Philosophical Inquiry in Education

Cosmopolitan Education in Agonistic Morality: Epistemological Restraint, Discourse Ethics, and Agonistic Pluralism

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Article abstract

Cosmopolitan education has been much theorized, discussed, and proposed, but what, exactly, might it look like and what specific processes might it involve? Cosmopolitanism's recognition of shared humanity and the subsequent entailment of democratic inclusion make explicit the moral and political nature of cosmopolitan education and philosophy. As an ethico-political process, existing political and ethical processes can be brought to bear on its educational manifestations. The political concepts of epistemological restraint, discourse ethics, and agonistic pluralism are offered as models for cosmopolitan education in agonistic morality: epistemological restraint is used to address the need for prioritization of moral inquiry over moral belief; discourse ethics addresses the necessity of inclusive and democratic dialogue; agonistic pluralism offsets the implications of the inevitability of pluralism in educational inquiry. All three combine to form a process of cosmopolitan education in agonistic morality.

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Abstract: *Cosmopolitan education has been much theorized, discussed, and proposed, but what exactly might it look like and what specific processes might it involve? Cosmopolitanism's recognition of shared humanity and the subsequent entailment of democratic inclusion make explicit the moral and political nature of cosmopolitan education and philosophy. As an ethico-political process, existing political and ethical processes can be brought to bear on its educational manifestations. The political concepts of epistemological restraint, discourse ethics, and agonistic pluralism are offered as models for cosmopolitan education in agonistic morality: epistemological restraint is used to address the need for the prioritization of moral inquiry over moral belief; discourse ethics addresses the necessity of inclusive and democratic dialogue; and agonistic pluralism reframes the effects of pluralism in educational and moral inquiry. All three combine to form a process of cosmopolitan education in agonistic morality.*

Cosmopolitan education has been variously conceived as an education in morality (Hayden, 2012), as a way of being (Hansen, 2010), as a means to promote better ways of living together (Todd, 2010), and as preparation to participate in the global intercultural economy (Luke, 2004; Weenink, 2007), among many others. Almost all conceptions of cosmopolitan education recognize some sense of a fundamental shared humanity. This shared humanity automatically embeds a moral component in these conceptions of cosmopolitan education. Taken together, cosmopolitan education stands as an education in morality that seeks to prepare students to become participants in an inquiry in morality that starts from shared humanity and actively maintains the potential for both understanding existing morality and developing it further. Such a conception suggests that we cannot reasonably deny the fact that we are all in the world together and need to find ways to live together that preserve that shared humanity. Like other approaches in education and philosophy, cosmopolitan education engages morality and politics not as academic disciplines, but as forms of life. Thus, the moral and political life of humanity is the thread with which other parts of our lives are interwoven.

Kwame Anthony Appiah (2006, p. xv) has said "cosmopolitanism is the name not of the solution, but of the challenge" that faces us. I will turn to this challenge by confronting a challenge of cosmopolitan education: what, exactly, would it look like? Due to the non-dogmatic nature of cosmopolitanism, there are no prescriptive how-to guides full of lesson plans. As a result, the challenge taken up in this paper is to identify the processes by and through which cosmopolitan moral education can work, and will focus on those that can maintain the key components of cosmopolitan moral education: the recognition of

shared humanity and its subsequent entailments of living together, dynamic engagement, openness and receptivity, and never-ending processes. First, I will mine Thomas Nagel's concept of epistemological restraint to address the prioritization of moral inquiry over moral belief and action. Second, I will show that Jürgen Habermas's discourse ethics provides support for addressing the necessity of inclusive and democratic dialogue. Third, I will offer the concept of agonistic pluralism via Chantal Mouffe to offset the implications of the inevitability of pluralism in an inquiry in morality. This paper asserts that epistemological restraint is required in order to create the necessary space in which to combine discourse ethics with agonistic pluralism; a combination of processes that can fulfill cosmopolitan requirements for democratic inclusion that I call *agonistic morality*.

Cosmopolitan Education in Morality

Cosmopolitan moral education is offered as a means to inquire into and about morality without indoctrination or the predetermination of morals, and must be oriented to a moral *process* rather than a particular moral *result* (Hayden, 2017b). Education in general, and particularly schooling, is an ethical endeavor—insofar as a formal education system is a manifestation of how a society thinks its newest members ought to live. It is filled with rules about how we should treat each other, and therefore embodies activity in morality whether explicit or not (Sanger, 2008; 2001). Cosmopolitan moral education needs to find a sustainable position for educators that allows for a process that is grounded in the communities in which they teach—a position that considers the personal values and morals of the teacher, the students, and the local community and hearkens to Appiah's (1997) conception of a "rooted cosmopolitanism"—but still makes room for negotiating different values and morals from well beyond the local borders and, in particular, those not yet encountered. Such an education would need to prepare them for future moral inquiry as the result of moral problems previously encountered as well as those with which they are presently grappling (Hayden, 2012).

Following a similar approach by John Wilson to describe an education in morality (1990; 1996), the goal of cosmopolitan moral education is not to determine whether what we believe to be moral actually is moral (Hayden, 2017a). For Wilson, an education in morality is an inquiry into what morality is, and not about what is or is not moral. Similarly, cosmopolitanism is not inherently equipped with a list of morals to adopt, but instead requires a process by and through which morality can be understood and determined; a process of inquiry in morality that is inclusive and democratic.

In moral and political discussions, there is always a need to justify claims (Gert, 2005). What justification might we have for the claims of morality we make and how can we make them in a moral inquiry? For a cosmopolitan inquiry in morality that is democratically inclusive, justifications must be accessible to all. This concern is motivated by the diversity of asserted morals, some derived systemically, and some through individual experience. Some morals and morality systems conflict with other morals and other morality systems and cause paradoxes and confusion, problems we must confront and sort through.[1] This paper assumes that the truth-value of moral knowledge is impossible to determine with

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[1] The term "morality system" comes from Bernard Williams's (1985, p. 174–196) use to refer to systems of morality such as utilitarianism, deontology, and virtue ethics, as well as those derived from religious beliefs or bounded ideologies, to name only a few. For an excellent and succinct explanation of these theses, see Chappell (2010).

absolute certainty society- and world-wide, so we must find agreeable means of justification for the morals we assert and the inquiry we undertake. For cosmopolitan moral education, we must find a way in which we can approach or enter into moral inquiry that can help us reach some kind of agreement about what is counted as permissible justification. The process-centric version of cosmopolitanism offered here cannot appeal for help from traditional moral educational theories because of either their pre-determined morals or their emphasis on the behavioral outcomes produced. As Natale and Wilson (1991, p. 46) state, the respectability of science is not that it delivers immutably correct answers, "but that we can feel reasonably certain of the procedures" from which our answers have been derived. However, such a constraint cannot be allowed to dismiss out of hand traditions or beliefs that one might choose to submit for deliberation. The "products" of those traditions or beliefs may be put forward, but they must meet the justificatory standards of a socially mediated and inclusive process.

What is required of a person who holds a belief about morality, but inhabits a socio-political environment wherein that belief is not shared? How can this be reconciled with the global democratic inclusivity of cosmopolitanism and the pluralism it contains? Cosmopolitanism's non-dogmatic and seemingly universalist stance means that overly subjective claims will encounter numerous obstacles, which suggest that some kind of impartiality needs to be found. In an example of a similar search for impartiality—in this case, for justice—Rawls (1999) developed his "veil of ignorance" to create conditions under which he felt impartiality could be attained, and thus that which followed could be justified.[2] However, Nagel (1973) avers that, behind the "veil," each agent is not allowed to possess knowledge of the good and that such knowledge is necessary for moral thought and action.[3] He argues that Rawls's veil allows for a liberal conception of the good to steer the "deliberations" toward a conception that is highly individualistic, which reduces the good to that which can only be obtained by pursuing one's self-interest and systematically sets up the privileging of liberal conceptions of the good over other conceptions, thus negating attempts at impartiality through its own devices. Similar criticisms are leveled by feminists who identify the reinforcement of male-dominated theories of morality found in such liberal conceptions that may seem impartial, but the very assertion of impartiality in existing conditions allows for the maintenance of the status quo (de Beauvoir, 1989; Code, 1991).[4] Further, applying Rawls's veil to morality results in a utilitarian system whereby the good for all is determined by one's own self-interest, confined to an extension of a "liberal" morality, and thus erasing an objective or impartial morality. Thus, impartiality can be a problem, particularly for liberals because they are so concerned about the neutrality of governing institutions in morality. To "save" impartiality requires something other than principles; it requires processes that can be agreed upon by all even if the substantive determinations cannot. This is where the important moral framework for democratic deliberation lies; in the mutual, possibly universal agreement of all appropriate, legitimate, and otherwise capable members that the fundamental value of deliberative democracy is in the processes by and through which it functions.

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[2] See Rawls (1999), Chapter 3 for his description of the "original position," and section 24 for the "veil of ignorance."

[3] While I agree with Nagel that knowledge of the good is vital to moral action and thought, I do not think such *certain* knowledge is possible, and thus I am slightly skeptical of the value of Rawls' veil of ignorance as a cosmopolitan educational tool.

[4] See Simone de Beauvoir (1989), particularly the Introduction "Woman as Other"; and Lorraine Code (1991), whose entire book deals with this issue.

Inquiry Over Belief

In order to achieve such a condition, we need something else: a mechanism that can suspend prior judgments or beliefs that obscure impartiality in order to accommodate inquiry. As developed by Nagel (1987), the concept of *epistemological restraint* allows one to hold beliefs that one feels it unreasonable to force on others through public policy *simply, or solely, based* on those beliefs. According to Nagel:

> We accept a kind of epistemological division between the private and the public domains: in certain contexts I am constrained to consider my beliefs merely as beliefs rather than as truths, however convinced I may be that they are true, and that I know it. (p. 230)

The beliefs that one might have are admissible in deliberations, but in the same way as any other reasons; they must be capable of being understood and accepted as reasons, and might be rejected or accepted as such. An individual operating under epistemological restraint would not offer their belief as the *sole* reason for enacting public policy or for the construction of moral norms, but would rather attempt to offer reasons that everyone can understand and deliberate. This does not mean that they are accepted, but only that they may or may not be accepted *as reasons*.

There are two ways to approach epistemological restraint. In the first, one can admit a type of skepticism about knowledge of the world. It is possible to hold a position about which one has doubts, but also know, having done due diligence on alternatives, that it at least appears to be the best option. Similarly, it is also possible to hold a belief about which one may be certain, but feel uncertain about one's fallible capacities, and thus possess a reticence to enforce upon others policies based only on that belief.[5] In this view, epistemological restraint is guided by the idea that there are matters about which it is impossible to determine the truth, and that this skepticism should prevent us from *forcing* others to comply.[6] In the second view, the desire for impartiality is motivated not by an internalized "skepticism about our *own* views, but rather by a desire to justify fundamental political principles to *others*" (Quong, 2007, p. 320)[7] Such a process is the result of a desire to enter into "fair terms of cooperation" with others (Rawls, 1999, p. 336). One engages in epistemological restraint not because one cannot be certain about the truth of a belief, but rather because adopting policies about which reasonable people disagree would be to base one's project upon something which reasonable people reject: skepticism about the ability to

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[5] This becomes much more difficult when dealing with those who believe their beliefs to be infallible such as those who believe God speaks directly to them. I am not sure what to do with them other than to invite them to join the deliberations. Here we might appeal to what is reasonable for them to expect others to accept as reasonable evidence, or rather that which it is reasonable to reject, though we should not be surprised if they refuse to practice epistemological restraint. In a footnote to his discussion of "reasonable rejection," Rawls offers an argument that epistemological restraint is possible for even the most devout. He cites the argument of Cardinal Bernardin (1986), wherein Bernardin "grants that not all moral imperatives are to be translated into prohibitive civil statutes."

[6] This skepticism would hold even in the case that I *know* X to be true, but have no way of overcoming reasonable disbelief that it is true.

[7] See also Price (2000). While this is an oft-used argument in favor of such restraint in liberalism, the adoption of such restraint does not necessarily commit one to liberal ideology. This is merely the case of commonality in an affect (impartiality) between liberalism and cosmopolitanism, but not evidence that they are one in the same or oriented to the same conclusion or ends.

know what the good life is.[8] Essentially, this second approach avoids skepticism because it folds the skepticism back into the project itself. Reasonable people disagree about what the good life is, so that disagreement becomes the point of focus and the attempts to resolve it form the content of what is to be done (Barry, 1995b).[9] As Quong (2007, p. 322) notes, it is "permissible to endorse epistemic restraint for sceptical reasons—Rawls only needs to show that the reasoning leading to epistemic restraint does not require acceptance *of* scepticism."

For cosmopolitan moral education, it is important to not privilege reasonable non-belief over reasonable belief, but to instead admit that both have something to contribute to the conversation. In his attempts to overcome the skeptical argument, an argument which essentially cripples any attempt to construct a decision-making procedure, Rawls appeals to the need for just such a procedure: some legitimate form of arbitration. "Granting that God's will should be followed and the truth recognized does not as yet define a principle of adjudication" (Rawls, 1999, p. 214). The issue is not the validity of the truth claim itself, but rather in what way a reasonable decision can be made (Nagel, 1987).

Epistemological restraint offers cosmopolitanism an answer. That is, as Nagel says, "the distinction between what is needed to justify belief and what is needed to justify the employment of political power depends on a higher standard of objectivity, which is ethically based" (1987, p. 229). Nagel appeals to what he calls a "highest-order framework of moral reasoning" (p. 229) wherein we transcend our personal viewpoint and take position in the impersonal viewpoint, or, rather, the "view from nowhere." The impersonal viewpoint is not that which has lost the personal interest, but rather one that has combined the personal viewpoint with the view of all the other viewpoints. This impersonal viewpoint will not only contain our particular reasons for justifying our belief, but also all the other possible reasons for withholding justification. It is "impersonal" because it is not solely "personal." When we view our beliefs from the impersonal viewpoint it becomes clear that appeals to the truth of our beliefs "must be seen as merely appeals to our beliefs, and should be treated as such," (p. 230) unless they can be justified from this impersonal viewpoint. In essence, in justificatory contexts, a line is drawn between the private and public domains; one can separate one's belief from the thing believed (Price, 2000). Nagel's epistemological restraint is different from Rawls' "veil of ignorance" because it not only allows those behind the veil to consider conceptions of the good, but it admits the deliberations about such conceptions as the activity of primary importance.

Joseph Raz (1990) points out that epistemological restraint could threaten ideologies or belief systems through the influence of external doubts such as secular notions of religious belief.[10] However, it is possible to address this concern. It is not cosmopolitan education's aim to either preserve or erode systems of belief, but rather to provide people with the space necessary to learn. Cosmopolitan education's use of epistemological restraint is a way to respect the beliefs of others without privileging

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[8] This phrasing, "about which reasonable people disagree," and alternately, "reasonable disagreement," is as posed in Quong in his gloss on Rawls. Thomas McCarthy (1994) writes that Rawls uses the phrase "on terms all can accept," but then connects it to Scanlon's (2000) formulation "the basic desire to be able to justify our actions to others on grounds they could not reasonably reject" (p. 153). Scanlon, in a note to this statement, acknowledges Derek Parfit in helping him formulate this statement instead of the alternative "that everyone could reasonably accept." This is no small matter, for the alternate version requires consensus of acceptance whereas the previous statement only requires non-rejection. I am not convinced, as McCarthy appears to be, that one can so easily "connect" the two.

[9] See also Brian Barry (1995a), Graham Long (2004), and Steven Wall (1998) for examples of the skeptical critique.

[10] Nagel felt that this concern was substantial enough to somewhat soften his position on epistemological restraint in a footnote in his "Equality and Partiality" (1991, p. 163), but retained his conclusion.

any. Were cosmopolitan education to respond to the concern that epistemological restraint might erode existing beliefs by deliberately withholding information or silencing points of view, it would result in reducing an educational endeavor to indoctrination; it would strip away the actual "education" part of the activity. Human history is marked by continual change in beliefs, ethics, morals, and governing structures. In short, the objection is primarily a political-structural one, and as such is not sufficient to upend the cosmopolitan moral educational project. Admittedly, schooling is not immune to these structural and political issues, but cosmopolitan moral education is not dependent upon formal institutional educational structures to exist, and therefore cannot necessarily stand in the way of their rise or fall, but merely exists as a process by and through which debates about their rise and fall might take place.

In any case, it is not necessary for epistemological restraint to be used within a process that has as its focus a particular political implementation: it need not produce anything except reflection.[11] The point is that one can keep epistemological restraint free from culpability for the erosion of beliefs if one prioritizes the legitimacy of the presumptively objective claims and the primacy of the legitimating processes over the results of the process. In cosmopolitan education, the inquiry into morality does not lie in the identification of specific morals to be adopted, accepted, and enforced. Instead the inquiry is to be conducted in a democratically justifiable way, and in doing so, provides the legitimacy required for an education in morality.

In criticism, it might be said that this view intrinsically values democratic processes, and thus a core principle is un-debatable, acting as received knowledge. I can offer two answers. First, in cosmopolitanism, and due to the primacy of shared humanity, everyone *must* be invited to contribute to the construction of the mores, codes, laws, and customs that will govern their lives. This claim lies at the core of cosmopolitan philosophy and my conception of cosmopolitan education. Justice, equality, and morality are tied together in this valuing of process, but the execution of the process is the defining characteristic and primary guarantor of its morality. The second answer lies in the process and its founding presuppositions of argumentation and discourse, and will be examined in the following section.

If we are to have shared ethics, morals, and laws, a cosmopolitan stance finds it reasonable to prefer a process that seeks to include the arguments, opinions, and beliefs of as many members of the to-be-governed group as is possible, and even when such beliefs might not be "reasonable," or when they might be irrational or purely emotional, this process still appeals to the undeniable fact of our human and shared existences. Is it possible that the perfectly collaborative group will come up with a terrible answer? Yes. Is it possible that democracy will choose the "wrong" option? Yes. Hitler was elected through an ostensibly democratic process, after all. However, inclusive democratic deliberation provides recourse for correction. It provides the unsuccessful lobbyists with another opportunity to persuade others, as well as the possibility that their efforts may never be successful. Here the choice is clear: a world in which one gets one's way regardless of the manner in which something is done and is thus quite likely to implement moral ideas in an immoral way, or a world in which one may not get one's way but the manner in which the other choices are chosen is, itself, a moral one (or at least not immoral). Such a process also requires that the participants of democratic deliberation be *persuadable*, too, but yet impervious to demagoguery. Maintaining a reasonable and autonomous place here requires deftness and skill. Those who "think" are less likely to be persuaded to immoral or evil action, which underscores the importance of an education

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[11] This is in direct relation with Hannah Arendt's (2003, 1971) numerous articulations of the notion of thinking as being "invisible" and her assertion that there is no actual concrete result of thinking.

in morality, in the tools of critical thinking and inquiry that go into examining what is moral and what is not (Arendt, 1964). Learning how to accept received morals only equips one with the skills to adopt whatever one is asked to adopt. Education in morality entails learning how to critically examine what is presented as "moral" (see Arendt, 1964 & 2003). One must be open to the possibility that the status quo or the position one holds could be incorrect. One must accept that a deliberative, inclusive, and democratic process might produce a result with which one is unhappy. One must willingly accept two very difficult constraints: the world may not conform to one's conception of the good, and one's conception of the good just might be wrong. What exactly we do, the kind of argument we have, forms the content of a cosmopolitan dialogue in morality.

Discourse in Morality

The process by and through which education in morality is to take place requires a scheme that comports with the cosmopolitan recognition of shared humanity and the democratic impulse thusly contained, confronts the reality of our ever-changing understandings of ethics and morality, and allows for the holding of beliefs as well as the space in which to proffer them as reasons, when appropriate, as well as the compulsion and space to withhold them in the interest of impartiality as discussed in the previous section. We need to find a form of dialogue about morality that is inclusive and democratic and can allow its participants to maintain the legitimacy of their work while also maintaining the work itself, and the concept of *discourse ethics* offers a model.

Fundamentally, discourse ethics are grounded in the "ought" of ethics. When we make statements such as "*one ought not to physically injure someone else*," we do not intend the prescription to be applicable only to the person who holds this view; we expect it to apply to everyone. Our intention is to assert what we believe to be a moral norm, or at least what we believe ought to be a moral norm, and the assertion is the presentation of an argument. For Habermas, since morals are normative and a person in isolation cannot determine moral norms, then the justification of a norm depends upon the mutual understanding between two or more persons.[12] Moral norms, as public artifacts, must be publicly generated. Unlike Kant's deontology, Habermas concludes that moral deliberation cannot take place in the privacy of one's mind, and in fact the nature of morality—as a norm that ought to apply to everyone—dictates that such deliberation take place in public, with others. For Habermas, the moral viewpoint is not contained in self-legislated *a priori* principles, but rather within a community of people in which the deliberations of the good and morality contain participants who are fully cognizant of the desires and perspectives of others, however foreign or competitive.[13] Taking a position in such a process, a position similar to the constraints of belief in favor of impartiality found in epistemological restraint, enables the "impartial standpoint [that] overcomes the subjectivity of the individual participant's perspective without becoming disconnected from the performative attitude of the participants" (Habermas, 1993, p. 173). Without such restraint, real communication, genuine argumentation about values, cannot occur. According to Habermas asserts that "the understanding of self as a person and as a member of a community simultaneously … is preserved

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[12] This use of "isolation" is compatible with Arendt's distinction between "isolation" and "solitude," though Habermas's use of the word is not intended to gesture to Arendt.

[13] Moral *thought*, however, can take place in the privacy of one's mind. The internal dialogue and self-legislation, as in the Kantian tradition, is vitally important, but it constitutes only one-half of the entire process of morality.

in the communicative presuppositions of moral argumentation. Just this structure compels each participant in argumentation to adopt the perspective of all others" (p. 24). For discourse ethics, there is no need to construct reasons for why one should adopt the perspective of others: it is automatically entailed in engaging in argumentation.

In defining what can be derived from the attempts at such mutual understanding between persons, a number of "presuppositions" are automatically entailed. "[A]rgumentation leaves participants without a choice; just in virtue of undertaking to engage in such a practice as such, they must accept certain idealizations in the form of presuppositions of communication" (Habermas, 1993, p. 31). These presuppositions are not obligations we must accept *in order to* engage discursively, but instead "they *make possible* the practice that participants understand as argumentation" (p. 31). These presuppositions of communication are:

a) That it is possible for participants to communicate and understand the meaning of what they communicate,
b) … there is full and equal inclusion of everybody and all relevant arguments and reasons,
c) … the only force exerted is that of the better argument, and
d) … all participants are sincerely and genuinely interested in finding the better argument. (Thomassen, 2010, p. 70)[14]

These presuppositions in discourse ethics are compatible with cosmopolitan education because they do not privilege or rest on a particular way of life or conception of the good, they are the conditions that make communicative action possible, they do not exclude anyone who wishes to take part, and they are automatically involved in argumentation.[15] However, there are those who may be reluctant to participate in "the conversation" because of existing power differences, and feminists would be the first to identify this problem. It is one of the reasons for the arguments in this paper, for, as McGowan (1998, p. 167) writes, "ethics must build on the intimate connection between character to place. Only where we create a certain kind of space can a certain kind of person emerge." The goal of this article is exactly that: to combine epistemological restraint, discourse ethics, and agonistic pluralism to create that kind of space.

What deliberation provides is important for Habermas and cosmopolitan moral education. We must enter into real discussions and not speculative ones. "We cannot anticipate the outcome of *real* discourses concerning proposed principles of justice among those potentially affected by their observance" (Ciaran Cronin, in Habermas, 1993, p. xviii).[16] Only the affected deliberators themselves are appropriate agents for justifying their claims, whereas philosophers can only take part in "reflective analysis of the procedure through which ethical questions *in general* can be answered" (Habermas, 1993, p. 75). It is a process by which ways or forms of life and conceptions of the good get public and democratic airing, and it is minimally intended to be universal insofar as it does not reject participants on bases of ethnicity, nationality, or any other ascribed characteristic. Persons may exclude themselves by refusing to take part,

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[14] "Finding the better argument" is connected to the inherent aim of education as a process. It is essentially progressive in that it builds upon and from that which it begins in the interest of growth, requiring evaluation and improvement.

[15] For my purposes, there is little difference between argumentation as constructed by Habermas and deliberation. Both are intended to refer to discussions that take place between two or more persons who have gathered to consider the reasons for or against something.

[16] This is in contrast to Rawls, for instance, for whom the veil of ignorance provides a speculative space in which to make impartial decisions about justice (and morality, for Habermas).

but they cannot be forced or prevented from participating if they so choose.

Discourse ethics works in many other ways with cosmopolitanism. In discourse ethics, the moral point of view must be that which "[detaches] itself from the egocentric (ethnocentric) perspective of each individual's (or our) way of life and demands that interpersonal conflicts be judged from the standpoint of what *all* could will in common" (Habermas, 1993, p. 24). But the moral point of view also requires that one "*transcend* the social and historical form of life and particular community and adopt the perspective of *all* those possibly affected" (p. 24, emphases in original). This gestures to Nagel's (1986) "view from nowhere." They both offer a view of the world as well as oneself contained in it. Both offer more than the limited subjective/local perspective does, and not completely disembodied as an absolutely objective/universal perspective would be; one has not lost oneself in the search for a vantage point of the world that contains more than just the subjective and local self. The test for education in morality is how well it accommodates the juxtaposition of these perspectives and whether everyone can acknowledge that the juxtaposition is generally valid (p. 13).

Any education in morality, short of indoctrination or moral relativism, is an inquiry (Wilson, 1990). For cosmopolitanism and Nagel's impartiality, it must occupy concurrently, or rather must consider the reasonable desires of, the impersonal/universal and the personal/particular viewpoints. The world does not only consist of you, nor does it *not* contain you in it. You are there and all that matters to you is there as well, and everyone else is there along with everything else that matters to them. If the worlds never collided or connected, it would not matter, but they do collide and they are inter-connected. This requires that, much like weighing evidence for making a judgment about any non-moral act, you must take into consideration all that is available to you to consider in moral action and that includes other viewpoints. In the ongoing inquiry and determination of morals and morality, this requires the consideration of all available options, lives, and experiences even when one's beliefs and reasons conflict with the material purposes of the discussion.

In examining moral dialogue, there is a distinction between the moral behavior required to conduct the dialogue and what behavior counts as moral as determined *by* the dialogue. It is the first of these to which both cosmopolitan moral education and discourse ethics are oriented. Discourse ethics does not "say what the answers should be, only how we should find them" (Thomassen, 2010, p. 87), and is not only for a particular community or for people who possess a certain ideology. As Thomassen writes, "[g]iven the pluralism of moral views that exist in today's societies, Habermas believes that an ethics for modern societies cannot give substantive answers to moral questions" (p. 87). Instead, discourse ethics provides a procedure for answering moral questions and this is cosmopolitan education's goal as well. However, this pluralism is at once a motivation and a problem for discourse ethics. "Once moral theory breaks out of the investigative horizon of the first-person singular, it encounters the reality of an alien will, which generates problems of a different order" (Habermas, 1993, p. 2). Pluralism is thusly problematized by discourse ethics and necessarily complicates the realization of consensus.

However, discourse ethics is only concerned with consensus insofar as it has reached a warranted presumption of reasonableness. In other words, consensus is not required for the final conclusion of deliberations, but is instead necessary for legitimizing the processes by and through which the deliberations took place. There must be an understanding that the process was sufficiently inclusive, available, and deliberative (Habermas, 2008, p. 103). In discourse ethics, the best we can hope for is partial justification for the norms that result, not justified by 100 percent consensus acceptance of the result, but an acceptance of the process that produced it. This distinction is vital for cosmopolitan

education. On the one hand, to form consensus might create the substantive moral decisions that are supposed to be elided by the construct of discourse ethics in the first place, and thus Habermas's assertion that discourse ethics could not be oriented to producing substantive answers to moral questions is in doubt. On the other hand, in light of epistemological restraint and the impersonal viewpoint, the key formulation of what counts as justification is *that which others could not reasonably reject*, not *that which everyone could reasonably accept,* the latter oriented to positive consensus. Discourse ethics can still provide a procedure for the utilization of epistemological restraint, but it cannot be oriented to consensus of acceptance, only an acceptance of the presuppositions of argumentation (and such acceptance need not be universal, but rather accepted by those engaged in the argument).[17] What results from these arguments is beyond the purview of a cosmopolitan educational process; deciding ahead of time what the result should or will be removes the justification for creating the inclusive processes through which to come to a decision. Such concern with consensus, in the face of so much moral pluralism, dooms an inquiry into morality to undermining its own justification. It is to that inevitable pluralism I now turn.

Agonistic Pluralism

Morality is predicated on an implicit acceptance of the fundamental conditions of our lives: our social lives. According to Arendt (1958), we would not need morality "if [humans] were not distinct, each human being distinguished from any other who is, was, or will ever be, they would need neither speech nor action to make themselves understood" (p. 175). If we were all identical there would be no need to assert how one ought to act toward another. It is this distinctness, this fundamental difference in the "who" that each of us is that prompts the desire and need for morality. Pluralism and morality are thus inextricably linked, and even though Habermas, procedurally consensus-oriented as he is, understands the ineradicable nature of moral pluralism, he draws from this the conclusion that "finding a solution to these few more sharply focused questions becomes all the more critical to coexistence, and even survival, in a more populous world" (1993, p. 91). While his answer is to continue seeking procedural consensus, others suggest accepting its impossibility and instead encourage focusing on the management of pluralism. To this end, I will now examine the concept of *agonistic pluralism* and the necessity of its inclusion in cosmopolitan education in morality.

    Agonism is derived from *agon,* the Greek word for struggle, contest, or conflict, and in Greek drama *agon* refers to the pitting of the protagonist and antagonist against each other. In Greek athletic contests, it was not only about defeating your opponent, but also competing well and with respect toward the competition itself as well as your opponent, without whom you can neither compete nor excel. Further, the more challenging or capable your opponent, the greater the respect and gratitude toward him, because it is the formidable opponent who makes excellence possible. The focal point was the *contest*, not the outcome. A champion who wins badly or without struggle is no champion. A true champion excels because of the contest, because of the struggle, and it is in the struggle that the Greeks placed human

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[17] As Habermas noted, entering the argument entails acceptance. Those who do not accept these presuppositions will not join the argument. However, adopting epistemological restraint is essentially an act of accepting the presuppositions because epistemological restraint entails that one recognize that one's beliefs could be reasonably rejected even though you may not at all agree with the potential reasons for such rejection. In doing so, you have already acquired the presuppositions necessary to participate in the deliberations and arguments.

drama and value.

In Greek culture, *agon* was the key dynamic force through which excellence (*arête*) was achieved and it was largely a public affair. Contests often took place as formal events with spectators, but *agon* also animated daily Greek cultural life. These struggles may have begun as some individual trial in which a citizen proved his excellence, but *agon* grew to encompass cultural accomplishment and continuity, permeating all aspects of community life, from the Olympic games to the politics of the *polis* (Burckhardt, 1872/1998). *Agon* has less communal value when only a private affair. Whatever has been produced or tested privately can only truly come into being and "prove" its value through public struggle and contestation. And as Arendt (2003) notes, one may have the Socratic conversation with oneself, a necessary dialogue to be sure, in order to produce legitimate thought, but those thoughts are not "in the world" until they have been disclosed through human action, which must be public.

In political theory, agonism refers to the theory that recognizes that not all conflicts can be resolved in such a way as to eliminate further conflict, and in fact there is the potential for positive effects to come from such conflict by approaching the conflict discursively, and not to find a "winner" (though there may be temporal winners and losers in normative, legislative, and policy conflicts). Agonists deny the possibility of universal harmony, and, for the most part, universal *anything* except conflict. The production of an outcome does not mean the conflict is over; it merely signifies a new point to contest. Agonism is a state of being in which contestation occurs. In political life, usually democratic but not exclusively, and as illustrated quite clearly in many ideological debates, agonism appears to be the constant; laws are passed, policies enacted, but the contestation over them continues, with further amendments to laws and policies over time. Beyond the structurally instantiated normative, we see that opinions, beliefs, and other convictions are contested as well.

Proponents of agonism often criticize Habermas for the seemingly consensual nature of the conditions required in discourse ethics and often deny both the importance and possibility of the kind of deliberations it proffers, primarily due to the obvious plurality of life. Chantal Mouffe is one of the most vocal of these. Her opposition to both Habermas and cosmopolitanism lies in the respective perceived aims of consensus and universalization. She asserts that it is impossible to achieve a fully rational consensus and that her model of agonistic pluralism not only deals with current democratic challenges, but is in fact the operant condition of democracy.

For Mouffe, the constitutive concept of politics is power; power is constitutive of the social, and thus the goal is to formulate politics that constitute forms of power that are more compatible with democratic values. In order to do this, one must recognize the distinction between "politics" and "the political." Mouffe defines "the political" as the intrinsic antagonism of human relations that emerge in our social relations. "Politics" consists of the practices, discourses, and institutions that order our coexistence. In ordering our coexistence, it is not only normative but also moral because that ordering sets goals, limits, and prescriptions for how we are to coexist. Thus, "only when we acknowledge the dimension of 'the political' and understand that 'politics' consists in domesticating hostility and in trying to defuse the potential antagonism that exists in human relations" can we approach the task at hand (Mouffe, 2000b, p. 101). That task is not to reach consensus, per Habermas, because doing so would eliminate "the political." Instead the task is one in which we "establish this us/them discrimination in a way that is compatible with pluralist democracy" (p. 102).

Mouffe's "politics" aims to perceive the "other" not as an enemy, but as an adversary whose right to defend his ideas is not abridged. One's "adversary is an enemy, but a legitimate enemy, one with whom

we have some common ground because we have a shared adhesion to the ethico-political principles of … liberty and equality" (2000b, p. 102). The "ethico-political" principles exist through conflicting interpretations, leading to what Mouffe calls "conflictual consensus" (2005, p. 56). These contestations consist of different conceptions of the good, not consensus *per se*, and thus become the embodiment of democracy through "a vibrant class of democratic political positions" (2000b, p. 104). This conception admits that antagonism will likely remain, rational discussion may not resolve it, and deliberation may prove equally as futile. However, "[t]his does not mean of course that adversaries can never cease to disagree, but that does not prove that antagonism has been eradicated," and compromises are possible as well (p. 102).

This distinction between "antagonism" as conflict between enemies and "agonism" as conflict between adversaries is vital. Both take place within a political relationship, but the goal is to convert the antagonism into agonism, and thus redefine the conflict as one that is more democratically collaborative even if the difference remains. Agonism is, as Mouffe states, "in fact [democracy's] very condition of existence," and offers a regulative service (2000b, p. 103). Echoing Laclau, Mouffe notes that any consensus reached in agonistic pluralism is a temporary stabilization of power that "always entails exclusion," always leaving some "other" on the outside (p. 104). Thus antagonism survives, "the political" re-engages, and the domesticating services of "politics" are required yet again. Bonnie Honig writes that "to affirm the perpetuity of the contest is not to celebrate a world without points of stabilization; it is to affirm the reality of perpetual contest, even within an ordered setting, and to identify the affirmative dimension of contestation" (1996, p. 15). The avoidance of conflict is the driving force behind most political theories, but agonism can play a role in disrupting these hegemonic tendencies (Honig, 1993). In agonism, no decision will be closed on the edges of "the political." It will "always be open to question and answer, demand and response, and negotiation" (Tully, 1999, p. 166–167). The criticality that is inherent in education in morality is alive and well in agonism.

Despite Mouffe's criticisms of cosmopolitan democracy, agonistic pluralism is not incompatible with the model of cosmopolitan education on offer.[18] Cosmopolitan education easily incorporates Mouffe's agonistic pluralism. Remaining in an agonistic state, rather than an antagonistic state, requires "a capacity for agonistic respect" (Donald, 2007, p. 295) wherein a "distance" is maintained within and among people to allow them to see themselves as actors within a larger group of actors, all of whom have the same right of participation. Each participant's view is from "somewhere," but is so by invoking both a personal and impersonal standpoint concurrently. By inhabiting agonism, one keeps the personal and includes it in the impersonal that governs the interpersonal interactions. The deliberations that take place do so in this context, one in which judgments might be made, but it is understood that they are the judgments "for now" and are subject to alteration in the future. By eliminating the finality and permanency of judgments, the agonist state can maintain the processes of democratic deliberation, collaboration, and contestation. In essence, adversaries collaborate to contest each other's ideas, externalizing the personal standpoint (this matters to me) while internalizing the impersonal viewpoint (that matters to you).

Mouffe contends that the ideal speech situation envisioned by Habermas could never take place because "no deliberation could ever take place without impediments to free and unconstrained public

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[18] The core of Mouffe's criticisms of cosmopolitanism is similar to that of her criticisms of Habermas and discourse ethics: the perceived orientation toward and organization for consensus.

deliberation" (Erman, 2009, p. 1042).[19] In Mouffe's view, Habermas' presuppositions rely on conditions so ideal that, in order for them to be met, the conflict they are summoned to mediate must be eliminated, thus precluding the need for the dialogue. She quotes Wittgenstein saying, "we have got on slippery ice where there is no friction and so in a certain sense the conditions are ideal, but also, just because of that, we are unable to walk: so we need *friction*" (Mouffe, 2000b, p. 98). Every conclusion of deliberation that results in a decision always excludes other possibilities that could have been chosen, possibilities ostensibly proffered in the deliberation, and sometimes not. We need the friction of "the political" in order to gain the traction necessary for "politics" to be of any value. Agonism is not necessarily "grist for the mill" of politics—which is supplied automatically by the pluralism of human and social life—but rather propels competing streams of water that make the wheel turn.

Conclusion

For educators trying to conceive of ways in which cosmopolitan education might be implemented, the inherent morality and political nature of cosmopolitan philosophy offers a way forward. Attempts to enact cosmopolitan education must not shy away from the moral and political constructs available that also preserve the core tenets of cosmopolitan conceptions of shared humanity and democratic inclusion. Epistemological restraint creates space in which discourse ethics and agonistic pluralism combine to engage in deliberations that are aimed at mutual/collective benefit. This cosmo-political progress combines two parts of the same progressive and regulative whole: progressive in the collaborative pursuit of something "better," and regulative in enlarging the boundaries of inclusion and providing guidelines of participation. Both recognize that the manner in which deliberations (about what we ought to do) are undertaken truly matters in morality as much as it does in political and public legitimacy.

The fundamental grounding of our moral lives in our shared humanity, in our shared forms of life in action, and in our universal capacity to insert our pluralistic selves into the world community make it incumbent upon us to share and collaborate in educational and moral inquiry. A cosmopolitan moral education embodies an inquiry in which all may participate; one that privileges interest in the inquiry over personal desires and beliefs, and with the real aim of improving our shared conditions of living at no other person's expense. The processes described, while typically perceived as politics-only processes, are the kind of ethico-political processes required of an education in morality through a cosmopolitan orientation to the world. It is a cosmopolitan agonistic moral process and an outcome that produces agonistic morality.

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[19] Erman criticizes Mouffe's view, maintaining that Mouffe requires consensus around the "ethico-political" principles she assumes, and that her argument for agonistic pluralism cannot proceed without such consensus, and thus Mouffe is as dependent upon procedural consensus as Habermas. See also Mouffe, 2000a, p. 13.

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