University of Tartu

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EDUCATING FOR AUTONOMY: IS IT JUST A PIPE DREAM?

Master's Thesis in Philosophy

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Tartu

2020

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

In this thesis I will present the paradox of educating for autonomy, review some solutions to it, and finally argue in favour of a forward-looking solution to the paradox, whereby the paradox can be solved by considering a child's right to an open future.

In one sentence, the paradox of educating for autonomy consists in an apparent conflict between the means that are best suited for educating children—roughly, the inculcation, by other people, of habits that bypass rationality, and the desired outcome of this process—an autonomous person. How can education truly promote the autonomy (to anticipate: the authenticity and rationality) of the child, while at the same time exerting on children a kind of influence that is not too far from manipulation?

This is a work that spans different philosophical areas, such as the philosophy of education, the philosophy of childhood and value theory (in particular, philosophical debates on the nature and value of autonomy), and which necessarily has to rely on certain assumptions about the nature of children's psychological development. However, the contribution I aim to make is purely philosophical and limited to the goal of providing a solution to the paradox.

I will leave the discussion of the concept of autonomy to chapter 1, but here I will lay out two background assumptions I will not discuss further. The first assumption is that autonomy (whatever that exactly consists in) is something valuable, that is, something worth promoting and preserving. There can be disagreement about whether autonomy is an end in itself (separate from a person's well-being), or a constitutive element of a person's well-being, or again something merely instrumentally valuable (for example, valuable only as a means to promoting a person's pleasure). But whatever view one prefers, the assumption here will be that promoting and preserving autonomy is a good thing.

The second assumption is that promoting a person's autonomy should, at least in principle, be one of the aims of education. Education for autonomy is believed to be liberating and providing a chance for children to escape the limitations set by their community that might hinder their life. It is often argued that such education will facilitate children with necessary skills to make well thought-out choices. At the same time education for autonomy is used as an antidote against parental, social and governmental manipulation that obstruct authenticity

of the child's self, which (as seen in the next chapter) is a necessary condition for autonomy.

By "education" here I will mean both formal education (by educational institutions such as schools) and informal education (such as is done, normally, by parents). Whenever the difference between formal and informal education is relevant, I will point that out. It is obvious that education should have some valuable goals in sight—education is not an end in itself, but is rather the means of a process of bringing about something valuable, most plausibly, something that contributes to the well-being both of the child and of the adult the child will become, as well as contributing to broader, social goals.

Some might disagree with the assumption that promoting a person's autonomy should be one of these goals—some might take the point of education to be exclusively promoting knowledge, or virtue, or sociality, but not autonomy. Such readers are therefore invited to read my thesis conditionally: *if* promoting autonomy should in principle be one goal of education, then there arises a paradox, but this paradox can be solved.[1] Of course, those who think that the paradox cannot be solved may well take this as a reason to deny that promoting autonomy should be a goal of education: if educating for autonomy is impossible, then it is not true that children should be educated for autonomy. But in order to take the paradox seriously in the first place, one needs to at least take as *prima facie* desirable the idea of educating for autonomy.

Here is an overview of my thesis. In the first chapter I will explain where exactly the conflict lies, relying on Richard Peters's work. I will also explain why Peters's own solution does not work (to anticipate: it does not solve the paradox with regards to authenticity). In the second chapter I will review Robert Noggle's and Stefaan Cuypers's solutions. The choice of these authors is motivated, in case of Peters, by the obvious fact that he formulated the paradox, and in the case of Noggle and Cuypers, by the fact that they propose explicit solutions to the paradox (Cuypers

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[1] Authors defending in detail the idea that autonomy should be one of the aims of education are Brighouse 2006, de Ruyter 2004 and White 2011. John White sees human flourishing as a life filled with autonomous, wholehearted and successful pursuits of worthwhile activities (2011). Whereas Harry Brighouse defines flourishing life as a life with two features: a worthwhile life that contains objective goods; and agents' identification with the pursuit of those goods in the life they are leading (2006 p. 16). In a similar vein, Doret J. De Ruyter considers human flourishing to consist of "generic goods that are objectively identifiable and the meaningful interpretation of these goods by the person herself" (2004 p. 384).

is also the one author who engages with both Peters's and Noggle's work, so in a sense the very existence of this debate is owed to Cuypers). In other words, these three authors constitute the best existing literature up to now concerning the paradox. I will argue that each of these solutions is problematic in one way or another. In the third chapter I present my own solution, which is similar in spirit to Cuypers's, but builds on Joel Feinberg's notion of a child's right to an open future.

Chapter 1

What is the Paradox of Educating for Autonomy?

1.1 Introduction

The main aim of this chapter will be to lay out the required background and introduce the paradox of educating for autonomy. In section 1.2, I will provide a brief introduction to the concept of autonomy and how external and internal forces can hinder one's autonomy. In what follows I will look at competency and authenticity conditions of autonomy, which will help later to explain the paradox. Section 1.3 will focus on defining the paradox of educating for autonomy which consists in incompatibility of means (education) and the end (autonomous person). I will present Richard S. Peters's formulation of the paradox of moral education, which will serve as a starting point for explaining the paradox of educating for autonomy. Finally, in section 1.4, I will analyse Peters's solution of the paradox of moral education. The discussion will reveal that the paradox of educating for autonomy lies in the authenticity condition of autonomy.

1.2 What is autonomy?

Looking at the preliminary definition of autonomy may be a useful start. Etymologically, autonomy means "self-rule" and originally it was applied to independent city-states. Later, the notion of autonomy was extended to also define an independent and free-thinking individual who has the right type of control while making decisions for herself (Cuypers & Haji 2006 p. 723).

What does it mean to have the right type of control? While various accounts of control conditions have been proposed, this is not the place to assess these accounts. So, I only consider the general outlines that are widely accepted among different theories of autonomy. One necessary condition for having the right type of control is to be free from *external* forces like coercion or social pressure. A person who decides to surrender her money under a gun threat has not made an autonomous decision, or has not exercised her autonomy. However, an autonomous individual must not only be free from external forces but also from *internal*, psychological forces that can usurp control from the person. Examples of lack of internal control can include addictions or obsessive-compulsive disorders. Moreover, a person acting on desires that are the result of brainwashing may fail to

be autonomous—or at least, if we think of autonomy as coming in degrees, such a person will be to that extent less autonomous than a person who has not been brainwashed. A fictional illustration of the case can be seen in B.F. Skinner's utopian novel *Walden Two,* where people of the community can choose anything they like; however, they have been conditioned since childhood to want and choose only what they can have or do (Skinner 1969). The reason why the internal control of people living in this utopia is undermined is because such conditioned desires or beliefs do not reflect who they really are and are, in a sense, "alien" to these people. These elements and their output as behaviour are inauthentic, because they are not a product of the real self.

In what follows, I will assume that the type of internal control that is necessary for autonomy requires meeting two kinds of conditions: competency conditions and authenticity conditions (Christman 2018).[2] A person satisfies competency conditions when she possesses (and exercises) capacities like rational deliberation, logical (in a broad sense) thinking, and self-evaluation. These capacities indicate whether the concerned person can function adequately while making choices or judging a given situation. Additionally, such conditions require that the person is free from debilitating pathologies that affect their decision-making functionality.

Authenticity conditions, on the other hand, require that the beliefs, desires, emotions or other psychological elements that make a person act in the way she does should be "her own". In other words, if competency is a matter of possessing and exercising certain capacities, authenticity has to do with how a person has come to acquire the beliefs, desires etc., which guide the exercise of those capacities. To go back to the case of brainwashing: a brainwashed person might well exercise capacities of rational deliberation in selecting the optimal means to achieve her goal (say, effectively saving money, and expertly comparing different offers, in order to purchase an expensive car she desires). But if having that goal is purely the result of brainwashing, that goal is not in the relevant sense "her own", and to that extent her choice will then be less autonomous (if autonomous at all). It is a controversial question, to which I come back in chapter 2, which kinds of processes of acquisition preserve or instead undermine authenticity. However, for now, it can be said that

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[2] These two conditions are those that I need in order to explain the paradox. I will leave it open whether also other conditions are necessary for autonomy.

authenticity is concerned with being true to oneself and, as Bialystok puts it, "[it is a] relationship of correspondence: it evinces an overlap between some aspect of one's behavior or choices and one or more aspects of who one "really" is" (2017 p. 4).

1.3 The Paradox

In what follows, then, educating for autonomy will be understood as educating the child with the goal of promoting her (and her adult self's) competency and authenticity in the choices she makes (and will make). Why should educating for autonomy (so understood) be paradoxical? In general, we take education to be a process which, if "all goes well", results in the acquisition of certain skills, capacities, traits. For example, there is nothing paradoxical in the idea of educating for sports or mathematical skills, even though of course it is not guaranteed that the pupil will in fact acquire sports or mathematical skills. Education is a fallible process. But the concept of a paradox of educating for autonomy points to something *intrinsically* wrong or misguided with including autonomy as an aim of education. In this case education is not only not guaranteed to succeed in its goal: it is *guaranteed to fail.*

The paradox consists in a conflict between the desired outcome of education for autonomy—the development of a person who possesses (sufficient) competency and authenticity in her decision-making—and the means or methods used in the educational process. Education of a child requires mechanisms of habituation, which bypass the child's rational capacities (thus undermining competency), and the inevitable influence on the child by adults and their aims (parents, teachers, etc.), thus making it seem impossible how the child's acquired beliefs, desires etc. can be truly her own (hence undermining authenticity). To use an analogy: the project of educating for autonomy would seem to be as paradoxical as the idea of curing a disease by administering a poison that aggravates that very same disease.[3]

My formulation of the paradox consists in a slight modification of what Peters called the paradox of moral education:

> What then is the paradox of moral education as I conceive it? It is this: given that it is desirable
> to develop people who conduct themselves rationally, intelligently and with a fair degree of

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[3] It follows from the paradox that, if and when a person becomes autonomous, she does so *despite* having been educated, or, if there is some positive correlation between education and the development of autonomy, we shouldn't see the latter as the result of the former. Education might still be the stimulus to *other factors* which favour the development of autonomy.

> spontaneity, the brute facts of child development reveal that at the most formative years of a child's development he is incapable of this form of life and impervious to the proper manner of passing it on. [...] Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that a rational code of behaviour [...] is beyond the grasp of young children, they can and must enter the palace of Reason through the courtyard of Habit and Tradition. [....] The problem of moral education is that of how the necessary habits of behaviour [...] can be acquired in a way which does not stultify the development of a rational code [...] at a later stage (1981 pp. 51–2).

As the passage makes clear, Peters's emphasis is not on the development of autonomy per se, but on morality. However, the problems that Peters sees in educating children for morality are exactly applicable to educating children for autonomy. In fact, it can be said that Peters sees a paradox in educating for morality *because* he (1) sees a paradox in educating for autonomy and (2) takes autonomy as a constitutive feature of a moral agent (an agent who can form and act according to a moral code)—a non-autonomous agent cannot be a moral agent. In this sense, then, the paradox of educating for autonomy is the more fundamental one.

Peters explains the problem: children need to enter the "palace of Reason"—in this context, really another word for "autonomy"—but, given the "brute facts of child development", they can only do so through the two forces of "Habit and Tradition". First, habit refers to activities to which children are trained in ways that are not rational. According to Peters, appealing to reason, i.e. to the exercise of rational capacities, is not really an option while educating children (1981 p. 52). He draws such a conclusion from the works of psychologists like Piaget and Luria who claimed that, for children up to a certain age, giving reasons for rules has very little effect, as rules appear to a child as something external and unalterable. Nor can often children understand the long-term benefits or harms of different activities. This is the sense in which education cannot but largely bypass rationality, and thus seems to conflict with the promotion of competency conditions of autonomy. Second, tradition refers to a set of concepts, notions, ideas which belong to adults, and which adults then go on to impart on and transmit to the child. Peters here makes use of Michael Oakeshott's distinction between "languages" and "literature" (Oakeshott 1962 p. 309). A "language" is a way of reasoning or thinking. In contrast, "literature" is something that has been authoritatively said in a given language (1962 p. 309). For example, a textbook of chemistry is the "literature" of the scientific field as it teaches how to use the products of scientific thought; whereas, the "language" is the way scientists think and recognise a scientific problem or proposition (1962 p.

310). The point of education for autonomy thus would be to initiate the child into the "language" of autonomy (Gardner 1981 p. 69; Oliver 1985 p. 16). However, this can be done only by passing down a "literature" that obviously does not belong to the child. If relying on tradition is a necessary element of education, as Peters holds, then this seems to undermine the authenticity of the beliefs and values acquired by the child during the educational process. In one sentence: through the methods of habit and tradition, one can learn (for example) to "speak chemistry", but one cannot likewise learn to "speak autonomy" (and in turn, cannot learn to "speak morality", for Peters). In this sense, educating for autonomy seems a contradiction in terms.

1.4 Peters's solution and its problem

Having pointed out the paradox, Peters goes on to argue that it can be solved. I will present his solution and criticize it. Seeing what is problematic with Peters's solution will be a step forward towards more plausible solutions. Peters calls attention to two kinds of habits: On the one hand, we have *passive* habits that exclude intelligent adaptability.[4] Such habits are those that we have in mind when using phrases like "out of habit" or "that is a matter of sheer habit". On the other hand, we have *active* habits that are adaptable to various purposes (1981 pp. 55–7). In general, we use the notion of a habit to characterize and explain certain kinds of actions. Taking off my shoes as soon as I enter home is a habitual action of mine; I take off my shoes because I have the habit of doing so. As this example shows, in principle people can have reasons for their habitual actions—if asked why I take off my shoes, I can answer "to avoid dirtying the floor." However, what is distinctive of habitual actions is that they are done in an automatic way, because they have been done many times before and will be repeated again. What Peters points out is that this automaticity of habits is compatible with a certain degree of open-endedness and adaptability to different circumstances. In one word, habits can be intelligent, and in this sense, active. When applied to the context of rules and codes of conduct (which, as seen above, is Peters's explicit focus), the distinction between active and

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[4] Peters does not actually use the terms "active" and "passive" when talking about habits. I employ these terms to make the distinction clearer and easier to understand. Throughout the rest of this thesis, I will be using these terms as though Peters himself used them.

passive habits corresponds to the distinction between acting *on* a rule (where the agent sees, or at least can see, the point of the rule) and acting simply in *accordance* with a rule (where the agent follows the rule simply because of drilling or conformism). Acting on a rule presupposes acting in the light of a generally conceived end, that is served by following the rule (Peters 1981 p. 56). For example, taking off one's shoes after entering home is a rule that can be seen to serve a general end (keeping the house clean), and not be just something that you do because "that's what people do" or as a blind reflex. According to Peters, then, inculcating habits through tradition does not necessarily conflict with promoting autonomy, because the habits formed through education can be active, intelligent habits (1981 p. 57). In this case, the agent is in a position to think rationally about what they do (competency) and, because she understands the complexity of a given concept or rule, she is not simply using the "literature" of the concept, but she can creatively and intelligently practice the "language" for herself, thus making the rule an authentic element of herself. In other words, with active habits the agent can gain the right type of control that is necessary for autonomy.

However, there is a major flaw in Peters's solution. Even though the development of active habits may to some extent promote autonomy, it will do so only if active habits are authentic elements of the self. However, nothing that Peters says ensures that active habits will be more authentic—more the agent's "own"—than her passive habits. For all he says, active habits will still be the result of the inculcation, by others, of a certain "literature", upon the child. Here is an illustration. A religiously educated person might well express her commitment to religious doctrines (in particular here, moral doctrines based on religion) as an active habit: instead of blindly following what priests or a sacred book tell her to do, she is able to question and defend her religious convictions, as well as adapt those rules to new situations. She has gained competency. However, she has inculcated those doctrines since a very early age. The process of acquisition has been completely shaped by the wishes of others (parents, schools etc.). There is going to be a question, if and to what extent the religious commitments she expresses can really be said to be her own. For all we know, such commitments have been simply passed down e.g. from her parents to her (and for that matter, likely from her grandparents to her parents, and so on). So her religiosity may still be an inauthentic

part of herself, despite her competency. If so, the paradox is not solved by active habits.

In a relevant discussion, Harvey Siegel proposes that by educating the child to cultivate a habit of rational evaluation of habits themselves, the child herself will be able to evaluate the recommended habit as being worthy, thereby becoming autonomous *with respect to such a habit* (Siegel 1988). This suggestion can be taken to indirectly lend support to Peters's solution. In Siegel's view, which also dovetails with Peters's conception of an autonomous person, critical thinking and education for autonomy are closely related. Since a rational person is capable of judging and/or justifying her beliefs and her values, a rational person is also an autonomous person (Siegel 1988 pp. 86–7). The idea then is that the habit of rational reflection will serve as a mechanism to cleanse any inauthentic element of the self (Siegel 1988 pp. 86–7).

The problem with this suggestion is that a habit of rational reflection can be itself an inauthentic element of the self. Clearly one can be indoctrinated into this habit as into any other (active or passive) habit. A good historical example of this is John Stuart Mill's autobiographical reflections on the strictly rationalistic education he had received from his father and from the founder of utilitarianism, Jeremy Bentham (Mill 1874). What Mill laments is that his habit of rational reflection, valuable as it was, was at some point perceived as alien to himself: it was instilled in him from an early age, eventually leading up to a period of depression. The deep dissatisfaction he felt was a sign that he was not at one with the belief and values that he had been taught (including his commitment to utilitarianism), and with the habits he had been trained for, no matter how much of an expert he had become in rational (self-)evaluation. What was lacking is that such traits, including the habit of rational reflection, were not authentic elements of his self. Therefore, Siegel's suggestion does not help Peters's solution.

Peters's account explains how certain habits can be autonomy-supporting *after* a person has acquired a set of beliefs and values that can be said to be authentic. But the paradox of educating for autonomy remains: Peters has not explained how one can acquire, through education, beliefs and values that are authentic. For all we know, the educative process, even when it promotes habits of rational (self-)scrutiny, still produces agents whose central beliefs, desires, dispositions to act are as inauthentic as the beliefs, desires etc., of agents who have

not been trained for rational reflection. So, the educational process is still incompatible with the promotion of autonomy.

As this discussion makes clear, the factor which makes the paradox of educating for autonomy persist is the authenticity condition for autonomy. Until and unless one's "evaluative scheme" (to use an expression in Cuypers 2009) has been acquired in such a way that it can be said to be truly one's own, the person's autonomy will not be promoted and is rather undermined by the educative process.[5] Note that I am not claiming that authenticity is in general impossible. What I am claiming is that there is a conflict in principle between the methods of education and the development of authentic elements of the self. People *can* become authentic, and thus autonomous: but *not* thanks to education.

In this chapter, we saw an overview of the conception of autonomy, and discussed competency and authenticity requirements. Next, I discussed Peters's definition and solution to the paradox of moral education. I have argued that the paradox of educating for autonomy arises because promoting/preserving a child's autonomy seems incompatible with the nature of education. Finally, I have concluded that although Peters gives valuable insights on how habits (autonomic actions) do not necessarily preclude a person's autonomy (compatible with competency), it does not explain how education is compatible with preserving the authenticity.

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[5] "Evaluative scheme" is a person's "self" which is constructed around certain core beliefs and desires that constitute the agent's most basic, important and—not necessarily consciously chosen—principles and convictions, together with her long-term goals and commitments and values (Cuypers 2009 p. 130).

Chapter 2
Two solutions of the paradox

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will review the solutions to the paradox proposed by Robert Noggle and Stefaan E. Cuypers. This chapter will be structured as follows: in section 2.2, I will describe in detail Noggle's suggestion that any initial self should be regarded as authentic, and in section 2.3, I will argue that Noggle takes authenticity to be too loose, which will result in attributing authenticity to inauthentic choices. Then in section 2.4 I will turn my attention to Cuypers's proposal that views authenticity in a forward looking manner, claiming that attitudes (desires, beliefs, etc.,) instilled during childhood is autonomy-preserving as long as they do not undermine future moral responsibilities. In section 2.5, I will argue that tying educating for autonomy to educating for moral responsibility is too strict and does not solve the paradox. Because educating for moral responsibility encourages moral life and character as the only life option for an autonomous person, which contradicts the very purpose of education for autonomy.

2.2 Noggle's solution: against the ab initio requirement

Noggle has argued that the paradox arises only because of an inflated, and in fact contradictory, notion of what it takes to be authentic. Instead, he proposes that the psychological elements of the "initial" self should be already regarded as authentic (2005 pp. 100–3). In this sense, then, there is no problem with authenticity in the first place. What will be important is simply to ensure that education preserves this already given authenticity. And an education which fosters rational reflection and critical thinking can do exactly that.

Noggle starts out arguing that we should reject what he calls the "*ab initio* requirement" for authenticity. The *ab initio* requirement is the notion that an element of the self can only be authentic if it derives from another authentic element. In other words, inauthentic elements cannot pass authenticity on to another element. Imposing such a requirement means that we are essentially "stuck" with inauthentic selves: unless the initial elements of our self are themselves authentic, there is no way we can become authentic. But, if the requirement holds, then how can the initial elements be themselves authentic? The only remaining possibility is

that the initial elements somehow give authenticity to themselves. But this, argues Noggle, "requires a self-creating self that could never exist". A self-creating self would be a kind of entity that both:

a) *exists*, as it is going to create something, and

b) *does not exist*, which must be true in order for the "self-creating self" to be created (Noggle 2005 p. 96).

Hence, the notion of a self-creating self is a conceptual impossibility. Even if it were possible, say, that a God-like creature that has such a capacity, it clearly would not be possible for human beings. In other words, the *ab initio* requirement on authenticity either makes it impossible to be authentic, or requires the contradictory idea of a self-creating self. Since both options are unacceptable, Noggle argues we should reject the *ab initio* requirement.

Now, we can see that if the *ab initio* requirement holds, there would be no way out of the paradox of educating for autonomy. If, as the requirement says, an authentic self cannot grow out of an inauthentic self, then the job of education simply cannot be to promote authenticity and in turn autonomy, because education operates upon a self that, for all we know, is not authentic (because there cannot be a self-created self), and education itself contributes to adding inauthentic elements.

Luckily, as Noggle has argued, we should reject the *ab initio* requirement. Once we reject that requirement, how should we think of authenticity?

On the one hand, Noggle suggests that an authentic self can be the result of a gradual process. Over time, we develop a relatively stable, orderly belief system and preference structure: these are our "core attitudes" (Noggle 2005 p. 99). Over time, we also acquire deliberative capacities to reflect upon and revise those beliefs and preferences. In particular, we can adjust our "peripheral" attitudes (desires or beliefs), in the light of new information.[6] For example, we may acquire a preference for healthier food, when we become aware of its benefits. Or, for a typical childhood example of such a revision process, we may abandon our belief in Santa Claus, when we realize that it is our parents who bring the presents.

However, changes to core attitudes do not occur quite often and not as easy as to peripheral attitudes. Changes to core attitudes are usually motivated by an internal need to resolve possible contradictions or tensions within our evaluative

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[6] Peripheral attitudes are relatively flexible attitudes that can rapidly change in the light of new information. These attitudes are not essential for the stability of evaluative schemes.

scheme. A dramatic example would be a person abandoning her belief in God in response, for example, to recognition of the amount of suffering in the world. But "change" doesn't necessarily mean abandoning beliefs/desires or acquiring new ones. It can also mean adopting the same ones on a new basis. This is what Mill did: after his depression, he renewed his commitment to utilitarianism, having now found a basis for it in his own experience of life. In such an evolution of core attitudes, Noggle argues that the self evolves "according to its own internal logic" (2005 p. 100). Such changes can therefore be considered to be authenticity-preserving, as the new (or renewed) element of the self (a belief, a preference, etc.) is an *authentic continuation* of the previous elements, regardless of whether these elements were already authentic themselves. In contrast, a change that did not occur in the same way, i.e. not as an internally motivated continuation of a previous configuration, cannot count as authenticity-preserving. For example, sudden organic traumas, or nefarious brain surgeries, might fall into this category.

Noggle sums up the development of an authentic self this way: "Out of a seemingly unpromising beginning—a sort of chaotic psychological "soup"—the child's [initial] self gradually emerges as her cognitive and motivational systems develop the kind of structure and stability and the rational and reflective capacities necessary for the existence of a coherent and stable self that can be the source of authenticity" (Noggle 2005, p. 101).

However, what about people who do not go through such changes? Do their beliefs and desires never get to be authentic? This is where Noggle in effect neutralizes the very problem of authenticity in the first place. Once a self is fully formed (has acquired a set of core attitudes), and there is no "previous self" on top of which one can arise, Noggle argues that this self must be declared authentic—even if this initial self is the result of standard child-rearing techniques based on sheer indoctrination. He gives the examples of "Edgar the evil"[7] and "oppressed Olivia"[8] and writes that:

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[7] *Edgar the evil* "is the son of a crime boss who rears him to follow in his footsteps. Using standard child-rearing techniques, he encourages Edgar's more selfish and violent impulses and discourages empathy and compassion. As Edgar reaches adulthood, he is quite thoroughly evil" (Noggle 2005 p. 102).

[8] *Oppressed Olivia* "has been raised (using standard child-rearing techniques) to abide by and adopt the sexist attitudes of the patriarchal society in which she lives. Consequently, she shapes her ideals, aspirations, and activities in ways that reflect these attitudes. As Olivia reaches adulthood, her convictions include a belief in the naturalness of women's subservient role, and her deepest aspiration is to be a housewife" (Noggle 2005 p. 102).

The only real difference between them and us is that we were brainwashed into having less dysfunctional attitudes (or if not, then we have at least been better able to leave ours behind). We must keep in mind that acknowledging that these attitudes are authentic (to Olivia and Edgar) does not require us to abandon our moral outrage at the fact that they have warped, corrupted, and stifled the development of these two people. We simply need to articulate that outrage a bit more carefully. It is not that the earliest socialization of a child into an evil or oppressive worldview imprisons some better self (Noggle 2005 p. 104).

Since there is no other self that has emerged from such childhood, any possible other self does not exist for Edgar and Olivia. Noggle adds that it is unfortunate that the self of a child might be morally and in other ways defective. However, as the authenticity of a self is about what beliefs and desires are truly a person's own, then that is no reason to claim that these initial desires and beliefs do not belong to the self. In other words, there is a big difference between the application of brainwashing and related techniques to a person with a fully-formed self, and the application of very similar techniques during the early stages of child rearing. In both cases, we create a self. But in the former case, we create a self by destroying an already existing one, and the new self will be inauthentic. In the latter case, we create the only self a person can ever have been until that point, and for this reason this self can be her only authentic self.

Noggle's solution to the paradox of educating for autonomy therefore looks as follows. When education contributes to forming the initial self (typically, parental education), then education (like brainwashing in the case of Edgar and Olivia) contributes to forming a self that must be declared authentic. When education contributes to reshaping an already existing formed self (for example, through schooling), then education can be authenticity-preserving, as long as education helps to satisfy an internal need to resolve contradictions or tensions within our evaluative scheme.[9] In both cases, education would turn out to be compatible with the formation of an authentic, and in turn, autonomous self.

2.3 The problem with Noggle's view

I agree with Noggle that the self-creating self is impossible, and thus that the *ab initio* requirement for authenticity should be rejected. We need to understand

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[9] Of course schooling and other educational systems can still undermine the person's authenticity. A solution to the paradox however only requires that education be *compatible* with promoting authenticity—that there be no *in principle* conflict.

authenticity (and in turn autonomy) as a work in progress, rather than postulate a special authenticity-conferring act that lies at the bottom of the "authenticity chain". However, I cannot agree with Noggle's idea that the initial self should be declared to be authentic, in the sense of authenticity that is relevant to the promotion of the agent's autonomy. In other words: the combination of competency conditions (assuming they are acquired somewhat later in life) plus Noggle's "initial self authenticity" does not result in the autonomy of the person later in life. Here is why.

Consider again Oppressed Olivia. Her parents have successfully managed to implant into her a desire for submissiveness that is, in Alfred Mele's phrase, "practically non-sheddable" for her. An element of psychology (a desire, a belief, etc.) is practically non-sheddable for an individual if resisting that element is not a "psychologically genuine option" for her (Mele 2001 p. 172). This means that Olivia cannot reason her way to the rejection of, or even to resistance against, her desire for submissiveness. Her desire can change only upon some brain trauma or perhaps via coerced psychotherapy. I say "coerced", because she cannot herself decide to start such a therapy: that would require a degree of control over her desire which by assumption she lacks. When Olivia grows up, since she cannot resist the implanted desire, her only psychologically genuine option is to live a submissive life. Now, on Noggle's account, since all the elements of Olivia's initial self must be authentic—including her desire to be submissive—therefore also her "choice" to live a submissive life will be authentic and thus autonomous. But this seems counterintuitive. Olivia does not have sufficient internal control of her life. Nor does she really have other options but to satisfy her desire to be submissive. She therefore cannot be autonomous, and in turn, this means we should not declare by default all initial elements of a self to be authentic, in the sense of "authentic" that matters for autonomy.

Olivia's initial self is indeed the only self she can have up to that point, but this is not enough to call it "authentic". Authenticity (as a condition for autonomy) cannot be equated with "being there from the beginning". People's initial selves (that is, their initial core attitudes) cannot really be called either authentic or inauthentic, but rather "non-authentic". The question of their authenticity can only be addressed once the person is in a position to relate to them. It is this relation to oneself which will determine the (in)authenticity of her attitudes, whether and which ones are truly her own. Noggle's view, instead, is reminiscent of an outdated conception of

childhood, in which the child is seen as an empty canvas to be painted into whatever composition the artist (typically, the parent) wants. Any shape that the artist will paint Olivia into, will be authentic. Yet children are not empty canvases. They are potential agents who can grow up to execute their own will. This is the problem: to the extent that we stir values that we deem right into children, we form their initial self while at the same time inevitably constraining the development of their own agency. Think about terrorist camps where they take children at a very young age and manipulate them to only see their community's own truth. If nothing occurs in between, these children will be executing the will of their commander, which means that they will not be the force of their own actions. Far from expressing their authentic self, they will have lost even their *potential* for authenticity. In other words, the paradox of educating for autonomy cannot be solved by claiming that initial selves are already authentic.

2.4 Cuypers's solution: moral responsibility and authenticity

Cuypers attempts to solve the paradox of educating for autonomy in two steps (2009). Firstly, Cuypers assumes that educating children to become moral agents is the primary aim of education. Accordingly, being a moral agent means to be an agent who can shoulder moral responsibility for her actions. Secondly, educating for becoming morally responsible agents will necessarily include educating for becoming authentic agents, because Cuypers (as I explain below) sees authenticity as a necessary condition for responsibility: there is no responsibility (for a certain action) without authenticity (relative to that action). So one cannot educate for moral responsibility unless one can also educate for authenticity. From this reasoning, it immediately follows that, if educating for moral responsibility is possible, then also educating for authenticity is possible. And since presumably educating for responsibility *is* possible, the conclusion follows that educating for authenticity must be possible, too. And if educating for authenticity is possible, then educating for autonomy is possible. Hence the paradox is solved, or perhaps better, avoided altogether, once we see authenticity as, so to speak, in the same package with moral responsibility.[10]

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[10] Of course a critic might immediately reply that another reasoning is possible here: if, as Cuypers thinks, responsibility includes authenticity, and educating for authenticity is impossible, then also educating for responsibility is impossible. The paradox of educating for autonomy, instead

In Cuypers's analysis (2009 p. 135), an agent S is not morally responsible for a particular action *A*, unless: (i) S knows that S is doing wrong (or right) in doing *A*; (ii) S has a responsibility-relevant control in performing *A*; and (iii) *A* stems from psychological elements that are components of S's authentic evaluative scheme. Clause (iii) makes authenticity a necessary condition for moral responsibility of an agent. For example, I am not morally responsible for hitting an innocent person, unless (i) I know that in this way I am doing something wrong, (ii) I had sufficient control in hitting her (in other words, I had sufficient control to decide not to hit her), and (iii) my action stemmed from psychological elements that are components of my authentic evaluative scheme. Since this is a logical conjunction, and each of the three conjuncts is necessary for moral responsibility, it follows that if hitting an innocent person was *not* a result of authentic psychological elements of myself, then I am not morally responsible for my action (though I can be legally responsible). And if I am morally responsible for my action, then it must be true that some authentic psychological element of myself was behind my action (say, I have an ingrained tendency to be aggressive).

Notice that Cuypers does not give us any analysis of authenticity as such. He instead relies on whatever specific analysis of authenticity works best. His point is simply that I cannot be morally responsible for my action unless the action was connected to a desire, habit etc., that is truly my own. This might seem disappointing, given the centrality that the concept of authenticity has in this thesis. Nonetheless, Cuypers's strategy to solve the paradox is clear, and can still be assessed as such. Moreover, even if Cuypers does not offer an analysis of authenticity as such, he offers what he calls a "criterion for authenticity", which relies on the connection with responsibility just noted:

> A child's initial evaluative scheme is responsibility-wise authentic if its doxastic and pro-attitudinal elements[11] (i) include all those, if any, that are required to ensure that the agent (into whom the child will develop) will be morally responsible for its future behavior; (ii) do not include any that will subvert the agent's being responsible for future behavior that issues

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of being avoided, in fact spreads out to become the paradox of educating for responsibility. But I will not consider this reply here.

[11] Doxastic elements are beliefs about matters of fact. Pro-attitudinal elements are desires, preferences, commitments, values held by the person.

from these elements; and (iii) have been acquired by means that, again, will not subvert the agent's being responsible for its future behavior (2009 pp.138-9).

These three conditions are, of course, already implicit in the idea that authenticity is necessary to responsibility: since authentic beliefs and desires are among the elements from which moral responsibility is built up, then educating the child for authenticity requires educating him in ways and with methods which promote and do not subvert his moral responsibility as an adult. In other words, if the child's authenticity is neglected in her education, her future moral responsibility is threatened too.[12] An example can be inspired by Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Emile (1763). One way to subvert Emile's future moral responsibility by making him inauthentic can be (perhaps paradoxically) by instilling in him a desire to always act in moral perfect ways, that is by educating him to be a moral saint (to use Susan Wolf's notion in (Wolf 1982)). Because such a desire will dominate his decisions—he will not ever stop to think whether anything else matters except doing the right thing—Emile's actions will be lacking in authenticity, and as a result Emile will not be morally responsible for performing those actions, no matter how worthy they might be. Emile has been shaped into a machine of moral perfection, but a machine cannot be responsible.

Cuypers's solution to the paradox therefore makes use of a presumed necessary connection between future moral responsibility and authenticity. It can be called a *forward-looking* solution to the paradox, since the possibility of promoting authenticity (and thus autonomy) through education of the child is staked on the role that authenticity must play in the child's *future*, in particular, as regards his future moral responsibility. In other words, authenticity is not a backward-looking feature, such that an element is authentic only if derives from a prior authentic element (as in those views that endorse the *ab initio* requirement), nor does Cuypers need to assume authenticity as a given feature, such that any agent by default initially possesses it (as in Noggle's view).

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[12] Note that authenticity alone does not guarantee moral responsibility, because the other two conditions must also be present: knowledge of right and wrong, and the control condition.

2.5 The problem with Cuypers's solution

Here I argue that Cuypers's account, being based on the connection between authenticity and future moral responsibility, must require a kind of education that will only aim at forming a specific kind of agent. This does not, perhaps, contradict the notion of an *ideal* autonomous person, but it contradicts the very project of educating for autonomy.

To be a morally responsible agent, on Cuypers's account, implies that the person has a "thick" form of rationality (2009 p. 135).[13] As Marina Oshana puts it, a thick form of rationality "embodies a normative component and is a matter of satisfying criteria that are objective in the sense that they are independent of what a person happens to want or to value" (Oshana 2002 p. 262). Cuypers's morally responsible agent must possess thick rationality, insofar as she must satisfy the first condition for responsibility: she must be able to tell whether what she did was wrong or right, otherwise she is not responsible for her action. In other words, she needs to possess moral knowledge at least relative to the action for which we ascribe her responsibility.

But if educating for authenticity (and thus for autonomy) is only understood as part of the project of educating a child to become a morally responsible agent, then educating for autonomy must pay its respects to ensuring or at least not undermining the first condition for moral responsibility (as well as to any other condition). That is, educating for autonomy must be overall coherent with imparting her objective moral knowledge (or in Oshana's terms, promoting her "thick rationality"). And herein lies a tension.

In order to be autonomous, one does not need thick rationality, that is, one does not need to possess objective moral knowledge. Or at least, to acquire moral knowledge would be a very controversial demand to make on autonomous people *as such*. In deciding how to live her life, a person might decide to live a fully autonomous life while remaining indifferent to moral principles. Gaining moral knowledge and living by it is one of the options for autonomous agents: but morality does not enjoy any special as such. An autonomous agent might as well devote

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[13] Cuypers does not use the word "thick rationality" to describe moral knowledge that he thinks needed for moral responsibility. I borrow the term "thick rationality" from Marina Oshana as it helps to explain Cuypers account clearer.

herself entirely to non-moral ends, like art, or accumulating money, or maximizing one's own pleasure.

Notice that the problem is not with inculcating moral knowledge per se. This can be in itself a worthy aim of education. The problem is that, on Cuypers's account, educating *for authenticity* (and hence for autonomy) must itself include inculcating moral knowledge—since authenticity is regarded only in relation to moral responsibility, and moral knowledge is a necessary condition for moral responsibility. In other words, for Cuypers, a form of education that disregards inculcating moral knowledge would be defective *as a form of education for autonomy*. But this is unacceptable, because when educating for autonomy, it seems one should not aim to inculcate any particular normative system, including morality. The result of "Cuypersian" education for autonomy would be an agent who reasons in a specific, constrained, way, rather than an agent free to explore various possibilities for her life. A rigid identity and a homogeneous lifestyle (essentially centered around regard for morality) would be encouraged.

In contrast, education for autonomy should be focused on guiding children to find a way of life that *they* can endorse. Such an education is often advocated as a safeguard against impositions of parents, community or government, that can inhibit children's life choices. For example, Harry Brighouse asks to consider some children born into a community which upholds a system of morality that might be quite restricting. Such communities, owing to the restrictive principles that they uphold, may not permit children to explore and pursue a life that corresponds to their fundamental needs and interests (Brighouse 2006). Because living in such conditions which constrains personal flourishing, Brighouse argues that an education for personal autonomy must instead create an opportunity to escape these constraints, and find a life in which one can flourish.

Therefore, Cuypers can solve (or avoid) the paradox of educating for autonomy only at an unacceptable cost. Education for authenticity (and hence for autonomy) is conceptualized as integral to education for moral responsibility. But this requires imparting objective moral knowledge—or at least does not allow indifference to moral knowledge. Such an education would lead the person into particular life choices, as opposed to leaving her free to find her own way of life. At the very least, it is not clear it is still worth calling this form of education "educating *for autonomy*."

2.6 Taking stock

In the previous chapter, we saw that Peters attempts to solve the problem he himself set up by pointing out that educational methods based on habituation can foster what he calls active habits. But this, at best, *only solves one half* of the paradox: active habits may promote competency conditions for autonomy, but not authenticity conditions. How can the habits themselves be authentic? In this chapter, we saw that Noggle suggests that authenticity needs no special *ab initio* requirement. Authenticity can be the result of internally motivated changes in one's attitudes, and in any case the very initial core attitudes must be declared to be authentic. But *Noggle's account is too loose*: by granting authenticity to any initial set of core attitudes, it ends up according authenticity to agents and choices that are not, in fact, authentic. Finally, Cuypers makes a connection between authenticity (and thus autonomy) and the moral responsibility of the adult-to-be. While it might seem that this provides an easy solution to the paradox, we saw that *Cuypers's account is too strict*: by tying educating for autonomy to educating for moral responsibility, the result is an education that necessarily privileges moral development (in particular, moral knowledge), and does not leave sufficient room for free development of the individual, which is what intuitively educating for autonomy should do.

In the next chapter, similar to Cuypers I will consider authenticity in a forward-looking manner. However, instead of viewing authenticity relative to future moral responsibility, I will suggest that education should view authenticity relative to the child's right to an open future.

Chapter 3
An improved forward-looking account

3.1 Introduction

We now know what a good solution to the paradox of educating for autonomy must look like: 1) it must show how authentic attitudes (beliefs, desires, values, habits etc.) can be the result of education—competency is not enough; 2) it must not be too loose to consider inauthentic attitudes that restrict the psychological choices of the person as authentic; 3) it must not be too strict to encourage a homogeneous character, that goes against the educating for autonomy.

In this chapter I will argue that, instead of considering authenticity relative to the future moral responsibility, as Cuypers did, we should consider authenticity relative to the children's right to an open future. This way, education will satisfy all the conditions set above, and provide a solution to the paradox.

3.2 An improved forward-looking account of educating for autonomy

The intuitive thought behind my solution is that education can promote autonomy only if education can respect, and promote, the child's right to an open future.

The argument for the child's right to an open future has originally been developed by Joel Feinberg (Feinberg 1992). According to Feinberg, a common category of rights that both applies to adults and children, that is, "*A-C* rights", are rights not to be mistreated. Besides the common category, he distinguishes among rights that only belong to adults ("*A* rights"), such as legal rights and right to act autonomously; and another type of rights that are generally characteristic of children ("*C* rights"), but can also be possessed by adults in unusual circumstances. C rights have two subclasses. The first subclass of "*C* rights" is based on a child's dependence upon adults to sustain basic and instrumental goods of life. The second subclass of "*C* rights" are rights that look like adult autonomy rights, which Feinberg calls "rights-in-trust". He writes about child's "rights-in-trust" as follows:

> When sophisticated autonomy rights are attributed to children who are clearly not yet capable of exercising them, their names refer to rights that are to be saved for the child until he is an adult, but which can be violated 'in advance', so to speak, before the child is even in a position to exercise them. The violating conduct guarantees *now* that when the child is an autonomous

adult, certain key options will already be closed to him. His right while he is still a child is to have these future options kept open until he is a fully formed, self-determining adult capable of deciding among them (Feinberg 1992 pp. 76–7).

"Rights-in-trust", which Feinberg sums up as a single "right to an open future", are rights that protect the key future options of the child (Feinberg 1992 p. 77). This right encompasses a broad spectrum of the child's life in a forward-looking manner, and puts some limits on "*A* rights", especially when these concern the sphere of education. For example, one could argue that, in liberal states, parents' autonomy rights ("*A* rights") allow them to influence their children's beliefs and attitudes with activities like going to church on Sundays, or not consuming meat for moral reasons (Brighouse & Swift 2006; Narveson 2002). Or, in schools, educators are normally free to praise and promote certain good character traits, influencing children to internalise such values. From "the child's right to an open future" point of view, such adults' activities of shaping children's values and attitudes are permissible, but only as long as they do not preclude the child's future autonomy, i.e. do not undermine the child's right to an open future.

It is not easy to find out whether a child's right to an open future is violated in particular cases. But we can see that the examples of oppressed Olivia and Emile from chapter 2 are cases of violations of this right. At least partly as a result of her education, Olivia has no other future options but to live a submissive life. At least partly as a result of his education (which formed him to become a moral saint), some key options for Emile have been closed off, in particular, the option to spare some space for non-moral projects. These are therefore cases where inauthenticity (and consequently lack of autonomy) is the result of an education which violated the child's right to an open future.

My proposal then is to make the following argument:

1) the question whether education can promote authenticity is tied together with the question whether education can promote, or at least respect, a child's right to an open future: if the latter right is ensured, then, as educators, we need not worry about authenticity as a separate matter;

2) certain types of education (remember, both informal and formal) *can* ensure the child's right to an open future;

3) therefore, certain types of education can promote authenticity.

If the argument is correct, the paradox of educating for autonomy is overcomed, because now we can see how authenticity conditions for autonomy can be secured by education.

It can be seen how my proposal is similar to Cuypers's, not only because it invites thinking of authenticity in forward-looking terms—the question is whether the child will have an open future—but also because it avoids relying on a specific analysis of authenticity. Authenticity is put into relation with the idea of an open future, but I am not proposing a theory of authenticity. All I am saying is that, whatever authenticity is, a person with an open future will also be a person whose choices can be authentic. By granting a person with an open future, you also grant her the possibility (at least) to be authentic. I stress that this is an advantage, not a disadvantage, of my proposal: it makes it a simpler, and thus stronger proposal, because it avoids commitment to any controversial ideas about authenticity.

I will now briefly defend premise 1 and premise 2 of my argument. Premise 1 can be defended by looking again at the shortcoming in Cuypers's solution based on future moral responsibility. The problem with Cuypers's solution was that, when the focus of educating for authenticity has to include imparting moral knowledge on the child, the danger is that we form only a particular kind of agent (an agent who lives by moral rules), and thus undermine her freedom to explore different paths, which should be at the centre of the project of promoting autonomy. But when we focus instead on securing the child's right to an open future, this danger is avoided, and the authenticity is preserved. By definition, keeping as many options as possible open for the adult she will become is exactly what this right demands. And keeping open as many options as possible will put the agent *in a position* to make authentic choices. As educators guided by the child's right to an open future, we will keep an eye on reducing possible sources of inauthenticity, most importantly by paying close attention to how our own practices as parents or teachers may lead the child to inauthentic choices later in life.

Of course, securing the right to an open future does not *guarantee* that the child *will make*, as an adult, authentic choices. Whether this is so will depend on many other variables that are not under the control of educators. But a solution to the paradox only requires that authenticity is *not undermined* by education—recall that the paradox was that the very process of education seemed to be incompatible with the ideal of authenticity.

Premise 2 says that certain types of education (whether informal or formal) *can* ensure the child's right to an open future. This premise is relatively easy to defend. Suppose one denies it: it is not true that certain types of education can ensure the child's right to an open future. In other words, suppose that no type of education could ensure a right to an open future. Now, this would not necessarily mean the collapse of such a right. In principle there are other agencies or institutions, *different from educational ones*, that could promote such a right. Health institutions for example have a role to play here: granting a child the best health conditions is part of ensuring that key options in her future are not closed off. However, the idea that neither informal nor formal educational institutions are able to even contribute something towards the right to an open future of the child seems very hard to believe. As illustrated before, educators and care-takers intuitively seem to be the main actors called upon to make sure that this right is honoured. Granting the existence of a child's right to an open future, while denying that educators can do anything to promote that right, would be as odd as granting that there is a right to *vote*, while denying that any *political system* whatsoever is able to enact that right.

What is more, if premise 2 were false, this would mean that children spend the near entirety of their childhood in the company of, and under the guidance of, people (parents, family, teachers) who can do nothing to positively contribute towards a central right that they have. This seems very counterintuitive. In other words, if premise 2 were false—but it was still true that children have a right to an open future—one would have to completely reorganize children's lives, so that they spend much more time not with educators (parents or teachers), but with people who *can* contribute towards providing them with an open future. This seems a very unrealistic scenario.

Of course, establishing premise 2 does not yet tell us just *which educators* and *which forms of education* are the best to promote a child's right to an open future. Perhaps one good candidate, at least as regards formal education, is Meira Levinson's proposal of "detached schools" (Levinson 1999). Detached schools follow roughly a liberal paradigm, whereby schools have the explicit role of limiting the influence of parents and society on children, and instead favour the autonomy of the child. But other types of school might also work well. It is not the aim of this work to investigate this question, which I leave for future reflection.

Having defended premise 1 and 2, the argument presented above then seems to be correct. One way to criticize it would be to reject altogether Feinberg's idea of children's right to an open future, or its importance. One could argue, for example, that children are in some sense their parents' projects, and while children do have some special rights against their parents (to be taken care of, to be not hurt etc.), a right to an open future would limit too much parents' prerogatives (Narveson 2002). But it would take another work of this length to defend Feinberg's idea from such criticism. Here I can do no more than rely on the intuitive appeal of the right to an open future, in order to use it for solving the paradox of educating for autonomy.

3.3 Comparison with Peters, Noggle, Cuypers

In section 3.2, I argued that by respecting and preserving the child's right to an open future education can promote children's authenticity. In this section, I will illustrate how my proposal overcomes the shortcomings of the solutions proposed by Peters, Noggle and Cuypers. The discussions in chapter 1 and 2 revealed that any solution to the paradox 1) should be able to explain how education can result in preserving the authenticity of child's psychological elements (beliefs, desires, values etc.) 2) It must not be too loose to define inauthentic attitudes that hinder future choices of children—thus autonomy—as authentic. 3) It must not be too strict to encourage only one type of life as an option for an autonomous person. I will take these as guidelines to evaluate and showcase how my solution fulfils these criteria.

Peters's resolution of the paradox consisted in distinguishing between *passive* and *active* habits. According to Peters, active habits are actions that have a fair degree of open-enedness, which makes them adaptable to a given situation. Roughly put, when an agent acts on active habits, she is rationally aware of her actions. This also means that when she acts on a rule she intelligently understands the complexity of the rule and practices the "language" of the concept. Which in turn makes this rule an authentic element of her evaluative scheme (section 1.4). In Peters's view, development of active habits allows education to escape the paradox.

Let's look back at Mill's example: as a child he acquired the habit of rational reflection. In Peter's view, Mill's education has preserved the authenticity of his evaluative scheme, simply because he is able to give reasons for his habits. However, as I have argued in 1.4, even though Mill has acquired competency, we still do not know why active habits are more authentic than passive habits, given that they both

are a result of inculcation. We still do not know how education, besides promoting the habit of rational reflection (competency conditions), can preserve authenticity of children's evaluative scheme. Peters's solution while revealing that the paradox of educating for autonomy is closely tied to the authenticity condition of autonomy, fails the first requirement of solving the paradox: the paradox cannot be solved unless we are able to explain how the education process promotes, or at least does not undermine, authenticity of evaluative schemes.

In section 2.2 I agreed with Noggle that the paradox cannot be solved as long as we hold up to *ab initio* requirement of authenticity: that is, an inauthentic element (beliefs, desires etc.,) of the self cannot pass authenticity to another element. If this requirement is true, then education will always try to build authenticity on existing inauthentic elements of evaluative schemes. However, because *ab initio* requirement is a conceptual impossibility, we have a good reason to reject it.

Noggle proposed that because there cannot be a self-creating self, and when a person acquires an initial self there is no previous self on top of which this initial self can arise then the initial self should be granted authenticity. What is more, because this initial self is the only self, then even if the initial self is a result of indoctrinative child rearing techniques, it should still be declared as authentic (section 2.2). However, as Olivia's example demonstrates, harsh paternalism can leave a child with non-sheddable impulses that limit the psychologically genuine options; Olivia did not have any other choice but to satisfy her desire for submissiveness. This means that the paradox cannot be solved by conceiving authenticity in such a loose sense, and thus Noggle's suggestion fails to fulfil second criterion for solving the paradox.

Olivia's case shows that education during childhood (formal or informal) is directly linked to the variety of possible choices that a child will have in the future. Such a link shows that a solution to the paradox of educating for autonomy lies in thinking about authenticity in a forward-looking manner. The solution proposed by Cuypers implements the notion of forward-looking authenticity, acknowledging that even if there is no authentic self per se, different child rearing techniques can either enhance (preserve) or limit the possibility of a child to be authentic in the future. Nevertheless, Cuypers's account falls short of solving the paradox as it views authenticity of the elements of psychology relative to the future moral responsibility:

if a belief or desire does promote the future responsibility of the adult into whom the child will grow up, it is authentic.

Cuypers defends such a position because to be a morally responsible agent one needs to have epistemic competency and control over one's action which should stem from authentic elements of psychology (section 2.4). Hence, by preserving future moral responsibility, education is supposed to preserve the authenticity of a child. However, if having knowledge about an action's moral significance is necessary for moral responsibility, according to the forward-looking account proposed by Cuypers, education should inculcate in children objective knowledge of what makes an action wrong/right. As I have argued in section 2.5, living one's life as a morally responsible agent is one option for autonomous agents. However, by inculcating specific normative rules, education will shape children into a person with particular homogeneous character traits, which goes against the diversity needed of educating for autonomy. For this reason, Cuypers's account, while satisfying the first and second criteria for the solution of the paradox, fails to fulfil the third criterion by being too strict.

In comparison to these three solutions, my suggestion to view authenticity relative to the child's right to an open future, an improved forward-looking account, is able to satisfy all three conditions needed for solving the paradox of educating for autonomy. While acknowledging that self-creating self is impossible and that authentic self can raise gradually, it is not too loose to consider inauthentic attitudes of initial self that inhibit future authentic choices as authenticity-preserving. For example, we saw that in the cases of Olivia and Edgar their future psychological options have been shaped and limited in such a way that they are not able to live any other life. If Olivia's and Edgar's education has preserved their future choices, they would have had a chance to act otherwise. For this reason, an improved forward-looking account meets the second requirement.

Improved forward-looking account also is not as strict as one proposed by Cuypers. Similar to Cuypers's solution, it recognises that certain values or habits while being worthy aims, like in the example of Emile, can hinder future autonomy of children. The major shortcoming of Cuypers's account, as it was mentioned above, is that it promotes a rigid identity and a homogeneous character (mainly moral one), which is too strict and counterintuitive from educating for autonomy point of view. In contrast, authenticity when viewed in relation to a child's right to an open future

does not impose a particular lifestyle as an only option. The advantage of a forward-looking account is that it aims at facilitating children with value, belief or habits that will promote/preserve their future choices, granting children the possibility of being authentic. As a result, an improved forward-looking account satisfies the third condition to solve the paradox.

Finally, I show in section 3.2 that some education (formal or informal) can preserve the child's right to an open future. This in turn, will preserve the child's chances for authentic, therefore, an autonomous, life. This being the case, it can be concluded that a) education does not always inhibit the authenticity of a child's elements of psychology, and b) because it can promote the child's right to an open future it can also promote the child's authenticity. By satisfying all three criteria, an improved forward-looking account, i.e. the solution I have proposed in this chapter, solves the paradox of educating for autonomy.

3.4 One objection and my reply

One objection to my proposal might be that it sets too strict limits to the ways a child can be educated or even parented. It can be claimed that educators and parents will be lost in trying to justify why their techniques do not harm the future authenticity, and therefore autonomy, of children.

However, this should not be a problem. My account can acknowledge that children need external influences to acquire beliefs, desire, values in order to develop into something worth calling a self. On my account, external influence does not per se undermine authenticity, because external influences do not necessarily undermine an "open future". In fact, *without* (the right type of) external influences a child is very likely to have many key options closed off. At the same time, my account does require attention to the methods one uses in education. In particular, an education which has the effect of instilling preferences that are irresistible ("non-sheddable", as defined before), or beliefs and habits that are unchangeable, will violate the right to an open future, because it will not promote authenticity. What this means in practice is that a parent or a teacher would be free to share their reasons why their choice of life, culture, or religion is in their opinion a good one. What these adults will have to avoid is forcing the child to live the same way, to internalise the same traditions, or to follow the same religious services, as they themselves do. This way, the bond between educators and the child will be intact,

and the child will grow up in an environment that supports autonomy and preserves her future authenticity. However, like I said above, I leave the discussion of concrete educational methods and practices for another occasion.

Conclusion

In this thesis, I presented the paradox of educating for autonomy, and argued that it can be solved by conceiving authenticity in a forward-looking manner. That is, by adopting an educational system that is able to preserve/promote the child's right to an open future, the children's authenticity will be preserved, and thus, in turn, their autonomy.

In the first chapter, I introduced the concept of autonomy and discussed how it relates to the paradox of educating for autonomy. My interpretation of the paradox was inspired by Richard Peters's discussion of the paradox of moral education, the solution of which revealed–while satisfying one of the two conditions, the competency–the paradox prevails due to the authenticity conditions of autonomy; and that it can only be solved if education can preserve/promote authenticity of the child's evaluative scheme.

In the second chapter, turning to Robert Noggle's and Stefaan Cuypers's solutions of the paradox, I argued firstly that Noggle's proposal is too loose because it views any type of initial self as authentic. Then, I considered Cuypers's suggestion that child's evaluative scheme is authentic as long as the attitudes inculcated during the childhood are able to preserve/promote the moral responsibility of the child as an adult. As moral responsibility has authenticity and control requirements, Cuypers argued that the paradox of educating for autonomy will be also solved. But this solution is too strict since it risks promoting moral agency as the only option for autonomous life.

In the third chapter I argued that authenticity considered relative to the child's right to an open future is able to satisfy all of the three requirements mentioned in section 3.3 and thus, solve the paradox of educating for autonomy. I claimed that an education that is able to preserve and promote an open future with as many options as possible for the child to choose from and design her own life with, will be able to preserve her authenticity. Such an education, by preserving authenticity, can also promote autonomy. Thus, the paradox of educating for autonomy is solved.

In this thesis, I did not consider the implications of my solution for pedagogical studies and curriculum design. I also did not touch on which conception of autonomy should guide the process of education. Even though I have avoided

basing my solution on any particular theory of authenticity, autonomy or type of education, whatever the outcome of these relevant discussions be, it will not affect the solution that I have posited in this thesis.

By showcasing that education can preserve the future freedom and authenticity of children, my thesis justifies discussions of autonomy that consider autonomy an important aim of education. Also, because it shows how external influences (like family values) are necessary for the development of an identity, and what type of external influences (limiting a child's future options) can hinder future autonomy, my thesis also can contribute to solving the conflict between parental rights to act autonomously and the child's future autonomy.

Abstract

This thesis explores the paradox of educating for autonomy. I state the underlying problem which is in an apparent incompatibility between education–a process of inculcation that shapes children's values, beliefs, desires, etc., while bypassing their rationality–and the desired end of guiding children to become autonomous persons. I provide an outline of the possible solutions proposed by Richard Peters, Robert Noggle, and Stefaan Cuypers, and point out their deficiencies. Ultimately, I suggest a forward-looking solution, which considers the authenticity of children's attitudes (values, beliefs etc.,) in relation to the child's right to an open future.

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