



This may be the way Aristotle's ethics looks when set in the context of his views on *scientific* knowledge, but Aristotle thought practical knowledge to be of a different kind, a sort of knowledge that, as Aquinas would later put it, is the "cause of what it understands" and is not "derived from the objects known" (*Summa Theologica*, Ia IIae, Q3, art. 5, obj. 1, quoted by Anscombe at p. 87 of *Intention*). The special logical form that makes reasoning and knowledge distinctly practical, so key to Aristotle's discussion in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, goes missing in Glymour's account.

This is not the only oversight of "Moral and Political Theories." There is an extended discussion of classical contractarian theories of government under the heading "The Naturalization of Government": Hobbes and Locke get their due time, but there is not a single mention here of Rousseau (although he is credited in the previous chapter as the forebear of the Stag Hunt game). Rawls's account of justice and his method of reflective equilibrium are explained, but the treatment is barely longer than a subsection in the chapter on miracles. Marx and Marxism go unmentioned, as do feminist theory, gender theory, race theory, and post-colonial theory. One cannot cover everything in an introductory text, but these omissions are out of balance with the level of detail in the book's first three sections.

It is in those sections, particularly the opening one, that the value of *Thinking Things Through* lies. Although the material there is challenging, the studious reader will find a rich introduction to the scientific side of Western philosophy.

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## **Experiential Learning in Philosophy**

Julinna Oxley and Ramona Ilea, editors

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Since first hearing of the project, I have eagerly awaited the publication of *Experiential Learning in Philosophy*. As I had hoped, co-editors Julinna Oxley and Ramona Ilea deliver a wonderful resource for philosophy instructors interested in high-impact practices. The book is packed with both theoretical frames for understanding how experiential learning can help us achieve our pedagogical goals and a variety of inspiring examples of how to design and implement experiential learning in our courses.

Oxley and Ilea define experiential learning (EL) in their introductory chapter, "Experiential Learning in Philosophy: Theory and Practice":

EL is a pedagogy that encourages the instructor to direct and facilitate learning via practical activities, so the students apply what they are learning in the course to real-world problems or situations. . . . EL is not merely about developing the skill of argumentation via active learning exercises or thought experiments; it involves carrying out complex, coordinated activities that require managing students and other stakeholders in an unpredictable environment. (1)

Experiential learning in a philosophy classroom may seem most fitting when teaching ethics or political philosophy, yet the authors in this collection demonstrate how experiential learning is relevant in other areas of the discipline. The twenty chapters contain examples of service learning, teaching pre-college philosophy, social activism and civic engagement, collaborative group projects, study abroad programs, and a final category Oxley and Ilea call “philosophical EL,” which uses “distinctive activities to teach associated philosophical content” (6).

The book is divided into two main parts. Part I, “Philosophical Reflections on Experiential Learning,” features seven outstanding chapters discussing the philosophical theories that ground experiential learning and how approaches informed by these theories can be implemented in specific courses. Michael D. Burroughs’s chapter, “Practicing Philosophy: Philosophy with Children and Experiential Learning,” focuses on philosophy in K–12 settings. Maurice Hamington’s chapter, “Performing Care Ethics: Empathy, Acting, and Embodied Learning,” describes his use of dramaturgical activities to engage students in the performance of caring. Minerva Ahumada’s chapter, “Dewey and Collaborative Experiential Learning Indoors,” approaches EL through cooperative learning activities that completely “flip” the classroom. The chapter concluding this section, “Cultivating Citizenship: Assessing Student-Designed Civic Engagement Projects in Philosophy Classes,” presents the assessment findings of co-authors Susan C. C. Hawthorne, Monica Janzen, Ramona Ilea, and Chad Wiener. Although all of these chapters are superb, I want to feature three additional essays from Part I, namely chapters 3, 6, and 7.

Chapter 3, “A Short History of Experiential Learning and Its Application to Business Ethics,” offers a clear summary of experiential learning theories and the research supporting its educational effectiveness, a concise description of the essential elements of experiential learning pedagogy, and an inventive example of how to engage students in experiential learning in a Business Ethics course. After comparing eight experiential learning theories and distilling the core features shared by them, co-authors Karen Hornsby and Wade Maki argue that successful experiential learning pedagogy must include three elements: structured scaffolding, measured cognitive dissonance, and repeated reflection activities. They then describe how they incorporate these three features into their Business Ethics courses. Students act as consultants for companies nominated for the annual Piedmont Business Ethics Award, and assist these companies in preparing their entry materials. Impressively,

many students continue their association with the businesses through internship opportunities, professional references, and mentoring relationships.

In chapter 6, “Philosophy, Critical Pedagogy, and Experiential Learning,” J. Jeremy Wisnewski approaches experiential learning from the perspectives of critical theorists such as John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Kurt Hahn. On this view, experiential learning not only prepares students for lucrative careers; experiential learning also cultivates critical consciousness and the grounds for democratic citizenship. Wisnewski utilizes experiential learning when teaching ancient philosophy and offers two examples of how he does so, one via a travel abroad program and the other via a first-year seminar. He argues for experiential learning exercises that are *transactive*, not merely interactive. By students and faculty co-creating the learning experience together, students are challenged to exercise the critical and independent thinking skills he hopes to cultivate, and thus the classroom itself is democratized. He writes, “In a political and social landscape where advertisement influences what we do and how we vote to a perhaps unprecedented degree, it is increasingly important to help students develop the ability to question the views they are exposed to, the arguments for those views, and the dogmas that tend to entrench them” (87).

In chapter 7, “Implicit Bias, Race, and Gender: Experiential Learning and Dual-Process Cognition,” Dan Yim argues for using experiential learning techniques to help students overcome implicit bias and stereotyping. The results of taking the Implicit Association Test typically produce cognitive dissonance in his students: their explicit beliefs and self-reports are revealed to be in conflict with their implicit stereotypes and biases. Then, rather than abandoning them with this often distressing knowledge about themselves, he offers the students opportunities for altering these unconscious biases through experiential learning expeditions. The expeditions are structured opportunities to engage with local families of varying sociological types in everyday activities such as meal planning and grocery shopping on a tight budget or negotiating public transportation without a personal automobile. These face-to-face experiences deliver more accurate narratives about the lives of those the students engage with and thus counter the pervasive stereotypes that feed their unconscious biases.

Part II, “Examples: Experiential Learning Courses,” is divided into three units, each of which includes four essays containing detailed descriptions of how the authors utilize experiential learning in their courses. Most of the authors offer lists of course readings, descriptions of course assignments, and reflections on how the inclusion of EL impacts student learning.

The first section, “Social Change through Philosophy,” inspires me the most. In “Emergent Learning in Independent Studies: The Story of the Accessible Icon Project,” Brian Glenney argues for creating high-risk learning environments, such as requiring students to submit their work to a professional journal or conference. In “Experiential Learning in a Social Justice

Course: Philosophy as Transformative Experience,” Megan Halteman Zwart argues for service learning opportunities that allow students to ameliorate the injustices they study. And, in “Feminist Philosophy and Civic Engagement: The Educational Fair,” Sharon M. Meagher explains how her students create a campus “teach-in” that allows them to creatively and collaboratively share with their peers what they learn in her course.

Of all the essays in this section, I am fascinated by the course design described in chapter 10, “Taking Animals Seriously: Ethics in Action.” Kathie Jenni combines key readings on ethical issues related to three non-human animal groups—animal companions, farm animals, and wildlife—with direct experience working with those animals. For example, during the animal companion unit, students log hours working at two types of animal shelters: a publicly-funded animal control facility in a low-income area and a privately-funded no-kill sanctuary in an affluent area. The contrast between the two environments is compelling and informs class discussions of individual and collective responsibility for the care of domesticated animals. Jenni writes, “In animal ethics, as in other social and moral arenas, forming *personal relationships* (in this case, with non-human animals) and *experiencing the undisputed facts themselves* (about animal killing in shelters, about the mental and emotional capacities of animals) conspire to effect personal transformations, changes in worldview, and commitments to long-term activism” (137).

The second section in Part II, “Service-Learning and Community Engagement through Philosophy,” also presents inventive course designs. In “Engaging with Global Justice through Internships,” Ericka Tucker describes how she employs project-based internships with local organizations to address global justice. Katherine E. Kirby’s course design also emphasizes global justice, but through international service learning. Her essay, “Cultivating Responsible Global Citizenship: Philosophical Exploration & Service Learning in Guyana,” emphasizes how to avoid the potential exploitation and disruption which threatens to undermine such work in developing countries. And, in “Studying War and Contributing to the Community,” Joe Cole describes how he provides students with opportunities to practice conflict resolution in the classroom to set the stage for their engagement with community projects focused on issues of war, peace, and conflict.

In this section, Donna S. Turney’s chapter, “Minding Philosophy: Service Learning and Intellectual Disability,” impressed me the most. She describes a first-year philosophy course, linked to another in psychology, which together aim to foster relationships between students and members from their local community who have intellectual disabilities. While the course readings are standard fare for an introductory philosophy course focused on personal identity, ethics of care, and debates regarding altruism, students’ encounters with “guest students” from Hanover Arc, a nonprofit organization serving people with intellectual disabilities, led them to engage the theoretical content in new ways. Turney emphasizes that students not only reversed the epistemic

privilege of the professional over the personal by critiquing the theories in light of their experiences with the guests, they also reversed roles as they increasingly recognized the reciprocal learning relationship that developed between them and the guests. Most compellingly, Turney's approach to course design radicalizes "backward course design." She writes, "I began with how to meet the needs of people outside the academic community and then addressed the learning needs of students within the academic community. . . . Philosophy curricula are primarily content-driven, but in this case, service determined content and not the other way around" (194–95).

The final section of the book, "New Directions in Experiential Learning in Philosophy," offers a thought-provoking set of essays. Gregory A. Clark's chapter, "Philosophy as Practice: Zen and Archery," presents archery as a way for students to learn about the notion of practice. Graham Hubbs, in "Teaching Philosophy by Designing a Wikipedia Page," outlines how his students collaboratively develop a Wikipedia page entry on the theme of their seminar class. And, in "Museums as the Philosophy Lab: Technology and Cognition Beyond the Brain," Robin L. Zebrowski describes how she incorporates visits to museums into her philosophy of mind courses.

Of the essays in this concluding section, chapter 17, "Collaborative Research Groups in the Experimental Philosophy Seminar," stands out. In it, Alexandra Bradner describes an exciting course she offers for advanced undergraduate philosophy and psychology students: students work in interdisciplinary teams to design and run their own experimental philosophy studies. These projects offer a tremendous learning opportunity for the students as they tested their philosophical intuitions and generated publishable results. Bradner writes, "Students left the course with valuable research experience and a sense of what it might be like to work as an experimental philosopher" (202). Most helpfully, Bradner's essay includes practical tips that are relevant for any instructor utilizing collaborative learning in his or her courses.

I sincerely enjoyed reading *Experiential Learning in Philosophy*. The many diverse examples of innovative teaching inspired me to share several chapters in the collection with my colleagues as we strategize about how to integrate experiential learning into our curriculum. While this is not a book one would assign for undergraduate students to read, it would be appropriate for a graduate student seminar focused on pedagogy. In all, I highly recommend this book for philosophy instructors who are interested in innovative teaching, and for faculty who are considering revising their curriculum to incorporate experiential learning opportunities for their undergraduate students.

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