Analyzing Teacher-Student Relationships in the Life and Thought of William James to
Inform Educators Today

DISSERTATION

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By

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Abstract

Enriching teacher-student relationships is timely considering the increase in school

violence, the changing demographics in schools, and the fact that educational aims

focused on high-stakes testing often ignore relationships. When applying philosophy to

teacher-student relationships, we must ask both whose voices are missing from our

current conversation and how we can apply their insights to improve education. While

philosophers such as John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Nel Noddings have all contributed to

that conversation, William James's philosophy and pedagogy provide a unique

perspective on teacher-student relationships that is largely absent within the field of

philosophy of education. In this dissertation, I explore the relationship between the

philosophy of James, his personality, and the productive relationships he had with

students. I suggest that there is a link between his pragmatism, pluralism, and

psychology, and the way he interacted with students. His philosophy can be evaluated

from its actual effects in the world and by how it changes us as individuals. I suggest that

the cash value, or impact in real life, of James's philosophy in the context of education,

plays out in particular forms of relationships of openness, experimentation, curiosity

about others, spontaneity, and communication.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to the first two philosophers I knew, my parents.

I would also like to dedicate this to my family; my brother Max, my husband Scott, and

my dogs Riley and Hank. I also dedicate this work to anyone who has become

academically engaged in the scholarship of William James and has found a historical

friend in the sea of educational research. This is also dedicated to all of the teachers I

have had and all of the students who have taught me.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge Deb Zabloudil for being one of the first people I spoke with at Ohio State. She was my guide and sage in the navigational process to beginning my academic journey. I would like to acknowledge and thank my advisor Bryan Warnick for his patience, support, time, insight, and kindness. I would like to acknowledge my committee and professors Jackie Blount, whose critiques were thoughtful and supportive, and Antoinette Errante, whose critical lens pushed my thinking. I would like to thank all my colleagues whose office banter sharpened my argumentative skills. I would also like to thank Bruce Kimball for pushing me academically to engage in historical scholarship in the history of education, which led me to discover William James. I would like to thank the Graduate School for providing me the opportunity and funding to engage in meaningful scholarship at Ohio State. I would like to acknowledge the support of my family throughout my academic journey, and my husband for his unwavering support.

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Novakowski, Julia. "Revisiting Pluralism and Multiculturalism in the works of William James and W.E.B. Du Bois for Guidance in Education Today." *Philosophical Studies in Education*. Ohio Valley Philosophy of Education Society. 49. (2018) 47-57.

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Fields of Study

Major Field: Educational Studies

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Understanding the Relevance of Teacher-Student Relationships in Education
Today

Introduction

Few would argue against the *good* in building positive teacher-student

relationships in education. Research on these relationships is vast and varied, with

scholarship from educational psychology, early childhood education and development,

curriculum and instruction, higher education, and school counseling. The discourse on

teacher-student relationships is especially timely in light of the increase in school

violence, the shifting demographics in student populations, and the continued rise in

high-stakes testing.

Due to the rise in student suicides and school shootings, discussions of

educational relationships have dominated the news.[1] After just *one* of the most recent

(politicized) school shootings at Stoneman Douglas High School, that left 17 high school

students dead, the political far right and far left voiced their perspectives on the event.[2]

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[1] Saeed Ahmed and Christina Walker, "There Has Been, on Average, 1 School Shooting Every Week This Year." *CNN* May 25, 2018. https://www.cnn.com/2018/03/02/us/school-shootings-2018-list-trnd/index.html. CNN documented the amount of shootings in the beginning of 2018, the article has been updated since. Tracking student suicide rates is complicated as many colleges do not track this data. See also Associated Press. "Most Public Colleges Don't Track Suicides, Report Says." *CBS*. January 2, 2018. https://www.cbsnews.com/news/most-public-colleges-dont-track-suicide-report/. However at one major university there have been three attempted suicides in the past two years with only two being recognized in a campus-wide email by the president of the university. The email, however, did not use the word *suicide*.

[2] I put politicized in parentheses because there is disagreement as to what constitutes a school shooting. School shootings in white affluent neighborhoods tend to get more national news coverage than schools serving other populations. The fact-checking site Snopes admits this complication of tracking the numbers.

The far right created a social media push, urging kindness as a method to prevent school violence.[3] They also suggested that arming teachers would help prevent future violence.[4] One question is whether this oversimplifies the complexity of educational relationships. It may blame both victims and survivors for having a part in *allowing* this violence to take place, while ignoring other societal factors such as economic disparities, poverty in schools, hunger and homelessness, racism, sexism, homophobia, lack of mental health support, academic pressures, and cisgender heteronormative pressures.

On the far left, pundits argued for more restrictive gun policies and increased accountability measures for accessing firearms.[5] Some on the far left also supported the "Walk Up, Not Out" anti-bullying campaign to combat violence. Others advocated for increased awareness of mental health issues.[6] One question with this approach is whether it focuses on the weapons as the purpose and tool of the violence, again ignoring the complexity of educational relationships. Similar to the logic of the far right, the far left

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I italicize *one* because two weeks after this happened there was a school shooting in San Antonio which left three more people dead. See also David Emery. "How Many School Shootings Have Taken Place So Far in 2018?" Snopes. February 16, 2018. https://www.snopes.com/news/2018/02/16/how-many-school-shootings-in-2018/. The *Washington Post* also described the inflated numbers as falsehoods. See John Woodrow Cox and Steven Rich. "No, There Haven't Been 18 School Shootings in 2018. That Number Is Flat Wrong." News. *The Washington Post*, February 15, 2018. https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/no-there-havent-been-18-school-shooting-in-2018-that-number-is-flat-wrong/2018/02/15/65b6cf72-1264-11e8-8ea1-c1d91fcec3fe_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.fb20c3f99ecb. Another site that is devoted to documenting the numbers over time. "Gunfire on School Grounds in the United States." *Grassroots News*. May 25, 2018. Gunfire on school grounds in the United States. https://everytownresearch.org/school-shootings/

[3] This was called the "Walk Up Not Out" campaign and emerged to counter the student-led walkout protests.

[4] Kate Way, "Arming Teachers," *New York Times*, March 23, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/23/opinion/arming-teachers.html.

[5] The "walk for our lives" had a variety of perspectives, with some arguing for better gun laws and others (mainly on the far left) arguing against guns altogether.

[6] These two examples of being kinder/anti-bullying and mental health, were seen anecdotally on "liberal" Facebook pages. Unfortunately, the algorithms on Facebook prevent breakthrough between contrasting political echo chambers.

ignores (or downplays) the impact of societal factors. As such, it seems that we need a

more robust understanding of the complexity of teacher-student relationships.

School shootings and the increase in student suicides account for one facet of

school violence related to teacher-student relationships. When analyzing teacher-student

relationships however, it is also important to understand the demographic shifts that are

taking place in American schools. According to the United States Census Bureau,

America will be a "majority-minority" nation by 2043.[7] However, in the 2011–2012

school year, K-12 teachers were 82% white, a percentage that has barely changed in over

two decades despite significant changes in the diversity of the student body.[8] Scholarship

on this topic has been increasing over time within sociocultural education research,

multicultural education scholarship, culturally relevant/responsive teaching, humanizing

pedagogies, critical race theory, and white epistemologies.[9] Therefore analyzing teacher-

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[7] U.S. Census Bureau, "U.S. Census Bureau Projections Show a Slower Growing, Older, More Diverse Nation a Half Century from Now," (December 12, 2012), https://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/population/cb12-243.html.

[8] Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, and Policy and Program Studies Service, *The State of Racial Diversity in the Educator Workforce* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 2016), 6. Sonia Nieto has also written extensively on this topic, for example in "Profoundly Multicultural Questions," *Educational Leadership* 60, no. 4 (2003): 1–7. These data are also cited in my previous work. See Julia Novakowski, "Revisiting Pluralism and Multiculturalism in the Works of William James and W.E.B. Du Bois for Guidance in Education Today." *Philosophical Studies in Education* 49 (2018): 47–57.

[9] Gloria Ladson-Billings, "Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy," *American Educational Research Journal* 32, no. 3 (1995): 465–91. There are others scholars that extend Ladson-Billings work. Some authors who discuss multicultural education and demographic gaps and challenges within education include Michael W. Apple, Sonia Neito, Gloria Ladson-Billing, Lisa Delpit, Jonathan Kozol, Valerie Kinloch, and Carl A. Grant. Along with Joel Spring's books on the history of education, see in particular: James A. Banks, "Multicultural Education: Historical Developments, Dimensions, and Practice," in *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education*, eds. James A. Banks and Cherry A. McGee Banks (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 3–28; Christine Sleeter and Carl Grant, "An Analysis of Multicultural Education in the United States," *Harvard Educational Review* 57, no. 4 (1987): 421–45; Donna M. Gollnick and Philip C. Chinn, *Multicultural Education in a Pluralistic Society*, 8th ed. (Columbus Ohio: Pearson, 2009), iv, 5; Christine Bennett, "Genres of Research in Multicultural Education," *Review of Educational Research* 71, no. 2 (2001): 171–80; Terese M. Volk, Music, Education, and Multiculturalism: Foundations and Principles (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

student relationships between a population of teachers and students who embody different lived experiences is important and relevant. As student demographics transform, while representation in teaching remains largely homogenous, a conversation on pluralism, multiculturalism, and teacher-student relationships is timelier than ever.[10]

Educational content and curricular aims comprise another area in which it is important to analyze teacher-student relationships. While the aims of schooling itself continue to focus on standardized testing, high-stakes testing, and a push for college readiness, these trends cost time and resources that could be spent fostering teacher-student relationships.[11] There has been a steadily growing focus on content-based instruction since the 1980s, a trend that is related to goals of meeting state standards and improving scores on high-stakes tests.[12] This has resulted in increased challenges and barriers towards building teacher-student relationships. This is not to say that testing correlates to a lack of positive teacher-student relationships, but simply that when teachers devote more and more time to the state tests, there is less time to have

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[10] Novakowski, "Revisiting Pluralism and Multiculturalism," 47-48. This is noted in my previous work, but within this project includes the teacher-student relationship.

[11] Nel Noddings, *The Challenge to Care; An Alternative Approach to Education*. Second Edition. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2005), 1-3. My view is based on my own experience teaching in K-12 public schools. I am not alone in recognizing this disconnect. In *The Challenge to Care*, Nel Noddings begins with this same critique of testing and lack of a focus on liberal arts-centered holistic visions of education that allow students to pursue interests and learn how to care for themselves and for humankind. She states that students should have freedom to engage in meaningful learning, caring for themselves and others, in contrast to preparing for state exams.

[12] This has been increasing over time, since *Nation at Risk* (1983), especially since *No Child Left Behind* (2001) implemented high-stakes tests attached to schools' performance and funding allotments. Along with the amount of testing, the amount of time devoted to test prep in class and to analyzing test data outside of class has also increased. This is evidenced through personal teaching experience and through inclusion of "data days" for teachers, who are expected to spend time analyzing test results in order to increase future scores.

conversations with students that build a sense of community and belonging.[13] This

increased focused on testing seems to indicate that compulsory schooling in America, at

least on a superficial level, is focused on the *good* in raising test scores and meeting

annual/adequate yearly progress (AYP) standards in each school. In turn, it has generated

expanded educational research focused on increasing student outcomes, achievement, test

scores, minimizing behavior problems, and mastery of content (to some extent.)[14]

    Whether the current discourse on educational relationship unfolds, through a

focus on school violence, changing demographics, or educational aims, the actual

student-teacher relationship itself is what remains important in education. The teacher

and student are connected by a unique relationship found within schooling. In short, the

two exist in relation to one another. In *Invitational Education*, Professor's John M. Novak

and William Watson Purkey, both former K-12 teachers, contend that, "Communication

is necessary for all social relationships."[15] They also note that in order to build positive

teacher-student relationships within an inclusive model of schooling, it is the teacher's

responsibility to "Tell people that they matter, have ability, and can participate in

meaningful activities."[16] The ideas above connect to the concepts of educational

relationships, communication, and care. They also present an opportunity to consider the

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[13] There is a large body of research on "sense of belonging" in educational psychology and the impact that it has on student retention in higher education. Vincent Tinto, *Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition*. 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993)

[14] This has emerged out of the analysis on educational psychology research focused on "teacher-student relationships" for the aim of outcomes like "better behavior" and "better grades"." John M. Levine and Margaret C. Wang, eds., *Teacher and Student Perspectives; Implications for Learning*, Hillsdale, (NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates, 1983). Jere Brophy and Thomas Good, *Teacher-student relationships: Causes and Consequences*, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1974).

[15] John M., Novak, and William Watson Purkey. *Invitational Education*. (Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 2001), 7.

[16] Novak and Purkey, 7.

model educator, William James – a caring instructor who formed positive and productive relationships with his students.

This current conversation connects to the importance of teacher-student relationships in many ways. Educational researchers have examined this dynamic between teachers and students, and William James exists as a valuable model educator who created productive relationships with his students. Therefore, including his philosophies and teaching pedagogy find purchase within current discussions about teacher-student relationships. In the preface of his biography on William James, Howard Knox explains, "For reasons of space... [he] had to restrict [James's] philosophy to the essential core of his doctrine, and to omit the many sides of his singularly rich and sympathetic personality."[17] Within this first sentence, James's persona is described as sympathetic and caring, two attributes that are important to building meaningful teacher-student relationships. Similar to other scholars who analyze William James, however, Knox fails to include the concept of the teacher-student relationship within the life and thought of James. This dissertation seeks to address that absence, thus making it a valuable contribution to the field.

Why are educational relationships important? As an educator and scholar, one may have limited control over the rapidly changing external stimuli that impact the classroom, including: the economy, the school, the home, and the government. Yet, the human relationship between teacher and student provides a catalyst of control in

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[17] Howard V Knox, *William James*. Philosophies: Ancient and Modern. (London: Constable & Co. Ltd, 1914), v.

education. It contributes to the development of a significant life as a teacher or student, a process that includes, getting to know one another and growing and learning together. To build positive teacher-student relationships is to have a good life. William James was a model educator who formed positive and productive teacher-student relationships with his students that were lasting and impactful. By learning with and from his students, he was able to create a good life in academia spanning over the course of thirty years.

James is influential because he taught many of the greatest thinkers in America, including W.E.B. Du Bois, Gertrude Stein, Theodore Roosevelt, Horace Kallen, and Edward Thorndike. He also inspired many more, including John Dewey through Granville Stanley Hall. During the Progressive era, his work was read widely by teachers in teacher education programs. Today, however, his voice is neglected within philosophy of education, and is absent when considering the teacher-student relationship. In correcting this oversight, my work argues for the current relevancy of James's concepts of pluralism, pragmatism, and habit. In particular his ideas can be used for informing a more inclusive teaching pedagogy and can assist educators in fostering meaningful and positive teacher-student relationships.

In this dissertation, I explore the relationship between the philosophy of James, his personality, and the productive relationships he had with students. I suggest that there is a link between his pragmatism, pluralism, and psychology, and the way he interacted with students. His philosophy can be evaluated from its actual effects in the world, by how it changes us as individuals reading the philosophy. This is, in effect, how James himself believes we should evaluate philosophy, namely, by its "cash value" in real life. I

suggest that the cash value of James's philosophy in the context of education, plays out in particular forms of relationships of openness, experimentation, curiosity about others, spontaneity, and communication.

Shifting from the larger body of research examining teacher-student relationships in educational psychology, counselor education, and higher-education, the field of philosophy of education provides an alternative approach and allows for the incorporation of the life and thought of James into this conversation.[18] While these other forms of research are valuable and important, there is space for philosophy of education scholars to enter this conversation on teacher-student relationships. In educational psychology, most research focuses on an outcome or intervention. For example, a study on teacher-student relationships might have the goal of increasing X (test scores, engagement, motivation, a sense of belonging, etc.) or will focus on intervention systems in order to reduce Y (high school dropout rates, bad behavior, suspensions, etc.). However, these researchers have not considered the idea of relationships for their own sake within a wider view of the aims of education, focusing on the process itself.[19] That

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[18] Lynley Anderman has discussed interpersonal relationships, motivation, and a sense of belonging, while Eric Anderman has discussed bullying. Eric M. Anderman, and Lynley M. Anderman. *Classroom Motivation*. 2nd ed. Columbus, Ohio: Pearson, 2013. Tzu Lin has discussed interpersonal relationships. Tzu Lin, T. -J., et al. (in press). "Promoting Academic Talk through Collaborative Reasoning," in R Gillies (Ed.), *Promoting academic talk in schools: Global practices and perspectives*. (Abingdon, OX: Taylor and Francis, in press). Robert Pianta is the leading scholar on teacher–student relationships in early childhood education. Robert C. Pianta, *Enhancing Relationships between Children and Teachers*. (Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 1999). Scholars have also considered collaborative learning, along with theories of interpersonal relationships in small-group and large-group learning settings for cognitive and non-cognitive measures. Robert E. Slavin "Non-Cognitive Outcomes of Cooperative Learning" in *Teacher and Student Perspectives: Implications for Learning*. Ed. by John M Levine and Margaret C. Wang. (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc., 1983), 354

[19] What I mean by this is that the questions asked in these fields are too granular and may benefit from a reflection on why these relationships should be analyzed in the first place. What good is there in teacher-student relationships?

being said, there have been studies that consider the non-cognitive impact of collaborative learning, which takes into account race relations, mutual concern, and cooperation.[20] That body of research presents the best space for an entry point into a conversation on building collaborative relationships in the classroom focused on the teacher-student relationships, pivoting from outcomes and academic achievement towards broader aims found in philosophy of education.[21]

As a discipline, philosophy of education analyzes education and schooling from a 30,000 foot view. Common questions asked include: *What are the aims of education*? *Who gets to teach*? *What does it mean to be educated*? *What gets to be taught*? *Who makes those choices*? *How does education look within a pluralistic democracy*? *What does the future of education hold*?[22] When considering teacher-student relationships, a philosopher of education might not ask what outcomes will result in building positive teacher-student relationships. This question is regularly addressed in the fields above— typically with answers that include "higher test scores" or "better behavior." Instead, we might ask, "What is the (common) good of building positive teacher-student relationships in education, community, and democracy?"[23] Or,"What is the good in building a positive teacher-student relationship and what are the benefits for everyone (i.e. the moral good),

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[20] Slavin, "Non-Cognitive Outcomes of Cooperative Learning," 354.
[21] Slavin, 354.
[22] Bryan Warnick has written about school violence and surveillance in addition to educational technology and its impacts on education. Bryan Warnick, *Understanding Student Rights in Schools: Speech, Religion, and Privacy in Educational Settings*. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2012).
[23] Amy Gutman has discussed theories of educational policy within a democratic nation. Amy Gutmann, *Democratic Education*. 2nd ed. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999).

not just those for the teacher, student, or school report card?" Or even, "What is the aim of education, and what role do teacher-student relationships play within that aim?"[24]

Among philosophy of education scholars who have considered teacher-student relationships in their work, the most prominent is Nel Noddings with her *Ethic of Care*.[25] Others include Paulo Freire with his liberation approach to teaching, as well as John Dewey's progressive model found in his lab school and idea of teaching students to become active democratic citizens.[26] Chapter two focuses on these three scholars in order to build a foundation for the rest of the study, creating a space for William James to enter into the conversation.

Purpose of this Study

In this study, I will analyze the life and philosophy of William James within the framework of teacher-student relationships. I will describe what James said about teacher-student relationships, how he taught, and how contemporary educators today can use his life and thought to inform a more inclusive pedagogy. I will also identify why his voice should be included in this conversation and how his ideas enhance, diverge, or complement the thoughts of others, especially Dewey, Freire, Noddings. This will include his pragmatism, pluralism, and psychology of habit balanced with creativity. Multiple themes emerge in his life and writing, but these themes can ultimately be

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[24] Gary D.Fenstermacher and Jonas F. Soltis, *Approaches to Teaching*. 5th ed. Thinking About Education Series. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2009); Kenneth A. Strike and Jonas F. Soltis. *The Ethics of Teaching*. 5th ed. Thinking About Education. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2009).

[25] Morwenna Griffiths, et al., *Re-Imagining Relationships in Education: Ethics, Politics and Practices*. 1st ed. Journal of Philosophy of Education. (Malden, Massachusetts: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015).

[26] Among others who could be included, Maria Montessori sees the teacher as a facilitator, while A.S. Neill believes schools should fit the student. Johann Friedrich Herbart could also be considered, along with Herbert Spencer, Edward Thorndike, G. Stanley Hall, Jane Addams, William Heard Kilpatrick, Francis Parker, Horace Mann, and Maxine Greene.

organized by understanding James's aims in education, his views on curriculum, and his pedagogy.[27]

Why include William James? Philosopher-psychologist William James, the grandfather of American psychology, was also known to be a great educator. He was caring, engaging, passionate, and spontaneous in how he taught and thought. A description by Paul F. Boller Jr. speaks to this claim: "James was by all accounts a superb teacher. Dynamic, vibrant, energetic, and witty in the classroom he was 'always throwing off sparks' as he talked. 'To see him' 'was never to forget what it means to be alive.'"[28] The relationships that James built with his students were familial and caring. He helped students discover their academic paths, visited them when they were sick, and took the time to get to know everyone. Author Houston Peterson notes that James was "amazingly hospitable to genius and crank alike."[29] Biographer Jacques Barzun describes James at Harvard walking across campus with two students and describes how James replied to their questions "as equal to equals."[30] In the Progressive era, where lecturing was the standard, James's teaching was unique. Former student Dickenson Sargeant Miller notes, "He took a considerable part of the hour by reading extracts from Henry Sidgwick's *Lecture Against Lecturing*."[31] Another student describes James's kindness

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[27] These ideas will not be discussed explicitly, but will instead be woven throughout the analysis.
[28] Paul F. Boller Jr., "William James as an Educator: Individualism and Democracy." in *Education and Values* ed. Douglas Sloan (New York: Teachers College Press, 1980), 268. This is also cited in William James, *Essays in Philosophy*, 5; Allen, *William James,* 301.
[29] Houston, Peterson, ed. *Great Teachers; Portrayed by Those Who Studied Under Them*. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1946), 221.
[30] Jacques Barzun, *A Stroll with William James*, (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1983), 6.
[31] Dickenson Sargeant Miller, "Thoughts on James from a Student in 1890s" in *William James Remembered*, ed. Linda Simon (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 125.

and the care he showed his students: "Before his class he was a friend and leader who

assumed the attitude of appreciation, sympathy, co-operation and helpfulness rather than

antagonism and harsh criticism." [32]

James understood and emphasized the importance of building positive

relationships with his students. Part of what made him such a great educator was his

process of co-constructing knowledge with his students in a discussion-centered

classroom. He allowed a plurality of perspectives to be present in his classrooms. This

type of diverse thinking is exemplified in the words of his former students. While his

students respected James as an educator some later argued in their careers against

James's philosophy and psychology. Thorndike, for example, countered and extended

James's psychology, and James B. Pratt claimed that James's pragmatism was too

relativistic. Another former student describes James's willingness to accept multiple

perspectives:

> Of all the professors of my time, William James seemed to me to combine the
> best features of the practical world and the academic world. He had a wonderfully
> … inquiring mind. He was probably the most genuinely open-minded person I
> have ever met. There was no aspect of human activity that did not interest him…
> He was always responsive to something that might open a new door to
> knowledge… [and was] hospitable to new thoughts.[33]

Through the words of his students it is clear that James's educational aims were related to

inclusion and open-mindedness, growth, and applied knowledge (pragmatism). James

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[32] Baldwin "William James' Contributions to Education." *Journal of Educational Psychology* 2 (1911): 371.

[33] Wilson Kipng'eno Arap Lang'at, "Pragmatism in American Social Thought and Its Relation to Educational Theory and Practice: The Case of William James and John Dewey." PhD diss., (Drew University, Madison New Jersey, 1988), 8. Citing Charles H. Compton., *William James: Philosopher and Man.* (New York: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1957), 126.

also balanced the value and attention to habit and behavior in education with creativity and spontaneity in how he taught.

James's pedagogy exemplifies a model of instruction that extends education outside of the "post-*Nation at Risk*" vision of neoliberal goals in education today, which include testing, behavior management, and college (or career) readiness.[34] His curriculum was experiential, inviting the conversation and lived experiences of his students into the classroom. Like John Dewey, James wrote about growth, describing his philosophy of pragmatism as "the open air and possibilities of nature, as against dogma, artificiality and the presence of finality in truth."[35] James's philosophy also spoke to the value in including pluralism, inclusion, and moral ethics in both education and life.[36]

James valued individual voices, experiences, and connections, writing: "What you want is a philosophy that will not only exercise your powers of intellectual abstraction, but that will make some positive connexion [sic] with this actual world of finite human lives."[37] For James, learning took place when connections were made between the students' lived experiences and their interests. For example in *Talks to Teachers* he writes that "Almost all children collect something. A tactful teacher may get them to take pleasure in collecting books."[38] This links the habits and behaviors of a student to the interests that can be fostered through the kind of learning that is made possible by the

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[34] I understand it is anachronistic to compare a Progressive thinker's ideas to the 1980s.
[35] William James. *Pragmatism A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking*. (New York: H. Holt 1907) 18-19; repr. (Dover, Delaware; Dover Publications, 1996).
[36] Many scholars have considered William James's moral philosophy including Ed. Jacob Goodson. *William James, Moral Philosophy, and the Ethical Life*. (Lexington Books: New York, 2018).
[37] James. *Pragmatism*, 8.
[38] William James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and Students on Some of Life's Ideals* (New York: Holt, 1899; repr. Mineola: Dover Edition, 1962), 26.

ingenuity of a teacher. By placing the value on the learning process and relationships, rather than just on the content, students are able to be more open-minded members of society. As such, they can critically listen to others and learn *from* and *with* others in order to co-construct knowledge and make some *positive connection* with this actual world of finite human lives. Meaning that experience and experiential learning were key points for James as he helped his students make "connections" from theories to practice which were "positive" because they were productive and pragmatic (future-oriented).

Beyond James's historical importance, his philosophy and psychology of habit continue to be influential in motivational texts today.[39] James's theories of habit are foundational for understanding education as an "organization of habits." In this dissertation, I argue that his pedagogy demonstrates the value of habit in *balance* with creativity and spontaneity, thus providing a more nuanced and unique understanding.[40] James was much admired during the Progressive era and his influential educational lectures, *Talks to Teachers*, were adopted by educators in teacher education programs during that time.[41] His books went through multiple reprints, representing his popularity and impact. When considering both James's philosophy and his students' countless stories of James as a great educator, it is clear that reintroducing his ideas to educators today can make a positive impact. Although, James was not a philosopher of education, his ideas are informative and instructive to educators today.

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[39] Charles Duhigg. *The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business*. (New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2014.)
[40] This can also be described as relational habits. This will be discussed in Chapter 4.
[41] Merle Curti, "William James, Individualist" *The Social Ideas of American Educators*. (Totowa, NJ: Littlefield, Adams & co., 1978), 429-458.

This dissertation thus analyzes the complexity of teacher-student relationships, guided and informed by the life and philosophy of William James. I argue that James's philosophy may contribute to a more robust understanding of the complexity of these interpersonal relationships, and that his perspective can add value to the field of philosophy of education and contribute to the ongoing conversation on teacher-student relationships taking place in educational psychology and educational research today.

Enriching teacher-student relationships is timely in light of the increase in school violence, the shifting demographics in schools, and the fact that educational aims focused on high-stakes testing often ignore relationships. When applying philosophy to teacher-student relationships, we must ask both whose voices are missing from our current conversation and how we can apply their insights to improve education. While philosophers such as John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Nel Noddings have all contributed to that conversation, James's philosophy and pedagogy provide a unique perspective on teacher-student relationships that is largely absent within the field of philosophy of education. This study traces James's life and thought to argue that his philosophy of pluralism, pragmatism, and habit (in balance with creativity) can both enhance our understanding of educational philosophy and inform a truly inclusive teaching pedagogy. Although currently neglected in scholarship, incorporating James in this conversation of teacher-student relationships is valuable because James was a model-educator who built productive relationships with his students, a process that can serve as a model for educators today who are considering how to build these meaningful relationships.

Literature Review: James and Education

Many scholars have analyzed James's philosophy, psychology, and metaphysics. Jamesian scholar Marcus Ford notes that more books have been written on James than any other American philosopher and then speculates why this is so:

> Perhaps it is because James addresses himself to major issues and writes with much charm and insight. Perhaps his work is not clear and cries out for clarification. Perhaps it is because James is largely correct in his beliefs but that they need updating. Or, more cynically, perhaps writers seek to legitimize their own views by falsely ascribing them to a respected figure of the past. [Perhaps it is] all these factors…[42]

While Ford's quotation demonstrates the breadth of scholarship on James, James's connections to education have received less attention.[43] James's influence can be seen in the fields of philosophy, psychology, business studies, and religious studies, but there are only approximately eighty sources (including only one book— an essay collection) that link James to education in some aspect, none of which consider his ideas in terms of teacher-student relationships.

In considering the multiple themes that emerge in scholarship on James and their connection to education, I chose to narrow my focus to the themes that have created his most lasting legacy: pluralism, pragmatism, and habit (balanced with creativity). While educational scholars have examined James in connection to Radical Empiricism, when

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[42] Marcus Peter Ford. *William James's Philosophy; A New Perspective*. (Amherst, MA: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1982). Ironically, this biographer does not highlight the connection of James and education. I would classify my purpose as being related to William James's ideas needing additional clarification and updating. Also, I am using James's words to help present my own views of education as an open and pluralistic endeavor.

[43] Lyman Gilmore, *The Educational Significance of the Thought and Metaphor of William James*. (Ed.D Boston University School of Education, 1971). Gilmore's work highlights the need for an examination of William James and education, but neither Gilmore nor other scholars consider teacher–student relationships.

considering the role of teacher-student relationships, I chose to focus on pluralism and

pragmatism instead.[44] D.C. Philips connects James's Radical Empiricism to Radical

Constructivism in education.[45] He presents an argument of the unique timelessness

comparing James's radical empiricism (of the late 19th century) with the modern concept

of radical constructivism by Ernst Von Glasersfeld (of the late 20th century.) Although

Philips compares the two thinker's philosophies, and presents evidence of the value of

continued conversation regarding the timelessness of James's thought, he does not make

any connection to James as teacher, or to the significance of teacher-student relationships.

     Scholars have discussed pluralism and pragmatism connected to education.[46] Jim

Garrison connects James's metaphysical pluralism to spirituality and overcoming

blindness to diversity in education. He explains

> Pluralism addresses questions of inclusion and diversity generally; it, therefore,
> has implications for issues involving educational diversity such as
> multiculturalism gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. All these issues
> involve questions about the relations between "us" and the "other." In a pluralistic
> universe, it is impossible to eliminate otherness, which is why such a universe
> remains perpetually alive and creative.[47]

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[44] D.C. Philips, "From Radical Empiricism to Radical Constructivism, or William James Meets Ernst von Glasersfeld" in *William James & Education.* ed. Bredo et al. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002), 115-129.; Randolph Crump Miller. "The Educational Philosophy of William James." *Religious Education* 86. Fall (1991): 619-634

[45] D.C. Philips, "From Radical Empiricism to Radical Constructivism" 115-129.

[46] Jim Garrison, "James's Metaphysical Pluralism, Spirituality, and Overcoming Blindness to Diversity in Education," in *William James & Education.* ed. Bredo et al. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002), 29.; Cleo Cherryholmes, "James's Story of the Squirrel and the Pragmatic Method," in *William James & Education.* ed. Bredo et al. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002), 89.; Jerry Rosiek, "Pragmatism's Unfinished Project: William James and Teacher Knowledge Researchers." in *William James & Education.* ed. Bredo et al. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002), 130; Ron Podeschi "Pluralism and Professional Practice: William James and Our Era" in *William James & Education.* ed. Bredo et al. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002), 58.

[47] Garrison, "James's Metaphysical Pluralism, Spirituality, and Overcoming Blindness to Diversity in Education," 27.

Garrison presents a foundation for this larger study demonstrating the connections between inclusion and pluralism for a better educational system that honors and respects others. Building on Garrison's work, where he states "Making connections, making room for different kinds of folks, is what makes a life significant,"[48] I extend his work, by focusing on the teacher-student relationships (absent from his chapter) applying James's pluralism and pedagogy to current practice which, provides new opportunities to engage in current discourse.

Likewise, while scholars have examined emotion, sensation, consciousness, and experience, I instead focus on habit balanced with creativity, also taking note of instinct and interest. Siebren Miedema examines the role of experience as it pertains to religion and religious education. Miedema writes "For James, religion has to do with practical, living affairs that include such aspects as conversations with the unseen, voices and visions, response to prayer, changes of the heart, deliverances from fear, inflowings of help, as well as assurances of support."[49] While Miedema's work makes a special connection with James and individual experience connected to religion, he does not consider the teacher-student relationship.

Finally, while many scholars have considered moral development and moral ethics within James's works, I will instead thread these ideas within his pluralism, pragmatism, and habit, simultaneously bringing attention to James's meliorism. Scholars such as Goodson, Gale, Shook and Margolis, Throntveit, and Duban (to name a few)

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[48] Garrison, 41.
[49] Siebren Miedema, "James's Metaphysics of Experience and Religious Education" in *William James & Education.* ed. Bredo et al. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002), 75-76 Citing (James 1907/1975- Varieties of Religious experiences)

dedicate entire books and collections of essays connected to William James's theory of morals and ethics.[50] Throntveit's first sentence notes the moral character of James "As passionately and eloquently as any thinker living or dead, William James insisted on the compatibility of believing in oneself and depending on others."[51] This statement is relational, yet the author does not consider the teacher-student relationship or education. Within these works, the connection to both education and teacher-student relationships is absent.

Although some of these themes overlap with other scholars, my unique framing of teacher-student relationships is currently absent from Jamesian scholarship. That being said, there are scholars who consider James as educator, defining the qualities he presented as a teacher. Truman Madsen's work provides an opportunity to extend his analysis of James-the teacher (singular) and consider the relationships he created, thus building productive teacher-student relationships.[52] Madsen discusses James as a great teacher; this presents a starting point for discussing the idea of relationships, but Madsen

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[50] Jacob L Goodson, ed. *William James, Moral Philosophy, and the Ethical Life*. American Philosophy Series. (New York: Lexington Books, 2018); Richard M Gale, *The Divided Self of William James*. (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.) John R Shook, and Joseph Margolis, eds. *A Companion to Pragmatism*. Blackwell Companions to Philosophy 32. (Malden, MA ; Oxford: Blackwell Pub, 2006.); Trygve Throntveit. *William James and the Quest for an Ethical Republic*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).; James Duban, *The Nature of True Virtue; Theology, Psychology, and Politics in the Writings of Henry James, Sr., Henry James, Jr., and William James*. (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2001.) Duban notes the impact of Henry James Sr. on Williams moral development. He writes "The elder Henry James was a theoretical socialist who, while economically 'leisured,' sincerely believed that human equality, fraternity, and disinterestedness would triumph over selfishness and usher in a state of heaven on earth." (p 11).

[51] Trygve Throntveit,. *William James and the Quest for an Ethical Republic*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), ix.

[52] Truman G. Madsen, "William James Philosopher-Educator." *Brigham Young University Studies 4*, no. 1 (Autumn 1961): 81-105. Madsen, presents an entire article dedicated to the unique teaching persona of James, while he does argue that James was a great teacher, he does not frame the argument around teacher-student relationships.

never makes an explicit connection and the essay's purpose, ultimately is to commemorate him as a teacher and philosopher. While this is valuable, it does not explicitly identify James's significance within the realm of educational relationships.

Two aspects of James's philosophy are noticeably absent from scholarship on James and education: creativity and spontaneity balanced with habit. However, scholars have discussed James using the term spontaneous, creative, and individualistic. Ron Podeschi unpacks the idea of James and his individualistic creative philosophy, balanced with the conception of self to present the challenges found in constraining academic professional communities. He concludes that he has:

> …emphasized the inevitable tensions between creative individuality *and* professional community, subjective feelings *and* objective rationality, freedom of choice *and* social embeddedness, an ideal self *and* fluidity of the self, courageous resistance *and* collaborative consensus, optimistic progress *and* anguishing realities.[53]

Linking this to James, he writes, "For James, 'having a place to stand' and doing professional practice with openness to new possibilities is not a contradiction but does create existential dilemmas in the 'jungle of experience.'"[54] While each point represents the unique individualism and creativity of James, neither considers the role of habit within this ideal model of professional freedom nor reflects upon the significance of teacher-student relationships.

Before examining each theme in-depth in Chapter Four, it is important to first clarify what both scholars and William James have said about his philosophy and

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[53] Ron Podeschi, "Pluralism and Professional Practices: William James and Our Era" in *William James & Education.* ed. Bredo et al. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002), 72-3.
[54] Podeschi, 73

psychology of education. When James passed away in 1910, many of his admirers in

higher education praised his unique contributions to the fields of psychology, philosophy

and education. One of the themes found most often in scholarship on James and

education is a generalized theory of education or philosophy of education "emanating"

(as one author puts it) from James, in addition to his general contributions to education.[55]

James's theory of education in his words is simplified to the organization of

habits towards present and future behavior, "Education, in short, cannot be better

described than by calling it *the organization of acquired habits of conduct and tendencies*

to behavior."[56] However his ideas prove to be more complex. He continues,

> An "uneducated" person is one who is nonplussed by all but the most habitual situations. On the contrary, one who is educated is able practically to extricate himself, by means of the examples with which his memory is stored and of the abstract conceptions which he has acquired, from circumstances in which he never was placed before.[57]

In this quotation we see that the purpose of education is connected to habits, as well as

the ability to use those habits to adapt to a future not yet known. James also notes, "*Our*

education means in short little more than a mass of possibilities of reaction… the

teacher's task is that of supervising the acquiring process."[58] James's claim here speaks

not only to the importance of habit, but also pluralism and possibilities. Scholars have

described James's theory of education tied to his philosophy of pluralism and

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[55] Amie Bushman Knox. *An Approach to Education Emanating from William James and Alfred Schutz.* (Ph.D. diss Teachers College; New York, 1977) i-237.
[56] William James. *Talks To Teachers On Psychology; And To Students On Some Of Life's Ideals.* (New York: H. Holt and Company/Dover, 1899), 34.
[57] James, "Talks to Teachers" 34.
[58] James, 20.

pragmatism, radical empiricism, and experiential learning.[59] In this dissertation, I support

such claims made and argue that William James's theory of education values pluralism,

open-mindedness, inclusion, pragmatism, and habit (balanced with creativity). I further

contend that these philosophies are first and foremost built on building caring

relationships with students in order to create a classroom environment that allows for

diversity of thought.

What is William James's theory of education? There are approximately thirty

sources on the topic. Most of them define James's philosophy or theory of education

using similar language. In their readings, James's theory of education is free, open to

possibilities, and pluralistic as documented above. Morals are also woven throughout his

work, and connect with habit. In *Principles of Psychology* when discussing how to build

positive habits, they must be tied to some moral good. He describes a person building

positive cultural habits by attending theatre, but that if this person does not then consider

the tragedies portrayed in the play, outside of the theatre in real life then the habit is

selfish and lacking in morals. He writes,

> The habit of excessive novel-reading and theatre-going will produce true monsters
> in this line. The weeping of a Russian lady over the fictitious personages in the
> play, while her coachman is freezing to death on his seat outside, is the sort of
> thing that everywhere happens on a less glaring scale… One becomes filled with
> emotions which habitually pass without prompting to any deed, and so the inertly
> sentimental condition is kept up. The remedy would be, never to suffer one's self
> to have an emotion at a concert, without expressing it afterward in *some* active
> way.[60]

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[59] *William James & Education.* ed. Bredo et al. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002); George W
Donaldson, and Richard Vinson. "William James, Philosophical Father of Experience-Based Education."
Journal of Experiential Education, 2, no. 2 (Fall 1979): 6-8.
[60] William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol. 1 (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1890), 126.

This point of habit needing to lead to some form of action also connects with James's

philosophy of pragmatism.

As mentioned above, other authors referred to James's unique teaching skills and

his value of experience as a catalyst for guiding students in finding truth(s) and

understanding the meaning of truth and finding their academic paths.

According to Randolph Miller, the essential aspects of James's philosophy of

education are related to experience, habit, psychology, pluralism, pragmatism, the moral

role of the human, and individuality.[61] Miller notes in a letter from James, discussing the

Talks to Teachers lectures: "These lectures are not only pedagogic, but they demand a

certain philosophical flexibility, and easy look at life."[62] Miller believes that habit,

consciousness, and experience are important to James's philosophy of education. The

concept of "philosophical flexibility" demonstrates the value of experience and reflection

in James's philosophy of education, which balances habit with creativity.[63] Miller's

recognition of these qualities is supported by other scholars: Jim Garrison and Ron

Podeschi have connected James's philosophy of education to pluralism and open-

mindedness.[64] Cleo Cherryholmes and Jerry Rosiek have likewise discussed the idea of

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[61] Randolph Crump Miller. "The Educational Philosophy of William James." *Religious Education* 86. Fall (1991): 619-634

[62] Ralph Barton Perry, ed., *The Thought and Character of William James*, vol. 2 (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1935), 131.

[63] Randolph Crump Miller. "The Educational Philosophy of William James." *Religious Education* 86. Fall (1991): 619-634. He also describes James's teaching style as being open and more seminar-based as opposed to being lecture-based. He does not explicitly describe habit balanced with creativity, but offers a space to begin that discussion.

[64] Jim Garrison. "James's Metaphysical Pluralism, Spirituality, and Overcoming Blindness to Diversity in Education." *William James & Education*. Ed. by Eric Bredo et al. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002).

pragmatism in terms of James and his philosophy of education.[65] Miller also described

the legacy and impact of James's work—directly and indirectly—on scholars such as

John Dewey, William Kilpatrick, and Jean Piaget.

While Miller makes claims about James's philosophy of education tied to habit,

consciousness, and experience, Paul Boller instead examines James's pedagogy built on

individualism and democracy. Boller formulates a complex and nuanced view of James

as an educator who was individualistic, though not necessarily self-serving or selfish in

his philosophy.[66] Boller describes his particular view of James:

> …James was an aristocratic individualist with an elitist background, but the views
> he formulated as a philosopher—pluralism, radical empiricism, indeterminism,
> pragmatism—democratized his thinking, gave it a social emphasis, and made him
> acutely sensitive to the wishes, needs, and aspirations of human beings outside of
> his own immediate range of experience. The educational enterprise, he came to
> believe, should embrace curiosity, adventure, tolerance, sensitivity, and
> compassion; and it was these qualities which he brought to his own teaching and
> writing.[67]

James's philosophy of education was thus influenced by his pluralism, radical

empiricism, and pragmatism, and also by the ideas of care, tolerance, and sensitivity. It is

also significant to note that Boller used the words curiosity and adventure, which

supports the theme of creativity balanced with habit.[68]

Boller continued to examine the educational philosophy of James and the role of

the individual in his pedagogy:

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[65] Cleo Cherryholmes. "James's story of the squirrel and the pragmatic method." in *William James & Education*. Ed. by Eric Bredo et al. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002).
[66] Paul F. Boller Jr. "William James as an Educator: Individualism and Democracy." In *Education and Values.* Ed. Douglas Sloan. (New York: Teachers College Press, 1980), 255- 269.
[67] Boller. 255-269.
[68] Boller, 268.

Education for James centered in helping individuals to discover their own special 'blessings' and encouraging them to make the most of their own particular opportunities. [Citing James, he writes] 'what doctrines students take from their teachers, are of little consequence provided they catch from them the living, philosophic attitude of mind, the independent, personal look at all the data of life, and the eagerness to harmonize them.'[69]

Thus according to Boller, examining James, and according to James, it is important that the human character (moral development) is part of the learning experiences.

Boller claims James as a "confirmed individualist," but balances that claim by also describing a person connected to community, who cared for and was sensitive to others.[70] Boller explains that James was an "unreconstructed individualist for all that and his philosophy of education as well as his metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics were highly individualistic."[71] In other words, James's philosophy was individualistic, but he also valued democratic engagement and a general theory of democracy.[72]

Even though James's philosophies were individualistic, he was more complex. Boller continued,

…he was not, to be sure, a 'rugged' individualist in the self-centered, socially irresponsible economic sense; but he was an individualist all the same. History, he insisted was the result of 'the accumulated influences of individuals, of their examples, their initiatives, and their decisions.' (Will to Believe, 218). Education, he thought, should be directed toward the development of superior individuals. 'There is very little difference between one man and another… but what little there is, is very important.'[73]

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[69] Boller, 268. Cited from William James's "Essays in Philosophy," 5.
[70] Boller., 255
[71] Boller., 255
[72] Boller., 256
[73] Boller., 256. Citing William James *Will to Believe*, p 218.

The philosophy of education for James exists in a balance between the *individual* and

community and between the *teacher* and the *student*. History was made from individual

experiences and lives working together towards a better future.

Bird T. Baldwin claims James as an educational psychologist, arguing that

James's psychology and educational theories are tied together with three main points. He

argues, "In the first place, his educational contributions are so intricately bound up with

his psychology that it is impossible adequately to treat the one without the other, no

matter which we are discussing."[74] Baldwin also notes that James was influenced by his

early studies in anatomy and physiology, and by the biological point of view, citing

James's claim that "…Man is a practical being whose mind is given to him to aid him in

adapting him to this world's life." [75] Baldwin's third point is connected to *Principles of*

Psychology and is formulated around the mind and "motor consequences" and "the

teleological conceptions of mind." He first cites James's point that "[w]e are acquainted

with a thing as soon as we have learned how to behave toward it." [76] He then cites *Talks*

to Teachers for further support: "There is no reception without reaction, and no

impression without correlative expression, and this is the great maxim which the teacher

ought never to forget."[77] These quotations are notable because the concept of flexibility is

important in education. James discusses how humans can "adapt" or be flexible (or

plastic). Thus, his philosophy of education considers habit balanced with flexibility,

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[74] Bird T. Baldwin "William James' Contributions to Education." *Journal of Educational Psychology* 2
(1911): 374.
[75] Baldwin, 374
[76] Baldwin, 375 Citing William James.
[77] Baldwin, 375. This means that the role of the teacher is to co-construct knowledge with students through
their "reaction," correlation, or connection to the content.

adaptability, creativity, and spontaneity. Finally, these quotations demonstrate that teachers and students are working together in relation and interpolation with the ideas of reception and reaction, impression and expression, and the *power dynamic* that the teacher "should not forget" (referencing the quotation above).

Structure of Dissertation by Chapter

The thesis of this dissertation is based upon the fact that James was a model educator who embodied lifelong learning: he was the grandfather of American psychology and one of the most important American philosophers, known for pragmatism and pluralism. His writing and teaching was accessible and inclusive, demonstrating a care towards students in building productive teacher-student relationships.

Transitioning from a general outline of the dissertation into the key thinkers within philosophy of education, Chapter 2 is titled "Analyzing Teacher-Student Relationships in Philosophy of Education." This literature review is driven by several essential questions: Who are key philosophers of education who discuss teacher-student relationships? Why are these thinkers' voices important to include? What is the rationale? Who was left out? What themes emerge and what gaps exist? How do they connect with William James? Why include James within this conversation?

Specifically, this chapter analyzes the philosophy of John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Nel Noddings. Within this chapter I describe these thinkers and their legacies, provide a rationale for their relevance in a project on teacher-student relationships, and describe their ideas regarding teacher-student relationships. Their ideas represent a

breadth of thought through theme and time, ranging from the Progressive Era to today, and from progressive thought to critical theory to feminist theory. At the end of this chapter, I introduce James into the conversation, examining where his ideas could be included and why his life and philosophy are valuable in this conversation. This identifies areas where Dewey, Freire, and Noddings's philosophies could be enhanced or complemented by James's insights.

Chapter 3, "Analyzing Teacher-Student Relationships in the Life of William James," is a historical analysis. In this chapter I establish that James was exemplary in forming productive teacher-student relationships. (Analyzing current scholarship on James and education this key connection is missing.) In this chapter I analyze the life of James and how teacher-student relationships played a role in his education and his pedagogy. The first part of the chapter is titled "Educating William James" and it provides a brief history of his educational childhood within the unique framework of teacher-student relationships. The questions answered in this section are "Who was William James?" and "What information can be gained from understanding his educational upbringing regarding teacher-student relationships?" The second part of the chapter is titled "Educated by William James"; this section focuses on James's teaching career at Harvard. The voices of the students will provide evidence of his pedagogy, along with his implied curricular and educational aims in teaching.

Chapter 4 is a philosophical analysis titled "Analyzing Teacher-Student Relationships in the Thought of William James," where I analyze the thought of James in order to draw out where his philosophy considers teacher-student relationships and/or

where it could be applied to teacher-student relationships. Focusing on James's pluralism, pragmatism, and habit (balanced with creativity), I present direct and indirect connections to teacher-student relationships in his writings. This chapter is organized into three discrete sections. Within each section a normative argument is presented, first examining the definition of the concept under discussion through a metaphysical lens, then connecting that concept to the framing of human nature and life, and finally connecting all three concepts together under the umbrella of teacher-student relationships for the good of education.

Using the philosophical analysis from Chapter 4, Chapter 5 considers the application of these philosophical ideas to education with the title: "Applying William James to Teacher-Student Relationships to Build an Inclusive Pedagogy." In this chapter I summarize the dissertation's goals, purpose, and novel contributions, then consider applications to current practice. I present this connection with the aim of building a more inclusive teaching pedagogy, building on the current multicultural education scholarship on culturally sustaining and relevant pedagogies, and on inclusive and caring pedagogies.[78] Connecting this application back to Chapter 2, I remind the reader of what gaps existed and ideas overlapped with Dewey, Freire, and Noddings to emphasize the value (and limitations) that James's ideas present within education today, and how logical and apt the inclusion of his voice is today.

Specifically, I present key points from James's pluralism, pragmatism, and habit that can be translated into advice and guidance for teachers today. In considering

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[78] This also connects with mindfulness and restorative justice circles.

pluralism within teacher-student relationships, teachers can continue to be inclusive and embody a model teacher-learner (teacher as model learner/student) through empathetic listening and a conversation/discussion-centered pedagogy that includes the lived experiences of the students, (similar to the pedagogy used by James, and connecting with the ethic of care from Noddings). This also connects with a social-constructivist model and progressive model, where the teacher and student co-construct knowledge together. Using pragmatism, teachers can reflect on their practice as an educator using a future-oriented pragmatic method that considers the value of content for students. The pragmatic method could be folded into curricular design, daily instruction, and/or teacher education programs that value and assert the "reflective practitioner" model. Considering the unique balance that exists in the power of *habit* balanced with one's creative, spontaneous, and flexible (quirky and authentic) self, teachers can teach students how to use habits to reach their highest potential while always being ready/prepared for future experiences with flexibility and adaptability. Teachers can also turn inward and do the same for themselves. This balance or cultivation of habit is not limiting, but productive in practice. Teachers should consider how to be habitually creative, responsive, spontaneous, and attentive to the needs and interests of their students.

By using the philosophy of James, such advice and guidance can help teachers reimagine their roles, moving from the traditional "divided teacher" apart/separated from a student and instead finding "balance" in the beauty in seeing oneself as a teacher-learner. Teachers can achieve this by constantly balancing one's expertise with the excitement for the unknown that comes from the students' experiences, included as part

of an educative process that emerges in and outside of the classroom. In employing a

"Jamesian" model of education, a teacher would value the lived experiences of each

individual within the larger learning community and model that passion for learning,

listening, and growing towards some utility (pragmatism) and towards a better tomorrow

(pluralism, meliorism, and habit of moral good).

Conclusion

Overall, this dissertation suggests that the influence and value of William James

that was present during the Progressive era in education be renewed and revisited in

education today within the framing of teacher-student relationships. Before considering

the life and thought of James within the framing of teacher-student relationships in this

process, it is important to first analyze what three key scholars in philosophy of

education, namely John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Nel Noddings, have previously said

regarding the role of the teacher and student in teacher-student relationships.

Chapter 2: Analyzing Teacher-Student Relationships in Philosophy of Education

Introduction

In this chapter I examine key literature on teacher-student relationships within

philosophy of education. Setting the scope of this review was particularly challenging

considering the vast interest in teacher-student and teacher-child relationships in

educational psychology and school psychology emerging in the 1980s and 1990s, which

produced a great deal of work[79], along with the similar interest in relational pedagogies in

philosophy of education.[80] To focus on teacher-student relationships in the philosophical

literature, this chapter will emphasize the work of John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Nel

Noddings, contrasting all three thinkers with William James.

This chapter is organized in three parts. The first three parts evaluate the work of

John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Ned Noddings, respectively, in terms of their treatments

of teacher-student relationships. Together these thinkers represent some of the major

traditions in philosophy of education, moving from progressive thought to critical theory

to feminist theory. Woven within the analysis, I consider their philosophical similarities

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[79] Robert Pianta is the leading scholar on teacher-student relationships in early childhood education and writes for an audience of school psychologists, counselors, teachers, and educational psychologists. See Robert C. Pianta, *Enhancing Relationships between Children and Teachers* (Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 1999). Lynley Anderman has discussed interpersonal relationships, motivation, and a sense of belonging, Eric Anderman has discussed bullying, and Tzu Lin has discussed interpersonal relationships. These scholars have also considered collaborative learning, as well as theories of interpersonal relationships in small group and large group learning settings for cognitive and non-cognitive measures. See Robert E. Slavin, "Chapter 14: Non-Cognitive Outcomes of Cooperative Learning," 354.
[80] Morwenna Griffiths, Marit Honerød Hoveid, and Sharon Todd. *Re-Imagining Relationships in Education: Ethics, Politics and Practices*. Journal of Philosophy of Education Book Series (Malden, Massachusetts: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015). Relational pedagogies also connect to culturally responsive teaching, as discussed by Mary Jo Hinsdale. Mary Jo Hinsdale "Relational Pedagogy" in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia, Education.* (USA: Oxford University Press, 2016).

and differences and compare them to James, to identify a discursive space for James's work.

There are many reasons to include John Dewey in an analysis of teacher-student relationships. He is one of the most important educational philosophers of all time, especially among American scholars, as his progressive models of schooling continue to influence independent and private school systems.[81] His philosophy of education emphasizes growth, viewing the teacher as a facilitator for helping students do their own best work, both through practice- and project-based experiential learning and through pedagogies that honor democratic participation and citizenship. In *Democracy and Education* Dewey wrote, "It is the aim of progressive education to take part in correcting unfair privilege and unfair deprivation, not to perpetuate them."[82] This message is still carried out today in progressive, independent schools. Another reason to use Dewey as a foundation to analyze teacher-student relationships is that he had such a long career and wrote widely on education. Because part of his career overlapped with James's career, starting here lets us consider how James's pragmatic ideas could complement Dewey's progressive model. Dewey will serve as a comparison within the pragmatic tradition of philosophy of education.[83]

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[81] This perspective is supported by William Heard Kilpatrick, Morris R. Cohen, and Alfred North Whitehead, to name a few. Herbert M. Kliebard, *The Struggle for the American Curriculum: 1893-1958.* 2nd ed. (Routledge. New York: NY, 1995). Kliebard explains how there is no one progressive education movement because it was so complex, but that ultimately progressive ideas "won out" in education today, even if the interpretation is distant from the original vision.

[82] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education.* (Henry Holt; New York, 1916).

[83] When discussing pragmatism in education, scholars often conflate Deweyian, Jamesian, and Peircian models. While distinguishing these first two models would be a separate research project, this study does include some discussion of them. Deweyian pragmatism follows Peirce in attempting to organize ideas and methods of knowing into systems (building on chemistry and hard science), whereas James is known to have been "unsystematic" in his thinking. James allowed pragmatism to take on a broader view of reality

Paulo Freire is another influential thinker in educational thought and critical pedagogy. His pedagogy is emancipatory/liberatory in nature and reimagines the teacher-student relationship: the teacher uses a problem-posing approach to emancipate/liberate the student while the teacher and student share in the learning process as "co-investigators."[84] Freire's legacy is seen in critical theory, multiculturalism, progressive education, and liberation pedagogies today. Freire then, will engage critical theory traditions within philosophy of education.

As a final point of comparison, I will turn to Nel Noddings and her unique ethic of care, which considers the teacher's moral good in being a "carer" and "care-receiver" and a reciprocal model of care that circulates between the teachers and students.[85] Noddings (b. 1929) is a contemporary philosopher of education and a former math educator. Her relational ethics and ethic of care prioritize teacher–student relationships over other aspects of ethical approaches in education such as consequentialism, utilitarianism, and deontology.[86] She combines feminist theory with philosophy of education to argue for acknowledging and paying attention to care, emotions, and the whole lived experience (e.g. parenting, homemaking, relationships) in education.[87]

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and truth, including the seen and unseen world, and incorporated a more pluralistic outlook of truth and reality.

[84] To clarify, the teacher does not liberate the students as liberator, instead the teacher provides experiences so that the students can liberate themselves. The teaching is employing an emancipatory pedagogy to *help* liberate.

[85] This reciprocal model however is asymmetrical as will be discussed in the Noddings section.

[86] Stanford Graduate School of Education. Faculty & Research. Faculty Profile. Accessed August 1, 2018. https://ed.stanford.edu/faculty/noddings

[87] She is not alone in her thinking and draws on influences from other feminist such as Carol Gilligan and Jane Roland Martin. Noddings' seminal works include *Caring: A Feminist Approach to Ethics and Moral Education* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1984) and more recently she has written *Happiness and Education* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

Moreover, she directly references James in the first paragraph of her book *Happiness and Education.*[88] Noddings will represent feminist traditions.

Based on this review, in this chapter I argue that James's ideas are unique regarding pluralism, pragmatism, and habit balanced with creativity, and are deserving of recognition within this on-going conversation of teacher-student relationships. Chapters 3 and 4 extend and explicate this argument. Specifically, James's ideas overlap with those of Dewey, Freire, and Noddings, but are unique regarding his pedagogy (as will be described in the next chapter) and his direct consideration of the teacher and student in terms of inclusion, pluralism, co-construction, and habit balanced with creativity.[89]

Part I: Analyzing Teacher-Student Relationships through the Philosophy of John Dewey

John Dewey on Teacher-Student Relationships

As mentioned above, John Dewey is one of the most famous educational philosophers and is regarded as the "father of progressive education."[90] Dewey spoke widely about the roles of the teacher (educator) and student (pupil/child) and their relationship. Unfortunately, his writing was not always clear and consistent. For instance, he describes education as being both future-oriented and conversely grounded in the present. Several scholars, in fact, begin their analysis of Dewey by acknowledging

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[88] In *Happiness and Education* on page 9 she cites *The Varieties of Religious Experience*: "If we were to ask the question what is human life's chief concern? One of the answers we should receive would be: 'happiness.'" That is how she sets up her entire book starting with religion, life, and the words of William James. She then transitions into a larger conversation and includes John Dewey.

[89] There is more to be said regarding each idea, and within creativity there is the idea of balancing one's authentic "quirky," spontaneous, flexible self with that of one built on habits.

[90] J.J., Chambliss ed. *Philosophy of Education: An Encyclopedia (Routledge Reference Libraries of the Humanities)* (New York: Routledge, Taylor Francis Group, 2015). Ironically, John Dewey claims that Francis Parker is the father of progressive education. While Dewey's influence on education writ large is clear, it is less clear what he specifically said about educational relationships.

another scholar's misinterpretation of his work.[91] My own analysis is based more directly

on Dewey's writings, though I recognize that in later works he may contradict those same

ideas.

Dewey saw education as a fundamentally social process where the teacher and

student play a cooperative role. He saw the role of the teacher as a facilitator, one who

can help expose students to learning while making each student an active participant in

that learning process. Dewey values voice and choice in the classroom, providing

opportunities for students to lead discussions and activities based on their own interests.

In this model, the teacher's job is to identify the students' interests and encourage growth

through their own pedagogical expertise and through building positive habits.[92] One of

his goals in education is to build democratic community and civic engagement, for which

both teachers and students are responsible. Some themes in his writings include the focus

on the teacher-student relationship as "social and growth oriented" and "experience

based," formed through "building democratic communities and meliorism."[93] He also

discusses the teacher as a "sympathetic observer."

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[91] Robert Westbrook. *John Dewey and American Democracy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991). Westbrook writes about this challenge in the introduction of his biography. In attempting to analyze education, Dewey oscillated between a future-oriented and present-oriented model. He eventually landed on both: "Education may be conceived either retrospectively or prospectively. That is to say, it may be treated as process of accommodating the future to the past, or as an utilization of the past for a resource in a developing future." John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (Henry Holt, New York, 1916). This type of language is confusing, since retro and pro- are not terms used in education, and since he includes the "past" in this quotation. It is argued that Dewey wrote *Experience and Education* to clarify the confusion in interpreting his ideas from *Democracy and Education* and earlier work.

[92] Jim Garrison begins his conversation on Deweyian pragmatism by considering the role of habit and interest in education. Jim Garrison and Alven Neiman, *The Blackwell Guide to Philosophy of Education*. Blake, Nigel, et al., eds. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2003).

[93] Additional significant themes include the role of habit, experience, practice-based education, experiential education, moral education, and pragmatism. I considered discussing emotions because Dewey does express the value of having a sympathetic listener in education, referencing Emerson. I also considered pluralism because he does discuss pluralism in terms of potential futures for students, but this is ultimately

Teacher as Sympathetic Observer

Dewey discussed teacher-student relationships through the themes of "education as a social space" and "education as growth-oriented."[94] He begins "My Pedagogic Creed" by explaining the role and aim of education: "I believe that all education proceeds by the participation of the individual in the social consciousness of the race."[95] He continues by explaining that this participation process begins as an unconscious action.

> Through this unconscious education the individual gradually comes to share in the intellectual and moral resources which humanity has succeeded in getting together. He becomes an inheritor of the funded capital of civilization. The most formal and technical education in the world cannot safely depart from this general process. It can only organize it or differentiate it in some particular direction.[96]

Dewey recognizes here that the teacher-student relationship is built on a social order or activity. It is the role of the teacher to help individual students grow and be part of their society and part of humanity. It is the role of the student to "share" in the "moral resources" of humanity.

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a space where James's ideas present a unique perspective. Finally, I considered treating pragmatism in education, but I found that most examples of its applications to education enter into the conversation from secondary sources and from scholars interpreting pragmatism in education (writ large). This is also done with William James. I do believe that pragmatism is important in philosophy of education, and recognize that many have discussed it already, so it is tricky. To say that Dewey or James should be analyzed through their philosophy of pragmatism applied to teacher-student relationships becomes an acrobatic exercise in making distant connections and potentially adding too much filler to find those connections. However, James does provide a unique *method* that can be applied to education. Essentially, Dewey is known for democracy, experience, and growth (with a connection to the social space/activity). Accordingly, I will postpone my analysis of pragmatism, pluralism, and psychology until the section on James.

[94] Gerald L. Gutek, *Philosophical and Ideological Voices in Education*. (New York: Pearson Education, 2004). Gutek discusses how pragmatism is a major component of Dewey's philosophy and initially introduces Dewey to the reader with "The Future of Philosophy," which considers the cultural values in education. This connects too with education being social.

[95] John Dewey, "My Pedagogic Creed," *The School Journal* LIV, no. 3 (January 1897): 77-80.

[96] Dewey, 77-80. The language of organization sounds similar to William James discussing education as an organization of habits.

Dewey further discussed how education is social, but stated that it also requires some sympathy and balance between the teacher and student. He wrote, "I believe that only through the continual and sympathetic observation of childhood's interest can the adult enter into the child's life and see what it is ready for, and upon what material it could work most readily and fruitfully."[97] This concept of "sympathetic observation" is an important point to highlight because it demonstrates Dewey's view of the role of the teacher-observer, as well as the role of the teacher as a "carer." In his model, the teacher needs to meet the child where they are and build or grow from there.[98]

In analyzing teacher-student relationships, Dewey does not directly address the "relational qualities that carry the pedagogical experiences of the child" as has been noted by Max Van Manen in *Pedagogical Tact*.[99] That being said, in attempting to define the educational relationships between the teacher and student expressed in Dewey's writing, the concept of the "sympathetic observer" comes closest to providing a theory. This sympathy is the responsibility of the teacher. They must understand what resources the students bring into the classroom and attend to their needs through the student's interests and habits. Thus in understanding what sympathy means, it is regarding the teacher's relationship to the student, the teacher is sympathetic to the student's needs and interest.

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[97] John Dewey, "My Pedagogic Creed," *The School Journal* LIV, no. 3 (January 1897): 77-80. William James published *Principles of Psychology* in 1890 and describes similar aspects of interest and attention regarding habit and education.

[98] A difference between traditional public school teaching and progressive models (today) is that in traditional schools the curriculum is ready-made and is delivered by the teacher to the student, whereas in progressive models the student brings half the curriculum to school and the teacher helps students "grow" or "progress" from that place.

[99] Max Van Manen. *Pedagogical Tact*. (Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press, 2015), 207.

The teacher is sympathetic to the changes of the student and attends to the student's growth.

In *Experience and Education*, Dewey writes about the "either-ors" that exist between the old/traditional model and new/progressive model and about how ideally we need to recognize the good in both subject-matter teaching and experiential teaching. He argued, "When external authority [seen in traditional models] is rejected, it does not follow that all authority should be rejected, but rather that there is need to search for a more effective source of authority."[100] This would need to consider the value of individual experiences in education and recognize the social balance. This concept of ending disputes over dualisms in education relates to the teacher-student relationship. In understanding the flexible and dynamic nature inherent in including both the subject-matter and experiential teaching, it is the responsibility of the teacher to be a "sympathetic observer" following the interests and skills of the student in order to include what is needed for the student to grow and learn. Additionally, the concept of "authority" as a search for a "more effective source" implies an attention to the power dynamics present within a classroom. The teacher, while holding the authority and power within the classroom, must also be sympathetic to the needs of the students.

Dewey also balances the idea of the individual within the society and social context.[101] He wrote:

> In sum, I believe that the individual who is to be educated is a social individual and that society is an organic union of individuals. If we eliminate the social

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[100] John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938), 21.

[101] In my opinion, this idea of the individual, social context/community, and democracy are muddied in *Democracy and Education*, where Dewey seems to encourage participation through a singular shared vote, but this could be to the detriment of the individual voice.

factor from the child we are left only with an abstraction; if we eliminate the individual factor from society, we are left only with an inert and lifeless mass. [In] Education, therefore, we must begin with a psychological insight into the child's capacities, interests, and habits. It must be controlled at every point by reference to these same considerations. These powers, interest, and habits must be continually interpreted-- we must know what they mean. They must be translated into terms of their social equivalents-- into terms of what they are capable of in the way of social service.[102]

In this quotation we see that the role of the teacher is twofold; first, observe as the student demonstrates their interests, then, using their teaching acumen, identify the student's strengths and help support the student in developing those skills and interests. This model of observation is describing the concept of the "sympathetic observer." This relationship between the teacher and student is dynamic and active, yet the majority of the responsibility depends on the teacher.

This point might presuppose that the role of the teacher is built on observation, support, and reflection, but also that there is a cooperative relationship. Dewey uses the term "social service" at the end to show that the ultimate goal of education is towards some greater societal good where the "individuals" are united without losing their "powers" or uniqueness, and without being individualistic or "narrow." He sees this as linked to a better future that values democracy and moves towards a melioristic view of society.[103] Ultimately in building a better future that considers the lived experiences of students within the larger society, it is the role of the teacher to be a "sympathetic observer," caring for each student, and caring about meliorism in society.

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[102] John Dewey, "My Pedagogic Creed," *The School Journal* LIV, no. 3 (January 1897): 77-80. Again, James wrote about these ideas of interest and habit in *Principles* (1890), predating Dewey's work.
[103] This meliorism and attention to habit is echoed in the works of James and throughout Dewey's writings on morals and moral education.

In *Democracy and Education* Dewey discussed the problems with schooling in his day, in order to provide alternatives that re-envision the teacher–student relationship in a social context. He wrote,

> Why is it, in spite of the fact that teaching by pouring in, learning by a passive absorption, are universally condemned, that they are still so entrenched in practice? That education is not an affair of "telling" and being told, but an active and constructive process, is a principle almost as generally violated in practice as conceded in theory.[104]

The problem that Dewey describes above is that education has become passive instead of active. The aim should be that the student is an active participant in their learning through this constructive process. He continued to unpack this educational problem: "Children doubtless go to school to learn, but it has yet to be proved that learning occurs most adequately when it is made a separate conscious business."[105] The teacher needs to help students be engaged and conscious and recognize that learning should not be a "separate conscious business." The teacher as a "sympathetic observer" should incorporate the student's interests and lived experiences into the classroom so that there is a unity in learning that does not "separate" learning as a passive activity, from life which is active. This also connects to Dewey's theories of education as being a social process, mentioned in the previous section.

Dewey later explains that the goal of teaching is essentially to teach students how to build a habit of learning in which growth is a fundamental part. He noted that "society determines its own future" when teaching the young, and that "this cumulative movement

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[104] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (Henry Holt; New York, 1916), 46.
[105] Dewey, 46.

of action toward a later results is what is meant by growth."[106] He continued, "A

possibility of continuing progress is opened up by the fact that in learning one act,

methods are developed good for use in other situations. Still more important is the fact

that the human being acquires a habit of learning. He learns to learn."[107] Thus the role of

the teacher is to help students learn the *habits* of *learning to learn*, so that they can

continue to grow.

In terms of growth, Dewey also explains the value of understanding education not

as preparation for the future, but as a present tool for *continuous* growth:

> It is not…a question whether education should prepare for the future. If education
> is growth, it must progressively realize present possibilities, and thus make
> individuals better fitted to cope with later requirements. Growing is not something
> which is completed in odd moments; it is a continuous leading into the future.
> […] Because the need of preparation for a continually developing life is great, it
> is imperative that every energy should be bent to making the present experience
> as rich and significant as possible. Then as the present merges insensibly into the
> future, the future is taken care of.[108]

The phrase "present possibilities" informs a relationship between the teacher and student

that requires the student to be "present" and "aware," while the teacher is sympathetic

and attentive to their needs.[109] Being present and aware includes being present to the

political climate and the classroom environment. This view of education as preparation

for the future realizing "present possibilities" and future "possibilities" connects to the

idea of pluralism.[110]

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[106] John Dewey, 53
[107] Dewey, 53. William James wrote over a decade earlier that education is the organization of habits.
[108] Dewey, 65.
[109] Present in multiple senses: the present political climate, the present classroom environment, the present emotions of oneself, and the present interests that guide one's learning.
[110] He notes that this growth can occur with the teacher as well. "The philosophy is eloquent about the duty of the teacher in instructing pupils; it is almost silent regarding his privilege of learning. It emphasizes the

Dewey also explains how it is damaging when education only looks towards the

future, because doing so makes the work of the student and teacher robotic (mechanical)

and boring (slavish).

> Specifically it [the aim of education] means foresight of the alternative
> consequences attendant upon acting in a given situation in different ways (it is not
> fixed or rigid). […] In education, the current of these externally imposed aims is
> responsible for the emphasis put upon the notion of preparation for a remote
> future and for rendering the work of both the teacher and pupil mechanical and
> slavish. [111]

This example also ties to pluralism and flexibility in education because he refers to a

future that is "not fixed or rigid."[112] Education should have foresight into the "alternative"

consequences in life, but if too much emphasis is put on the future, then there is no life or

growth (or happiness) in the present experience in education. Dewey recognized not just

the social aspect of education, but also the internal reflective part needed to learn and

grow. He wrote,

> Thought or reflection, as we have already seen virtually if not explicitly, is the
> discernment of the relation between what we try to do and what happens in
> consequence. No experience having a meaning is possible without some element
> of thought. But we may contrast two types of experience according to the
> proportion of reflection found in them. [113]

Since reflection is so important, the teacher must provide time and opportunity for

students not just to have meaningful experiences or learn content or gain knowledge, but

also to reflect on that and thus think ("element of thought") about content critically. This

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influence of intellectual environment upon the mind; it slurs over the fact that the environment involves a
personal sharing in common *experiences*." Thus, the teacher-student relationship hinges on both the teacher
and student "sharing" in-common experiences. This all helps for growth. John Dewey, *Democracy and
Education* (Henry Holt; New York, 1916).
[111] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (Henry Holt; New York, 1916).
[112] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education.*
[113] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education.*

also connects to the teacher's role as a sympathetic observer. The teacher is responsible for being sensitive and sympathetic to the student's needs and ability to reflect, by providing space and support.

Dewey does discuss the educator and student directly: "The educator's part in the enterprise of education is to furnish the environment which stimulates responses and directs the learner's course."[114] This means that they need to facilitate and provide opportunities for learning to occur. This environment can speak to the physical space itself, or to the set of knowledge a teacher has and is able to tap into. Within that set of knowledge, the teacher can be a sympathetic observer, reflecting on what the student is able to accomplish, and then provide opportunities for growth. For instance, Dewey writes, "…the more the educator knows of music the more he can perceive the possibilities of the inchoate musical impulses of a child."[115] This means that the teacher needs to know their content, their students, and how to provide opportunities to learn.[116] Connecting back to the importance of education as a social enterprise, he contends that it is the role of the teacher to help "perpetuate group life."[117] This is done by keeping "the experience of the student moving in the right direction."[118] Overall, Dewey emphasizes the importance of social life, group life, the teacher's role in crafting an educative environment that considers continuity in experience, and reflection. The connecting

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[114] Dewey, 206.
[115] Dewey, 207.
[116] Len Waks has also discussed the role of friendship in Dewey's work. This will be discussed in the conclusion to this section below.
[117] Dewey, 207.
[118] Dewey, 207. James writes about how the teacher should have ready-made content at their disposal, but also be flexible and ready depending on the students.

factor that ties social life, group life, and the teacher together is the concept of the teacher

as a sympathetic observer. This is a teacher who is responsive to the needs of the students

so that social life, group life, and growth can occur. Sympathy implies an ability of the

teacher to be flexible to the needs of the students, attend to their interests, and be

sensitive to each student's unique path towards growth.

The Teacher-Student Relationship as Democratic Community/Participation and Meliorism

Dewey admitted that the "devotion of democracy to education is a familiar

fact,"[119] but argued that there is clearly something more important when considering it

within education. Democracy, he noted, is "more than a form of government": it is a

"mode of…living."[120] Dewey identified the school as a place for democracy to be

enacted, taught, and practiced. He explained that democracy is usually seen in a

superficial sense as just a government, but that he saw it as a larger entity:

> Since democratic society repudiates the principle of external authority, it must find a substitute in voluntary disposition and interest; these can be created only by education. … A democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. The extension in space of the number of individuals who participate in an interest so that each has to refer his own action to that of others, and to consider the action of others to give point and direction to his own, is equivalent to the breaking down of those barriers of class, race, and national territory which kept men from perceiving the full import of their activity. These…varied points of contact denote a greater diversity of stimuli to which an individual has to respond; they consequently put a premium on variation in his action.[121]

The teacher is there to facilitate this democratic model and help build these skills in the

students in order to have a "mode of associated living," where each participant or student

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[119] Dewey, 99.
[120] Dewey, 99.
[121] Dewey, 99.

can communicate their experiences and move towards a more just world, breaking down class and race barriers. In this quotation, Dewey also speaks to the ideal of participation and inclusion, and promotes exposure to a variety of points of view or "points of contact," which leads to a variety of actions which are ideal for a pluralistic democracy.

Ultimately, the role of the teacher is to help students recognize healthy models of social progress, engage in social discourse, and recognize when there are barriers to those ideals. According to Dewey, "since education is a social process, and there are many kinds of societies, a criterion for educational criticism and construction implies a particular social ideal."[122] In this model the ideal society provides opportunities to learn grow and engage in conversation and discourse; an "undesirable [mode] sets up barriers to free intercourse and communication of experience."[123] Thus freedom and democracy are part of education for Dewey, and it is the role of the teacher to facilitate these aims. Dewey further uses the idea of education as a social institution to unpack additional ideas on democracy and meliorism. He reiterates,

> I believe that school is primarily a social institution. Education being a social process, the school is simply that form of community life in which all those agencies are concentrated that will be most effective in bringing the child to share in the inherited resources of the race, and to use his own powers for social ends.[124]

The teacher-student relationship is social and is built towards the aims of bettering society, through revealing and fostering the powers and goods in individuals towards a positive community.

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[122] Dewey, 112.
[123] Dewey, 112.
[124] John Dewey, *My Pedagogic Creed. The School Journal* (LIV, no. 3. January, 1897), 77-80

Similarly to James, Dewey recognizes that education can provide endless opportunities for a pluralistic future. Dewey frames this pluralism within a melioristic future. "I believe that when society once recognizes the possibilities [of education] in this direction [towards a moral duty], and the obligations which these possibilities impose, it is impossible to conceive of the [large amount of] resources of time, attention, and money which will be put at the disposal of the educator."[125] This quotation is hopeful, idealistic, and values pluralism. Overall, these quotations imply that for Dewey there is a cooperative relationship between the teacher and student, but that the power and responsibility for facilitating this relationship still rests more on the teacher.

The Teacher-Student Relationship Focused on Experience and Environment

In *Education and Experience* Dewey explains that a philosophy of education needs to be based on a philosophy of experience. However, he insists, not all experiences are educative: the problem with the traditional model and the progressive model is that they both "proceed negatively or by reaction against what has been current in education rather than by a positive and constructive development of purposes, methods, and subject-matter on the foundation of a theory of experience and its educational potentialities." This means that education needs to revolve around experience, and that the teacher, student, pedagogy, and curriculum also need to consider each student's lived experience.[126] In setting out the role of the teacher, Dewey also discusses how important it is to have the correct environment or setting: "Life activities flourish and fail only in

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[125] John Dewey, *My Pedagogic Creed. The School Journal*, 77-80.
[126] John Dewey. *Experience and Education.* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938), 22.

connection with changes of the environment."[127] Here the *environment* is key for a positive growth-oriented education that is also democratic. It is the job of the teacher to have the ability to reflect and be sympathetic observers.

Dewey has been misinterpreted as being "student-centered," and he has been called out for creating manufactured experiences to help guide students towards learning, but regardless of the obfuscating style of Dewey's writings, experience is an essential part of his philosophy of education.[128] As such, the role of the teacher is to build a relationship with the student that helps empower them to see the value in their lived experiences in education. Dewey wrote, "I believe that education… is a process of living and not a preparation for future living."[129] This quotation is particularly interesting because it is used often in progressive education and tends to be misquoted as "education is not preparation for life, it is life." What Dewey is saying, though, seems contradictory to his view of education as having a goal towards a future orientation. This quotation seems to focus on the present with the words "*not* a preparation for future living." This means that present experiences are important.[130]

For Dewey (unlike Freire but very much like Noddings), good experiences in the home are educative and meaningful for the school. He wrote, "I believe … the school life

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[127] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York; Holt, 1916), 142.

[128] In his video on Summerhill at 50, A.S. Neill discusses how in America there is the "progressive" model where you have to trick or convince a student to learn. He says, "I don't want to use play to study mathematics, I think it's quite unfair." As if progressive schools "trick" students into learning instead of letting them choose to learn when they want. A.S. Neill. *Here and Now. Founder of Summerhill*. 1964. Viewed multiple times, most recent, 8/27/2018. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4-C2i9Iq9vY&t=9s Jim Garrison also dissuades readers from this misconception in "Pragmatism and Education" (Blackwell).

[129] John Dewey, *My Pedagogic Creed. The School Journal* (LIV, no. 3. January, 1897), 77-80.

[130] John Dewey, 77-80. He continues, "I believe that the school must represent present life— life as real and vital to the child as that which he carries on in the home, in the neighborhood, or on the playground."

should grow gradually out of the home life; that it should take up and continue the activities with which the child is already familiar in the home."[131] This is seen in progressive schools that teach students through hands-on activities such as math through cooking. Dewey continued, "I believe, therefore, in the so-called expressive or constructive activities as the center of correlation. I believe that this gives the standard for the place of cooking, sewing, manual training, etc., in the school."[132] Here he describes education as being process-driven through an active engagement on the part of the student in connecting their lives to the subject matter, not the other way around. It is the role of the teacher to construct a classroom and build a positive environment that allows these experiences to take place.

Dewey's vision of pragmatism is seen most in his connection to instrumentalism and experimentalism. In Dewey's lab schools he tested out his theories, through emphasizing the importance of experience but also the scientific method. "Education is the laboratory in which philosophic distinctions become concrete and are tested."[133] This laboratory is figurative and literal since his Chicago Laboratory School did just that. He wrote,

> Philosophy was defined as the generalized theory of education. Philosophy was stated to be a form of thinking, … Since education is the process through which the needed transformation may be accomplished and not remain a mere hypothesis as to what is desirable, we reach a justification of the statement that philosophy is the theory of education as a deliberately conducted practice.[134]

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[131] Dewey, 77-80.
[132] Dewey, 77-80.
[133] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York; Holt, 1916), 363.
[134] Dewey, 363.

Here it is the role of the teacher, within a model of education that theorizes that

"philosophy is the theory of education as a deliberately conducted practice," to "locate

the nature of perplexity" or curiosity and interest from the students, and to foster those

"emotional and intellectual dispositions" towards growth and transformation.[135] As

Dewey puts it, teachers must ask "How shall the young become acquainted with the past

in such a way that the acquaintance is a potent agent in appreciation of the living

present?"[136]

Dewey continues to discuss experience and also a potentially future-oriented

"pragmatic" model of education. He explains that the educator needs to engage students

in "manual skills" while also preparing them for "later usefulness."[137] Alfred L Hall-

Quest supports this idea of balance and flexibility, writing in the foreword of *Experience*

and Education that for Dewey true learning is "longitudinal and lateral" in dimensions

and both "historical and social" it is "orderly and dynamic."[138]

When discussing the role of the teacher in the educational relationship and

growth, Dewey noted,

> [I]t is the fault of the teacher if the pupil does not perceive in due season the
> inadequacy of his performances [growth or lack thereof], and thereby receive a
> stimulus to attempt exercise which will perfect his powers. Meantime it is more
> important to keep alive a creative and constructive attitude than to secure an

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[135] This is quotation is one example why Dewey remains one of the leading and transformative philosophers of education to date. Many of his successors utilized this connection of philosophy to experience and education. William Kilpatrick continued Dewey's progressive education work, but extended it more towards project-based learning.

[136] John Dewey, *Experience and Education*. (The Macmillan Company. New York, 1938), 23. This question considers what the aims of education should be.

[137] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (Henry Holt; New York, 1916), 221. This theme of balance in one's experience is uniquely Deweyian and pragmatic. William James also discusses this in his work.

[138] Alfred L Hall-Quest in John Dewey, *Experience and Education*. *Experience and Education* (The Macmillan Company. New York, 1938), 11.

external perfection by engaging the pupil's action in too minute and too closely regulated pieces of work.[139]

Dewey claims that it is the job of the teacher to help students reflect on their own growth or "performance," but that if the teacher cannot teach these metacognitive skills then it is the teacher's fault. The teacher needs to be a sympathetic observer in this process and they need to listen to the student. Dewey puts blame on teachers who may not clearly provide the tools to the students to determine their own growth. This is interesting because the teacher is still the person in charge, even though there is an idealized flattened hierarchy where the student may share in that decision or the power of self-conscious reflection and assessment of oneself through democratic participation.

Thus, it is the role of the teacher to advise and facilitate, but then ultimately to allow the student to know how they are doing in school. In addition to having students know their academic ability, it is also the job of the teacher to "keep alive a creative… attitude." This means that the teacher needs to guide the students with an invisible hand, inspire them to maintain creativity, not stifle them, and teach them democratic participation.[140]

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[139] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York; Holt, 1916). 222-223.

[140] It seems like Dewey has a great task for teachers to undertake that may not be realistic within his curricular model. Also of note is that although Dewey suggests the good in creativity, he was known to himself be a terribly dry and uncreative traditional professor, one who would lecture with no frills because the content should speak for itself. Student of John Dewey, Irwin Edman remembers his first lecture with Dewey. "It was a shock, a shock of dullness and confusion, if that can be said. It was at any rate a disappointment. I had not found Dewey's prose easy, but I had learned that its difficulty lay for the most part in its intellectual honesty, which led him to qualify an idea in one sentence half a page long." Houston Peterson, ed., *Great Teachers; Portrayed by Those Who Studied Under Them.* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1946), 195

<u>Conclusion and Shortcomings of John Dewey</u>

John Dewey viewed education as a social activity and stressed that education is not preparation for life; it is life. Life is educational in itself, so it is the role of the teacher to help students make those connections. For Dewey, "education is both a tool and an outcome of democratic practice."[141] The social activity is meant to lead towards a practice, process, and outcome of democratic values. He valued the good that teachers could bring into the classroom by working *with* students, not teaching at them. Dewey also interprets the teacher-student relationship as one where the teacher is sympathetic. The teacher is a sympathetic observer, who is able to attend to the interests of the students, while creating an educative space that is conducive to social activity, growth, and learning.

Long before Freire wrote about the banking model, Dewey recognized the problems of a unidirectional teaching model:

> The teacher is not in the school to impose certain ideas or to form certain habits in the child, but is there as a member of the community to select the influences which shall affect the child and to assist him in properly responding to these influences. I believe that the discipline of the school should proceed from the life of the school as a whole and not directly from the teacher.[142]

The process of "selecting the influence" is an example of how Dewey argues for teachers as "sympathetic observers" able to respond to the needs of the students and direct or facilitate their learning. Although Dewey saw the teacher-student relationship as social and shared, it still seems to rest more on the shoulders of the teacher to build that

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[141] J.J. Chambliss ed. "John Dewey" in *Philosophy of education, an Encyclopedia*. (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1996), 151.

[142] John Dewey, *My Pedagogic Creed*. *The School Journal* (LIV, no. 3. January, 1897), 77-80.

educational environment, given that there is more evidence of the role of the teacher vs.

the role of the student. This is one major shortcoming that William James can build upon.

Also, although Dewey's philosophy is praised today, these theories do not always

translate into practice. Historian Herbert Kliebard wrote,

> Dewey, the quintessential American philosopher, may, paradoxically, have been out of step, in at least some significant respects, with dominant American values, and while, personally he was much revered in his own lifetime, his educational reforms remained confined largely to the world of ideas rather than the world of practice.[143]

In addition to Kliebard's critique of Dewey, within the secondary source materials on

Dewey, only a few scholars pull out what Dewey superficially says about teacher-student

relationships because his writing does not directly state it. Should the teacher be familial?

Formal? Informal? Critical? Caring? Dewey does express the idea of the "sympathetic

observer" as a role of the teacher, but does not elaborate on how that relationship unfolds.

In *John Dewey on Listening and Friendship in School and Society*, Leonard J.

Waks considers the tasks at hand for a teacher using Dewey's writings.[144] He argued that

the relationship between the teacher and student is built on listening and a "cooperative

friendship." The author, however, connects this to democracy as opposed to defining and

characterizing that relationship and those criteria alone. The focus of the work is on the

transactional process of listening and shows where that concept is found most is in *School*

and Society. This process of listening, also supports my argument for the teacher as a

sympathetic observer because to observe, in part, requires listening.

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[143] Herbert M. Kliebard. *The Struggle for the American Curriculum: 1893-1958.* 2nd ed. (Routledge. New York: NY, 1995), 76.
[144] Leonard J. Waks, "John Dewey on Listening and Friendship in School and Society." *Educational Theory*, University of Illinois, 61, no. 2 (2011): 191–205.

In *Promoting Student-Centered Learning in Experiential Education*, Cheryl A. Estes argues that in the push to promote a more progressive Deweyian model of "student-centered learning," many teachers in practice present a "teacher-centered" model. Many sources on experiential education are centered not on "relationships" emanating from Dewey, but instead on "power in experience-education."[145] This article presents evidence that the theories of Dewey regarding the practice of progressive education are unclear and the power still rests (incorrectly, because it should be more student-oriented) on the shoulders of the teachers.[146]

An additional topic of much consideration in the literature on Dewey is the idea of democratic communities in pedagogical practice.[147] This again presents evidence that Dewey's writings on the teacher-student relationship deserve additional scholarship. Also, this gap provides an opportunity for James to enter into the conversation, because he wrote directly about the role of the teacher and student in *Talks to Teachers*, and because he taught with a model of inclusion and openness. He was an exemplary teacher who built positive and productive teacher-student relationships that were familial. In *Community as a Pedagogical Enterprise and the Functions of Schooling Within It in the Philosophy of John Dewey*, Frederick M. Schultz interprets what the "community school" model is and how it functions in contemporary American schools informed by Dewey.

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[145]Cheryl A. Estes. "Promoting Student-Centered Learning in Experiential Education." *Journal of Experiential Education* 27, no. 2 (2004), 141–60, "power" is from 146. Again, this interpretation of a "student-centered" model of teaching is incorrect, as defended by Garrison and other scholars.

[146] There are authors who actually credit James as being the grandfather of experiential education over Dewey. George W Donaldson and Richard Vinson, "William James, Philosophical Father of Experience-Based Education." *Journal of Experiential Education,* 2. no. 2. (Fall 1979): 6-8.

[147] Frederick M. Schultz, "Community as a Pedagogical Enterprise and the Functions of Schooling Within It in the Philosophy of John Dewey." *Educational Theory*, (1971): 320–37.

Shultz connects the role of the community schools to the aim towards an ideal democratic institution.[148] The role of the teacher is to help achieve these aims, but a discussion of the specific teacher-student relationship is again missing.

In *Defining Reflection: Another Look at John Dewey and Reflective Thinking*, Carol Rodgers recognizes the disconnect and contradiction in teacher education programs: they promote the vision of teaching educators to be "reflective," without having a clear criteria and characterization of what that process entails and how to teach it.[149] In her work she brings forth what John Dewey actually states on reflection and how this can be translated into teacher-education practice. Again, while this analysis rests on the ideals of the community practice, it neglects the teacher-student relationship in unpacking the value of reflective practices.

Considering Jamesian pluralism, pragmatism, and habit, Dewey's ideas overlap with James's in several ways. However, as mentioned above, when scholars describe pragmatism in education, they often do not disaggregate the ideas of the three thinkers (Peirce, Dewey, and James) and instead see the concept as singular. James, however, created a method/model for understanding truth that can be applied to teaching and life, and is additionally pluralistic. In the following section, I will discuss the themes that emerge in the writings of Paulo Freire on teacher-student relationships. Freire uses more expressive and disruptive language, moving from the ideal co-constructed model that Dewey begins to unpack, to the realized co-investigator, problem-posing model that

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[148] Schultz, 320–37.
[149] Carol Rodgers. "Defining Reflection: Another Look at John Dewey and Reflective Thinking." *Teacher's College Record* 104, no. 4 (June 2002): 842–66.

lights a fire in any critical educator who reads Freire. Whereas Dewey wants to build a

better tomorrow, Freire wants to raze the unjust systems that trap us in the present.

Part II: Analyzing Teacher-Student Relationships through the Philosophy of Paulo Freire

Freire on Teacher-Student Relationships

Paulo Freire was born in Brazil in 1921 and lived during a politically tumultuous

time in his country. Freire's perspective compared to Dewey, Noddings, and James is

unique in that he was teaching students and peasants for the aim of teaching experiences

that would help create agency and support movements out of oppression. His philosophy

of education reflects his unique experiences and the challenges he faced living in poverty

during the Depression. His work speaks not only to the liberation of the oppressed and a

method or pedagogy for/towards that freedom, but also to the importance of teacher-

student relationships. Freire is highly influential in education and his legacy is seen in

critical theory, multiculturalism, progressive education, and liberation pedagogies

today.[150] In his most influential work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* he criticized the

"banking concept," which continues as a problem in education today. He also proposed

"problem-posing" models of education as a solution.[151]

In my analysis of Freire, I am analyzing primarily his early works, recognizing

that his arguments evolved and changed over time. The first point of clarification regards

Freire's philosophical commitments. He is educating peasants and students in order to

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[150] While some scholars classify Freire as critical, he himself did not claim a Marxist critical position.
[151] Freire's philosophy is taught in teacher-education and in foundations of education courses. His work is used to teach pre-service teachers to not "fill" students with knowledge (as seen in the banking concept), but instead to build a meaningful connection through experience and problems in the community that lead to action. In this analysis I will be focusing primarily on his early works.

teach agency and allow them to liberate themselves. The aim is to have the teachers be

co-investigators with the students. However the teacher is not the liberator, as that would

suggest that students are dependent on the teacher and would reinforce their

powerlessness. Rather the teacher gives students experiences and as such students

themselves become liberators. Unlike Dewey, Noddings, and James, Freire was working

with a significantly different population. He was attempting to build agency in the

peasant community to help them liberate themselves. He was not teaching elite

undergraduate students (as James), students in a lab schools (private-self-selecting as

Dewey), nor in K-12 math classrooms (as Noddings). Freire notes that his writings are a

"result from my observations during six years of political exile, observations which have

enriched those previously afforded by my educational activities in Brazil."[152]

Throughout Freire's work, the teacher, student, and their relationship are central.

He describes the teacher and student as co-investigators and co-constructors of

knowledge, and imagines a teacher-student relationship that is humanizing, disruptive,

liberating, with a reimagined structure: both the teacher and student are one. In this

section I will describe themes that emerge in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (since his

language envisions the teacher-student relationship), complemented by other works.[153]

Freire begins with the problems seen in education during his time and then provides

solutions to breaking free from these alienating, dehumanizing pedagogies through a

liberation pedagogy that is humanizing.

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[152] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Trans Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 2007), 35.

[153] Instead of organizing this section by theme, I trace his argument and thread the themes throughout.

<u>Teacher as Student-Liberator</u>

Freire begins *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by identifying the problems found in

education. Part of the problem is found within the teaching pedagogy that results in being

alienating and disconnected from students' lived experiences. He explains that the

method of teaching is static, unidirectional, immutable, and predictable.[154] Teachers

"'fill' the students with the contents of his [the teacher's] narration— contents which are

detached from reality, disconnected from the totality that engendered them [the students]

and could give them significance."[155] As a result, "words are emptied of their

concreteness and become hollow, alienated, and alienating."[156] Freire continues,

> Students are filled with knowledge that has no connection to their lived
> experiences and are taught rote memorization of facts 'four times four is sixteen'
> which lacks any opportunities for a transformative education or experience. The
> students become 'containers' or 'receptacles' to be 'filled' by the teacher… the
> quality of teaching and becoming educated is judged by how full the receptacle is
> and good students are those who 'permit' themselves to be filled the most.[157]

Freire labels this idea of filling students as the banking concept. He also addresses

teacher–student relationships and contemporary problems with them.

> A careful analysis of the teacher-student relationship at any level, inside or
> outside the school, reveals its fundamentally narrative character. This relationship
> involves a narrating subject (the teacher) and patient, listening objects (the
> students). The contents, whether values or empirical dimensions of reality, tend in

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[154] This view of Paulo Freire as a critical theorist who is interested in relational pedagogies is supported by many scholars. See Mary Jo Hinsdale's writings on *Relational Pedagogies* where she highlights Freire, in addition to Noddings. In philosophy of education anthologies, he is also referred to as a critical theorist. See John Dale and Emery J. Hyslop-Margison *Paulo Freire: teaching for Freedom and Transformation; The Philosophical Influences on The Work of Paulo Freire*, where they write that Paulo Freire's name alone "raises blood pressure when discussed in faculty of education" and is "feared and hated," vii.

[155] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Trans Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 2007), 74-86.

[156] Freire, 74-86.

[157] Freire, 74-86.

the process of being narrated to become lifeless and petrified. Education is suffering from narration sickness.[158]

In order to move away from this problem and transform education, he pushed for teachers to be co-investigators and emancipators from the problems in school and society. For Freire, it is the job of the teacher to help students enact change through a "problem-posing" pedagogy. Similar to Dewey, Freire desired an educational model that moved away from current practice and saw the teacher as a facilitator. Freire however diverges from Dewey due to his more disruptive and radical stance for not simply changing education but transforming it.[159]

Freire continues to explain the "banking concept" problem with education. "In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing."[160] This is oppressive and negates the idea that knowledge is a process of inquiry. This also demonstrates a deficit model towards the students, viewing them as not having anything worthy of being identified as knowledge (or culture). As modern critical theorist Tara J. Yosso puts it in a wider discussion on critical race theory and communities of cultural wealth, the key question is "Whose Culture has Capital?"[161]

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[158] Freire, 74-86.

[159] While change and transform may seem like similar terms, change implies building or pivoting or changing something starting from where you are, whereas transform implies that the foundation may need to be radically modified (or razed) before you can change or transform it.

[160] Freire, 74-86.

[161] Tara J. Yosso "Whose Culture has Capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth" *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 8:1, (2005), 69-91.

The many problems with this model include alienation, a lack of creativity and spontaneity or transformation, and a misguided system of "knowledge."[162] Freire claimed that the problem with banking is that it

> anesthetizes and inhibits creative power, problem posing education involves a constant unveiling of reality. The former… maintains submergence of consciousness; the latter strives for the emergence of consciousness and critical intervention in reality.[163]

Another issue is that it is easy for populations to stay the course and remain oppressed, adapting to the oppressive situations in life as opposed to changing them (or "emerging" into "consciousness"). In this model students have no "buy-in" or "commitment." [164] Freire identifies additional problems with the banking notion of consciousness by noting that the "educator's role is to regulate the way the world 'enters into' the students." This hurts spontaneity and creativity, preventing opportunities for students to choose 'how' to enter. Another problem is indoctrination. "Everything [related to knowledge] in this ready-to-wear approach serves to obviate thinking."[165] This problem unfortunately persists today with the rise of high-stakes testing that goes hand in hand with test prep, which rarely invites creativity as a metric or assessment.

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[162] This lack of creativity and spontaneity is not necessarily bridged with a liberation pedagogy, in my opinion. In order to teach creativity and spontaneity, there needs to be an intentional model and modeling of what this unique (and oppressed) process looks like when freed from the creative soul or instinct of the child. Art education may have guidance on this process. Liz Lerman has written widely on the dialogic process of critique in education and how to make it inclusive. Lerman and Freire's philosophies together would be helpful for future educators in any field. Liz Lerman and John Borstel, *Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process: A Method for Getting Useful Feedback on Anything You Make, from Dance to Dessert.* (Takoma Park, Maryland: Liz Lerman Dance Exchange, 2003).

[163] Freire, 74-86.

[164] Freire, 74-86.

[165] Freire, 74-86. This point on the importance of creativity is an additional entry point for William James regarding the value of habit balanced with creativity, as well as the role of the teacher in providing these tools of balance.

<u>The Teacher-Student Relationship as a Solution to Banking; Liberation, Problem-Posing, and Humanizing Pedagogies</u>

In order to partner with the student, the role of the teacher in Freire's model is to facilitate and teach in a way that is liberating, humanizing, and drives change. This is done through dialogue and discussion, an understanding of liberating education, and through problem-posing guided by the teacher (but ultimately co-constructed). After recognizing the problems in current educational practices, Freire presented the solution: "the raison d'etre of libertarian education…lies in its drive towards reconciliation. Education must begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers and students."[166] For Freire, the role of the teacher and student is *shared* as learner and teacher, with both adding value to the learning environment.[167]

Freire also noted in *Education for Critical Consciousness* that the key point in all of education starts with relationships. He wrote,

> To be human is to engage in relationships with others and with the world. It is to experience that world as an objective reality, independent of oneself, capable of being known. […] Man's separateness from and openness to the world distinguishes him as a being of relationships. Men, unlike animals, are not only *in* the world but *with* the world.[168]

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[166] Freire, 74-86.

[167] Lesley Bartlett, "Dialogue, Knowledge, and Teacher-Student Relations: Freirean Pedagogy in Theory and Practice." *Comparative Education Review* 49, no. 3 (August 2005): 347. Bartlett supports this claim writing "Thus, problem-posing education relies on a transformed and transformational, respectful relationship between teacher and student. According to Freire, "through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the- teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with student-teachers. . . . The teacher is no longer merely the one who teaches, but one who is . . . taught in dialogue with the students, who in their turn while being taught also teach." Thus dialogue is a key part of this relationship.

[168] Paulo Freire. *Education for Critical Consciousness*. Trans. and Ed. Myra Bergman Ramos. (New York: A Continuum Book The Seabury Press, 1973/1969) 3.

[…]

> Human relationships with the world are plural in nature…men relate to their world in a critical way. They apprehend the objective data of their reality (as well as the ties that link one datum to another) through reflection-- not by reflex, as do animals. And in the act of critical perception, men discover their own temporality. Transcending a single dimension, they reach back to yesterday, recognize today, and come upon tomorrow. The dimensionality of time is one of the fundamental discoveries in the history of human culture. [169]

This connects to pluralism within education as well and provides space for entry with

William James. Further, the concepts of temporality and reflection are human elements,

part of education.

In order to start the process of liberating education, one must consider the role of

communication between the teacher and student through dialogue and discussion:

> Yet only through communication can human life hold meaning. The teacher's thinking is authenticated only by the authenticity of the students' thinking…authentic thinking…concerned about reality does not take place in ivory tower isolation, but only in communication. If it is true that thought has meaning only when generated by action upon the world, the subordination of students to teachers becomes impossible.[170]

This quotation demonstrates that the role of the teacher and student is to work towards

some level of *authentic* life and experience that is not ready made or handed down from

above (curricula).

According to Freire, the teacher and student work together to realize that

education is in part about critically considering their reality. An additional goal for the

teacher is being a humanist revolutionary educator: "her efforts must coincide with those

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[169] Freire. *Education for Critical Consciousness*, 3.
[170] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 2007), 74-86.

of the students to engage in critical thinking and the quest for mutual humanization. His efforts must be imbued with a profound trust in people and their creative power. To achieve this, they must be partners of the students in their relation with them."[171] What he means by partners and partnership is that together they must work towards the goal of liberation in education. To work as partners implies a flattened hierarchy built on common problems they are aiming to address. Thus an additional part of the teacher–student relationship rests with trust and respect.

Freire identified authentic education and humanizing education as an ultimate aim. "Authentic liberation-- the process of humanization-- is not another deposit to be made in men. Liberation is a praxis: the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it." [172] This authenticity requires action and disruption against the status quo. Problem-posing education responds to the "essence of consciousness- intentionality-- rejects communiques and embodies communication…."[173] It raises "consciousness" within men and women. This concept of critical consciousness is an idea still used today.[174]

For the teacher-student relationship, transformation and liberation takes place first in the teacher by acknowledging and reflecting upon those goals, and then initiating change with students through dialogical relations. Freire wrote, "Liberating education consists in acts of cognition, not transferals of information… Accordingly the practice of

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[171] Freire, 74-86. This concept of "trust" also calls forth meliorism, linking James with Freire.
[172] Freire, 74-86.
[173] Freire, 74-86.
[174] The colloquial term is "woke" or "wokeness." It is the idea that once one is enlightened or awoken to their reality and problems that exist within society, then it is nearly impossible to go back to sleep or escape and not acknowledge said reality. It almost pushes one to move forward to change in some way.

problem-posing education entails at the outset that the teacher–student contradiction to be

resolved." [175] This makes "dialogical relations" paramount in order to have both parties

perceive the same objectives.[176] Echoing this concept of "dialogic education," Ronald C.

Arnett wrote, that even though no one author points to "the way in which this work uses

the term dialogic education, Freire does offer a handle on what the term implies."[177]

Arnett explained, "Freire's understanding of dialogic education begins with the

assumption that both reflection and action are central to dialogue."[178] The teacher-student

relationship and their roles become reimagined with problem-posing. This changes the

"vertical pattern" into a "flattened hierarchy where power and authority are shared

through dialogue."[179] Freire went on,

> Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher
> cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher–student with students-teachers.
> The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself
> taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teaches.
> […] They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow. […]
> Arguments based on 'authority' are no longer valid; in order to function, authority
> must be on the side of freedom, not against it…people teach each other, mediated
> by the world, by cognizable objects which in banking education are 'owned' by
> the teacher.[180]

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[175] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Trans Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 2007), 74-86.

[176] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Trans Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 2007), 74-86.

[177] Ronald C. Arnett, "Conversation, Relationships, and Values." *Dialogic Education; Conversation About Ideas and Between Persons*. (Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1992), 16-17.

[178] Arnett, "Conversation, Relationships, and Values," 16-17.

[179] Cary A. Buzzelli, and Bill Johnston. *Moral Dimensions of Teaching; Language, Power, and Culture in Classroom Interaction* (New York: Routledge Falmer, 2001). Buzzelli and Johnston also discuss how power is circulated. Thus while a teacher may attempt to give power to a student or share that power, it is always present when an actor or student enters into a classroom and agrees to the rules of that dynamic.

[180] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 2007), 74-86.

According to Freire the teacher-student relationship is shared, knowledge is co-constructed, and there is a third side to their triangle of learning: experience, both lived and present in a community. His theory also brings forth the issues of ownership and agency in education. For Freire it is not the teacher's place to own the knowledge and bestow it like a "gift"; instead that knowledge is mediated and shared with the students and guided by the students.[181] This process is reciprocal and continues forth without one specific end, but with at least one goal— liberation. Denis Goulet echoes this analysis: "Education in the Freire mode is the practice of liberty because it frees the educator no less than the educatees from the twin thralldom of silence and monologue."[182]

Freire further characterized the role of the teacher as "problem-posing," which "does not dichotomize the activity of the teacher–student [since] she is not 'cognitive,' at one point and 'narrative' at another." Likewise, "the students— no longer docile listeners— are now critical co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher." In the resulting spiraling reflective model, when teachers and students work together, "the teacher presents the material to the students for their consideration, and re-considers her earlier considerations as the students express their own." Freire concludes, "The role of the problem-posing educator is to create, together with the students."[183] This circulation of

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[181] This mediating model of finding truth and co-constructing truth is not dissimilar to the concept of James's pragmatism or from Dewey's pragmatism which seeks to eliminate dualisms.

[182] Denis Goulet, "Introduction" in *Education for Critical Consciousness* by Paulo Freire. Trans. and Ed. Myra Bergman Ramos. (New York: A Continuum Book The Seabury Press, 1973/1969) viii-ix.

[183] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 2007), 74-86.

knowledge and reflection with others is often called reflexivity in multicultural education today.[184] He uses the term "authentic reflection."[185]

Freire also explained how learning and education is ongoing, always a process of creating, recreating, and flux without one perfect ending point. "Problem-posing education affirms men and women as being in the process of becoming -- an unfinished, uncompleted beings in and with a likewise unfinished reality...the unfinished character of human beings and the transformational character of reality necessitate that education be an ongoing activity."[186] This process, he argued, connects theory and practice: "Education is thus constantly remade in the praxis… Problem-posing— which accepts neither a 'well-behaved' present nor a predetermined future— roots itself in the dynamic present and becomes revolutionary."[187] The teacher and the student make and remake their reality through co-construction of knowledge and problem-posing. This is not dissimilar to modern concepts of fixed and growth mindsets and seeing these problems as mutable and changeable.[188] Arnett also wrote about Freire's ideas of the dynamic present by stating, "Freire reveals dialogic education as including the importance of *how*, as well

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[184] Paris Django and H. Samy Alim. "What Are We Seeking to Sustain Through Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy? A Loving Critique Forward." *Harvard Educational Review* 84, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 85–100. This model of a co-constructed curriculum is used in some progressive schools today and inspires some project-based learning in those schools.

[185] Freire, 74-86.

[186] This vision of the incomplete in education sounds a little bit like William James's writings on the Will to Believe and *A Pluralistic Universe*, where he discusses the sick soul, and the even this echoes the idea of identity and the dual selves in *Principles of Psychology*.

[187] Freire, 74-86. This echoes William James and *A Pluralistic Universe*. Also, the idea of education being connected with the lived experiences of students could also be linked with *Pragmatism* and the belief that an idea or question or lesson needs to have some "cash-value" in the life of the student.

[188] Carol Dweck. *Mindset; A New Psychology of Success* (Ballantine Books, 2007). This almost sounds like the fixed and growth mindset as well. The idea is that you can see something as fixed and set, i.e. "I am X," or you can use a growth mindset and say "I am X and I plan to work towards Z."

as *what* one learns" because Freire suggests that "the orientation from which we approach a problem affects the very nature of what we see and the solutions discovered."[189] These solutions speak to the dynamic present and revolutionary future.

Freire believed that education should lead to freedom, so "any situation in which some individuals prevent others from engaging in the process of inquiry is one of violence...to alienate human beings from their own decision-making is to change them into objects."[190] Thus, the teacher needs to work with the student to encourage freedom and inquiry.[191] In multicultural education today, the process of decolonizing education and humanizing is deeply inspired by Freire. The aim in critically/culturally responsive teaching is to humanize students and reduce or eliminate alienation that exists (most often with the non-dominant groups— in America this means persons of color, non-cisgender, etc.).[192]

Freire then moves on in his argument to explain the role of the individual and the community. Similar to Dewey, he saw community as fundamental for education but also as fundamental for transformation. He wrote:

> This movement of inquiry must be directed towards humanization-- the people's historical vocation. The pursuit of full humanity, however, cannot be carried out in isolation of individualism, but only in fellowship and solidarity; therefore, it cannot unfold in the antagonistic relations between the oppressors and oppressed. No one can be authentically human while he prevents others from being so…[this individualism leads to]… a form of dehumanization.[193]

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[189] Arnett, "Conversation, Relationships, and Values," 16-17

[190] Freire, 74-86.

[191] Freire next discusses consciousness, building on his previous ideas, and then includes transformation, inquiring/inquiry, and the humanizing process.

[192] This is present in the works of Tara J. Yosso, Geneva Gay.

[193] Freire, 74-86. This passage goes on to discuss power and oppression. "Not that it is fundamental to have [power] in order to be human. Precisely because it is necessary, some men's having must not be allowed to constitute an obstacle to others having, must not consolidate the power of the former to crush the other."

In order to move towards humanization, and to be authentic and not become a "sub-oppressor," it is important that the teacher work with the students to build a "circle of certainty"[194] whereby the students continue to inquire and the teacher continues to reflect on their role in the students' growth. It is clear that with this pedagogy, it would be challenging and require a great deal of training on the teachers' behalf to embody this humanization process. Lisa Delpit, a contemporary critical theorist, writes about listening. She wrote that in order to communicate across differences (such as those between race, class, gender, or in this case oppressed, oppressor, and teacher and student) it

> takes a very special kind of listening, listening that requires not only open eyes and ears, but hearts and minds. We do not really see through our eyes or hear through our ears, but through our beliefs. To put our beliefs on hold is to cease to exist as ourselves for a moment—and that is not easy.[195]

This is not dissimilar to what Freire writes about in *Pedagogy of Hope*. The purpose of work is to consider deeply the practice of hope within education to teach tolerance, along with other aims. He examines the vision and value of hope, but also recognizes that in a world of corruption there is hopelessness as well. "Hope is an ontological need. Hopelessness is but *hope* that has lost its bearing, and become a distortion of that ontological need."[196] When hopelessness wins, people "succumb to fatalism" and it becomes impossible to "re-create the world."[197] He explains that hope alone is not

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[194] Freire, 74-86.
[195] Lisa Delpit. *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom* (New York: New Press, 2006).
[196] Paulo Freire. *Pedagogy of Hope; Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Trans. Robert R. Barr. (Continuum: New York, 1994), 7-8.
[197] Freire, *Pedagogy of Hope; Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 8.

enough, but without it the aims and struggle are "weak and wobbly" [198] Because hope is

based on the "need for truth as an ethical quality of the struggle,"[199] he wrote,

> The essential thing…is: hope, as an ontological need demands an anchoring in practice. As an ontological need, hope needs practice in order to become historical concreteness… without a minimum of hope, we cannot start the struggle…and turn to hopelessness… hence the need for a kind of education in hope. Hope…is so important for our existence, individual and social, that we must take every care not to experience it in a mistaken form, and thereby allow it to slip toward…despair [or inaction]. [200]

Freire connects this concept of hope to the educator, since "one of the tasks of the

progressive educator… is to unveil opportunities for hope, no matter what the obstacles

may be."[201] This again connects back to the concept of the teacher as liberator. He

explains that his book is "is meant as a defense of tolerance—not to be confused with

connivance—and radicalness. It is meant as a criticism of sectarianism. It attempts to

explain and defend progressive postmodernity and it will reject conservative neoliberal

postmodernity." [202]

Conclusion and Shortcomings of Freire

Paulo Freire examined the "banking" problems in education and found potential

solutions in "problem-posing." For Freire, the teacher-student relationship is built on

aims of liberation from an oppressive society, on shared experiences and shared learning

and teaching, and on revealing the reality of societal problems by reaching a critical

consciousness. The teacher is a liberator and the teacher-student dichotomy is reconciled

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[198] Freire, 7-9.
[199] Freire, 7-9.
[200] Freire, 8-9.
[201] Freire, 9.
[202] Freire, 10.

through a joint venture in liberation. The teacher helps facilitate this learning, but ultimately remakes the vision of learning (the class) based on the input and experiences of the students. While Freire's theories are revolutionary within critical pedagogy, a shortcoming is found within the application of the ideals. Freire can be considered too idealistic and hopeful, or too revolutionary without a focus on "hard" skills. He mentioned that a critique people have of his work is that he is not an "educator" because of his "exaggerated 'politicization'" in education. Ironically, he countered that "denying me the status of educator for being 'too political' [is] being political as I."[203]

William James's pluralism provides overlapping support in understanding how teachers can include the lived experiences of their students. James's pragmatism can provide guidance on this future-oriented model that is liberatory, but with a clear outcome and goal, and his theories of habit (balanced with creativity) can help support students in recognizing their authentic incomplete selves (the 'unveiling' teacher aim mentioned by Freire), balanced with the habits that should be used to support one's flexibility in life to become liberated.

Overall, Freire's philosophy of education is liberatory, but he remained humble. Similar to James's pedagogy, Denis Goulet notes that Freire was actually a great educator who had engaging conversations:

> His own educational practice stands as proof that dialogue is possible, that educators can learn together with educatees. […] He is ever prompt to 'decree his own death as an educator' whenever he meets an interlocutor who unmasks some residual naiveté in his own thought. The quality of his human relationships, even with total strangers, is testimony to his theory that all people are important and merit active respect. […] Freire is one of those rare persons whose stature grows

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[203] Freire, 7.

the closer one gets to him. […] To know him is to become convinced that liberating education and authentic communication are indeed possible.[204]

This "active respect" is unique compared to Dewey, Noddings, and James, but it also lends itself well to the idea of a "sympathetic observer," (Dewey) "attentive care," (Noddings) and inclusion in practice in James's pedagogy.

The following section uses the philosophy of Nel Noddings to continue to expand this idea of the teacher-student relationship, building on Dewey and Freire. Noddings' view of the teacher and student is more granular, examining the emotional connection of the teacher and student through the lens of "care" with a feminist perspective.

Part III: Analyzing Teacher-Student Relationships through the Philosophy of Nel Noddings

Nel Noddings on Teacher-Student Relationships

Nel Noddings is a leading scholar in philosophy of education with a focus on relational pedagogy.[205] She applies feminist theory to argue the value in acknowledging and paying attention to care, emotions, and the whole lived experience (parenting, homemaking, relationships) in education.[206] In this section I will analyze Noddings' philosophy of teacher-student relationships in order to understand her unique perspective and to compare it with those of John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and William James. Noddings'

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[204] Denis Goulet, "Introduction" in *Education for Critical Consciousness* Paulo Freire. Trans. and Ed. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: A Continuum Book The Seabury Press, 1973/1969), xiv.
[205] Morwenna Griffiths et al. *Re-Imagining Relationships in Education : Ethics, Politics and Practices*. Journal of Philosophy of Education Book Series (Malden, Massachusetts: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015).
[206] Feminist theory is complex: as Maxine Greene and Morwenna Griffiths note, "there is no one 'feminism'; there are multiple points of view described as 'feminist.' Feminist theories, or clusters of theories, are not united by some overarching principle of 'essence,' still less by any single set of beliefs, but rather by the way they generate or infuse actions in the world" (p. 73). Maxine Greene and Morwenna Griffiths, *Blackwell's Guide to Philosophy of Education*. Blake et al. ed., (Malden, Massachusetts; Wiley-Blackwell, 2002), 73.

aims for education emphasize care, so the respective roles of the teacher and student start

from that foundational place of care. In this section happiness and emotion will also be

woven into the argument in order to understand the complexity of humanizing teacher–

student relationships.

Teacher as Carer: Feminist Perspectives and Moral Theory

In order to understand and analyze teacher-student relationships in Noddings'

philosophy of education, it is first important to understand her moral theories. Her

philosophy is rooted in feminist perspectives and moral theories which lead to an ethic

of care.[207] Giarelli explained that

> the source of ethical caring lies not in a cognitive decision to follow a principled
> obligation, but rather in a memory of caring and being cared for and in a natural
> longing for goodness to preserve and extend the joy experience in such natural
> relationships by meeting the other morally, receiving and responding to the
> other's needs and interests as one's own.[208]

Thus, in asking "why be moral?" when applying "care," the aim is towards a

"premoral good and the source of an ethical ideal."[209] For Noddings, "[t]he first aim

of educating is to preserve and enhance the caring relation."[210] Giarelli noted that the

"ethics of education is derived from an analysis of the ways in which various

educational activities, practices, and institutions bear on the preservation and

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[207] Within discussions of ethics and morality in education, Dewey's vision of ethics is grounded within group "custom" and ethics "with systematic judgments about such conduct." James Giarelli, "Ethics and Morality" in *Philosophy of Education: An Encyclopedia*. Ed. J.J. Chambliss. (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc, 1996/1992), 199. Noddings is mentioned within these conversations as an alternative approach to the normal views within ethics as mentioned earlier.

[208] Giarelli, "Ethics and Morality," 202.

[209] This overlaps with Dewey's telos for caring, turning it into acting for a purpose (of good/good life).

[210] Nel Noddings. *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 172.

72

enhancement of caring as the fundamental point or purpose of the enterprise of educating."[211]

Nel Noddings' philosophy and ethical orientation arises from "female experience[s], such [as] activities in child rearing, nursing, teaching, and homemaking."[212] In her work she draws on other feminist theorists, particularly Carol Gilligan and Sara Ruddick, to highlight the importance of these female experiences in life and in education, and to present her own ethic of care. She wrote:

> Although the moral orientation referred to as 'care and response' seems to be observed more frequently in women than in men (Gilligan, 1982), feminists do not usually claim that caring is an exclusively female ethic. On the contrary, our claim is that, if caring is a desirable moral orientation, both females and males should engage in the sort of work that induces it… work that Sara Ruddick (1980, 1989) calls the 'work of attentive love.'[213]

She then went on to explain her own theory:

> An ethic of care starts with a study of relation. It is fundamentally concerned with how human beings meet and treat one another. It is not unconcerned with individual rights, the common good, or community traditions, but it de-emphasizes these concepts and recasts them in terms of relation.[214]

For Noddings the teacher-student relationship starts with that key word, relation(ship). It does not start from external problems, such as those presented by Freire with problem-posing, or from democratic societal aims, as with Dewey.[215] That is not to say that these

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[211] Giarelli, 203.

[212] Nel Noddings, *Ethics for professionals in education: perspectives for preparation and practice,* ed. Kenneth A. Strike and Lance P. Ternasky (New York: Teachers College Press, 1993), 43-53. Citing Nel Noddings, *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

[213] Noddings. *Ethics for professionals in education: perspectives for preparation and practice,* ed. Kenneth A. Strike and Lance P. Ternasky (New York: Teachers College Press, 1993), 43.

[214] Noddings, "Chapter 3: Caring; A Feminist Perspective," 45.

[215] However, she does spend time on democracy as an inherent good and the arguments for it in education in *Happiness in Education.*

external aims are absent from Noddings' work, but the starting point is with the

relationship itself between the teacher and student or the parent and child (Dewey does

also reference the parent and child when explaining growth and interest in *Democracy*

and Education).

It may seem obvious to philosophers of education or educators that everyone

should care, but Noddings frames this issue within the patriarchal practices and theories

that dominate the discourse. She argues that an ethic of care *is* an alternative connected to

moral development, suggesting how this alternative vision might play out in a

conversation:

> One way to start the conversation on caring is to ask: How might ethics have
> developed if it had arisen from the sort of experience traditionally associated with
> women rather than with men? Suppose, that is, that the people who have been
> responsible for child rearing, homemaking, nursing, and, in general, the
> maintenance of relationships had written about moral life. What sort of moral
> theory might have emerged?[216]

In her later book *Challenge to Care in Schools; An Alternative Approach to*

Education, she explained clearly why her work is relevant in education today and what

the current problems are:

> I argue… against an education system that puts too much emphasis on academic
> achievement defined in terms of test scores and the acquisition of information.
> Today… students spend weeks—even months—preparing for and taking tests.
> [time that could be better spent] exploring new ideas, discovering new interests,
> extending established ones, and expressing thoughts in art, drama, music, and
> writing… students should be given opportunities to learn how to care for
> themselves, for other human beings, for the natural and human-made worlds, and
> for the world of ideas. This learning to care requires significant knowledge; it
> defines genuine education.[217]

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[216] Noddings. 45.
[217] Nel Noddings, *The Challenge to Care; An Alternative Approach to Education*. Second Edition. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2005), xiii.

Noddings' philosophy values experience, reflection, and the moral orientation between the teacher and student. "It is not farfetched, then, to suppose that experience requiring close connection to, and intimate responsibility for the physical and emotional well-being of, particular others induces a distinctive moral orientation."[218]

Noddings notes that relationship ethics is also found outside of feminist scholarship, such as in Martin Buber's writings about the "principle of relatedness," but ultimately her theories of teacher–student relationships begin from a place of moral relations and ethics, a feminist perspective, and experience. [219]

Teacher as "Carer": Criteria and Reciprocal Relationship

Noddings describes in six points what "care" entails, using her own words and those of previous scholars. I include these verbatim, as they make up the whole of how an ethic of care and teacher-student relationship works.

> 1. Caring is used to describe both a relation that has certain characteristics, and the behavior, thinking, and attitude of the carer in the relation. In the former use, it is necessary to discuss the contribution of the recipient of care (or cared-for) and the conditions in which the relation is embedded.
> 2. A carer attends to the cared-for in a special act of receptivity (nonselective attention or engrossment). In this act, a carer hears, sees, and feels what is there in the other.
> 3. A carer is disposed to help- often with direct involvement in the other's project, but sometimes with advice or even admonition. The carer's thinking and action are often guided by interests in the preservation, growth, and acceptability of those cared for (Mayeroff, 1971; Ruddick, 1980). Carers want to preserve the lives and well-being of cared-fors; promote their growth; and support them in

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[218] Nel Noddings, *Ethics for professionals in education: perspectives for preparation and practice,* ed. Kenneth A. Strike and Lance P. Ternasky (New York: Teachers College Press, 1993), 46.

[219] Noddings' philosophy of education related to teacher-student relationships is inspired by the feminist theories that came before her. She describes Sara Ruddick's "maternal thinking" and "attentive love" in order to lay out how important it is to be intentional with regards to education and building relationships with students.

75

acceptable behavior. (All of these concepts require separate analyses, for which see Mayeroff, 1971; Ruddick, 1980, 1989; and Noddings, 1992.)

4. Carers are guided by a thoroughgoing consideration of care; that is, attention and the desire to help are directed not only at the particular cared-for but also outward across the entire web of relations. This is necessary because the well-being of both carers and cared-fors depends on the health of their relationships.

5. The contribution of the cared-for is vital to the relation; not only does the response of the cared-for sustain carers in their efforts but it is the essential material by which carers monitor the quality and effects of their caring, in continuous cycles of attention and response.

6. Carers, because they care, strive for competence in whatever reactions or arenas their efforts are applied.[220]

Noddings' ethic of care is similar to Freire's re-conceptualizing the teacher and student as divided and renaming them as teacher-student and students-teachers, but instead Noddings employs a reciprocal model where "care" is shared, not just knowledge or problem-posing. For Noddings, the teacher *and* student can be care-givers and receivers. Also mentioned above is the concept of growth. Similar to Dewey, Noddings recognizes the good in having educational aims focused on growth, but she connects this with the concept of care.

She also mentioned the idea of "quality of effects" in relation to caring. This is unique because she understands that simply caring as a quantity or a feature is not enough. Caring is not easy, so it is important to reflect on the *quality* of care that is provided through "cycles of attention and response" and "competency." Care thus becomes a skill, not simply an emotion. This is documented by other scholars considering

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[220] Nel Noddings, *Ethics for professionals in education: perspectives for preparation and practice,* ed. Kenneth A. Strike and Lance P. Ternasky (New York: Teachers College Press, 1993), 48.

socio-emotional learning, kindness in the classroom, and the academic outcomes that result from attention to care as a skill in education.[221]

Noddings goes on to explain how we know that care has been achieved or completed.

> In teaching, too, cared-fors [students] contribute to the relation by responding to their teachers. The response need not be one of spoken gratitude. If students show growth as an obvious result of their teacher's efforts, the teacher's caring is completed. Hands raised, eyes alight with curiosity, honest questions, and passionate debates are all teacher-sustaining responses. Teachers who are deprived of these responses are in danger of burnout.[222]

Teaching is a helping profession and as such the reward is knowing that what you do every day makes some positive impact or difference. Nicholas Burbules raises similar issues in "The Tragic Sense of Education" about how sometimes as teachers we do not really know our impact. He wrote:

> As educators, our activities require us to hope for the best that may be possible: the development of an individual person or group of people; the betterment of a society. Yet the further the process of education proceeds, the more away we become of the ambivalent character of our successes and failures, the difficulty of attaining significant or lasting change, and the kinship of hope and disappointment.[223]

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[221] "Kindness in the Classroom." Random Acts of Kindness in the Class Lecture Series Introduction. Accessed July 30, 2018. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7rVDDot3W7k.

[222] Nel Noddings, *Ethics for professionals in education: perspectives for preparation and practice,* ed. Kenneth A. Strike and Lance P. Ternasky (New York: Teachers College Press, 1993), 48. More recently, Chris Higgins has written about "burn out" and "burn in" within teacher education in his book *The Good Life of Teaching*. This echoes some of Noddings ideas. See Chris Higgins, *The Good Life of Teaching, An Ethics of Professional Practice* (Massachusetts, Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).

[223] Nicholas C. Burbules, "The Tragic Sense of Education," *Teachers College Record*. 91, no. 4 (Summer 1990), 469. As an educator of ten years, I am well aware of the absence and void that comes with teaching, but ultimately there is a connection or relationship that comes with teaching as well. I cannot teach without students. We rely on one another, locked in a mutualistic relationship where each identity cannot stand alone.

Burbules concludes with thoughts on the aims of education tied to emotion and care, complementing Noddings' ideas:

> Education stands alone as its own raison d'etre, as its own justification— imperfect, incomplete, and inadequate as it is. What shortcomings it has can only be addressed by more of the same: more dialogue, more caring, more effort at mutual understanding. We adopt these methods not because they are sure to succeed, but because they are the only decent methods available to us. To adopt them…is to admit their imperfection…in transforming the larger moral order.[224]

This passage supports the idea that care and dialogue are the best ways to connect with students, but they are neither simple nor a guarantee: similar to what Freire said earlier, education is a humanizing but an incomplete and imperfect process.

Noddings also explains the role of the student in the reciprocal relationship. She noted that "many students have never learned how to be cared for, and they need to learn how to distinguish genuine caring from cruelty or neglect and how to respond to it."[225] She points out how care connects to each human; since it is not a tool used as "some impartial standard of fairness," care looks different for everyone. She explains, "some students need much more attention than others, and some will respond to one teacher's attention whereas others may need a different teacher's care."[226] Care is not "inherently soft or sweet…caring requires heightened moral sensitivity."[227] It also requires heightened observation, listening skills, and flexibility. Being caring takes practice, persistence, patience, and clear focus and intentionality.

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[224] Burbules, 477.
[225] Noddings, 48
[226] Noddings, 48
[227] Noddings, 48.

These complex skills and practices help teachers learn how best to meet their students' needs: "[c]arers do not seek growth only in the *attitude* of care. They strive to become competent in the…work." Likewise, having *sympathy* is not enough:

> Parents who feed their hungry children junk food, respond tenderly to illness but fail to have their children immunized, or play roughhouse but never read to their children are not adequate as carers. […] Similarly, caring teachers have an obligation to become competent at whatever they teach and to reflect on their own competence with an eye toward continuous improvement.[228]

In this regard, Noddings' goal of "continuous improvement" resembles' Dewey's focus on growth.

Noddings also discusses care and emotion in education, regarding death as part of life, and how moral education should not be neglected. She critiques contemporary education as focusing too much on academic and economic success without engaging students' interests or important questions about death, mortality, and morality:

> We underestimate teenagers when we suppose that is all that matters to them. They are in fact intensely interested in the questions we have been considering, especially those concerning life and death: Does life have any meaning? Is life worth living? Is there life after death? What does the fact of death mean for life? […] Students should have opportunities to discuss death and its connection to the meaning of life. [229]

Here Noddings responds to John Silber (1989), who recommended that children be exposed "to what is true, to a confrontation with what is real." He believes that a recognition of death's reality will encourage students to work harder and to live more morally.[230] In opposition to Silber, Noddings argued that "[s]tudents must be helped to

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[228] Noddings, 50.
[229] Nel Noddings, *Educating for Intelligent Belief or Unbelief.* Teachers College Press. (Teachers College, Columbia University New York and London. 1993), 78.
[230] Noddings, 78.

find meaning and joy in life— that many definitions of success should be available to them. […] I believe that love and care play a greater role than fear in developing moral attitudes and behaviors. Death should indeed be discussed but in connection with life and its meaning."[231] This type of thinking mirrors James's pluralism and moral philosophy.

For Noddings, it is important to model good moral ethics to build positive teacher–student relationships: "When we adopt caring as a moral orientation, we are also led to examine our own practices as teachers."[232] Instead of consequentialism, utilitarianism, or deontology, Noddings uses different questions to consider how to address an ethical situation. She wrote,

> from the perspective of care, we ask: What is best for this student? Will doing what is best for her or him hurt other students? What effect will my decision have on the network of relations on which we all depend? Asking such questions, we are led sometimes to follow the given rule, and sometimes to fight it publicly, even at the risk of considerable personal sacrifice. [233]

These questions become tools for teachers in considering the application of care in the classroom. This pragmatic model also demonstrates Noddings' value apart from Dewey (whose ideas are sometimes unclear in practice) and Freire's (whose ideas might only exist when school is completely transformed but have no home in traditional schooling).

Unique to Noddings' vision of care and education is intentionality, built not simply on "student interest" or "habit" but on truly knowing the child. She wrote, "To shape such persons [who care about trust and respect], teachers need not only intellectual capabilities but also a fund of knowledge about the particular persons with

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[231] Noddings, 78.
[232] Nel Noddings, *Ethics for professionals in education: perspectives for preparation and practice,* 52.
[233] Noddings, 52.

whom they are working."[234] Recognizing the challenges to "care" regarding the

application and practice from critiques, she also suggested solutions, notably "[s]maller

classes, extended contact, and more numerous opportunities for dialogue."[235] All these

solutions, she pointed out, would need to have "mutual consent" from the student.

<u>Deconstructing the Reciprocal Relationship; Asymmetry and Responsiveness</u>

In the work of Nel Noddings, she argues that schools should be responsive to the

needs of students (and parents).[236] And that teachers and students should work in relation

towards an ethic of care. This concept speaks to the teacher and student within a

reciprocal relationship, however this relationship is more nuanced and is not symmetrical.

She argues that an ethic of care "embodies a relational view of caring" emphasizing the

carer and cared-for and "caring as a virtue belonging to the carers." [237]

She continues that "Mature relationships are characterized by mutuality. They are

made up of strings of encounters in which the parties exchange places; both members are

carers and cared-fors as opportunities arise."[238] While she argues that both teachers and

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[234] Noddings, 50. Citing (Noddings, 1988, 221). This idea also relates to James's views of understanding students interests (along with Dewey) to help support the student's learning.

[235] Noddings, 53. She also discusses other options in detail, using Ted Sizer's work. A teacher might stay with the same group of students for three or more years (with mutual consent, of course), one teacher might teach two or more subjects to 30 students instead of one subject to 60 students (Sizer, 1984), or a team of teachers might work together with a group of students for several years. Any of these arrangements would increase opportunities for teachers to develop the relations of trust and care required for fully competent teaching. This is just one example of how an ethic care can function as a critical moral theory. She explains that extended contact means having either groupings of students together that follow teachers, or teachers that teach more than one subject.

[236] Nel Noddings, *The Challenge to Care; An Alternative Approach to Education*. Second Edition. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2005), xiv.

[237] Nel Noddings, *The Challenge to Care; An Alternative Approach to Education*. Second Edition. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2005), xv. Thus in arguing that the virtue belongs to the carer, the asymmetry presents itself.

[238] Nel Noddings, *The Challenge to Care; An Alternative Approach to Education*. Second Edition. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2005), 17.

students can be carers and cared-for, she goes deeper to explain the qualities that must be present to begin the caring process and presents evidence that the teacher or parent is better positioned to begin this reciprocal relationship. In *Caring* she describes the "state of consciousness of the carer or one-caring as characterized by engrossment and motivational displacement. By engrossment [she] mean[s] an open, nonselective receptivity to the cared-for."[239]

She continues to explain motivational displacement, emptying, and engrossment with cared-ones (usually the teacher). She begins, "…when I care, I realize that there is invariably this displacement of interest from my own reality to the reality of the other."[240] This means that the teacher takes on the life, interests, and problems of the cared-for in an authentic way, through dialogue and practice, while recognizing that one can never truly understand another's life, but can all the same take in the facts and help care for the student. This caring process then leads to action. She explains that once she feels and attempts to understand another's reality "I must make a commitment to act. The commitment to act on behalf of the cared-for, a continued interest in his reality throughout the appropriate time span, and the continual renewal of commitment over this time span are the essential elements of caring for the inner view."[241] Therefore the reciprocity between the teacher and student circulates care, but also circulates commitment, reflection, action, and responsiveness. Again, this is asymmetric as the

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[239] Nel Noddings. *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 16. Or as other authors use the word "attention"
[240] Nel Noddings. *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 13.
[241] Nel Noddings. *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 14.

teacher takes on the majority of the responsibility of this act, in interpolation with the student demonstrating care and being cared-for in order to present evidence of the quality of the relationship.

In discussing care as skill, she discusses not just the relationship between the teacher and student, but the requirements and emotional needs of the teacher and inner self. She documents "the inner dynamics of caring: on the constitutive engrossment and receptivity, on the consequent displacement of motivational energy, on the circles and chains that reflect and sustain the caring, and on the conflicts of caring."[242] She also examines what it means to "care genuinely about self and how caring for the ethical self sustains us through periods of lapsed caring, and …the role caring plays in ethical behavior. But caring is a relationship that contains another, the cared-for, and we have already suggested that the one-caring and the cared-for are reciprocally dependent."[243]

While they are "reciprocally dependent" Noddings clarifies that the student is at a disadvantage. She asks: "What part does the cared-for play in caring?" She answers,

> Clearly, in equal meetings, there may be mutual caring and when this happens we need not in a practical sense try to distinguish the roles of the one-caring and the cared-for. But we are interested in the logic of caring; further, in parent-child and teacher-student relations the meetings are often not equal. This child/(student) may like, even love, the parent or teacher, but he is incapable of the motivational displacement of caring and, usually, incapable of perceiving or understating what the parent or teacher wants for herself. Now obviously this inequity is neither permanent nor invariant. Even a small child may have occasional equal meetings with an adult. But by and large it is the parent or teacher who is capable of inclusion, it is she who sees the two pairs of eyes.[244]

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[242] Nel Noddings. *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 55-56.
[243] Nel Noddings. *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 55-56.
[244] Nel Noddings. *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 69.

Noddings is explaining the asymmetry in care, where the teacher or parent has more experience and practice in being "inclusive" and of "motivational displacement" in contrast to the child or student. Thus the teacher-student relationship is predicated on mutual respect and support of one another, but with the teacher initiating that relationship most times through a selfless (but not burdensome or draining) genuine interest and connection with the student or child without a motivation towards "fixing" or "problem-solving," but by being responsive and listening to the needs of the child. She writes "The one caring is first and foremost committed to receiving."[245] This speaks to the responsiveness of the carer.

She continues to analyze the child in this asymmetric relationship. "…the student may then to his ultimate disadvantage make what seems to be an effort at inclusion, the inclusion is necessarily incomplete, however because it is induced by the student's needs and not by engrossment in the teacher-as-subject."[246] Meaning that the student is not ineffectual, simply inexperienced in the process.

Continuing to analyze responsiveness she contends, "I have claimed that the recognition of caring by the care-for is necessary to the caring relation. It is clear however that the cared-for need not be the one-caring in order to constitute the relation… Yet he must respond… somehow."[247] This means that there needs to be a recognition of care from both parties for there to be an "actualization" of care through dialogue,

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[245] Nel Noddings. *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 121.
[246] Noddings, 69.
[247] Noddings, 69.

encounter, and practice. While Noddings notes the asymmetry and the reciprocity, she also complicates the concept more by arguing the fluidity of the roles. "The motivational displacement of caring occurs naturally, supported by the buoyant responsiveness of the care-for. The one caring for a fully participating cared-for is sustained and invigorated, and her caring is unlikely to deteriorate to 'cares and burdens.'"[248] I translate this buoyancy into fluidity and responsiveness on the part of the teacher in connection to the student.

While Dewey argues for educational aims focused on democratic engagement, Freire on the role of the teacher to help liberate the student by showing them experiences to build agency in the student to liberate themselves, Noddings is arguing that teaching care and an ethic of care is a *skill* to be examined and shared/taught with/to teachers (and parents). "A caring relation requires the engrossment and motivational displacement of the one-caring, and it requires the recognition and spontaneous response of the cared-for. When caring is not felt in the cared-for, but its absence is felt, the cared-for may still, by an act of ethical heroism, respond and thus contribute to the caring relation. This possibility… gives weight to our hope that one can learn to care and learn to be cared for."[249] In *Caring*, Noddings examines the teacher, the student, and the inner motivations of the teacher in relation to the work of care.

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[248] Nel Noddings. *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 72.
[249] Noddings, 76-77.

Happiness in Education and Democracy

In *Happiness and Education*, Noddings carries through her ethic of care to engage the larger question of the aims of education, especially as they relate to human flourishing and happiness. She explicitly describes the roles of the teacher and student and how emotions and happiness should be deeply considered within education. Noddings starts her analysis with a quotation on the meaning of life from William James's *Varieties of Religious Experiences*. He explains that one potential answer to the meaning of life is "happiness."[250] She then continues to discuss how other scholars have conceived of happiness, examining Aristotle's view of human flourishing (eudemonia) as well as the "intellectualist" view of happiness, which she considers potentially problematic.[251] She then presents Dewey's critique of Aristotle's views: "John Dewey pointed out again and again the pernicious effects that this Aristotelian doctrine has had on education; it created a sharp separation of theory and practice, and it artificially branded some subjects matters as superior to others."[252] She explains that Dewey argued for a balance and that we need a balance between theory and practice when it comes to education.[253] This connects to teacher-student relationships because in order to build positive relationships, teachers should consider the emotions and happiness of the student in addition to reflecting on educational aims and their impacts on the students.

Noddings discusses James yet again in her first chapter. There, to argue for a serious consideration of happiness in education, she acknowledges previous work on the

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[250] Nel Noddings, *Happiness and Education*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 9.
[251] Noddings, 10.
[252] Noddings, 10.
[253] Noddings, 10.

topic: "psychologists have not always neglected religious experience. William James frankly studied and reported on the rapturous experiences associated with religious life. For…they have been pursuing happiness…they are 'seeking the good.'"[254] She even points out that James explains the ideas of depression and melancholy and awareness of suffering. This provides an entry point for introducing James into a discussion on how teacher-student relationships connect to emotion and happiness. Likewise, she claimed that "[o]ur basic orientation to moral education, then, should be a commitment to building a world in which it is both possible and desirable for children to be good-- a world in which children are happy."[255] However, the teacher should not define this concept of "happiness" because it is not monolithic; it is about understanding the "possibilities" within multiple definitions of happiness.[256] This connects to James's concept of pluralism.

Whereas Dewey and Freire provide limited guidance on classroom models, Noddings spends a great deal of time discussing the classroom environment: "one feature of [a] happy classroom," she notes, "is a continually negotiated balance between expressed and inferred needs. Students will do things for teachers whose care is regularly demonstrated, and caring involves responding to the expressed needs of the cared for."[257] This echoes Dewey's ideas of growth and reflection, as well as

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[254] Noddings, 15.
[255] Noddings, 2.
[256] Noddings, 3.
[257] Noddings, 242.

representing the power of co-constructing knowledge together through experiential education. [258]

Noddings defends an orientation towards democratic life in education, but also recognizes its limitations.[259] She wrote, "many people today believe that democratic forms of social life are best…but it is not clear how it contributes to happiness."[260] On the topic of democracy, Noddings suggested where curriculum should move forward:

> I would go beyond Dewey in recommending revisions of the school curriculum. Whereas Dewey suggested new rationales for teaching the traditional subjects and new ways to teach them, I would question the whole organization of curriculum and teaching. Where do we address the great existential questions how should I live? Is there meaning in life? What does it mean to be good? To be happy? Where do we address the issues traditionally associated with women,…home…what constitutes good parenting…what do we owe elderly parents…to other people's children…how can we achieve and maintain peace?[261]

These questions show the extent to which Noddings' theories are grounded in moral ethics and relationships. They also address the questions that educators should be considering within educational aims.

With the increase in testing, Noddings argued that we need to reevaluate what the actual aims of education are. She wrote, "when John Dewey discussed aims in education, he said that his account of education 'assumed that the aim of education is to enable individuals to continue their education—or that the object and reward of learning

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[258] Donaldson, and Vinson, 6-8. In literature on experiential and outdoor education, there are scholars who credit William James with the movement of experiential and outdoor education (even more so than John Dewey).
[259] Noddings, 230.
[260] Noddings, 230.
[261] Noddings, 235-236.

is continued capacity for growth.'… but then he discusses a multiplicity of aims."[262] But

she also argued that we need to continue to discuss aims in education in order to

radically change education, to consider happiness within the curriculum and school.[263]

Conclusion and Shortcomings of Noddings

For Nel Noddings, the teacher-student relationship is built on an ethic of care

that reimagines the teacher and student as both care-givers and receivers. According to

Noddings, one of the problems with "care" is that it is interpreted as an "add-on" or as

"soft," when instead it is paramount and foundational.[264] Noddings also does more to

highlight the student as independent from the teacher, which is slightly different than

the other scholars.

Overall, each of these thinkers attends to different questions. Noddings asks

"what is best for the student?"[265] Dewey might ask "what is best for democracy?" and

"how can the teacher be a sympathetic observer?" Freire might ask "what is best for

freedom from oppression?" and "how can the teacher be a liberator" So where does

William James fit in? He might ask "how we can build an inclusive classroom centered

on pluralism, how we can create meaningful educational experiences that are pragmatic

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[262] Noddings, 83.

[263] Something unique about Noddings is how much she emphasizes the importance of homemaking and the relationships formed in and around the home. She sees the home as the root of educational/societal goods and evils that emerge. This means that if we care about good education and happiness in life, then we cannot neglect the value that the home plays in developing this idealized society. This includes considering home-life within school life and continued conversation on educational aims (instead of assuming those aims).

[264] It takes work for teachers to know their students, and it takes a great amount of time, observation, communication, and flexibility. "Kindness in the Classroom." Random Acts of Kindness in the Class Lecture Series Introduction. Accessed July 30, 2018. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7rVDDot3W7k.

[265] Asking what is best for the student is not far removed from pragmatism (Jamesian) and the idea that an idea is right if it serves some discernible difference and good towards that end.

and connect to students' lived experiences, and what role does habit plays in education when balanced with creativity and spontaneity?"[266] and "How can the teacher invite a plurality of thought that encourages creativity?" In the following chapters I will extend these questions and consider where James could fit in to discussions of teacher-student relationships, recognizing where the philosophies discussed here overlap, diverge, and how James could contribute.

Conclusion

In this chapter, teacher-student relationships in philosophy of education were examined based on the philosophies of John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Nel Noddings. From this conversation it is clear that first, it is a meaningful topic worthy of continued analysis, and second that within this ongoing conversation, William James's ideas overlap and can find a foothold with new ideas. James's life and thought are valuable and applicable in teacher-student relationships today with a focus on pluralism, pragmatism, and habit balanced with creativity. In order to understand these unique features as they emerge in his philosophy, it is first important to recognize how his educational history and pedagogy speak to the values of inclusion, open-mindedness, and flexibility in practice (his pedagogy). In the following chapter, the life of James will provide evidence of his unique educational upbringing and unique teaching persona that demonstrates pedagogical implications to consider today.

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[266] Additional questions include, "how can we balance demands of life emotionally for students, co-construct knowledge with them, and also present our authentic (quirky) selves?" When asking what content we should teach a student A or B, the pragmatist then asks, what difference will it make if there is A or B? If there is no difference, then we need to rethink the question.

Chapter 3: Analyzing Teacher-Student Relationships in the Life of William James

Introduction:

I desire my child to become an upright man, in whom goodness shall be induced not by mercenary motives as brute goodness is induced, but by love for it or a sympathetic delight in it. And inasmuch as I know that this character or disposition cannot be forcibly improved upon him, but must be freely assumed, I surround him as far as possible with an atmosphere of freedom.[267] *-Henry James Sr.*

As evidenced in the above quotation, Henry James Sr. cared deeply about the education of his children, including that of his first born; William James. As such, the James family traversed Europe and America, sharing varied educational experiences along the way. Within these varied experiences, the seeds of William's future philosophy of life and education were sown. Indeed, by the time of his death in 1910, William James had already become cemented in Progressive history as an influential public intellectual and great educator.

When William James taught his last class at Harvard on January 22, 1907, the classroom overflowed with current and former students, colleagues, and Harvard administrators. His wife Alice even snuck in to view the proceedings. A committee of his graduate students and teaching assistants presented him with a silver-mounted inkwell. His undergraduates gave him a loving cup. Together, his students' gifts represented an acknowledgement of the quality of their professor's work and the appreciation for his love and teaching. James was genuinely touched and surprised,

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[267] Henry James Sr., *The Nature of Evil*, cited in Gay Wilson Allen, *William James: Pamphlets on American Writers* (University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, 1970), 88. The author continues, however, that "James's education was not as free and spontaneous as that of Rousseau's Emile," 88-89.

and he remarked on "how warm-hearted the world around one is."[268] Ironically, James's autopsy report reflected that the kind, empathetic, and open-minded educator actually "died of an enlarged heart."[269] Figuratively, of course, James's big heart is of significance in relation to his pedagogy. The question is, how did James come to have such a big heart? In other words, how did he teach in an inclusive and caring manner, and in what ways did he demonstrate the characteristics of a "great" teacher?

In the previous chapter I examined the scholarship on teacher-student relationships in philosophy of education, focusing on John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Nel Noddings. I argued that William James could contribute to the discussion of teacher-student relationships. In this chapter, I will show that James's pedagogy revealed an emphasis on educational relationships. This is particularly evident in how James created a classroom that was inclusive, valued pluralism, encouraged pragmatic thought, and balanced habit with creativity. These ideas find some areas of overlap with: Dewey (pluralism and pragmatism); Freire (critical consciousness and meliorism/social justice); and Noddings (care and inclusion within the classroom).

In this chapter, I contend that James's unique educational upbringing and his distinctive teaching persona demonstrate certain pedagogical implications that should be taken into consideration when analyzing teacher-student relationships today. From this evidence I argue that, because of his upbringing and through his teaching, his pedagogy embodies a model teacher-learner who is authentic, quirky, and spontaneous and that he

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[268] Frank Pajares, "Our Father who Begat Us," in *Educational Psychology : A Century of Contributions*, ed. Barry J. Zimmerman and Dale H. Schunk (Mahwah, N.J.: L. Erlbaum Associates, 2003), 46.
[269] Pajares, 46.

achieved success in teaching by building positive close familial relationships with his students. His pedagogy reflects his philosophies of both pluralism and pragmatism, which lead to an inclusive vision of the classroom and aims towards a utility in education, respectively. I argue that his upbringing influenced his understandings of educational relationships, and these informed how he chose to teach. Additionally, his philosophy, which emerged out of his freedom in childhood, informed his philosophy, which in turn informed how he thought and his educational relationships.

This chapter is a historical analysis of James's life that uses the framework of teacher-student relationships. The exercise I embark upon mirrors the work of Paul Jerome Croce, whose research analyzed the influence of science and religion on the life of William James.[270] Instead, I focus on the influence and impact of teacher-student relationships on (and by) James. His pedagogy manifests as an educator who attends to the interests of the students and teaches the value of building habits that are balanced with creativity/spontaneity. In the fifth chapter, I will explain how James's philosophy can inform current educators who are analyzing teacher-student relationships.

Part I: Educating William James: The Childhood and Development of James's Education with a Focus on Teacher-Student Relationships.

Introduction

William James was born in New York City in 1842. His father, Henry James Sr., was constantly in search of the self and thus moved the James family from country to

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[270] Paul Jerome Croce, "The Education of William James: Religion, Science, and the Possibilities for Belief without Certainty in the Early Intellectual Development of William James" (dissertation, Brown University, 1987), 98-112.

country throughout Willy's early childhood.[271] His mother, Mary Robertson Walsh, was a good listener and a caring, calm person who represented a good balance to her husband. William James was the oldest of five children and received an education in France, Germany, and the United States from schools and tutors as well as from Henry James Sr. himself. William's education was thus quite varied: "Between the ages of ten and sixteen, William attended at least nine different schools, with various interludes of schooling at home."[272] As biographer Robert Richardson aptly describes it, this "zig-zag" childhood primed William James to be open-minded, international, cosmopolitan, and eventually enter the world of academia.[273] Gay Wilson Allen has described James's youth as a "transatlantic infancy" because the James family departed for Europe three times before William James was twenty-one and they settled there for a least a year each time.[274]

The cosmopolitan life was important for the James family because it bred pluralistic opportunities that did not preclude freedom. Foreign language and culture were important to the education of all the James children.[275] By the time William entered Harvard, he was fluent in German and French and had studied in Paris, Boulogne, Geneva, and America.[276] He was able to read in German both Hegel, and William Wundt, as the field of psychology was starting to emerge in Germany. Croce writes:

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[271] "In search of self" refers to how Henry James Sr. was searching for the meaning of life, death, and religion throughout his life.

[272] Robert Richardson, *William James, in the Maelstrom of Modernism* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2007), 19.

[273] Richardson, 19.

[274] These dates include: 1843-1845, 1855-1858, 1859-1860. See Croce, "The Education of William James," 110. Croce cites Gay Wilson Allen, *William James: A Biography* (New York: Viking Press, 1967), 13.

[275] Croce, "The Education of William James," 111.

[276] Croce, 110. Croce cites Allen, 13-15.

By the time James was 18, he knew some Latin, a good knowledge of German, and excellent speaking and writing fluency in French. In a sense, language learning was the ideal education to suit the elder James's philosophy of freedom. To learn a language was not to enforce particular points of view, but to gain access to another realm of culture and thought. Languages have traditionally been the basis of the liberal education, and to the elder Henry James they had the added appeal of allowing the freedom he insisted on.[277]

Croce also describes James's desire and aptitude to learn multiple languages (formally and informally) including a little Greek and a reading knowledge of Italian.[278] James's interest in learning languages suggests a certain openness about his personality. This could certainly have had an effect on the creation of a philosophy that was built upon pluralism, open-mindedness, and experiential learning. When learning another language, an individual is also learning how other cultures think and conceive of the world. Later, James taught this pluralism, openness, and experiential learning to his students.[279]

The Education of William James

Croce writes, "For the first decade of his life, William James rarely attended school or even studied with tutors. His education was exclusively from the home and based on his father's intense interest." [280] Biographer Ralph Barton Perry further explains, "The father would propound some provocative idea, and throw it in to the midst of his brood in order that they might sharpen their teeth on it and, in their eagerness to

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[277] Croce, 111.

[278] Croce, 112. Most biographers simply list the languages that he knew by 18, but Croce also describes his growth by mentioning Greek and Italian which was not mentioned in Richardson's biography.

[279] While this idea may be a jump from language to open-mindedness to teaching, I think it is worth noting because this openness to learning languages that were not necessary to his success in his school demonstrates a "natural interest" that his father taught him to foster.

[280] Croce, "The Education of William James," 112. This is cited from Perry, I; 172. Grattan, Richardson, Perry, Gay, and Barzun also discuss the unique childhood of James. Ralph Barton Perry. *The Thought and Character of William James*. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1935).

refute him or one another, exercise themselves in the art of combative thinking."[281]

James's education was based on a philosophy of education with aims towards "freedom," "spontaneity," and "ignorance/purity," all of which were "interest and inquiry driven."[282] Ultimately, an analysis of teacher-student relationships in the early education of William James is actually an examination of both the father-son relationship and the "experience-as-teacher" relationship. James was educated by his father whose philosophy of education was based upon the ideas of: freedom, spontaneity, innocence, and natural interest.[283]

This *spontaneity* is part of how James taught and learned. It allowed for him to learn languages, science, philosophy, and art. It also provided him with the ability to pivot towards his interests in metaphysics and to develop a theory and value of pluralism. I use this word intentionally because James referred to *spontaneity* within his own writings and his biographers include it within their portraits of James. I also focus on spontaneity because it is a concept that is rarely discussed in educational scholarship.[284] As an educator, James shows part of this spontaneity in representing his teaching as his "authentic-self." Authenticity is connected to the idea of "ardent sincerity" and the exposed, vulnerable self. It is the attempt to break down the walls of niceties and decorum in order to show a truer self, a concept that I will further discuss in the following

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[281] Croce, 112.

[282] Croce, 102.

[283] In my use of the word *freedom*, I am referring to a lack of forced direction and rules that limit one's ability to pursue one's natural interests. *Interest* implies one's desires to grow and learn. There is a natural instinct towards one's interests. Finally, I define *spontaneity* as "*freedom* having fun." In other words, it is the mixture of one's ability to be flexible, free, and driven by interest and inquiry. It can also be understood as "flexibility with joy" or "flexible creativity".

[284] In educational psychology scholars discuss the construct of creativity, but spontaneity is unique and presents a different conversation.

section. In short, authenticity is the idea of removing the invisible layers that prevent connection.[285]

In order to analyze the impact of the father-son relationship on the life and thought of William James, I will first explain the unique character of Henry James Sr. He was an eccentric thinker in search of self, religion, and connection to a higher purpose. As Henry James Sr. lay dying on December 18, 1882, his daughter Alice asked him how he would like to be remembered during his funeral. He reflected on the question and told her to tell William: "Here lies a man, who has thought all his life that the ceremonies attending birth, marriage and death were all damned non-sense!"[286] Henry James Sr. was born into the wealth accumulated from the business acumen of his father, William James Sr. (of Albany). Because of this financial success, "future generations had the leisure necessary for intellectual pursuits."[287] Henry James Sr. was raised in a dogmatic and austere religious home. He disagreed with his father on religious matters and later rebelled. As biographer C. Hartley Grattan explains, "He was born to ease and affluence and throwing over entirely any concern for the business life which had so thoroughly engrossed his father, he spent his days and nights in trying to make an illumination that would in truth dissipate the great darkness in which all mankind was wandering."[288]

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[285] An additional concept that I considered analyzing is that of James as a "quirky" teacher. However, this concept is challenging to define, and ultimately leads to the idea that being "quirky" really means attending to the interests of the students while balancing one's own personality. It is a not a skill or concept that is easy to replicate (nor should it necessarily be taught as a necessity of teacher education).

[286] C. Hartley Grattan, *The Three Jameses, A Family of Minds, Henry James Sr., William James, Henry James* (New York: New York University Press, 1962), 107. This quotation is also printed in *The Letters of William James*. James, Henry, ed. *The Letters of William James*. Vol. 1. (Boston: The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1920), 218-220.

[287] Grattan, 18.

[288] Grattan, 22.

Over the course of his life, Henry attempted to make sense of science, naturalism, and religion. In his quest, he discovered the thinker Swedenborg and dedicated much of his writings and thought to a vision of religion that countered the dogmatism of his church upbringing: "Henry James, when he got a perspective on it, regarded his childhood religion as little better than Deism, for it too was impregnated with the naturalistic bias and led logically to atheism."[289] Over the course of his life, he published works and gave lectures on his unique views of religion, life, and freedom. According to Grattan, "His ideas, like those of Emerson, were non-scientific without being especially anti-scientific. His problem was to define the place of science in his intellectual scheme and to appropriate all that was of utility in it without giving an inch in his maintenance of his own position."[290] This flexible outlook sounds similar to his son William James's views of pluralism and pragmatism. While William James's ideas are unique, it is likely that his father's (almost selfish) pursuit of truth influenced William's pluralistic thinking and his own search for multiple truths.

Freedom

William James's philosophy reflects his open-mindedness, emphasis on pluralism, and belief in being *free* in thought, untrammeled by the structures of traditional education. As I will demonstrate through an analysis of the voices of his students, James taught with a discussion-centered model and elicited feedback from his students in order to improve as an educator. Both of these methods were quite uncommon within higher

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[289] Grattan, 97.
[290] Grattan, 93.

education during the Progressive era. As the teacher throughout William James's

childhood, Henry James Sr. promoted the concepts of freedom, education, and

childrearing that later informed William James's pedagogy. Croce writes:

> Henry James [Sr] based his own philosophy of education and childrearing on freedom and the unrestrained development of natural impulses, the lack of which burned in the memory of his childhood. His spiritual philosophy of natural divinity within humanity merged with the romantic view of childhood goodness that was popular in the early nineteenth century America… James hoped to maintain his children's natural innocence for as long as possible [291]

Croce goes on to cite Henry James Sr.:

> …The great worth of one's childhood to his future manhood consists in its being a storehouse of innocent natural emotions and affections, based upon ignorance, which offer themselves as an admiral Divine mould or anchorage to the subsequent development of his spiritual life or freedom. Accordingly in so far as you inconsiderately shorten this period of infantile innocence and ignorance in the child, you weaken his chances of a future manly character. [292]

Croce continues by explaining that James "bathed his children in freedom and enforced

nothing on them, except of course, his insistence on freedom itself."[293] From these

quotations we see that Henry James Sr. emphasized a philosophy of freedom and

innocence for his children. He valued the good in childhood because he felt that his

religious upbringing had forced external moral values without considering the input and

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[291] Croce, "The Education of William James,"102
[292] Croce, 102. This is also cited in Allen's biography of William James. It is interesting that there is the word choice of "manly" character. It may be due to the idea of adulthood, but at the time man may have been substituted for adult.
[293] Croce,102.

interest of the child.[294] He felt bitterness towards an upbringing that, while financially

sound, was emotionally bankrupt.[295]

How did this pedagogy of freedom impact William James and his siblings? In his

citation from *The Literary Remains*, Croce provides an explanation:

> Henry James's insistence on freedom led to a tyranny of indecision in the mind of
> William James. In the education of his children, Henry James attempted to foster
> spontaneity and natural innocence and thereby completely avoid the strict
> moralism of his own upbringing. 'I am sure that the early development of my
> moral sense was every way fatal to my natural innocence, the innocence essential
> to a free evolution of one's spiritual character, and put me in an attitude of
> incessant exaction—in fact, of the most unhandsome mendicancy and higgling—
> towards my creative source.'[296]

Henry James Sr. cultivated a freedom in the household, and it was this sense of freedom

that caused William to be indecisive and follow his own path in search of self. While this

search for self, led to a worldly cosmopolitan life and academic holistic education, it also

meant that he was in some ways stunted by the lack of rules and *overreaching* freedom

that he experienced in childhood.

The role of freedom in a teacher-student relationship or father-child relationship

has both benefits and drawbacks. According to Croce, "The result of this freedom was a

seemingly happy family with dedicated parents and five grateful children: the children

remembered 'their pure, simple lives, with souls unruffled by the ways of men, like

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[294] This could also connect to the idea of co-constructing knowledge with students and the open-mindedness that William James showed when he taught.

[295] Perhaps this is an extreme interpretation, but from the writings on James senior it is clear that he was bitter about his upbringing.

[296] Croce, "The Education of William James," 32. Croce cites William James Ed., *The Literary Remains of the Late Henry James*. (Boston: James R. Osgood, 1884), 178-9.

special creatures, spiritualized and remote from coarser clay.'"[297] From the outside, this appears to be a beautiful freedom from the ills of society, with students and children shaped like malleable clay. The reality, of course, is more complex.

Croce continues by explaining the major setback to this freedom as the possibility that students and children become identical to their families, as a negative outcome. As such, they may not develop individual identities as often.[298] He writes, "for all the children, the father's insistence on freedom and innocence served as an obstacle to their arriving at maturity."[299] Croce explains the various outcomes for the siblings: Alice had physical and emotional issues that made her dependent on the family; Wilky and Robertson lived fairly uneventful lives in which Wilky died before 40 and Robertson became an alcoholic.[300] Although this freedom helped to guide Henry and William towards writing and academics, it is clear that it was not ideal for everyone.[301]

This paternal authority also had an effect on Henry and William's choices concerning vocation: "Paternal authority in the Henry James household would serve as an indulgent protection of childhood's freedoms and natural interest."[302] William, for example, originally wanted to study art. Although William wrote in his letter that he was

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[297] Croce, 105. Croce cites William James Ed., *The Literary Remains of the Late Henry James*. (Boston: James R. Osgood, 1884), 170.
[298] Croce, 106.
[299] Croce, 107.
[300] Croce, 107.
[301] There is one student who reflects on learning from William James. He describes how thoughtful he was as a teacher, but that he was also scattered and sometimes would confuse himself in deconstructing a complex concept for the students. Edmund Burke Delabarre explains that although his speaking was so beautiful, sometimes but would lead to a "misunderstanding of his meaning." See Delabarre, "A Student's Impressions of James in Late '80's," in *William James Remembered*, ed. Linda Simon (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 125-27.
[302] Croce, "The Education of William James," 100.

not talented in the subject, biographers have inferred that William did not pursue art because his father wanted more for him and that medicine was a more rigorous option.[303] Thus, as William James moved forward in his own education and then his teaching career, it is clear that he was heavily influenced by the relationship with his father that both promoted freedom and potentially stunted his independent growth. As a result, William's adoption of pluralism allowed him to teach his students to consider multiple views and futures when pursuing their own interests.

Even as a child, the only constant in William's life was change: "William James's history for the first thirty years of his life was, indeed, a record of temporary adobes, of fleeting identification with places of residence and study, all of them urban."[304] Biographer Grattan notes, "The distinctive mark of William's personality was activity…Quick, nervous, athletic qualities of mind marked him all his life."[305] He continues, "Yet with all these qualities, he looked back upon his years of schooling with scorn, finding northing in them which seemed to justify the labor expended."[306] The irony within this disdain is that his childhood brought him all over the world and exposed his strong linguistic aptitudes to "devour psychological and philosophical literature with no pausing at linguistic boundaries."[307] Connecting this back to the influence of James's father on his education, Grattan writes, "Though he was educated for nothing in particular, in harmony with his father's desire not to 'make' his boys anything definite, he

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[303] Additionally, Henry James Jr. discovered that he loved writing early on in life. His father did not initially encourage it, saying that while Henry was good, he was not "great."
[304] Grattan, *The Three Jameses*,109.
[305] Grattan, 109.
[306] Grattan, 109.
[307] Grattan, 109.

showed rather early certain tendencies which if encouraged might have given his life a greater directness than it actually did."[308] Grattan suggests that James's freedom to pursue all interests—art, science, philosophy, and psychology— created a level of indecision that prevented a clear linear trajectory in his later education. According to Grattan, "William's problem, very apparently, was to reconcile his versatility with the necessity of learning some one thing thoroughly."[309]

<u>Experience as Teacher (Social Activity As Teacher)</u>

Experience is an important part of James's philosophy, so it is not surprising that his own childhood experiences informed his outlook. In addition to being taught by his father, which demonstrates the teacher-student relationship, he was also taught by his own experiences (personifying a "teacher"). These experiences instilled in James an open-minded and pluralistic approach to educational opportunities. Gay Wilson Allen explains this in his biography:

> William James received a novel but erratic education as a consequence of his father's social and religious theories, which inculcated the need for freedom, spontaneity, and innocence. The innocence of the infant should be protected as long as possible to give his innate divine creativity a chance to grow strong enough to resist the corruptions of society and institutions.[310]

Allen discusses how James's travel influenced him and how his year in Germany "greatly stimulated his intellectual development."[311] Allen explains, "He joined the Swiss

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[308] Grattan, 110.

[309] Grattan, 111-12.

[310] Gay Wilson Allen, *William James*, in *University of Minnesota Pamphlets on American Writers* Vol. 88 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1970), 6.

[311] Allen, 6-7. "…He attended private schools, had … tutors, and in his father's educational experiences was shifted back and forth between Europe and America… His father did not want him to specialize or choose a profession too soon, with the result that he was late in choosing at all. He studied painting… then anatomy and comparative zoology, and finally entered the Harvard Medical School in 1864…" His education concluded with an MD.

students' club Societe de Zoffingue, and actively cultivated both its sociability and its beer from April to July 1860."[312] In Paris, James received instruction in drawing in addition to language. James's brother remembers that throughout their childhood, James was always drawing. This artistic interest changed, however, when James's father gave him a microscope on his fifteenth birthday.[313]

Connecting with the Authentic Self; Emotion as Educator; Life and Death

William James dealt with depression and loss during his life. In addition to losing friends and family members, James's fifth child, Herman, died at eighteen months. This connection to love and loss impacted his views of life, growth, and—to some extent— education. By tapping into the emotions connected to these experiences, James further developed a sense of his/an authentic self, one that was exposed to pain and thus presented with opportunities for growth. Perhaps James's experiences with death were a form of learning that taught him the value of embracing life and mortality together in education. Allen writes about James's bouts of depression, citing James's letter to a friend in 1868:

> I have grown up, partly from education and the example of my Dad, partly, I think from a natural tendency, in a very non-optimistic view of nature, going so far as to have some years ago a perfectly passionate aversion to all moral praise, etc.— an antinomian tendency, in short. I have regarded the affairs of human life to be only a phantasmagoria, which had to be interpreted elsewhere in the kosmos into its real significance.[314]

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[312] Grattan, *The Three Jameses*, 111.
[313] Grattan, 110.
[314] Allen, *William James,* 8. Perhaps we can turn to William James to develop a theory of emotion applied to education.

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From this excerpt we can see that James felt both connected to and disconnected from life

(real and imagined). In other words, he maintained a certain sense of apathy. Allen

explains that James excavated himself from this melancholia by reading the philosophy

of Goethe.[315]

        After suffering from episodes of depression in 1869 and 1870, he was shocked to

his core when his beloved cousin Minnie Temple passed away in the spring of 1870.

Allen describes the effect on James:

> Her death shocked him into a realization of "the nothingness of all our egotistic
> fury." He attained a kind of existential stoicism, or what Emerson called 'fatal
> courage,' and wrote in his [William's] diary "The inevitable release is sure;
> wherefore take our turn kindly whatever it contain. Ascend to some sort of
> partnership with fate, & since tragedy is at the heart of us, go to meet it, work it in
> to our ends, instead of dodging it all our days, and being run down by it at least.
> Use your death (or your life, it's all one meaning)."[316]

This final point about a singular meaning for death and life, as well as the value of

"meeting it" and "working on it," has particular significance within education. This

example of life, death, and experience demonstrates a unique teacher-student relationship

that should not be ignored. Experience is a teacher. Instead of viewing certain

experiences as misfortunes or letting them pass by unnoticed, educators should foster

experiential relationships in order to glean meaning and learn from them. This can also be

connected to the idea that tragedy is educational and can take on a pedagogical role.[317]

While I contend that William learned through experience, these experiences were always

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[315] Allen, 8. James discovered Goethe's realism. He writes, "Goethes realism [was a] palliative for his
father's unhealthy (for William) antinomianism." James discusses how delightful Goethe is.
[316] Allen, 9. He is citing James from his own diary.
[317] See Burbules article on tragedy and education for more insight. Nicholas C. Burbules, "The Tragic
Sense of Education." New York: *Teachers College Record* vol. 91, no. 4. Summer (1990): 469–79.

social in some form; in other words, I do not suggest that we can be free from human teachers. James learned literature and language through both reading and conversation. Similarly, he learned art through tutors as well as through drawing, and he learned science from museums and laboratories.

Areligious as Educative/ Experience, Openness, and Open-mindedness, Spontaneity, Authenticity

The James family's relationship to religion and experiences serves as an additional source of their education.[318] Rather than embodying a teacher-student relationship between the family and the church, the James's distance from and questioning of the religious institution actually reflects William James's inquisitive and inquiry-driven instruction that is flexible, *quirky*, open-minded, and experiential. *Inquiry* is the idea that learning can occur through questions and the questioning of ideas within a framework of freedom.

James was open to religious possibility and willing to learn from and with his students. Croce writes, "The strongest intellectual influence of the elder Henry James on the mind of his son (William) was his temperamental sympathy with religious ideas, construed in the broadest sense as a persistent questioning of 'the deepest reasons of the universe.'"[319] This did not mean that James was religious in a Christian or dogmatic sense; rather, he was religious in his process of learning about the world through the lens of spirituality embodied in religious thought.[320] Croce continues, "…James's first steps

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[318] This connection is heavily discussed in Croce's work.
[319] Croce, "The Education of William James," 98.
[320] William James was religious, or religiously curious. He was often seen at the chapel at Harvard in the morning.

toward his own ideas of science and religion were taken on those paths of freedom and spiritual spontaneity that his father staked out and explored."[321] This search or step towards finding oneself was influenced not by locating an end or a singular aim, but by attaining growth and maturity. Basically, this is the philosophy of pluralism and flexibility. Croce explains that Henry James Sr. trained his children in moral values "not by compunction but by natural attraction."[322] Meaning that interest and natural attraction are key parts to education. This natural attraction is something that many of James's students reference when explaining his style of lecturing. They describe him as a captivating and interesting presenter who demonstrates an interest in students' perspectives. James's teaching persona was "authentic" in that he was modeling how to teach with and learn from students: "In addition to teaching growth and valuing innocence, Henry James also wanted to teach his children to be 'free of worldly want' and a 'freedom for great worldly educational opportunities.'"[323] Although this removal of materialism was not demonstrated in William James's teaching, his constant experimentation with drugs, medicine, and homeopathy may have been influenced by this desire for freedom from "worldly want." James attempted to turn inward towards a better inner life, one that was pluralistic, accepting of the unknown, and open to experiences.

Returning to the topic of religious upbringing, it is important to note that Henry James Sr. did not belong to a church. When Henry James Jr.'s classmates questioned him

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Croce, "The Education of William James," 99. Croce uses the term spontaneous, as do others, which is in part why I think this unique quality deserves attention in the history of James and in the application of education today.
[322] Croce, 103.
[323] Croce, 104.

about this, he asked his father: "'What church do you go to?'… The father replied that his goals were to allow his children to be 'small unprejudiced inquirers obeying their inspiration.'"[324] For James Sr., this ideal of freedom meant that even religious education, a concept conventionally viewed in terms of "purity," was a source of taint, distrust, and corruption. Croce argues that the James family treated "churches more as museums than houses of worship."[325] How does this relate to teacher-student relationships? Because William James was taught to be a critical, open-minded consumer of knowledge and experiences in all forms, including those related to religion, he was receptive to the experiences of his students and taught them how to practice this critical open-mindedness in academia. Conversely, Croce might have also presented this information to show that people claiming to be "religious," as a monolithic declarative, immutable identity, should be treated with concern and skepticism.

Discussion Centered Instruction and Childhood/ Inquiry/ Social Activity

William James was taught to inquire about and reflect upon life, art, culture, language, and controversy through lively discussions at the dinner table. After Ralph Waldo Emerson's son Edward visited the James family for dinner sometime in the 1850's, he described an interesting and informative evening with the family:

> …The adipose and affectionate "Wilkie" as his father called him, would say something and be instantly corrected or disputed by the little cock-sparrow Bob, the youngest, but good-naturedly defended his statement, and then, Henry (Junior) would emerge from his silence in defense of Wilkie. Then Bob would be more impertinently insistent, and Mr. James would advance as moderator, and William, the eldest, join in. The voice of the moderator presently would be drowned by the combatants and he soon came down vigorously into the arena, and when, in the

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[324] Croce, 108.
[325] Croce, 109.

excited argument, the dinner knives might not be absent from eagerly
gesticulating hands, dear Mrs. James, more conventional, but bright as well as
motherly, would look at me, laughingly reassuring, saying "don't be disturbed,
Edward; they won't stab each other. This is usual when the boys come home."[326]

This description highlights the value of "discussion-centered" and inquiry-based practices

and debates as well as the importance of flexibility within conversation and ideas. This

quotation also speaks to the view that education is pervasive and not limited to a

classroom environment. Later, when James was a professor, he would invite students into

his own home to debate topics and engage in conversation. (There is no evidence,

however, that those conversations included children wielding knives).

Conclusion: James's Upbringing

William James's interest-driven childhood taught him to be sympathetic, flexible,

and spontaneous. These elements are reflected in his pedagogy. By looking to the role of

teacher-student relationships in James's early life and how those relationships influenced

his teaching, it is clear that his upbringing sowed the seeds for informing a philosophy of

education that emphasized freedom, flexibility, experience, quirkiness, spontaneity,

discussion, and interest.[327] His father was his teacher and this close paternal relationship

was later replicated in the close bonds he created with his own peers and students. It is

clear that James's educational aims were tied to his aim for a good life. He describes this

in a letter to a friend in which he discusses his vocational choices:

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[326] Croce, 328. He is citing Edward Waldo Emerson, "The early years of the Saturday club," Letters I:18-
19. Edward Waldo Emerson, *The Early Years of the Saturday Club 1855-1870*. (New York: Houghton
Mifflin Company, 1945).
[327] This is my view from my research and Emile Boutroux, Bird, Wilson Kipng'eno arap lang'at, and
Pamela Costello also write it about. While the other scholars discuss freedom, pragmatism, and pluralism,
my unique contribution is spontaneity and quirkiness.

> Everyone, I think, should do in society what he would do if left to himself… In the first place, what ought to be everyone's object in life? To be as much use as possible…. What is use? Analyse any useful invention, or the life of any useful man, and you will see that its or his use consists in some pleasure, mental or bodily, conferred upon humanity… [if all needs were met, money food clothing, what would men do?] … every man would follow out his own tastes, and excel as much as possible in the particular line for which he was created. It is then the duty of everyone to do as much good as possible.[328]

This means that education needs to have some use and practice that combines pleasure with utility and strives to do some greater good for humanity. This philosophy of education parallels the manner in which James sought to live his life; towards some greater good. In addition to pluralism, pragmatism, and habit, the concept of meliorism is valuable for educators to embrace today. This quotation connects to James's upbringing because it provides insight into how he sees life and purpose connected to relationships and later education.

Part II: Educated by William James

In my research on William James as a teacher, I have found ample evidence to suggest that he was a renowned educator. He was an exemplary teacher who created positive and productive relationships with his students that were familiar and caring. A description by Paul F. Boller Jr. speaks to this claim: "James was by all accounts a superb teacher. Dynamic, vibrant, energetic, and witty in the classroom he was 'always throwing off sparks' as he talked. 'To see him' 'was never to forget what it means to be alive.'"[329] In this section, I answer the following questions: What did James's model of teaching say

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[328] Gerald E Myers, *William James, His Life and Thought* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 3. He is citing a letter to Edgar Van Winkle.

[329] Paul F. Boller Jr., "William James as an Educator: Individualism and Democracy." in *Education and Values* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1980), 268. This is also cited in William James, *Essays in Philosophy*, 5; Allen, *William James,* 301.

about his views regarding teacher-student relationships? James's childhood informed his pedagogy, because he was afforded the freedom to learn and grow with minimal restrictions, and as such this helped him understand how to teach students in a way that allowed for this freedom of thought, built on first, positive relationships, and second a value of experiences. What were the roles of the teacher and the student in the teacher-student relationship?

From the words of his students, biographers, and colleagues, it is clear that James practiced a pedagogy that was empathetic, kind, and inclusive. He created a classroom environment that encouraged discussion and debate and valued freedom. As an instructor, he was open-minded, quirky, authentic, pluralistic, and pragmatic. James balanced all of these attributes with an attention to habit-building that considered both creativity and spontaneity. His close relationships with his students demonstrate a level of caring similar to the connection he developed with his first teacher, his father. In this section I analyze scholarship that supports these pedagogical values, thus highlighting James's unique teaching in order to explain the concept of the teacher-student relationship within James's pedagogy.

Additionally, it is important to note that James also modeled a teacher-learner persona; he was a life-long learner and saw educational opportunities everywhere. This connects to the value of experiences, experiential learning, and pluralism, and is a topic that is threaded throughout this section. My research builds upon a range of scholarship about William James: Emile Boutroux's work on James's pedagogy; Baldwin T. Bird's consideration of James's contributions to education; Linda Simon's compilation of

James's students' stories; and Lyman Gilmore's analysis of the application of James's

pedagogy to teacher education. In a departure from this scholarship, I argue for the

centrality of the teacher-student relationship found within James's pedagogy.

<u>William James as an Early Academic</u>

William James began his life with an international education that transformed

through interests and subjects when he entered higher education. His interests shifted

through a variety of subjects: painting, physiology, medicine, psychology, and, finally,

philosophy.[330] James used to speak of his education, that he "never had any" and he once

complained that the first lecture on psychology he ever heard was the first one he gave as

a professor of psychology at Harvard.[331] After debating whether or not to enlist in the

Civil War and deciding against pursuing a career in painting, James enrolled at Harvard

University to study medicine and science.[332]

In 1859, only seventeen years after James was born, Charles Darwin published *On

the Origins of Species*. This work shifted the paradigm of scientific thinking for

generations to come. When James entered Harvard with an interest in studying science,

the field of professionalized science and the term "scientist" were only eleven years old.

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[330] Today his legacy can be measured in the numerous fields of academic study that embrace his writings. These include business, religious studies, psychology, philosophy, political science, and almost everything in between.

[331] Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club; A Story of Ideas in America* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001), 94. This was due to the fact that James's father Henry James Sr. moved the family around regularly during William's childhood, starting the year in England with a private tutor, then moving to Paris, only to complain and end up again in New York.

[332] Robert Richardson, *William James, in the Maelstrom of Modernism* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2007). Perhaps due to his father's lack of support or perhaps due to his own wanderlust he chose to instead enroll at Harvard University. At age 17, William James spent 1 year as a student at the University of Geneva. Then he spent one year studying art at Newport, Rhode Island with Mr. William M. Hunt. After deciding to not become a painter, he enrolled at Harvard. This is also cited in Grattan, *The Three Jameses*, 109-113. His health was a major detractor from entering the Civil War.

The burgeoning field thus provided a fertile ground for new thinking and ideas in addition to opportunities to pursue them.[333] James spent two years at the Lawrence Scientific School where he studied anatomy and chemistry. He then attended Harvard Medical School for two years. He studied chemistry under Charles Elliot, the future Harvard president (though he was not impressed with him as a professor).[334] Academically, James was influenced by Charles Renouvoir and Gustav Fechner.

He went to Brazil with Agassiz in 1865, followed by a year in Berlin working in physiology. James was initially excited to study under Aggasiz; however, his health quickly deteriorated on a voyage to the Amazon, and his views of Aggasiz followed a similar atrophy.[335] After his trip, he went back to Harvard to work in a zoological lab with Agassiz.[336] After bouncing from one scientific interest to the next, James concluded his education at Harvard with an M.D. in 1869. After finishing his degree he began his career not as a doctor, but as a professor.

Teaching

Biographer Gerald E. Myer writes, "James's greatest Achievement was to command professional and popular audiences simultaneously."[337] Over the course of his professional career, James taught college courses, gave lectures, and gained a reputation

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[333] Richardson, 44.

[334] Grattan, *The Three Jameses*, 112. He also studied under Jeffries Wyman, whose lectures he thought were "prosy… and monotonous:… but whom he did have "filial feeling" toward.

[335] Menand, *The Metaphysical Club,* 97-148. From this educational experience he saw how ego can be detrimental to building an educational relationship and can negatively impact a student's interest in the subject.

[336] Bird T. Baldwin, "William James' Contributions to Education," *Journal of Educational Psychology* 2 (1911): 369-82. See specifically the footnotes on the first page.

[337] Myers, *William James, His Life and Thought*, 1.

as a great scholar and thinker as well as a great teacher.[338] James began his academic

career as a professor of anatomy and physiology in 1872.[339] He taught psychology

courses until 1894. During this time his interests shifted from psychology to philosophy.

He taught courses on philosophy until he retired from teaching (in a classroom) in

1907.[340] As this brief timeline illustrates, James had a long career as a professor and was

recognized for his contributions to education. Bird Baldwin describes James's

professional trajectory:

> As a teacher James' professional life was accompanied by similar shiftings of educational orientation, though he remained on the Harvard faculty for thirty five years, from 1872 to 1907. For the first three years he was an instructor in physiology and anatomy, and then assistant professor of physiology for four years. During this period he gave regular courses in psychology with experiments, and established in 1875 the first psychological laboratory in America. This honor has been assigned heretofore to G. Stanley Hall, who started a laboratory at Johns Hopkins in 1883. James lectured at Johns Hopkins in 1877-78 on psychology, and Dr. Hall received his degree from Harvard in 1878; so he and Royce, who was a fellow at Johns Hopkins in 1877-78, were students of James.[341]

Many of James's former students have spoken fondly of James's role as a professor.

According to one student, for example, "[he] was not lecturing to us or at us, but was

discussing with us…we were always thinking together."[342] In his analysis in a chapter on

education and values in history, Paul Boller writes:

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[338] Truman Madsen, *William James Philosopher-Educator* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 1961), 81-105. This article documents that William James was more than a scholar, demonstrating that he was also a beloved educator.

[339] Myers, *William James, His Life and Thought*, 3.

[340] Menand, *The Metaphysical Club*, 75-6.

[341] Baldwin, "William James' Contributions to Education," 369-82. See the footnotes of first two pages for additional information.

[342] Edwin Diller Starbuck, "Thoughts on James from a Student in 1890s" in *William James Remembered*, ed. Linda Simon (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996),168. While John Dewey is remembered as the great American Philosopher of Education, embedded in his works are echoes of William James. William James wrote a few pieces on education, but education is rarely seen as his legacy in biographies, as

William James was an aristocratic individualist with an elitist background, but the views he formulated as a philosopher--pluralism, radical empiricism, indeterminism, pragmatism--democratized his thinking, gave it a social emphasis, and made him acutely sensitive to the wishes, needs, and aspirations of human beings outside of his own immediate range of experience. [343]

Important points to note here include the ideas of *social emphasis* and *education as social activity*, concepts that echo Dewey. James was also "sensitive" to the feelings and desires of others:

The educational enterprise, he came to believe, should embrace curiosity, adventure, tolerance, sensitivity, and compassion; and it was these qualities which he brought to his own teaching and writing.[344]

James's students make it clear that the teacher-student relationships incorporated ideas of curiosity, adventure, tolerance, sensitivity, and compassion. Biographer, Jacques Barzun paints a picture of James at Harvard in 1890:

A man in early middle age (forty eight) of slight build and medium height- is walking with a pair of students, boy and girl, who have followed him out of his class in experimental psychology. His face is bearded and his eyes bright blue, and his features reflect the rapidity of thought. The two… are pursuing him with questions and he is replying as equal to equals with his customary fullness of illustration.[345]

This type of equanimity was characteristic of James. James was also known to have been a compassionate person who visited students regularly when they were sick. Barzun further develops his description of James's unique character:

…at any time or place William James behaves by nature and habit like no one else. He differs even from people who are out of the ordinary by not remembering that he is one of them. Spontaneous, unaffected, his character is to act on any full-

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evidenced by the chapters in biographies that are shorter than the other chapters dedicated to his philosophy.

[343] Paul F. Boller Jr., "William James as an Educator: Individualism and Democracy," in *Education and Values*, ed. Douglas Sloan (New York: Teachers College Press, 1980), 255- 269.

[344] Boller Jr., "255- 269.

[345] Jacques Barzun, *A Stroll with William James*, (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1983), 6.

fledged emotion provided others' feelings are not hurt. His conscience will approve, and conventions will not stop him.[346]

Yet again, another scholar identifies *spontaneity* as a key feature of James. Barzun continues by explaining that not everyone enjoyed this quirky persona. George Santayana recalls that although James was an established academic while he was working at Harvard, his personality was "questionable and irregular."[347] To be sure, James made an impression on everyone he met. As a public intellectual and scholar, his teaching and writing practices were mirrored in how he approached the his teaching paying attention to the lived experience and pluralistic world. He also argued against lecturing as a professor. Former student Dickenson Sargeant Miller notes, "He took a considerable part of the hour by reading extracts from Henry Sidgwick's *Lecture Against Lecturing*."[348]

Principles of Psychology and *Talks to Teachers*

Although James authored many papers about psychology and philosophy, his name is only tied to one piece of scholarship devoted to K-12 schooling—*Talks to Teachers*.[349] Nevertheless, his writing in *Talks* and his pedagogy form a philosophy of teaching that was in part influenced by his upbringing. Because of his childhood experiences in which freedom was valued, James was taught to be a life-long learner.

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[346] Barzun, 7.

[347] Barzun, 7.He is here citing George Santayana.

[348] Dickenson Sargeant Miller, "Thoughts on James from a Student in 1890s" in *William James Remembered*, ed. Linda Simon (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 125.

[349] He did write about the problems with Academia in the *PhD Octopus*, as will be discussed more in the next chapter. He also was known to critique the stuffy ways that school was done where there should be one correct form of spelling words.

In 1890, after twelve years of labor, James published *Principles of Psychology*. It remains one of the most impactful texts in psychology to date; Cremin describes it as his "epochal" work.[350] James's lecture series, *Talks to Teachers*, actually duplicates many sections and ideas from *Principles*. James's impact on the philosophy of education during the progressive era suggests that his work should be considered alongside that of John Dewey.

James wrote his lectures in *Talks to Teachers* as both a psychologist and professor. In front of a lecture hall of teachers at Lowell Harvard in 1894, James led his first lecture from, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and Students on Some of Life's Ideals*.[351] These lectures were later compiled and published in their entirety in 1899.[352] The purpose of this collection was to help teachers understand how to apply the new field of psychology to their own classrooms. James wanted teachers to actually see the complexity of the student as opposed to simply reading about a psychological process in a textbook. *Talks to Teachers* is a two part book that consists of lectures given to teachers and lectures given to college students.[353] Writing in 1912, Emile Boutroux suggested that this work "immediately won extraordinary success, and even today [1912] is eagerly read throughout the world."[354]

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[350] Lawrence Cremin, *The Transformation of the School* (Toronto: Vintage Books, Alfred A. Knopf, 1961), 90-91.

[351] William James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and Students on Some of Life's Ideals* (New York: Holt, 1899; repr. Mineola: Dover Edition, 1962).

[352] In between the lectures and final publication, sections of the lecture were published in *The Atlantic*, a popular magazine for a general audience. His father also published there.

[353] James, *Talks to Teachers*, Table of Contents.

[354] Emile Boutroux, *William James* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1912), 8.

In the preface, James explains that he ultimately wants to create a piece of work that is useful and has a practical application to teachers and students. One of the goals of the text is to embrace the "active unity" of the pupil. He also notes the importance of public schooling: "The State school systems give a diversity and flexibility, an opportunity for experiment and keenness of competition, nowhere else to be found on such an important scale."[355] He explains that "teaching is an art" and that knowing the pupils as "youthful organisms" with "curious inner elements" and "interests" is "surely the knowledge at which every teacher ought to aim."[356] This connection to the student is one of the key concepts as well as connecting learning to something worthwhile. This connection to utility is a topic he further elaborates upon in *Pragmatism*. In this text, he writes that pragmatism is a process for understanding truth as well as a method for concluding interminable debates that would otherwise be unanswered. His philosophy of education emphasizes the importance of utility as opposed to pure abstraction.

He wants teachers to understand that just as we do not separate ourselves and compartmentalize our identities, our students share a similar method for thinking and processing information, one that requires a fluid unity.[357] In *Talks to Teachers,* James says, "I have found by experience that what my hearers seem least to relish is analytical technicality, and what they care for is concrete, practical application."[358] By attending to

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[355] James, *Talks to Teachers*, 1.
[356] James, 3, 5.
[357] In the preface of *Talks to Teachers*, William James speaks to the readers as if to give tips and hints on the larger arguments and questions presented. He hints at what seems to be his favorite lectures of them all; "On a Certain Blindness." He spends time explaining that it is an important piece, that he wishes he could have spent even more time on it, and where it is located in the book.
[358] James, *Talks to Teachers*, 1-2.

the needs of his audience when constructing his work, James is both inclusive and pragmatic. This quotation is valuable because his lectures combine theory with practice, recognizing the importance of experience in education. Noting James's impact, Baldwin writes, "Professor Hanus of the Educational Department of Harvard attended some of these lectures, and he writes [ ] that the audiences were large and appreciative."[359] Educational scholars also regularly examine these lectures in order to elucidate James's philosophy of education.

In these lectures, James also states the importance of habit: "You should regard your professional task as if it consisted chiefly and essentially in *training the pupil to behavior*, not in a narrow sense of his manners, but in the very widest possible sense, as including every possible sort of fit reaction on the circumstances into which he may find himself brought by the vicissitudes of life."[360] According to James, instructors are responsible for teaching students how to develop habits so that they can use flexibility to successfully face future situations of "every possible sort." He also states that education is "the organization of acquired habits of conduct and tendencies to behavior."[361] Even though habit is important, he also notes the importance of flexibility, and that teaching both of these concepts is an art.

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[359] Baldwin, "William James' Contributions to Education," 373. The *Talks* were given at Cambridge in a series of twelve lectures under the title, "Talks on Psychology of Interest to Teachers," beginning October 27, 1891. The lectures were given, according to the university calendar, on successive Thursdays, except the first lecture, which was given on Tuesday.
[360] James, *Talks to Teachers*, 13-14.
[361] James, 15.

Talking *"to"* Teachers Instead of Talking *"with"*

While William James admits in the beginning of *Talks to Teachers* that he is humbled by their expertise (the teachers in the audience), there may exist a contradiction in his praise, balanced with his words and actions towards teachers. The first contradiction is that James's teaching pedagogy within his own classroom model was more discussion-centered, yet his lectures were "to" teachers and not "with" teachers. The first clarification is that this was a lecture, not a classroom discussion, which may have dictated the mode of delivery- unidirectional lecture. Additionally James may have had his own blindness's (to use his own words) when it came to the abilities and aptitude of teachers. He may not have actually seen teachers as equals to himself or professors.

There is some evidence to support that James may not have been as warm/accepting to teachers, as his book may suggest.[362] David Berliner's analysis, praise, and critique of James best explains this complicated relationship that James had with teachers. Berliner begins with his praise of James as connected to the field of educational psychology. He explains that in 1891, Harvard's administrators asked James to provide some lectures on the new psychology to the teachers of Cambridge, Massachusetts. These talks over time were edited, expanded and polished, resulting in 1899's famous *Talks to Teachers on Psychology*. Berliner claims:

> With that book, we have our field's first popular educational psychology text, including speeches first delivered in 1892. The lectures of 1892 marked the beginning of a vigorous educational psychology presence in America. A scholar of international renown had now become associated with our field and provided

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[362] I write that his "book suggests" his warmth towards teachers because first, he chose to write it, second he devoted much of his time to the binding, design and publication of the work, and third he took pride in this work, thus also taking pride in the content of teaching and teachers.

intellectual grounding for its growth. The year 1892, then, may be used to mark the beginnings of both the APA and the field of educational psychology.[363]

Berliner, then critiques James as perhaps not truly seeing teachers as equals. He continues:

> James may be thought of as our grandfather, but he did not have much respect for the teachers to whom he spoke. On teachers' comprehension of his lectures he said "a teacher wrings his very soul out to understand you, and if he ever does understand anything you say, he lies down on it with his whole weight like a cow on a doorstep so that you can neither get our nor in with him. He never forgets it or can reconcile anything else you say with it, and carried it to the grave like a scar."[364]

This seems to imply that James saw teachers as somewhat immutable in their mental growth or flexibility, or perhaps too emotional in taking in new information.[365] "Weight of a cow" implies a level of stubbornness, and using the animal itself implies a level of dehumanization with the teacher. However, giving this quotation a more generous reading, perhaps James is arguing that teachers take information from the scientific community to heart, for better or worse, and hold on to it, perhaps with too strong a grasp, without a critical lens, because of their passion for the desired/potential outcome. Meaning, it is not that teachers are ignorant, it is that teachers desire this "scientific" knowledge, without understanding that the field is still influx and may not have all the answers.

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[363]David C. Berliner, "The 100-Year Journey of Educational Psychology: From Interest, to Disdain, to Respect for Practice," in *Exploring Applied Psychology: Origins and Critical Analyses. Master Lectures in Psychology*, eds. Thomas K Fagan and Gary R. VandenBos (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 1993), 49.

[364] Berliner, 49. Here citing James's letter (William James 1899/1983, 241)

[365] An additional critique could be that he was a male professor of privilege and the audience were perhaps female teachers, therefore there could be a gendered vision of *other* at play, but his lectures use "he" as the pronoun, thus potentially dismissing sexist critiques of James.

James made similar potentially negative or condescending claims in a letter to his

brother. After the 1898 lecture tour to California he wrote to Henry

> …that the tour ended in a blaze of glory. 'with many thanks for having emancipated the school teachers' souls. Poor things they are so servile in their natures as to furnish the most promising of all preys for systematic mystification and pedantification on the par of the pedagogic authorities who write books for them, and when one talks plain common sense with no technical terms, they regard it as a sort of revelation"[366]

Again, this quotation seems to underestimate the independent thinking of the teachings,

hence talks "to" teachers, instead of talks "with." Yet an argument can be made that he is

writing these lectures for this very reason, that teachers are being manipulated by

"authorities" ("scientists") on scientific ideas, when in reality a book like *Talks to*

Teachers, puts the power and "common sense" back into the hands of the teacher (with

the additional scientific and logical support from an expert-namely James-) without a

desire to manipulate or obfuscate the inherent and human logic that exists in connection,

teaching, and education.

Yet again, in a letter to a friend suggesting they read *Talks to Teachers*, James

suggests (and even argues within the introduction), that they should read *On a Certain*

Blindness, as that is at heart of James's philosophical outlook. Yet that is the least

educationally "technical" chapter within the book.[367] This suggests that James's heart in

this book rests within the ribcage of philosophy as opposed to science, psychology, or

education.

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[366] Berliner, 49. Citing James's letter to his brother Henry. (W James 1899/1983, 241)
[367] Houston Peterson, ed., *Great Teachers; Portrayed by Those Who Studied Under Them*. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1946), 195

While James's critiques of the teacher's (that he is seeking to teach/lecture) provides a negative view of James as being condescending, the major point, that some scholars downplay or ignore, is that James saw teaching as an art, which required the ingenuity and creativity of the teacher (thus giving agency and independence to the teacher). Thus as he writes and presents an entire lecture on the utility of science, he then counters that teaching is an art, psychology a science, and science cannot generate art alone. This celebrates the teacher.

Berliner is not the only author to critique James's tone towards teachers. Berliner however ultimately celebrates James's contributions while providing a fair and balanced critique. On the other hand, Barbara Thayer-Bacon, provides a scathing critique of James in "A Feminist Re/examination of William James as a Qualified Relativist."[368] She begins by arguing that James was "patronizing" to teachers as he advises them that they are "merely" teachers and not to worry about science.[369] This presents evidence of the importance of philosopher's understanding the history in connection to the philosophy. James's tone is one of critique of the scientific community taking advantage of teachers, not that teachers should not "worry their little heads" (as the author suggests James's intent is.) James allowed women into his classroom and treated them with respect. The author continues to argue that James was teaching teachers to be more like "animal trainers" than educators.[370] Again this author seems to forget that James had an MD and was very interested in behavior, interest, instinct, habit, and humans. This was not meant

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[368] Barbara Thayer-Bacon, "A Feminist Re/examination of William James as a Qualified Relativist," in *William James & Education.* ed. Bredo et al. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002), 97-114.
[369] Thayer-Bacon, 97.
[370] Thayer-Bacon, 97.

as a condescending point, but as a simple, clear, distinct point about humans as organisms.

The author continues a critique of James within feminist traditions of social relations in contrast to the individualism that is embedded in James's philosophy. Citing Siegfried, the author writes "Because James embraced individual values, and a 'live and let live' attitude, he never had to place his own sexist views under scrutiny. Thus his individualism made it possible for him to avoid confronting his own limitations, which were harmful and had exclusionary results for women (Siegfried, 1996)."[371] Thayer-Bacon continues that James "insistence on individualism allowed him to continue to embrace patriarchal values," and "… not challenge his sexist stereotypes… which is why it is difficult to call him a friend of feminism, although we can call him an associate."[372] Again, this author is attempting to provide a nuanced understanding of James, yet ignores his history and pedagogy. Again, he allowed women into his classrooms. Barzun provides a story of two students talking with James walking across Harvard Yard, a young women and man, and describes James as talking to them "equals to equals." While James is individualistic in his philosophy as I have argued before, he was not anti-social. He learned through conversation and co-construction of knowledge. He invited students into his home. He supported women not just passively allowing them into his classes, but had to fight to allow minorities in.

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[371] Thayer-Bacon, 110. Citing Siegfried 1996.
[372] Thayer-Bacon, 110.

I do not disagree that James's elite status and positionality may have impacted how he saw the world, however his argument within *On a Certain Blindness* points a finger to that challenge (of perspective taking) that all humans need to recognize and overcome. Therefore, in asking, what did James think about teachers, and why did he talk *to* them and not *with* them, the answer is complex. He respected teachers, yet worried that they were being taken advantage of by the scientific community. He allowed women into his classroom, demonstrating inclusion and community, yet argues that his own lecture series is most interesting when he is discussing life and blindness instead of science and education. Similar to James's philosophy as being "unsystematic," James's views on teachers is inconsistent and difficult to pin down. He clearly had his own blindnesses, yet respected the taxing, hardwork, that was required in teaching students everyday. He was humbled by teachers.

Discussion, Debate and Inquiry

Randolph Crump Miller directly discusses William James's philosophy of education. He also describes James's teaching style as being open and more seminar-based rather than lecture-based. [373] This view connects with James's philosophy of pluralism in which he argues against a monistic understanding of the world as a singular truth. He explains:

> …*empiricism means the habit of explaining wholes by parts, and rationalism means the habit of explaining parts by wholes*. Rationalism thus preserves affinities with monism, since wholeness goes with union, while empiricism inclines to pluralistic views. No philosophy can ever be anything but a summary

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[373] Randolph Crump Miller. "The Educational Philosophy of William James," *Religious Education* 86 (1991): 619-34.

125

sketch, a picture of the world in abridgment, a foreshortened bird's-eye view of the perspective of events.[374]

Education, learning, teaching, and knowing are concepts that represent "a summary sketch" of what can be known and what is yet to be known. Thus, in explaining the importance of habit in *Talks to Teachers*, James discusses habit as part of a framework understanding the world as a "sketch" of the incomplete world. Instead of using the term pluralism, he considers the value of constructiveness and how that connects to providing opportunities for students to learn. He writes, "The more different kinds of things a child thus gets to know by treating and handling them, the more confidence grows his sense of kinship with the world in which he lives."[375] James means that students learn best through hands-on learning and with a variety of learning opportunities.

William James valued discussion and debate both inside and outside of the classroom. As a former student of James, Baldwin describes the casual conversational design of James's course and teaching. He writes:

> James was a good teacher…He applied the spirit and methods of his psychology to his teaching, and we always found him presenting the good rather than the bad, the correct rather than the incorrect, going from the simple to the complex, the known to the unknown, the concrete to the abstract. Before his class he was a friend and leader who assumed the attitude of appreciation, sympathy, co-operation and helpfulness rather than antagonism and harsh criticism. [376]

This demonstrates that James showed kindness and care towards his students and that he applied the concept of meliorism to education. All of these aspects of James's pedagogy

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[374] William James, *A Pluralistic Universe* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1909) 1-41.
[375] William James, *Talks to Teachers*, 30.
[376] Baldwin, "William James' Contributions to Education," 371.

could be used today. Additionally, developing familial, friendly relationships was

significant in helping James to become the kind of the teacher who built friendships with

students before and after class. This shows that education is not only bound by content,

but improved through care and human relation. This connects to the *ethic of care* outlined

in Nel Noddings work as discussed in the previous chapter. Baldwin continues:

> He was always stirring up problems and following them out. He not only assigned
> problems for his students to consider, but frequently gave an important
> comprehensive examination question to the class three or four weeks before the
> examination. [377]

Clearly, James valued experimentation and creativity in the classroom and encouraged

students to be curious. He was inquiry-driven in his instruction. Baldwin further explains

James's teaching methods:

> James' lectures and recitations were usually informal and of a conversational
> nature; he would walk into the room, take his seat, begin talking about the subject
> and soon all members of the class were eagerly taking part in the recitation by
> asking questions or entering into the discussion. His strongest points as a teacher
> were that he made his students think because he was thinking, and that he treated
> each topic with such richness, vividness and intensity that it became the most
> important and interesting topic of the year.[378]

This quotation demonstrates James's unique teaching persona. Teachers should consider

the student's interest in relationship to engagement and decide how to incorporate

questions and discussion into their instruction in an authentic way, while also showing

their own passion for the content being taught. As a teacher, it seems that James was a

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[377] Baldwin, 371.
[378] Baldwin, 369-382.

social constructivist (or, a progressive educator) by being authentic, sincere, and informal

and by using his intense passion for learning to co-construct knowledge with his students.

<u>Empathetic and Kind: The Value of Individual Relationships, Authenticity, and "Ardent Sincerity"</u>

James was a kind and empathetic educator and person. He was sincere and

authentic, and he made connections with all individuals who gained his acquaintance.

Boutroux explains that James "… taught that a philosophy has its root in life, not in the

collective or impersonal life of humanity, in his view the abstraction of the schools, but in

the concrete life of the individual, the only life which really exists."[379] In other words,

education and teaching begin with experience and the individual relationship between the

teacher and student. As such, James listened to his students and invested personal interest

in each of them. One student wrote that William James and Mrs. James were "'warm

friends and charming companions.' James was a man very fond of his home and his

family, and 'he cared greatly for his students.'"[380] It is important to note that James cared

about his students and brought them into his home as if they were family. Baldwin writes:

> …He had a literary style which brought him into close touch with all who read him, and more so with those who have talked with him or heard his rich, sympathetic voice. His simplicity and modest and ardent sincerity won him friends wherever his name was known; his freedom from dogmatism and prejudice, and his love for truth and fair play brought him in closest touch with the greater scientists and philosophers, and his approachable, friendly, happy manner, together with, his desire to see the good in a fellow, caused him to be loved by all his students, as hundreds will testify. It has been said that he helped more young men find themselves than any other philosopher or educator in this country.[381]

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[379] Emile Boutroux, "Pedagogy," in *William James*, trans. from the second edition by Archibald and Barbara Henderson (London: Green. 1912), vi.

[380] Baldwin, "William James' Contributions to Education," 370.

[381] Baldwin, 370. Baldwin cites that Perry mentioned this information when writing the biography of William James.

Baldwin echoes the idea that James was not anti-intellectual, but rather free in his thought. He was a friendly, open-minded person and a pluralistic thinker. He desired to see the good, an attribute linked to his meliorism. In the quotation above, Baldwin writes that James's "ardent sincerity won him friends." This concept of "ardent sincerity" might reflect what it means to be authentic and present your authentic self when teaching.

One of James's students was the famous philosopher and contemporary, Josiah Royce. In 1877, Royce writes:

> James found me at once, made out what my essential interests were at our first interview, accepted me with all of my imperfections as one of those many souls who ought to be able to find themselves in their own way, gave patient and willing ear to just my variety of philosophical experiences, and used his influence -from that time on, not to win me as a follower, but to give me my chance. It was upon his responsibility that I was later led to get my first opportunities here at Harvard. Whatever I am is in that sense due to him.[382]

Royce's recollection here demonstrates a few key concepts. First, James accepted people as they were with their "imperfections." This type of teacher-student relationship is very important—it demonstrates that teachers should not try to make students perfect, but that they should accept their students in their inherently and beautifully imperfect forms. James was also an empathetic listener; as Royce explains, James did "not try to win me over as a follower, but give me my chance" to think and be.[383]

James taught many great minds during the Progressive era, including Edward Thorndike. Even though Thorndike's psychology diverged from his professor, he still

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[382] Baldwin, 371. He is here citing *Harvard Graduates' Magazine* 18, 631, nd.
[383] Today, we refer to strength-based models and asset-based models when considering how to best support students. This is in opposition to the concept of a deficit model that attempts to fix weaknesses.

spoke kindly of his teaching. Thorndike explains his admiration for James in the preface

to *Elements of Psychology:*

> To Professor William James I owe the common debt of all psychologists due for
> the genius which has been our inspiration and the scholarship which has been our
> guide…. I owe- also a personal debt for unfailing kindness and encouragement,
> which can only be acknowledged, never repaid.[384]

Thorndike's description demonstrates that James was kind and encouraging, qualities of

teaching that we continue to advocate today.

Baldwin explains that James was so "ardently sincere" and "earnest." On one

occasion Baldwin recollects James stating, "As I write this special topic seems to me the

most important in the subject, and when I come to another chapter that will seem so, too."

[385] Meaning that James demonstrated passion for everything he taught and that "In short,

he adopted in his classwork, as in his writings/the romantic point of view which thrilled

the imagination and led one on into unexplored regions."[386] As a term used multiple

times, the idea of "ardent sincerity" is significant in understanding the authentic self in

teaching. It is about being *exposed* and *sincere* and wanting to learn from and with your

students. It is also about presenting the closest version of yourself without the layers of

decorum and niceties that prevent humans from connecting. Finally, it is clear that James

was enthusiastic about the topic that he was teaching and was knowledgeable in many

areas.

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[384] Baldwin, "William James' Contributions to Education," 369-382.
[385] Baldwin, 371.
[386] Baldwin, 369-82.

James was a model teacher-learner; he was always demonstrating that an ideal educator is a life-long learner who can learn without a classroom or book by paying attention to everything and everyone regardless of class, gender, location, race, etc. James was said to be "hospitable to genius and crank alike."[387] Being a model teacher-learner also means that one should be ready for all educational opportunities. James contends, "Any object not interesting in itself may become interesting through becoming associated with an object in which an interest already exists."[388] It is up to the teacher, however, to "know the native interests" of the students so that they may foster such connections.[389]

In my earlier description of James's teaching style, I explained that James used the Socratic seminar method of discussion. He cared for his students and demonstrated a vested interest in everything he taught in order to create a thoroughly engaging classroom environment. He would give students three weeks' notice to ponder a question before an examination, thus demonstrating that he cared about the process of learning rather than the static "finished product" of a grade or an exam. Boller explains:

> Education for James centered in helping individuals to discover their own special "blessings" and encouraging them to make the most of their own particular opportunities. "What doctrines students take from their teachers, are of little consequence provided they catch from them the living, philosophic attitude of mind, the independent, personal look at all the data of life, and the eagerness to harmonize them."[390]

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[387] Houston Peterson, ed. *Great Teachers; Portrayed by Those Who Studied Under Them*. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1946), 221.

[388] James, *Talks to Teachers*, 47.

[389] I used to teach students to be "ready to learn." This is different, though, because I was commanding them as opposed to inviting them to a habitual way of learning and being ready for educational opportunities.

[390] Paul F. Boller Jr., "William James as an Educator: Individualism and Democracy." in *Education and Values* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1980), 268.

This connection between "personal look" and "data of life" leads to an educational harmony. According to James the process of learning content should include self-reflection that allows students to "discover their own special blessings."

William James attended to students, helping them discover their own special blessings at work, and within his home, continued to pour his life into helping others. His first born son Henry James III, fondly called Harry, notes:

> In his [William James's] own house it seemed as if he was always at work; all the more, perhaps, because it was obvious that he possessed no instinct for arranging his day and protecting himself from interruptions… He allowed his conscience to be constantly burdened with a sense of obligation to all sorts of people. The list of neighbors, students, strangers visiting Cambridge, to whom he and Mrs. James felt responsible for civilities, was never closed, and the cordiality which he animated his intentions kept him reminded of every one on it.[391]

James's lack of "instinct" for arranging his day is ironic because he preached the good in daily habit-building. This quotation also provides a transition into the concepts of spontaneity, flexibility and creativity.

Spontaneous, Creative, Flexible, and "Quirky"

In his consideration of the role of consistency in James's thinking, Randolph Miller explains, "James admitted that he was deliberately unsystematic, and that he tried to avoid the humbug of exactness in his writings." [392] Miller argues that the warmth of experiences formed the heart of James's philosophy. He further explains that this philosophy can be linked to James's philosophy of education. If James himself considered his thought unsystematic, then it is up to scholars to attempt to create some

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[391] Henry James III, "A Firm, Light Step," in *William James Remembered*, ed. Linda Simon (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 119.
[392] Miller, "The Educational Philosophy of William James," 619.

semblance of a system.[393] Part of this "unsystematic" way of teaching may also refer to

the creativity and spontaneity that were part of James's charm.

Boutroux's biography of James has an entire chapter dedicated to James's

pedagogy. Within this chapter, Boutroux describes James as "spontaneous" and

"unsystematic" because he was not bound to rules.[394] He writes:

> He [James] was incapable of binding himself by the rules of official pedagogy.
> He threw into his speech his ceaselessly active thought, his ardent soul, his whole
> being. Whether he taught in his own classroom or lectured outside, whether he
> conversed familiarly with his friends, the spontaneity of his discourse was always
> arresting.[395]

Boutroux recognizes that James's pedagogy was essentially "free," (and spontaneous) a

concept that makes his contribution to current educational research both unique and

meaningful.[396] Similar to the way in which he was raised, James used conversation and

experience to teach in a natural and inclusive manner.

Another student who spoke of these qualities was Edwin Diller Starbuck.

Starbuck was a religious scholar. In his reflection on James, he writes:

> On occasion of the opening lecture period of the first semester, Professor James
> appeared almost late, moved smoothly and unobtrusively up the middle aisle to
> the slightly elevated platform, placed a small bundle of books from his arm on the
> desk, paused, gave the class a split second of friendly glance, lifted the index
> finger of his right hand above the forehead as if it were the symbol of a new idea
> and remarked "Oh, excuse me I forgot something" a minute or two following the
> time signal he returned seated himself serenely at his desk and began, not
> lecturing to us or at us, but discussing with us, some of the men and movements in

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[393] Or perhaps creating a system is antithetical to a Jamesian model of freedom in education.
[394] Boutroux, "Pedagogy," 94-114.
[395] Boutroux, 13.
[396] I continue to quote heavily from this book as it really captures the essence of James more than other works that only touch upon the idea of education within James's thought and do not give it the full attention it deserves.

psychology. He showed two or three significant recent books; we should help decide if we wished to use a text and if so which it should be.[397]

It is important to note that in the current rigid model of education, teachers are taught to be "experts" and "model teachers"—a concept that leaves no room for presenting an authentic and exposed self within the classroom.[398] In contrast to this model of perfection, Starbuck's description shows that James simply "seated himself serenely" and began teaching. This sense of freedom can inspire teachers to consider how to balance the demands of a rigid teaching structure with the need for flexibility and freedom. Starbuck's story also demonstrates James's quirkiness, flexibility, and spontaneity. It represents his "ardent sincerity" or authenticity. In *Talks to Teachers* he writes about the value of flexibility and offers advice to teachers: "Prepare yourself in the subject so well that it shall be always on tap: then in the classroom trust your spontaneity and fling away all further care."[399]

Starbuck continues, "…his lectures were always vitalizing. No studied rhetoric. Always happy turns of intriguing phrases, a glow of warmth and meaning. Never a moment wasted on shop-made humor. We were always thinking together."[400] Starbucks' description shows that James was a caring individual who enjoyed teaching and learning from his students. He was "warm" and his words were "vitalizing"— he had a *joie de*

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[397] Starbuck, *William James Remembered*, 168. He was a religious scholar.
[398] If I arrived to class late or even on time I would be flustered and concerned about my *professionalism* and my *status*, *authority* and *expertise*. I would feel awful. James, however, felt confident with his authentic self.
[399] William James, *Talks to Teachers*, 109.
[400] Starbuck, *William James Remembered*, 168-169.

vivre for learning and teaching. This excerpt also makes it clear that he co-constructed

knowledge with his students.

Edmund Delabarre was another student who wrote about his experience with

James in the late 1880s. During 1888-90, Delabarre was studying under James and

Royce. James had nearly finished writing *Principles* and read many of its chapters to his

class of graduate students during sessions at his home.[401] Delabarre recalls:

> As young students, we were too inexperienced and had too little background to
> judge of his originality of thought, or of many others of his many-sided traits. But
> we were deeply impressed with his thorough mastery of his subject, his profound
> knowledge of all that had been written on all of its many phases, his judgment in
> arriving at such conclusions as were warranted by the evidence at hand.[402]

Delabarre's description demonstrates that creating a positive teacher-student relationship

involves being knowledgeable about one's field in addition to being flexible, humble,

authentic, and understanding the limits of one's knowledge. Delabarre continues:

> Yet he clearly realized that requisite evidence is rarely fully assembled and he
> was perfectly and admirably frank in admitting his many uncertainties and doubts.
> It was stimulating to realize his innate modesty and open-mindedness, and to feel
> that he was inciting us to think out his problems with him, we appreciated fully
> his remarkable genius for felicitous, clear and picturesque expression…[403]

Here, Delabarre explains that James was an open-minded teacher who recognized the

beauty and humanity in being "incomplete" as a learner (and teacher). James was

comfortable "admitting his many uncertainties and doubts" and was happy to learn as

well as teach. In describing the personality of James, Delabarre writes:

> No one could escape feeling the deep charm of James' personality, his empathic
> interest in everyone about him, his constant friendliness. The times when we were

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[401] Delabarre, "A Student's Impressions of James in Late '80's," 113, 125-27.
[402] Delabarre, 125-27.
[403] Delabarre, 113, 125-27.

invited individually to meals at his home were occasions of happy sociability and of the joyous give-and-take of congenial conversation.[404]

This highlights the value of "discussion-centered instruction" and the fact that learning can take place both inside and outside of the classroom. As such, students and teachers alike should always be open to different opportunities for learning. Delabarre's words also portray James as an empathetic listener with an interest in others.

William James's pedagogy was unique because he both taught and modeled the idea that life's experiences are "opportunities of learning." According to James, the combination of practice (habit) and an open mind enable you to learn and grow with anyone, anywhere. By connecting the ideas of experience, experimenting, and openness, Delebarrre describes James as a scientist:

> He was essentially an experimentalist at heart, in the sense that he sought factual knowledge and aimed to base his beliefs upon observational experience, although in a vastly broader field than the confines of a laboratory. Yet he felt strongly the importance and necessity of developing psychological knowledge by experimentation of the laboratory type as well as by accurate observation of wider personal experience.[405]

James balanced the empirical with the experimental to teach and learn in a way that valued a pluralistic pedagogy and pedigree.

Reflection, Inclusion, and Concern for the Craft of Teaching

In his history of educational psychology, Pajares discusses the quality of James's teaching. He writes, "William James was a gifted teacher, skilled orator, and prodigious thinker and writer. … James took to teaching. His students described him as a rigorous

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[404] Delabarre, 114, 125-27.
[405] Delabarre, 113, 125-27.

instructor, a lively and humorous lecturer, and a caring soul-mate- 'to see him' one wrote, was never to forget what it means to be alive."[406] This quotation provides additional evidence speaking to the quality of James as a teacher.

Pajares also discusses James's influence on education in relationship to the field of psychology by pointing out that James may have been the first educator to solicit feedback from students. He writes:

> …In 1891, … the Harvard administration … proposed to its instructors that they address issues of concern to teaching from the perspectives of their own disciplines. James did so and incorporated the fruits of his labors into his own teaching (James was perhaps the first university professor ever to elicit evaluations of his teaching from his students). I believe it safe to say that William James was the first American psychologist to directly address educational issues.[407]

Although this is a fairly sizable claim, it is important to note that Pajares is not alone in his beliefs about James's impact on education, psychology, and philosophy. In eliciting feedback, James demonstrated his willingness to grow and learn from his students. This also shows that despite his feelings about the deficits in his knowledge, he cared greatly about teaching.[408]

What Makes James Unique?

James was said to be "unsystematic" in his thinking and philosophy. Thus a problem presents itself, "What makes James unique? Was he just a charismatic disorganized teacher?" While that claim can be made that he was simply charismatic and

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[406] Pajares. "William James: Our Father Who Begat Us," 44.
[407] Pajares, 51.
[408] In the beginning of *Talks to Teachers*, James admits that he is limited in his knowledge of teaching, as he presents to a lecture hall full of teachers.

disorganized, a more nuanced understanding of James's pedagogy and actions, connected to his morals and ethics, present an inclusive and intentional philosophy and professor. James's instances of openness set him apart from other professors.

James was inclusive in allowing different types of people into his classroom. One of his students include W.E.B. Du Bois, the first African American to receive a PhD from Harvard. This represents not a trend, but a blazing pathway forward in inclusion. James did not just teach Du Bois, Du Bois, describes James as a friend and someone who was there to listen and support him. Meaning, that James was not passive in the teacher-student relationship, but actively forged meaningful relationships built on honesty, respect, trust, and openness.

In W.E.B. Du Bois' autobiography he notes that after choosing to attend Harvard, this choice landed him "squarely in the arms of William James, for which G-d be praised."[409] He notes "I was there to enlarge my grasp of the meaning of the universe."[410] His pathway to that aim was through studying philosophy. Taking a course in ethics taught by William James Du Bois notes, "I became a devoted follower of James at the time he was developing his pragmatic philosophy…. I hoped to pursue philosophy as my life career, with teaching for support. …My salvation here was the type of teacher I met rather than the content of the courses. William James guided me out of the sterilities of scholastic philosophy to realist pragmatism; …"[411]

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[409] W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Autobiography of W.E.B. Du Bois: A Soliloquy on Viewing My Life from the Last Decade of Its First Century* (New York: International Publishers Co., Inc. Seventh Printing, 1980/1968), 127.
[410] Du Bois, 132.
[411] Du Bois, 133.

While there is ample evidence of racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, and

discrimination at Harvard, Du Bois' own stories of exclusion from social life through

rejections of clubs make clear that although he was in Harvard, he was not truly a part of

it, except through his positive interactions with some classmates and some professors.

James invited him into his home and developed a positive teacher-student relationship.

He was also honest about academic prospects and impact of scholarship and encouraged

Du Bois to follow his interests with the knowledge that academia is unkind to

philosophers. Du Bois notes, "James and one or two other teachers had me at their homes

at meal and reception…I was repeatedly a guest in the home of William James; he was

my friend and guide to clear thinking"[412]

> Analyzing the impact of James and other scholars at Harvard, Du Bois writes,
>
> I reveled in the keen analysis of William James, Josiah Royce and young George Santayana. But it was James with his pragmatism and Albert Bushnell Hart with his research method, that turned me back from the lovely but sterile land of philosophic speculation, to the social sciences as the field for gathering and interpreting that body of fact which would apply to my program for the Negro. As an undergraduate, I had talked frankly with William James about teaching philosophy, my major subject. He discouraged me, not by any means because of my record in his classes. He used to give me A's and even A-plus, but as he said candidly, there is 'not much change for anyone earning a living as a philosopher.' He was repeating just what H. Case of Fisk had said a few years previously.[413]

Du Bois also notes that even after he had left Harvard and had achieved success through

his research, James wrote "[a] heartening letters... William James wrote in 1907: 'I have

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[412] Du Bois, *The Autobiography of W.E.B. Du Bois*, 135, 143.
[413] Du Bois, 148.

just looked through the last installment of your studies on the American Negro. I with the portraits might have been better printed. But it is splendid scientific work."[414]

In addition to his positive teacher-student relationship fostered with Du Bois, James exemplified an openness to women in academia. James urged Gertrude Stein to enter into the medical school, seeing her potential. After entering into the program, she quickly realized that medicine was not her calling. There is the story that I shared earlier of Stein not wanting to complete an examination and James kindly agreeing that sometimes he does not want to do menial tasks as well. What is absent though from that story is that James did not "passively" allow Stein into his classroom, he encouraged, fought for her, and actively engaged the administration in allowing women into the classes. While his elite status, and white male privilege was present and afforded him the opportunities he had in his life, his childhood of worldly experiences, freedom, and inclusion made him a professor who sought to humanize everyone, every perspective, and recognize the diverse and unique human experiences that make up the pluralistic universe.

Additionally James taught Horace Kallen, who was a Jewish American. During James's tenure, Charles Eliott was outspoken against Jewish immigrants. Indeed Horace Kallen himself initially tried to hide his identity and heritage in an attempt to blend into Harvard. James however helped Kallen see himself and identity as a positive addition to life and thought, not something to ignore. Thus in asking what makes James unique, it is his *radical inclusiveness*, pushing against the trends of the time, and even that of his

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[414] Du Bois, 218.

contemporaries and colleagues.[415] Kallen notes that William James wrote about many

subjects of contemporary thought like "relations between individuals taken distributively

and take collectively … themes of American temper and the American scene, the labor

question, war and peace, nationalism, education, and democracy."[416] He cared about

hearing the voices and input of his students, not just the students of the time at Harvard

"affluent and white" but the entirety of human experience and perspectives. He wrote that

philosophy is a summary sketch of life, and in that same vein included diverse

perspectives in order to enhance that summary sketch of life within his own classroom.

Kallen notes that "James's philosophy has a living immediacy of appeal, [and yet] it talks

straight to your good sense; you do not need to be persuaded of it by an elaborate logic, a

complicated technique of inference and illation."[417] In this same way James taught in an

inclusive and clear way. His values were as evident as his philosophy.

Within James's writings, he also included the stories of common people. His

instruction and lectures were not limited to that of the words of scientists and

psychologists, but also included anecdotes from his life and relationships in connection

with others. *On a Certain Blindness* discusses not only life in the Appalachians to

elucidate the power of perspective and limited perspective, but even that of his dog. He

has been quoted as saying "there is little different between one man and another, but that

small character difference is of importance." However James did not say that, he is telling

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[415] John Dewey, was one of the founding members of the NAACP, yet did not advocate for an inclusive, desegregated education, simply an education for all.
[416] Horace M. Kallen, ed. *The Philosophy of William James Drawn From His Own Works*. New York: The Modern Library, 1925, 4.
[417] Kallen, 7

a story about a conversation he had. "One of the most philosophical remarks I ever heard made was by an unlettered workman who was doing some repairs at my house many years ago. 'There is very little difference between one man and another,' he said, 'when you go to the bottom of it. But what little there is, is very important.'"[418] This story exemplifies James's radical inclusion of everyone's voice. Meaning, he cared about the voices, and included those from all walks of life to enrich the understandings of diversity, inclusion, and humanity within his classroom (and lectures). As such, the pedagogy of James is unique because he was personable (and perhaps unorganized or spontaneous), but also cared about and included the lives and voices of others as evidenced in his lectures, actions, and students encouraged to study with him at Harvard.

Conclusion

William James lived a life full of learning and teaching. His childhood represents one that valued freedom, creativity, and purity of thought in search of one's authentic self and interests. By analyzing the teacher-student relationships in James's early life, it is clear that his unique and varied educational experiences influenced his future development as an educator. When he began as a professor at Harvard, he created intimate relationships with his students that reflected the significance of the father-son relationship from his childhood.

James was an empathetic, kind, open-minded, quirky, and spontaneous instructor whose pedagogy valued discussion and debate. He taught in a way that demonstrated an

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[418] James, "Gospel of Relaxation," in *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and Students on Some of Life's Ideals*, 104.

"ardent sincerity" that can be understood as *authenticity*. In my analysis of the teacher-student relationships within the life of William James, it is clear that teachers must adhere to certain concepts in order to create meaningful and positive connections to their pupils. The teacher should: expose her or his authentic and sincere self; co-construct knowledge with the student; be open-minded, flexible, and spontaneous; balance the rigidity of academics with the levity of life; be empathetic and caring; and be open to all experiences as educational opportunities for a pluralistic future unknown. In the following chapter, I will discuss the philosophy of James with a focus on pragmatism, pluralism, and habit balanced with creativity, all of which support his philosophy of education related to teacher-student relationships.

Chapter 4: Connecting the Philosophy of William James to Teacher-Student Relationships

Introduction:

> *…It is a pleasant thing when one grows old not to stop having intimate relations with the young… I have no definite advice to give about teaching or 'school-management' everyone finds his own personal way gradually and better if he can [take in and learn from] (which isn't easy) some criticism of his mistakes.*[419]

In the above correspondence with former student James Bissett Pratt, William James confides that he has no "definite advice to give about teaching"; however, his philosophy of education demonstrates that relationships are a key factor.[420] In Chapter 3 I examined James's life, describing how his upbringing and pedagogy exemplify key teachable features that could be considered in education today. His childhood allowed for the development of a pedagogy based upon freedom, open-mindedness, and experience, and his teaching represented a model teacher-learner who was inclusive, caring, and open-minded. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the nature of James's teacher-student relationships and to explain his views about education by referencing his philosophy of pluralism, pragmatism, and habit (in balance with creativity/spontaneity).[421]

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[419] William James, "Correspondence with James B. Pratt," Oct. 1, 1905, Box 21, Folder 1, Special Collections, Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts. Continuing, he writes, "I rejoice in the spirit with which you confront your new tasks. It is of good aging and in any case I feel sure that you will be a success." I believe that the illegible word (marked in brackets) is "ride/confide/hide.". I found this letter by conducting historical primary source research and reaching out to the William James Society regarding the name and breed of William James's dog. I received the information and located the Archives where this letter was housed. From there, I worked with the archivist to identify and analyze other key letters between James and Pratt to see if there was anything else regarding relationships.

[420] Reflection also seems to be important and these are key factors in building positive teacher-student relationships and becoming a quality teacher. This letter is one of many between his former student and himself.

[421] Spontaneity could be substituted for creativity or flexibility.

Building upon my work in Chapter 3, I begin this chapter by considering how James's practices as a teacher might connect to his stated philosophies. I then present his explicit views on education, including a clear statement of how James's viewpoints relate to his pedagogy and his philosophy of education. I then connect James's practice as a teacher with his statements about education. By crafting a normative argument that has a moral standard for guidance, I am able to explain how the philosophy leads to a specific view of teacher-student relationships. This argument begins with the metaphysical view of James's philosophy, transitions into how this philosophy connects to human activity, and concludes with an explanation of the implications for teaching and for teacher-student relationships. In presenting this work, I argue that James's ideas are significant to educational philosophy concerning teacher-student relationships and that this connection is currently neglected in Jamesian scholarship.

Theme 1: Pluralism

<u>Connecting James as Teacher to James as Philosopher</u>

As discussed in the previous chapter, James's teaching methods were open-minded, inclusive, and pluralistic. He taught his courses with a discussion-centered pedagogy that was unique to a period of time in which scripted lectures were the normal method of delivery. He held lively debates where he invited students to question the ideas that were presented. This suggests a willingness to consider other ways of thinking and knowing, which is a pluralistic approach to pedagogy. By creating a normative argument that connects the metaphysical concept of pluralism to both the human condition and to

teacher-student relationships, this section argues that James's pluralism informed his

open-minded pedagogy and can provide guidance to teachers today.

James's Views on Education Connected to Pluralism

One of the most pronounced features of James's philosophy and personality is

that of being open-minded and inclusive of others. While many scholars have discussed

James and open-mindedness to inform a theory of education, they have not considered

the framing of teacher-student relationships[422] in conjunction with James's open-minded,

inclusive, and pragmatic philosophy of education.[423] James biographer Emile Boutroux

writes, "In fact the general result to which his [James's] philosophy leads is the effective

value assured to the notion of possibility."[424] Essentially, his educational philosophy (as

well as his philosophy in general) is built upon the habit of valuing possibility or

pluralism. Many authors echo this sentiment.[425]

In his consideration of the relationship between pluralism and education, James

explicitly writes, "Education, enlarging as it does our horizon and perspective, is a means

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[422] See *William James & Education,* ed. Eric Bredo, et al. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002). Many authors consider James's philosophy of teaching and do not neglect the value of inclusion, pluralism, diversity, and the applications to the classroom, but there is no direct explicit connect made from James to teacher-student relationships.

[423] Emile Boutroux, *William James*, 2nd ed., trans. Archibald and Barbara Henderson (London: Longman & Green Press, 1912). Emile Boutroux's biography of William James covers a variety of topics including education and pedagogy. While Boutroux does not directly write a philosophy of education of William James, he does create a picture of what a Jamesian orientation to schooling and education would or could be, with a chapter dedicated to pedagogy.

[424] Boutroux, 95.

[425] This is echoed in: J.A. Wissot, "John Dewey, Horace Meyer Kallen and Cultural Pluralism," in *Educational Theory*, (Place of publication: Publisher, 1975), 25, 186-196; Pamela Castella Crosby, *A Pluralistic University: William James and Higher Education* (dissertation, Florida State University Libraries, 2008); Jim Garrison, "James's Metaphysical Pluralism, Spirituality, and Overcoming Blindness to Diversity in Education," in *William James & Education*, ed. Eric Bredo, et al. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002).

146

of multiplying our ideals, of bringing new ones into view."[426] He continues, "…and your

college professor, with a starched shirt and spectacles, would, if a stock of ideals were all

alone by itself enough to render a life significant, be the most absolutely and deeply

significant of men."[427] The phrase "multiplying our ideals" means that there is a plurality

of the ideal and it is expanding. There are multiple ways of putting together the "facts" of

the universe. Our task as teachers is to recognize the value of diverse lives and

backgrounds, to provide opportunities to learn from all experiences, and to teach students

how to "multiply" those opportunities in order to develop and grow.

Connecting James's philosophy of pluralism to his statements on education and his teaching

What is pluralism? James defines pluralism as an understanding of the universe

with a vision towards multiple realities, possibilities, and experiences. He thus argues

against the monistic and absolutist traditions that see the world as a "block" universe

already set in stone. He writes:

> … Pluralism or the doctrine that it is many means only that the sundry parts of reality *may be externally related*. Everything you can think of, however vast or inclusive, has on the pluralistic view a genuinely 'external' environment of some sort or amount. Things are 'with' one another in many ways, but nothing includes everything, or dominates over everything. The word 'and"trails along after every sentence. Something always escapes. 'Ever not quite' has to be said of the best attempts made anywhere in the universe at attaining all-inclusiveness.[428]

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[426] William James, "What makes a life Significant," in *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and Students on Some of Life's Ideals* (Holt: New York, 1899; repr. Mineola: Dover, 1962).
[427] James, 143.
[428] William James, *A Pluralistic Universe* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1909).

This model of pluralism positions incompleteness as a valuable way to understand

reality.[429] The world exists as "externally related" and incomplete as it continues to

change overtime.

In *A Pluralistic Universe*, James writes that his lectures adhere to a general thesis

concerning a "defense of the pluralistic against the monistic view."[430] He distinguishes

these two views as the "all-form" and the "each-form." The "all-form" refers to the

monistic and absolutist view that implies singularity in understanding life, reality, and

philosophic thought. The "each-form," on the other hand, encompasses the unique lived

experiences and perspectives of each person in understanding the universe and

philosophy. He argues the value of understanding the "each-form" compared to the "all-

form."

> … whereas absolutism thinks that the said substance becomes fully divine only in the form of totality, and is not its real self in any form but the *all*-form, the pluralistic view which I prefer to adopt is willing to believe that there may ultimately never be an all-form at all, that the substance of reality may never get totally collected, that some of it may remain outside of the largest combination of it ever made, and that a distributive form of reality, the *each*-form, is logically as acceptable and empirically as probable as the all-form commonly acquiesced in as so obviously the self-evident thing.[431]

Although his lectures are directed at philosophers and psychologists (and the general

public), he does speak to the role of pluralism connected to higher education.

Specifically, he considers faculty's role in stifling creativity within their students when

pluralism is *not* considered. Within the first lecture he expresses discontent with the

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[429] He describes how one who thinks they know everything is also known as ignorant. He mentions this "ignorant" person as himself in the first lecture.
[430] William James, *A Pluralistic Universe*. (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1909).
[431] William James, *A Pluralistic Universe*. (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1909).

monist/absolutist model because it neither permits creativity of thought nor provides the "open air" necessary for the possibility of ideas.[432] Citing Professor John Grote of Cambridge, James discusses the problems with the frequent "abuse of technicality" and how the obfuscating language surrounding complex metaphysical ideas is similar to seeing "… through a heavy woolen curtain [created by] the veil of previous philosophers' opinions." [433] He continues that students and philosophers ideas are "wrapped in proper names, as if it were indecent for a truth to go naked." Meaning that students are taught to only present original ideas through the reference and lens of other thinkers. Continuing to cite Grote, James remarks that there is something "depressing" in learning when students have an idea but are subsequently told that "Oh, that is the opinion of such and such a person long ago." Students are thus made to feel as though they cannot consider themselves original thinkers. According to James, it is "noxious" for students to get into the habit of thinking that any idea they have "…must have thought it all before."[434]

James continues that this "habit" discussed above is unfortunately "most encouraged at our seats of learning." Students must tie their opinions to the greats before them and must define ideas by "distance from Kant's" or "[refutation of] your rival's view." The result is that "all spontaneity of thought, all freshness of conception, gets destroyed. Everything you touch is shopworn. The over-technicality and consequent dreariness of the younger disciples at our American universities is appalling."[435] He

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[432] Within pluralism, he also includes religious discussion as a part of a pluralistic philosophy that offers options in life, the future, and universe outside of our understanding.
[433] James, "The Types of Philosophic Thinking." Here he is citing Professor John Grote of Cambridge.
[434] James, "The Types of Philosophic Thinking."
[435] James, "The Types of Philosophic Thinking."

worries about the shopworn and shop-habits taught to students and how it becomes an

exercise not in pluralistic views, but in a connection to the past as proof of disciplinary

excellence. What is lost, however, is the connection to human experience. He writes, "In

a subject like philosophy it is really fatal to lose connexion with the open air of human

nature, and to think in terms of shop-tradition only."[436] James discusses the impact on

faculty and professors as well. He writes:

> [Within the rules of the]…Professorial game—they [professors] think and write
> from each other and for each other and at each other exclusively. With this
> exclusion of the open air all true perspective gets lost, extremes and oddities count
> as much as sanities, and command the same attention…[437]

James continues by connecting these ideas to the teaching of philosophy. He explains:

> Great as technique is, results are greater. To teach philosophy so that the pupils'
> interest in technique exceeds that in results is surely a vicious aberration. It is bad
> form, not good form, in a discipline of such universal human interest.[438]

This claim not only connects with teaching pluralism, but it also attends to students'

interests, echoing *Principles*. Within James's own writings his argument moves from the

human experience and interest into the metaphysical and back again. All the same, he

recognizes the value in pluralism connected to these examples in education.

Within his own classroom instruction, James was known to sometimes get lost in

the moment of teaching. He would begin discussing an idea, write it on the blackboard,

and then lose his train of thought, turn to the students and admit to the "incompleteness"

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[436] James, "The Types of Philosophic Thinking."

[437] James, "The Types of Philosophic Thinking." This is also cited in Castella Crosby, *A Pluralistic University: William James and Higher Education*. Referencing the work of Professor Paulsen, James writes how Paulsen "recalls an old professor saying to him once: 'Yes, we philosophers, whenever we wish, can go so far that in a couple of sentences we can put ourselves where nobody can follow us.' The professor said this with conscious pride, but he ought to have been ashamed of it."

[438] James, "The Types of Philosophic Thinking."

of thought.[439] This authentic relationship and transparency of the imperfect self helped

James to win his students' affection, respect, and awe. This model also represents a

departure from the "shopworn" habits that stifle creativity by requiring students to build

original thoughts upon the work of past philosophers. As mentioned above, philosophy is

of "natural human interest"; thus, how one teaches and connects with students requires a

finesse and attention to human relationships.

Connecting the Philosophy of Pluralism to the Philosophy of Education in Order to Inform Teacher-Student Relationships for a Moral Standard of Guidance

James's metaphysical philosophy of pluralism is presented as a moral practical

tool for teachers in *Talks to Teachers*.[440] In "On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings,"

James sets up his thesis of inclusion, open-mindedness, and reflecting on one's own

blind-spots in order to be inclusive and reflective as an educator. In the lecture, "What

Makes a Life Significant," James extends the metaphor from "On a Certain Blindness" to

include ideas on how lives are filled with meaning and what makes life significant. He

explains that part of that inclusive open-mindedness and respect for others contributes to

an ideal and good life. These lectures speak to the teacher-student relationship and

present evidence connecting his philosophy to his pedagogy, which was respectful,

inclusive, and sensitive to the lived experiences of others.

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[439] I am using the word "incompleteness" to connect back to pluralism. However, James did not say *that* to his students.

[440] Although these were published before *A Pluralistic Universe*, his philosophy of education is percolating and represents a unity of thought emerging from James regarding the value of pluralism, inclusion, and open-mindedness (in education and life even before he presents *A Pluralistic Universe*).

In "On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings," James provides his most compelling support for an ideal vision of education that considers the value of being open-minded and recognizing one's own blind spots. He uses stories to guide his discussion of commonplace blind spots. He begins with an example about how his dog does not understand why his owner sits motionless reading a book.[441]

> Take our dogs and ourselves, connected as we are by a tie more intimate than most tied in this world; and yet, outside of that tie of friendly fondness, how insensible, each of us, to all that makes life significant for the other!—we to the rapture of bones under hedges, or smells of trees and lampposts, they to the delights of literature and art.[442]

He then discusses his trip to Appalachia in North Carolina in which he observes people clearing woods to "make a life;" to him, however, it looks like they are destroying nature.[443] These two examples relate to teacher-student relationships because teachers are responsible for recognizing their own blind spots while also helping students to see what they may have otherwise overlooked. Teachers are then able to attend to those neglected understandings and experiences as places for growth. To James they were destroying nature, but to the people clearing the land they were making a living. To James he is enjoying a book, and to his dog, he must be crazy for not playing fetch with him.

Continuing in his lecture, James explains that "…life is always worth living, if one has such responsive sensibilities" and that unfortunately the "highly educated classes

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[441] William James, "On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings," in *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and Students on Some of Life's Ideals* (New York: Holt, 1899; repr. Mineola: Dover Edition, 1962), 113.
[442] James, "On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings," 230. (New York: Holt, 1899) (Dover Edition, 1962) 230. This is also cited in Elizabeth Aldrich, *As William James Said: a Treasury of His Work* (Vanguard Books, New York: 1942), 32. On a side note, I do believe that dogs can distinguish certain types of art, like that of the singing of their owners or the sound of guitar (from my own experience). William James's dog was a setter named Jap, but I'm not sure if that is short for something.
[443] James, "On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings," 114.

(so called)" have lost sight of and moved far away from "nature." He continues, "We are

trained to seek the choice, the rare, the exquisite exclusively, and to overlook the

common." Because in academia students are "stuffed with abstract conceptions and glib

with verbalisms and verbosities," their natural and "peculiar sources of joy connected

with our simpler functions often dry up, and we grow stone-blind and insensible to life's

more elementary and general goods and joys…."[444] Thus, it is the job of the teacher to

see the beauty in the mundane and the complex, the material and the natural, and to bring

forth this "responsive sensibility" for the educative benefits. In addition to discussing all

the blind spots that people have towards each other, James examines the blind spots from

within ourselves that are disrupted (created) by society. This idea does not seem far

removed from the idea of freedom that his father taught his children to live by. For Henry

Sr., the child needs to have her or his natural interests developed and fostered during

childhood. This suggests that natural interests can be conceptualized as connecting to

actual nature itself and the simplicity of life.

James continues by offering a solution: "The remedy… descend to a more

profound and primitive level."[445] He thus suggests that we need to recognize our own

blindness and release ourselves from the chains of material consumption that constrain us

from seeing life at the most primitive experiential levels. He also cautions about the

overeducated type who cannot see the good in the simple parts of life. Specifically, he

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[444] James, 126.
[445] James, 126.

mentions the overeducated, pessimistic people and their "blindness to the fundamental

static goods of life."[446]

In the last paragraph of the lecture, he explains both the positive and the negative

aspects of recognizing one's blindness:

> It absolutely forbids us to be forward in pronouncing on the meaninglessness of
> forms of existence other than our own; and it commands us to tolerate, respect,
> and indulge those whom we see harmlessly interested and happy in their own
> ways, however unintelligible these may be to us.[447]

He writes that in taking this way of teaching and life to task "it commands us to tolerate,

respect" all those who are just living their lives in harmless ways. Then he asserts:

> Hands off: neither the whole of truth nor the whole of good is revealed to any
> single observer, although each observer gains a partial superiority of insight from
> the peculiar position in which he stands… It is enough to ask of each of us that he
> should be faithful to his own opportunities and make the most of his own
> blessings, without presuming to regulate the rest of the vast field.[448]

He commands us (the teacher and student) to be "hands off" because we are only one

perspective and a "single observer." This is similar to differences between the "each-

form" and the "all-form." James suggests that it is inappropriate to assume that you in

your oneness have any superiority over the lives of others, because every individual has a

particular lived perspective and advantage. As a teacher it is important to see that life is

incomplete; there is always an "and" that trails off. In other words, recognizing the

experiences of others while simultaneously learning about oneself is always an exercise

in growth and an acknowledgment of one's inability to grasp the entirety of life and lived

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[446] James, 127.
[447] James, 129.
[448] James, 129. He uses the word "opportunities" to present a pluralistic outlook in education.

experiences of others. The best we can do is to identify our blind spots and live within

that space of incompleteness towards a melioristic and pluralistic future unknown.

In "What Makes a Life Significant," James begins by summarizing the previous

chapter and how "soaked and shot through life is with values and meanings which we fail

to realize because of our external and insensible point of view."[449] He explains that our

blind spots and limited perspectives combine with external distractions to make us

unaware of the internal value and good in life. He continues by discussing the importance

of valuing others regardless of their way(s) of life:

> The meanings are there for the others, but they are not there for us. There lies
> more than a mere interest of curious speculations in understanding this. It has the
> most tremendous practical importance… It is the basis of all our tolerance, social,
> religious, and political. The forgetting of it lies at the root of every stupid and
> sanguinary mistake that rulers over subject-people make.[450]

This quotation demonstrates the practical importance of attempting to understand other,

which starts from a place of tolerance. This quotation is the heart of James; he is an open-

minded individual, but also extremely sensitive to the lived experiences of others and

inclusive of others. He continues:

> The first thing to learn in intercourse with others is non-interference with their
> own peculiar ways of being happy, provided those ways do not assume to
> interfere by violence with ours. No one has insight into all the ideals. No one
> should presume to judge them off-hand. The pretension to dogmatize about them
> in each other is the root of most human injustices and cruelties, and the trait in
> human character most likely to make the angels weep.[451]

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[449] James, 130.
[450] James, 130.
[451] James, 130.

By applying the concept of "non-interference" to pedagogy, James's philosophy suggests that teachers can learn from listening first, not acting. This provides teachers with the opportunity to proactively build relationships to help support and develop students' natural abilities rather than attempting to "fix" students or "dogmatize" them to one's ideal visions of the world. This also includes teaching students to fight against human injustices and cruelties by demonstrating how to be inclusive and non-judgmental.

In his discussion of what makes a life of significant, James explains that, as humans, we should attempt to be in love with everyone at once and expand our capacity for friendship and take delight in other people's lives. The reason that people are unable to have this openness is due to "exclusions and jealousies."[452] He writes, "leave those out, and you see that the ideal I am holding up before you, however impractical today, yet contains nothing intrinsically absurd."[453] Although James understands that he is working against the current of humankind and the habitual ways we live our lives with a "cloud-bank of ancestral blindness weighing us down," he pushes his audience further: "if we cannot gain much positive insight into one another, cannot we at least use our senses of our own blindness to make us more cautious in going over the dark place? Cannot we escape some of those hideous ancestral intolerances and cruelties, and positive reversals of the truth?"[454]

In attempting to recognize intolerance and our own blindness, we embrace pluralistic opportunities to learn from and with others. Although he does not specifically

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[452] James, 131.
[453] James, 131.
[454] James, 131.

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use to terms "co-construct" or "collaborate," his philosophical concepts can be productively applied to teacher-student relationships. It is teacher's responsibility to co-construct meaning with students because students' experiences are beautiful and meaningful in education and life. For a teacher or a student, finding balance and significance in life and education is contingent upon the ability to divorce oneself from past ways of thinking that leave one blind. In this way, teachers and students are both able to adopt more open-minded and pluralistic outlooks that respect all of humankind.

James concludes his lecture by writing, "The solid meaning of life is always the same eternal thing, -- the marriage, namely, of some unhabitual ideal, however special, with some fidelity, courage, and endurance; with some man's or woman's pains. – And, whatever or wherever life may be, there will always be the chance for that marriage to take place."[455] Teachers and students alike must seek out that balance and meaning in life and marry the habit with the creative, the material with the natural, the black with the white, the beauty with the pain, the teacher with the student. In other words, life is made significant by the intentional growth in education towards a better internal and external lived life with sensitivity, inclusion, and acceptance towards other. This concept is further exemplified in the acknowledgement of life and education as incomplete and pluralistic.[456]

William James sees teaching as an art and he views education as a way to enrich one's thinking with more opportunities and possibilities. This is pluralistic. He writes:

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[455] James, 145.
[456] This includes an aim towards acknowledgement of the beauty of the incomplete.

> Intellectual education is essentially the preventive treatment for fogyism; it teaches us to enrich the mind with the greatest possible number of widely useful concepts, and at the same time to maintain intact and virgin, so far as possible, the faculty of adapting these concepts, the expression of the past, to the new objects which constitutes the interest of the future.[457]

It is up to the teacher in the teacher-student relationship to encourage creative thinking and plurality of thought so that "fogyism" can be prevented and a vision towards the future with multiple opportunities can be realized.

James contends that as thinkers, teachers are both actors and creators, with an active role in creating truth:

> I, for my part, cannot escape the consideration, forced upon me at every turn, that the knower is not simply a mirror floating with no foot-hold anywhere, and passively reflecting an order that comes upon and finds simply existing. The knower is an actor and coefficient of the truth on one side whilst on the other he registers the truth which he helps to create…[458]

James conceptualizes thinking (or, learning and teaching) as a process; it is incomplete, in flux, and in development.[459] It is also the role of the teacher to recognize that inclusion is not a static state of being in life or education. Rather, it is something one strives towards because, as James explains, "something always escapes" from the "best attempts" at seeking "all inclusiveness."[460]Teachers thus need to recognize their positionality within the knowledge construction process.

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[457] Boutroux, *William James*, 107. This is also cited in Aldrich, *As William James Said: a Treasury of His Work*, 70-71.

[458] William James, *William James; The Essential Writings*, ed. Bruce W. Wilshire (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 1878 introduction by William James.

[459] It is the role of the teacher to recognize that the relationship built with students, should be one that connected to pluralism as a theory of many lived experiences together side by side.

[460] It is a quest for recognizing that there is always something, some voice, some idea missing.

Within his pluralistic philosophy he is attempting to find a balance between monism, the one truth that must exist in philosophy and life, and pluralism, a view that allows for togetherness of ideas without a "great total conflux" that insists on one reality. He writes:

> For pluralism, all that we are required to admit as the constitution of reality is what we ourselves find empirically realized in every minimum of finite life. Briefly it is this, that nothing real is absolutely simple, that every smallest bit of experience is a *multum in parvo* plurally related, that each relation is one aspect, character, or function, way of its being taken, or way of its taking something else; that a bit of reality when actively engaged in one of these relations is not by that very fact engaged in all the other relations simultaneously.[461]

The "we" above can be applied to teachers, as "teachers" needs to admit that the "constitutions of reality is what we ourselves find empirically realized in every minimum of finite life." When teaching and co-constructing knowledge with students, the students' finite experiences and realities need to be considered within the classroom environment and curated curricula.

Jim Garrison writes, "In a pluralistic universe, there are always other, often unique, possibilities."[462] In constructing an inclusive classroom environment that is built upon the ideas of pluralism, it is the aim of the teacher to value the "assured notion of possibility."[463] In this section, I have explained how the concepts of pluralism and inclusion could be used in developing a classroom model that provides for plurality of

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[461] James, *William James; The Essential Writings*, 367.
[462] Garrison, "James's Metaphysical Pluralism, Spirituality, and Overcoming Blindness to Diversity in Education," in *William James & Education.* ed. Garrison et al. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002), 29.
[463] Boutroux, *William James,* 95.

experiences, realities, and possibilities. This openness in turn allows for creativity and spontaneity, both of which will be discussed in the following themes.

How can we connect William James from his metaphysical pluralism to education today? According to Stephen Rowe, "James can be helpful to us today… [he felt a] genuine affirmation of otherness."[464] This affirmation and appreciation of otherness is how teachers can build an inclusive classroom. Rowe writes, "The moral story [of James's regret for not finishing his work] might be that we are not the best judges of ourselves and our worth. The moral might also be that we await relationship with others for our own completion to occur."[465] Teaching is a process of learning that consists of growing both internally and with others. The process of co-constructing knowledge with the student is the part of the educational relationships that is needed. One cannot teach alone and there is no singular (monistic) view of "good" teaching.

Conclusion: James as Teacher and Pluralism

What is the connection between James as teacher, James as philosopher, and James's pluralism informing teacher-education? As a teacher, he was open-minded and inclusive. As a philosopher, he argued against monistic closed ways of thinking. As a means of informing teacher-student relationships, pluralism provides an opportunity for teachers to consider the moral good in teaching in an inclusive manner, thus inviting curiosity and conversation. In short, James's philosophy of pluralism is related to open and searching relationships he built with his students. James writes, "The most a

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[464] Stephen C. Rowe, "The Vision of James," in *The Spirit of Philosophy Series*, ed. Jacob Needleman (Rockport, Massachusetts: Element, 1996), 11.
[465] Rowe, 13.

philosophy can hope for is not to lock out any interest forever. No matter what doors it closes, it must leave other doors open for the interests which it neglects."[466] The same can be true of education and teacher-student relationships. An education should not lock out interest; rather, it should provide opportunities to engage in a plurality of inquiries.

Theme 2: Pragmatism

William James's teaching practice has been described as pluralistic, open-minded, and pragmatic. Similar to the philosophy of pragmatism that is a mediating method for understanding truth, James organized his courses around discussion in order to allow for debate and conversation. There are examples of his transparent thought process in the course. Former student Edwin Diller Starbuck recalls:

> We were always thinking *together*… One day he[James] ventured a diagram on the blackboard to clear up some notions we had stumbled into about relations existing between 'selfhood' 'cognition' … There were circles or lines symbolizing each of these and other states and processes. In going back over some of it he got a little ensnared in the entanglements. He backed away, cocked his head to one side and remarked, 'What the deuce have we got here anyhow!' With friendly smiles and a chuckle the members of the group helped to disentangle the snarl… that sort of 'teaching' made us like the subject and love the instructor.[467]

This example demonstrates the process by which James mediated truth with his students. Similarly, the teacher-student relationship between James and Gertrude Stein exemplifies pragmatism as a future-oriented theory similar to consequentialism, a concept that considers what future good comes from one theory/action over another. Joshua Miller

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[466] James, "Lecture I- The Types of Philosophic Thinking."
[467] Edwin Diller Starbuck, "A Students Impressions of James" in *William James Remembered*. Ed. Linda Simon. (University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln, 1996), 168-169.

tells the story of how James was an innovative teacher and taught Gertrude Stein at

Radcliffe:

> After reading the questions on the final exam, Stein wrote a note, 'Dear
> Professor James, I am so sorry but really I do not feel like an examination paper
> in philosophy today' and left the class. The next day she received James's reply:
> 'Dear Miss Stein, I understand perfectly how you feel. I often feel like that
> myself.' He gave her the highest mark in the class.[468]

This story shows that James is caring, but also that perhaps if a student demonstrates a

clear understanding and knowledge of the course throughout the year, then a missed

paper at the end does not lead to the student failing the course.[469]

James's Explicit Views on Education Related to Pragmatism

In relation to pragmatism, James believes that education should have some

connection to the lived experiences of the student and that the content should provide

some future good, or "cash-value."[470] Although James's *Pragmatism* may have been

more directed towards the fields of philosophy and psychology, his discussion of the

opportunities within a pluralistic society and the openness that is essential for students to

flourish are concepts that are relevant to the educator.

In his explanation of the pragmatic method for understanding ideas, truth, and

experience, James writes:

> …If you follow the pragmatic method, you cannot look on any such word as
> closing your quest. You must bring out of each word its practical cash-value, set it
> at work within the stream of your experience. It appears less as a solution, then,

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[468] Joshua Miller, "William James on Teaching Democracy," *Civic Arts Review*, vol 11. n1 *Win-Spr 1998*
(1998), 10-15.

[469] Emotions matter, and consequences of that nature do not detract from the semester of work and deserve
a failing grade.

[470] James does not explicitly connect pragmatism to education, thus implicit connections need to be drawn
out, which is the purpose of this work.

than as a program for more work, and more particularly as an indication of the ways in which existing realities may be changed.[471]

Thus, James is explaining that pragmatism is a practical and future-oriented method that focuses on continuous development. As James puts it, it is "less as a solution, than as a program for more work."

Although James does not explicitly describe pragmatism in *Talks to Teachers*, he does discuss interest, attention, and the importance of teachers connecting the subject matter to the lived experiences of the students. He writes:

> Any object not interesting in itself may become interesting through becoming associated with an object in which an interest already exists. The two associated objects grow, as it were, together: the interesting portion sheds its quality over the whole; and thus things not interesting in their own right borrow an interest which becomes as real and as strong as that of any natively interesting thing.[472]

In other words, the interest's "cash-value" is brought forth when it is connected to the experiences of the students. It is the role of the teacher to make these connections transparent. James continues by relating the lived experience and the role of the teacher to interest:

> From all these facts there emerges a very simple abstract programme for the teacher to follow in keeping the attention of the child: Begin with the line of his native interests, and offer him objects that have some immediate connection with these.[473]

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[471] William James, *Pragmatism; A New Name for Some Old ways of Thinking* (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1907; repr. Mineola: Dover, 1995). See also William James, "Pragmatism, A New Name for an Old Way of Thinking," in *The Collected Works of William James: A Comprehensive Work*, ed. John McDermott (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1966).
[472] William James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and Students on Some of Life's Ideals* (New York: Holt, 1899; repr. Mineola: Dover, 1962).
[473] James, "Lecture X, Interest."

Jamesian pragmatism deserves attention within philosophy of education due to its unique characteristics and James's implementation of these ideas in his classroom. First, as we have seen, James was a brilliant teacher who embodied a pragmatic persona.[474] His former students regularly referred to his discussion-based classrooms in which he pushed to have students ask questions and reflect on the results of those conversations.

Second, James's pragmatic persona and openness of the mind enabled him to value the link between questioning (inquiry) and the individual. James's model of pragmatism argues against the traditional absolutist views present in philosophical study. This model explains the divide between the "tough-minded" (empiricists) and "tender-minded" (rationalists) researchers and argues for a more nuanced and inclusive view of oneself. James thus argues against armchair philosophers who engage in circular debates in which the "winner" fails to receive a real prize because there is no "cash-value" in being right or wrong. In short, James is really getting to the heart of the value of questions. We need to ask the right questions in order to answer, "What difference would it practically make to anyone if this notion rather than that notion were true?" James introduces the aim of the pragmatic method as a unique way of understanding truth and understanding how to trace the value of an argument, he writes:

> The pragmatic method is primarily a method of settling metaphysical disputes that otherwise might be interminable. Is the world one or many? — fated or free? — material or spiritual? — … The pragmatic method in such cases is to try to interpret each notion by tracing its respective practical consequences. What difference would it practically make to anyone if this notion rather than that notion were true? If no practical difference whatever can be traced, then the

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[474] Truman G. Madsen, presents an entire article dedicated to the unique teaching persona of James. Truman G. Madsen "William James Philosopher-Educator" in *Brigham Young University Studies.* 4.1. Autumn, Provo Utah: Brigham Young University, (1961): 81-105.

alternatives mean practically the same thing, and all dispute is idle. Whenever a dispute is serious, we ought to be able to show some practical difference that must follow from one side or the other's being right.[475]

For education, a teacher might reflect, "What practical difference does *this* lesson have over teaching *that* lesson for the future outcomes of my students?"[476] The first step in asking these deep metaphysical questions, however, involves creating an inclusive classroom environment that values pluralism.

Jamesian pragmatism also values experience.[477] James writes, "What you want is a philosophy that will not only exercise your powers of intellectual abstraction, but that will make some positive connexion with this actual world of finite human lives."[478] If we substitute the word *philosophy* for *education*, it is clear that the ends are the same: "What you want is an *education* that will not only exercise your powers of intellectual abstraction, but that will make some positive connexion with this actual world of finite human lives."[479] Borrowing this concept from James, teachers may ask: "How does this lesson 'make a positive connection with this actual world of finite human lives?' of my students?"

Connecting pluralism, to pragmatism, James's philosophy of pragmatism is discussed in *Will to Believe*. He argues for the benefit of including religious conversation

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[475] James, *Pragmatism; A New Name for Some Old ways of Thinking*,16-17.
[476] With questions like this we might critically challenge and push back against past models and lessons taught. This could potentially open the door to helping schools restructure their pasts for a better future. Also, similar to Dewey, "how can my students be involved in that decision?"
[477] Both Dewey and Peirce also value experience, but James's philosophy has more attention and weight placed on it.
[478] James, *Pragmatism; A New Name for Some Old ways of Thinking*. 8.
[479] This is where John Dewey's progressive model of education has done a great job. He attempts to build a pedagogy that is project-based (though that is more Kilpatrick), student-centered, and problem-centered.

within scientific inquiry that employs a pluralistic doctrine. He goes on to explain the

norms of human life, moral development, and how to lead the best life. This connects not

only to metaphysics, life, and education, but also to teacher-student relationships. James

considers the value of unique experience in connection to the moral good as the main

purpose of *Will to Believe*:

> … There is no such thing possible as an ethical philosophy dogmatically made up in advance. We all help to determine the content of ethical philosophy so far as we contribute to the race's moral life. In other words, there can be no final truth in ethics any more than in physics, until the last man has had his experience and said his say.[480]

James's claims here emphasize the power of experience in determining ethics and present

an argument against a unifying singular moral ethic. In education, this means that while

the teacher is responsible for providing the tools for engaging in unique situations, s/he

cannot provide a *set* road map for how to solve or approach each problem or ethical

dilemma with a singular solution. Similar to the difference in every experience and

perspective, ethics exists within that space of the amorphous and changes case by case.[481]

James constructs a normative argument within ethics in order to connect the

metaphysical to the individual. He states:

> The zone of the individual differences, and of the social "twists" which by common confession they initiate, is the zone of formative processes, the dynamic belt of quivering uncertainty, the line where past and future meet. It is the theatre of all we do not take for granted, the stage of the living drama of life; and however narrow its scope, it is roomy enough to lodge the whole range of human passions.[482]

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[480] William James, "Will to Believe," in *William James; The Essential Writings*, ed. Bruce W. Wilshire (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 184. This idea could also be conceived as purporting the value in "collaborative experience" (new concept) as a pluralistic endeavor.
[481] When teaching ethics, I share that ethics is a "grey" area for discussion. Meaning that one solution cannot be used for every situation or scenario, thus it is amorphous.
[482] James, 260.

He argues that life, while seemingly "narrow" in scope, is actually "roomy" enough to house the whole range of human passions. In teaching and learning, therefore, there is space to engage with diverse ideas and interests.

Similar to the manner in which truth *happens* to an idea in pragmatism, James explains, "…the truth of an idea is not a stagnant property inherent in it. Truth happens to an idea. It becomes true, is made true by events. Its verity is in fact an event, a process: the process namely of its verifying itself, its verification. Its validity is the process of its validation."[483] This process of truth-validation also connects to reaching enlightenment about truth and knowledge through education. Learning is an "event."

James's moral philosophy relates pragmatism to the human experience. In *Memories and Studies*, he writes about the connection of the university to the human personality: "We are only beginning in this country with our extraordinary reliance on organization to see that the alpha and omega in a university is the tone of it and that this tone is set by human personalities exclusively."[484] Meaning, that the individual human personality is important within larger institutions and makes up that "tone." This moral, human good, and personality, is echoed in *Will to Believe*. In *Will to Believe*, the moral value in living starts with the belief in that value. James explains:

> Be not afraid of life. Believe that life *is* worth living, and your belief will help create the fact. The "scientific proof" that you are right may not be clear before the day of judgment (or some stage of being which that expression may serve to symbolize) is reached. But the faithful fighters of this hour, or the beings that then

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[483] William James, "Pragmatism's conceptions of Truth," in *Pragmatism; A New Name for Some Old ways of Thinking* (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1907; repr Mineola: Dover Publication, 1995).
[484] William James. "Stanford's Ideal Destiny" in *Memories and Studies*. Ed. Henry James Jr. (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1911). First presented at Stanford University on Founder's Day, 1906. Printed in *Science,* for May 25, 1906.

and there will represent them, may then turn to the faint-hearted, who here decline to go on…[485]

The role of the pragmatic teacher is to consider how to facilitate a learning environment that provides a plurality of opportunities that will result in an interest-driven, future-oriented utility for the student. Using James's pragmatism, it is important to consider the value of encouraging questions and inquiry within a classroom setting, a mindset that emphasizes the individual voice within the learning community. In classroom instruction, reflective questions can assist teachers in creating lessons that are future-oriented and connect to the lives and lived experiences of the students.

Connecting Pragmatism to Pragmatic Education.

In order to understand how Jamesian pragmatism applies to teacher-student relationships, it is important to first consider how pragmatism is defined and its treatment in scholarship. James does not directly or explicitly tie pragmatism to education; as such, this work draws inferences from the text, and connects the two. In his summary of James's pragmatism, Louis Menand explains, "the ultimate test for us of what a truth means is indeed the conduct it dictates or inspires… the effective meaning of any philosophic proposition can always be brought down to [the] particular consequence, in our future practical experience…"[486] Thus, pragmatism is a process in understanding the outcome and consequence related to practice.

Does the teacher go round the student or does the student round the teacher? It not only depends on how one defines "round," but also on how one defines education,

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[485] James, "Will to Believe," 62.
[486] *Pragmatism a Reader*, ed. Louis Menand (Vintage Publishing: New York, 1997), xiii. He is here citing James.

pragmatism, and the role of the teacher and student. James attests that "pragmatism unstiffens all our theories, limbers them up and sets each one at work."[487] James's pragmatism thus considers the problems with closed systems and determinism that yield *one* final truth. Specifically, I believe he is arguing against the old guard of traditionalism, which holds up the walls of philosophy with no doors or windows for entry from other thinkers or thoughts. This conceptualization is mirrored in educational theories that present either a passive or a constructivist view about student inclusion. Arguing against the "old guard," with its emphasis on "rote memorization," a pragmatic vision of teacher-student relationships includes the students and values them instead of providing readymade and established *educational truths*.

James describes pragmatism as a "mediating way of thinking."[488] Menand expands and explicates the value in Jamesian pragmatism, "pragmatism is … an effort to unhitch human beings from what pragmatists regard as useless structure of bad abstractions about thought."[489] From this point, we begin to see pragmatism as a type of process-driven methodology. I would add that pragmatists often consider how to recognize and define truth, including the processes by which a truth becomes realized as such and how people discover, make sense of, and assimilate certain truths within their established frameworks of veracity. The learning and teaching that occur in education

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[487] James, *Pragmatism; A New Name for Some Old ways of Thinking*, (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1907). (Reprint Dover Edition, Dover Publication, 1995), 19.
[488] William James. *Pragmatism; A New Name for Some Old ways of Thinking*. (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1907). (Reprint Dover Edition, Dover Publication, 1995), 15.
[489] Louis Menand ed., *Pragmatism: A Reader*. (New York: Vintage, 1997).

closely align with this definition of pragmatism as a process for finding, assimilating, and understanding truth based on experience. .

As explained above, pragmatism is both a theory for understanding truth as well as a method for settling metaphysical disputes mediating one outcome over the other. Understanding pragmatism further, it is important to distinguish Pragmatism (capital P) from pragmatism (lower case). As a philosophical method, then, pragmatism is not to be confused with the colloquial terms pragmatic or practical, James interrogates the questions that philosophers have been debating when he considers, "What is the cash-value in terms of practical experience?"[490] Instead, he thought that they should ask, "What special difference would come into the world accordingly as it were true or false?" He makes a similar claim in *Pragmatism*: "the truth is the name for whatever proves itself to be good in the way of belief, and good, too, for definite and assignable reasons."[491]

He considers the consequences that would result if one answer or another were presented in a dispute.[492] How does this relate to teacher-student relationships, since James does not explicitly connect pragmatism to education? It is the aim of the teacher to recognize the good in the lessons taught in order to enable future growth in the students. As a teacher, it is important to reflect on the consequentialist views of the lessons and content as well as on the relationship built with the students.

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[490] Menand, *Pragmatism: A Reader,* xiv. He is here citing James.
[491] Menand, xiv.
[492] One statement from James that exemplifies this is that we should not <u>ask if there IS or IS not a G-d, instead</u> we should consider what good comes to those that think one way or another and what consequence that belief has on the person.

In "The Ph.D. Octopus," James recognizes the problems within higher education that exist in his time (and that persist today).[493] These include the narrowed focus on technical teaching and learning without acknowledgement of the unique native skills of students. He sees a problem with the increased "specialization" in education towards a "badge" (the PhD) without respect for the individual growth that cannot be quantified by a grade. His solutions, which relate to the link between pragmatism and teacher-student relationships, are threefold. First, he suggests that universities need "lower standards" that would allow for a consideration of the "brilliantly gifted individual" and identify the "native distinctions" which need an "official stamp."[494] He suggests balancing the changed standards with the individual, to ensure that the tough, tender, religious, or metaphysical not be "turned out." Also balancing expertise with hard work with natural skill, he does not want to abolish higher education and recognizes that "faithful labor, however commonplace, and years devoted to a subject, always deserve to be acknowledged and requited."[495]

Next, James argues against the titles that are more for vanity than anything else: "…Let them [colleges and universities] give up their unspeakably silly ambition to bespangle their lists of offices with these doctorial titles. Let them look more to substance and less to vanity and sham."[496] This model of valuing of "substance" within the teacher-

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[493] William James. "The Ph.D. Octopus," in *Memories and Studies*. Ed. Henry James Jr. (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1911). First published in *Harvard Monthly* (Boston), 1903 in March.
[494] James, "The Ph.D. Octopus."
[495] James, "The Ph.D. Octopus."
[496] James, "The Ph.D. Octopus."

student relationship is demonstrated in the countless stories of students being invited into the James home for the joy of conversation and learning.[497]

In his third solution, James connects the concepts of experience, cash-value, and the teacher and student. He explains that the key lies with the "individual student and with his personal adviser in the faculties."[498] He describes certain barriers to access. Some students, for example, would take on the higher degrees but refuse to because the examinations "interfere with the free following out of [their] more immediate intellectual aims."[499] In a different, ideal, higher educational system, students "would not be made to suffer for [their] independence." [500] James laments the passing of these exams as "very grievous interferences." [501] He suggests that "private letters of recommendations from their instructors" should help as an alternative, and that there should be flexibility in the university to allow instructors to "advise students against it [the exam]" when needed, considering the future "market-struggle" that the student will have to face.[502] It seems, then, that James is suggesting that advisors have a meaningful, authentic relationship with their advisees. This relationship should demonstrate the advisor's interest in their advisee's future success that is balanced with their present challenges.

He concludes his lecture by considering the American spirit of individuality juxtaposed with the university, which goes against the "soul" of the state. He states that it

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[497] W.E.B. Du Bois, Horace Kallen, and Diller Starbuck describe and look back upon these home visits with fondness.
[498] James, "The Ph.D. Octopus."
[499] James, "The Ph.D. Octopus."
[500] James, "The Ph.D. Octopus."
[501] James, "The Ph.D. Octopus."
[502] James, "The Ph.D. Octopus."

is "odd to see this love of titles" while growing up in America, when individuality is part of the American soul.[503] To both colleges and politics, he poses a question: "Is individuality with us also going to count for nothing unless stamped and licensed and authenticated by some title-giving machine?"[504] He then expresses his worries on the subject: "Let us pray that our ancient national genius may long preserve vitality enough to guard us from a future so unmanly [inhuman] and so unbeautiful!"[505] James is arguing against the emergent trends in higher education that dehumanize the individual and replace her with titles, and as a result remove the "national genius," which is the mark of American individualism. He identifies this trend as having the potential to damage teacher-student relationships by making professors into the testers for these exams as well the ones bestowing degrees.

Transitioning from pragmatism applied to teacher-student relationships found within "The Ph.D. Octopus," this section concludes with a connection of pragmatism to pluralism. In defining pragmatism, James connects truth to pluralism. He writes: "Our account of truth is an account of truths in the plural, of processes of leading, realized in rebus, and having only this quality in common, that they pay."[506] He then explains what they pay for, suggesting that there are "numerous points" at which ideas are verified. He continues: "Truth for us is simply a collective name for verification-processes, just as health, wealth, strength, etc., are names for other processes connected with life, and also

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[503] James, "The Ph.D. Octopus."
[504] James, "The Ph.D. Octopus."
[505] James, "The Ph.D. Octopus."
[506] William James, *Pragmatism; A New Name for Some Old ways of Thinking* (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1907; repr. Mineola: Dover, 1995).

pursued because it pays to pursue them. Truth is made, just as health, wealth and strength are made, in the course of experience."[507] Thus, in using pragmatism to inform teacher-student relationships it becomes an experiential, process-driven method. This method presents skills for practice, it connects with experience, and it is fluid and changing, just as learning and education are. This experiential element is also corroborated by James's theories in *Will to Believe*.

In Menand's explanation of James's pragmatism, "the ultimate test for us of what a truth means is indeed the conduct it dictates or inspires… the effective meaning of any philosophic proposition can always be brought down to [the] particular consequence, in our future practical experience…"[508] Pragmatism exists in connection to experience and practice. While beginning as a metaphysical theory, it is always connected to "particular consequence" and "future practical experience."

Connecting Pragmatism to Education and Teacher-Student Relationships.

By connecting James's pragmatism, to his pedagogy, it becomes clear that the teacher-student relationship is also a process of mediating truth. James is concerned with the lack of openness and opportunity to discuss ideas outside of the scope of "normal" philosophy, such as religion.[509] James's pragmatism considers the problems with the concepts of determinism and closed systems that yield *one* final truth. This finality and singularity represents the same monistic and absolutist view that he is arguing against in

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[507] William James, *Pragmatism; A New Name for Some Old ways of Thinking* (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1907; repr. Mineola: Dover, 1995).

[508] Menand, *Pragmatism a Reader*, xiii. He is here citing James. It is also significant to note that what makes Jamesian pragmatism different than Peirce or Dewey is the willingness to open up the floodgate to experience and to experiences not understood within the scientific method of inquiry.

[509] I am appropriating the concept of "normal" science from Kuhn.

A Pluralistic Universe. I use pragmatism, pluralism, and habit tied to creativity because they complement one another. Using pragmatism to successfully attend to the needs of a student involves addressing the lived experience of that student and the plurality of her unique perspective. These concepts must then be combined under the practical future-oriented model that asks, "What good comes from this?" This mediating process also requires a level of habituation both towards this line of inquiry and towards spontaneity driven by the knowledge of the students' interests and needs. James's philosophies are rooted in experience, but also in relationship.

In practice, pragmatism can be construed as a process of asking questions. For example, if a teacher were to engage in a pragmatic teaching process, what questions would they ask regarding metaphysical issues, and what concepts of belief and will, get to the heart of these ideas? In order to have deep personal conversations and ask these larger questions, the first step is to build a positive relationship.

Pragmatism connects to the experiential level. Using the metaphysical theory of pragmatism, teachers can help students through existential questions and thoughts connected to their human experiences. In *Will to Believe*, James discusses how "belief" can impact human life. When viewed through the lens of pragmatism, however, these experiences are unique and individualized. Therefore, it is up to the teacher to understand each particular experience and to then collaborate to build an inclusive and pluralistic classroom. In this process, individual students think through the relational impact of beliefs and ideas. The ways in which these beliefs impact one's life is essentially how pragmatism dictates this future-oriented vision.

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James's philosophy of pragmatism provides a method for talking and interacting that can be used as a model in the classroom. By asking questions and examining how beliefs impact our lives, teachers are actively engaging in a relational project. Considering the philosophy of James, this pedagogical model is about building a community of inquiry in order to understand one another. This cannot be achieved without a relational understanding of the teacher and the student.

It is important to understand that when labeling either a teacher or a student as pragmatic, we are describing their use of the pragmatic method. A pragmatic teacher, for example, uses the pragmatic method and builds meaningful relationships with his students.[510] As explained above, the pragmatic method is "less of a solution, than as a program for more work" in which theories or questions "become instruments, not answers to enigmas, in which we can rest. We don't lie back upon them, we move forward, and, on occasion, make nature over again by their aid [through discussion and questions]."[511] This connects to teacher-student relationships because the teacher should not view lessons and connections with a student as linear and having a distinct conclusion; rather, teachers should engage in a process similar to that of a spiraling curriculum in which new experiences and ideas are added to previous lessons learned. This process would also connect with the idea of *aporia* and the goal of having students leave the classroom with more questions and with a desire and *eros* to learn more.[512]

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[510] For example: When teaching a lesson on who shot the first shot at Lexington green to start the revolutionary war, the answer to the question will not change the fact that the revolutionary war started and this was the location of the first shot.

[511] James. *Pragmatism; A New Name for Some Old ways of Thinking*, 19.

[512] Pamela Castella Crosby. *A Pluralistic University: William James and Higher Education*. (Florida State University Libraries, 2008). Dissertation. PhD. Crosby presents a similar argument applied to higher

James continues, "You want a system that will combine both things, the scientific loyalty to facts and willingness to take account of them, the spirit of adaptation and accommodation, in short, but also the old confidence in human values and the resultant spontaneity, whether of the religious or of the romantic type."[513] Here, James provides evidence for the value of balance between the scientific rigidity in philosophy with flexibility, creativity, and spontaneity. This connects to the teacher-student relationship because teachers should consider how to take account of these seemingly opposing outlooks and provide opportunities for students to engage in these discussions.

James further explains the complexity of human nature. He writes, "Most of us have, of course, no very definite intellectual temperament, we are a mixture of opposite ingredients, each one present very moderately."[514] This means that teachers should not assume a monolithic story for any student or narrow their students' identities to something that is not complex.

James explains, "The pragmatic philosophy … preserves as cordial a relation with facts… it neither begins nor ends by turning positive religious constructions out of doors — it treats them cordially as well."[515] This demonstrates open-mindedness in James's philosophy. He continues, "I hope I may lead you to find it just the mediating way of

education in her work. She discusses the application of inquiry and questions to education based on James. Invoking James, Crosby presents quotations. In order to make use of concepts so that the individual is in "better command of the situation" in which she finds herself (James 1911/1996c, Crosby, 57), James explains that we must use them to direct the mind to their origin—the world of perception. In order to do this we ask of them: What is their function? How do they operate? What is their value in helping us to live useful lives? What difference in our experienced lives can they make? (Crosby, 59–61). To ask what is a concept's use in our ongoing experience is to adhere to what James calls the Pragmatic Rule or what is often referred to as the Pragmatic Theory of Meaning.

[513] James, *Pragmatism; A New Name for Some Old ways of Thinking*. 19.
[514] James, 19.
[515] James, 19.

thinking that you require."[516] The use of the term "mediating" is valuable for understanding the teacher-student relationship. It is co-constructed and the teacher's role is to help students navigate and mediate different ways of thinking.

William James is arguing against a system set in philosophy and psychology that is rigid and does not permit new or radical ideas. He writes, "The actual universe is a thing wide open, but rationalism makes systems, and systems must be closed."[517] Applying James's ideas to teacher-student relationships, it becomes clear that it is the job of the teacher to present an "open" universe full of possibilities. Continuing to examine the "open possibilities," James explains that pragmatism "…means the open air and possibilities of nature, as against dogma, artificiality and the pretense of finality in truth."[518] When practiced in life and education, the pragmatic method can provide an opportunity to listen, think, reflect, and interact with fellow humans with a mindset to the "open air and possibilities" of nature.

Transitioning from the "open air" of possibilities, James then explains the process, which is more concrete, for reaching these ends (which opens again). James writes, "To attain perfect clearness in our thoughts of an object, then, we need only consider what conceivable effects of a practical kind the object may involve — what sensations we are to expect from it, and what reactions we must prepare."[519] When applying this concept to teacher-student relationships, it is important because we need to conceive of the effects of practical lessons, content, and relationships in education.

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[516] James, 19.
[517] James, 19.
[518] James, 19.
[519] James, 19.

Theme 3: Habit in balance with Creativity

Many scholars have discussed James in connection to interest and habit using *Talks to Teachers* and *Principles of Psychology*. Drawing from the psychology of habit (in addition to behavior, attention, and interest) found in *Principles of Psychology*, James speaks directly to the power of habit as connected to education in a *Briefer Course* and in *Talks to Teachers*. He argues that education is the organization of habits.

My research on James and education shows that many secondary sources include discussions of habit, and discuss his contribution to experiential education and educational psychology. Many themes arose within my research, but creativity and spontaneity did not emerge as central, distinct concepts. Instead they were discussed in connection to pedagogy and habit. Scholars have discussed the idea of individuality within James's work, and his students used the terms "creative" and "spontaneous" to discuss his pedagogy. Within his writings, there is evidence to support inferences that his philosophy of education can be tied to the balance of creativity and habit, and as such, is the role of the teacher to foster these processes in the classroom.[520] This balance can also

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[520] There are gaps in the scholarship related to many themes. Many authors discuss James and individualism. However, James was a complex figure in history and as such can easily be misinterpreted as being too individualistic. Within many of the sources, authors discuss individualism, creativity, and community. Wilshire and Podeschi go in depth building a strong foundation for continued scholarship on this theme. Clearly there is a basis to extend this scholarship and consider the relationship between the teacher and student more deeply within the idea of the individual and community. Future scholarship could consider the unique character of James as valuing individualism while also mediating or balancing the value of community in educational contexts. What continues to be neglected in most of the scholarship on James and education is a concrete connection moving from theory into practice. I hope to bridge this gap with tools for teachers that relate to the relationship building required in a meaningful educational setting where teachers can use inquiry and the philosophy of James and translate it into their pedagogy. In addition to the balance of habit with creativity, scholars have discussed joy, which finds a connection to creativity. Creativity was mentioned briefly in a few sources as well and is a complex construct. This could be further theorized and then applied to education using James's words and ideas to propel that work. However, creativity in itself is an entire dissertation in definition and framework. Joy also lives in this amorphous and enormous body of work.

be understood as a "cultivation" of habituating teachers to recognize the unique scenarios that emerge in teaching and to be responsive and attentive to the needs and interests of the students.

Many scholars have discussed the significance of James's theories about habit and education. According to Lawrence Cremin, "James felt the call of the future and the assurances that it could be made far better, totally other, than the past."[521] This is a melioristic outlook. Cremin continues with an explanation of how James understood the purpose of education:

> …[The purpose is] to organize his powers of conduct so as to fit him for his social and physical milieu. Interests must be awakened and broadened as the natural starting points of instruction. The will must be trained to sustain the proper attention for productive thought and ethical action. The right sorts of habits must be early inculcated to free the child for his role as an intelligent being, and his ideas must be put wherever possible to the practical test.[522]

Meaning, that habits are key parts of training in education. The "right habits" can help students be free and flexible to apply said habits to a plurality of future choices and experiences. It is the role of the teacher to help students "organize" those habits and then help them put those habits to the "test" in experience and life.

Some scholars have written about James's creativity. In "Speculation on Curriculum from the Perspective of William James,"[523] William Schubert and Georgiana Zissis discuss the implications of James's philosophy for curriculum theory, research, and practice. Their thesis revolves around a central question: "What if American education

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[521] Lawrence A. Cremin, *The Transformation of the School* (New York: Alfred A Knopf and Random House, 1961), 109. He is here citing George Santayana.
[522] Cremin, 108.
[523] William Schubert and Georgiana Zissis, "Speculation on Curriculum from the Perspective of William James," *Educational Theory* 38.4 (1988): 441-455.

had been informed by the legacy of William James rather than that of E.L.

Thorndike?"[524] Within their answer, they argue that James was more creative in thought

than Thorndike, (James's student) who was more traditional in process and research.

Within James's pedagogy, various aspects of the teacher-student relationship

include instinct, relationships, native tendencies, and habit.[525] According to Baldwin,

"Practically no one had mentioned instincts in relation to education previous to 1890, and

James was the first educator to call direct attention to the native resources of the child and

the place these native tendencies to reaction must necessarily have in any scheme of

education in which children are concerned." [526] He continues:

> Plato had emphasized the moral aim; Socrates, the dispelling of error and the
> discovery of truth; Aristotle, happiness through perfect virtue; Luther, service to
> the state and church; Spencer, preparation for complete living; Herbart, a many-
> sided interest; Harris, the reciprocal help between men, but James said,
> 'Education is the organization of acquired habits of conduct and tendencies to
> behavior.' [527]

Baldwin's explanation is also of note because it identifies James's influence on the

history of educational psychology as well as the history of education in general.

James's views on education were evident not only within his philosophy, but

also within his pedagogy. As an educator, James did not embrace commonly held habits.

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[524] Schubert and Zissis, 441. Schubert and Zissis provide a great deal of overlapping insight into the value
of "revisiting" Jamesian thought in education today. They explain the value of James within educational
theory suggesting the values in "conversation and dialogue" juxtaposed with James pragmatism, pluralism,
and theories of truth. "James's pragmatic, or active, view of truth acknowledges perspectivism, purpose,
and point of view as conditions of human thought. James's pragmatism recognizes the variety of
mindfulness with which persons may direct their attention as they strive to make sense of their worlds.
Every person lets one world prevail over another…," 444.
[525] This is similar to the ideas Henry Sr. proposed.
[526] Bird T. Baldwin, "William James' Contributions to Education," *Journal of Educational Psychology* 2
(1911): 375.
[527] Baldwin, 375.

There are descriptions of him walking about Harvard in a sports coat rather than a more

traditional suit. He would invite students into his home and gave attention and advice to

students, even when he had only met them briefly. This same kind of "inhabituation" can

be found within his role in the classroom.[528] One student recalled a time when James

came into class "almost late." He then moved to the front of the classroom only to pause,

look at the students, and "lift his index finger of his right hand above the forehead as if it

were the symbol of a new idea and remark 'Oh, excuse me, I forgot something,'" after

which he returned to share the latest texts. According to one student, "His 'lectures' were

always vitalizing. No studied rhetoric…"[529] Although James is famous for his ideas on

habit, his teaching demonstrates a balance between both habit and moments of creativity

and spontaneity.[530]

Choosing to write about habit balanced with creativity and spontaneity, my

inspiration came from the word used regularly to describe James as an educator—

spontaneous. Arthur Lovejoy's description of James attests to this spontaneity. He writes:

> It is, of course, a natural consequence of this that one of the two traits by which
> James's more directly ethical writings are chiefly distinguished is an
> exceptionally vivid feeling for the underived and intrinsic value of almost all
> distinctive and spontaneous manifestations of human nature, the indefensible
> validity of each personal point of view not itself merely negative and destructive

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[528] I am coining this term to describe the unique balance between habit and flexibility seen in James's pedagogy.

[529] Edwin Diller Starbuck, "Impressions of James in the Middle 90s," in *William James Remembered*, ed. Linda Simon (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 168. This student has quotation marks around the word 'lectures' because his teaching style was really more discussion-based.

[530] One student remembers James in his tweed sports coat, which made him stand out and look more casual than his colleagues in their dark suits. James was inspired by Darwin and writes that it is our good fortune that evolution gave us minds to make decisions. See Robert Richardson, *William James, in the Maelstrom of Modernism* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2007) and Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club; A Story of Ideas in America* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001).

of others, the inner significance for itself, when lived simply and heartily, of every separate pulse of vital experience.[531]

Lovejoy's points speak to the manner in which James's moral values impacted his philosophy and teaching. The "inner significance" for life and vital experiences is James's pluralism in action.

Looking to the habits instilled within James's teaching, it is clear that he was a model teacher-learner, someone who was always learning with and from his students. His classes were structured in a way that allowed for both inquiry and discussion. He maintained the space and flexibility necessary to attend to the needs of the students while still teaching particular content. This is evidenced from many students who outline a similar model of teaching, demonstrating a balance of habit, structure, and flexibility as well as creativity and spontaneity

<u>James's Explicit Views on Education Tied to Habit and Creativity/Spontaneity</u>

James has much to say on habit in education and the instructor's role in teaching habit. He also discusses how teachers should embrace their own creativity and ingenuity and contends that students should balance dedicated study time with flexibility. These two ideas might appear to be in conflict with each other. How can habit coexist with spontaneity? These claims both speak to the concepts of freedom and experience. In *Talks to Teachers*, James defines the relationship between education and habit, emphasizing the need for teachers to realize the importance of habit. He writes:

> … We speak, it is true, of good habits and of bad habits; but, when people use the word 'habit,' in the majority of instances it is a bad habit, which they have in

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[531] Arthur Lovejoy, "William James as Philosopher," in *William James Remembered*, ed. Linda Simon (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 158.

mind… But the fact is that our virtues are habits as much as our vices. All our life, so far as it has definite form, is but a mass of habits,—practical, emotional, and intellectual,—systematically organized for our weal or woe, and bearing us irresistibly toward our destiny, whatever the latter may be.[532]

Habit is more than an "automatic" process; it is also moral. Transitioning from discussing habit writ large, James directs teachers as to how they should attend to and teach habit to students. He argues that students can understand the good of habit-building at an early age and feel the benefit of gaining responsibilities. He explains, "…it would be well if the teacher were able himself to talk to them of the philosophy of habit in some such abstract terms as I am now about to talk of it to you."[533] James discusses how building habits leads to ease of activity and that our minds (brains) are plastic and subject to changing impression:

> I believe that we are subject to the law of habit in consequence of the fact that we have bodies. The plasticity of the living matter of our nervous system, in short, is the reason why we do a thing with difficulty the first time, but soon do it more and more easily, and finally, with sufficient practice, do it semi-mechanically, or with hardly any consciousness at all.[534]

It is important to note that James here uses the term "plasticity" to imply the flexibility that comes with human experience, demonstrating that habit plays a role in balancing the flexible with the automatic. He continues:

> Could the young but realize how soon they will become mere walking bundles of habits, they would give more heed to their conduct while in the plastic state. We are spinning our own fates, good or evil, and never to be undone. Every smallest stroke of virtue or of vice leaves its never-so-little scar…. Nothing we ever do is, in strict scientific literalness, wiped out.[535]

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[532] William James, "The Laws of Habit," in *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and Students on Some of Life's Ideals* (New York: Holt, 1899; repr. Mineola: Dover, 1962).

[533] James, "The Laws of Habit." This quotation also demonstrates James as a model teacher and learner because he is explicitly modeling how to teach students complex ideas.

[534] James, "The Laws of Habit."

[535] James, 34.

James explains that students are "mere walking bundles of habits." As such, it is the role of the teacher to help enlighten them to this reality in order to help them conduct and develop the best habits at an early age.

James continues to describe the value in understanding habit tied to human nature and then relates this to education. He explains that we are bundles of habits, but also "stereotyped creatures," imitators and "copiers" of our past selves. Due to these circumstances, he contends that the "teacher's prime concern should be to ingrain into the pupil that assortment of habits that shall be most useful to him throughout life. Education is for behavior, and habits are the stuff of which behavior consists."[536]

James balances the value of habit and knowledge of content with the flexibility and ingenuity of the teacher. He also connects habit to life by arguing that people can unlock potential if the most basic daily habits are solidified, thus allowing for more complex workings of the mind can be attended to and developed:

> …the great thing in all education is to *make our nervous system our ally instead of our enemy*. It is to fund and capitalize our acquisitions, and live at ease upon the interest of the fund. *For this we must make automatic and habitual, as early as possible, as many useful actions as we can*, and as carefully guard against them growing into ways that are likely to be disadvantageous. The more of the details of our daily life we can hand over to the effortless custody of automatism, the more our higher powers of mind will be set free for their own proper work. There is no more miserable human being than one in whom nothing is habitual but indecision…If there be such daily duties not yet ingrained in any one of my hearers, let him begin this very hour to set the matter right.[537]

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[536] James, 33.
[537] James, 34.

James recognizes the value of habit not just as educative, but as essential to living a life worth living. He sees the good in attaining "higher powers of mind" when daily habits are ingrained so that they do not become barriers to accessing this ideal life. In this regard, habit is something that is taught for the good of the individual that has larger implications for the moral good of life and relationship-building in society.

Similar to his discussion in *Talks to Teachers*, in *Principles of Psychology* James quotes previous theories of habit that are popular at the time and then inserts his own ideas. After referring to Dr. Bain and his two maxims of habit, James writes:

> A third maxim may be added to the preceding pair: *Seize the very first possible opportunity to act on every resolution you make, and on every emotional prompting you may experience in the direction of the habits you aspire to gain.* It is not in the moment of their forming, but in the moment of their producing motor effects, that resolves and aspirations communicate the new 'set' to the brain.[538]

I interpret this "seizure" as the process of realizing one's potential for spontaneous action—the ability to choose and act on desire, emotion, interest, and habit. In further explanation of the creative good in teachers and the need to identify and seize the right time, James writes his fourth maxim:

> *Don't preach too much to your pupils or abound in good talk in the abstract*. Lie in wait rather for the practical opportunities, be prompt to seize those as they pass, and thus at one operation get your pupils both to think, to feel, and to do. The strokes of *behavior* are what give the new set to the character, and work the good habits into its organic tissue. Preaching and talking too soon become an ineffectual bore.[539]

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[538] James, 35.

[539] James, 36. This also connects to pragmatism because he is arguing from concrete connections over abstractions that lead to no future value for the students.

This demonstrates that habit is a process to be practiced and that instructors are responsible for teaching this process. This maxim also suggests that teachers should provide opportunities for students "to do" or practice that experience or habit. In this instance, the "seize" refers to teachers being attentive and responsive to making connections with students.

Connecting the Philosophy of Habit, to Education Tied to Creativity and Interest

Creativity can be tied to many concepts, including interest and habit. James's *Principles of Psychology* and *Talks to Teachers* speak to the ideas of creativity as an essential part of building a positive teacher-student relationship. Creativity is in part defined as the ability to help one create noble ideas.[540] According to E. Paul Torrance, leading psychologist on creativity and innovation studies, creativity is fostered in education when teachers allow students to be exposed to multiple experiences, finding joy (or interest) in those activities.[541] As an entry point, James's pluralism thus finds purchase with the idea of creativity, particularly with the concepts of "multiple experiences" and interest tied to habit.

In *Principles of Psychology*, James speaks of humans as animals within a scientific framework, yet he still includes the idea of education. He continues to emphasize how animals (and humans) are "bundles of habits" and contends that while these daily behaviors are implanted at birth in animals, such behaviors in humans are the "result of education":

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[540] Richardson notes that James is a pluralist to the bone. It is no wonder that it has been documented that James even objected to standard spelling for words.

[541] E. Paul Torrance, *The Manifesto; The Guide to Developing A Creative Career* (Westport, Connecticut: Ablex Publishing, 2002).

> The habits to which there is an innate tendency are called instincts; some of those due to education would by most persons be called acts of reason. It thus appears that habit covers a very large part of life, and that one engaged in studying the objective manifestations of mind is bound at the very outset to define clearly just what its limits are.[542]

James's claims here create an exigency in the teacher to help students develop a sense of "reason" and "choice" in identifying the habits that are best suited to help in human development and educational growth. This excerpt also emphasizes James's strong belief in the importance of education.

In *Talks to Teachers*, James explains that the teacher should teach in an inclusive, creative, and experience-based manner. As I discussed earlier, James was critical of teaching methods that failed to engage with students: "Don't preach too much to your pupils or abound in good talk in the abstract."[543] According to James, "Instruction must be camed on objectively, experimentally, anecdotally."[544] This means that the students and teachers together should share stories and life in the process of learning. In this way, learning is co-constructed and shared between the teacher and student.[545]

In *Talks to Teachers*, James explains the value of psychology on education but also provides a caveat explaining that teaching is still ultimately an art. He writes that psychology alone cannot "deduce definite programmes and schemes and methods of instruction for immediate schoolroom use" because "psychology is a science, and

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[542] James, "Habit," *Principles*, 104.

[543] William James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and Students on Some of Life's Ideals* (New York: Holt, 1899; repr. Mineola: Dover, 1962), 144. This is also cited in Aldrich, *As William James Said: a Treasury of His Work*, 71.

[544] James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and Students on Some of Life's Ideals*, 93.

[545] This point of view is also supported by William Schubert and Georgiana Zissis as mentioned above in footnote on the second page as they compare the creativity of James in contrast to the structured psychology of Thorndike.

teaching is an art." Thus, "sciences never generate arts directly out of themselves."[546] He argues that an intermediary inventive mind must make the application by using its originality.[547] This claim speaks to the balance that teachers must find in building relationships with their students. Because the process is an art, it is up to the teacher to be creative in how they teach; and though science can inform that process, it should not be prescriptive. James describes this as an "intermediary inventive mind" in which the teacher must use her "originality." James is discussing creativity. This connects to the metaphor James's uses in *Principles* concerning the good in habit with a pianist practicing. When a pianist uses habits to learn all aspects of piano, then the pianist has the ability to improvise and be creative.

James also explains that because teaching is an art, people can teach differently and have similar positive results. He continues, "Knowing psychology does not equal being a good teacher." In other words, "Psychology can only help teachers," but ultimately we still need to have creative and inventive teachers.[548] James also explains how important it is that teachers get to know their students. They can only build meaningful relationships by understanding students' various interests and then capturing the attention of their students to help them learn.[549]

When discussing interest, James writes, "One learns best by his/her own activity."[550] He must take the first step himself. This means that in order to consider the

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[546] James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and Students on Some of Life's Ideals*, 3.
[547] James, 3.
[548] James, 3-4.
[549] James, 4.
[550] James, 393.

teacher-student relationship, one must first respect the inherent curiosity and interest of the student and then foster those experiences. This idea is not surprising when considering the fact that Henry James Sr. promoted creativity and natural instinct within his children's education.[551]

There are connections between the processes of habit building and finding one's interest that may in turn promote creativity within the classroom. Other scholars have noted William James's analysis of habit in relationship to teaching. Using *Talks to Teachers,* Eric Bredo contends that teachers should start with and then build upon the interests of the student.[552] Further developing concepts about the student's ability to have an active mind and be an individual, Bredo also references *Principles of Psychology* in order to support James's work on habit and habit building.[553]

James discusses the trends of the days in education, which sound similar to teacher education programs today. He writes:

> …they talk much in pedagogic circles today about the duty of the teacher to prepare for every lesson in advance. To some extent this is useful. But we Yankees are assuredly not those to whom such a general doctrine should be preached. We are only too careful as it is. The advice I should give to most teachers would be in the words one who is herself an admirable teacher. Prepare yourself in the subject so well that it shall be always on tap: then in the classroom trust your spontaneity and fling away all further care.[554]

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[551] As mentioned in the previous chapter, James's father wanted to preserve the native interests and instincts of the students to learn naturally without input or control from other adults or authorities.

[552] Bredo, "William James and Darwin," in *William James & Education*, ed. Eric Bredo, et al. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002).

[553] Bredo, "William James and Darwin." I agree that habit is one foundation of James's thought that is found throughout his writings that have a direct application to education, but are not *limiting* in the impact. Meaning, habit may sound like a closed system of life and life style, but ultimately James explains that one must make the monotonous tasks in life habitual so that you have more space to think, and that one should be steadfast in habit building and be committed if you want to make a change (this is seen when he discusses new habits; do not introduce new habits until that first one is solid.)

[554] James, "Gospel of Relaxation," in *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and Students on Some of Life's Ideals*, 109.

This description gets to the center of James's vision of education, a vision that is based on creativity and spontaneity alongside his theories of habit. Within the classroom itself, a teacher needs to find balance between what they know and the incomplete pluralistic world of experiences. Teaching is an art in this balance of the known (content) and the unknown (educative experiences that arise in concert with the inclusion of the experiences of students). This again connects to the metaphor of the pianist having the knowledge of piano "on tap" so that they can "fling it away" as they create and improvise.

James has similar advice not only for teachers, but also for students. In his advice to students, he writes:

> … Just as a bicycle-chain may be too tight so may one's carefulness and conscientiousness be so tense as to hinder the running of one's mind…. If you want really to do your best at an examination, fling away the book the day before, say to yourself 'I won't waste another minute on this miserable thing, and I don't care an iota whether I succeed or not.'… go out and play, or go to bed and sleep…[555]

This advice supports the ideas of creativity, spontaneity, and relaxation in education. Although written over 100 years ago, these words have striking parallels in today's world. In the current educational system, it is commonly believed that students are too tightly wound and that teachers are pressured to teach more content than ever before. These two factors are detrimental to the relationships between teachers and students.

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[555] James, 109-110. I removed part of this quotation where James makes a point that it is especially girl-students who are most tightly wound as it does not add to the point. That being said, I am unclear as to why this is directed towards women. Is he being gendered or sexist in his understanding of mental and emotional capacities? Is he speaking from experience with female students? It is unclear. There is evidence that he was inclusive and had women students, thus it may not be derogatory, but it is worth including this note to recognize this language for future study.

James emphasizes the value of living and suggests that school is not an all-encompassing life—it is just part of a larger whole. It is the job of the teacher to help students live their best lives. He argues this same point in his critiques of higher education.

James explains the aspects of education that prevent a more creative and spontaneous education. In "The PhD Octopus," he describes the barriers to creativity and teacher-student relationships. He argues against the rigid establishment in higher education and the false belief in credentialing as a process that is correlated to a meaningful education, which actually speaks to a lack of attention towards the character of the person.[556] He writes, "Organization and method mean much, but contagious human characters mean more in a university, where a few undisciplinables… may be infinitely more precious than a faculty-full of orderly routinists."[557] This connects to understanding the "human character" and moral good that results from education (in addition to learning content). Part of considering the creativity and spontaneity of the student relies upon building an interest in the student. According to James, teachers are tasked with building the positive teacher-student relationships that recognize the good in human character while simultaneously instilling "routines" or "good" moral habits in their students.

James explains, "interest is of signal importance to learning." He further explains, "In teaching, you must simply work your pupil into such a state of interest in what you

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[556] William James, *Collected Works of William James*, ed. John McDermott.(Chicago; University of Chicago Press, 1978), 839. See also James, "The Ph.D. Octopus," 36, 1-9. One problem mentioned in "The PhD Octopus" is "our colleges ought to have lit up in us a lasting relish for the … appetite for mediocrities." This is also cited in Aldrich, *As William James Said: a Treasury of His Work*, 71.
[556] James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and Students on Some of Life's Ideals*, 73
[557] James, *Collected Works of William James*, 839. See also James, "The Ph.D. Octopus," 36, 1-9. This is also cited in Aldrich, *As William James Said: a Treasury of His Work*, 73-74.

are going to teach him that every other object of attention is banished from his mind."[558]

Connecting this to the teacher-student relationship, it is clear that a teacher should attend

to the interests of the students and help facilitate learning in that way. Conversely, this

argument may seem too simplistic. In taking James's advice, a student will learn if the

teacher can tap into the student's interest and in part "entertain" the student. In reality,

"banishing" other thoughts from the minds of students may be harder if their lives are

more complex than what occurs within the classroom setting. Simply having an

"interesting" or interest-driven" lesson may not be enough.

James writes, "In real life, our memory is always used in the service of some

interest; we remember things we care for or which are associated with things we care

for."[559] This means that as teachers, we need to tap into this tool of student interest in

order to gain their attention, facilitate learning, and then develop that learning into a

habit. This "care" could also be connected to educational relationships. For example,

James also writes, "If you only care enough for a result, you will almost certainly attain

it."[560] According to James, the proper use of both attention and interest will result in

progress and positive habits.

James also argues that in order to foster a positive teacher-student relationship,

one must consider the lived experiences of the student and tend to their natural desires to

learn and grow. In this way, a teacher can transform a student's experiences into habits:

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[558] James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and Students on Some of Life's Ideals*, 46. This is also cited in George W. Donaldson and Richard Vinson, "William James, Philosophical Father of Experience-Based Education," *Journal of Experiential* Education 2, no. 2 (1979): 6-8.
[559] James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and Students on Some of Life's Ideals*, 134.
[560] James, 148, 137.

"Feed the growing human being. Feed him the sort of experience for which from year to year he shows a natural craving and he will develop in adult life a sounder sort of mental tissue . . ."[561] James puts the onus on the teacher to teach through connections to interest and instinct. He explains that it is important to be observant and follow one's instincts: "To detect the movement of instinctive readiness for the subject is, then the first duty of every educator."[562] This speaks to the idea of being "ready to learn" and can also be considered in terms of being "ready to teach" and knowing when students are ready to be taught.

David Berliner compares William James to his predecessors and contemporaries and writes about the importance of James's work in the history of educational psychology. He explains that James can be considered the "central figure in the establishment of psychology in America."[563] Whereas Wilhelm Wundt was the German founder of experimental psychology, citing Boring, Berliner writes, "James was said to have had 'the courage to be incomplete.'"[564] James's psychology was a psychology of humility, humanity and tolerance. This is particularly evident when compared to the psychology of Wundt or his own very serious student, E.H. Thorndike. This is valuable in understanding the philosophy of William James because it demonstrates that James was

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[561] James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and Students on Some of Life's Ideals.*
[562] William James, *As William James Said: a Treasury of His Work*, ed. Elizabeth Perkins Aldrich (New York: Vanguard Books, 1942), 66.
[563] David C. Berliner, "The 100-Year Journey of Educational Psychology: From Interest, to Disdain, to Respect for Practice," in *Exploring Applied Psychology: Origins and Critical Analyses. Master Lectures in Psychology*, eds. Thomas K Fagan and Gary R. VandenBos (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 1993), 41-42, 47.
[564]Berliner, 41-42. Here he is citing, E.G. Boring. *History of Experimental Psychology* 2nd ed. (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey; Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1950), 516.

balancing the concepts of individual emotions and one's realization of the imperfection of life with the willingness to accept that imperfection and "incompleteness."[565] It is also possible to draw a connection between the ideas of the complete "habitual" teacher and those of the "creative" and flexible teacher.

Reconciling Habit and Spontaneity

In arguing that James's theory of habit is valuable when balanced with creativity and spontaneity, there is a certain contradiction that requires reconciliation. In *Principles of Psychology*, James uses the example of a pianist learning their instrument to explain the development of motor and muscle memory, thus becoming effortless with habituation and practice. Using and extending this metaphor in order to understand the reconciliation of habit with creativity, I turn to the pianist and the concept of improvisation. Through a pianist's habitual practice, they learn the habits of notes, the habits of form and structure (scales, modes, chords), and the habits of melodies. These processes are assimilated into muscle and mental memory over time. The act of practicing and developing habits is valuable in order to invite variety into the music. It is a commonplace within both music and art that you cannot break the rules until you know them. When a pianist improvises, they are using their repertoire of musical memory to bend, shape, experiment, and create new sounds, structures, tunes, melodies, and ideas. Thus, pianists learn to improvise by first habituating themselves to the modus operandi of the instrument and notes. Similarly, a teacher must acquire the habits of knowing one's subject matter and master the

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[565] Berliner, 42, 47.

processes of teaching in order to also be flexible, creative, spontaneous, and improvisational.

While a pianist improvises, why might a teacher "improvise?" In order to attend to the needs, interests, and changing dynamics of the classroom setting, a teacher is constantly making and remaking history to best suit their students' needs and to connect their students to the content. Although teachers may teach similar content every year, they can change their methods for teaching that content based upon the students, classroom dynamic, and relationships. Thus, in "improvising" or being a creative teacher, the first task is to habituate oneself to the processes of teaching (subject matter included). The teacher must then work to understand each student and build a relationship so that when creativity and spontaneity are needed, the habits of teaching become tools and processes to be used, all within the reach of one's fingertips. In order to be habitually engrained in the subject matter, a teacher must continuously practice the content. How, then, can they be flexible? Ultimately, a teacher adopting a Jamesian pedagogy aims to be habitually ready to make connections, habitually open to students, and habitually spontaneous. A meta-habit that is part of this reconciliation is the habit of following students' interests. In other words, a teacher must be habitually responsive to what the student presents and make connections. Habit that calls forth creativity is thus productive, not limiting. This cultivation of habits is built on the foundation of positive teacher-student relationships, familiarity with subject matter, and knowledge of students and their interests.

196

What is important here is the development of "relational habits" or habits that point us toward different sorts of relationships. This openness and desire for discussion (flexibility and improvisation) are both relational habits because they help support the process of building and learning through interpolation and habituation of said practices. James's flexible habits might be identified as "relational." That is, habits of openness, discussion, and experience serve human relationships. These habits promote teacher-student relationships because they inform processes, practices, procedures, and modus operandi, of how to begin building relationships through openness and discussion. The process of teaching students how to communicate, is a process of teaching students how to relate, with one another, how to communicate respectfully, and how to be part of the community of inquiry transpiring within the classroom. When students feel that they are part of a community, and feel included, they are compelled to speak openly and be part of the discussion. The student recognizes the quality of inclusion within that classroom model, facilitated by the teacher, and feel included. The teacher-student relationship is fostered through these intentional processes, through "relational" habits.

Related to the teacher's role in fostering good habits and the value of teacher-student relationships, James writes about the importance of daily effort in habits and immediacy in fostering those habits. He explains, "We forget that every good that is worth possessing must be paid for in strokes of daily effort." The problem that emerges is that if one postpones these efforts, the "possibilities are dead."

He suggests even short periods of time for building such habits:

Whereas ten minutes a day of poetry, of spiritual reading or meditation, and an hour or two a week at music, pictures, or philosophy, provided we began *now* and

suffered no remission, would infallibly give us in due time the fullness of all we desire. By neglecting the necessary concrete labor, by sparing ourselves the little daily tax, we are positively digging the graves of our higher possibilities. This is a point concerning which you teachers might well give a little timely information to your older and more aspiring pupils.[566]

Within this explanation James speaks specifically to the teacher's role in building habits within students. James understands that teaching, learning, and growing require positive habits; and that these positive habits are "relational."

For James, habit is connected to moral good. Habit is something learned through repetition, attention, interest, and instinct. These views connect not only to the classroom but to society as a whole. He continues:

Habit is thus the enormous fly-wheel of society, its most precious conservative agent. It alone is what keeps us all within the bounds of ordinance……It alone prevents the hardest and most repulsive walks of life from being deserted by those brought up to tread therein. …It dooms us all to fight out the battle of life upon the lines of our nurture or our early choice, and to make the best of a pursuit that disagrees, because there is no other for which we are fitted, and it is too late to begin again. [567]

Habit then is relational, moral, and tied not only to the teacher and student building positive and productive relationships, but also connect to the school and society.

James explains how we craft and make our own "hell to be endured… by habitually fashioning our characters in the wrong way." [568] In order to avoid this, James advocates for an education that teaches students and teachers how to build habits that lead to positive relationships. James explains, "New habits *can* be launched… on condition of there being new stimuli and new excitements." [569] He continues with a pluralistic view

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[566] William James, "Habit," 134.
[567] James, 121.
[568] James, 121.
[569] James, 39.

that "life abounds in these, and sometimes they are such critical and revolutionary experiences that they change a man's whole scale of values and system of ideas." [570] When such an event occurs, "the old order of his habits will be ruptured; and, if the new motives are lasting, new habits will be formed, and build up in him a new or regenerate 'nature.'"[571] Within this work, the teachers hold the power to create and unlock these events and experiences within the child, and build communities of openness, discussion, and inclusion through "relational habits." The aim is to "rupture" the old habits that take the educational relationship for granted within conversations of educational aims.

James writes:

> …The genius of the interesting teacher consists in sympathetic divination of the sort of material with which the pupil's mind is likely to be already spontaneously engaged, and in the ingenuity which discovers paths of connection from that material to the matters to be newly learned. The principle is easy to grasp, but the accomplishment is difficult in the extreme.[572]

James's use of the word "sympathetic" speaks to the role of the teacher in the relationship. It is important for a teacher to care about the students. This includes understanding how to use the "ingenuity" as well as the "spontaneity" of the students' minds in order to provide opportunities to learn and grow. James admits, however, that this is easier said than done, stating that the "accomplishment is difficult." It is also about building relational habits.

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[570] James, 39.
[571] James, 127.
[572] William James, "Attention," in *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and Students on Some of Life's Ideals* (New York: Holt, 1899; repr. Mineola: Dover, 1962), 52.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined the themes that emerged in the philosophy of

William James regarding the role of the teacher and the teacher-student relationship. By

focusing on pluralism, pragmatism, and a concept of habit that incorporates creativity and

spontaneity, my research demonstrates that although each theme is divided by name,

there is an overarching theme of balance that emerges. There is balance in training

teachers to recognize their own blind spots and to be inclusive towards a more pluralistic

outlook. Each student's individual lived experiences in a pluralistic universe can be

balanced within the singular learning community of the classroom. It is worthwhile for

teachers to use pragmatism as a tool for reflecting on the consequentialist good of lessons

and ideas in the classroom that are presented and absent from the course. Finally, James

explains the moral good in building habits. He suggests that teachers are responsible for

fostering that good by balancing the arduous habits needed for a moral life with the

flexibility, spontaneity, and creativity that emerge from teachers' experiences.[573]

My research has shown that James's writings contain a unifying philosophy of

balance between a variety of concepts: the material and the natural, the teacher and the

student, the emotional and the physical, the spontaneous and the habitual, and the

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[573] Ultimately, James emphasizes the importance of habit in education. It is the role of the teacher to teach students how to develop positive habits that then become the tools for future known and unknown situations, connecting to pluralism and pragmatism. James also recognizes the limitations of habits and suggests that they need to have a positive outcome that takes meliorism into consideration. In order to achieve this, the process of habit-building should be balanced and it should allow for creativity, flexibility, adaptability, and spontaneity. Habits should move beyond the mechanical space of learning by doing a certain task and instead include the moral habit development towards an inner good and towards outer good "positive relationships." In short, it is the role of the teacher to foster positive moral habits with the students.

learning that comes from books and learning that comes from experience. Within this balance, the teacher-student relationship is predicated on the need for teachers to be open-minded in order to create a classroom space that allows for conversation, discussion, plurality of thought, and creative and spontaneous learning and teaching. All of these attributes combine towards attaining some future good or cash-value.

In the following chapter, I will consider these philosophical ideas of teacher-student relationships and apply them to modern pedagogy. In doing this work, I am attempting to build a more inclusive classroom and pedagogy that balances the lived experiences of the students with that of the teacher. This melioristic pedagogy requires both habit and creativity and is centered on a pluralism that values the educational opportunities of all.

Chapter 5: Applying William James to Teacher-Student Relationships to Build an
Inclusive Pedagogy

Introduction

> What you want is a philosophy that will not only exercise your powers of
> intellectual abstraction, but that will make some positive connexion [sic] with this
> actual world of finite human lives.[574]

William James was a valued teacher and scholar because of the meaningful
connections he made with his students, colleagues, and friends. In the same spirit, in this
final chapter I make a connection between James's life and thought, to contemporary
education for the purpose of building a more inclusive and reflective pedagogy. In this
dissertation, I have explored the relationship between the philosophy of James, his
personality, and the productive relationships he had with students. I have suggested that
there is a link between his pragmatism, pluralism, and psychology, and the way he
interacted with his students. I hold this out as one way of evaluating the philosophy of
James. His philosophy can be evaluated by its actual effects in the world, by how it
changes us as individuals holding the philosophy. This is, in effect, how James himself
believes we should evaluate philosophy, namely, by its cash value in real life. I have
suggested that the cash value of James's philosophy in the context of education plays out
in particular forms of relationships, relationships constituted by openness,
experimentation, curiosity about others, spontaneity, and communication.

This dissertation has argued that James's philosophy and pedagogy provide a
unique perspective on teacher-student relationships that is largely absent within the field

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[574] William James. *Pragmatism, A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking*. Dover Thrift Edition. (New
York, New York: Holt, 1909), 8.

of philosophy of education and fully absent in Jamesian scholarship. Specifically, the study traced James's life and thought to argue that his philosophy of pluralism, pragmatism, and habit (in balance with creativity) could both enhance our understanding of educational philosophy and inform a truly inclusive teaching pedagogy.

To conclude the study, this aims to connect these ideas to argue that James's life and thought are relevant and valuable for educators today, and that within the history of philosophy of education, his work both stands apart and stands the test of time.[575] Part I will revisit evidence from Chapter 2 to reveal how James's life and thought speak to Dewey, Freire, and Noddings, and what limitations persist as related to teacher-student relationships. Part II considers how James can complement current conversations regarding teacher-student relationships and inclusive pedagogies. It presents evidence that James can contribute to and enhance recent multicultural educational scholarship that discusses the conceptions of inclusion and responsive teaching (again all connected to teacher-student relationships). Finally, Part III will provide an application showing how pluralism, pragmatism, and habit balanced with creativity can inform a more inclusive teaching pedagogy, when considering first and foremost building meaningful and productive teacher-student relationships. Within this analysis I will specifically state how creativity and spontaneity inform the development of relationships. Additionally throughout this chapter, while analyzing James and education writ large, I continue to connect James to teacher-student relationships.

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[575] Other educational scholars have also recognized that James's ideas are both relevant today and deserving of recognition. For example, The Ohio Valley Philosophy of Education Society has chosen William James's moral philosophy to guide the theme for its 2019 conference.

Close attention to the philosophy of James provides useful advice and practical implications for teachers today. Specifically, he can contribute to philosophy of education by helping educators:

1. Be an authentic, quirky, spontaneous, creative, self.

2. Find emotional and physical balance through flexibility.

3. Embody a model teacher-learner (teacher as model learner/student) through empathetic listening and conversation.

4. Reflect on their practice as educators using pluralism, pragmatism, and psychology as an aid for reflective-inquiry (or community of inquiry).

5. Find ways to engage in democratic, social activism through experiential learning.

James provides evidence for teacher's to be their authentic selves. James was charismatic, but his process was dialogic, which is a pedagogical process any teacher can adopt. Teachers can continue to be inclusive using pluralism and be open-minded. Teachers while potentially unable to take on James's quirky persona, should embody a model teacher-learner, demonstrating their passion for the content they teach and the student's interests. Teachers should also be empathetic listeners and similar to what Noddings argues, be responsive to the needs of the students. Teachers should use pragmatism to build a community of inquiry using a pragmatic method for considering truth, truths, and multiple perspectives. And finally teachers should cultivate habits of practice balanced with creativity, or as I suggest, relational habits. In order to implement relational habits, teachers use would ideas and qualities of habits as James notes, their

importance not only for daily life, but for living a good moral life, and use these habits to constantly and consistently cultivate community, being responsive to students, and being flexible, creative, and spontaneous to their needs.[576] This chapter will first bring James's approach to education into dialogue with some of the major thinkers in philosophy of education. I will then offer recommendations to teacher educators.

Part I: Revisiting Dewey, Freire, and Noddings: Limitations, Conversations, and Contributions

Before considering the application of James to education today, it is important to recognize that relying solely on his philosophy has limitations, some of which Dewey, Freire, and Noddings address. In this section, I revisit Chapter 2 to bring forth the limitations in James's thinking, show how his ideas contribute to the ongoing conversation on teacher-student relationships, and provide evidence of my unique contribution to the field of philosophy of education, teacher-student relationship research, and Jamesian scholarship.

Dewey's ideas of democratic participation stand apart as his own unique educational contribution, Freire's ideas of liberatory education are likewise unique, and Noddings' specific theory, *the ethic of care,* is her own. The analysis in Chapter 2 demonstrates a clear opportunity for James to overlap with all three thinkers, complement their thoughts, and contribute something new in considering the teacher-student relationship. Specifically, James can contribute his own unique ideas of pluralism (of which he is the progenitor), pragmatism (he popularized a theory that differs from

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[576] An additional point of difference between James and Noddings, is that he was morally individualistic, meaning that he did care about community building and relationship building, but that the responsibility was partly the social and moral *individual* responsibility of *each person*.

Dewey's), and theories of habit balanced with creativity/spontaneity. Despite their neglect in current scholarship, his ideas are groundbreaking and significant, during the Progressive era and today.

As previously mentioned in Chapter 2, each of these thinkers attends to different questions. Noddings asks "what is best for the student?"[577] Dewey might ask "what is best for democracy?" and "how can the teacher be a sympathetic observer?" Freire might ask "what is best for freedom from oppression?" and "how can the teacher be a liberator?" So where does William James fit in? He might ask "how we can build an inclusive classroom centered on pluralism, how we can create meaningful educational experiences that are pragmatic and connect to students' lived experiences, and what role does habit play in education when balanced with creativity and spontaneity?"[578] Also, "How can the teacher invite a plurality of thought that encourages creativity?"

Dewey and James in Conversation

John Dewey does not directly discuss teacher-student relationships. He considers the role of experience in education, the role of the teacher as a facilitator, and the role of democracy for building community within education. His philosophy implies a teacher-student relationship that is positive, but it still requires the organization of the teacher to facilitate the relationship. It requires *sympathetic* observation of the teacher. James

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[577] Asking what is best for the student is not far removed from pragmatism (Jamesian) and the idea that an idea is right if it serves some discernible difference and good towards that end.

[578] Additional questions include, "how can we balance demands of life emotionally for students, co-construct knowledge with them, and also present our authentic (quirky) selves?" When asking what content we should teach a student A or B, the pragmatist then asks, what difference will it make if there is A or B? If there is no difference, then we need to rethink the question.

overlaps with Dewey's ideas of education as social, progressive, centered on habit, and interest-driven. They also overlap with the ideas of pluralism and pragmatism.[579]

James was famous for pragmatism, but also for pluralism. His philosophy considers the future good that will result from X. This is similar to (most of) the philosophy of John Dewey. In that regard, teachers applying James's philosophy can provide endless opportunities for their students in a pluralistic society, while also being grounded in some practical outcome/future good. James was also open-minded, inclusive and melioristic in his teaching and philosophy. This stance (while not unique to himself) deserves extended attention in terms of his pluralism. He was working against a closed philosophical system that was "stuffy" and out-dated, in order to disrupt (slightly) the status quo in favor for a better tomorrow. This is seen in his writings *The PhD Octopus* and letters to friends on the state of education.[580]

Dewey's views on education, as evidenced in his volumes of texts on the topic, provide examples of how subjects and disciplines in schools play out within a progressive model. He suggested teaching students using authentic hands-on projects, such as cooking in math class. He also explains the balance in not adapting progressive models or traditional models in their entirety because both have value in education. For Dewey, the teacher-student relationship requires the teacher to be a sympathetic observer, and take on the responsibility of building meaningful relationships with the students. However for

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[579] Dewey's view of Pragmatism is built on removing dualisms from thinking. James's pragmatism is built on considering the utility in an idea or argument and considering a consequentialist view of truth. James's pluralism is similar to Dewey's pragmatism in that James is arguing against monistic views of a singular truth, and Dewey is arguing against dualisms, both consider the nuanced and dynastic ideas of truth.
[580] He writes against the different camps of philosophers and scientists that exist and really against aspects of the higher education institution.

Dewey, the key point of education is to have positive social activity connected to democratic engagement, thus the aim in relationship building is societal instead of familial and personal, as it was with James.

Both James and Dewey thoroughly discuss habit, interest, and the role of psychology in education. Regarding habit, James argues that there needs to be some sort of balance with flexibility, creativity, and spontaneity. James, while he applies psychology to understand teaching in *Talks to Teachers*, does not provide enough guidance on how to teach specific subjects in light of sympathetic student observation or on what psychology has to say regarding that pedagogical knowledge. This is where Dewey's ideas help support James's in creating an inclusive classroom which includes democratic participation and a concrete visualization of the classroom, as seen in the lab school model. Whereas Dewey considers the K-12 classroom, James being a professor provides an opportunity to consider a progressive model in higher education that can also be utilized in K-12 settings. For Dewey the classroom is a space to engage in democratic participation by coming to a consensus, but for James the classroom focuses more on the individual, due to the nature of higher education, and seeks out connections to the lived experiences. Both views are valuable to educators today and can complement each other.

A major difference between James and Dewey is that James represented a model educator, connecting with his students, engaging their interests through presenting his own passion for the content, and revealing his authentic, quirky spontaneous self. Dewey on the other hand was known to be a "dry" and "boring" teaching (as noted previously). Thus, James demonstrates the importance of connecting with students through building

208

meaningful teacher-student relationships, whereas Dewey, while arguing for connecting with students' interests, did not pedagogically adopt that model.[581]

<u>Freire and James in Conversation</u>

In Paulo Freire's writings about teacher-student relationships, he re-conceptualizes the teacher and student as a shared role for disrupting power dynamics within a political system that disenfranchises a population of people. For him, education holds the key to freedom from oppression, so he examines the role of the teacher in helping students free themselves from their oppressors by providing opportunities and experiences to engage in liberation. The teacher is similar to a mid-wife or mediator towards that liberation and emancipation. His philosophy implies a flattened hierarchy and positive teacher-student relationships. His unique perspective speaks to the hardships taking place in his life and country and as such provides an alternative approach to an oppressive society, one that James did not contend with (personally or philosophically) as a white, cisgender, heteronormative, affluent male.

If Freire and James were in conversation with one another, a major point of difference would be regarding the populations they taught, and their philosophical commitments. Freire is similar to Dewey in that one of his aims is to provide educational experiences, to help foster and facilitate knowledge and critical consciousness of the oppression in society. An additional goal is that the teacher's power is recast as a "mid-wife" or mediator to freedom through more socialization and recognition of problems (through the problem-posing pedagogy). Freire also deeply considers the importance of

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[581] Dewey's philosophy was not demonstrated within his own teaching. He was not a model educator.

dialogue and the power of words. Freire writes, "Liberating education consists in acts of cognition, not transferals of information."[582] Continuing he notes, "Dialogue is the encounter between men, mediated by the world in order to name the world."[583] Finally he contends the importance of meliorism, social issues, and social justice, "Dialogue cannot exist, however, in the absence of a profound love for the world and for people."[584]

This commitment to justice was different than William James, as was the student population. William James was of an elite status and taught elite undergraduate students at Harvard. His philosophical commitments were towards freedom in thought, co-construction of knowledge with students, but ultimately allowing the power to rest in the hands of the professor. His aim was not towards liberation, if any connection be made, he was teaching independent critical thinking skills, which is academically creative and liberatory, but again, his commitments as was his life, was radically different than that of Freire's.

While James considers the unique individual student, Freire might critique James for not also considering the social structures that oppress populations of students. Similarly, while James argues that teachers need only attend to students' interests in order to capture their attention and make connections, Freire might critique this vision for not considering barriers that persist outside of the classroom walls to prevent a student from

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[582] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Trans Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 2007), 79.
[583] Freire, 88.
[584] Freire, 89.

210

demonstrating academic interests.[585] Freire's reimagined image of the student and teacher

within a shared co-constructed relationship likewise flattens the hierarchy and power

dynamic in the classroom. James continued to have a hierarchy, however, because he was

a college professor living in the Progressive era. For James's time, his ideas were

somewhat radical within the confines of higher education. That being said, in building an

inclusive pedagogy based on the life and thought of James, Freire's more radical ideas on

education as liberation present a value that is absent from James's work. Conversely,

Freire's ideas may be too radical to implement within a higher education system through

one teacher's classroom, since it requires a radical redefinition of the school first (and

education writ large).

However, a flattened model may or may not be appropriate for every educational

endeavor. When learning basic math and grammar, the need for "discussion" and

"debate" contradicts the need to learn basic rote concepts such as letters and numbers. It

is up to the expertise of a first grade teacher to help students learn this in sometimes a

more "top-down" approach. James however, gives us a way of thinking about a humane

hierarchy that values the voices of each student and includes them within a pluralistic and

pragmatic classroom. James was able to teach in an inclusive way, by habitually inviting

in debate and conversation built on the interests of his students, and their interests, in

James's passion for teaching and learning.

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[585] James may be blind to societal problems that prevent a "good" teacher from teaching students, e.g. hunger, poverty, and oppression. He may also be blind to inequities and be too idealistic in considering each student to start from the same point, with the same resources in accessing education.

Like Dewey, Freire's work re-envisioned a K-12 setting, and while it could be applied to higher education, it was really meant to radicalize the youth. While James's *Talks* catered to teachers and students in K-12, within higher education his pedagogy speaks more to the liberation of the mind, as he considers the barriers to creativity and plurality of thought that existed (and persist today) in higher education. Freire also discussed how alienation can be a barrier to creative thought. James does not use the word alienation, but he does discuss how higher education can be lonely and isolating when there are no opportunities for students to have original thoughts and instead are forced to ascribe their ideas to Kant or Hegel.

James also spoke to the value of the moral character in education and how moral learning should be habitual. This emphasis is absent from Freire's work. However, Freire's discussion of banking may align with James's model of habit building in education. Banking education may in part be a form of "habituation." The question is, "Does James contradict Freire through inadvertently advocating a banking model?" James's teacher-student relationships balance the habitual with the creative and spontaneous. In order to provide that level of flexibility and latitude within a classroom setting however, the first task is to have some form of order and habits (or procedures) fostered within the classroom model. James's classrooms were standard in process, he would arrive to class, invite the students' questions into the discussion, and then let the classroom change and transform depending on the topic. Thus for James, he starts from a place of habit building, and inclusion, so that he has the ability to be creative, flexible,

and spontaneous. Thus he was forming meaningful and productive teacher-student relationships.

With Freire, James overlaps with the ideas of meliorism (or with Freire's attention to shared social concerns) towards a better society that honors, values, celebrates, and includes diverse perspectives. James was not as politically "radical" as Freire was, but he did write against the Spanish–American War and against American imperialism. These writings were not necessarily introduced into his classroom as a teacher, but it is a connection worth making (especially since embodying a life-long learner should be done in and outside of the classroom). James's views on inclusion were modeled in his classroom where he went against the standards at Harvard, and instead allowed women, African Americans, and Jewish Americans into his classrooms.[586] James was a model teacher who created meaningful and productive relationships with his students that were in part based on caring for them, including their lived experiences, and thinking pragmatically about the future good. In this way, James overlaps with Freire, but the care, and pragmatism is unique.

Noddings and James in Conversation

Noddings, along with Freire, speaks to the role of the teacher in sharing the learning and teaching responsibility from the stance of care. This explicit model of care is absent from Dewey, Freire, and James. James overlaps with Noddings' ideas of inclusion (inferred care) and kindness in the classroom. However, Noddings is a modern, critical,

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[586] James likewise embodies a quirky professor who is creative, crafting a persona that presents new grounds regarding teacher-student relationships. James believed that teachers need to be flexible and creative as they relate to students. He represents an authentic teacher and learner.

feminist theorist and as such has a unique perspective and lived experiences. In her philosophy, the ethic of care is presented in relation to the teacher-student relationship. Her ideal role for the teacher and student, similar to Freire, is to share the responsibility— not as liberator and liberated, but as co-constructors of their experiences, centering on care-giving and care-receiving. Thus, in building an inclusive pedagogy, using intentional language to get at similar aims is important.

As mentioned before, Noddings vision of the teacher and student in the teacher-student relationship is built on responsiveness, trust, care, and encounter and practice. For Noddings though she considers the challenges faced by teachers when they care, without first emptying themselves of prejudice (or desire to fix students). For Noddings the first step to care is commitment to receiving, or in other words being responsive, actively listening, and acting to help support the students. Since her work is focused on teachers and parents, in relation with students and children, she does present an asymmetric dynamic that exists. It is not that the student is unable to be a carer- quite the contrary-but the student is not in the place (often) of initiating that caring relationship, due to being "incapable of motivational displacement" as she notes.

James however taught college students, and his recognition of the inclusive classroom model was less granular than Noddings which considered pedagogy, and instead considers action, policy, and similar to Noddings, dialogue. James allowed minority students into his classroom when that was not regularly done. This was an action towards an inclusive pedagogy. Noddings, however recognizes (similar to Freire) the alienation that takes place when care and recognition was absent in a classroom. This

214

is where Noddings might provide support for James in helping him decenter his whiteness and privilege. Conversely, James's aims in education were focused on "liberating" the *mind* of the individual students. This individualism within a pluralistic framework allows his classroom to co-construct knowledge (with again a subject-focused higher education aim), while demonstrating the value in each student's perspective. Thus he was responsive and inclusive, but with a different framework.

James *did* care about the students' lived experiences and emotions, but the word *care* was not at the center of his writings. Noddings and James both wrote about the impact of emotion on schooling and life, but while Noddings explicitly connects it to teaching and learning, James's ideas remained in partly the metaphysical and existential realm. Building on the ideas of care from Noddings, James's unique life and thought provide additional insight for building a positive teacher-student relationship. James dealt with depression his whole life, and this informed his moral philosophy. Noddings examines the good and value in discussing death in educational curricula.

One feature that emerges in James's philosophy is the idea of balance, due in part to his depression and poor health. Using James, teachers can learn to balance their performative teacher-selves with their human and emotional selves. James was a caring educator and built familial relationships with his students. This personal connection helped him to invite students into the classroom to voice their perspectives; he also invited them into his home, which shows how he cared about his students like family. Noddings, having taught mathematics and having had many children, brings forth a

215

similar familial relationship with her students. Noddings also discusses the importance of self-care in *Happiness in Education*.

James connected with his students and was engaging because he truly wanted to learn with and from them. He demonstrated care for his students and for humankind, just as Noddings brought those ideas into practice with K-12 educators. For James, "care" was deeply part of his subject matter within philosophy. He cared about humankind, he cared about students, and he cared about his subject matter. He also cared that his students cared about philosophy. James might show us how care intersects with the subject matter itself. Within James work on psychology he discusses the importance of interest in connecting students with the content. However, in order connect student's interests to the content, it starts for James, with the teacher having a truly authentic interest and passion in the content, the students' perspectives, and the desire to build meaningful teacher-student relationships. Similar to how Noddings suggests that care is foundational to teaching, for James building inclusive and caring relationships with students in conjunction with a passion for the content can create meaningful and productive teacher-student relationships.

Noddings, like Dewey, does speak to the role of each subject and the structure of the school. James, however, does not discuss how the school should be structured to allow for his pluralistic, pragmatic model to flourish, which is why this dissertation provides a unique contribution, as will be clarified in the following sections. The multiple biographies on James mostly focus on his academic life as a philosopher and psychologist. Within secondary sources on James and education, the conception of the

216

teacher-student relationship is absent. Perhaps if he had lived longer and chosen to write about schooling, a more concrete vision would have emerged, but as his work stands, those views are absent. But then again, he may *not* have created a "systematic" vision, since he was known to be unsystematic within his thought. In any case, his teaching exhibited how to use a pragmatic model to create a community of inquiry in the classroom built on student interest, while his teaching was a model of inclusion and pluralism, built on strong familial relations with the students so that questions of belief could be broached.

Though no explicitly stated vision connected to education emerges within *Pragmatism*, in order to include a pragmatic model of conversation that allows for questions of ideas and beliefs to flourish, the first step is to build meaningful caring relationships with the students, showing that one values and includes a pluralistic outlook. More specifically, that the model of inclusion can lead to a pragmatic classroom, and James's philosophical position in part constructed his relationships with his students. That philosophical position being pluralism and pragmatism.

A teacher cannot attend to metaphysical pragmatic questions without starting by building meaningful relationships. This position is complex and non-linear. First, in order to have an inclusive classroom, James adopted a pluralistic stance that is metaphysical and grounded in human life and the value of unique lived experiences. Conversely, the reverse can be true, in that a teacher cannot build relationships with the metaphysical alone, and that a pragmatic real world application must be included in order to determine

217

the "cash-value" of the content and learning, all while being built on positive and productive teacher-student relationships.

In order to build connections with students, James had to know the students, as well as being habituated to his own content and to the modus operandi of the class, in order to be spontaneous in building connections to the students' interests.

Part II: Connecting James to Multicultural Education Today: Pluralism, Pragmatism, and Habit

In Part II, I discuss James's contributions to philosophy of education and teacher education using pluralism, pragmatism, and habit balanced with creativity. Within this section I present evidence that James was ahead of his time, and that his work complements current scholarship in multicultural education that considers inclusive practices. The connection with current scholarship validates the project set forth in the dissertation as well as the utility in revisiting James's philosophy and pedagogy connected to education. At the end of Part II, I consider how all these seemingly divergent ideas are connected through the idea of balance.

<u>Applying Pluralism to Teacher Education and Current Scholarship</u>

James's philosophy of pluralism does not directly address the teacher-student relationship, but from his pedagogy it is clear that he created a positive classroom environment where multiple views could be voiced, and where multiple perspectives in psychology and philosophy could be engaged. How can teachers build positive teacher-student relationships today using the philosophy of pluralism? They can balance the static and singular objectives within state and county curricula with a vision towards a future unknown. They can teach students that in life as in education, often there is more than

218

one right answer. In doing so, students become included, do not feel alone or alienated, and are invited to engage in inquiry and conversation.[587] Using the idea of pluralism, the process of understanding and building knowledge creates building blocks for students to engage with unknown problems in the future.

Pluralism lends itself to the ideas of open-mindedness. It includes multiple views/perspectives of reality, truth, and lived experiences. In considering building positive teacher-student relationships using the life and thought of James, including the idea of "open-mindedness" is not radically new to education. Most teacher-education programs already teach teachers to be reflective practitioners, inclusive, and open-minded. What unique attributes or advice can be learned from James? Perhaps what needs to be considered is that it is *still* valuable for teachers to be open-minded today and consider pluralism, especially as the teaching population remains homogeneous and the student population changes.

How can teachers use the philosophy of James to inform their practice? Teaching students to be "open-minded" and inclusive leads to meaningful and authentic discussions in the classroom. Teaching pre-service teachers through the lectures of *Talks to Teachers*, with a focus on "On a Certain Blindness" and "What Makes a Life Significant," may help them teach students to recognize their own blindness. Today, we might call this blindness "implicit bias" as we work to recognize and decenter teacher privilege in order to build a more inclusive classroom. Within the classroom itself, it is

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[587] When I taught mathematics, on the first day of class I wrote a Chinese proverb on the board: "There is more to knowing than being correct." I did this to invite students into my course with the knowledge that the *process* of math is important, not just the final answer.

important to balance the voices and lived experience of the students with that of the teacher. James taught in a co-constructive way; this is a pedagogical tool that should not be ignored in teacher education.

James likewise respected the lived experiences of others and argued for a more open-minded perspective. He wrote, "Real culture lives by sympathies and admirations, not by dislikes and disdains; under all misleading wrappings it pounces unerringly upon the human core."[588] This means that we as teachers, students, and citizens of earth should view culture as an additive and inclusive positive model (the asset model/strengths-based model). It is about perspective-taking, recognizing one's own blind spots, caring about others, and admiring and celebrating differences and similarities. It is not about critique and criticism. It is not a deficit model. It is about finding strengths and the good in others, as James so often did. This critical, but sympathetic model of culture connects to critical multiculturalism. While teaching and building a learning culture in the classroom, a teacher can attempt to sympathize with other students and teach all the students to sympathize with and admire one another.[589] Culture and good character are not built on judgment, dislike, and disdain. James's quotation relates to meliorism, but also to the concept of respect, inclusion, and being open-minded. James's theories of pluralism connect to current literature in multicultural education.[590]

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[588] William James. Ed. Elizabeth Perkins Aldrich, "As William James Said: a Treasury of His Work" (New York, Vanguard Press, 1942), 66. William James. Ed. Henry James Jr., *Memories and Studies* (New York, Longmans, Green, and Co., 1911/1908), 322.

[589] This of course has limitations. There is no educational "good" in appreciating the "culture" of a hate group.

[590] For example, in "Whose Culture Has Capital? A Critical Race Theory of Community Cultural Wealth," Tara Yosso examines culture through this additive lens and through a critical race theory lens, arguing against a deficit lens, to promote a cultural wealth model. Tara J. Yosso, "Whose Culture Has Capital? A

James's ideas of pluralism relate the most to current multicultural educational

scholarship regarding building an inclusive pedagogy that values teacher-student

relationships. As discussed in previous work, there is a connection between Jamesian

pluralism to multiculturalism today. W.E.B Du Bois studied under James, and his proto-

multicultural perspective was in part influenced by James's pluralism. While Du Bois did

not create multiculturalism,[591] his legacy is evidenced in his name being present in most

multicultural educational textbooks today.[592] In *The Politics of Recognition*, Charles

Taylor connects multiculturalism to recognizing (recognition of) the value of cultural

distinction while pursuing equality within cultural distinctness.[593] This recognition can be

seen in the individual cultural identity, cultural group, and cultures.[594] Robert Fullinwider

defines multicultural education as an "education that is responsive to cultural difference

Critical Race Theory of Community Cultural Wealth." *Race Ethnicity and Education* 8, no. 1 (March 2005): 69-91. Gloria Ladson-Billings similarly theorizes "culturally relevant pedagogy" in *Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy*. In this text she examines previous theories of teaching in a "culturally compatible" way, from "culturally responsive" to "culturally appropriate" pedagogies. She discusses the value of dialectical relationships in educational research, the value of experience for forming meaning in research, the ethic of care, personal accountability, culturally relevant pedagogy and student achievement, and culturally relevant teaching and cultural competence, along with the detriment of losing cultural and psychosocial well-being in order to gain academic success. James recognizes that teachers are actors in part of teaching and are not removed from this power dynamic. Ladson-Billings wrote, "not only must teachers encourage academic success and cultural competence, they must help students to recognize, understand, and critique current social inequities."Gloria Ladson-Billings, "Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy." *American Educational Research Journal* 32, no. 3 (Fall 1995), 476. Within James's practice he allowed students from minority groups into his classroom. He might not have explicitly taught about social injustice (in the way that Freire did), but he spoke out against the war, and about higher education's exclusive processes that leave intelligent students outside of her ivory tower.

[591] Lawrence Blum, "Recognition, Value, Equality: A Critique of Charles Taylor's and Nancy Fraser's Accounts of Multiculturalism," *Constellations* 5, no 1 (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), 51. Blum noted that "Multiculturalism is a contested term" and the term includes racial distinctions, racial justice, and an *opposition* to racism.

[592] Julia Novakowski, *Revisiting Pluralism and Multiculturalism in the works of William James and W.E.B. Du Bois to Inform Education Today*. Philosophical Studies in Education. Ohio Valley Philosophy of Education Society (2018), 51-52.

[593] Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism and "The Politics of Recognition"* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992).

[594] Blum, "Recognition, Value, Equality," 53.

with the aims of 1) promoting individual student achievement, and 2) promoting mutual

respect and tolerance among students."[595]

Pluralism recognizes different lived experiences and the benefits of honoring and

including each voice. Teachers today can continue to be inclusive in their classrooms and

truly recognize the value added by student experiences. However, pluralism of the sort

that James advanced sets the foundation for multiculturalism, a multicultural education is

more proactive in theory. Multicultural education, as Sonia Nieto writes, is about being

"anti-racist."[596] In embracing the philosophy of pluralism and open-mindedness, teachers

undergo a process not dissimilar from that of culturally responsive teaching, culturally

sustaining pedagogies, and working towards an anti-racist pedagogy.

Applying Pragmatism to Teacher Education and Current Scholarship

Similar to James's philosophy of pluralism, pragmatism does not make a direct

mention of teacher-student relationships, but pragmatism itself is a process for settling

disputes and finding truth(s). Thus in building positive teacher-student relationships, it is

valuable to use pragmatism as a tool for reflecting on one's practice of teaching and for

guiding a community of inquiry. Since pragmatism helps one consider how to broach

questions on metaphysics, existence, belief, and ideas, the process requires a relationship

and attention to the dialectic relationship. Both the student and teacher, by engaging in

such large issues, require a familial connection to begin to unpack issues of humanity.

Using the pluralism and inclusion described above, the first step in using pragmatism as a

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[595] Novakowski, 52. Here citing, Robert K. Fullinwider, "Multiculturalism: Themes and Variations," *Perspective* 5, no. 2 (1993): 4–23.

[596] Sonia Nieto, "Profoundly Multicultural Questions." *Educational Leadership*. Equity and Opportunity 60, No. 4 (December 2002/January 2003), 6-10.

pedagogical inquiry-based process is to create an inclusive and open-minded classroom, so that ideas can be presented in a "safe space." One cannot debate the existence of a higher being, for instance, without first feeling comfortable sharing and speaking in class with the knowledge that their voice is valued.

When creating a lesson plan, teachers should reflect on what the consequential good is in teaching the students using one idea/problem instead of another. This begins a process of thinking pragmatically about the lessons and future good. They should ask themselves two important questions: how will my students use this information in the future, and how will it connect to the lived experiences of the students? In that same vein, students should be taught to be reflective learners, and consider what good will come from learning one lesson over another. How will this lesson connect to the future? Pragmatism would continually challenge the teacher to ask, "What different is this going to make in the lives of students?"

Applying James's theories on interest to the pragmatic classroom, in order to help students connect content X to their lived experiences, teachers must first understand their students' interests. Students and teachers alike should break down the hierarchy inherent in a classroom by employing a Jamesian pragmatic method for not "settling disputes," but for considering what educational goods or truths (not truth) are valuable with particular content and lessons. Additionally, pragmatism connects to an ideal vision of teaching teachers to be reflective and use inquiry as a basis for pragmatically building a community of inquiry within the classroom. Also of note, is that in considering pragmatism for the purpose of building meaningful and productive teacher-student

223

relationships, teachers, as pragmatists, would be experimental. A teacher, would consider

the potential outcomes that would result in teaching specific content in a specific way.

The teacher is not only planning a classroom based on the learning objectives, but taking

a step back looking at the larger picture in considering the good and importance that the

content has within the lived experiences of the students, and within their specific interests

and habits.

Applying Habit Balanced with Creativity and Spontaneity to Teacher Education and Current Scholarship

In *Talks to Teachers*, James famously wrote that education is the organization of

habits. However, James was also a creative and inclusive educator, and his ideas on

spontaneity and flexibility provide a more nuanced view of habit balanced with

creativity. In reconciling these two seemingly opposed concepts, habit and spontaneity,

what can teachers learn to inform a more inclusive practice and build positive teacher-

student relationships? It is important to find a balance between creativity and habit in the

classroom. Teachers should be spontaneous and know their content well but should also

have the ability to change depending on the needs (or interests) of the students. Similar to

how a pianist learns to habituate herself to the notes, melodies, and structures of music in

order to have the ability to improvise, so too must a teacher be habituated to the

structures and practices of teaching, and of the content, so that she can improvise when

needed and be spontaneous.

How then can creativity and spontaneity, in balance with habit, inform teacher-

student relationships? James taught in an inclusive way that promoted divergent and

pluralistic thought. This is the first step, consider the classroom environment in order

224

building positive teacher-student relationships that considers creativity. Next James

taught in an authentic way that was creative, quirky, and spontaneous. This helped him

form positive teacher-student relationships because students felt at ease, saw his passion

for the content, and felt included in the thinking process. James balanced this creativity,

with evidence of his habitual studies in the content, his teaching acumen, his depth of

knowledge, and his classroom design, which was in part (according to the stories of

students) organized by some procedures. (discussion-based). Thus, in order for James to

build meaningful and productive teacher-student relationships, it takes the balance of

creativity and spontaneity, in addition to pluralism, passion and interest for the content,

and a level of balance and expertise in the subject.[597]

James shows us how to use the balance of creativity and habit to disrupt current

practices, in order to build a more inclusive educational environment. In order to

implement this balance between habit and creativity, perhaps the terms can be reconciled

with the idea of being habitually creative or relational habits. Ideally a teacher should be

habitually responsive, habitually attentive to the needs of the students, habitually seeking

connections between the students' interests and the material taught, habitually flexible,

habitually spontaneous, and habituated within the subject/content/discipline and just as

knowledgeable of the students, so that they are habitually able to improvise as needed.

Teaching teachers to follow these habits is not meant to be limiting in any way, but

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[597] Additionally, James writes about how students should also relax and be spontaneous, not studying too hard. Thus in building a positive teacher-student relationship today, educators should consider the balance of creativity and habit within their classrooms. Unfortunately, teachers are taught to be technicians of their trade and are taught to celebrate the habituated student, as opposed to the divergent thinker.

instead to be a productive and creative act. These are also relational habits—they point use to deep relationships with other people.

In connecting habit and creativity to current scholarship, this section of the dissertation may hold the most intrigue for future work. Within teacher education, the concept of teaching a balance between habits and spontaneity and creativity is not something one often reads about. Within educational psychology, the construct of creativity, creative thinking, and divergent thinking is well traversed, but within the philosophy and history of education there is space for discussion. In teacher education today, teachers are taught to be "technicians" of their craft, but are not taught how to "improvise" like the pianist or to be spontaneous or creative.[598] This gap in the literature represents an entry point for the thought of James, using his theories of habit with his pedagogy of spontaneity to inform positive teacher-student relationships that work towards an inclusive classroom. Additionally, teaching teachers how to balance their habits with creativity is an exercise in recognizing how to balance your "teacher-performative self" with that of your "authentic self." This goal of teaching authenticity is an additional way to connect teachers and students together and speaks to what James's students defined as being "ardently sincere." The concept of being "ardently sincere" or authentic is a key part of building positive teacher-student relationships. Teacher-student relationships are built on trust, respect, and inclusion. When teachers are presenting their

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[598] I was taught to be a technician of teaching, and not to consider the unique balance needed between my "habitual" self as teacher, and my "spontaneous" and creative self as human. Indeed, my first mentor teacher spoke with pride about how well her students take tests, and how she is "not creative." Immediately this isolated me from the profession, turning teaching as an "art" into teaching as a "trade" or "techne."

authentic selves, students feel comfortable and able to speak freely, debate actively, and feel valued and respected within the community.

<u>Pragmatism, Pluralism, Habit, and Creativity In Balance (Teaching Balance Using William James)</u>

Teaching is unlike any other profession. It requires split-second decision-making, along with an emotional connection to (and sometimes disconnection from) one's content, environment, and students. Chris Higgins discusses the good in teaching, but instead of analyzing burn-out when teachers leave the field, drained by external pressures, he notes that teachers also deal with burn-in which comes from the selfless, constantly helping nature of the profession.[599] If a teacher does not find space and time to reconnect with their emotional, physical, and mental health, then their ability to teach is diminished. James was in search of balance in his philosophy and life. When he was abroad he would write home about how he missed America, and when at home would write to friends and family complaining about the hustle and bustle of America. In his philosophy, pragmatism is a "mediating" model of solving interminable debates. In *Talks to Teachers*, he tells students to study, but not too hard, and for teachers to know their content, but allow for flexibility. Today in teacher education programs, there is a need to reconnect with students and teachers' physical, mental, and emotional states in order to find a balance and build positive and productive teacher-student relationships.

As mentioned above and in the first chapter, the increase in student suicides and school violence represent a symptom of a disease, not a cause. James's philosophy and

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[599] Chris Higgins, *The Good Life of Teaching, An Ethics of Professional Practice* (Massachusetts, Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).

227

pedagogy centered on balance find purchase with the recent positive disruptions in educational practices. There is emergent research on socio-emotional learning, restorative justice, and the long-term damage of many dominant disciplinary practices in schools.[600] There is a rise in meditation practices as evidenced by its applications and inclusion in school curricula. James's ideas read as current and relevant today, as educators and researchers are just (over the past two decades) beginning to examine what James had discussed so long ago.

This balance should permeate teacher educator programs, built to reimagine the role of the teacher-student relationship to build a more inclusive classroom using balance. This balance should be considered within educational aims that value tests, high-stakes testing, and college-readiness over educational relationships. This balance should consider where the power exists in classrooms, socio-economic status, class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, curricula, schools, counties, states, access to education, disparities in resources, and finances. Teachers and students alike should demand more of institutions that allow imbalance to be the prevailing philosophy guiding American education.

Ultimately, the teacher-student relationship is the beginning of all educational relationships (within the classroom). Teachers hold the power to build a positive environment so that students can build positive relationships with one another, with education, and with themselves and their senses of self-worth and self-efficacy. In

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[600] Alice G. Walton, "The Long-Term Effects of Spanking" in *The Atlantic*, February 24, 2012. Retrieved on 2-26-19 from https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2012/02/the-long-term-effects-of-spanking/253425/.

building a positive teacher-student relationship using James it is important to be open-minded, inclusive, pluralistic, and pragmatic, balance habit and creativity, and be reflective of emotional balance.

Part III: Applying James to Practice, Building an Inclusive Pedagogy Based on Positive Teacher-Student relationships

Although William James lived over one hundred years ago, his ideas are still relevant today. The life and thought of James, considering open-mindedness, pluralism and inclusion, pragmatism, and habit balanced with creativity/spontaneity, fits well into the current scholarship on culturally responsive, sustaining, and inclusive pedagogies within multicultural education. Considering a current application of this Progressive thinker to processes used today, we can identify three major lessons learned for teaching teachers to be inclusive and thinking intentionally about teacher-student relationships.

1. *Use pluralism to be inclusive*

This means teachers should be open-minded, value freedom and pluralism of ideas in education, and include the interests of the students. Recognize your own blind spots and implicit biases. Include multiple perspectives in the classroom. In order to be "inclusive" a teacher first must understand what is not being "included." Teachers need to help increase visibility and raise awareness that current classrooms may *not* be inclusive as they could be. If you do not know that perspectives and lived experiences and voices are missing, then you cannot know that it is not inclusive and thus cannot be inclusive; therefore, raising awareness is key. You cannot be inclusive of something that you do not know is being excluded.

229

2. Build a community of inquiry using the Pragmatic method

Teachers should use Pragmatism as a method or process for teaching and learning. By first building an inclusive classroom through pluralism, teachers can engage in meaningful and authentic discussions about beliefs and ideas through an inquiry-based pragmatic model. Pragmatic questions would include considering questions through a consequentialist lens and through the utility of the idea or its "cash-value." Teachers might ask reflective questions about what the value of one lesson might be over another and encourage students to do the same. This process builds a stronger community that connects teachers and students.

3. Cultivate habits of practice balanced with creativity

Teachers should be habituated in the knowledge of their content and the knowledge of their students. From this habituated practice they will have the ability to cultivate the practice of being habitually responsive to the needs and interests of the students and habitually seek connections based on their creative skills, developing spontaneous instincts for knowing how to build positive teacher-student relationships. This also means being your authentic self so that you can be "ardently sincere," balancing the habitual "teacher-self" with the "human self," removed from/untethered by social decorum. Learn your content well, but also be ready to be flexible, playing into the interests of the students so that they can make meaningful connections to the content. These relational habits requires the teacher to be habitually responsive to the needs of the students.

Conclusion, Limitations, and Future Studies

Within this study of William James, there were limitations and other aspects of the scholarship that could have been considered. Due to the nature of the work and

230

limited space, I was unable to address the value of radical empiricism, the concept of consciousness and experience, and the essay *The Energies of Men*. In light of the attention given to socio-emotional intelligence, emotion, restorative justice, and mindfulness practice in education, a future project might consider how James's writings on emotion, consciousness, and experience could inform these modern practices today.

Extending the project presented in this dissertation, future scholarship could also consider how Jamesian pragmatism could be included in curricular design addressing issues of "cash value" and "future consequences." Considering how to use pragmatism as a guiding pedagogical practice in applying Jamesian thought to education, I would focus on reflective questions that teachers could ask themselves in their own practice and pedagogy. Similar to extension models of lesson plans that include "literacy," "modifications," and "technology integration," the concept of pragmatism could be an additional box with additional guiding questions. This model of direct application provides new analysis for James and education, moving from the theory of Jamesian philosophy of education into the practice of teaching.[601]

Additionally, within the Harvard archives, there are notations along the margins of James's syllabi/lessons/lectures he made during his tenure as a professor. With deeper analysis and time, scholarship could be presented on how James's pedagogy was informed by the notes he took in concert with the stories of his students. There has been some scholarship on how James was the true father of experiential learning, but more can

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[601] Questions could include: *What opportunities do I present in the classroom to connect the content to the lives of the students? What consequence will one lesson, concept, or experiment, make in connection to the lives of my students? Will they use this information in the future? What is the cash-value or application? How?*

be written about how his theory of experience and consciousness from *Principles* and *Radical Empiricism*, not just his *Talks to Teachers,* can inform that model of teaching today. James was an engaging educator, and within trends in education today the term "active learning" is popular in Scholarship on Teaching and Learning (e.g., SoTL, adult learning theory). James's philosophy and pedagogy could be juxtaposed with that trendy term "active learning" to really dissect the concept and understand what it means to actively engage one's pupils.

James's philosophy considers the value of balance. In education today, where teachers are overworked and underpaid, where students take on the stress of a failing economy compounded by lack of access, opportunity, and the potential for economic stability seen in previous generations, a conversation on balance between the school and society, the teacher and student, and teaching and learning deserves recognition. Applying the underlying concept of balance in the philosophy of James, a theory emerges that considers a positive teacher-student relationship based on balance, where there is respect, kindness, openness, inclusive, flexibility, spontaneity, authenticity, interest, and joy. Additionally, as mentioned above, there is a space for considering criteria of spontaneity in education balanced with habit. How could James's theories of habit demonstrate one half of a required pedagogy that balances spontaneity and creativity in order to build *relational habits* that consider the teacher-student relationship? How do you teach teachers to be flexible, creative, and spontaneous? Can it be achieved at all? These questions are worthy of consideration in future studies.

In conclusion, the life and thought of James can enhance and inform educators today interested in building positive teacher-student relationships. Just as James valued open-mindedness, was inclusive, and modeled being a lifelong teacher-learner, teachers today can be inclusive in their own practice, finding opportunities to include the voices and lived experiences of their students. In this study I focused on analyzing teacher-student relationships, guided by the philosophical writings of James along with his teaching pedagogy. My research revealed that there is a gap in the literature on his impact in education and showed how valuable it is to think philosophically and seek alternatives to the status quo using his philosophy.

I presented an original contribution to the field of philosophy of education, teacher education, and educational research focused on teacher-student relationships by including Jamesian thought tied to pluralism, pragmatism, and habit balanced with creativity and spontaneity. Within this dissertation I developed (a theory) of how Jamesian pragmatism and pluralism contributed to teacher-student relationships. Additionally I developed a philosophy/method of habit and connected it with teacher-student relationships. Within this analysis I helped reconcile habit, creativity, and spontaneity in teaching. Ultimately I argued that James's philosophy did indeed have a "cash value" when considering teacher-student relationships.

In 1890, William James wrote in a letter to a friend, "What most horrifies me in life is our brutal ignorance of one another."[602] In taking on the task of analyzing teacher-student relationships to build an inclusive pedagogy, gaps continue, but the next step is to

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[602] Simon, 174.

teach teachers how to escape from the *ignorance of one another* through inclusive and

disruptive pedagogies that include the lived experiences of their students.[603]

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[603] Novakowski, 57. I previously used similar language to argue for the value of pluralism and multiculturalism in education, but this idea is shifted towards inclusive pedagogies and disruptive teaching practices.

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