

**THE HAPPY AND SUFFERING STUDENT? ROUSSEAU'S *EMILE* AND THE PATH NOT TAKEN IN PROGRESSIVE EDUCATIONAL THOUGHT**

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**ABSTRACT:** One of the mantras of progressive education is that genuine learning ought to be exciting and pleasurable, rather than joyless and painful. To a significant extent, Jean-Jacques Rousseau is associated with this mantra. In a theme of *Emile* that is often neglected in the educational literature, however, Rousseau states “to suffer is the first thing [Emile] ought to learn and the thing he will most need to know.” Through a discussion of Rousseau’s argument about the importance of an education in suffering, I argue that the reception of Rousseau by progressives suggests a detrimental misstep in the history of educational thought, a misstep that we should recognize and correct today. We ought to revive the progressive tradition of distinguishing valuable educational pains from harmful ones, even if we disagree with Rousseau’s distinctions.

“Progressive education” is a phrase that encompasses a variety of educational ideas and practices that shaped the course of American schooling in the twentieth century. The early principles of the progressive movement in education included broadening the curriculum, aligning it to the needs of diverse students, and using schooling to democratize society.<sup>1</sup> Though no single definition suffices since progressivism has been invoked in a vast array of educational reforms, a number of crude slogans that highlight its major features have surfaced in its history: schools must educate the whole child (not just the mind), learning must be student-centered (rather than subject-centered or teacher-centered) because the child’s interests and developmental maturity are to limit and guide all instruction, students must be physically active and intellectually engaged (rather than inert and passive), students’ motivation must be intrinsic (while external coercion must be avoided), learning must involve discovery and experimentation (not drilling and learning by rote), and genuine learning is exciting and pleasurable (not joyless

or painful). Though many scholars have attempted to show that these contrasts largely involve false dichotomies, many of these progressive mantras stubbornly persist and continue to influence teachers' beliefs and practices.

The final contrast that I listed – the idea that learning can and should be pleasurable and painless – is my main concern in this paper. It is this theme in progressive educational thought that has given rise to the widely held belief that frustration, confusion, distress and other painful moments in education inhibit learning. This belief has led to contemporary classrooms in which students are denied meaningful challenges and deprived of important educational experiences.<sup>ii</sup> The idea that learning can and ought to be effortless and painless has had a long history in progressive education<sup>iii</sup> and I show below that this idea is often traced to Jean-Jacques Rousseau – with good reason – just as all progressive educational thought can be understood as his legacy. I argue in this paper, however, that Rousseau's views on happiness and pain in education are far more complex than the simplistic ideal of painless and joyful learning that has enthralled many progressivists. I hope to show that Rousseau's position on educational pain presents a neglected path in progressive educational thought. Rousseau suggests that educational theorists ought to concern themselves with identifying and eliminating harmful or useless pains while encouraging and facilitating students' experiences of beneficial ones. I return to this argument in the final section of the paper. First I briefly discuss Rousseau's legacy in progressive education and reconstruct Rousseau's theory of the educational value of pain.

### **Happiness, Suffering, and Rousseau's Legacy in Progressive Educational Thought**

The influence of Rousseau's *Emile* is so great in education that John Darling has declared (with a nod to Whitehead's famous statement about how Western philosophy is a series of

footnotes to Plato) that “child-centered educational theory is a series of footnotes to Rousseau.”<sup>iv</sup> Critics of progressivism have looked to *Emile* to account for damaging ideas in contemporary schooling and educational theory. For example, B.F. Skinner wrote a short polemic blaming Rousseau’s influence for the entrenched and deeply flawed psychological account of “the free and happy student.”<sup>v</sup> Like Skinner, Charles Sykes draws a direct line of culpability from Rousseau to educational reformers and radicals of twentieth century American education.<sup>vi</sup> Another critic of progressive education, E.D. Hirsch, Jr. blames the romantic impulses of anti-knowledge progressive educators on Rousseau.<sup>vii</sup> In short, these authors and others have argued that progressive educational thought is overly concerned with ensuring that students feel good about themselves and are enjoy learning. The net effect of these beliefs is that educators shield students from distress that might arise from engaging in meaningful challenges and encountering valuable criticism.

The critics of progressivism are not alone, however, in looking to *Emile* to better understand contemporary educational theory and practice. In recent decades, a progressive critique of Rousseau can be found that has focused most often on two issues. First, Rousseau was not a progressive on the issue of women.<sup>viii</sup> Second, as freedom and anti-authoritarianism became prominent mantras in progressive education, especially among advocates of free-schooling and deschooling, many educational theorists recognized that Jean-Jacques was far more manipulative and controlling of *Emile* than those who had been inspired by *Emile* might have hoped.<sup>ix</sup>

My concern in this paper is not to argue that there is a strict causal relationship between Rousseau’s educational thought and today’s educational practice. Indeed, scholars have offered compelling arguments that *Emile* neither was read carefully by proponents of progressive education nor was critically influential in the early American progressive movement.<sup>x</sup> I am not

suggesting that if only we were better readers of Rousseau, our educational practices would be better (as though *Emile* contains within it some secret that will dispel all of our educational problems). Nevertheless, Rousseau continues to be a prominent part of a particular narrative about education: the movement away from “traditional” education to “progressive” education. Scholars continue to invoke Rousseau’s name and many teacher education programs persist in presenting portions of *Emile* to future teachers along with other documents by “progressive” thinkers such as Dewey and Freire who are enlisted to support this historical narrative. As I have argued above, this historical narrative has resulted in practices that shield students from potentially valuable educational distress. I therefore believe that it is worthwhile to revisit and reconstruct this narrative and *Emile* presents an excellent resource to do so.

Curiously, neither progressivists nor the critics of progressivism who invoke Rousseau to support their educational theories have wrestled with a prominent theme in *Emile* that runs counter to the contemporary educational ethos: Rousseau’s countless remarks on the value and centrality of suffering in Emile’s education. Indeed, both admirers and critics of Rousseau’s educational thought typically read him as advocating that the best education ought to entail a happy childhood, a time in which children can partake in the delights appropriate to their age.<sup>xi</sup> Rousseau is taken to argue that there are various practices of “traditional” education by which the child is made miserable by subjecting him<sup>xii</sup> to ideas and practices that inhibit, compromise and destroy his natural interests, desires and joys.<sup>xiii</sup> Rousseau certainly wants Emile to be, above all, happy. Rousseau complains that typically “the age of gaiety passes amidst tears, punishments, threats, and slavery” and he tells his readers to avoid the “barbarous education which sacrifices the present to an uncertain future, which burdens a child with chains of every sort and begins by making him miserable in order to prepare him from afar for I know not what

pretended happiness which it is to be believed he will never enjoy.”<sup>xiv</sup> Rousseau’s rhetorical flourishes continue in this passage as he admonishes his readers to “love childhood; promote its games, its pleasures, its amiable instinct.” Indeed, Emile’s education must occur away from negative, corruptive influences, and his soul is metaphorically fenced in to protect him (38). Without doubt, Rousseau was concerned with Emile’s happiness, and it is appropriate to say, as Tal Gilead does in this issue of *Educational Theory*, that “*Emile* is not simply a book about education; it is a book about education for happiness.”<sup>xv</sup>

Rousseau does not conceive of Emile’s happiness as merely the enjoyment of pleasure. In fact, Rousseau was generally critical of the Enlightenment view that happiness is tantamount to pleasure, and understood happiness to involve a deeper sentiment in an enduring psychological state.<sup>xvi</sup> Happiness for Rousseau in many ways resembles the concept of happiness as well-being (or flourishing), *eudaimonia*, that was prominent in the Greek thought that influenced him so heavily. A person is judged happy not because he feels much pleasure but because he lives well. For Rousseau, living well stems from maintaining one’s desires and faculties in equilibrium. Rousseau writes, “the closer to his natural condition man has stayed, the smaller is the difference between his faculties and his desires, and consequently the less removed he is from being happy” (81).<sup>xvii</sup> Yet it seems to me that Rousseau also values the subjective feelings of pleasure in his conception of happiness, especially for children. According to him, happiness is both achievable and enjoyable.<sup>xviii</sup> Although it might sometimes seem that when Rousseau speaks of happiness he refers only to achieving the equilibrium characteristic of well-being, his emphasis on promoting the pleasures of childhood (as quoted in the previous paragraph) suggests that subjective, positive feelings have an important place in his account of Emile’s education. Rousseau,

evidently, is willing to meet modern, Enlightenment conceptions of happiness as the enjoyment of pleasure partway.

Jean-Jacques is therefore concerned that Emile be happy both in the sense of maintaining an equilibrium between his faculties and desires and in enjoying the activities in which he takes part. Although Emile will experience much joy in the midst of his education, Rousseau pointedly writes of him, “to suffer is the first thing he ought to learn and the thing he will most need to know” (78). Why does Rousseau insist that Emile must suffer if he goes to great length to condemn the flagrant and subtle ways that children are coerced, oppressed and otherwise made miserable through traditional education and rearing? I attempt to answer that question by isolating three connected elements of Emile’s education in suffering. First, and most importantly, he must learn to bear the arbitrary blows of nature and endure the inevitable turmoil associated with social attachments. Second, Emile suffers because it is instrumentally useful in facilitating learning. Third, Emile must experience compassion, which involves suffering at the suffering of another, because compassion provides a positive and stable foundation for social relations.

### **Bearing the Yoke of Necessity in the Physical and Social Worlds**

Rousseau’s explicit statement about the importance of Emile’s suffering was already foreshadowed at the outset of *Emile*. The illustration that Rousseau commissioned for Book I depicts Achilles as an infant, plunged into the Styx by his mother, Thetis, to make him invulnerable (36 and Frontispiece). This illustration can be understood to represent the complex relationship between protecting Emile from suffering, and thus allowing him to be happy, and causing him to suffer in order to bring that state about. On the one hand, Emile’s happiness will be more likely if he becomes immune to the twists of fate that cause most men suffering – just

as Achilles was made nearly invincible to the attacks of enemy warriors. On the other hand, to get to that point, Emile must suffer through the act of plunging; just as baby Achilles was immunized through suffering a submersion, unable to breathe and terrified of drowning, Jean-Jacques identifies various physical and emotional pains to which he subjects Emile.<sup>xix</sup> Happiness may be the goal of education for Rousseau, but unmitigated joy is not the means to that end. Emile must learn to accept and endure the suffering that is inevitably part of the human condition – and learning to accept and endure suffering turns out to depend on experiencing a great deal of it.

The education in suffering is raised so often in the first two books of *Emile* that it is somewhat surprising that the book is taken to depict the “happy and free student.” Since man is subjected to harsh elements, injuries, fears and various other pains in the physical environment, Rousseau often repeats that learning how to suffer well is the key to living well: “he among us who best knows how to bear the goods and the ills of this life is to my taste the best raised” (42).<sup>xx</sup> Rousseau contends that one can overcome suffering by habituating oneself to it, “the more [Emile] gets used to the sufferings which can strike him, the more, as Montaigne would say, the sting of strangeness is taken from them, and also the more his soul is made invulnerable and hard” (131). Enduring suffering is the only valuable habit in Emile’s childhood.<sup>xxi</sup> Indeed, it is one of the great accomplishments of Emile’s education that he bears the yoke of necessity from birth (161)<sup>xxii</sup> and the education in suffering must begin at birth because “a child will bear changes that a man would not bear” (47).<sup>xxiii</sup> Rousseau writes later in the book, “the hard life, once turned into habit, multiplies agreeable sensations; the soft life prepares for an infinity of unpleasant ones” (129). Thus, the desire to shield a child from pain will be ill-fated; it “is not teaching him to bear suffering; it is training him to feel it” (42).<sup>xxiv</sup>

Rousseau concedes that children should be protected from the extreme dangers of their environments, but he also requires that appropriate dangers should be sought out. Jean-Jacques would keep Emile from a rocky area where he would need to be protected from falling, for example; instead, however, he would take Emile to a field so that he may run and fall without the need for protection by adults.<sup>xxv</sup> Rousseau emphasizes that children will accommodate themselves to the necessity of pain, should their caregivers react appropriately to their early experiences of it. The pain itself is an event that can be assimilated without much trouble, for Rousseau, because our reaction to the pain is relatively independent of the pain itself. When Emile hurts himself, Jean-Jacques does not “fuss around him as though [he] was alarmed;” rather, since “the harm is done; it is a necessity that he endure it; all [his] fussing would only serve to frighten him more and increase his sensitivity. At bottom, it is less the blow than the fear which torments when one has been hurt” (77). Rousseau writes that “bearing slight pains without terror, one gradually learns to bear great pains” (78). In these two quotes, Rousseau emphasizes the need to overcome not only physical suffering but also the emotional suffering of fear and terror. Fear is a byproduct of suffering physical pain but it also arises without it; for example, children fear darkness and are distressed in encounters with unfamiliar masks or “ugly, disgusting, peculiar animals” (63).<sup>xxvi</sup>

Crucial to Rousseau’s advocacy of an education in suffering is that the particular type of suffering that Emile experiences is of utmost importance. In the context of the quotations above, Rousseau advocates letting children suffer the various pains and discomforts that arise in their interactions with the world around them. The pains arise through playing outdoors, through walking barefoot, through the experience of extreme temperatures and through fear of the unfamiliar.<sup>xxvii</sup> These are all pains from which caring parents and educators might shield their



students, but Rousseau argues that these pains are to be valued, especially since in their absence caregivers end up making the children susceptible to even greater suffering in the future. Though habituation to suffering is essential, not just any type of pain will serve the desired educational function. As I noted above, Rousseau would not subject children to the boredom of rote learning and the traditional “barbarous” education that enchains students through threats and coercion. Further, Rousseau is not advocating that children experience the pain of punishment (79), for punishment teaches children only that they must obey someone more powerful than they are; punishment teaches servitude and domination – a lesson that Rousseau emphasizes must be avoided (66, 68). Rousseau argues that punishment must not be meted out upon children by authority figures but he also insists that children not be spared from any unpleasant consequences of their actions (101). Thus, the child who breaks his window should not suffer censure but rather an intemperate room (100). Jean-Jacques has been careful to allow Emile to suffer only certain pains; he tells Emile later in his life, “of the ills to which [nature] subjects you and from which I could protect you, you have felt only those which could harden you against other ills. You have never suffered any of them except to avoid greater ones” (443). Rousseau has carefully distinguished valuable pains – physical and emotional pains that result from interaction with the physical world – from useless or damaging pains – arbitrary rebukes, beatings and threats, for example. The pains that Emile experiences help build immunity to other, greater pains that cannot be avoided as Emile matures. By building tolerance to these pains, Rousseau hopes that Emile will be spared from the psychic distress that disturbs the equilibrium between his desires and faculties. Unhappiness results from distress due to imagining that it was possible to avoid pain and from lamenting and fearing it. Far better, Rousseau suggests, is to recognize that

occasional suffering is inevitable, to accept it, build tolerance to it and overcome it, and to distinguish pains that can be avoided or mollified from those that cannot.

The education in suffering is not only aimed at bearing the forces of nature and the physical limits of the human condition, however. By accepting the pains that result from interactions with the natural world as inevitable, Emile's education is designed to help him similarly endure the social world, the pains of which are far worse. Rousseau writes, "the fate of man is to suffer at all times... Lucky to know only physical ills in his childhood—ills far less cruel, far less painful than are the other kinds of ills and which far more rarely make us renounce life than do the others! One does not kill oneself for the pains of gout. We pity the lot of childhood, and it is our own that should be pitied. Our greatest ills come to us from ourselves" (48). In order for Emile to partake in uncorrupted social relations, he must not entertain the idea of having too much of an effect on others and he must not allow others to have too strong an effect on himself. He must learn to endure the suffering associated with the disintegration or challenges of social relationships with the same equanimity with which he bears extreme weather.

Rousseau describes the failure of a man who is happy at one moment and then devastated in the next because of reading a letter bearing bad news. Rousseau contends that the bad news in the letter has no true effect on the man's being: "senseless man, what ill has this piece of paper done to you then? ... Altogether, what has it changed in you yourself to put you in the state in which I see you? ... O man, draw your existence up within yourself, and you will no longer be miserable... do not rebel against the hard law of necessity" (83). Later in *Emile*, Jean-Jacques presents a similar test to see if Emile can deal with adverse changes in his human relationships. Once Emile has fallen in love with Sophie, and Emile has not seen Sophie for two days, Jean-

Jacques enters his room holding a letter and asks him “what would you do if you were informed that Sophie is dead?” (442). Emile becomes enraged at the thought and Jean-Jacques says that Emile has failed to become invulnerable like Achilles – he is now subject to various passions and attachments; “you were bound to nothing other than the human condition, and now you are bound to all the attachments you have given to yourself. In learning to desire, you have made yourself the slave of your desires” (443). Jean-Jacques’ test of Emile leads to an eight page (in Bloom’s translation) lecture on mastering one’s desires;<sup>xxviii</sup> “extend the law of necessity to moral things. Learn to lose what can be taken from you; learn to abandon everything when virtue decrees it, to put yourself above events and to detach your heart lest it be lacerated by them” (446). He tells Emile, “you know how to suffer and die. You know how to endure the law of necessity in physical ills, but you have not yet imposed laws on the appetites of your heart, and the disorder of our lives arises from our affections far more than from our needs... the more he increases his attachments, the more he multiplies his pain” (443-4).<sup>xxix</sup>

Rousseau’s problematic conception of human emotion and well-being notwithstanding (his view of the ideal emotional reaction to the loss of a loved one seems to me deeply flawed), it is clear that Emile must learn to accept both the death and suspicion of death of a loved one without great despair. Rousseau asks, what good is Emile’s early education in enduring physical suffering if he cannot endure the suffering that accompanies social relations? Comprehending that social attachments are subject to the same cruel twists of fate as is one’s health is key to attaining the only legitimate type of happiness that is possible for humans. Emile’s education aims at an equilibrium that is dangerously disturbed by immoderate emotional reactions; thus an education for happiness must cultivate moderation and Rousseau argues that it may do so through presenting various opportunities for enduring physical and social suffering.<sup>xxx</sup>

### **Suffering as Instrumentally Useful in Learning**

Among the suffering to which Emile is subjected is a subset of physical and emotional pain that accompanies many of Emile's most important lessons. Rousseau holds that learning can be facilitated if it is accompanied by a strong physical and affective response. This instrumentally beneficial role of pain in education emerges in several places in *Emile* and I will discuss three incidents here. In the episode in which Emile plants beans, only to have them uprooted by the gardener whose garden Emile has unwittingly made use of, Emile receives his first moral lesson. Jean-Jacques carefully orchestrates the scenario so that the gardener will destroy the products of Emile's labor. Knowing that Emile will soon receive a harsh blow, Jean-Jacques deepens Emile's sentiment of ownership of the beans by telling him that the product of his labor belongs to him (98). Jean-Jacques has set up Emile to learn the lesson of justice through emotional anguish suffered at the destruction of his dearly loved beans. Emile reacts as his tutor had predicted, "the first sentiment of injustice comes to shed its sad bitterness in [Emile's heart]. Tears flow in streams. The grieving child fills the air with moans and cries" (99). The scene ends happily, however, with Emile and the gardener reaching a compromise and Emile learning about justice and property. In presenting this vital lesson, Rousseau suggests that deep emotional investment followed by emotional distress improves children's ability to recognize and comprehend their lessons; the lessons must be experienced, not given in words (99-100). The dramatic account Rousseau depicts, however, is not mere benign or joyful activity, as later progressivists will come to hold dear. Rather, it is activity that entails significant distress. It seems that the progressivists turned Rousseau's ideas about children's interests upside down. The progressivists valued students' deep interest and internal motivation and believed that such

experiences were to be positive and joyous. Rousseau, in contrast, suggests that a child's interest might be heightened not only by his excitement and pleasure but also, and perhaps more importantly, by his emotional anguish. Emile is interested in the fate of his beans and the lesson he learns is presented as more meaningful, more effective, more likely to have a lasting effect and be remembered because of how much it pains him. In addition, and as with the following two examples, Rousseau values disturbing, unexpected events in learning. It is the unexpected destruction of the beans, an event for which Emile had no preparation, which causes the pain that Emile experiences. Given this bean example, and the next two, it becomes clear that Rousseau believes the conditions for learning are often optimal when suffering is acute.

Emile's lesson in geography occurs in much the same way as the bean project (180-181). Emile is taken on a long walk and Jean-Jacques contrives that they become lost. Just as the younger Emile cried over his destroyed beans, he cries now as well as he suffers physical and emotional distress – fear, thirst and hunger (181). According to Rousseau, from a pedagogical standpoint, the situation is now ideal as it ensures that Emile is quite keen on learning how to use the sun's position to calculate his location (a lesson in which he had no interest the previous day when he saw no use for it and had no emotional investment in it). Like the situation with the beans, this one ends happily. Emile is delighted to have figured out how to escape the forest and Jean-Jacques can revel in the fact that he has made Emile desire to learn a valuable lesson in geography.

Both the beans and the forest lesson highlight the fact that Rousseau understands mistakes to be a crucial part of learning. Though these two examples (and the next) contain incongruous and somewhat artificial surprises orchestrated by Jean-Jacques, the core idea behind these dramatic accounts is a relatively simple educational principle: learning occurs by

confronting the limits of what is understood and familiar.<sup>xxxii</sup> When children discover that there is something problematic about their course of action or thought, whether it be in the garden, in the forest, or elsewhere, they reside at a vital moment in learning, a moment in which they must invest their powers in devising a satisfactory solution. The pain helps direct their attention to what is unsatisfactory and the greater the intensity of this pain, the more determined students will be in their search for a resolution. Further, intense pain will more likely cause the lesson to be remembered and, thus, it need not be repeated. Emile must be subjected to these essential moments, Rousseau insists, though not by telling him explicitly that he is wrong: “if he makes a mistake, let him do so; do not correct his errors. Wait in silence until he is ready to see and correct them himself; or, at most, on a favorable occasion carry out some operation which will make him aware of them. If he never made mistakes, he would not learn so well” (171). Pain is instrumentally valuable in learning for Rousseau because, among other things, it is a byproduct of confronting one’s inadequacies and coming to understand when and why one has erred or failed; this pain can be powerful source of motivation to overcome inadequacy, it can be the well-spring of learning.

Just as Emile learns about property and geography through painful surprises, Rousseau suggests that the development of Emile’s character will best progress along similarly painful lines. Rousseau’s concern that Emile’s *amour-propre* not become corrupted and inflamed is central to *Emile* and the education of *amour-propre* resides at the core of Emile’s the encounter with the magician (172-175). Emile attends a local fair, and figures out that a magician is using magnetism to make a wax duck floating in water appear to follow his hand. Emile uses this knowledge to upstage the magician, which causes Emile’s pride to swell as he is praised. He has reached precisely the heights that Jean-Jacques desired for it is from great heights that one falls

farthest. Emile returns to the fair the next day to upstage the magician again. This time, however, the magician uses another means to command the duck and Emile is humiliated as he is laughed at and jeered during his futile attempts to appear clever.<sup>xxxii</sup> Rousseau writes, “how many mortifying consequences are attracted by the first movement of vanity! Young master, spy out this first movement with care. *If you know thus how to make humiliation and disgrace arise from it, be sure that a second movement will not come for a long time*” (175, my emphasis). When the nascent impulse to rank oneself above others arises (235), Rousseau advises that it must be met with crushing embarrassment and humiliation. Indeed, Rousseau writes that budding vanity is so dangerous that the humiliating encounter with the magician would be repeated in countless ways (245). Rousseau proceeds to offer a list of ways that Emile would be fooled, embarrassed and dejected at the hands of others because, Rousseau believes, only vanity must be curtailed by associating painful experiences with it.

Emile’s impulse to rank himself above others evolves out of Emile’s comparison of himself to others, a product of his awakening *amour-propre* (235). Limiting the corruption of his *amour-propre* is a central aim of Emile’s education and Rousseau identifies a way that Emile can compare himself to others without the desire to be recognized as better than they. At this vital stage of Emile’s education, a new type of suffering comes to play a role and all of Emile’s previous suffering will be understood to make this continued education possible.

### **Suffering at the Suffering of Others**

The necessity of Emile’s suffering has emerged in two connected ways in the preceding discussion. First, Emile receives an education in suffering because he must come to tolerate and endure the pain that is inevitably part of the human condition or a result of his actions. Second,

pain is pedagogically useful because it motivates Emile to address problematic aspects of himself or his understanding of the world by the sheer force of its unpleasantness. Both these aspects of suffering are Emile's affair – they are his pains. Yet Emile's education has always had an eye towards his relations with others and when Emile begins to compare himself to others, a third role for suffering enters into Emile's education, the pain he feels when he sees others suffer.

In Rousseau's understanding of social relations, the suffering of others is a central element in human sociability.<sup>xxxiii</sup> Rousseau writes, "we are attached to our fellows less by the sentiment of their pleasures than by the sentiment of their pains" and "it is our common miseries which turn our hearts to humanity" (221). When men begin to compare themselves to others, they might also regard others with envy. Envy is dangerous because it breeds competition and dissatisfaction with one's lot. Thus, Jean-Jacques has made Emile's entire education prepare him to feel compassion<sup>xxxiv</sup> as his primary social emotion. Rousseau advocates an education in compassion that proceeds through the prudent selection of objects that will arouse compassion; Rousseau asks rhetorically, "what is there to do other than offer the young man objects on which the expansive force of his heart can act?" (223). The educator's selection must be done with great care because exposing an adolescent to too much suffering will habituate him to it and it will cease to stir his heart (231). Importantly, the pain of others is not something that Emile must overcome, as he must his own suffering.<sup>xxxv</sup> Indeed it would be a failure of Emile's education were he to become habituated to others' suffering. Emile must suffer at the suffering of others because it presents a positive way that Emile can enter, and remain in, the social world.

Emile's education in suffering serves as the foundation for his compassion for others. It is only through his own experience of pain that Emile can recognize the pain of others and commiserate with them. Rousseau writes that "the man who did not know pain would know



neither the tenderness of humanity nor the sweetness of commiseration. His heart would be moved by nothing. He would not be sociable” (87). Since Emile was never shielded from suffering, he knows he is not exempt from that which others suffer. He recognizes that “all are condemned to death, all are subject to the miseries of life, to sorrow, ills, needs and pains of every kind” (222).

Emile will feel their suffering as his own, and say to himself, “it is in order not to suffer that I do not want him to suffer” (235). Importantly, he will judge their suffering, since not all suffering is worthy of compassion; “we must have pity for our species still more than for our neighbor, and pity for the wicked is a very great cruelty to men” (253). Emile’s compassion is socially positive because the pain Emile feels motivates action. Emile will not gawk at others who suffer. Rousseau writes, “I have not supposed that when he sees unhappy men, he would have only that sterile and cruel pity ... with the interest he takes in all men who are miserable, the means of ending their ills are never indifferent to him” (251).<sup>xxxvi</sup>

The pain of compassion is, for Rousseau, an essential aspect in Emile’s education for it allows him to become a social being without falling victim to modern man’s tendency to vice; it allows Emile’s *amour-propre* to develop in a socially beneficent way rather than in the pernicious direction that arises when men come to envy, command or dominate others.<sup>xxxvii</sup> Emile’s own suffering has allowed him to recognize that he is not exempt from the suffering of others and he will come to desire to live in a world in which unjust suffering is eradicated.

### **Progressive Educational Thought and the Lesson of *Emile***

Above I have attempted to reconstruct Rousseau’s position on educational suffering to account for his claim that “to suffer is the first thing [Emile] ought to learn and the thing he will

most need to know” (78). I hope that my analysis shows that Rousseau ought not to be mistaken for simplistically advocating happy, joyful learning. I stated in the introduction that my purpose in writing this paper was to identify a path not taken in progressive educational thought – a path that has led to the belief that educational pains are obstacles to learning and has resulted in denying students meaningful challenges and vital educational experiences.<sup>xxxviii</sup> Rousseau’s influence may be partly to blame for the current state of affairs – he certainly was concerned with Emile’s happiness and he often described joyful learning as ideal. Yet *Emile* must also be read as an argument for a distinction between useful and useless or harmful suffering in education. Useful suffering is that which enables students to appreciate and endure the limits and vagaries of the human condition; it is that which enables them to recognize and confront their errors and discomforts and formulate constructive responses to them; it is that which can heighten students’ interest; it is that which enables people to recognize the suffering of others and motivates them to act on their behalf. Useless or dangerous suffering is the artificial and arbitrary domination, punishment, and coercion foisted upon children, suffering that neither facilitates learning nor cultivates just social relations.

One may not agree with Rousseau’s classification of valuable and dangerous suffering in education. In my analysis of his account I have not evaluated it. Rather, I sought to explore the function of suffering in *Emile* in order to reveal a detrimental misstep in the history of progressive educational thought, a misstep that we would be wise to recognize and to correct today. We ought to follow in Rousseau’s footsteps not by accepting his conclusions about the educational pains necessary in learning but rather by engaging in the tradition of distinguishing the valuable educational pains from the harmful ones. Making mistakes often results in various kinds of distress. Students may become embarrassed of their mistakes; they may become anxious

or frustrated. This distress can inhibit learning. On the other hand, errors and the pain that often accompanies them are essential sources for learning. It is the sometimes painful fact of our ignorance that provides the foundation for learning. It is often painful confrontation with the horrors of which humans are capable that allows for moral development. The great challenge for educators today is twofold. First, educators must, like Rousseau, distinguish the valuable educational pains from the rest. Second, educators must create an environment in which students are equipped with the resources to persevere, overcome and, perhaps, relish in the distress involved in their education. If the progressivists inspired by Rousseau had drawn that conclusion from his work rather than the contention that education ought to be painless and joyful, Rousseau's contribution to educational theory and practice would have been far more positive.

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<sup>i</sup> On the early stages of progressive education, see Lawrence A. Cremin, *The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957* (New York: Knopf, 1961), viii-ix. See also Arthur Zilversmit,

*Changing Schools: Progressive Education Theory and Practice, 1930-1960* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 1-18.

<sup>ii</sup> The detrimental effect of teachers' commonly demonstrated concern to shield their students from pain was revealed most clearly in the Third International Mathematics and Science Study. Researchers observed American teachers shielding students from complex problems, instead preferring to teach through fast-paced, simple, leading questions. See James W. Stigler and James Hiebert, *The Teaching Gap: Best Ideas from the World's Teachers for Improving Education in the Classroom* (New York: Free Press, 1999), 30-31, 89-91. Fritz Oser's work is also especially valuable on this topic; see, for example, Fritz Oser, "Negative Morality and the Goals of Moral Education," in *Conflict, Contradiction, and Contrarian Elements in Moral Development and Education*, ed. Larry P.

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Nucci (Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2005). See also, Margaret M. Clifford, "Students Need Challenge, Not Easy Success," *Educational Leadership* 48, no. 1 (1990); Edward Kuhlman, *Agony in Education: The Importance of Struggle in the Process of Learning* (Westport, Conn.: Bergin & Garvey, 1994). On the educational ethos that generally holds that students must feel good about themselves in order to learn well, see Maureen Stout, *The Feel-Good Curriculum: The Dumbing-Down of America's Kids in the Name of Self-Esteem* (Cambridge, Mass.: Perseus Books, 2000); Kathryn Ecclestone and Dennis Hayes, *The Dangerous Rise of Therapeutic Education* (New York: Routledge, 2009); Frank Furedi, *Wasted: Why Education Isn't Educating* (London: Continuum, 2009), 167-93.

<sup>iii</sup> For example, William Kilpatrick contrasted the learning of the "old-type school" (based on a formal curriculum, memorization and drill that "made us think of the learning process as laborious and repellent") with "life's inherent learning" that "comes as such without effort, comes in fact automatically and stays on for use" Willain Heard Kilpatrick, "Guiding Principles for a More Adequate Educative Process," *The Educational Forum* 9, no. 3 (1945): 264. Kieran Egan, in his effort to highlight the centrality of Herbert Spencer's ideas to progressive education, writes that Spencer "presents learning as some kind of binary moral choice between the traditional, passive, forced, and vicious and the progressive, active, effortless, and pleasurable." Further, Egan contends that the modern followers of Spencer say, "Why, instead, do teachers become caught up forcing an artificial curriculum into children's minds using outdated methods, making the learning painful and inefficient for the child and the teaching frustrating and inefficient for the adult?" Kieran Egan, *Getting It Wrong from the Beginning: Our Progressivist Inheritance from Herbert Spencer, John Dewey, and Jean Piaget* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 45, see also 38, 67, 144. E.D Hirsch, Jr. similarly describes how the Romantic influence in American education has led to a stark opposition of joyful, nonacademic education to joyless, unnatural academics. E. D. Hirsch, *The Schools We Need and Why We Don't Have Them* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 79-80. William Reese notes that "progressivism was also part and parcel of wider reform movements in the Western world that sought the alleviation of pain and suffering and the promotion of moral and intellectual development." William J. Reese, "The Origins of Progressive Education," *History of Education Quarterly* 41, no. 1 (2001): 3.

<sup>iv</sup> John Darling, *Child-Centered Education and its Critics*. (London: Paul Chapman, 1994): 16. To offer but two more examples, Reuben Palm has noted that that progressive education "has been used to designate a theory and method of education based on principles set forth by Rousseau" and Diane Ravitch has described *Emile* as "the seminal text of the child-centered movement" Reuben Palm, "The Origins of Progressive Education," *The*

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*Elementary School Journal* 40, no. 6 (1940): 448; Diane Ravitch, *Left Back: A Century of Failed School Reforms* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), 169.

<sup>v</sup> B. F. Skinner, "The Free and Happy Student," *The Phi Delta Kappan* 55, no. 1 (1973). Elsewhere Skinner credits Rousseau because he "did not fear the power of positive reinforcement" and cites Rousseau's explicit remarks about the illusory nature of Emile's freedom (on p. 120 in Bloom's translation). B.F. Skinner, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* (New York: Alfred. A. Knopf, 1971), 40; see also 124.

<sup>vi</sup> Charles J. Sykes, *Dumbing Down Our Kids: Why America's Children Feel Good About Themselves but Can't Read, Write, or Add* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 201-02.

<sup>vii</sup> Hirsch claims that "the theories that have dominated American education for the past fifty years stem ultimately from Jean Jacques Rousseau" and adds that Dewey has received too much attention and Rousseau too little. E. D. Hirsch, *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know*, Updated and expanded ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1988), 118, see also xiv.

<sup>viii</sup> The feminist critique of Rousseau goes back to the eighteenth century with Mary Wollstonecraft's publication of *A Vindication of the Rights of the Woman* in 1792. The late twentieth century has featured a significant amount of scholarly work that examines Rousseau's conception of women's nature and women's education. The most important example of such work is Jane Roland Martin, *Reclaiming a Conversation: The Ideal of the Educated Woman* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 38-69. See also, for example, John Darling, "Child-Centred, Gender-Centred: A Criticism of Progressive Curriculum Theory from Rousseau to Plowden," *Oxford Review of Education* 12, no. 1 (1986). Leo Damrosch points out that Rousseau's views on women were, in some ways, already old-fashioned when he wrote them (more than thirty years before Mary Wollstonecraft's strong critique). Though many women applauded that Rousseau granted them authority over the home (undoubtedly an improvement for many women), his fellow *philosophes* Voltaire, d'Alembert and Diderot held much more progressive views on women. See Leopold Damrosch, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Restless Genius* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2005), 340.

<sup>ix</sup> A.S. Neill, for example, recognized and disapproved of the authoritarianism of Emile's tutor; see Scott Walter, "The 'Flawed Parent': A Reconsideration of Rousseau's 'Emile' And Its Significance for Radical Education in the United States," *British Journal of Educational Studies* 44, no. 3 (1996): 262, citing Alexander Sutherland Neill and Jonathan Croall, *All the Best, Neill: Letters from Summerhill* (London: A. Deutsch, 1983), 184. See also Eliyahu

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Rosenow, "Rousseau's 'Emile', an Anti-Utopia," *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 28(3), 1980: 212-224; and Eugene O. Iheoma, "Rousseau's Views on Teaching," *Journal of Educational Thought*, 31 (April) 1997: 69-81.

Olivier Michaud, in this issue of *Educational Theory*, provides a valuable analysis of the complex nature of authority in *Emile*.

<sup>x</sup> Egan argues that the key early influence on progressive education was not Rousseau but Herbert Spencer. Spencer refused to read Rousseau, though Egan notes the general influence. Egan, *Getting It Wrong from the Beginning: Our Progressivist Inheritance from Herbert Spencer, John Dewey, and Jean Piaget*, 8, 12-13 & 24. On the misreading of *Emile* and the limited influence of Rousseau on early American progressive education, see William Kessen, "Rousseau's Children," *Daedalus* 107, no. 3 (1978): 161-63. Oelkers provides a valuable account of Rousseau's educational thought in the midst of which (chapter 5, "The Reception of Rousseau's 'Natural Education') he distinguishes the influence of Rousseau's complex educational thought (which was limited) from Rousseau's rhetoric about education (which was canonized and had a widespread influence in Western countries). By the nineteenth century, Oelkers argues, "with historical distance increasing, distortion was compounded and Rousseau could look to be the founder of a kind of education which he had never formulated." Jürgen Oelkers, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, Continuum Library of Educational Thought V. 13 (London; New York: Continuum International Pub. Group, 2008), 200.

<sup>xi</sup> Consider Darling's comment that Rousseau's portrayal of childhood "has since become clichéd as 'the age of harmless mirth.'" Darling does not disagree with the general tone of the assessment, however. He continues, "education and child-rearing, Rousseau thought, should do nothing to change this agreeable condition: children's fun should not be unnecessarily curtailed; they should not be subjected to threats, punishments and other vexations," John Darling, *Child-Centred Education and Its Critics* (London: P. Chapman Pub., 1994), 6-7.

<sup>xii</sup> I will use "he" to describe the child in Rousseau's educational theory in this paper, as I am drawing on the ideas that describe Emile's education, rather than Sophie's.

<sup>xiii</sup> In the educational literature, I am aware of only two exceptions that pay significant attention to the importance of suffering in Emile's education: Mark Jonas, "When Teachers Must Let Education Hurt: Rousseau and Nietzsche on Compassion and the Educational Value of Suffering," *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 44, no. 1 (2010); Andrea English and Barbara Stengel, "Exploring Fear: Rousseau, Dewey and Freire on Fear and Learning," *Educational Theory* (forthcoming). Jonas innovatively incorporates Jean-Jacques' pedagogical encounters with Emile into

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Rousseau's theory of compassion (typically scholars focus more narrowly on Rousseau's comments on compassion in Book IV of *Emile* and the *Second Discourse*). Jonas argues that the lesson we might draw from Rousseau is that we must overcome our own compassion for our students because their suffering may be essential to their development. English and Stengel make an effort similar to my own in that they revisit some of the seminal thinkers in the history of progressive education with the intent of complicating the often simplistic dismissal of students' negative experiences. (English and Stengel's analysis of Rousseau focuses on one negative emotion, fear, specifically.)

<sup>xiv</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile: or On Education*, trans. Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979): 79.

Subsequent references to *Emile* will be parenthetical, in-text.

<sup>xv</sup> Tal Gilead, "Rousseau, Happiness and the Economic Approach to Education," *Educational Theory*. Consider also Salkever's argument that Rousseau's works form a coherent whole around the question of what conditions are conducive to happiness, Stephen G. Salkever, "Rousseau & the Concept of Happiness," *Polity* 11, no. 1 (1978).

<sup>xvi</sup> See *Ibid.*: 34; Darrin M. McMahon, *Happiness: A History* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2005), 236-37.

Rousseau writes, "If at first the multitude and the variety of entertainments appear to contribute to happiness, if the uniformity of a steady life at first appears boring, upon taking a better look one finds, on the contrary, that the sweetest habit of soul consists in a moderation of enjoyment which leaves little opening for desire and disgust. The restlessness of desire produces curiosity and inconstancy. The emptiness of turbulent pleasure produces boredom" (229).

<sup>xvii</sup> One key to establishing a balance between faculties and desires is to limit a child's imagination. See Amy Shuffelton's contribution to this issue of *Educational Theory* for a thoughtful qualified defense of Rousseau's controversial position on imagination.

<sup>xviii</sup> Rousseau writes of Emile's education in adolescence, "I shall not seek a distant happiness for him at the expense of the present. I want him to be happy not once but always, if it is possible" (326-7).

<sup>xix</sup> The figure of Achilles may be relevant in another way as well. Though Achilles was nearly invincible in battle, he was quite vulnerable to the opinion of others. Indeed, in Homer's *Iliad*, Agamemnon's slight led to Achilles to such rage and despair that he almost allowed the entire Greek army to be destroyed. It seems to me that Jean-Jacques plunges Emile repeatedly with the hope that Emile will be able to withstand others' opinions even better than Achilles could withstand enemy warriors on the battlefield. (Achilles was fortunate to have been plunged only once

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while Emile must suffer many plungings!) Further, the comparison to Achilles might show the impossibility of the success of Emile's education. Just as Achilles was psychologically vulnerable and not entirely invulnerable physically (as the heel by which Thetis held him when he was submerged in the Styx remained vulnerable), Emile's education will never fully protect him from the vagaries of the human condition, however much Jean-Jacques hopes. Even in the fifth and final book of *Emile*, Emile never becomes completely immune to suffering (the primary example of this is Emile's failure to respond well to the false news of Sophie's death; a point to which I will return later). Emile's incomplete education is also a central premise of Rousseau's unfinished sequel to *Emile*, in which the opening event is Emile's despair at the collapse of his relationship with Sophie. This event causes him to revisit the teachings of his tutor about accepting one's fate. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Emile and Sophie, or the Solitaires," trans. Christopher Kelly, in *Emile: Or on Education (Includes Emile and Sophie, or the Solitaires): The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, ed. & trans. Christopher Kelly (Hanover: Dartmouth College, University Press of New England, 2009), 685-721.

<sup>xx</sup> Consider also Rousseau's remarks, "naturally man knows how to suffer with constancy and dies in peace" (55) and "we suffer more the less we know how to suffer; and we give ourselves more torment in curing our maladies than we would have in enduring them" (82). In Book IV, Rousseau writes "whoever does not know how to endure a bit of suffering ought to expect to suffer much" (281). At that stage, Emile is also to suffer through unsatisfied sexual urges (333-4); this sort of suffering is vital to Emile's self-mastery that helps him maintain an equilibrium central to a happiness that does not degenerate into hedonism. On the education to self-mastery in *Emile* see Mark Jonas, "When Teachers Must Let Education Hurt."

<sup>xxi</sup> "The only habit useful to children is to subject themselves without difficulty to the necessity of things" (160). Alas, Rousseau is not always consistent in his remarks. Earlier in *Emile* he states explicitly that "the only habit that a child should be allowed is to contract none" (63). Perhaps the difference between the two comments is due to the fact that they occur at different stages of Emile's education, infancy and childhood, in Books I and II respectively.

<sup>xxii</sup> Bearing the yoke of necessity involves more than suffering. It involves, for example, recognizing limits, distinguishing the possible from the impossible, accepting responsibility for one's actions and, after childhood, understanding one's duties.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Rousseau also writes, "constancy and firmness, like the other virtues, are apprenticeships of childhood" (131).



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<sup>xxiv</sup> Since the education in suffering must start in infancy, Rousseau continually emphasizes that babies must not be overly indulged. In a passage that returns to the idea of Achilles' invulnerability, Rousseau writes of mothers who carry their care to "excess": "hoping to exempt [her child] from the laws of nature, she keeps hard blows away from him. She preserves him for a moment from a few discomforts without thinking about how many mishaps and perils she is thereby accumulating for him to bear later... Thetis, to make her son invulnerable, plunged him, according to the fable, in the water of the Styx. This allegory is a lovely one, and it is clear. The cruel mothers of whom I speak do otherwise: by dint of plunging their children in softness, they prepare them for suffering" (47). Rousseau also writes, "one thinks only of preserving one's child. That is not enough. One ought to teach him to preserve himself as a man, to bear the blows of fate, to brave opulence and poverty, to live, if he has to, in freezing Iceland or on Malta's burning rocks" (42).

<sup>xxv</sup> In the field "let him run and frisk about; let him fall a hundred times a day. So much the better. That way he will learn how to get up sooner. The well-being of freedom makes up for many wounds. My pupil will often have bruises. But, in compensation, he will always be gay. If your pupils have fewer bruises, they are always hindered, always enchained, always sad" (78). Likewise, the reader is later informed that Emile will run barefoot in all seasons and Jean-Jacques will take care only that the glass be removed (139).

<sup>xxvi</sup> For a critical reading of the habituation to fear in Emile's education, see the aforementioned article, English and Stengel, "Exploring Fear: Rousseau, Dewey and Freire on Fear and Learning."

<sup>xxvii</sup> In addition to the aforementioned comments about playing in the field and running barefoot, Rousseau notes that children will play in the snow until their fingers are numb and cold: "the freedom I give my pupil amply compensates him for the slight discomforts to which I leave him exposed" (87). Rousseau also advises to habituate children to extreme cold and hot temperatures in their baths (62).

<sup>xxviii</sup> As Emile enters adulthood, the tutor no longer needs to hide his manipulation. The veil is lifted in this episode about Sophie; in contrast, it was crucial that Emile viewed his earlier suffering as inevitable consequences of his action or of the human condition generally.

<sup>xxix</sup> "Restrain your heart within the limits of your condition. Study and know these limits. However narrow they may be, a man is not unhappy as long as he closes himself up within them" (445).

<sup>xxx</sup> The stoic influence on Rousseau seems evident here. The stoics would perform what Pierre Hadot has called spiritual exercises that required meditation upon various kinds of suffering that might arise through unexpected

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twists of fate or inevitable tragedies like death or sickness. See Pierre Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002), 137. How lucky the stoics were that they were able to choose to subject themselves to these exercises in contrast to Emile who is forced to meditate on Sophie's death involuntarily! Perhaps the difficult matter of Rousseau's intention in writing *Emile* is at issue here (as it is throughout the book). The depiction of Emile's forced meditation might not be a program for educators to copy but rather may serve as a dramatic example designed to encourage readers to undertake their own meditative exercises.

<sup>xxx</sup> For two attempts to reposition these negative encounters as central to learning see Gert J.J. Biesta, "How Difficult Should Education Be?," *Educational Theory* 51, no. 4 (2001); Dietrich Benner and Andrea English, "Critique and Negativity: Towards the Pluralisation of Critique in Educational Practice, Theory and Research," *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 38, no. 3 (2004).

<sup>xxxii</sup> In the encounter with the magician, Rousseau does not explicitly state that Jean-Jacques orchestrated the entire event. Rousseau later responded to a critic that the situation was entirely foreseen. See Bloom's note (487, n6).

<sup>xxxiii</sup> Rousseau had offered an earlier iteration of this idea in his *Second Discourse*: "pity is a natural sentiment which... contributes to the mutual preservation of the entire species. It is pity that carries us without reflection to the assistance of those we see suffer" Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality among Men," in *The Discourses and Other Early Political Writings*, ed. Victor Gourevitch (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 154.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> As is common in the scholarship on Rousseau's theory of pity, I use "compassion" rather than "pity" because of the taint of condescension that pity has acquired in the twentieth century.

<sup>xxxv</sup> A tension exists here in that Emile must not pity himself but must pity others. Mary Nichols argues that Emile's education in pity seriously threatens Emile's happiness: "to the extent that a man identifies with the sufferings of mankind, he may come to fear death. To the extent that he rejoices that he does not suffer from the miseries he pities, he may be led to pride." Nichols contends that Rousseau offers the education in religion and love to restore the balance to Emile, though these educations ultimately prove incomplete as well. Mary P. Nichols, "Rousseau's Novel Education in the *Emile*," *Political Theory* 13, no. 4 (1985): 554.

<sup>xxxvi</sup> Rousseau's advocacy of the social importance of compassion has found some support among educational theorists. See, for example, Mitchell M. Masters and Mitch Holifield, "Rousseau Revisited: Compassion as an Essential Element in Democratic Education," *Education* 116, no. 4 (1996). Despite Masters and Holifield's often

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insightful reconstruction of the role of compassion in Emile's education, they seem to me to draw the implausible conclusion that Rousseau would endorse limits on the state's authority over education and would support the elimination of all forms of patriotic and nationalistic education. The Rousseau of *The Government of Poland* and *The Social Contract* would certainly not endorse this conclusion. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Considerations on the Government of Poland and on Its Projected Reformation" and "Of the Social Contract" in *Rousseau: The Social Contract and Other Later Political Writings*, ed. & trans. Victor Gourevitch (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 177-260; 39-152. For a superb treatment of seemingly opposed educational thinking in Rousseau that argues that Rousseau's educational thought is dependent on particular political contexts. see Grace G. Roosevelt, *Reading Rousseau in the Nuclear Age* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990). Richard White has recently contended that Rousseau's discussion of compassion remains valuable in education, though he argues that it is ultimately flawed because compassion is limited by the virtue of justice (which requires discernment about who is worthy of compassion and who is not). White views this as a weakness of Rousseau's account, rather than an asset, a weakness that is absent in the Buddhist and Christian views of compassion which serve to unite people. See Richard White, "Rousseau and the Education of Compassion," *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 42, no. 1 (2008). I view Rousseau's acknowledgment about the pernicious nature of undiscerning compassion as one of the virtues of his analysis, however. On my view, Martha Nussbaum offers a more reasonable position on compassion, justice and democratic citizenship and she makes frequent reference to Rousseau. Nussbaum views compassion as a bridge to justice – though not sufficient for justice – and it is itself imbued with judgment. Compassion must be educated if it is to play a positive role in bringing about justice. See Martha Nussbaum, "Compassion: The Basic Social Emotion," *Social Philosophy and Policy* 13, no. 01 (1996) and *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 297-454. Clifford Orwin, who is more inclined to see the perils of compassion in political life rather than its benefits (see, "Compassion," *American Scholar* 49, no. 3 [1980]) also notes the importance of judgment in Rousseau's account of it. (In addition, Orwin provides an excellent reconstruction of Emile's education in compassion.) Orwin, "Rousseau and the Discovery of Political Compassion," in *The Legacy of Rousseau*, ed. Clifford Orwin and Nathan Tarcov (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 307 & 10-11. Jonathan Marks, in another valuable contribution to the scholarship, demonstrates that compassion merely motivates and supports justice, rather than replaces it. Jonathan Marks, "Rousseau's Discriminating Defense of Compassion," *American Political Science Review* 101, no. 4 (2007): 735-37.

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<sup>xxxvii</sup> “The spirit of peace is an effect of his education which, not having fomented *amour-propre* and a high opinion of himself, has diverted him from seeking his pleasures in domination and in another’s unhappiness. He suffers when he sees suffering” (251).

<sup>xxxviii</sup> See the sources in note 2.