

The Educational Requirements For A Good Life: Why Growing Just Modern Liberal
Democracies Requires Appropriately Educating Citizens

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Abstract

Living a good human life depends on two criteria: first, the development of the capacities required to engage in characteristic human actions, actions without which a life could not be happy or, indeed, fully human; and, second, the political circumstances that permit and promote the exercise of those capacities in a free and just way. It is too often forgotten that education can promote the capacities required to live well; it is not merely professional training, which, alone, would be wholly insufficient. Education is required to arm citizens with the capacities they need to fulfill their roles in political society, which, if the society is good, will promote citizens' abilities to live well. Proper education is a common requirement for the achievement of both criteria for a good life. This indicates that the success of an educational system at promoting these capacities is a necessary, though not sufficient, condition for the ability of political society to achieve what Aristotle says is its telos, its end, of promoting good lives for its people. Political society can be evaluated by how successfully an educational system promotes individuals' capacities to live well, not just by its success at protecting individual rights. I refer to the criteria that an educational system must meet to promote the capacities individuals need to live well, which determine whether or not a political society can be successful, as the "eudaimonic pedagogical requirement." The eudaimonic pedagogical requirement stipulates that a good education will cultivate basic human capacities by teaching knowledge of facts; intellectual, civic, and moral virtues; deliberative skills; and will do so in a way that promotes freedom rather than domination, using a formal education system, laws, and society's basic structures. The eudaimonic pedagogical requirement serves as a measuring stick for the success of education and modern liberal democracies.

Section 1: Introductory Discussion

1.1. The Good Life And The Importance Of Political Society

The problem of the good human life, *eudaimonia*¹, the question “what does it mean to live well,” is peculiar to human beings, and is rooted in our capacity for reason. “For just as the good ... for whatever has a function and [characteristic] action, seems to depend on its function, the same seems to be true for a human being, if a human being has some function” (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1.7.10, 1097b).² Our capacities for speech and reason separate us from animals; reason is part of our function and characteristic action, and, therefore, part of what it means to live well. Of course, as with any action, certain circumstances promote the ability of an action to achieve its actor’s *telos*, its end, while certain circumstances inhibit an action’s ability to achieve its actor’s

¹ The Aristotelian account of a good life is a useful starting point. It recognizes that a good life necessarily involves reason. When I refer to a “good life” I mean neither a good animal life, nor a good plant life but, instead, a good human life. It is useful to start with Aristotle’s notion of politics because it aims at promoting good lives, which, I believe, is an intuitive idea of government. Political society should not just make our lives easier, it should help us live the best lives that we can, which necessarily involves giving us the capacities to be the best individuals we can be.

² Aristotle writes, “Happiness is a certain sort of activity of the soul in accord with virtue” (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1.9.7, 1099b). Acting virtuously does not merely help us live well; rather, it is the sort of activity that constitutes happiness, a good life, human flourishing, *eudaimonia*. Aristotle’s notion of a good life is a useful way of thinking about the range of good lives available to us, which involve degrees of freedom, justice, and virtue. It highlights the notion that a good life isn’t just about what we have or what we do, but also how we act. The notion of *eudaimonia* develops as a measuring stick for an effective education, one that prepares citizens to perform their roles in a society that creates the circumstances for them to live well and gives them the capacities to live a good, flourishing human life. I call this measuring stick the “*eudaimonic pedagogical requirement*” and claim that, for a regime to achieve its end, its *telos*, of helping citizens live well, it must satisfy the *eudaimonic pedagogical requirement*. While aiming at *eudaimonia* is certainly Aristotelian in nature, this project is not a wholly Aristotelian critique of modernity; rather, the Aristotelian grounding is a useful starting place for an internal critique of education in modern liberal democracies.

telos. If reason is linked to our ability to live well then we should be concerned with cultivating our rational capacities, we should be concerned with the goals of education.

Reason problematizes our notion of a good life, but it also helps us come together for mutual benefit to meet the needs of daily life. Aristotle writes:

The partnership arising from [the union of] several villages that is complete is the city. It reaches a level of full self-sufficiency, so to speak; and while coming into being for the sake of living, it exists for the sake of living well. (Aristotle, *Politics*, 1.2.8, 1252b)

Reason directs³ us towards political society, which can help us reconcile the problem of a good life by promoting the circumstances under which we can live well. While it is easy to see how regimes can exist for the sake of living by ensuring that we satisfy our biological needs and defend ourselves from outside attack, it is harder to see how they can be involved in living well.⁴

³ Aristotle writes: “[It] is evident, then, that the city belongs among the things that exist by nature, and that man is by nature a political animal. ... That man is much more a political animal than any kind of bee or any herd animal is clear. For, as we assert, nature does nothing in vain; and man alone among the animals has speech. ... For it is peculiar to man as compared to the other animals that he alone has perception of good and bad and just and unjust and other things [of this sort]; and partnership in these things is what makes a household and a city” (Aristotle, *Politics*, 1.2.9 – 1.2.12, 1252b-1253a). We have the capacity for reason insofar as we can have a conception of good and bad. Reason in this sense, reason as *logos*, is unique to human beings and directs us towards political society for living and living well.

⁴ The assertion that political society exists for the sake of living well seems problematic because political regimes always place restrictions on citizens’ freedom to act. If political society helps citizens live well then the restrictions it places on them must either enable citizens to engage in more activities, and thus give them more freedom than would be possible without the regime, or the regime must make accessible qualitatively better actions that would not have been possible without it. Education can make possible qualitatively better actions by fostering basic human capabilities. This is a way that political society, while limiting action, helps citizens live well. Since regimes exist for the sake of living well, education in modern liberal democracies must satisfy the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement, it must aim to promote good lives by fostering essential human capacities, enabling individuals to live well and citizens to perform their roles in society.

All sorts of ethical doctrines define a good life and prescribe how we should live, the particularities of which sometimes conflict. While some doctrines accept authoritarian regimes as potentially in conformity with their view of a good life, I presuppose a liberal democratic tradition⁵, one that views freedom⁶ and justice as necessary and constitutive of a good life. Without them we wouldn't be able to actualize our telos fully.⁷ Since we are the types of beings that live in communities it seems natural that a community that better promotes our capacity to live well would be qualitatively better than a community

⁵ By “liberal democratic tradition” I mean modern liberal democracies whose values include, but are not limited to, liberty, equality, fair and open elections, openness to a plurality of conceptions of a good life, and free speech. John Gray, in *Liberalism*, explains, “Liberal governments cannot be other than limited government, since all strands within the liberal tradition confer upon persons rights or claims in justice which government must acknowledge and respect and which, indeed, may be invoked against government. ... A liberal political order... must contain constitutional constraints on the arbitrary exercise of governmental authority. ... In the absence of some such constitutional constraints on government, we cannot speak of the existence of a liberal order. ... The *sine qua non* of the liberal state in all its varieties is that governmental power and authority be limited by a system of constitutional rules and practices in which individual liberty and the equality of persons under the rule of law is respected” (Gray 70-72). In a society where rights, liberty, and equality are valued, the government must be constrained in some way. The aim is to ensure justice and to allow for the development and actualization of each individual's telos. This requires that individuals be brought up with certain capacities, and that political society allow for the free exercise of those capacities. A modern liberal democracy whose educational system satisfies the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement satisfies both conditions for a good regime.

⁶ Rousseau, in *On The Social Contract*, writes, “obedience to the law one has prescribed for oneself is freedom” (Rousseau 56). His opinion, what Isaiah Berlin calls positive liberty, stands in opposition to J. S. Mill's conception of liberty, what Berlin calls negative liberty, which values the absence of external restraint and the opportunity to live as one pleases. A good modern liberal democracy must balance negative and positive liberties while respecting the demands of justice and virtue.

⁷ It may be objected that certain doctrines do not require the stringent demands on freedom that I do. I claim that any *modern liberal democracy*, one that values freedom (involving a balance of both negative and positive freedom) and a plurality of good ways of life, if it is to be good, must satisfy the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement. This does not apply to all societies; rather, it aims only at establishing the necessary conditions for an educational system in modern liberal democracies, and, based on those conditions, can be used to evaluate the success of such a society by evaluating its educational system.

that inhibits that ability. This suggests that we can evaluate regimes based on their success at promoting the conditions under which we can live well. I argue that, since education gives individuals the capacities they need to live well (as individuals and as citizens who fulfill the roles required for the proper functioning of a regime), to satisfy the telos of political society (to promote good lives for its people) a regime must meet the demands of what I call the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement. The eudaimonic pedagogical requirement aims at giving individuals basic human capacities that allow them to function well, both as individuals and as citizens, by teaching knowledge of facts; intellectual, civic, and moral virtues⁸; and deliberative skills. It educates through a free, universal, formal education system; laws; and society's basic structures, and in a way that promotes freedom rather than domination. The eudaimonic pedagogical requirement is a new measuring stick for education and for the success of modern liberal democracies.

1.2. An Aristotelian Approach To A Critique Of Education In Modern Liberal Democracies

By now it should be clear that this project is a critique of education in modern liberal democracies and is premised on the Aristotelian notion of eudaimonia. This raises two important questions: first, why premise the whole of this critique on Aristotle rather than a modern theorist like John Rawls? Second, isn't Aristotle's political philosophy elitist rather than democratic, and republican⁹ rather than liberal¹⁰? The answer to the first

⁸ “Insofar as virtue is related to another, it is justice, and insofar as it is a certain sort of state without qualification, it is virtue” (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 5.1.20, 1130a). Aristotle clarifies that justice promotes the common good whereas virtue is a certain state (*hexis*) in an individual that promotes human flourishing, *eudaimonia*.

⁹ Jürgen Habermas, in “Three Normative Models of Democracy,” writes, “according to the republican view, the status of citizens is not determined by the model of negative liberties to which these citizens can lay claim *as* private persons. Rather, political rights –

question involves the value that can be gained from an Aristotelian analysis that is not possible from a Rawlsian analysis and demonstrates the unique perspective this critique offers. The answer to the second protects this critique from being undermined on grounds that it both attempts to criticize liberalism from the perspective of republicanism and that, by setting such high standards for a good life, is unnecessarily elitist and, therefore, ends up precluding a large (poorer) group from living a good, and fully human, life.

Using Aristotle as the basis for a critique of modern liberal democracies offers a perspective that modern theorists like John Rawls cannot. Starting from the Aristotelian notion of eudaimonia, a good human life, is useful because it helps us see the big picture with respect to political society, it helps us focus on the ability of education, and through it political society, to promote good lives. On the other hand, a Rawlsian perspective would focus too much on justice, the common good, and would leave out those aspects of personal freedom and liberty that constitute a well-lived life for an individual. In this sense, using Aristotle as a starting point aids our critique of modern liberal democracies better than a Rawlsian perspective because the notion of eudaimonia is more compatible with the liberal attitude that values a plurality of good ways of life. Insofar as an

preeminently rights of political participation and communication – are positive liberties. They guarantee not freedom from external compulsion but the possibility of participation in a common praxis, through the exercise of which citizens can first make themselves into what they want to be – politically autonomous authors of a community of free and equal persons. . . . So, the state’s *raison d’être* lies not primarily in the protection of equal rights but in the guarantee of an inclusive opinion –and will-formation in which free and equal citizens reach an understanding on which goals and norms lie in the equal interest of all” (Habermas 22).

¹⁰ Habermas writes, “according to the liberal view, the citizen’s status is determined primarily according to negative rights they have vis-à-vis the state and other citizens. As bearers of these rights they enjoy the protection of the government, as long as they pursue their private interests within the boundaries drawn by legal statutes – and this includes protection against government interventions” (Habermas 22).

Aristotelian perspective sets standards that are closer to Nussbaum's "thick vague" conception of the good, which lists functional capacities that are essential to a good life, than Rawls' "thin theory," which merely lists the means to good living, an Aristotelian perspective is more compatible with liberal values and therefore will be more useful for talking about how education can help both individuals to live well and societies to be just. A Rawlsian perspective would be too focused on justice and not focused enough on living well, eudaimonia. This Aristotelian basis allows for a critique of contemporary education and modern liberal democracies that is more holistic, which, since it guides us to thinking about what is necessary to be capable of justice and living well, is analytically prior to a theory that is solely concerned with justice or just structures.

It may be objected that an Aristotelian approach takes an elitist, republican stance, since Aristotle was interested in politics as one of the highest goods, rather than a liberal, democratic perspective, and, therefore, that using it to critique modern liberal democracies would amount to an elitist, republican objectification of the liberal democratic tradition. Not so. Rather, using an Aristotelian approach to modern liberal democracies helps temper the tendency of liberal traditions to drift towards privileging negative liberties at the expense of positive liberties. This helps forge a middle path between the liberal view, which values negative liberty, and the republican view, which privileges positive liberty. Instead of viewing this approach as elitist, as saying that only the well-off or the aristocracy are capable of being fully human, this approach is wholly democratic insofar as it establishes necessary conditions for all individuals, not just the rich or the privileged, to live well and for a modern liberal democracy to be just. Since the ability both of a society to be just and a person to live well depend on basic human

capacities for reason which, for a life to be eudaimonic, must be cultivated through education, we should now turn our attention to education and its role in living well.

What follows are two questions: first, what types of virtues, skills, and capacities are necessary for citizens to perform their roles well? And second, what is the best way to give individuals those virtues, skills, and capacities without indoctrinating them¹¹?

Education is the best response to the second question; it can give individuals the skills they need to meet the demands that a good modern liberal democracy would make of them. Education is capable of preparing people both to be good individuals and good citizens. The eudaimonic pedagogical requirement aims at promoting good lives by balancing the good of the individual with the common good. To understand the dual role that education plays in helping individuals live well – giving citizens the virtues, skills, and capacities they need to perform their roles in political society, a society which helps them to live well, and giving individuals the capacities to engage in the activities that constitute a good life – we must first understand what is involved in a good life, the types of education that exist, and how education influences individuals in society.

Section 2: Background Discussion

2.1. An Examination Of Freedom

To know what the content of education should be, to know what capacities are necessary for living well, it is necessary to ask: what is involved in a good life? A regime cannot promote a good life when the people being ruled are not free in Aristotle's sense,

¹¹ Indoctrination prevents individuals from thinking for themselves, which makes freedom impossible because such an individual could not give a law to himself. The eudaimonic pedagogical requirement reconciles the need to help individuals both be good citizens and live well while preserving positive freedom through a pedagogy that develops the capacities necessary for basic human functionings.

when there is no share in ruling. Constant describes two notions of freedom in terms of the differences between how the ancients and the moderns view liberty.

The aim of the ancients was the sharing of social power among the citizens of the same fatherland: this is what they called liberty. The aim of the moderns is the enjoyment of security in private pleasures; and they call liberty the guarantees accorded by institutions to these pleasures. (Constant 317)¹²

From this we see that there are at least two important considerations in freedom: sharing in ruling and the right to act without impediment in private endeavors.

Isaiah Berlin, in “Two Conceptions Of Liberty,” elucidates two types of liberty articulated by Constant. The view that Constant attributes to the ancients, the republican conception of freedom supported by Kant, Rousseau, and Hegel, which values sharing in ruling, corresponds to what Berlin calls positive liberty¹³. The view that Constant attributes to the moderns, the liberal conception of freedom articulated by Mill¹⁴, Hobbes, and Locke, the view that emphasizes the absence of external restraint and the opportunity to live as one pleases, corresponds to what Berlin calls negative liberty¹⁵.

¹² While Constant’s distinction between “the view of the ancients” and “the view of the moderns” is helpful in thinking about the different types of freedoms, the terms can be misleading. Others would surely find the construction problematic. For that reason, I move away from Constant’s terms when discussing the two views.

¹³ “The ‘positive’ sense of the word ‘liberty’ derives from the wish on the part of the individual to be his own master. I wish for my life and decisions to depend on myself, not on [any] external force. ... I wish, above all, to be conscious of myself as a thinking, willing, active being, bearing responsibility for my choices and able to explain them by reference to my own ideas and purposes. I feel free to the degree that I believe this to be true, and enslaved to the degree that I am made to realize that it is not” (Berlin 178).

¹⁴ Mill argues, “the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can rightfully be exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others” (Mill 9). Negative liberty is the liberty to pursue your own good in your own way.

¹⁵ “I am normally said to be free to the degree to which no man or body of men interferes with my activity. Political liberty in this sense is simply the area within which a man can

While negative liberty and positive liberty represent two important aspects of a good life, using the term liberty in two ways causes some confusion. Hannah Arendt, in *On Revolution*, clarifies the distinction between liberty and freedom. She calls negative liberty “liberation,” and calls positive liberty “freedom.”

It may be a truism to say that liberation and freedom are not the same; that liberation may be the condition of freedom but by no means leads automatically to it; that the notion of liberty implied in liberation can only be negative, and hence, that even the intention of liberating is not identical with the desire for freedom. (Arendt, *On Revolution* 19-20)

Arendt attacks the liberal conception of negative freedom in favor of the Kantian and Rousseauian notion of positive freedom. Arendt identifies liberation with negative liberty, which includes the absence of oppression and outside force that constrains behavior and a basic level of material goods that meet biological needs¹⁶. She conceives of liberation as important but, since she considers it a prerequisite of positive freedom, thinks liberation is qualitatively inferior to positive freedom insofar as liberation is only an instrumental means to an end, a precondition of positive freedom. A good regime liberates people and allows time for the activities of freedom involved in living well.

act unobstructed. ... If I am prevented by others from doing what I could otherwise do, I am to that degree unfree. ... By being free in this sense I mean not being interfered with by others. The wider the area of non-interference the wider my freedom” (Berlin 169-170). According to Berlin, positive liberty requires negative liberty. “Every interpretation of the word ‘liberty,’ however unusual, must include a minimum of what I have called ‘negative’ liberty. There must be an area within which I am not frustrated” (Berlin 207).¹⁶ Arendt defines labor as the “reproduction of individual life. ... By laboring, men produce the vital necessities that must be fed into the life process of the human body. ... The laboring activity never comes to an end as long as life lasts; it is endlessly repetitive. Unlike working, whose end has come when the object is finished, ready to be added to the common world of things and objects, laboring always moves in the same circle prescribed by the living organism, and the end of its toil and trouble comes only with the end i.e., the death of the individual organism” (Arendt, *The Portable Hannah Arendt* 170-171). There are no new beginnings in labor, since it is repetitive and ends only in death. When one can only focus on labor and has no time for action then one can be considered a slave to continuous laboring and, therefore, has no share in freedom.

Freedom, for Arendt, in part corresponds to positive liberty, i.e. sharing in political activity and being able to act in political society. The right to vote, to participate in a consenting process of authorization, is necessary for freedom insofar as it is a political action¹⁷; through voting one enacts oneself as one that shares in ruling, one chooses one's own leaders and, through them, one's own laws. Since voting allows citizens to consent to the laws and rulers that govern them, it coincides with freedom as obedience to a law you give yourself. This helps justify my claim that modern liberal democracies are the type of regime most in line with the requirements of a good life.

Since eudaimonia requires being free to live one's own life in one's own way, and the ability to give a law to oneself, a good political society balances negative liberties with positive liberties. Moreover, a good political society promotes the right education, which balances the capacities individuals need to participate in the activities that constitute freedom, like positive liberties, and the capacities needed for citizens to play their role in a political society that protects and promotes those freedoms and, through them, good lives. Each aspect of freedom has something important to offer, and education makes both freedoms possible. A person cannot live a eudaimonic life, cannot actualize his telos, without both types of liberty being, to some degree, present. By defining liberty

¹⁷ "Life, in its non-biological sense, the span of time each man is given between birth and death, manifests itself in action and speech, to which we now must turn our attention. With word and deed we insert ourselves into the human world, and this insertion is like a second birth. ... This insertion is not forced upon us through necessity like labor and it is not prompted by wants and desires like work. It is unconditioned; its impulse springs from the beginnings that came into the world when we were born and to which we respond by beginning something new on our own initiative. To act, in its most general sense, means to take an initiative, to begin" (Arendt, *The Portable Hannah Arendt* 178-179). Arendt defines freedom as a new beginning and considers it a wholly political activity that occurs between people. Anything that inhibits speech and action inhibits one's capacity for freedom.

and freedom in this way, and by valuing consent as I do here, I presuppose a liberal democratic tradition as necessary for a political society to achieve its telos. Since modern liberal democracies aim to promote a wide range of good lives through democratic institutions, whose institutional structure is supposed to guarantee the relevant aspects of freedom and justice, the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement fits the aims of a liberal democratic society by promoting the necessary capacities needed for such a regime to function and for an individual to actualize his own conception of a good life.

2.2. Education’s Role In Promoting The “Thick Vague” Conception Of The Good

The eudaimonic pedagogical requirement proposes a system of education that helps individuals gain the capacities listed by Nussbaum, which follow, and the capacities required to perform the roles of a good citizen in a liberal democratic society. Insofar as the eudaimonic pedagogical demands that everyone be educated to possess certain basic capacities, it is inflexible in its curriculum.¹⁸ The liberal tradition avoids attempts to specify one particular good life; rather, it aims to promote a conception of the good that allows for a plurality of good ways of life. The Aristotelian conception of the good fits this tradition, though not in the ways posited by liberal theorists like John Rawls. The Aristotelian does not merely list the means to good living, like Rawls’ “thin theory” of the good; rather, as Martha Nussbaum argues, his view is thick and vague¹⁹, involving

¹⁸ The eudaimonic pedagogical requirement demands that individuals possess the basic capacities to engage in the fundamental human activities that are constitutive of a good life. One who cannot ask oneself what a good life looks like, one who is incapable of developing his own conception of the good, cannot live in accordance with his own laws; he is deprived of positive liberty. We would say that education failed in the instance of this hypothetical person, it did not provide him with the requisite capacities to live a good life; it did not satisfy the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement.

¹⁹ The thick vague conception admits of “many concrete specifications [of the good]; and yet it draws, as Aristotle puts it, an ‘outline sketch’ of the good life. It draws the general

“human ends across all areas of human life” (Nussbaum, *Aristotelian Social Democracy* 217). The thick standard involves a stringent list of basic capabilities that are invaluable to a good human life. The role of society is to give the support that is needed for those individuals “to become capable of functioning in that sphere according to their own practical reason – and functioning not just minimally, but well, insofar as natural circumstances permit” (Nussbaum, *Aristotelian Social Democracy* 228). Martha Nussbaum suggests a list of these basic functionings in terms of capabilities.

Nussbaum argues that a good society should promote the ability to live a “complete human life”; to be healthy; “to avoid unnecessary pain ...[; to] use the five senses”; to have attachments to other things and other persons; “to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one’s own life”; to engage in “familial and social interaction...[; to] live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, [and] the world of nature”; to engage in recreation; and “to live one’s own life and nobody else’s” in the context of one’s own choosing” (Nussbaum,

outlines of the target, so to speak. And yet, in the vague guidance it offers to thought, it does real work. The Aristotelian proceeds this way in the belief that it is better to be vaguely right than precisely wrong; and that, without the guidance of the thick vague theory, what we often get, in public policy, is precise wrongness. The thick vague theory is not, in the sense that worries liberals, a metaphysical theory. That is, it is not a theory that is arrived at in detachment from the actual self-understanding and evaluations of human beings in society; nor is it a theory peculiar to a single metaphysical or religious tradition. Indeed, it is ... both internal to human history and strongly evaluative; and its aim is to be as universal as possible, to set down the basis for our recognition of members of very different traditions as human across religious and metaphysical gulfs. The theory begins, as we shall see, from an account of what it is to be a human being” (Nussbaum, *Aristotelian Social Democracy* 216). The thick vague theory of the good sets a stringent standard of basic capacities that are essential to a good life, which is the sense in which it is thick, but it does not specify, once that standard is met, what form a good life must take. This is useful for thinking about the role that education should play in promoting a good person and a good society. When thinking about a good person, education should promote the capacities necessary for basic human functionings. When thinking about a good society, education should promote the capacities involved in being a good citizen.

Aristotelian Social Democracy 225).²⁰ A life without any of these, regardless of what else this life might have, is seriously lacking in humanness, it cannot fully participate in a good life (Nussbaum, Aristotelian Social Democracy 225). The eudaimonic pedagogical requirement demands that individuals possess these capacities and the capacities required to perform the roles of a good citizen in a just liberal democratic society.

Although the thick vague conception is uncompromising on the issue of basic human capacities and what constitutes a good human life, it does not specify the shape that a good life should take beyond possessing those basic capabilities. To specify a single way of life would be overly doctrinaire and would restrict one's ability to choose one's own way of life and one's own conception of the good, which would undermine one's ability to live a good life in the way we have discussed.²¹

2.3. The Dangers Of An Overly Doctrinaire Society And Specific Theories Of The Good: Tempering Education And The Thick Conception Of The Good

If our conception of a good life were specific, if it mapped out the form a good life must take rather than a set of basic capabilities that a good life requires, then it would

²⁰ To her list of basic human functional capacities Nussbaum adds having bodily integrity, which includes having opportunities for sexual satisfaction, choice in reproductive matters, and being secure against violent attacks; being able to think, imagine, and reason in a truly human way, "a way cultivated by an adequate education, including, but by no means limited to, literacy, and basic mathematical and scientific training"; being able to use those capacities in connection with imagination and experiences to express one's self in one's own way; and being able to engage in play and recreational activities (Nussbaum, *Women And Cultural Universals* 425-426).

²¹ If, for example, an educational system specified a single religious perspective as the only acceptable conception of the good, and if education were directed solely at promoting the capacities necessary to participate in that type of life, then individuals would not be free to choose their own conception of the good or their own way of life. This would deprive individuals of positive freedom. This highlights that, while the liberal democratic tradition accepts basic tenants about what a good life requires (the "thick" criteria), it does not specify what form a good life must take beyond possessing the capacities necessary for basic human functionings (the "vague" criteria).

posit a conception of the good that excluded many more ways of life. Such a specific theory would establish one way of life as better and would educate with that view as its aim. The effect would be the creation of a single way of life as the norm, as the only acceptable way of life available to individuals in society. Education would seem to be more than a means by which we gain the capacities that allow us to live fully human lives, it would become a mode of surveillance and examination.

2.3.1. *The Problem Of Normalization:*

Foucault might be concerned that such an aim, with its specific idea of the good, would act to normalize²² and homogenize individuals in a way that is destructive to their ability to live their own, unique human lives. The danger, from this perspective, is that such an education would be a form of surveillance and examination whereby the norm, in virtue of being an unseen force and pressure, disciplines²³ pupils by making overt any deviation from the norm's self contained truth. The norm posits a truth of its own and makes it easy to identify any violations of that norm (Foucault 187). Any education that specifies a single, specific theory of the good could impose a view as a norm that

²² Foucault, in *Discipline and Punish*, writes "In a sense, the power of normalization imposes homogeneity; but it individualizes by making it possible to measure gaps, to determine levels, to fix specialties and to render the differences useful by fitting them on to another. It is easy to understand how the power of the norm functions within a system of formal equality, since within a homogeneity that is the rule, the norm introduces, as a useful imperative and as a result of the measurement, all the shading of individual differences" (Foucault 184). The danger of educating with a view towards a single, specific conception of the good is that education would serve as a type of normalizing gaze, a surveillance through which the individual is measured and by which deviation from the norm is made apparent.

²³ Foucault writes, "disciplinary power ... is exercised through its invisibility; at the same time it imposes on those whom it subjects a principle of compulsory visibility. In discipline, it is the subjects who have to be seen. Their visibility assures the hold of the power that is exercised over them. It is the fact of being constantly seen, of being able always to be seen, that maintains the disciplined individual in his subjection" (Foucault 187).

disciplines individuals' conception of the good and precludes them from coming to these substantive beliefs on their own. With this kind of pressure they would not truly be able to give this idea, as a law, to themselves.²⁴ This Foucaultian perspective should remind us that, even in a democratically structured regime, if our education aims at a single, specific theory of the good it can endanger individuals' ability to obey laws they give themselves, and thus prevent them from being free, a criteria required for a good human life.

2.4. Realizing Education's Goal In Political Societies

Taking a liberal democratic regime as the political society most in line with the requirements for a good life, a new question comes into view: how do we ensure that the structures of a regime best create the circumstances under which people can live well? Since we have returned to the discussion of what a good regime looks like, we have also returned to the discussion of what citizens' roles in such a regime should be. If we must educate citizens to fulfill their roles in society, the end of which is to enable them to live well, we should be concerned with how education works, how it can be used to create good citizens and good human beings, and how it can help individuals live well.²⁵

²⁴ If education is used to advance a single, specific theory of the good then it imposes that view as a norm that disciplines the conceptions of the individuals. The danger, Foucault might argue, is that it would prevent, or at least make it very difficult, for an individual to choose any other conception of the good. If there is only one theory of the good available to a person, and if that view is advanced as fervently as Foucault fears, then that person cannot be thought of as obeying a law he has given himself, because, for all intents and purposes, he has not given that law to himself, it has been imposed and forced upon him. This would endanger his ability to choose freely his own conception of the good and to live his own life in his own way, a capacity invaluable to a good life (Foucault 184-187).

²⁵ I qualify this statement by saying that we will see how education *can* work in society because, as I will explain later, there is a growing trend in society for education to focus primarily on the sciences and the so-called "useful" and "productive" disciplines while ignoring the humanities and the liberal arts, which foster the capacities we need to live good human lives. It is important that we recognize education's potential so that we can see where education has gone wrong and, more importantly, what must be done to fix it.

Section 3: Main Discussion

3.1. Purposes Of Education

Education serves many roles both for the good individual life and for the good citizen. In discussing the role that education plays in a good life Plato asserts that education is more than merely putting knowledge into the soul. He writes,

the present argument ... indicates that this power[, the power of knowing,] is in the soul of each, and that the instrument with which each learns – just as an eye is not able to turn toward the light from the darkness without the whole body – must be turned around from that which *is coming into being* together with the whole soul until it is able to endure looking at that which *is* and the brightest part of that which *is*. And we affirm that this is the good, don't we? ... There would, therefore, ... be an art of this turning around, concerned with the way in which this power can most easily and efficiently be turned around, not an art of producing sight in it. Rather, this art takes as given that sight is there, but not rightly turned nor looking at what it ought to look at, and accomplishes this object. (Plato, Republic 7, 518 c-d)

Without education we cannot know the important things in life. According to Plato, education involves turning around the whole soul, including feelings and thoughts, which allows us to see the good. Part of turning the soul involves adopting the right values, giving individuals the capacities they need to develop their own values and idea of the good.²⁶ Without the right education, the proper turning around of the soul, we cannot know what is good and cannot act in accordance with virtue; we cannot live well.

If we take this seriously then education should be focused on helping individuals develop their own sense of what is important, as well as their own reasons, which brings us back to the question of what is important for a good life. As we discussed, freedom,

²⁶ Education that involves adopting values, so long as those values are aimed at a basic level of human capabilities and not a specific theory of the good, can avoid the type of indoctrination that would preclude individuals from realizing and developing their own conception of the good, an ability indispensable to a good life.

justice, and virtue are important for living well. Therefore, a good education orients the soul correctly with respect to these things, giving each individual the capacities necessary to be just, virtuous, and free. Since these capacities are important to a good life, this turning of the soul is also demanded by the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement.

Aristotle argues that study²⁷ is the supreme virtue²⁸, since it is the type of activity that most corresponds to what it means to be human²⁹. Therefore, an education that aims at a good life for the individual prepares a person for a life of study.³⁰ On the other hand, Rousseau, Kant, and Arendt, proponents of positive freedom, might be more likely to argue that a good education develops the capacities necessary to obey a law one gives oneself. With a view to the good regime (which creates the conditions under which we

²⁷ Terence Irwin explains that Aristotle's use of the word study, *theōria*, refers to "the contemplative study that he identifies with happiness, or with part of it" (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 349). Aristotle argues that study, *theōria*, is the closest activity to meeting his conditions for eudaimonia, complete happiness, human flourishing.

²⁸ "If happiness is activity in accord with virtue, it is reasonable for it to accord with the supreme virtue, which will be the virtue of the best thing. The best is understanding, or whatever else seems to be the natural ruler and leader, and to understand what is fine and divine, by being itself either divine or the most divine element in us. Hence complete happiness will be its activity in accord with proper virtue; and we have said that this activity is the activity of study. This seems to agree with what has been said before, and also with the truth. For this activity is supreme, since understanding is the supreme element in us, and the objects of understanding are the supreme objects of knowledge. Further, it is the most continuous activity, since we are most capable of continuous study than any continuous action" (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 10.7.1 – 10.7.2, 1177a). Study is important in the liberal democratic tradition insofar as it fosters intellectual virtues and the knowledge of facts necessary to make the right decisions about action. It prepares one to live well and to fulfill one's role in a modern liberal democracy.

²⁹ "Moreover, we take the human function to be a certain kind of life, and take this life to be activity and actions of the soul that involve reason; hence the function of the excellent man is to do this well" (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1.7.14, 1098a).

³⁰ Aristotle argues that our aim should be wisdom (*sophia*), which is important for study. He writes, "wisdom is understanding plus scientific knowledge; it is scientific knowledge of the most honorable things that has received [understanding as] its coping stone" (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 6.7.3, 1141a). Aristotle thinks wisdom benefits study, *theoria*, which is the highest human activity that accords with its function, understanding.

can live well), a good education prepares individuals to satisfy their roles in a just political society.

Education's role in forming individuals and citizens means that it is largely responsible for the reproduction of society, its structures, and, first and foremost, the people who perpetuate them. John Dewey, in *Democracy and Education*, offers a modern and non-Aristotelian critic of modern education. He writes,

Education, in its broadest sense, is the means of this social continuity of life. Every one of the constituent elements of a social group, in a modern city as in a savage tribe, is born immature, helpless, without language, beliefs, ideas, or social standards. Each individual, each unit who is the carrier of the life-experience of his group, in time passes away. ... There is the necessity that these immature members be not merely physically preserved in adequate numbers, but that they be initiated into the interests, purposes, information, skill, and practices of the mature members: otherwise the group will cease its characteristic life. ... Beings who are born not only unaware of, but quite indifferent to, the aims and habits of the social group have to be rendered cognizant of them and actively interested. Education, and education alone, spans the gap. (Dewey 6)

Individuals must be educated to possess certain knowledge³¹, which will have been passed down to them from the mature citizens. Since citizens exist as part of the political whole, good citizens must possess the language, beliefs, ideas, and social standards of society.

Education must give individuals a common language³² before it can transmit its

³¹ This highlights one of the most basic goals of education, it must transmit knowledge to the new members of society, but it must do it in a way that promotes students' freedoms, basic capacities, and intellectual virtues. An education that does this prepares individuals to act with knowledge of a wide variety of subject matters, including "the facts observed, recalled, read, and talked about, and the ideas suggested" (Dewey 149).

³² "Society exists through a process of transmission quite as much as biological life. This transmission occurs by means of communication of habits of doing, thinking, and feeling from the older to the younger. Without this communication of ideals, hopes, expectations, standards, opinions, from those members of society who are passing out of the group to those who are coming into it, social life could not survive" (Dewey 6). "What nutrition and reproduction are to physiological life, education is to social life. This education consists primarily in transmission through communication" (Dewey 11). Education is the

knowledge from the mature members (adults) to the new members (children). J. S. Mill, in *On Liberty*, asserts the importance of teaching children a basic minimum, including language and general facts (Mill 105). Mill argues education should be as factual and value-free as possible in order to prevent the state from exercising “an improper influence over opinion” (Mill 105).³³ This is important because knowledge informs our understanding of concepts, virtues, and action.

The expression “transmitting knowledge” evokes an image of institutional education where knowledge comes from the teacher and is deposited in the student. To borrow from Plato’s language, it treats the student as one who cannot see and the teacher as one who must create sight in the student rather than one who must help the student see that which is important on his own. Paulo Freire, in *Pedagogy Of The Oppressed*, explains that this attitude is destructive to the student’s creativity and humanity, it treats the student as a receptacle for facts rather than as a self-conscious individual deserving of freedom. Freire contends that this attitude encourages systems of domination of teacher over student and advantages society at the student’s expense. He writes,

primary way we reproduce society and it operates by reproducing individuals. This highlights a conservative aspect of education; it reproduces what came before. Education can also be progressive, giving individuals the capacities to move society forward.³³ “All attempts by the State to bias the conclusions of its citizens on disputed subjects are evil; but it may very properly offer to ascertain and certify that a person possesses the knowledge requisite to make his conclusions on any given subject worth attending to” (Mill 106). Mill does not want the state to interfere with the ability of individuals to do as they please; he thinks that educations that bias opinions are too restrictive of freedom. He argues that it is important that people have the knowledge necessary to come to their own conclusions. The ability to use knowledge to develop your own opinions is a valuable cognitive skill, a capacity necessary for an individual to develop his own notion of the good, engage in deliberative action, and live well. Having this knowledge and being able to engage in these activities is part of the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement.

liberating education consist in acts of cognition, not transferrals of information. ... Whereas banking-education³⁴ anesthetizes and inhibits creative power, problem-posing³⁵ education involves a constant unveiling of reality. The former attempts to maintain the *submersion* of consciousness; the latter strives for the *emergence* of consciousness and *critical intervention* in reality. (Freire 79-81)

Freire claims that the banking system of education, where students merely memorize facts, diminishes individuals' abilities to interact with the world and to develop the critical reflection necessary for free persons. He advocates for a problem-posing system of education that engages students with teachers as critical co-investigators in the world.

The problem posing system of education encourages students to learn facts through experience. It praises education that stimulates a sense of wonder and asks students to respond to questions to develop their critical capacities. It asks students to discover facts in the world through exploration with the world and dialogical relations with the teacher and other students, a process of intelligent, critical discourse. This seems reminiscent of the notion of Rousseauian freedom discussed earlier, obedience to a law you give yourself. Freire advocates for an educational style where facts are arrived at by the student's own logic, as a product of discourse, and given as truth to himself. This retains the importance of learning facts, but does it in a way that better preserves the

³⁴ Freire explains, "The banking concept (with its tendency to dichotomize everything) distinguishes two stages in the action of the educator. During the first, he cognizes a cognizable object while he prepares his lessons in his study or his laboratory; during the second, he expounds to his students about the object. The students are not called upon to know, but to memorize the contents narrated by the teacher. Nor do the students practice any act of cognition, since the object towards which that act should be directed is the property of the teacher rather than a medium evoking the critical reflection of both teacher and students. Hence in the name of 'preservation of culture and knowledge' we have a system which achieves neither true knowledge nor true culture" (Freire 80).

³⁵ Freire explains, "The role of the problem-posing educator is to create, together with the students, the conditions under which knowledge at the level of the *doxa* is superseded by true knowledge, at the level of the *logos*" (Freire 81).

student's freedom while developing his critical capacities and intellectual virtues. Since, as we learned from Aristotle, how we do things is just as important as our intentions and what we do³⁶, the freedom promoting style engendered by the problem-posing system of education is a valuable asset to a just theory of education. Since improper educational styles, while possibly aiming at the right end (promoting eudaimonia), can, because of the way they educate, lead to domination, which precludes the dominated from a good life, the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement demands that formal education engender a style, like the problem-posing system, that promotes freedom and a good human life.

3.2. Types Of Knowledge

Knowledge about necessary facts informs our understanding and deliberative processes. This is important because our decisions can go wrong, they may be logically unsound or logically invalid, in two ways: first, if the premises are erroneous and, second, if the arguments or conclusions fail to follow logically from the premises. A decision or an argument is logically sound and logically valid when it has true conclusions that logically follow from true premises. The problems associated with the latter, with a failure of deliberation, will be addressed later in a discussion of intellectual virtues. In the meantime, suffice it to say that a decision cannot be logically sound and logically valid if either the premises are false or if the arguments fail to follow logically from the premises. The problems associated with the former, with erroneous premises, are dependant on knowledge of facts. For our decisions to be logically sound and logically valid, our knowledge of facts, our premises, must be true. Insofar as reaching the truth is dependant

³⁶ "Having these feelings at the right times, about the right things, toward the right people, for the right end, and in the right way, is the intermediate and best condition, and is proper to virtue" (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 2.6.11, 1106b).

on caring whether something is true and discerning truth from falsity, truth depends, at least in part, on intellectual virtues (which will be discussed in greater detail later).

Although knowledge of facts is important, it cannot help us with actions without knowing what good action is.³⁷ This is important since a good life is a certain sort of activity in accord with virtue; it is an activity that must be done the right way. This helps us know what to aim for in action. A good education exposes us to notions of the good, provides us with information, and gives us the capacities to choose our own notion of the good and our own way of life.

Living well, according to Aristotle, is an activity in accord with virtue, but, so far, all we have talked about have been facts and principles, which, although they inform action, are not necessarily geared towards action³⁸. Prudence involves knowledge about actions and human concerns.³⁹ This is necessary because action is never as simple as applying a universal to all situations.⁴⁰ Acting virtuously is difficult; it involves knowing

³⁷ According to Aristotle, acting virtuously requires knowledge of the unchanging aspects of virtue, of what it means to be virtuous in a theoretical sense. Understanding (*nous*), then, is about the principles of things (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 6.6.2, 1141a).

³⁸ Action involves things that change. Since virtue involves action, it requires knowledge about things that change. This explains why acting virtuously requires knowledge of changing things (actions) and unchanging things (what it means to be human).

³⁹ Aristotle describes *phronēsis*, also translated as prudence, as “a state grasping the truth, involving reason, concerned with action about things that are good or bad for a human being” (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 6.5.4, 1140b). “Prudence ... is about human concerns, about things open to deliberation” (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 6.7.6, 1141b). This highlights that acting well involves more than knowing facts, the virtues (the good), and how things hang together. Acting well requires knowing about human concerns and what is good in particular circumstances.

⁴⁰ “When speaking of natural right, Aristotle does not primarily think of any general propositions but rather of concrete decisions. All action is concerned with particular situations. Hence justice and natural right reside, as it were, in concrete decisions rather than general rules. It is much easier to see clearly, in most cases, that this particular act of killing was just than to state clearly the specific difference between just killings as such and unjust killings as such. ... In every human conflict there exists the possibility of a

what the right thing to do is at the right time and, therefore, requires prudence.⁴¹ An education that aims at living well, one that satisfies the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement I recommend, prepares individuals for action with knowledge of facts, understanding, and prudence. This is important for a citizen in political society, one who shares in ruling, because he must play his role in society. He must be educated to have virtues of thought; his education must prepare him to do the right action at the right time.

3.3. The Necessary Components of Education

3.3.1. Addressing Concerns About Freedom

Arendt's conception of freedom involves disclosing oneself to the world through action. This necessitates that we have an identity to disclose. From this perspective, education must help people foster a personal identity beyond one's role as a citizen. A person must conceive of himself as an end in himself, as worthy of respect and recognition. This is important because freedom is constituted by actions that disclose ourselves to the world, in the Arendtian sense, and because individual identity is necessary for formulating laws we give ourselves, in the Rousseauian sense. Furthermore, it would be absurd to think of an individual as living a virtuous life if he had no distinct character of his own, if he were not an individual. For these reasons, it is fundamental to the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement that education promote a unique identity for all.

just decision based on full consideration of all the circumstances, a decision demanded by the situation. Natural right consists of such decisions. Natural right thus understood is obviously mutable" (Strauss 159).

⁴¹ Aristotle clarifies that "prudence [is not] about universals only. It must also acquire knowledge of particulars, since it is concerned with action and action is about particulars. ...And since prudence is concerned with action, it must possess both [the universal and the particular] or the [particular] more [than the universal]. Here too, however, [as in medicine] there is a ruling science" (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 6.7.7, 1141b). Irwin explains that this ties prudence both to acting according to a mean, and acting for the community's good, not merely one's own good (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 245-246).

3.3.2. *With One Eye On Virtue And The Other Eye On Justice*

As we have said, education must aim both at virtue, the private good, living a good, flourishing life, and justice, the common good, being a good citizen; each aims at promoting good lives in different ways. It can be tempting to value one aim too much, to privilege one aim at the expense of the other. Susan Collins, in “Justice as Virtue” from *Aristotle And The Rediscovery of Citizenship*, emphasizes a tension between virtue and justice. According to Collins, the education that promotes the virtuous man (one that orients him towards virtue) is not necessarily the education that promotes the good citizen (one that orients him towards the common good).

[Aristotle] thus clarifies the problem at the heart of civic education: the two ends that necessarily demand our devotion as morally serious human beings cannot be fully reconciled. In this way, Aristotle’s account of the virtues both describes the political community’s noblest pedagogical aim and, on the basis of this community’s own aim, establishes its limits. (Collins 80)

On the surface, this seems to force us to choose between two necessary elements of a good life. But perhaps the problem is not that the two demands, educating a virtuous person and educating a just person, cannot be reconciled; rather, the problem is that we are looking at them as opposing things that must be reconciled.

This tendency stems from the erroneous belief that actions concerned with justice and actions concerned with the good of an individual are mutually exclusive.⁴² Although each aspect of education, living justly and living well, prepare an individual for different

⁴² In the case of an armed conflict it might be asked whether the actions demanded by individuals are just. This seems to be the case when virtue demands courage in the face of danger and loyalty to one’s regime whereas one’s sense of justice might consider such conflicts repugnant, that is, not in accordance with the common good. Virtue and honor require that soldiers on such occasions follow orders, and this is considered praiseworthy. In such cases there seems to be a tension between our various duties, between the common good and what is good for the individual.

roles and activities involved in a good life, that does not mean the two are irreconcilable. While actions required by the good individual may at times conflict with the actions required by the just man, this does not indicate a natural hierarchy of actions. Rather, if we consider the Aristotelian notion of a good life and Nussbaum's thick vague conception of the good we see that, while actions cannot be generalized into a hierarchy, ends can be. If we promote the capacities necessary for a good life and learn to value them as indispensable to a good life then education resolves the tension between justice and the good life by giving us the capacity to see what is most important.

The tension ceases to be a problem when we examine the process by which individuals make decisions concerned with action. According to Aristotle, both actions concerned with the common good and those concerned with individual goods are types of virtues, and virtues are *prohairesis*⁴³, they involve decision. The eudaimonic pedagogical requirement includes fostering the ability to recognize the hierarchy of ends advocated by Nussbaum. This reconciles the tension between justice and a good life. It balances idealism with realism; it recognizes that to live well you must first do what is practicable. The hierarchy of ends, which is determined by which end most promotes good lives, dictates whether virtue or justice (or some other end) should take precedent when a

⁴³ The word *prohairesis*, which Irwin translates as "decision" in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, possesses a stronger meaning for Aristotle than how we normally think of the word decision. "What is decided is what has been previously deliberated. For decision involves reason and thought, and even the name itself would seem to indicate that [what is decided, *prohairesis*] is chosen [*hairesis*] before [*pro*] other things" (Aristotle 3.2.16-17, 1112a). For Aristotle, *prohairesis* involves having made the choice in advance. Acting correctly involves having thought in advance and having had deliberated on those problems concerning action. This seems to give us a greater potential for acting virtuously, since it involves reflection, and thus gives us a greater responsibility for living well. Given this deeper understanding of *prohairesis*, decision, we can see that correct deliberation is necessary to making correct decisions and to living well.

conflict exists. This depends on recognizing tensions when they appear, identifying the options' ends, and then, using deliberation, making the right decisions about action.

The notion that knowing the right action in the right situation involves being able to make the right decision seems intuitive but, since we are concerned here with education, it is necessary to examine this decision process to figure out how to make it most accurate. Aristotle explains that decision is

either understanding combined with desire or desire combined with thought; and this is the sort of principle that a human being is. ... The function of each of the understanding parts, then, is truth. And so the virtues of each part will be the state that best directs it toward the truth. (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 6.3.2, 1139b)

Knowing the best thing to do requires good decisions, which combines the right thought with the right desire, which involves good deliberation.⁴⁴ Since good actions depend on good decisions, which depend on good deliberation, education that improves individuals' deliberative capacities gives them the intellectual virtues necessary to guide their actions.

3.4. Right Thinking: The Value of Intellectual Virtues

⁴⁴ "Having deliberated well seems ... to be some sort of good; for the sort of correctness in deliberation that makes it good deliberation is the sort that reaches a good. ... [Good] deliberation is correctness that accords with what is beneficial, about the right thing, in the right way, and at the right time. Further, our deliberation may be either good without qualification or good only to the extent that it promotes some [limited] end. Hence unqualifiedly good deliberation is the sort that promotes the unqualified end [i.e., the highest good], while the [limited] sort is the sort that correctly promotes some [limited] end. If, then, having deliberated well is proper to a prudent person, good deliberation will be the type of correctness that accords with what is expedient for promoting the end about which prudence is true supposition" (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 4.9.4 – 4.9.7, 1142b). Good deliberation requires being able to balance correctly the goods involved with action so that the actor can achieve the highest good. Good deliberation achieves the highest good in each situation, which makes it necessary for decision and therefore, for the virtuous actions of citizens and individuals. Intellectual virtues that promote correct deliberation will also promote good decisions, virtuous actions, and good lives.

Nancy Sherman and Heath White, in “Intellectual Virtue: Emotions, Luck, and the Ancients,” describe the human desire to know as part of living well (Sherman and White 39).⁴⁵ This desire to know becomes even more important if we take seriously the notion that knowing the truth⁴⁶ carries an epistemic value that contributes to living well (Zagzebski 140). Furthermore, it is easy to imagine how truth can benefit action. Since living well is concerned with activities of the soul, truth will help us better know the appropriate way we should respond in various circumstances. This demonstrates that truth can play at least two roles in a good life: it can help us achieve our immediate goals with respect to action (acting well in particular instances) and it is important for living well overall (Annas 24). Since knowing the truth helps us live better lives, virtues that help us know the truth will help us live well.

Although intellectual virtues are involved in living well, they are not the same as a good life. Moral virtues involve emotions and feelings in different ways than intellectual virtues. Julia Annas in “The Structure Of Virtue,” explains

The real distinction emerges when we consider that moral virtue is essentially practical; it is the skill of living, where living, in the virtue tradition, is seen as essentially active, shaping your life so that it is ordered from within. The way you live is seen as actively reflecting and expressing your character and hence your choices. Intellectual virtue, on the other hand, is not essentially practical; it is theoretical in that it is directed at achieving aims other than good action. Particularly if we think of intellectual virtue as aimed at achieving truth, we can see that its aim is going to be distinct from that of moral virtue. (Annas 21)

⁴⁵ On the other hand, an unyielding, single-minded pursuit of truth can be damaging to an individual’s pursuit of a good life. “The attractiveness of the intellectual search for truth, and the intrinsic appeal of its objects, can lead humans away from the aim of living a morally ordered life” (Annas 22).

⁴⁶ By the term “truth” I mean that which correctly represents the world as it is, in the case of a statement about the world, or what accurately and sincerely reflects intentions, in the case of a non-descriptive utterance.

This explicates the differences between moral virtue, which aims at doing the right thing, and intellectual virtue, which aims at knowing the truth. This distinction helps us understand how the two are related; since intellectual virtue aims at truth, it can improve understanding, which informs moral virtue. Since moral virtues aim at doing the right thing, which requires knowing what the right thing is and doing the right thing, one cannot be morally virtuous⁴⁷ without intellectual virtues (Annas 22). Intellectual virtues, since they help us achieve the truth, both in particular circumstances and overall truth, are indispensable to the epistemically well-lived life (Annas 32). Therefore, a good life requires intellectual virtues, since we cannot make moral decisions without them. Since intellectual virtues contribute to an epistemically well-lived life, intellectual virtues are part of the stringent demands of the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement.

True beliefs are epistemically valuable because they “include dispositions to have accurate propositional representations,” which can help us reach our goals in particular circumstances as well as in our overall aim of living a morally virtuous life (Zagzebski 137). This highlights what it is about true beliefs that we consider valuable: they are

⁴⁷ Acting morally requires that one be able to follow through with a virtuous action once one has decided what the moral action is. Since to act well one must be free to act, we must ask: what capacities must one possess to act freely? Obviously being free is a matter of not being enslaved and of being free from continuous labor (having one’s biological needs met); however, these are preconditions for freedom and action on the side of political society. What are the preconditions for freedom in terms of capacities that individuals themselves must possess to engage in activities of freedom? To be free, as Rousseau points out, we must be able to obey a law we have given ourselves. Therefore, continence, the ability to obey our own rational decisions, is a capacity that is necessary for positive freedom. The incontinent person is capable of making decisions but, because of desire, acts contrary to his rational decision. Therefore, in order for a man to obey laws he gives himself he must be educated to be continent. This involves valuing the ability to act in accordance with decisions and to behave moderately with respect to one’s desires. For a more thorough treatment of continence refer to Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 7.1.6, 1145b).

successful in their representational aims. When we reflect on our beliefs we represent ourselves representing the world. This process of representing our own representations, of critically reflecting on the accuracy of our own beliefs, allows us to evaluate our beliefs as good or bad, accurate or inaccurate.

This ability has two significant consequences: it allows us to have an idea of knowledge, which is characterized by good, true beliefs, and it gives us a responsibility for the form of our beliefs, that is, whether they are true or false. This suggests that finding the truth, which is connected with intellectual virtues, comes with a degree of responsibility in a way similar to physical acts, which involve moral virtues. Linda Zagzebski, in “Intellectual Motivation and the Good of Truth,” explains,

We wouldn't be responsible for our beliefs if we couldn't wonder in this way. The situation is similar but not identical in the evaluation of our acts. Aquinas thought that we always do an act “under the aspect of good.” But thinking that our acts are good does not in itself relieve us of responsibility if they are not good. We are responsible for our acts because we can reflect upon them. Similarly, when we have a belief we *ipso facto* think the belief is true, but it does not follow that we have no responsibility for believing what is true. Even while having a belief and thereby thinking it is true, we can, and sometimes should, ask ourselves whether it is true. (Zagzebski 137)

Zagzebski explains that our capacity to represent ourselves representing the world comes with the responsibility to reflect critically on the accuracy of our beliefs. Since critically reflecting on the state of our beliefs helps us improve the accuracy of this portion of our cognitive process, we have a responsibility to develop this second order capacity as a type of intellectual virtue. Critical reflection emerges as satisfying two aims: it helps us hold ourselves accountable for the accuracy of our beliefs, and it helps us act correctly when our actions are based on beliefs we assume to be true, which is important because we are also morally responsible for those physical acts. Moreover, critical reflection is

also an important intellectual virtue for a citizen in a liberal democratic society. Such a virtue improves citizens' abilities to perform their roles in society by making them better deliberators, voters, jurors, leaders, and even more informed, discerning citizens.

Therefore, since the quality of a political society depends, at least in part, on the ability of its citizens to perform their roles adequately, intellectual virtues such as critical reflection help create the political circumstances that help individuals live good human lives and, thus, are part of the demands of the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement.

3.5. Types Of Education

3.5.1. Formal Education

Since the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement creates stringent requirements for evaluating the success of a political institution through its effectiveness at educating its citizens, it is necessary that a liberal democratic political society have a mandatory system of free, equal, public, universal education. This education must aim to satisfy the demands of the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement by teaching facts; intellectual, civic, and moral virtues; and all things that promote the capacities required for an individual to live a good life and to be a good citizen. This formal education, however effective it may be, must be supplemented and reinforced by other types of education.

3.5.2. Laws As A Form Of Societal Education

Political societies promote good lives through their laws.⁴⁸ More than just restricting people's actions, laws⁴⁹ habituate us towards acting well and, if they are

⁴⁸ "Law instructs us to do the actions of a brave person...[, of] a temperate person... [, and] similarly requires actions in accord with the other virtues, and prohibits actions in accord with the vices. The correctly established law does this correctly, and the less carefully framed one does this worse" (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 5.1.14, 1129b).

informed by the right reasons for acting, can foster states that predispose us to act virtuously in the future. For example, laws can help us become prudent by tempering our desires through habituation. While societies can promote good lives through laws, regimes and laws require certain people to play certain roles – leading, voting, judging, legislating, following, etc. – and require that each role is done well, i.e. in a way that promotes good lives. Performing those roles well requires that citizens possess certain virtues, skills, and capacities, which requires the right education. Good laws, more than just preparing citizens to satisfy their roles in society, also prepare individuals to live well by giving them the skills to be good family members, good friends, and virtuous persons. Society’s use of laws to educate individuals with the capacities they need to live well is a representative instance of the ways that education shapes, and is shaped by, society. To leave open the widest range of freedoms and good ways of life, the only restrictions on laws imposed by the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement are that they promote basic human capacities, defend the circumstances that help individuals live well, and guide them towards civic, intellectual, and moral development in the ways we have discussed.

3.5.3. How Political Society’s Basic Structures Educate Individuals

While laws primarily educate us through habituation, they also shape our lives in significant ways insofar as they constitute the basic structures of political society, which helps to educate individuals about their roles as citizens. One of the clearest examples of political institutions relying on citizens is its use of juries. Juries depend, for their success, on the jurors being educated, that is, we rely on the ability of the jurors to

For Aristotle, this means that good laws, which can be both written laws and unwritten customs, promote the activities of a good life.

⁴⁹ By the term “laws” I refer to a set of rules housed in an institution and backed by the coercive power of a state.

understand the judge's instructions, the testimony from both sides, and to come to the right decision. We depend on the jurors' ability to engage their intellectual capacities during deliberation in a way that results in a good, accurate, just verdict. Juries also act as institutions that educate citizens about the justice system. By requiring citizens to engage in deliberative debates about substantive facts, and by asking those jurors to draw conclusions based on those facts, juries develop citizens' intellectual virtues while instilling them with the values and laws of society, which further helps to make them good citizens and good individuals, helping them to live good lives.

The most basic institution in a democratic society, the electoral nature of democracy, depends on citizens' capacities to analyze the political candidates, their positions, values, and past actions; to engage in respectful, critical discourse with other members of the electorate; and, from that pool of knowledge and opinions, to elect the best candidate to public office. The product of a majority of individuals successfully engaging in logically sound and valid deliberation leads to a good decision, one where a qualified, honest, effective representative is elected, one who is likely to act in the people's best interests. When poor deliberation leads to poor decisions by the majority of the electorate, the result is likely to be an elected official whose actions will not be in the people's best interest. This is important because the wrong type of deliberation can lead to the election of a leader that is detrimental to a just political society. Poor deliberation, resulting in poor decisions on Election Day could result in a regime becoming less just, which would create circumstances that would make it harder for individuals to live well. This demonstrates the role that citizens play in shaping their political institutions, making them just, and ensuring that they have the best possible circumstances for living well.

3.6. The Effect Of Education On Social Schemas, And Vice Versa

Whereas citizens vote and serve on juries only once in a while, the social schemas that embody the everyday actions of individuals in society are continuously created and recreated through individuals' actions, discussions, and thoughts. This can be problematic if our schemas, our background assumptions, cause us to participate in unjust activities. If the background assumptions that compose our social schema are not just, then individuals will subsequently be educated to behave unjustly. Alternatively, if we are educated to recognize the background assumptions in our social schemas through critical reflection, then we can resist detrimental schemas and reshape them to adhere to the ideals of a just liberal democratic society. The ideas and beliefs imbedded in social schemas compose the background assumptions of society, which can promote or inhibit good lives. A failure of schemas to promote good lives detracts from the positive effects of education. A successful education enables individuals and, through them, society to reshape schemas in ways that promote just citizens and virtuous individuals.

The basic structures of political society determine how possible it is for someone to live well. Consider a society that contains prejudicial background information that asserts that people with black skin are untrustworthy. An individual in such a society would be more likely to pre-judge a black person's status as an agent unworthy of recognition. This black person would find himself discredited, making him appear epistemically untrustworthy⁵⁰ and, thus, undermined in a fundamental human capacity,

⁵⁰ Fricker, in *Epistemic Injustice: Power & The Ethics Of Knowing*, explains, "epistemic trustworthiness has two distinct components: competence and sincerity" (Fricker 45). Undermining a person in either of those capacities, competence or sincerity, undermines him in his ability to be perceived as epistemically trustworthy and, therefore, as an agent of testimonial exchange.

the capacity for testimonial exchange⁵¹ (Fricker 44-45). This would make it more difficult, if not impossible, for him to successfully communicate. When speech is undermined in this type of way a person is inhibited in his capacity to disclose himself to the world (in the Arendtian sense) and, therefore, is impeded in the activities of freedom. Such a person would be excluded from political discourse and would be relegated to a group with limited access to the realm of freedom. The types of people that compose a regime determine the extent to which that regime can successfully promote good lives for its people. Regardless of whether individuals are politicians, judges, or citizens, the type of individuals they are constitutes the society, its basic structures, and its schemas, and determines the type of regime that can exist. This demonstrates that the failure to advance a pedagogy that promotes intellectual virtues risks falling victim to prejudicial background information that makes an otherwise just society unjust. The problems presented by social schemas gives further credence to the demands of the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement and serves as a representative instance of the frailty of good lives in political society; society can negatively educate us if our education doesn't prepare us to respond to, and to reshape, the schemas and basic structures of society.

3.7. Problems With Contemporary Education: Demonstrating The Need For The Eudaimonic Pedagogical Requirement

⁵¹ “The primary harm is a form of the essential harm that is definitive of epistemic injustice in the broad. ... The form that this intrinsic injustice takes specifically in cases of testimonial injustice is that the subject is wronged in her capacity as a giver of knowledge. The capacity to give knowledge to others is one side of that many-sided capacity so significant in human beings: namely, the capacity for reason. ... The fact that the primary injustice involves insult to someone in respect of a capacity essential to human value lends even its least harmful instances a symbolic power that adds a layer of harm of its own: the epistemic wrong bears a social *meaning* to the effect that the subject is less than fully human” (Fricker 44).

Education is more than career-preparation, a requirement for a diploma, or something that aims merely at economic usefulness, its aim should be the promotion of eudaimonia, which involves promoting basic functionings and capacities. Nussbaum, in *Not For Profit: Why Democracy Needs The Humanities*, explores the benefits of humanistic education and points out problems with contemporary education. She laments,

The demands of the global market have made everyone focus on scientific and technical proficiencies as *the* key abilities, and the humanities and the arts are increasingly perceived as useless frills that we can prune away to make sure our nation (whether it be India or the United States) remains competitive. To the extent that the humanities and arts are the focus of national discussion, they are recast as technical abilities that ought to be tested by quantitative multiple-choice examination, and the imaginative and critical abilities that lie at their core are typically left aside.
(Nussbaum, *Not For Profit*, 133)

The trend in contemporary education is to focus on the sciences, technology, and research while ignoring the critical abilities and the training for citizenship and for life that accompanies the humanities and a liberal arts education. This is in part due to demands for tangible results, economic progress, and demonstrated usefulness by policymakers and budget-writers. This effectively sacrifices the capacities necessary for individuals to live well and to perform their roles in society, which is essential if a political society is to protect individuals' abilities to exercise their human capacities by engaging in the activities that constitute a good life. If political society takes seriously its obligation to help citizens live well it must invest more in education, it must aim at promoting the humanities, the liberal arts, and the natural sciences, not just the so-called useful subjects. Society must recognize that, while the sciences are productive and contribute to

economic growth⁵², the humanities and the liberal arts make us better, more well rounded individuals; they help us live fuller, more human lives by giving us the capacities to actualize our potential. A good modern liberal democracy recognizes the need for these capacities in human life, and therefore the need for the humanities and liberal arts; a good modern liberal democracy satisfies the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement.

Section 4: Conclusion

4.1. Modern Liberal Democracies Need A Eudaimonic Pedagogical Requirement

The eudaimonic pedagogical requirement I recommend demands an educational system that educates just citizens while also promoting good lives by giving individuals the capacities they need to live well. This requires that a society's education, from formal education to political structures and social schemas, promote in individuals the capacities that Nussbaum claims are required for an individual to live well and that are required to perform the roles of a good citizen in a just modern liberal democracy. Good education gives individuals the capacities to be just, virtuous, and free. Moreover, since how individuals are educated is just as determinate of a good life as the content of that education, the eudaimonic requirement also addresses Freire's concern by stipulating that a just pedagogy educates individuals in a way that promotes their freedom and a good life, and allows them to develop their own conception of the good. Furthermore, since the enactment of the right ideas about a good life can only be successful if our decisions about actions and beliefs are informed by effective deliberative practices, intellectual

⁵² It could be argued that economic growth depends on more than mere training in natural sciences, computers, and engineering; it also depends on creativity and imagination. Since the humanities and the liberal arts develop these types of capacities and intellectual virtues, economic growth, the kind that results from innovation and new ideas, is not only benefited by the humanities and liberal arts, but actually requires them.

virtues are a necessary part of the eudaimonic requirement. Intellectual virtues such as critical reflection and the pursuit of truth help individuals live well by ensuring that their actions are the best enactments of their positive character, they help individuals be just citizens by giving them the capacities to perform their roles in society well, and they help people respond to society's structures by recognizing prejudicial background information and reshaping harmful schemas. This requires that formal education's curriculum include, in addition to the so-called "useful subjects" like science and technology, training in the humanities and the liberal arts, since these subjects promote the intellectual virtues necessary for living well. Just modern liberal democracies cannot promote good lives without meeting the demands of the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement, without a holistic educational system that promotes justice, the common good, and virtue, the activities that constitute individual happiness. If modern liberal democracies best promote freedom, which is necessary for living well, then satisfying the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement is necessary for a regime to achieve its telos of helping individuals live well, and serves as a measuring stick for the extent to which an education and a political society have satisfied the common requirement of the two criteria of a good life.⁵³

⁵³ Recall that a good life requires: first, the development of the capacities required to engage in characteristic human actions; and, second, the circumstances that permit and promote the exercise of those capacities in a free, virtuous, and just way. Modern liberal democracies that meet the demands of the eudaimonic pedagogical requirement satisfy the first requirement by educating individuals to possess the capacities they need to live well and satisfy the second requirement by giving citizens the skills they need to perform their roles in society. Although proper education makes good lives possible, it is limited insofar as, by itself, it is not sufficient to make a life good. Further research can advance this project by enumerating programs that create circumstances that promote good lives.

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