After we finished our previous book project, *Educating Citizens for Global Awareness*, in 2004, Nel Noddings, its editor, was kind enough to connect BRC president Masao Yokota and me with educational philosopher David Hansen, author of *Exploring the Moral Heart of Teaching*, one of our favorite books. We discussed with him some nascent ideas we had about helping to expand the multicultural philosophical resources offered in education courses. From these discussions emerged a wonderful partnership between Professor Hansen and our publications manager, Patti Marxsen, on a project that has inspired all of us at the BRC in so many ways at every step in its development. Anyone who knows David can imagine the learning opportunities he created as our vision came into focus, authors were recruited, chapters developed, and manuscripts edited with care and extraordinary respect. We got to see *his* philosophy and practice of education in action, and this was a precious gift.

At a recent meeting of the American Educational Research Association in San Francisco, the BRC sponsored a panel discussion at which four of the chapter authors presented the ideas and historical contexts of their chosen figures—Dewey, Maria Montessori, Rabindranath Tagore, and Tsunesaburo Makiguchi—and engaged fellow educators in exploring the relevance of their insights to the challenges facing teachers today. We can imagine our present volume sparking many more such valuable conversations at universities and elsewhere in the United States and beyond. What a joy it would be if this book were to strengthen the chorus of international voices, past and present, extolling a vision of holistic education.

Virginia Benson
Executive Director
Boston Research Center for the 21st Century

INTRODUCTION

Ideas, Action, and Ethical Vision in Education

David T. Hansen

IDEAS HAVE CONSEQUENCES. This truism holds for educational ideas as much as it does for ideas about government, science, and health. The notion that children should learn to read, write, and numerate; the idea that places named *schools* should be organized for educating; the claim that men and women called *teachers* ought to play leading roles in the process—these ideas and countless others like them have had profound, enduring effects on educational policy and practice the world over.

Ideas do not spring from a vacuum, and they are never inevitable. They are not like the wind, the tide, or the rising and setting of the sun. They do not derive from nature's inexorable course. Rather, ideas take form through the initiative of individual persons who seek to respond to particular concerns, problems, fears, and hopes. Ideas originate with human beings, not impersonal forces. The cliché that ideas have consequences harbors a truth that is all too easy to overlook as people go about their daily affairs: What individual persons think and do can make a genuine difference in the course of events. Mind and imagination can transform the quality of life.

The purpose of this book is to challenge and encourage all who care about education to cultivate mind and imagination in the world. The authors of the chapters ahead pursue this aim by presenting the core ideas of some of the most influential educational thinkers and activists of the 20th century. The authors also examine the consequences of these persons' ideas on educational thought and practice. The figures are Jane Addams, John Dewey, W. E. B. Du Bois, Paulo Friere, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, Maria Montessori,

Ethical Visions of Education: Philosophies in Practice, edited by David T. Hansen. Copyright © 2007 by Boston Research Association for the 21st Century. All rights reserved. Prior to photocopying items for classroom use, please contact the Copyright Clearance Center, Customer Service, 222 Rosewood Dr., Danvers, MA 01923, USA, tel. (508) 750-8400, www.copyright.com

Albert Schweitzer, Rudolf Steiner, Rabindranath Tagore, and Tao Xingzhi. Much has been said over the years about these extraordinary persons. But this book is the first to bring their vibrant legacies together in a single "conversation" about the nature and consequences of educational ideas. As readers will see, the power, originality, and profound relevance of the ideas of these theorists stand out when they are brought together in the dialogue this book represents.

Readers will also discern a deep ethical impulse that resides behind the ideas and actions of these thinkers, who believed that human beings matter more than flawed institutions, that education comprises a moral commitment to the betterment of individuals and communities, and that it is possible to educate meaningfully even in the face of difficult challenges and obstacles. They demonstrate what it means to cultivate a sense of self that extends beyond the troublesome, often confusing present, and that grows and deepens in service to others.

The chapter authors take a sympathetic and critical approach toward these luminaries. They do not treat them as canonized role models proffering educational blueprints for others to follow. Quite the contrary. The collective lesson of this volume is that educators ought not to mimic one another but rather should learn from one another how to use their own minds and imagination. In this way, *every* educator can make a unique difference in the world, however modest in scope. Every educator can experience why pedagogical work constitutes one of the world's truly great vocations of hope, possibility, and accomplishment.

In this introductory chapter, I will orient readers to the chapters ahead by responding to a number of questions. First, what are ideas? How do they differ from facts and information? How does a person develop an idea? How do educational ideas relate to educational practice? What do we learn from the educators featured in this book about the dynamic relation between ideas and action? Second, what is an educational philosophy? Why is it important for educators to cultivate a philosophy and to be aware of its origins, substance, and consequences? How does a philosophy of education differ from a theory of education, and why is the difference significant for teachers? Finally, how can there be more than one reasonable, defensible, and inspiring philosophy of education? Why don't all educators, such as those featured in this book, have the same philosophy? Why is it valuable for educators to study different philosophies of education? How and what can educators learn from looking at the similarities and differences among them? My responses to these questions will be suggestive rather than definitive. I hope that after reading this book readers will feel not only disposed to respond, but also excited about answering the questions in their own ways.

In the first section below, I take up questions about the nature and efficacy of ideas in education. In the ensuing section, I examine how a philosophy of education provides educators with an articulate sense of values, a moral compass to guide their work, and a fruitful source of ideas for their day-to-day efforts. The third section provides a brief overview of each of the 10 figures' central educational ideas and actions. In the final section, I discuss the criteria that led to the inclusion of these philosophers in this book while also providing further perspectives on what we can learn from their work.

IDEAS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

The world abounds in facts and information. From computers, television, radio, cell phones, newspapers, magazines, billboards on the highway, and more, facts and information flood into our lives. Contemporary humanity is indeed drowning in facts and information. Ideas, by contrast, are rarer, and they are more difficult to recognize. They do not arise automatically and instantly, unlike facts and information. Ideas emerge through individual attempts to articulate in a sustained fashion a thought, a feeling, a hunch, an interpretation, a response.

Because ideas are essential for intelligent and humane action, it is worthwhile taking some time to think about what they are. Moreover, it is indispensable for educators to grasp fully why ideas differ from facts and information. If they do not do so, they will have no intellectual basis upon which to criticize curriculum and assessment policies that privilege the mastery of fact over the development of genuine thinking (Boostrom, 2005). My analysis will dramatize how significant and timely for education are the ideas of the individuals featured in this book. Moreover, as readers will see, it is striking how alert they were to the creative power of ideas.

Unlike ideas, facts and information are inert and stable. In metaphorical terms, they exist passively. They are lifeless until persons take them up and employ them in thought and action. In contrast, ideas are always active, in motion, and in transformation. As such, they cannot be scooped up and absorbed as can facts and information. Moreover, ideas remain ideas only if they are dynamic and subject to change. When they harden or become routine, as all too many do, they lose their vitality and take on the passive aspect of facts and information. In such cases they may sidetrack or even suppress the emergence of new ideas.

John Dewey addresses these points in his wide-ranging inquiry *Democracy and Education* (MW9).[1] After examining the nature and place of thinking in education, he offers the following remarks:

> The educational moral I am chiefly concerned to draw is not, however, that teachers would find their own work less of a grind and strain if school conditions

> favored learning in the sense of discovery and not in that of storing away what others pour into them; nor that it would be possible to give even children and youth the delights of personal intellectual productiveness—true and important as are these things. It is that no thought, no idea, can possibly be conveyed as an idea from one person to another. When it is told, it is, to the one to whom it is told, another given fact, not an idea. The communication may stimulate the other person to realize the question for himself and to think out a like idea, or it may smother his intellectual interest and suppress his dawning effort at thought. But what he directly gets cannot be an idea. Only by wrestling with the conditions of the problem at first hand, seeking and finding his own way out, does he think. (pp. 159–160)

Dewey stresses how burdensome and unfulfilling schooling becomes when it is dominated by the river of facts and information that saturates the world and when no time and space are provided for cultivating and expressing ideas. What he calls "personal intellectual productivity" results from deploying facts and information *in* the process of thinking rather than trying to swallow them apart from it. Conceiving and expressing ideas is "delightful," to paraphrase Dewey, because the process calls upon the student's intellectual and reflective resources, and because it is an active rather than passive undertaking. Ideas and the thinking that gives rise to them constitute a fundamental aspect of education, regardless of whether one has in mind a child first learning what can be done with numbers or a scientist recognizing the meaning of an experimental outcome.

Dewey emphasizes that nobody, whether an educator or layperson, can "give" an idea to another person. Only facts and information can be handed over, like a ladle of water, from one person to the next. In contrast, ideas emerge from what Dewey calls "wrestling" with conditions, circumstances, and situations and working one's way forward. This process does not necessitate unprecedented originality, creativity, or genius. A young child who grasps the logic of addition has a genuine mathematical idea, even though countless other persons have had it before. The bottom line is that ideas involve thinking, activity, and personal transformation, however modest in scope.

This last point underscores why ideas have consequences, whereas facts and information taken in themselves do not. Depending on the situation, facts and information can either distract people from thinking and cloud their judgment, or they can serve as a useful resource for thinking. But only ideas can lead to explicit, overt, and intentional change. Facts and information, in and of themselves, can have only an implicit or subconscious effect. With regard to human hopes and aspirations, it is what people *do* with facts and information that has consequences. The child who now has a mathematical idea is a transformed being. He or she will never look at mathematics in the same way again, an outcome that can influence any number of subsequent engagements the child has with the curriculum of school and life. For the teacher, the consequences of the child's having an idea include a better understanding of how the child thinks, a chance now to present new challenges to him or her, and the opportunity to attend for the moment to other students perhaps struggling to bring forth ideas in response to the presented facts.

Although the consequences in this example are positive, such an outcome is obviously not always the case with ideas. A child who suddenly has an idea of what matches and fire can do may be a danger to others and to him- or herself, if the child has no corresponding ideas or dispositions about safety and responsibility. Thus the *particular* ideas that experience generates matter enormously. Education constitutes not only the process of conceiving ideas but also the enterprise of seeking to understand their consequences, and therefore to grasp why some ideas are better and more worthy of support than others. All the influential figures featured in the chapters ahead worked persistently to identify what they viewed as better ideas. They sought to bring to life more enlightened, ethical, and intellectually robust ideas that could serve humanity's quest for meaning and fulfillment.

Dewey refers to the "educational moral" of his argument in the quote cited above, and I draw from his remark two meanings. The first is that all ideas are potentially moral in their consequences. All ideas can lead either to a positive or harmful change in individuals and communities. The child with the new mathematical idea is now in a position to generate further ideas. Thus the child learns, however modestly and subtly, what it means to engage the world in more meaningful and expansive ways. On a broader scale, the idea that all people are created equal has not only launched a famous revolution but also has led to countless political and social transformations around the world.

At the same time, some ideas lead to morally harmful and even disastrous consequences. A student whose mathematical ideas contain logical flaws will go on to struggle with the subject, perhaps in worse ways than if he or she had simply not grasped the logic at all. The student may lose academic confidence, and teachers may regard him or her as a problem. The idea that a government's primary responsibility is to support the growth of business has led to many problematic consequences regarding equity, social stability, the environment, and more. In short, no idea is inherently neutral from a moral point of view. Even an apparently laudable idea such as teaching everyone how to read does not automatically result in beneficial consequences if what persons go on to read warps or indoctrinates their minds and outlook (Weaver, 1948, pp. 13–14). The individuals featured in this book illuminate why one aspect of being an educated person is sensitivity to the human consequences of ideas, whether they be large or small in scope.

The second lesson I derive from Dewey's choice of terms is that having the opportunity to conceive and express ideas is itself a moral issue. An educational system can be described as morally deficient if it simply pours material into students and systematically denies them opportunities to engage their minds. Such a system undermines and negates human potential. Because it suppresses rather than fuels positive human development, it renders the world a shallower, less productive, and less fulfilling place than it could otherwise be. The politician, policy maker, or educator who regards education as solely a matter of transferring facts and information (vital as they are) may be unwittingly damaging future prospects for human freedom and creativity.

The individuals featured in this book cherished the freedom to conceive and express ideas. They loved thinking. They worked against the anti-intellectual pressures of conformity. They responded to the expanding tide of facts and information in the world with genuinely educational ideas. Moreover, many of the so-called facts they confronted boiled down to taken-for-granted prejudices and biases. For example, Maria Montessori had to confront the "fact" that in her time and milieu women were not supposed to embark on professional careers. W. E. B. Du Bois had to move beyond the "fact" that Black Americans were not eligible for a place at the table of national political and cultural life. Tsunesaburo Makiguchi rejected the "fact" that education should be conducted purely in the service of the state rather than for the sake of individual development and freedom. Their collective experience alerts us to the possibility that every person on the planet struggles, at one time or another, with environments that work against thinking and the creation of humane and empowering ideas.

The ideas and conduct of the thinkers in this volume illuminate modes of responding to difficult situations. Rather than accepting custom and other people's ideas uncritically, they thought about them, examined them, and in so doing formed their own distinctive ideas and plans of action. I invite readers to study the chapters ahead not solely for the biographical facts and information that they contain, important as these are, but to engage them to form their own ideas about education, society, individuality, and the meanings of life. Moreover, the chapters challenge readers not only to conceive and express their own ideas but also to keep their thinking dynamic and vivid. This notion points to the value of an educational philosophy, the topic of the following section.

THE PRACTICAL MEANING AND NECESSITY OF A PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

People often describe philosophy as the love of wisdom. This eulogistic definition can be translated into the maxim that since ideas matter for the conduct of life, it is wise to put forward the most ethical and empowering ideas possible.

The figures in this book sought to articulate and disseminate generative educational ideas and did so in an extraordinary variety of ways. They wrote scholarly and popular texts and, in the case of Rabindranath Tagore, also published fiction and poetry. They were active public speakers, addressing audiences of educators, politicians, policy makers, community leaders, parents, students, and more. They organized schools or other institutions supportive of learning. They mobilized people and resources by participating in various social and political movements. Their drive to make a difference in the world also led them to study philosophy, art, history, science, and other subjects. Each brought to bear sustained curiosity about the world and a deep belief in the values of human development.

The fact that these persons were serious students of life suggests that a common denominator in their efforts, however disparate these were, was a commitment to the importance of acting through a mature educational philosophy. An educational philosophy comprises (1) a statement of values, (2) a moral compass, and (3) an abiding engine of ideas. As a statement of values, an educational philosophy reflects what the thinker or community esteems: learning to read and to write critically, to conduct scientific experiments, to produce artistic works, to speak well and courageously, to engage other people respectfully and honestly, and so forth. As a moral compass, an educational philosophy guides the educator or community in making decisions, for example, that a particular approach to teaching is better to adopt than its alternatives because it treats subject matter intellectually rather than as solely a store of facts, which means regarding students as human beings capable of thought rather than merely of absorption. As an engine of ideas, an educational philosophy helps the educator or community respond intelligently to new situations and conditions; for example, it leads the teacher to ask a thoughtful question about the novel at hand when students are restless rather than automatically piling on more information about it. In other words, instead of relying uncritically on custom, convention, or prepackaged scripts, educators can draw upon their educational philosophy to devise creative, fruitful responses to issues and problems that are tailored to their specific circumstances.

Popular opinion often equates philosophy with a more or less pointless recycling of perennial questions, such as, What is the meaning of life? Because philosophers and others have provided so many disparate and incompatible answers to such questions, the popular impression (unsurprisingly) is that philosophy boils down to a fruitless intellectual game far removed from the concrete affairs of life. In a famous passage in Plato's dialogue *Gorgias*, Socrates and the brash young politician he has been questioning, Callicles, find their dialogue breaking down (if, indeed, it can be said to have ever got off the ground). Callicles has mocked and often refused to answer Socrates' questions about what values he believes are worthy in life. He declares that Socrates' pursuit of philosophy is childish and unpractical. At one juncture in the dialogue he sneers, "Always the same old language, Socrates," to which Socrates replies, "Yes, Callicles, and on the same subjects" (490e; quote from Plato, 2004, p. 77). Socrates' point is that anyone who aspires to lead a consciously chosen and deliberate life—and, more specifically, a good and humane life—*does* end up facing "the same subjects," such as whether the ends justify the means (if I want to make a lot of money, is it OK to cheat and lie?) and whether obligations to others sometimes override self-interest (should I go to the movie or attend to my sick child?). For the educator who wants to do the right thing for students, the educational equivalent of such questions includes what approach to take toward teaching, assessment, curriculum, colleagues, parents, and one's own professional development. Every educator the world over faces these "same subjects."

A lesson I draw from Socrates' timeless exchange with Callicles is that while some philosophy is esoteric, other philosophy—such as the educational philosophy articulated by the people in this book—constitutes the most practical thing of all for a human being to pursue. This claim may sound strange because ideas, unlike actions, are not immediately material and observable. However, sound practical action involves more than mere brawn. It also implies thoughtfulness, perspective, imagination, and sometimes even a vision of a better world. Moreover, consider what it would mean if a teacher operated without a philosophy of education. In its absence, the teacher would have no recourse but to rely on unexamined habit; on memories of his or her own teachers as well as experiences as a student; and on resources contrived by other people whose outlook may or may not be compatible, much less more enlightened, than the teacher's own. As I have suggested, an educational philosophy provides the educator with an articulated sense of values, with a moral compass, and with an abiding engine of ideas to employ in his or her work. In the chapters ahead, we will see these functions of educational philosophy play themselves out in concrete practice. We will witness the consequences of educational ideas.

Readers will also encounter the issues of how and why educational philosophies can differ, with correspondingly different consequences for practical affairs in schools and elsewhere. Later in this chapter I will suggest that the genuine differences in these philosophies constitute not a problem to be solved or a mystery to be cleared up, but rather a splendid spur to thinking and educational imagination. However, first let me offer a brief synopsis of each of the figures' philosophies and their impact on practice. In the ensuing and final sections of the chapter, I will explain the criteria of selection that led to including these particular individuals in the book. I will also show how these criteria mirror the values touched on here regarding the vitality of educational philosophy.

CHAPTER OVERVIEWS: ETHICAL VISIONS

Chapter 1, which I contribute to this volume, focuses on the American John Dewey's (1859–1952) idea that education is a process of enhancing the quality of life. By *quality* Dewey meant a life of meaningful activity, of thoughtful conduct, and of open communication and interaction with other people. Dewey viewed the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons as the primary purpose of a democratic society. He conceived an approach to education that would equip individuals with the skills and the outlook that he believed were necessary for taking on the hardships and possibilities of life and thereby for building a better world. In the chapter I emphasize Dewey's core concepts of growth, experience, and meaning. I show how these ideas emerged from and guided his active life as a founder of a famous school, as a public speaker, as a widely read public intellectual, and as a leader of numerous democratic organizations. Dewey's ideas remain alive and vivid today in the academy, in colleges of education, and in the lives of many teachers and schools.

Stephen Fishman and Lucille McCarthy, in Chapter 2, describe the contours of Paulo Freire's (1921–1997) influential philosophy of education. These derive from a Marxist critique of economic and social inequalities produced by capitalism, a postcolonial critique of imperialism and its human consequences, an existentialist view that humans have a fundamental desire for freedom that is too often thwarted by social arrangements, and a Christian notion of the necessity for individual—rather than solely societal—transformation if the world is to become a just and humane setting for all. Determined to address the socioeconomic inequities in his native Brazil, Freire fused his critique of society with a belief in the values in genuine dialogue. He advanced a conception of educational practice centered directly around dialogue between teachers; students; and, at important moments, members of local communities. Through dialogue, Freire maintained, people can learn to articulate (or "name," as he puts it) their concerns, aspirations, and ideas for how to improve conditions. He advocated a genuinely communicative environment in the educational setting through which people can learn to think and act critically. He contrasted this outlook with what he called the "banking approach," in which facts and information are "deposited" in the minds of students without creating circumstances in which the students feel empowered to raise questions. Fishman and McCarthy show how Freire sought to bring his vision to life through a variety of influential educational roles.

In Chapter 3, Rodino Anderson focuses on W. E. B. Du Bois's (1868–1963) remarkable book *The Souls of Black Folk*. Anderson suggests that the work expresses Du Bois's belief that a liberal education was crucial to the intellectual emancipation of Black Americans, who had been systematically denied education under the brutal regime of slavery and who continued to live under racist conditions after the American Civil War. Du Bois believed that intellectual emancipation would equip Blacks to challenge and undermine racism and thereby both open opportunity to them and help bring the nation closer to its democratic ideals. Such an education would position Black Americans to claim their rightful role as national "creators of culture," a process in which they could infuse society with their distinctive achievements as other individuals and groups within society would do the same. Anderson shows that Du Bois's educational philosophy points not so much to what is today called multiculturalism as toward the centrality of an aesthetic education for all people. Du Bois's unique take on liberal education merges the study of important events and texts (historical, philosophical, scientific) from around the world with a focus on equipping and propelling people to create and express meaning in life. Anderson's inquiry into *The Souls of Black Folk* becomes a springboard for showing how Du Bois's outlook links educational and political aims in a manner that continues to inform educational thought and practice today.

In Chapter 4, Andrew Gebert and Monte Joffee describe Tsunesaburo Makiguchi's (1871–1944) innovative idea of "value creation" as the aim of education. A teacher, school principal, public speaker, activist, and author, Makiguchi sought to humanize education in his native Japan by insisting that it serve individuals and communities rather than the political and economic needs of the state (which was increasingly militaristic and coercive in the years before World War II). Makiguchi believed that the educator's fundamental obligation was to equip students with a sense of purpose so that they would be empowered to both discern and create value in their lives and communities. To explain his philosophy of education, Makiguchi wrote and spoke extensively on pedagogy. He argued that the teacher should be an intellectual and moral role model and should seek to develop genuine dialogue with students rather than force-feed them facts and information. Moreover, as Gebert and Joffee suggest, Makiguchi advocated a close interaction between the teacher, school, home, and local community. In his view, all play a dynamic role in fostering individual development and flourishing. Makiguchi's influence remains strong today in the lay Buddhist organization he founded in the 1930s, Soka Gakkai International (Value Creation Society), with some 12 million members around the world, as well as in Soka schools now in operation in several countries.

In Chapter 5, Charlene Haddock Seigfried elucidates the American Jane Addams's (1860–1935) influential creed that education is a lifelong endeavor grounded in experience. For Addams, education extends well beyond the confines of school. In many respects, it finds its fullest expression outside the school walls, in the ways in which people actually work, interact, spend their time, and focus their energy. Addams argued that all experience could be educative if approached in an open-minded, experimental spirit. She sought to support that spirit through the settlement house movement she launched in the United States in the 1890s. For example, at Hull House, in Chicago, she and her colleagues initiated countless programs that engaged new immigrants in activities through which they learned new ideas and skills and also shared with others their knowledge and expertise drawn from life experience. Moreover, Addams worked to connect Hull House activities with other civic developments in Chicago. She encouraged native-born citizens and new immigrants to regard one another not as aliens but as fellow Americans with whom they could work to bring forth a more democratic society. Seigfried shows that Addams's vision embodied a powerful idea of civic education. Addams articulated a public process through which all members of society educated themselves about one another, about what would improve peoples' opportunities and life chances, and about what would support a more just and efficacious approach to social problems and difficulties. As an aspect of her extensive educational and social work, Addams worked tirelessly against war and violence. Her efforts resulted in her being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931.

Wang Weijia and Zhang Kaiyuan demonstrate, in Chapter 6, why Tao Xingzhi (1891–1946) is widely regarded as "the father of modern Chinese education." The authors show that Tao exerted an enormous influence on the 20th-century movement in China to bring formal education to all people regardless of class or economic status. In a pioneering way, Tao fused Deweyan and traditional Chinese educational ideas. He spent several years studying with Dewey in New York City, even as he systematically examined Chinese philosophies of education. He articulated an original and expansive philosophy of education pivoting around the value of rendering human activity thoughtful. He advocated educating people to approach their work and lives as free and independent agents, acting out of intelligence, imagination, and resolve. Centering his initial approach around the promotion of literacy, Tao founded and led numerous regional and national educational organizations to advance public education, which was a controversial idea in his time and place. He also founded an important teacher education institute, wrote textbooks, and devoted much effort to establishing educational programs in rural areas. He was convinced that rural development was crucial for the eventual emergence of a democratic society in China. Wang and Zhang show why Tao's ideas remain vibrant and pertinent in today's educational and social climate, in which countless children throughout the world still lack basic education and fundamental freedoms.

In Chapter 7, Jacqueline Cossentino and Jennifer Whitcomb examine the peace-centered educational philosophy of the Italian educator Maria Montessori (1870–1952). Although Montessori is best known for her approach to early childhood education, Cossentino and Whitcomb show how what is today simply called Montessori education spans human development from infancy to adulthood. Montessori articulated a philosophy of education centered around her abiding conviction that if education is genuinely responsive to the developmental needs of children—emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and moral—it can lead to a more peaceful world. She elaborated a comprehensive approach to early elementary education in which she articulated views about the role of the teacher, the nature and place of the curriculum, the qualities of the physical environment, the nature of assessment, and the dynamics of student agency and freedom. She also established a program for later elementary education, for children ages 6 to 12, that would draw them into what she called a "cosmic" outlook on the world. Through the study of world history, the structure of language, the forms and evolution of nature, and more, combined with social inquiries undertaken outside the school, Montessori argued that children at this stage could begin to discern how they themselves might grow up to make a difference in the world. They would begin to conceive how they could employ their education to help remake the world, into a more democratic, fair, and peaceful place for all. Cossentino and Whitcomb demonstrate that Montessori's philosophy of education remains extremely influential today in a vast number of schools, both public and private.

Kathleen O'Connell examines, in Chapter 8, the educational work of Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941), who spent most of his life in his native Bengal, India. While best known as a prolific poet, playwright, essayist, and novelist—he received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913—Tagore articulated and put into practice a pioneering vision of education centered around the arts, communication, and freedom. He believed that formal education all too often snuffed out the creative impulses of students and teachers. He viewed students as capable of adding to the richness of the world in endlessly diverse ways so long as they receive the right encouragement and support. He viewed the teacher as a creative facilitator and moral guide. For Tagore, the ideal teacher would be an artistic person, in the sense of being able to perceive the potential in students regardless of the subject matter at hand. At the same time, the teacher would combine a focus on learning with a vision for youth, of how young people would regard and treat one another, and the world itself, in an ethical manner. Tagore brought his ideas to life in the establishment of an innovative and influential educational center for children called Santiniketan, and he and others disseminated information about it in an effort to reform schooling across India. At the same time, as O'Connell points out, Tagore focused on higher education, convinced that both India and the world needed enhanced global exchange and mutually enlightening communication. He articulated a cosmopolitan idea of a university-educated person. That individual would have scholarly training linked with a philosophical, moral, and aesthetic education that would fuel a broad-minded outlook on the problems and prospects of humanity. Tagore established a university cum cultural center based on this vision.

Austrian-born Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925) founded what has come to be called Waldorf education, an educational approach that finds expression today in some 1,000 Waldorf schools around the world. In Chapter 9, Bruce Uhrmacher elucidates Steiner's distinctive idea that education entails the holistic cultivation of a person's mind, body, heart, and spirit. Steiner fused notions of intellectual, aesthetic, emotional, and spiritual education into a systematic program for schools in which teachers would work with children as the latter progressed through what he called "stages" of human development. Uhrmacher analyzes these stages and outlines the many sources of Steiner's ideas, which ranged from theosophy (a combined study of world religions, ancient mystic outlooks, philosophy, science, and psychic investigations) to anthroposophy (the study and practice of spiritual development, rooted especially in Christian traditions). Steiner sought to link his belief in both a physical and spiritual world with a vision of how educational practice could equip the young to live morally and spiritually fulfilling lives characterized, in turn, by a fundamental respect for nature in all its wonder. Uhrmacher highlights contemporary features of Waldorf education, illustrating the approach by focusing on how Waldorf teachers center their pedagogy around story and narrative and on how they assess and evaluate students using artistic methods rather than traditional letter grades.

In the final chapter of the book, A. G. Rud examines the humanitarian ideas and actions of Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965). Born in the Alsace region of France, Schweitzer is best known for his contributions to global public health and nuclear disarmament, which together earned him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1952. However, Rud shows in detail how Schweitzer's conduct and his philosophy of "Reverence for Life" have valuable educational consequences. Rud focuses especially on three of these consequences: education in the name of service to humanity, education for environmental awareness, and education for hospitality and community. He shows how Schweitzer modeled in his life all these educational ideas. Schweitzer abandoned a materially comfortable and secure way of life to serve others, and in so doing realized a far deeper meaning and sense of personal fulfillment. He articulated a vision of human life as embedded in nature rather than as standing apart (or over) it; he worked toward a holistic image of humanity and the world. He developed what remains a world-renowned hospital in Gabon, Africa, that serves the people in the surrounding region regardless of income or status. His approach to institutionalized medical practice centered less around technological expertise, although it incorporated that, than around ideals of rendering health service hospitable and supportive of human community.

A WAY TO APPROACH THE TEN EDUCATORS AND THEIR WORK

As this overview makes plain, the individuals featured here differ markedly, not only in terms of national background but also, and more dramatically, with respect to the educational ideas they conceived and the activities they promoted. This diversity in philosophy and action forms an important criterion of selection for the book. As I argued at the start of this introduction, ideas and philosophies of education are dynamic and subject to transformation. If they are not, they reduce to inert and perhaps stultifying facts and information. This claim implies that there can be no one philosophy of education. There is no definition of the purposes of education that can terminate further discussion and inquiry.

Correspondingly, just as nobody can hand over an idea to another person, so nobody can give another educator a philosophy of education. Every teacher must work out his or her own ideas and educational philosophy, a process that necessitates thinking, careful study, experience with students, and dialogue with other educators. I urge readers not to approach the chapters ahead as if they were encyclopedic entries of fact and information. Rather, the chapters constitute deliberate attempts to provoke readers to think imaginatively and deliberately about education.

In addition to the important criterion of differing philosophies of education, five other criteria inform the selection of the figures in the book:

- Their work generates ideas and practices pertinent to today's world.
- They provide more than a theory about education; they articulate and enact an educational philosophy that can be lived in practice.
- They contribute to a common moral compass to guide educational work today, even while they emphasize quite different tactics and strategies.
- They represent an international scope, while demonstrating how good ideas can transcend borders in their beneficial consequences.
- They are remarkable, unusual human beings whose example edifies while it also educates.

In the remainder of this chapter I will address each of these criteria.

The 10 thinkers and activists featured here show us that human striving across the generations remains a timeless, wondrous source of learning for the present. The intellectual and programmatic resources they cultivated speak directly to contemporary challenges and offer a host of strategies that might be useful to teachers in the 21st century. Worldwide, educators are currently under tremendous pressure from efforts to standardize teaching and schooling, from market forces elbowing their way into schools and into the lives of teachers and students, from ongoing attempts to politicize education and put it in the service of selfish interests, and other sources. These circumstances are likely to continue into the foreseeable future. Each of the 10 individuals highlighted in this book faced equally formidable pressures. Although they dwelled in a different historical era, their work remains vivid and dynamic because it reminds us of a crucial truth that is easy to overlook: Individuals do make a difference in the course of events through their ideas and actions. For educators, whether experienced or in preparation programs, this familiar but sometimes unarticulated fact is powerful. Every educator can make a difference. Every educator has untapped resources for contributing to human good.

A key to employing such resources is understanding that challenges, obstacles, and frustrations, form an organic part of the world and are not, as such, things to resent. People grow and become accomplished, while helping others do so, by confronting difficulties rather than complaining about them or running from them. The figures in this book show time and again that engaging problems fuels human growth, imagination, and effective ideas and practices. Readers may find their efforts all the more illuminating because their ideas and actions may seem, at first (and even second!) glance unfamiliar, strange, even alien. Perhaps a well-known adage bears inserting here: The only way to become educated is by engaging that which is new. Our most influential educational experiences derive from the violation of our expectations, not from their confirmation. To consort solely with ideas one already knows can lead to intellectual stasis and fixed mental habits, rather than growth in one's knowledge and outlook. The juxtaposition in this book of strikingly different philosophies of education renders all of them new, in the sense of fresh, revitalized, and provocative.

A second criterion of selection, touched on in a previous section, is that the 10 individuals articulate and enact philosophies of education. They do not merely offer a theory of education. The difference between *theory* and *philosophy* is purely semantic if both terms are reduced to how one perceives the world. However, it is possible to have a theory of economics, of politics, of society, of the universe, and of the meaning of life without that theory having any influence on one's conduct. A physicist may change her theory of space and time, but meanwhile remain a Democrat or Republican, an honest or unscrupulous friend, a loving or distant parent, and so forth. But a change in one's philosophy implies a corresponding change in the things that one believes, values, and does. I encourage readers to examine the philosophies of education in the chapters ahead as possible ways of *living* while one is in the role of an educator, rather than solely as theories *about* education.

As discussed above, an educational philosophy provides educators with an articulate sense of values, with a moral compass, and with an engine of ideas for use in the actual work of teaching. The 10 luminaries featured here differ in their fundamental values. Some advance political values and concerns first and foremost. Others foreground religious and spiritual values. Still others spotlight aesthetic and artistic values in education. In addition, the ideas that spring from their differing philosophies of education are, unsurprisingly, also distinctive. Their specific ideas about teaching, curriculum, schooling, and so forth differ in sometimes striking and incompatible ways. Dewey and Makiguchi, for example, would not agree with the idea put forth by Steiner and Montessori that human beings go through various predetermined "stages" or "planes" of development. For Dewey, all people, ideally, grow throughout the course of life experience. He suggests that differences in their growth are a matter largely of degree rather than of kind. Makiguchi suggests that children are as capable of value creation in their lives as are adults—indeed, in some respects they are better equipped, since they do not feel as strongly the press of custom and convention. In contrast, Montessori and Steiner argue that children and young people do undergo identifiable, discrete stages of development that must be at the center of educators' planning and assessment if these teachers are to pursue their work responsibly. In short, the philosophers whose ideas are explored in this volume present incompatible conceptions of learning and human growth, or so it seems, and their proposals regarding educational practice differ accordingly. Such differences in values and ideas will, hopefully, provoke readers to ponder their own philosophies of education that much more critically.

However, while the philosophies of education of these thinkers differ with regard to values and ideas, they point toward common moral ground. They contribute to the making of a shared moral compass, by which I mean a sense of direction that humanity might take in facing the problems of our dwelling together on the planet. That direction is toward greater justice, deeper freedom, and broader and richer meaning in human life. These are the core elements associated here with the idea of the "moral."

A common moral outlook does not imply shared values. As mentioned, the individuals profiled here, like people everywhere, differ in their political, religious, artistic, and other values as well as in their sense of how these ought to inform education. Moreover, according to various contemporary criteria of justice and goodness, there are limitations in their viewpoints. For example, it is possible to take Du Bois and Steiner to task for being uncritically gender-blind in their proposals. It is possible, on the one hand, to criticize Schweitzer and Tagore for not being more politically conscious and active and, on the other hand, to charge Dewey and Freire with politicizing educational practice. For such criticisms to be themselves reflective and justified, they would need to examine with care the full tapestry of each individual's ideas and actions.

However exclusive these thinkers' philosophies may be with respect to particular values, or to national or regional concerns and circumstances, their moral vision of a better world seems to me to be remarkably inclusive. They linked their proposals with a tough-minded critique leveled against those who held political, economic, and educational power. Each of these thinkers, in his or her own way, took issue with the status quo and in some cases paid a severe price for their resistance (for example, Makiguchi died of malnutrition in a Japanese military prison during World War II). In a test of their moral vision, one might ask, Would they have been willing to abandon their values and ideas if they were privy to a better way to move toward a more just, free, and creative world? I believe that each of them would have been willing to engage this question seriously—as in fact they did at various moments in their eventful lives. This claim is why I discern the makings of a common moral compass across their otherwise contrasting philosophies of education.

At the same time, I do not want to discount the differences in moral *emphasis* they express. For example, Tagore reflects a major theme running through some of the chapters when he writes that education's purpose is to bring people and the world into greater harmony:

> We have come to this world to accept it, not merely to know it. We may become powerful by knowledge, but we attain fulness by sympathy. The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence. But we find that this education of sympathy is not only systematically ignored in schools, but it is severely repressed. From our very childhood habits are formed and knowledge is imparted in such a manner that our life is weaned away from nature and our mind and the world are set in opposition from the beginning of our days. Thus the greatest of educations for which we came prepared is neglected, and we are made to lose our world to find a bagful of information instead. We rob the child of his earth to teach him geography, of language to teach him grammar. His hunger is for the Epic, but he is supplied with chronicles of facts and dates. . . . Child-nature protests against such calamity with all its power of suffering, subdued at last into silence by punishment. (Tagore, 1917, pp. 116–117)

While the other educators in the book might resonate with Tagore's vision, thinkers and activists such as Addams, Dewey, and Freire would emphasize the political potential in education to render human affairs more just, free, and meaningful. They might suggest that Tagore's outlook is necessary in a comprehensive philosophy of education, but not sufficient. They would suggest that the difference is more than a matter of tactics; rather, it is one of substantive consequences in the here and now. Tagore, Du Bois, Makiguchi, and others might reply that political transformation in the direction of democracy constitutes a profound value that they not only endorse but are, in their respective ways, striving toward. However, they might suggest that unless education is fueling children and youth—here and now—with creative imagination; a sense of beauty and harmony; an abiding respect for individual mind, heart, and soul; and care for nature and the world, political transformation may be either a will-o'-the-wisp or may backfire and produce new and unanticipated modes of oppressive conformity.

When I suggest that the 10 persons profiled in this book contribute to a common moral compass, I do not mean to say that they travel in the same way or with their eyes on an identical destination. I do think they would regard one another as worthy interlocutors in a dialogue about what are the best, most humane, and most efficacious constituents of a philosophy of education. No doubt they would vigorously dispute where the right or most timely moral emphasis should reside with respect to action. I hope that readers of this volume will subsequently feel motivated to ponder where their own emphasis lies—in individual freedom and creativity, in disseminating knowledge, in social justice, in humane interaction between people and with nature, or in all these goods. I also hope they will contemplate how to communicate effectively and respectfully with fellow educators whose emphasis differs from theirs.

My conjectures highlight another criterion of selection that also offers an appropriate conclusion to this introductory chapter. The 10 thinkers included here are, in a nutshell, remarkable and unusual human beings. While the chapters ahead highlight, by design, ideas and their consequences rather than biographical details, they do provide sufficient background for readers to get a sense of what the 10 persons were like. As readers will see, each sought to harmonize philosophy and action, theory and practice. Each was a person of ideas: a serious and probing thinker about the nature and purposes of education, and about values and the human prospect more generally. Each was a person of action: a dedicated and committed leader and participant in human affairs. Each responded in a determined, systematic manner to pressing educational, social, and political problems. Their ideas derived not solely from other ideas, indispensable as those sources were for them, but from life itself—from their experiences as thinkers and as doers and from their moral commitment to a more humane world. The ancient Greeks articulated a human ideal that helps capture the collective accomplishment of those included in this volume. The ideal for a human life comprised a fusion of what the Greeks called *logos* and *ergon*, the harmony of word and deed, of idea and practice. The meaning of an idea comes to life in action and conduct, just as action and conduct only become intelligent if informed by ideas. The persons featured in this book show us how to strive for such a harmony, itself an enduring educational aim across cultures and eras.

PART I

Foundational Perspectives on the Aims of Education