsibility of the Philosopher of Education. This paper describes how such meaningful action can be accomplished by integrating the pedagogical ontology of Martin Heidegger into a course in the history and philosophy of Education. The course challenges students to engage in the cooperative project of what John Sallis calls "world building" by posing strategic questions, designing appropriate content, and demonstrating artful signs. Heidegger expects his students to rethink what it means for them to be a human being. When this identity is transformed, a new calling to think and an invocation to teach that calling can flow from that instruction. This paper describes this kind of instruction in practice by specifically characterizing what a "professor of learning to think" would be.

Keywords Heidegger · Plato · Vocation · Teaching · Learning · Thinking

> We all still need an education in thinking, and before that, first knowledge of what being educated and uneducated in thinking means.
> Every attempt to gain insight into the supposed task of thinking is moved to review the whole history of philosophy.
> Martin Heidegger: *The end of philosophy and the task of thinking*

The State of Our Educational Problem

Over the past 16 years, it has been my observation, one shared by Bonnett (2002, pp. 236–240), that higher education is increasingly under the sway of what Heideggerians

J. Neufeld (✉)
Faculty of Education, Brock University, 500 Glenridge Avenue, St. Catharines, ON L2S 3A1, Canada
e-mail: Jonathan.Neufeld@brocku.ca

للاستشارات المنارة

call the "essence of technology." This is not only clear in market management models of university administration but also in educational reform movements that promote standardized evaluation systems (i.e., Defined Learning and Evaluation Outcomes). "Education" is increasingly referred to as an industry or economic engine; universities are increasingly referred to as schools; and higher education is increasingly under pressure to train for the world of work. This movement directly infects children and youth in elementary and secondary schools where it continues to affect undergraduate students at universities in lecture halls and seminars. It creates relationships throughout instructor/student interactions that Heidegger scholars call "instrumental" (e.g., Bonnett 2002, p. 236). This produces evaluative structures that spell out achievement norms to dictate how students' creative writing projects should be standardized. In this paper, I elaborate on a counter-movement that may heal some of the harm that the essence of technology is inflicting on students.

Emerging research examines how undergraduate students are searching for deeper meaning in their lives by means of their university studies. However, they are not necessarily taught how to pursue it through those studies (e.g., Astin 2004; Lindblom 2007). Lindholm associates this yearning as a growing societal quest for nonreligious, non-denominational ways of fostering spirituality (p. 13). This deprivation results in what Myers (2000) calls a "spiritual hunger," a craving that Charles Taylor (1998) called the "malaise of modernity". Cooper (2002, p. 50) has observed that Heidegger's remarks on education occur in the neighborhood of the nature and dominance of science and the affects of scientific, technological thinking. By this, Heidegger is not only referring to narrow, subject-based views of the world. He is referring to an entire world-view that takes in all events, things, and all beings, including human beings, as resources to be allocated and channeled. This way of thinking manifests in various stress-related psychological and social disorders, akin to what Taylor calls "malaise." The debilitating moods that accompany these various feelings of alienation include estrangement, or what might be called a general feeling of not being "at home" in one's life. The students feel this way because they increasingly see little relatedness between learning and living. This is then exacerbated by the expectation that their degree will have no currency after they graduate from university. In real terms, "goals" lack any profound sense of "truth" for them. For Heidegger, the absence of the examination of a more basic and fundamental truth was the cause of human distress that manifested itself in these various alienating moods. Alienation from the connectedness of life is not confined to the individual alone but can have the effect of eroding the spiritual strength of society in general (Cooper 2002, p. 51).

I believe Philosophers of Education should be highly concerned with the feelings of alienation that their students feel. Technological thinking will increasingly dominate the ways in which students' being-in-the(ir)-world will show up for them as adults (Vandenberg 2008, p. 254). It is essential, therefore, for philosophical studies in Education to convey more meaningful versions of the quality of being-in-the-world for students. More saving truths can become a vehicle to help them find a "dwelling place" in this life where they have been thrown (Hogan 2002, p. 224). Leading students forth into this kind of meaningful action is the first responsibility of the Philosopher of Education. Without more profound reflection, it is not philosophy of "education" that is taught but the inculcation of ideology or the collection of even more alienating information. This paper describes a highly successful model of one such vehicle, although many others may exist.

المنارة للاستشارات

Introducing Heidegger's Vocation to Think

Heidegger calls on his students of learning to re-imagine what it means to be a human being through education in thinking. In introducing his fundamental pedagogical challenge to his students, he poses four questions to examine thinking and its significance for learning (Heidegger 1954, p. 157). These questions are:

1. What is needed to think correctly?
2. What does prevailing doctrine mean by "thinking"?
3. What does the word "thinking" signify?
4. What calls on us to think?

These four questions can act as the foundations for an undergraduate course in the History and Philosophy of Education. The course can be delivered in an explicitly Heideggerian fashion in order to maximize students' learning to think. I have found that this can be accomplished by challenging the students with a set of strategic questions that drive the course forward; questions that they are forced to confront as they navigate through the course with its assignments.

The course begins by asking the students to compose a four-page essay that responds to the following seven questions only:

1. What is the "world," that it is something that can be learned (about)?
2. What is true about your goal(s)?
3. Who and what are you?
4. Where is your focus?
5. What methods will you apply to learn what you want to learn?
6. What habits will assist your journey?
7. What equipment is needed, and where is it to be found?

The students who enroll in this course customarily originate from all faculties throughout the university. They usually find this first assignment to be quite difficult in format and style. They particularly find the first three questions very challenging. Some, in fact, reluctantly confess that they are unable to answer the first question because they have never considered it before taking this course. They are also concerned about answering the questions correctly. I simply comfort them by assuring them that I very much look forward to their essays with great expectation. I remind them that the course is intended to answer one overarching question: what does it mean (for you) to be, an "educated" person? Many submit their papers with apologies for what they've written. I read them and return them filled with encouraging comments and questions that preface the course. No student does poorly in this first assignment because there are no wrong answers to these questions. For my purposes as a Heideggerian teacher, these essays are assigned to provide me with the material upon which I base the entire remainder of the course. Their purpose is to set the foundation to begin the cooperative project of what Sallis (1965) calls "world building."

How could the "concept of world" be seen in its intelligibility by means of a course in Philosophy of Education? It does not necessarily have to be a course that examines Heidegger's philosophy per se, nor even a course in fundamental ontology intrinsically. However, it should be a path of study that places students into the course of thought that Heidegger made accessible by means of his ontological perspective. One successful point of entry for figuring this perspective is the one that Heidegger used himself. This is the metaphor of the journey, specifically Heidegger's metaphor of "pathways" (Sallis 1965, p. 2). The students respond quite favorably to this image as a way of conceptualizing how

المنارة للاستشارات

to navigate their way through the course. As Sallis describes so poetically, Heidegger's paths are "forest paths." We enter as strangers. The forest hoards treasures from our prying and teaches us to wage perpetual battles with darkness. If we are to prepare the way for the journey into what Sallis refers to as "the Holy which lies hidden in the depths of this forest" (p. 3) we must make our way along the paths of philosophers from the past. My goal for the course is to evoke carefully chosen ontological questions as pathways to "the Holy."

Sallis so appropriately identifies "the Holy," as the destination, given the above comments concerning our modern malaise. The Holy is the hidden treasure that cures the malaise. This "gift" is exactly what many of the students are searching for. They are searching for some kind of edifying experience that allows them to answer fundamentally ontological questions that they sense need to be asked, but lack the vocabulary that facilitates inquiry. The most "renowned road of the goddess," as Parmenides called it, is the one that leads to the innermost depths of the forest where the Holy gift is bestowed. That road alone is "the pathway of the thinking of Being. *Such a path is the thinking of the world*" (Sallis 1965, p. 3). Therefore, interpretation of the material in the course must, from the outset, distinguish their familiar goals of scholarship from the ones that I am pointing to as their guide. Sallis suggests that we could characterize the familiar goals of scholarship as "a picture or copy" of philosophy (p. 4). In practice, this portrayal would best be described as re-presentation, practiced as recapitulation or mere recitation of course content. I am not as interested in ensuring that students retain the information of content, although I know that this will occur. I am confronting them with "the problem of world" as one significant means of posing, for them, questions of Being.

My initial question that orients students onto the pathway comes from *Being and Time* (1962, p. 402). This is the question that Heidegger posed to examine everyday dealings and their relationship with meaningful entities. The actual questions that Heidegger posed to his students were:

1. In what sense *is* the world?
2. In what way is anything like a world possible?

My own first question is quite a bit more simplified so that even students who are uninitiated can try to respond naively and honestly to this fundamentally ontological question. This initial question, when combined with the other six, enables the students to begin investigating a homecoming within four major regions that concern them (and which Vandenberg demarcates):

- The world of human relationships
- The world of vocation as it relates to their studies
- The lived world as disclosed by their chosen subject matter(s)
- The world of their adulthood

These are areas of reference that I integrate into lectures while presenting what appears to the students to be a survey of the history of Philosophy of Education. It is from their essential first assignment, therefore, that I am able to answer Heidegger's first question—what is needed to think correctly?—from the students' vantage point.

The course then begins with a close examination of Parmenides first Fragment (1995) to introduce all of the basic metaphorical and poetic images that I will return to over and over again throughout the course (e.g., movement through space and through time [historicality]; darkness and light; the upward way; an ultimate or eternal truth; justice as a cosmic reordering; world-changing; alterity; divine aspects; a "dawning"; the distinction of

المنارة للاستشارات

reliability vs. unreliability; persuasion; freedom; the disclosure of a secret). These are essential and basal foundations. They free students to begin poetically opening the way into an imagination that will serve them throughout the course. It also allows them to identify what they have written in their first assignment with an ancient and esoteric source. I emphasize for the purposes of the course that the original rendition of "philosophy of education" was composed and performed as a poetic soliloquy. I call on them to compose their own contemporary version of this soliloquy at the end of the course by applying and adapting course content into continuity.

The final assignment is a formal essay where they, once more, answer the same seven questions from a personal perspective by integrating and citing as much content from the course as is necessary. That final paper is ten-pages long. Over the course of the term, they submit four two-page reports in which they analyze course content reflectively with citations but always from a personal perspective. I also manage a web-based forum on which students dialogue with each other on topics that I introduce and which relate directly to the course. The material for the course includes Pre-Socratics/Plato/Aristotle; St. Augustine; the modern Rationalists; Rousseau/Macaulay; and Kierkegaard/Nietzsche. Of course, other pathways may take the students on a similar journey. This is one where I am the guide so I plan the tour according to my own expertise. I conclude the course with two chapters from Arendt's (1996a, b) exploration of the concept of *caritas*.

By the third lecture, I address another of Heidegger's questions: What does prevailing doctrine mean by "thinking"? Obviously, this leads straight into his interpretation of Plato's famous "Allegory of the cave," the first chapter in what it means to be "educated."

Plato's Doctrine of Truth: Foundations for a Metaphysics of Learning

Plato's allegory of education (1992, pp. 186–193) is a story about alternating from metaphorical falsity into truth and then back into falsity. Heidegger (1998b) is interested in what occurs during these movements, all of which demand a reorientation of eyesight. Something very distinctive occurs in each region of human consciousness (i.e., confinement, release, illumination, and return). *Paideia*; that is, "the effects of instruction," occur from being uprooted from one region and deposited into another. This "transplanting" is possible only if everything commonly accepted as truth is changed for the student. "Truth" in ancient Greek was *alitheia*, which can be translated into English as "unhiddenness" but which has come to mean an agreement between the concept and the thing itself (Heidegger 1998a, p. 138). I teach the students that if we were to think of "instruction" and "truth" as the ancients thought of them, then "learning" and "truth" would comprise an essential unity. This is why I must engage them in an examination of the "truth of their goals" as a way for them to examine the learning behind decisions and the entities that are required to fulfill those goals. This must be accomplished by making the poetic context and interpretation of Plato's allegory as applicable as I can to their everyday life.

Plato's allegory transports the learner into four different regions. In each region, whatever results from instruction is dependent upon the region in which it resides. During the stage of confinement, for example, the truth is revealed as mere shadows of artificial objects. Heidegger is most interested in the fourth stage, where the effects of instruction no longer "shine" for the aspiring learner but must be extracted, uprooted, and unraveled. At this stage truth is whatever was uncovered amidst darkness and in silence. There are many forms of engaging with truth when it is dark and when it is silent. For example, truth can be enclosed, hoarded, disguised, covered-up, veiled, or dissimulated. The most extremely

المنارة للاستشارات

hidden things in metaphorical darkness, however, must be wrested from concealment. Extracting, uprooting, and unraveling truths from concealment demands some of the alternative and unorthodox pedagogical practices that Heidegger advocates in a course such as this one.

Heidegger observes that the interpretive force of Plato's story does not arise from either the image of enclosure in a subterranean chamber or from the freedom and openness outside it. The interpretive force lies in the complementary role of the fire, the firelight, the shadows, the sun, and the sunlight. Plato's instructions on learning to think favor the correctness of looking towards illuminated ideas rather than uncovering what remains concealed or hidden in darkness. As "correctness of perspective," Plato's doctrine of truth demands a particular attitude towards learning to think, and teaching students how to think, in precisely this illuminated way. This signals danger for Heidegger, because it has the potential to favor scientific, instrumental, ideological, and objective perspectives of what learning to think should be.

Ever since Plato, philosophers (of Education) have construed truth as epistemological and ethical correctness. This definition has the potential to make unjust or prejudicial distinctions in how we choose to categorize people and things. In terms of specific curriculum goals, this definition of "education" does its work through the reformation of moral behavior (as in State Correctional Institutions), as the salvation of immortal souls (as in religious schools), as the unfolding of creative powers (as in public schooling), as the development of reason (as in institutions of higher education), as the nourishment of personalities (by means of myriad psychotherapies), as the awakening of civic sense (again, as in publicly sponsored schools), as the cultivation of bodies (through athleticism or military training), or as an appropriate combination of some or all of these "humanisms" (Heidegger 1998b, p. 181).

Heidegger (1972, p. 55) questions these fundamental assumptions of what truth and learning are. Questions are paths, he writes, but questioning this doctrine alone will not result in alternatives. There must be a total inversion of the truth; the kind of reversal that is only possible if the student ceases to search for truth-as-correctness and begins searching for a new essence of what truth is and where to find it. Heidegger, as teacher and curriculum theorist, is also searching for this new essence with us as our guide. Therefore, his ways of teaching can become a sign that points in the direction of the way. But it is up to devoted instructors and their apprentices to individually embark on the path on their own. Planning for this journey, therefore, starts by gathering together how the philosophers of the past have led us to contemporary concepts of learning and thinking. The challenge then comes with speculating on a new path without the temptation of revisiting the same ground of what learning and thinking have been.

Heidegger's Alternative Instruction in Thinking

Heidegger's goal is to culminate the tradition, to disillusion it, and to proclaim a new vocation for thinking. In doing so, he is calling for a new and more exalted humanism with a completely new focus for learning to think. This is exactly what the goal of a Heideggerian educator of Philosophy-as-thinking should be. Attending to this call requires an intense analysis of the prevailing doctrine of thinking. We must discover why we are indoctrinated into considering, performing, and assessing thinking as we have for centuries. We must continue, therefore, by inquiring into what the prevailing doctrine means by "thinking."

المنارة للاستشارات

Nine regions of truth have descended from Plato's original doctrine (Heidegger 1998a, p. 136). These are:

1. Practical experience
2. Rational calculation
3. Technical skill
4. Political discernment
5. Scientific research
6. Artistic composition
7. Reflective reasoning
8. Cultic belief
9. Common sense

All of these contexts are favored in the students' first assignments. Especially prevalent are practical experience, rational calculation, reflective reasoning, cultic belief, and common sense. Heidegger (1998a, p. 136) acknowledges that, in fact, all nine have value as objective, delimited principles of good practice. In applied practice, these comprise the foundations for institutionalized structures of learning how to think successfully and correctly.

Heidegger inquires into what the features of truth are in Plato's doctrine. First, truth is considered to be what is actual or genuine. Gold, for example, is what is properly meant to be "gold" as opposed to "lead." Truth occurs, therefore, when matter corresponds with its name, or when statements about beings and propositions are in accordance with those statements. Whether we are citing the consonance of matter (as form) with its supposed statement (in advance of consonance), or whether we are discussing the accordance of a stated meaning with matter or with form, truth must always be an *adequate* representation of that thing. In other words, there must be an adequate relationship of thought *to* the thing, or of intellect *with* the thing. Truth can be a correspondence, therefore, or even conformation as a result of adequately constructed dialectical arguments. Consistent with Heidegger's criticism, truth remains "correctness." Heidegger is deliberately avoiding such dialectical analyses because he is trying to avoid the logical results that always follow from Plato's doctrine. Alternatively, he tries to demonstrate what he means by portraying truth as an allowance for what lies latent in experience, as if to teach students to wrest what lies hidden in darkness or dormant in silence beyond truth's dialectical clamor.

To do this, Heidegger analyzes how a statement adopts the authority of being truthful. In figurative terms, a statement allows a perspective to open itself up as a re-presentation. "To present," implies that things stand in opposition for appearance and examination. Appearances and examinations are always activities that take place in some region. And when we enter any "domain" then things in that regional domain share relations with each other (Heidegger 1998a, p. 141). Relations occur with the accomplishment of a bond. And whatever becomes "bonded" in any relationship of common representation is what we end up calling a "thing" or an "event." "To be something," or "to experience something," therefore, is when relationships bind together for the sake of their appearance as something. It's as if all that is dispersed joins together in a region of mutual relation and presents itself to us as something to behold.

Try to picture this topographically as travelling through experience from departure, through passage, and to arrival. We enter an experiential context where common sense makes "good sense" as if walking into a region of experience. In those regions of thought, truths conform—they "come together"—and convey meaning to us. What we find in these regions are examples of truth and they are capable of being stated. These statements that

المنارة للاستشارات

we call "truthful" conform to laws and rules that make them truthful because evidence can be found to justify them (i.e., to hold them upright). In regions, therefore, statements of truth arrange themselves as truthful for us, thanks to the findings that we arrive at by applying correct methods of thought's movement that lead to them. Correct methods are the kind that we call rational calculation, scientific research, or reflective reasoning. Consistent with Heidegger's criticism, truth is an accurate correspondence between thought and event; a conformation between what is thought and the things that we experience. Thoughts, things, and events can then become bound together into sets of relationships that are coherent ideologies within these regions of correctness. When they are bound together ideologically into a structured set of relations, we can put our trust in the principles that hold together those structures, and we get political discernment or cultic beliefs. Our concepts, structures, systems, and beliefs depend on regions of truth and these regions are dependent on the doctrine of truth-as-correctness to guide us along paths correctly. They give us our bearing, determine our conduct, and define our identity. Without trusting them, we believe that we could have no experience, calculation, skill, discernment, research, reflection, belief, and no common, good sense. Heidegger believes that this doctrine has reached its climax in the technological ways that life shows up for us everywhere.

To begin disillusioning this dangerous tendency, we must ask next: what does thinking signify? Heidegger responds by the use of frequent etymologies, genealogies of words, and neologisms that are central to his analysis. I follow his lead in this approach. I am constantly providing students with etymologies and cognates of the vocabulary needed to teach the course during each lecture. I store these etymologies for them on a web-based virtual supplement to the course (along with other supportive resources) that grows as the course proceeds. There are always some students who find my constant genealogies of words very aggravating—at first. But when they become accustomed to them, and begin to expect them, something amazing begins to happen. Their language has been revered as one "region" where the correspondence between thought, things, and events has become legitimated and unquestioned. This regional legitimacy must be destabilized for Philosophy-as-thinking to germinate. Etymologies are one integral means of undermining that logical legitimacy. For example, Heidegger (1954, p. 21) observes (as I have explained) that thinking during the modern period has flourished as logical "accounts of reality." "Good judgments" by these accounts are measured by the power of reasoned arguments that provide evidence to justify grounds. "Logic" is an abbreviation of its complete title in Greek, which meant "the understanding that concerns the *logos*." *Logos* is the nominal version of *legein*, which means "to say something about something through accounting for it" literally by recounting its presence (Heidegger 1954, p. 154).

Learning to think beyond this recounting begins to be laid out when the value of thinking becomes budgeted in an entirely new way. As Heidegger identifies, their "laying out" (*legein*) of accounts tends to be budgeted in the form of rational calculation. Correct accounts for the truth will only report what is intended after going through such an accounting process (i.e., only after having passed through the *dia* of the logic; 1954, p. 156; hence, the word "dia-lectic"). The Romans called these forms of calculative thinking *ratio* because this economy of thought was able to balance all accounts, one-to-the-other directly, as if to fractionalize them. Thus, correct thinking came to be what appeared as a rational, economic structure. This structure was related to an exchange of *reor*; to "take something *for* something." And in this way, even our language became arranged into an orthodox grammatical structure (Heidegger 1954, p. 210). Students, as well as their university professors, have a lot invested in these doctrines. It is this dialectical economy of

المنارة للاستشارات

calculation and accounting that establishes the legitimacy of how truth claims come to be evaluated. Learning to think in new ways requires instruction in an alternative economy of thought's movement. What could thinking point to potentially? The answer to this question ultimately calls for becoming an entirely new person.

On Becoming a New Person

I have shown how correctness has always been assessed according to an assumed relationship between actions and thinking (Heidegger 1977, p. 217). In the legacy of Plato's doctrine of truth, thinking has become a method of perceiving practice—but seeing it *abstractly*, as if abstracted from the material world. Thinking has become a form of calculating the relative accuracy and proximity of this correspondence. Perception produces and adduces purposes, and provides ways and means for modes of action (Heidegger 1954, p. 62). With all of its purposes, ways and means, Heidegger concludes that the methods by which we interpret and then correct our perception provides us with our "mask" of human being, or our "personhood." Consequently, all current educational programs must necessarily proclaim some kind of representative mask for what is ideally the "educated person." An orthodox interpretation of perception focuses our eyesight on the correct "picture or copy" of what it means to be an educated person. And a course such as this must relentlessly unmask this person and challenge the students to don a new mask for (their) human being.

Our contemporary English word for "person" descends from the Latin *persona* that the Romans used to refer to what an actor wore on a dramatic stage (i.e., a "mask"). The word was directly related to the Latin word *personagium*, which is translated as "effigy" or "model." Heidegger was searching for an alternative means of becoming an educated person, and to do that he was deliberately trying to incinerate our inherited and indoctrinated effigy of what that person is to be. Such an alternative will never be acceptable to educators as long as the *personage* of what it means to be "educated" remains a civilized denizen of a nation or organized political territory. That is to say, so long as what it means to be "human" carries social, economic, legal, or occupational connotations, the pedagogical product will have to be educated correctly according to those categories. A different fundamental relation between action and thinking is required to begin imagining any alternative to this pedagogical effigy. And for this imagination to begin, we require a new openness that comes from an entirely new vocation for what the person who is educated is to become.

Heidegger (1977, p. 224) asks why the truths of education originally intended to make a "man" or a "woman" more "human". The answer to this question has everything to do with our continued obsession with analyzing our essential "natures." This obsession has grounded all of our human sciences. For example, from a sociological standpoint, "human" being is essentially "social" being, which means that truths associated with a correct education must de-animalize us. In fact, Heidegger notes that even this conception of learning has classical origins. He writes:

> *Humanitas* was first striven for during the Roman Republic. Homo *humanus* was opposed to *homo barbarus*. Homo *humanus* was exalted and honored Roman *vertus* through the embodiment of *paideia* taken over by the Greeks. This was concerned with scholarship and training in good conduct. *Paideia*, thus understood, was translated as *humanitas*. In Rome, educators can encounter, therefore, the first

المنارة للاستشارات

> humanism, a hybrid curriculum that integrates Roman civilization with the culture of Late Greek philosophy. (1977, p. 224)

For the Romans, *civitas* was a body of people constituting an organized community or city-state. After this ancient word was combined with the Middle English word "denizen" (*deynseyn*: "an inhabitant or occupant of a certain place"), we arrived at the contemporary word "citi-zen." In accordance with doctrine, instruction has to have a civilizing affect on the actions of the students and make the educated person more applicable to social, commercial, and occupational performance. Historically, this is consistent with the Roman pedagogical project of distinguishing human beings, or the *animale rationale*, from plants, animals, or deities either by degrees of civility, or by degrees of piety.

Consistently, as long as university instructors respond to the call of thinking as the rational animal, they will continue to design, implement and evaluate learning outcomes according to inherited doctrines of correctness. Then all forms of incorrect thinking will be identified, marginalized, penalized, and eventually persecuted. The first bold step for instructors in the education in thinking comes with renouncing calls for thinking with this rational model in mind, a renunciation that can open the way to a radically new freedom of thought. One way of wresting truth from indoctrinated concealment could be the gesture of "unmasking." When doctrines of truth are unmasked, "freedom" can become an allowance for thought to unfold, as it will. For my students, becoming free to attend to this allowance requires consideration of some alternative models of what an educated person is. To do this, they must ask themselves what is calling them *into* thinking. And this can never be done if the instructor is not ahead of them in following this calling.

The Vocation of Thinking

How, then, is thinking called out from where it lies concealed in darkness and in silence? Heidegger shows how thinking has been a task, a chore, a means to an end, or a method. He grants that thinking alternatively must still be a kind of "deed." But the deeds associated with this alternative are more akin to the kind of watchful abiding that comes with attending to the safety of a loved one. Thinking is an attention *to* and thankfulness *for* what is most passionately protected and loved in the thinker's life. The freedom to think is the freedom to let thinking happen rather than forcing it into its outcome. This allowance is synonymous with letting learning happen rather than forcing it into outcomes. Clearly, any alternative would demand an inventory of what a new intention for thinking would be. This begins with Heidegger's fourth and final question: "what is calling us into thinking"?

> To answer this, let us emphasize the message of Parmenides' 8th fragment where he writes:
>
> Thinking and the thought that it is are the same. For not without being in which it is expressed, will you find thinking.[1]

In translating this fragment, Heidegger contrasts our modern *syntactic* language with Parmenides' ancient *paratactic* language. Syntax is the name for how our contemporary English grammatical language is arranged (from Greek *suntaxis*: together-arrange). Syntax organizes language into a linear stream of subject, verb, and object continuities. In contrast, paratax does not follow such continuity but lines words into an order that easily facilitates

[1] This translation is not Heidegger's but comes from the translation edited by Curd (1995, p. 46).

المنارة للاستشارات

paradox. Heidegger (1977, p. 218) observes how paratactic language can be detected in the occasional speech of young children when they arrange words in an order that may not be grammatically correct but still conveys their intentions. Eventually, however, they become indoctrinated as correct grammarians. In light of these facts, Heidegger relates Parmenides' fragment in the following way: "it is worth while to allow thinking to lie beside us such that beings, in their being, are taken to heart."

If we continued to follow Heidegger as our guide, then he eventually leads us into a new region of what it means to be a human being. That is when we cross a boundary into a region where alternative truths can unfold before us. We might there be able to attend to thinking's call in the gathering place that Heidegger believes Parmenides originally intended our ear to be attuned (Heidegger 1954, p. 227). This would then be the first step in learning thinking and subsequently teaching students of this possibility. The gathering of our thoughts in that region would then stop grasping for correct structures, systems, and beliefs. We might then begin making allowance for alternative and latent experience; allow it to unfold, as it will unfold. However, taking this gathering to heart, as Parmenides intended, does not take place when we try to reach for the significance of thinking in abstract terms. That conforms to doctrine. It takes place when we embrace thinking as we would embrace something or someone that we care about most, and hold them closely by our side.

To try to explain this, Heidegger reminds us that the ancient Greeks employed a word for this gathering, heartfelt embrace—*ekto*—that literally translated as "outside," or "without," and meant something similar to "external." He combines this prefix with the Latin,—*sistere*, which meant, "to cause to stand outside of oneself." In combination he uses this word to denote the human way "to be" as "standing beside oneself" (1977, p. 228). Heidegger discards the abstract subject versus object relationship along with the notion of a rational animal that intends and exerts its potential into the external environment. By discarding these masks, Heidegger is challenging his students to become more like attending guardians, loving caretakers, and watchful shepherds, or even concerned parents. All of these models are attendants of something or someone that they cherish. They watch out for what they love and wait for their love to arrive. They call for the arrival of what they love and gather together with it because the presence of what they love sustains them.

To illustrate and offer options, I refer students to Socratic indications of the educated person from *Phaedrus* (Plato 1993, 245b–245c; prophet; exorcist; shaman; one possessed by the Muses; artist; musician; poet; the ones overcome by the madness of love) and illustrate how these ancient attributions of education are also to be found among indigenous peoples. Heidegger's and these more humble images challenge students to imagine what is fitting for them in terms of their own interpretation of what it means to be a model of the educated person. These are also available to challenge the students to uncover what they should love, guard, protect, watch over, and be concerned about as responsible stewards of thinking. Learning to think means learning to allow what must be loved to avail itself in its own terms and by its own definitions and characteristics. Learning to be educated by donning such masks, by entering into such dark and silent regions of care, if even momentarily, can lead eventually into definitions and characteristics of a new personhood.

"Movements" Through "Time" and "Significance"

What quality of relationship should the instructor display to embrace what is hidden and concealed, but not yet manifest until circumstances are suitable for development? And how

المنارة للاستشارات

does the instructor evoke what is latent in darkness and silence? Consider, as Riley (2009) does, the way in which Heidegger describes the relationship between cabinetmakers and their apprentices. To comprehend what it is to be a cabinetmaker, one must first understand how relatedness to the entity of "wood" maintains the whole craft. The arts and crafts relationship would be nothing but meaningless "busy work" without this relatedness. Therefore, in all cases and in all interactions students must be sheltered from any meaningless activities and constantly be striving for activities of relatedness. They must comprehend relationships by means of working with the entity of "philosophy" that maintains the whole craft. As if working alongside the apprentice, my agenda is always functioning in the background. And this is why, as Heidegger maintained, teaching is more difficult than being a student because teaching calls for this: to let learning take place rather than measure the quantitative accumulation of content. As a Heideggerian my goal is to let nothing else be taught except this: "to let learn." I must be even more teachable than the students are when it comes to engendering these relationships.

I ask the students "what habits are propelling your journey" at the beginning of the course. In the face of these responses, my challenge is to evoke the essential capacity that is shared by all students: that of habituating them into the "movement of thinking" (Riley 2009, p. 4). I do this through effective de-signing. I enter into this movement as a shared undertaking by constantly referring anonymously to examples from anecdotes that are contained in their four formative assignments without sufficient detail to identify any one student (although students do confide that they are complemented when I refer to their examples). I do this to encounter them unexpectedly with phenomena (i.e., things, events, persons) that are relevant to them and intersperse these accounts with material from the course. My goal is to invoke what Riley calls "uncommon understandings" (p. 4) or deviations from what is standard or expected. I challenge them to refer to such anomalies in their assignments as examples of what they cite from course content. The most challenging aspect of this process for the instructor is "appropriate responding" (ibid.) where I reward them for such examples (especially in the first assignment) as a way of encouraging deeper gestures into the movement of thinking. The movement that I am trying to encourage is the movement of their being through time or, its "historicality."

Riley (2009, p. 6) makes the accurate observation that every human being is historical. Students show up in the course as the person that they are-up-to-now-and-want-to-be-in-the-future—and they do that all at once. They show up in relation to—or, *as* relations to—their prior commitments, concerns, choices made over time, possibilities pursued or lost, and actions taken or let go. That is the currency of value in the course. Out of that endless array comes a larger meaning of a life and the interconnections that are disclosed to provide their life-world with form, direction, and purpose. It is essential for them, therefore, to cross-reference purposes, practices, persons, and things as background references that enable thinking and productive learning. I ask them, frequently, "are you sensitive to what you are hearing and writing about in this course?" I declare "sensitivity" as one of the main skills that is needed for success in the course but I allow the students to elaborate on where this is needed when they refer to purposes, practices, persons, and things. Four central questions that drive the course involve focus, methods, habits, and equipment, all categories that might be significant when undertaking a journey. What moves the journey forward down the path are signs that instructors must be tokens of, and which they must show skillfully and artfully.

Signs are what invoke and access alternative worlds. Riley (2009) is astute in identifying that the main pedagogical skill of the Heideggerian educator is not persuasion but signification (i.e., pointing the way). As I mentioned, this is exactly why my course begins

Springer

المنارة للاستشارات

with poetry, symbolism, and allegory. Throughout the course I complement the writings of 15 different philosophers with hand-drawn allegories (from Greek *allos*: other; and *agoria*: speaking) to speculate on the alternative voices of their texts in pictorial form. This is an essential component of the curriculum and I encourage the students to construct their own visual renditions of these texts as these relate to their personal contexts, so as to establish their own signs of significance (Riley 2009, p. 9). Showing them signs opens up new regions that grant understandings of being in which the students show up in their own particularly situated ways.

As a signifier, I at no stage in the course present any overarching thesis of what a correct "education" signifies. There is no final, big answer at the end of the course to the main question. Instead, I am always careful to denote where we are situated in the course locally (i.e., this is only Aristotle's version of what it means to be educated; this is only Descartes' thesis; this is only Kierkegaard's rendition; etc.). And while this may seem confusing at first, this "shifting" eventually forces students to relocate their referential regions and relations so that "meaning becomes cleared in this way" (Riley 2009, p. 10). This clearing (of the house of being) avails rediscovery of preliminary encounters with persons, places, events and things. They are rediscovered as incomprehensible useful things, or as things-at-hand that they did not know what to do with, until now, but which were veiled to circumspection (Heidegger 1962, p. 81). Consistent with this perspective, these signs do not convey direct information but invoke indirect instruction to the students. They gather together newly relating aspects of the students' environments. When students reply in their course evaluations that "in this course, I actually learned something," they are referring to worlds that solicited themselves to them (from Latin, *solicitare*: to set *into movement*). Solicitation enables a new "bearing" to develop in them: the directional power of movement and comportment (Riley 2009, p. 13). Signifying on the part of the instructor must establish signs continuously to challenge students to discover signs on their own to gain access to the most significant regions of their world. When the students finally begin to mark out their own pathways, it becomes possible for them to begin caring about their world in a new and exciting fashion. They begin to become loving stewards of learning to think about new truths for their goals.

What invokes the stewardship of thinking, according to Heidegger? Students learn thinking by disposing of everything that they have until their deeds answer to whatever is addressed to them, at any given moment (Heidegger 1954, p. 4). This is why I must ask them to include considerations of habits and equipment that they will practice and carry along the woodland path of learning to think. Learning to think anew demands a turning of everything that they do and everything that they carry as meaningful towards those concerns (Heidegger 1954, p. 8). It is not just devotion and commitment that are required to think in this alternative way. It also involves de-learning what thinking has been for them traditionally. Once they begin to be seduced by the devoted call of de-learning and re-learning thinking, then they are on the way to learning to think beyond mere correctness. They can then begin to become, on their own, guides to what must be thought.

To describe this ek-sistential pedagogy, recall once more how the cabinetmaker responds to the kinds of shapes that reside in the wood prior to freeing those shapes into a cabinet. This sensitivity identifies the mask and miter of the Heideggerian teacher. They respond to what resides already within the student before freeing that potential into the person. Whether students can learn to respond to the goals, habits, and equipment that shine for them, as if those entities answer back to them when they call on them, depends on the presence of an instructor who can make the students comprehend such relationships. And so, in order to accomplish this "instruction of allowance," Heidegger reminds us

المنارة للاستشارات

again that teaching thinking is more difficult than learning it. Like the cabinet-maker's apprentice, learning to think is like learning handwork *along with* the apprentices. The de-signing and signing of the results of such cooperative work are all rooted in calling it out together.

Heidegger thus suggests that we substitute the infinitive "to call" to signify what we traditionally refer to with the infinitive "to instruct" (Heidegger 1954, p. 117). Rather than be instructors who "profess Education," accordingly, we must become professors of "calling thought into presence." When we call for thinking along this way, it can arrive like a surprising gift. As if out of nowhere, it can arrive for us from a dark, silent, and unnamed place. And when it arrives in this way we can become accustomed to having it beside us as if it were our companion. We become its neighbor and ek-sist beside it. Stepping back from the distressful focus of reflective reasoning and stepping back from "telling" the account of how to think instrumentally only begins to open the space for calling this companionship into arrival. Instructors, as well as the students, have to learn to ek-sist in a shared openness of thinking for this type of meditative teaching to be successful. It demands humility and waiting patiently to become thinking's servant rather than trying to be a master of education. Whenever we think and believe that we are doing wrong by teaching in this way, we should remind ourselves that "error" was only a legacy of our indoctrination of what thinking was supposed to be. And when freed from *that* doctrine, only *then* does thinking become free to be on its own and to unfold for us, as it always will.

The Heideggerian Instructor-As-Entrepreneur

There are obviously challenges in assessing the results and achievement levels of this course in ways that satisfy the exigencies and policies of the university institution. As an instructor I am searching for the essential human capacity to "answer" to being-in-the-world and to enhance students' human capacity to naturally encounter and participate in the world. I am looking for *an answer to this calling*, and not for *the correct answer*. This is why the main question that drives the course is simply: "what does it mean (for you) to be, an educated person"? The punctuation deliberately pauses the question to quest after Being. In doing so, I want students to embrace an authentic experience in thinking with consequential matters. Note how "to embrace a thing" comes from loving it—*to favor it* (Heidegger 1977, p. 220). Favoring means bestowing something essential, as if to shower it with gifts. It is this bestowing (from Old Middle English *bistowen*: to devote) that lets something unfold as it is originally meant to unfold. It is on the strength of that devotion that "learning," as an unfolding of what has been covered, can be disclosed for the students.

To assist them in their devotion, I avail myself as an example of one human being who is on this path. To assist them in embracing their assignments, I challenge them to write their assignments from a personal perspective. I do design and provide the kinds of traditional and familiar matrices for evaluation of formative assignments. These are distributed to standardize format, length, and to set out criteria for writing quality that are generally expected from a typical undergraduate university essay. Because the path that we travel together traverses a region of correctness I must include some rational calculation as an appeasement to the institution while we travel within its borders. I think of this as paying a "toll" for safe passage. However, the matrix for the final assignment contains a ten-point rating scale labeled "impact." I base this evaluation on a private grading matrix that measures the more esoteric criteria that I have elaborated upon in this essay. Clearly,

Springer

المنارة للاستشارات

measuring impact of this sort can only be done after working alongside the apprentices for the entire duration of the course. By the time the course comes to an end, most students have embraced the perspective of the course whole-heartedly and devote themselves passionately to writing their culminating essays.

I am the first to proclaim that that this course of study may seem controversial to some. Cooper (2002, p. 58) cites some criticisms that have been directed at Heidegger's work, in particular the accuracy of his etymologies, along with the relative importance that Heidegger attaches to his etymologies and neologisms. More relevant criticisms in the context of this paper would be managerial counter-arguments originating in the organizational or management sciences that are now invading our university systems, as I warned at the beginning of this paper. Perhaps other attacks would also originate from the business practices of accounting where arguments for best practices originate behind proposals of effective educational administration of universities. I say this after having experienced successive waves of budgetary "rescission" that lead to the gradual elimination of seminars and programs from Humanities in general, and from Philosophy departments in particular.

Critics of Heidegger's perspective, therefore, might argue that an ontological curriculum such as this one is incorrectly frivolous, not cost-effective, as it offers no direct return for the investment of an instructor. It should be blatantly clear from my argument that such criticisms originate from the manner of thinking that leads to social and psychological malaise. How are those cost-effective? Students who seek and pay for a university education will conform to whatever's required. It is for the instructors of those students to respond to the call of thinking rather than the call to market. Invoking that call as I do here should demonstrate that Heidegger's pedagogy of learning to think is much more than frivolity. In fact, it can be a pathway to social stability, mental health, and probably to a more dynamic commercial context for that stability and health to flourish.

This tells us that a Heideggerian educator of this sort must be "entrepreneurial" in the terms that Solomon (1995, p. 79) so aptly defines it. One must be devoted to this anomalous curriculum even when no specialized or profitable place exists for it. What we also call the "student of Philosophy" must be rediscovered for this curriculum to flourish. It necessitates the application of a more cooperative, coordinated, service-oriented, and caring perspective on the student; a perspective that is now being rigorously attacked by "the laws of supply and demand." But this path is to be pursued! Heideggerian educators do not create consumers of any kind—not even of knowledge. They try to provide the students with whatever is most fitting *for them* to become *what they are to become*, as they will. They allow for what must be loved in order to avail, in its own terms, and by its own definitions, openness to the world in all of its glory.

Nevertheless, as long as students continue to evaluate my course with comments like this one:

> I loved this course. In all the courses that I've taken, this is one course where I can say that I actually learned something. It helped me to begin answering some questions that I've been trying to answer for a long time. I was hoping to get some of those answers in my university studies. But this course showed me that I didn't even know what questions to ask to get the answers that I was looking for. Now that the course is over, I still don't have all the answers. But that's OK. At least I now know how to ask the questions that I need to ask to begin finding the answers for myself.

I know that I am guiding them down the pathway that leads towards the thinking that is world building.

المنارة للاستشارات

Acknowledgments I am grateful to Frederick M. Dolan and Hubert L. Dreyfus who introduced these ideas to me during what seems like only yesterday, but was actually many years ago. I am especially grateful to the two reviewers of *Studies in Philosophy and Education* whose invaluable comments gave me the freedom to write this paper as I have.

References

Arendt, H. (1996a). The structure of craving. In H. Arendt (Ed.), *Love and St. Augustine* (pp. 9–17). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Arendt, H. (1996b). *Caritas* and *Cupiditas*. In H. Arendt (Ed.), *Love and St. Augustine* (pp. 18–35). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Astin, A. (2004). Why spirituality deserves a central place in higher education. *Liberal Education, 90*(2), 34–41.

Bonnett, M. (2002). Education as a form of the poetic: A Heideggerian approach to learning and the teacher-pupil relationship. In M. A. Peters (Ed.), *Heidegger, education, and modernity* (pp. 229–243). Oxford, UK: Rowman and Littlefield.

Cooper, D. E. (2002). Truth, science, thinking and distress. In M. A. Peters (Ed.), *Heidegger, education, and modernity* (pp. 47–63). Oxford, UK: Rowman and Littlefield.

Curd, P. (Ed.). (1995). *A presocratics reader*. (R. D. McKirahan, Jr., Trans.). (p. 46). Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett.

Heidegger, M. (1954). *What is called thinking?*. New York: Harper & Row.

Heidegger, M. (1962). *Being and time*. (J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson, Trans.). San Francisco: Harper.

Heidegger, M. (1972). The end of philosophy and the task of thinking. In M. Heidegger (Ed.), *On time and being*. (J. Stambaugh, Trans.). (pp. 55–73). New York: Harper & Row. (Original published in 1969)

Heidegger, M. (1977). Letter on humanism. In D. F. Krell (Ed.), Heidegger, M. *Basic writings*. (D. F. Krell, Trans.). (pp. 217–265). San Francisco: Harper. (Original published 1946)

Heidegger, M. (1998a). On the essence of truth. In W. McNeill (Ed.), Heidegger, M. *Pathmarks*. (J. Sallis, Trans.). (pp. 136–154). Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press. (Original published in 1930)

Heidegger, M. (1998b). Plato's doctrine of truth. In W. McNeill (Ed.), Heidegger, M. *Pathmarks* (pp. 155–183). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Original published in 1931/1932)

Hogan, P. (2002). Learning as leave-taking and homecoming. In M. A. Peters (Ed.), *Heidegger, education, and modernity* (pp. 211–228). Oxford, UK: Rowman and Littlefield.

Lindblom, J. (2007). Spirituality in the academy: Reintegrating our lives with the lives of our students. *About Campus, 12*(4), 10–17.

Myers, D. (2000). *The American paradox: Spiritual hunger in an age of plenty*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Parmenides. Fragment #1. (1995). In S. M. Cohen, P. Curd & C. D. C. Reeve (Eds.), *Readings in ancient Greek philosophy: From Thales to Aristotle* (pp. 44–45). Indianapolis: Hackett.

Plato. (1992). *Republic*. (G. M. A. Grube, Trans.). Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett.

Plato. (1993). *Symposium and phaedrus*. New York: Dover.

Riley, D. C. (2009). Heidegger teaching: An analysis and interpretation of pedagogy. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*. doi:10.1111/j.1469-5812.2009.00549.x.

Sallis, J. (1965). *The concept of world: A study in the phenomenological ontology of Martin Heidegger*. Doctoral Dissertation. Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Solomon, R. C. (1995). Martin Heidegger: Entrepreneurship and cooperative practices. *Inquiry, 38*(1), 75–81.

Taylor, C. (1998). *The malaise of modernity*. Toronto: House of Anansi.

Vandenberg, D. (2008). A guide to educational philosophizing after Heidegger. *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 40*(2), 249–265.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com