
ABUSE OF SOCRATES IN TODAY'S CLASSROOM: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Socrates, the Greek scholar, is viewed to act as an illustration of a splendid instructor in a scope of settings, from primary school discussions to school theory classes to graduate school. I check out a couple of contemporary instances of Socratic instructing and point out disparities. I examine contemporary Socratic teachers, such as Mortimer, with a critical eye. Adler and I discuss how Vivian Gussin Paley, a well-known primary school teacher, enacts the Socratic tradition in a unique manner. I trust that the most well-known abuse, or misuse, of the Socratic heritage happens when his educating is seen similarly as an instructive strategy without setting and incongruity. The title of my paper is a shrewd parody of Friedrich Nietzsche's exemplary article, History's Use and Abuse. Nietzsche centered his look to his own general public in that book, decrying what he referred to its as "dangerous chronicled fever." He accepted that basically considering the past, especially by narcissistic scholastics, was not a necessary utilization of verifiable practice. Information on the past should help both the present and the future, rather than turning into a theoretical thing without the setting that gave it life.

KEYWORDS: Abuse, Classroom, Context, Socrates, Teachers.

1. INTRODUCTION

Today, a historical person like this serves as a significant model and source of inspiration for a lot of contemporary teaching. Socrates, the Greek philosopher, is regarded as an example of a superb teacher in everything from philosophy classes to law school. Many precollegiate programmes are seeking to incorporate "Socratic" speech. Beyond the rigorous investigation of the academic classicist or philosopher, it appears that this piece of history, brought to life for us by Plato, Xenophon, and Aristophanes, is also alive in teaching and learning. This variety in how Socrates' legacy is used in contemporary teaching is an important heritage. Many of the ways in which this heritage has been put to good use are commendable. However, different people have different ideas on what a "Socratic approach" is. There is debate, for example, regarding whether Socrates provided a teaching technique in the modern sense. I propose to look at a variety of Socratic pedagogical applications in various settings in order to identify inconsistencies, especially in relation to the Platonic Socrates. I build on past studies on the Socratic legacy in education and offer new perspectives on present Socratic practitioners.

I've come to the conclusion that the word "Socratic" is often used to describe specific kinds of instruction. When Socratic teaching is considered to cover everything from the dialectical investigation of philosophical problems of impartiality, good, and the like to a teacher's use of questions regardless of subject matter, a greater grasp of the Socratic legacy's uses for teaching is required. (1).

1.1 Background: Some Recent Socrates Commentators:

If we want to properly comprehend and critically evaluate Socrates' legacy, we must consider many contemporary critical perspectives. Furthermore, as I will show at the conclusion of this article, such critique is a critical component in determining the applications of Socrates in modern education. Recent writers on both the historical and Platonic Socrates, such as Bruce Kimball, I. F. Stone, and Friedrich Nietzsche, have critiqued Socrates and his legacy. Socrates is seen as an opponent of nascent Greek democracy by Stone, Nietzsche is seen as a degenerate butcher of Greece's heroic heritage by Nietzsche, and Kimball bemoans the liberal education's emphasis on Socratic reason over Ciceronian oratory by Kimball. Nietzsche started his career with a full-throated assault on Socrates, while having at least two opposing viewpoints on the Greek. He groans the development of the Socratic attitude of thorough investigation, which put a stop to the Apollinian-Dionysian combination that produced early Greek catastrophe, in *The Birth of Tragedy*. Socrates, according to Nietzsche, was incapable of understanding previous tragedians like as Aeschylus, and only went to Euripides' plays (whom Nietzsche mockingly refers to as the "first rational tragedian"). For Nietzsche, Socrates' emphasis on meticulous study marked not just the end of Greek culture's vibrancy, but also the starting of an era of men with reduced spirits who relied on logical analysis rather than creative myth. The late journalist I. F. Stone makes an even more vehement criticism, albeit from a different perspective. According to Stone, Socrates was an opponent of democracy, feeling that the herd of men required strict management. Stone is unable to regard Socrates as a teacher or even an Athens citizen because of his political worldview, which includes the belief that knowledge is ultimate and unattainable, and that virtue and wisdom cannot be taught. Because Stone tried to defend Athenian democracy against Socrates, his book created a sensation in the trade press. Bruce Kimball's highly debated book, *Orators and Philosophers*, offers a more balanced assessment of Socrates' impact (1986). Kimball reminds out that in modern liberal education, Socrates' philosophical legacy has triumphed over Cicero's oratorical tradition. Kimball perceives a conflict between, on the one hand, the quest of knowledge and, on the other hand, the acknowledgment and preservation of historical traditions within learning communities(2).

Kimball's talk is very instructive. It encourages us to find ways to maintain the Socratic spirit alive in the face of corrosive or parasitic myth and culture, while yet recognizing and fostering tradition and custom as Ciceronian oratorical thinking recommends. As Nietzsche stated in *The Use and Abuse of History*, this was his personal task. We'll keep this idea from Kimball and Nietzsche in mind when we look at modern Socratic instruction. Despite the fact that those notions were not explicitly defined in terms of educational practice, they remain critical to understanding Socratic teaching today. A fierce public dispute between Richard Paul and Louis Goldman over the role of Socratic inquiry in the classroom exemplifies this significance. "A. "A good education of the young must begin with a strong grounding in the nature and values of our culture," Goldman believes: "A decent education of the young must begin with a deep grounding in the nature and values of our culture." He points out that Plato only supported dialectics after a lengthy preparation period. In the wrong hands, Socratic inquiry may become dynamite, and we can only imitate his method. Goldman advises that we focus on conventional (Ciceronian, to use Kimball's word) literacy for the youth and avoid introducing dialectics too early(3).

Goldman is disagreed with by Richard Paul, arguably the most popular proponent of critical thinking in classrooms. He thinks that we must cultivate the habit of critical thinking with a sense of cultural appreciation. He accepts the challenge given forth by Kimball and others. To utilize Kimball's words, Paul accepts that a mix of Socratic request and Ciceronian conservatism ought to be accentuated. Paul proceeds to make a point that is shared by scholars inspired by theory for kids. Young people have an easy time thinking philosophically. To improve cultural understanding and other educational goals, a loving teacher should harness contagious interest displayed in

youthful surprise and the persistent inquiry that comes with such amazement(4).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

F. J. Ambrosio in his study discusses about the response to Goldman's criticism of the Socratic method, the author redefines the "Socratic spirit" as logical discourse focused on important issues in a supportive and cooperative environment. This method, as shown in Lipman's "Philosophy for Children," feeds children's reflective spirit and builds their confidence(5).

L. Goldman, focuses on "Socratic teaching," with an emphasis on the asserted desirability of the goals that typically inspire it, the efficacy of the approach meant to assist the Socratic teacher in reaching these goals, and the strategy's ethical standing. The Socratic teaching account stresses the teacher's attempt to take the student from a complacently held but not yet thoroughly researched position to a state of humility and perplexity, with the hopes of assisting the learner in growing. This will be accomplished by a process of cross-examination, in which the student will be notified of the inconsistencies in his or her belief system(6).

D. Gray in their study discloses about several articles addressing the basic characteristics of the Socratic Method in terms of developing students' critical thinking abilities. This research focuses on the significance of integrating Socratic inquiry into Social Studies instruction. This paper's main sources were collected from foreign publications. According to research, when instructors employ Socratic questioning, students analyze and probe their own views by making them explicit, enabling them to grow and assess their thinking while expressing their opinions openly. This, in turn, is the primary goal of the Socratic Method: a pupil with a well-developed critical mind(7).

3. DISCUSSION

3.1 A Reexamination of Socrates as a Teacher:

Famous educational philosophers have expanded these insights from Nietzsche to modern issues in the realm of critical thinking. Sophie Haroutunian-Gordon and her colleagues have undertaken perhaps the most persistent effort to deal with Socrates' legacy for education.

Haroutunian-Gordon questions the idea of a "Socratic method" by closely examining many of the Socratic dialogues, especially the Gorgias, Meno, Philebus, Phaedo, and Protagoras. She, for example, points out Socratic contradictions that put the word into doubt. She further claims that Socrates does not follow a defined formal technique since he is in a "ill-structured teaching environment," as educational experts today term it. Following a preset dialectical pattern will not suffice in cases when a conversation has gone "off track." In these circumstances, the questions you ask are determined by the substance of the discussion and the subtlety and shadings of meaning that emerge. Many post-Wittgensteinian logicians, like Grice and Gadamer, have investigated this peculiarity that has for some time been perceived to inventive scholars. Talented educators have likewise figured out how to arrange right out of badly organized circumstances to impact learning for an assortment of understudies for our points. Haroutunian-Gordon also tries to "define educational objectives" by offering four ideas, all of which fail to demonstrate the insufficiency of a formal definition of Socrates' teaching:

1. Lead interlocutors to aporia;
2. Seek truth on basic issues;
3. Educate appropriate intellectual habits;
4. Change interlocutors' moral principles.

In spite of the fact that Socrates might energize the philosophical life through these reasons, as per Haroutunian-Gordon, he doesn't expect others to follow this way, nor are these declared objectives

important to the "assignment of understanding the reason why he submitted the demonstration in the discoursed."Gordon's Haroutunian arguments are crucial because they decisively defeat a simple educational replication of Plato's Socrates(8).

3.2 In the Meno, Socratic Pedagogy:

It's difficult to understand how Socrates has become such a widespread educational paradigm, given the Socratic legacy provided by Haroutunian-Gordon and her colleagues, as well as the perspectives expressed by subsequent critics. He frequently claims that he is not a teacher, and then, like towards the conclusion of the Gorgias, appears practically determined to prove that assertion via irony, contradictory behaviour, and the odd long-winded speech. Yet, when it comes to Socratic instruction, we may go to Plato's conversation, which has been referenced by many. Meno A striking picture of what many think Socratic instruction is is an elderly man drawing geometric patterns in the sand for a little slave child. However, we must exercise caution when dealing with this ostensibly clear example of education. Though Socrates used persuading and vivid imagery to extract the difference between knowledge and genuine opinion, his alleged pulling out of the slave boy's recollected geometric insight is troubling as teaching. Socrates starts his lecture by speaking into the slave boy's mouth (82B f.). Is this an effective pedagogical display? Leaving aside the obvious (at least to my eyes) power and control issues of an older Greek citizen instructing a slave child, this type of teaching has always made me uneasy. Though it is a compelling demonstration of inference, as R. E. Allen (1959) pointed out, there is no indication that instruction has taken place. The slave boy's ability to use his knowledge is not explicitly stated in the conversation. He appears to be a source of advice for Socrates, who appears to be nothing but a megaphone for ideas of memory (anamnesis) and inherent knowledge. It is feasible to interpret the Meno in a more liberal way that ignores the power differential. Socrates is really instructing the slave boy when he asks him leading questions, which are veiled replies to the inquiries the kid should be asking. These questions are asked in a "stepwise" manner in an educational discourse in which the instructor and slave boy are both aware of the ultimate result(9).

3.3The Socratic Spirit:

Capturing and Losing It though some may find the Meno problematic in terms of pedagogy, it has served as a source of inspiration for instructors in the classroom. The popular passage (80A-B), in which Meno criticizes Socrates for delivering difficult questions like an electric ray (or torpedo), has given Donald Thomas (1985) with a method of teaching that encourages pupils to venture out on their own and delve under the surface. In a short and fascinating article, Thomas recalls an occasion in his first secondary school teaching career where he gave his students a dramatic production of a lecture by Puritan preacher Jonathan Edwards. He intended to shock his pupils into a state of bewilderment that would make them uncomfortable, similar to how Socrates made Meno disturbed with his endless inquiries. In a short and fascinating article, Thomas recalls an occasion in his early secondary school teaching career when he gave his students a dramatic production of a lecture by Puritan preacher Jonathan Edwards.

Thomas employs the "torpedo's touch" in his pedagogical arsenal many years after the event. He, like Socrates, frequently starts with niceties and small chat, waiting for the perfect time to ask his pupils the stark and difficult questions that would elicit astonishment and a recognition of ignorance. However, Thomas' article is too short to provide instances of his issues and to reproduce a variety of educational situations. Beyond being confusing and intellectually numbing, we'd want to know how his queries were similar to those of Socrates. Others try to create Socratic teaching methods that are devoid of such energy, whereas Thomas draws inspiration from Socrates in his classroom practice. Some of the more egregious "abuses" associated with adopting Socrates as a pedagogic model arise when superficial components of Platonic Socrates are used

indiscriminately as pedagogic practises. Several of these "misconceptions" are highlighted by Fishman (1985).

Socratic teaching, according to Kay and Young (1986), entails asking more questions in the classroom and encouraging students to think independently and autonomously. They make a comparison between Socratic inquiry and Anthony Manzo's "ReQuest" teaching method. Kay and Young make no mention of the substance or purpose of the questions; evidently, it is enough for them to call a teacher Socratic if he or she is a full-time questioner(10).

3.4 Beyond Inspiration: Socratic Teaching in the Present:

In the following sections, I look at a few instances of Socratic teaching methods that go beyond just taking inspiration from the dialogues or failing to do so. Thomas' method has a flaw in that he does not provide a pedagogical technique with examples in his short article. However, if we don't understand the Socratic objective, we risk inflating and twisting formal components of Socratic practice in our teaching, as Kay and Young did (1986). We'll look at the theories of Vivian Gussin Paley and another Chicago-based Socratic practitioner, Mortimer Adler, as we widen our understanding of Socratic education. Vivian Paley, a recently departed kindergarten teacher, recounts a different kind of numbness from Thomas's "torpedo's touch." She discusses her lack of excitement and enjoyment in her first few years as a teacher (1986). She noticed a colleague using the "old Socratic technique" (p. 123) that she had used as a debate leader for the Great Books.

Then, at that point, she figured out how entranced she was by the internal operations of her understudies' brains. She presently underscores the worth of this interaction over some other outcome or item in her educating (1990). She contends that kids are charmed by process and captivated by significance creation and language play, rather than by arrangements. The sad fact that she didn't know the responses to the questions her young students were asking sparked new interest and research into her own teaching. Paley was obliged to keep asking appropriate questions depending on how the kid was thinking about a subject, rather than her own assumptions. "A paper chain of magical imaginings combined with some real facts" became her classroom theater, in which her pupils performed creative tales of their own creation. Paley had plenty of chances to practice her Socratic questioning with this paper chain(11).

Paley the teacher, on the other hand, goes above and beyond Socratic inquiry in the classroom. With a "particular instrument she has applied for years, the tape recorder, she turns the inquiry reflexively on herself and her own thoughts. Paley records ninety minutes of her pupils' tales and conversation every day. With its "unrelenting faithfulness", the tape recorder taught her to pay close attention to what the kids said. Paley has the chance to examine everything that happened in the classroom while transcribing the recorded conversation, which appears in significant sections in her novels. In preparation for her work, she used an "internalized Socratic technique", asking herself enquiries such as "why did I overlook that question?" and "is it something I might have brought up with him?". This action, according to Paley, is active authority of the "intellectual game of teaching".

Engaging with toddlers when they enjoy with blocks involves both thinking and intellectual development. Her demanding lecture, recording, and transcription schedule exemplifies Socrates' concept of the importance of the studied life. This tricky feature of reflective inquiry focused at self-awareness is absent from the so-called Socratic training offered by professionals like Kay and Young.

Paley's techniques have gotten him a lot of attention and praise. Mortimer Adler and his followers, on the other hand, advocate for a more widely accepted form of Socratic education. Adler's Paideia Proposal is one of the most important documents in the present education reform movement. In this short book, he offers three interconnected learning strategies that should be

followed by all students, regardless of age or aptitude: 1) knowledge acquisition (lectures, memorization); 2) intellectual skill development (coaching); and 3) comprehension extension (Socratic debate of ideas and texts)(12).

However, the third form of learning, the Socratic seminar, has received the vast majority of attention in the execution of the Paideia Proposal. Let us now shift our attention to Adler's Socratic pedagogy. Seminar pedagogy is described in deceptively simple terms by Adler: "A conversation in which students both ask and answer questions" is defined as a "discussion in which students both ask and answer questions". Patricia Weiss, one of his closest colleagues, describes a seminar as "an educationally focused debate in which ideas, problems, or concepts are explored... In seminars, the primary teaching technique is asking and analyzing answers. This method of instruction is known as Socratic teaching, after Socrates, who utilized questions to educate the young of Athens around 400 BC". Weiss then goes on to describe Adler's three seminar leader tasks: "1) ask a series of questions, 2) examine the answers by attempting to draw out the reasons for them, or their implications, and 3) engage the participants in a two-way conversation with one another when views appear to be in conflict". I recognize Socrates in 1 and 2, but I don't remember seeing him urge his interlocutors to argue each other elsewhere in the dialogues.

With a few exceptions (Callicles strikes to mind), these interlocutors are much more to answer to Socrates' contemptuous questioning with monosyllabic responses, leading some readers to question how dialogic these stories were deliberated to be. On another hand, despite the fact that this Adlerian method is not loyal to Platonic Socrates, may it be deemed a worthy progression of Socratic practice? After all, it appears strange that these interactants, many of whom are comically laconic, hardly quarrel with one another (unless you consider Plato's own objective for his fictitious characters) (the Gorgias being an exception). Unfortunately, based on the data collected of Adler and a few of his colleagues' seminars, this third job of a seminar leader is as unusual now as it was in ancient Athens(3).

Let's look at how Weiss uses Socratic teaching in more detail. In the guidebook that surrounds the videotapes of Adler delivering high school students seminars, Weiss provides a descriptive overview about how to organize a seminar. She suggests that teachers first establish a climate in which pupils are comfortable asking questions. This may include setting aside any experience that students may offer to the text in order to facilitate a broad discussion among (near) equals. To get pupils talking in her courses, Weiss uses a number of non-aggressive interrogation methods.

After the contention has started, Weiss might inquire as to whether Socrates is an instructor, his contemplations on the charges collected against him in the Apology, or on the other hand assuming he is blameworthy or honest. Weiss, like Haroutunian-Gordon, recognizes the "ill-structured teaching environment" by emphasizing the necessity of instructors being prepared to offer unscripted follow-up questions. All of these activities are admirable, but they are based on a key assumption articulated by Dennis Gray, another Paideia supporter. Despite Gray's claim that Socrates had no curriculum, he maintains that the goal of Socratic education is to focus on texts all of the time, with even the first inquiry based on a comprehensive review of the book at hand. The adjustments we've made on behalf of Socrates are unmistakable. Of course, at a seminar table, Socrates did not use a conventional reading. Furthermore, Gray's statement reveals a related premise of the Paideia approach, namely, that great works would include great ideas(6).

3.5 The Socratic Legend's Dark Side:

Socrates can be challenging and disarming, as shown by the picture of Socratic instruction given above. Educators, on the other hand, are often fixated on viewing Socrates as the founder of humanistic inquiry in the warm light of history. In this section, I'll revert to an unsentimental view of Socrates that I've only previously presented through other writers like Stone and Nietzsche. I'd argue the bad aspects of the Socratic spirit's applicability, albeit with caveats, by citing firsthand

tales of legal education and the usage of the "Socratic method" in law schools. Despite Adler's influence in American classrooms, the public picture of Socratic teaching is frequently based on the "Socratic technique" employed in law schools. I gained information from graduate school classmates who have a doctorate in philosophy and have also studied law.

Although most of us have never taken a legal class, we believe we have a good understanding of what happens in one. Professor Kingsfield was played by John Houseman in the film and television series "The Paper Chase." For most of us, the start and end of legal pedagogy, as well as our judgments on how Socrates is utilised in legal education, is Houseman's image of an unforgiving tactician interrogating his often-timid pupils with piercing questions. I was able to expand my understanding of Socratic legal teaching further than this widespread image by visiting two colleagues who had previously worked in legal education. Faculty of philosophy at Earlham College, Peter Suber has a PhD and a JD from Northwestern University . His account of a law class is really terrifying: "Sardonic jibes or withering stares are used to penalize incorrect replies, excessive delays in responding, or overt indications of anxiety." The penalty is humiliation, and the environment is humiliation... Students unanimously agree that the approach is not "educational" in the conventional sense. It does not aid in the understanding of cases or legal thinking. It's depressing ". Suber finds enough of proofs in the dialogues to support his theory that Socrates acted likely(10).

4. CONCLUSION

Socrates has appeared in a wide range of educational contexts, from Paley's kindergarten to law school. Which of these usage of Socrates is appropriate, and which is inappropriate? Various factors, in my opinion, should be considered in determining such ratings. As one might imagine, Socratic abuse often does not occur whenever the "victim" is mischievously questioned and stabbed with caustic barbs. Abuse may come from well-intentioned instructors who take away Socrates' authority, maybe in the thrill of discovering a method that is liberating and encourages thought. How did Socrates' legacy become so tainted? To start, we should understand that at his best, Socrates was endeavoring to get himself and empowering others to do likewise. He shunned devotees for his devil. Since both Stone and Suber call attention to, Socrates was smart and misleading. These contemplations should be at the core of any current Socratic understanding. When we apply a Socratic approach to any subject (and I use this word intentionally), it does not ensure that we will get self-knowledge. As the sarcasm employed by Socrates or Soren Kierkegaard appears to indicate, self-knowledge is a tough notion. To ignore the unpleasant elements of Socrates, on the other hand, is to abandon the Socratic spirit and, as a result, to misuse Socrates' legacy for educational purposes.

A similar Socrates abuse in modern education occurs when we assume without question that Socrates was a teacher. Most of us in the "training industry" consider an educator somebody who can plan and carry out an educational program. In case Socrates was an instructor, then, at that point, he must've had a specific instructional method and a particular arrangement of subjects that others might study, as per rationale. Burbules' recent work on dialogical education marks a watershed moment in the understanding of Socratic training as a broad repertory of approaches. According to Burbules, instructors influenced by Socrates engage in a dilogical "game" controlled by rules but adaptable to circumstances. In and of itself, Plato's composition of the exchange is a Socratic instructing act. The author is for sure the educator of the exchange and, reflexively, of oneself, and the peruser is the student. Different instructors, then again, have kept on pushing for essential showing strategies and curricular objectives dependent on Plato's person. In spite of the fact that I've seen Mortimer Adler use mockery and even embarrassment in a Socratic-like way, I'm not sure if his students have the guts or temperament to do so. I've witnessed well-intentioned Adler-trained instructors deliver apparently "Socratic" presentations devoid of satire or criticism, which Adler himself dismisses as "watered-down" seminars. Perhaps many instructors are unable

to be "mischievous, dishonest, and crafty, and sometimes even treacherous," as Plato's Socrates was.

There are also obvious and troubling conflicts between Socratic teaching and other educational goals. Educators are being encouraged to be encouraging and nurturing to their pupils, many of whom are presently "at-risk." Teachers are frequently asked to act as surrogate parents for children from difficult households. Plato's Socrates has been taught to a large number of special education graduate students. They've all said it would be difficult, if not impossible, to incorporate Socratic debate approaches into their classes. As a result, utilising such a teaching style to encourage the development of self-awareness in these students is difficult, if not impossible. It is now that an instructor's affectability, comprehension, and fitness as an exchange mentor, knowledgeable in a Socratic-enlivened repertory of academic procedures and developments, comes right into it. Moreover, such an instructor should have an empathetic comprehension of every understudy just as the subtleties of the study hall setting. Otherwise, abuses such as reducing Socratic instruction to a debating exercise, or the "ritualised fighting" witnessed by many women in law classes, may develop. Haroutunian-Gordon and many others have supplied enough examples from the text to make us hesitant of claiming that Socrates was a teacher in any sense of the word, conventional or modern. Others, such as Nietzsche, I.F. Stone, Bruce Kimball, and Louis Goldman, have emphasised how destructive and even lethal Socratic inquiry can be. Why, however, does Socrates continue to leave the torpedo's deep scars on practically everyone who reads the dialogues, including on those of us who want to emulate his teaching style?

Plato's Socrates is continuously cutting across realms of knowledge that are comprehended by either episteme or phronesis, theory or practise, theory or practise. Socrates may persuade us that failing to keep a thesis or find a definition is a moral disaster, not just a lack of intelligence. Socrates may not have provided us with a clear "system" that we can apply to every subject, and teaching Socratically in today's "anti-dialogical" institutions may be challenging. Nonetheless, the more extensive issues featured in the conversations ought not be overlooked. Socratic incongruity perplexes numerous fundamental understandings of the Socratic inheritance for instruction. The worry of the spirit, the reason for moral request, and a mission that plays hooky ought to have been the first and most noteworthy application, and extreme worth, of Socrates for current training.

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