

## I

I hold that to become educated is to learn to be a person (1). Unfortunately, the case made out by the principal exponent of this particular view of education, Glenn Langford, suffers from some serious weaknesses and, if his main contention is to stand, a more convincing case in support of it must be supplied. This paper is written in the belief that Langford's account of what education is is right, but that it has to be sustained by other means and given specific content. I first describe Langford's contention that to become educated is to learn to be a person. In the next section I discuss several important difficulties arising out of Langford's claim. In the final section I outline my own proposals for defending and developing it.

## II

Here are six features of Langford's contention that to become educated is to learn to be a person.

First, that education is helping human beings to learn to become persons is intended as an answer to the general question "What is education?" (2) Langford intends his recent book Teaching as a Profession to be "to some extent a reaction against" contemporary philosophy of education, and his answer to the question "What is education?" can be seen as a reaction to some contemporary answers given by philosophers of education, for example that education is "concerned with the development of mind", or that it is "the initiation of people into a worthwhile form of life" (3).

Secondly, the answer that education is learning to be a person is arrived at by the pursuit of a distinctive philosophical method. Langford takes issue with the approach of the conceptual analysts to the philosophy of education, chiefly for the reason that he does "not consider the traditional empiricist metaphysic of atomism adequate for an understanding of the nature of social phenomena" (4). His predominant method (at least in Teaching as a Profession) is "better described as descriptive or phenomenological [sic] rather than analytic" (5). The choice of method represents a considerable shift of emphasis in the philosophy of education and, I would think, is one that most students and not a few teachers in the subject would welcome. So the answer to the question "What is education?" is arrived at by carefully describing, as neutrally and suppositionlessly as one can, the sort of things that go on in the social tradition of teaching. This is a different kind of task from that of expounding 'the logic of "education"'.

Thirdly, the answer to the question "What is education?" is descriptive. This partly follows from the use of the phenomenological method. Langford holds that the question is both descriptive and prescriptive (6), but that only the descriptive form of the question is intelligible. I shall assume that a descriptive answer is an answer in terms of what is assumed to be the case, and a prescriptive answer is an answer in terms of what ought to be the case.

Langford's insistence that his answer to the question is descriptive but not prescriptive is of great importance for understanding his concept of education. In accordance with the descriptive, phenomenological method, one must search the whole of the social tradition where education is going on, a very wide-ranging and general, empirical exercise. What one finds there is that formal, as opposed to informal education (7), helps individuals to become persons.

The reason Langford gives for his insistence that 'learning to become a person' is to be understood descriptively, is his contention that a descriptive answer is already sufficient, and that it is not clear how a prescriptive answer could be understood. I shall argue later that this constitutes a grave weakness in his position, for several reasons. "It is doubtful," he writes, "whether much sense could be made of the suggestion that human societies should be made up of some kind of entity other than persons" (8). Individuals become persons by learning to do so, and they learn by being educated. So:

There is no question of persons becoming persons other than by a process of learning, for example, of their being manufactured or born as complete, fully functioning adults ... It is doubtful whether any alternative to education could be intelligibly conceived; and in the absence of alternatives there is no scope for prescription. (9)

But, as I shall urge below, there is no scope for using the concept of a person without prescription, since as Langford elsewhere acknowledges (10), the concept of a person contains many hidden, implicit values. It does not follow from the statement that 'There is no question of persons becoming persons other than by a

process of learning', that there is no question of what sort of persons they learn to become.

Sometimes the answer, learning to become persons, is not arrived at on the basis of a description of what those engaged in education understand themselves to be doing. It sometimes has the ring of a necessary truth about it, namely that children necessarily grow up, and persons are what they necessarily learn to grow up into. Langford writes

The new-born baby is no more than a young specimen of the biological species homo sapiens. It has to learn to become a person after birth. No one is born a typical American boy or a Merseyside docker. These are things which they have to learn to become; though, of course, which they learn to become depends on the social context into which they are born. (11)

Learning to become persons, then, is what children eventually do and what education necessarily brings about. But as an answer to the question 'What is education?', learning to become persons can be defended either as a description of what those engaged in education actually try to bring about, or as a logical inference from the obvious fact that children grow up. These, as we shall see, are very different procedures.

Fourthly, Langford sets out fairly specifically the principal features of personhood. Persons are conscious and capable of thought. They have a more developed awareness than animals of their environments, an awareness which is 'conceptually structured' (12). Persons have a conception of the physical world "as we experience it, and which forms a possible object of knowledge for us" (13), and of the social world, in which, to become a person, the child "must distinguish part of its environment as consisting of persons" (14). A developed awareness of the world is impossible without 'the possession of language'. On the basis of their awareness of the world persons come to hold beliefs and "to form a conception of themselves as the subject of those experiences" (15). Persons "are agents and as such capable of rational choice" (16). They can bring about "one state of affairs rather than another because they have a reason for doing so" (17). Persons can bring about their own intentions. In exercising choice they shape their own lives (18). Causal laws do not apply to such choices (19).

Fifthly, the values implicit in the concept of a person are socially relative.

The concept of education has a reference to values built-in because the concept of a person (or a human being) has values built-in. What those values are will depend on the particular society; there need not be any choices which are the right choices to make in any absolute sense. (20)

Sixthly, it will already be apparent that Langford's concept of a person is highly specialised. We have already seen that children are not persons, but have to become these by a process of education. It follows then, in a strict sense that one cannot speak of an 'uneducated person' or use this concept of a person, of a child.

### III

There are some serious weaknesses in this account of education. One of them becomes apparent by asking whose question is the question 'What is education?', and whether the answer 'learning to become a person' can count as a genuine answer to it. Langford says the question is asked by

Teachers who keep an educational tradition alive through their professional activities [and] may reflect upon and try to see more clearly the nature of their own activities ... It is not an abstract question about the meaning of a word but an empirical question about the activities of a particular group of people. It can be answered, therefore, only by reference to the activities of those people. (21)

But an obvious problem with the location of the question and the answer in the professional activities of teachers is that it involves teachers asking questions to which they know the answers already. If the answer to the question is to be located solely in the social tradition of teaching, then teachers have a conspicuous absence of a reason for asking it. If the question is an empirical, descriptive one, then 'What is education?' cannot express a genuine desire to discover something about the nature of education, for educating is what teachers are doing all the time, and they are unlikely to want to call in philosophers of education to articulate philosophically on their behalf what they are doing already. If, however, the question becomes prescriptive, then it can legitimately be taken as a request for the answerer's informed and professionally competent judgement about the matter which involves reference to philosophical choices, ideals and values as well as empirical descriptions of what goes on in a social tradition or profession. Thankfully teachers often do ask what they ought to be doing.

The prescriptive character of the question 'What is education?' is unavoidable, and for reasons other than the one just given, namely that those who are engaged in education do not require a descriptive answer and are in any case the only people who could provide it. If the question remains descriptive it is hard to resist the further conclusion that Langford's answer amounts to a broad, uninformative generality which could hardly be of assistance to teachers who 'may reflect upon and try to see more clearly the nature of their own activities'. So the answer would be as pointless as the question. I have already suggested that Langford's answer, descriptively understood, can be arrived at without a phenomenological look at the teaching profession at all. 'Infants learn to become persons by education' is just a conflation of two generalisations, both of which Langford thinks are self-evident and need no further support, namely 'infants learn to become persons'; and 'education brings about

learning'. But I cannot think Langford would be happy with this procedure for arriving at his conclusion, for

presumably the phenomenological description of what the teaching profession does might be expected to yield further gains. In any case, underlying the claim that learning to be a person is a purely descriptive answer is the false assumption that 'person' is capable of being used purely descriptively (22).

The claim that 'What is education?' cannot be answered prescriptively is supported indirectly by the choice of the phenomenological method. Langford nowhere expounds the principles of such a method (23), but it is reasonable to expect that a method of philosophy which is 'descriptive or phenomenological' (24) will work well in the task of stating what is going on in the social practice of teaching, but less well in the task of evaluating or developing alternatives to what one has carefully described. In his brief conclusion to Teaching as a Profession he states that he has regarded education "as a practical social activity" and that "it is a consequence of this approach that philosophy of education is thought of as the philosophy of the social practice of education and its primary task as that of understanding the practice" (25). A critical discussion of the values underlying the social practice of education, particularly as they impinge upon possible types of personhood that the teaching profession is busily engaged in bringing about, is not offered. The phenomenological method of doing philosophy is not the best method for examining values, for they are not easily describable. As Langford rightly says, "There is an almost irresistible temptation to speak of values as though they were part of the furniture of the world, in the sense of existing independently of the people who hold them" (26).

But here we come to the fundamental weakness of much modern philosophy of education of both the conceptual-analytical and descriptive-phenomenological kinds, that it does not penetrate to the hidden value-assumptions, the implicit ideological commitments, the 'models of man', the Weltanschauungen, or whatever word or phrase is used, which instantiate to differing degrees the social practice of teaching. These issues undoubtedly involve us in metaphysics, or at least meta-ethics, whose current unfashionability is no guide to the degree to which they are urgently needed (27). Commitment to certain guiding principles, shared values, overriding goals is either explicit or implicit, but whether explicit or implicit it is ever present and it needs to be unearthed. The method of philosophical analysis, applied to the social practice of education and not just to the key concepts involved in the cerebral discussion of education can help to do this. Once these entrenched value-assumptions are dug out, much more philosophical work of the meta-ethical or transcendental kind is needed to provide an adequate justification of them, or perhaps a drastic refashioning of them, a comparison between them, a curricular application of them, and so on.

Langford's philosophical method is just such an example of the sort of commitments which anyone working in education necessarily takes on board. Evidently and justifiably the phenomenological method is, he believes, a better method than conceptual analysis or philosophical idealism or existentialism for the job in hand. But this is itself a matter of choice. The choice of a descriptive method of philosophy is certainly not purely descriptive, for the descriptive method contains many assumptions which need independent support. Langford's treatment of values shows that he does not have a stance, a particular attitude toward them which bespeaks a certain philosophical commitment. He writes, "All values, however, have their foundation in the wants and needs of individuals. Talk about values is a convenient shorthand for talk about the people who hold them and their behaviour" (28). But this looks obviously utilitarian and there are good reasons (which I would certainly want to advance) why this account of values should not be accepted (29). Again, Langford makes it sound like a purely contingent matter, irrespective of any truth-claims being entertained, that

A Western European may be expected to come to share John Stuart Mill's preference for "the pleasures of the intellect, of the feelings and imagination, and of the moral sentiments" to which he attached "a much higher value as pleasures than to those of mere sensation". (30)

But this already presupposes an agreement to cash out values in terms of pleasure, and there are a host of good reasons for not doing so. My point here is not to argue with Langford about values; only to show that what he says about values already expresses his implicit philosophical commitments. But education, from nursery school to university, contains many such implicit commitments.

Another philosophical commitment of Langford's (this surely cannot be just plain descriptive?) is his account of what a person is. This does not seem to be derived from the social practice of education but to come instead at least partly from the independent discipline of western philosophy. The possession of language, self-awareness, conceptions of the physical and social worlds, freedom, intention and agency, all characterise modern philosophical discussion about what a person is. However, a serious problem for Langford is that there is no obvious connexion between the description of a person which he has set out, and the persons which educationists are engaged in teaching children and students to become. It is not at all clear to me that teachers are in the main acquainted with what a person is in recent Western philosophy, and if they were to be made aware of it, one wonders what difference it would make to the practice of their teaching. Indeed the theory of education, which presumably serves the teaching profession in an indirect way, contains powerful elements which actually conflict with an essential feature of personhood, for the different forms of sociological and psychological determinism can, in important respects, be incompatible with the moral autonomy of individuals. There are two related problems for Langford here: the first is that his account of what a person is is prescriptive because it is an account of what he thinks individuals minimally ought to become if they are to achieve the status of persons: the second is that the concept of a person which he offers is not obviously one which operates in the teaching profession and cannot therefore be the consequence of a purely phenomenological approach. The philosophical concept of a person, and the concept of a person which operates in the descriptive answer to the question 'What is education?' are different concepts.

Unfortunately there are further perplexities in Langford's concept, or concepts of a person. The first

concerns his assumption that the content for becoming a person which individuals encounter in their education is derived from the social contexts in which the education is given. "... The concept of a person (or a human being) has values built-in. What those values are will depend on the particular society ..." (31) "... Although the members of other societies are persons like ourselves, the kind of person they are will depend on the social traditions of the society to which they belong and to which they were introduced by a process of learning" (32).

If Langford is drawing attention to the fact that what is taught by educators in any given society is bound to be influenced by the social traditions of that society, then he is drawing attention to an important, albeit fairly obvious, state of affairs. However it appears that Langford is actually assuming a mild form of social determinism, in which educators are not free to respond selectively and critically to whatever has been transmitted to them in a social tradition, and at the same time enrich that same tradition by developing their own initiatives and innovations. But the more important issue here, which reference to the social tradition of education obscures, is that a social tradition such as that to which teachers in the 1980s are the unwitting heirs, has no uniform set of values, no single dominant concept of a person. An educator does not just imbibe 'built-in' values, neither does he just look around, so to speak, to see what understandings of personhood are de facto operative implicitly in the social practice of teaching. He will want to contribute his own experience and insight to the issue, for these will in any case be regulative for him in his own teaching practice.

What a person is is a matter of fierce and healthy debate involving philosophers, social scientists, psychologists, biologists, theologians as well as educationists (33). We have already seen that there is no obvious connexion between the philosophical description of a person which Langford gives and the concept of a person which operates in the social practice of education. What must now be said is that there is no orthodox or consensus view of what a person is in education. That is why some theory of human nature, or explicit theology of some sort is essential to a discussion of this kind, so that one can at least take sides over the issue. Langford thinks that educators are the ones who must already know what persons are because they teach individuals to arrive at a particular state which is equivalent to being a person. But this is an almost perfect circular argument. Because teaching necessarily brings about learning to be a person, teachers necessarily know what being a person amounts to.

Furthermore, Langford cannot claim the support of ordinary language usage for his concept of a person, for, as we have seen, children are excluded from personhood. Clearly Langford would not wish to exclude children from the wider moral community of persons. To do so would bring about the kind of result where, say, the murder of a child was treated as a breach of the peace, or hospital beds were denied to children on the ground that they were needed by persons. Nonetheless I think there is overwhelming agreement that children are universally regarded as already persons who, by virtue of their membership of the species homo sapiens are endowed with certain moral and legal rights from birth. This obvious consideration shows that Langford is adopting a highly specialised use of the concept 'person' which merits more justification than it receives. Sometimes the two concepts, the moral and the educational, are rather oddly juxtaposed, as when Langford says "There is no question of persons becoming persons other than by a process of learning ..." (34).

Let us make a move which I think Langford would find unacceptable, and substitute for the educational concept of person the concept 'adult'. To become educated would then be to learn to be an adult, and those who would undergo the process of learning to be adults would already be persons, as befits their moral status. Children would then be included within the designation 'person'. The descriptive answer to the question 'What is education?' would then be 'Education is the process whereby children learn to become adults'. Such an answer would, of course, amount only to a trite and uninformative generality, but I do not see how a purely descriptive answer to the question 'What is education?' can avoid being an answer of just this unsatisfactory kind. The alternative is to spell out what sort of personhood education is supposed to bring about. This has to be done if Langford's account of education is to be saved.

Finally Langford's concept of a person is in any case unrealisable, being a matter of degree (35). This would not matter if the concept were prescriptive, but as it is not, it gives rise to further problems, for example that no-one ever becomes fully a person, for then he would have no further need for education. In the absence of any prescription of what it is to become a person, an individual who had attained this state would not know that he had attained it. Alternatively, if the concept remains descriptive, one could argue that everyone becomes a person provided, of course, he undergoes a process of education. But this entails the obviously unsatisfactory conclusion that the 'uneducated' become the single exception to the class of human beings designated persons.

These fundamental difficulties require that the concept of person be spelled out in a positive regulative way. The degree- concept of person in Langford's account of education, being apparently underived from any specific theory or ideology and produced as a very general term to cover the final goal of the learning that education is supposed to bring about, is so open-ended as to be vacuous. To become a person is whatever an individual becomes who has undergone a process of formal education. But people undergo different types of education, for different lengths of time, at different levels, for different purposes. The precise point to be grasped is that the particular concept of education which operates in Langford's descriptive answer appears to be a teleological concept, because it specifies some end-state, namely what the learning is intended to bring about. "Formal education", he writes, "is the name of an activity distinguished from other activities by its overall purpose, and that purpose is that someone should become educated" (36). But if a concept is to be understood by reference to its telos or end which it specifies, then it should at least specify informatively some possible or desirable state of affairs. In the absence of specification, no-one would know what has to be learned, nor whether the required teaching had successfully brought it about.

Here then, to summarise, are some reasons why Langford's answer to the question 'What is

education?' needs further expansion and justification:

- a) the location of the answer to the question in the social practice of education ensures that those who ask the question already know the answer and do not need to ask it;
- b) as a purely descriptive answer 'learning to be a person' amounts only to an uninformative generality;
- c) the task of stating what values instantiate the concept of person, which hover beneath the surface of

educational practice, is evaded;

- d) the phenomenological character of the answer encourages such evasion;
- e) implicitly or explicitly, particular philosophical commitments are inevitable in education, a fact that becomes clear in Longford's own writings;
- f) no obvious connexion exists between the philosophical description of a person which Longford provides and the concept of a person which operates in the social practice of teaching;
- g) no normative explicit understanding of what a person is can be found within that social practice, or in the wider social context in which that tradition belongs;
- h) the exclusion of children from the class of individual designated by the concept 'person' indicates a highly specialised use of it;
- i) as a teleological concept it requires some specification of the telos or end-state it refers to.

#### IV

Can Langford's account of education be repaired? Despite the number of weaknesses in it I think it can, although there is no concealing that an alternative account of 'learning to be a person' fundamentally alters Langford's proposal.

Let us first specify two distinct concepts of a person. Let us call the first a status concept, and agree, following ordinary usage, to confer the status of person upon all individuals who are members of the species homo sapiens, including children, the aged, the handicapped. The second concept is an ideal concept. (The terms 'moral concept', 'value concept' or 'teleological concept' would do equally well.) As such it specifies an end-state, an exemplification of what a person ought to become. This amounts to a model or models of personhood. In speaking of an ideal concept of person, I concur with the view of Professor T.F. Davey that moral commitments are inevitable in any discussion of the nature or purpose of education (37). His "main thesis", he says, is that

when we speak of education, there is presupposed either an ideal of a person to which the education is leading; or alternatively an ideal of a society for which the education fits the individual member. But in any case - and this is the important part - lying behind the concept of education is the notion of a norm or set of norms which gives the education its purpose. (38)

How might this ideal concept of a person be arrived at?

Having maintained that philosophical commitments are inevitable in the discussion of educational problems, I must now make my own, although I will do so very briefly. Such an exercise is not intended as an embarrassing confession of faith, but rather as an example of an activity which anyone working in the field of education ought from time to time to do. Rather gingerly I shall first lay down some criteria for the construction of an ideal concept of a person, draw attention to the influence of some rival concepts, and then briefly consider its possible contents.

- a) It is likely to be constructed from influential ideas and insights contained in Western philosophical, religious and educational traditions;
- b) each feature of it must be coherent and rationally supportable;
- c) the resulting concept must itself be coherent, i.e. its component parts must integrate into a meaningful whole;
- d) it must be consistent, as far as possible, with empirical work going on in the human sciences;
- e) it must apply some concrete specification of the end-state to be aimed at;
- f) it will express its architect's own commitments which will themselves have arisen from a study of possible sources and, preferably, long engagement with educational practice and reflection upon that practice;
- g) the resulting concept must be seen to be more in accordance with these criteria than its detailed rivals.

There is nothing sacrosanct about these criteria. They are intended to signify only that if one begins with an ideal concept of something and works backward from the concept to its influence on practice, one need not be engaging in unstructured or hopelessly subjective thinking.

What then might the content of an ideal concept of a person be? First, implicit in current educational practice are deeply entrenched philosophical norms which need to be rooted out. Here, for example, are three assumptions about persons, all of which, despite their orthodoxy, are misleading and damaging.

When Descartes decided he was a res cogitans or 'thinking thing', he initiated a modern tradition of philosophical dualism which had far-reaching educational implications. Once the unity of the person had become split into separate substances, mind and body, the way became open for educationists to regard education as concerned primarily or even exclusively with the mind. This sort of dualism, albeit in implicit form, is alive and well in the philosophy of education. Liberal education, says Hirst, is exclusively concerned with "the development of the mind that results from the pursuit of knowledge" (40). But on this view of persons the body and its activities are relegated to secondary importance as they are in ancient gnosticism. Knowledge is regarded as primarily an intellectual matter, educational success is all too easily understood as the passive assimilation and subsequent regurgitation of facts and ideas. Bodily skills such as dancing,

pole-vaulting, tending plants, climbing rock-faces, making bookcases, moulding clay models, cooking lasagne, painting landscapes and repairing motor cycles stand right at the bottom of the curriculum hierarchy, usually of interest only to those who have already failed to acquire, or more likely shown no interest in, the high-status mentalistic knowledge that 'A' levels are all about. Recently, Ryle's distinction between 'knowing-how' and 'knowing-that' has been applied to curricular issues (42), and it is slowly becoming clearer that such practical activities as canoeing or playing the viola have a different although equally valid epistemological status from knowing what canoes and violas are made of. But what one initially takes a person to be drastically affects the sort of education that is planned for children to receive, and Cartesian dualism lies at the root of the cerebral, mentalistic approach to the curriculum.

Some other views of person have an equally baleful influence on educational practice. Two obvious candidates are those of 'programmable machine' and 'self-reliant individual', both of which have a fairly specific, traceable philosophical history. The mechanistic concept of a person widely affects curriculum planning and the discussion of teaching methods, and the idea of a person as a self-reliant individual reinforces an aggressive competitiveness in education, introduces economic values into it, and tends to destroy a person's essential belonging with other persons in a community. All this of course needs further justification which cannot be provided now. I have merely drawn attention to the fact that learners are often regarded as thinking beings, programmable machines and isolated individuals, and these attitudes derive from ideological assumptions which are no less powerful for being implicit, but which already shape much educational practice and society's expectations of that practice. There are good reasons why the full rigour of analytic philosophy should be turned upon them.

Other sources for an ideal concept of a person exist which accommodate and more adequately draw out the immense range of potentialities available to human beings, and at the same time provide a refreshing contrast to those theories of personhood which see a person as primarily a rarified mind or a bodiless intellect. Instead of the Cartesian res cogitans, an older and more characteristically Christian concept of person is that of homo creator. In one of the Genesis creation myths, God the creator, having busied himself for five days with making the world, on the sixth day creates personkind - and personkind is made in God's image (43) with the task of acquiring dominion over the earth and everything in it (44). The importance of the theological doctrine of the creation of persons in God's image is that they are made after the likeness of a creator and told to get on with the creative work of having dominion over the earth. The profound anthropological self-understanding contained in this myth is that persons are primarily creators, being made in the image of the creator-God. Here then, is a Judaeo-Christian concept of a person which, despite the advent of Western secularisation, already provides a model of personhood that is of more than passing interest to curriculum theorists. For to see the individual person as essentially a creator (rather than, say, the possessor of an immaterial mind) immediately sets a premium on those learning activities which help to bring about self-expression, bodily skills, and active participation in those things one comes to know. In the arts a new emphasis is given to the learner's creativity by the homo creator model, in writing literature as opposed to merely reading and 'appreciating' it; composition and playing music as opposed to merely dissecting or listening to it; producing, as opposed to simply contemplating, works of art; philosophising for oneself as opposed only to assimilating the philosophy of others; forging out one's moral and aesthetic preference from the inheritance of past experience, wisdom and genius bequeathed to one, as opposed to the assimilation of selected parts of it. The application of the homo creator model requires much more detailed elaboration and exposition than I can give now. I have only just begun to indicate its possibilities.

Instead of the dualistic split of the individual person into an immaterial mind and a material body, other accounts of personhood are available in the philosophy of mind which provide a timely alternative to Cartesianism on the one hand and outright materialism or physicalism on the other (45). These theories emphasise the overall unity of the person, and locate the dualism of body and mind in the logically distinct languages or series of concepts that are used about human beings. The precise formulation of the unity of the human person and the diversity of possible descriptions about this unity is a complicated question, although I certainly want to claim that one of the main achievements of twentieth century Western philosophy is that it has progressed beyond seventeenth century dualism and nineteenth century materialism to a variety of monistic theories about persons which successfully preserve personal unity.

The application of monistic person theories to certain educational problems is a high priority for philosophers of education. Their importance is that they preserve the essential integratedness of mind and body. They have a holistic character. Emotions, feelings and imaginings, do not have to be assigned to one side or the other of the body/mind divide (and become epistemologically devalued if the distinctive sort of knowledge and experience they provide cannot qualify as intellectual). For imagination, feeling and emotion belong with intellect and reason to the psychosomatic unity that is a person, and outside this unity, any one of these capacities is an abstraction from a totality. What has happened in educationally regulative concepts of a person is that 'reason' (46) or 'intellect' has become abstracted from the person's overall unity, with the result that the educational process has become less concerned with persons as wholes and more concerned with persons as possessors of rational minds. It follows from an integrated monistic theory of persons that discovering Mozart or learning to care for the elderly is perhaps a more significant stride into personhood than a thousand examples of examinable 'knowings-that'.

The model of personal unity or person monism, together with the model of a person as homo creator, begins to provide an exciting basis for the ideal concept of a person which was earlier sought. The role of the intellect, and the need for much acquisition of objective knowledge is not denied, although it is qualified, for those who are being educated are, on this view, learning to become persons, and not just developed minds, and

'persons' is a decidedly non-neutral term. That education is 'of the whole man' is not just 'a conceptual truth', as R.S. Peters avers (47), because it points to a developed theory of human nature which has

all kinds of educational implications. He who learns to become a person will do so by being expressive as well as receptive, and some of the things he will come to know will lead to a widening of the epistemological limitations marking out what knowledge is.

To the understanding of persons as creative (in their activity) and holistic (in their nature), I should want also to insist on the recovery of subjectivity and community, in order to provide a hefty counterbalance to the massive biases in favour of objectivity and individuality in teaching, in curriculum design and assessment. To some extent subjectivity has already been included, but I am anxious to include in the ideal concept of a person a radical freedom to exercise one's own authentic possibilities within the 'facility' of all the 'givens' that constitute one's existence, those features of it that one is unable to choose for one's self. From Christian theism to atheistic existentialism such a concept is to be found. That personhood is a radically social

phenomenon which requires the apprehension of other persons, not as representing the limits of our own freedom, but as co-creators in a common, corporate human enterprise is a further essential feature of what personhood is.

The concept of a person as essentially creative, as an integrated totality of subjective and objective experiences and possibilities, as radically free yet belonging to a wider moral community, is the sort of ideal concept which I am prepared to defend. The final composition of the content, the terminological arrangement of it, the complex justifications for it, and the possible curricular applications of it all require much further work. An account such as the one I have tried to outline is needed because the question 'What is education?' is a legitimate question that requires a satisfactory, compelling answer, and contra Langford, such an answer must be prescriptive. But despite my criticisms of Langford I think his answer is the right one, although for different reasons. Although I agree with his answer I do not expect he would countenance my adoption of it in the present context.

If I have been influenced by idealism, existentialism and religious thought in writing this paper it is because, like Langford, "In writing it I have not felt obliged to adhere to any one philosophical method" (48). Philosophy of education has been too long dominated by one particular type of philosophising. A more catholic taste in philosophy may help to provide a more varied menu.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

- 1 Philosophy and Education, p. 60 (London, Macmillan, 1968; The concept of education in: Langford, G. & O'Connor, D.J. (eds) New Essays in the Philosophy of Education, p.3 (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973); Teaching as a Profession, p. 4 (Manchester University Press, 1978).
- 2 Teaching as a Profession, p. 77f.
- 3 Teaching as a Profession, p. 1; Hirst, Paul Liberal education and the nature of knowledge, in: Peters, R.S. (ed.) The Philosophy of Education, p. 99. This article is also found in Archambault, R.D. (ed.) (1965) Philosophical Analysis and Education (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul); and Hirst, Paul (1974) Knowledge and the Curriculum (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul). Hirst is writing about liberal education. Peters, R.S. Aims of education - a conceptual inquiry, in: Peters, R.S. op. cit. p. 16.
- 4 Teaching as a Profession, p. 2.
- 5 ibid.
- 6 Teaching as a Profession, p. 78.
- 7 The concept of education, p.4; Philosophy and Education, p. 58.
- 8 Teaching as a Profession, p. 86.
- 9 Op. cit., p. 86.
- 10 E.g. Philosophy and Education, p. 69.
- 11 Op. cit., p.60.
- 12 Ibid.: The concept of education, p. 10.
- 13 Philosophy and Education, p.60.
- 14 Op. cit., p. 62.
- 15 The concept of education, p. 11.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Philosophy and Education, p. 67.
- 19 Op. cit., p. 68.
- 20 Op. cit., p. 69.
- 21 Teaching as a Profession, p. 78.
- 22 See below, p. 6.
- 23 A brief, succinct description of the method is given by Bettis, J.D. (1969) Phenomenology of Religion, chapter 1. An introduction to phenomenology (London, SCM).
- 24 Teaching as a Profession, p.2.
- 25 Op. cit., p. 117.
- 26 Op. cit., p. 114.
- 27 I have argued elsewhere that metaphysical commitments are unavoidable; see my The Ontology of Paul Tillich, particularly pp. 172-176 (Oxford University Press, 1978).
- 28 Teaching as a Profession, p. 115.
- 29 For a convincing (and non-religious) refutation of utilitarianism, see Williams, Bernard (1973) Morality.

- An Introduction to Ethics, chapter 10 (Harmondsworth, Penguin).
- 30 Philosophy and Education, pp. 69-70.
- 31 Op. cit., p. 69.
- 32 Teaching as a Profession, p. 85.
- 33 See Ruddock, R. (ed.) Six Approaches to the Person (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972).
- 34 Teaching as a Profession, p. 86.
- 35 The concept of education, p. 14.
- 36 Art. cit., p. 6, my italics.
- 37 Daveney, T.F. Education - a moral concept, in: Langford, G. & O'Connor, D.J., op. cit., p. 80.
- 38 Art. cit., p. 79.
- 39 Liberal education and the nature of knowledge, art. cit., p. 99.
- 40 Art. cit., p. 95.
- 41 The Concept of Mind, p. 28f. (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1976, first published 1949).
- 42 E.g. Pring, Richard (1976) Knowledge and Schooling, p. 38f. (London, Open Books).
- 43 Genesis, 1.26-7.
- 44 Genesis, 1.26:28.
- 45 I have in mind the version of the double-aspect theory held by Strawson, P.F. (1957) in Individuals, chapter 3 (London, Methuen), sometimes called 'the person theory'; Harris, E.E. (1966) The neural-identity theory and the person, International Philosophical Quarterly, p. vi; (1960); Hirst, R.J. Mind and brain: the identity hypothesis, in: The Human Agent, Royal Institute of Philosophy Lectures, Vol. 1, 1966- 67 (London, Macmillan); the theory of 'anomalous monism' advanced by Davidson, D. (1976) Psychology as philosophy, in: Glover, J. (ed.) The Philosophy of Mind (Oxford University Press); Bernard Williams' similar theory in Descartes: the Project of Pure Inquiry, chapter 10, Mind and its place in nature (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1978); and R. Abelson's theory of conceptual dualism outlined in Person (London, Macmillan, 1977).
- 46 In classical theology and philosophy, 'reason' or logos had a much wider function, so that the modern words 'reason' and 'rational' do not capture the breadth of meaning of the earlier term. As late as the nineteenth century, reason was for Samuel Taylor Coleridge a unitary principle which included the exercise of imagination and judgement, the intuition of 'Truths above sense' and the source of the spiritual life. Coleridge, along with Shelley and Carlyle, all fought against the narrower view of reason, the acceptance of which they saw as the modern mind's infection with "the contagion of its mechanic philosophy". See Reardon, B.R.G. (1971) From Coleridge to Gore, p. 63f. (London, Longman). But Mill and the mechanists won the day, and educational thought still in the main follows Mill.
- 47 The aims of education - a conceptual inquiry, art. cit., p. 19.
- 48 Teaching as a Profession, p. 1.