

Teaching Philosophy and Tragedy

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1 Introduction

The issue and its significance. Philosophy of education — the study of the nature, aims and norms of education — is an established area of philosophy, but the subsegment that deals specifically with teaching *philosophy* has not received much attention from theorists. Why this should be is

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both puzzling and unfortunate. Better understanding would surely improve how well philosophy is taught, which would lead to higher enrollment and smoother transfer of philosophical ideas to the public at large. Teaching philosophy is also interesting in its own right, a complex practice, diverse in setting, aim and content. Socrates, for example, *guided* his interlocutors by asking for definitions and giving counter-examples. In modern universities, teachers *deliver lectures* to undergraduates, *lead* graduate tutorials and *mentor* doctoral students. Teaching assistants *tutor* students how to write essays, think critically and produce formal proofs. My aim in this paper is to examine one specific practice, namely teaching introductory philosophy to learners who have little to no exposure to the subject. I want to determine what makes teaching introductory philosophy the practice that it is and what makes a particular lecture a good one. I will argue, in §2, against some alternative conceptions of teaching introductory philosophy. In §3 and §4, I develop the positive conception from the striking similarity teaching introductory philosophy bears to Greek tragedy as Aristotle understood it. In §5 and §6, I turn to pedagogy and propose a model for lecture design and a diagnostic for imperfections. I conclude the paper, in §7, by giving a definition of teaching introductory philosophy, compare it to alternatives and briefly consider the possibility that teaching philosophy is a kind of fine art.

Approach. To make headway, one could begin with what works in the classroom. From student feedback, personal success and that of others, one could identify content and in-class exercises that work for both teachers and students and, then, determine specific goals that an introduction to philosophy should have. The *How to Teach* series in the journal *Teaching Philosophy* is an especially useful source for this sort of line.¹ Alternatively, one could spell out a general philosophy of education, an amalgam of psychological, ethical and political views, and then apply it to teaching philosophy. Liberal education, for example, promotes the development of autonomy and initiation into social practices of local communities and liberal society as a whole (White, 1999; Hirst, 1999; Nussbaum, 2012).² Accordingly, a lib-

¹See, for example, “The Socratic Note Taking Technique” (Walker et al., 2017).

²Hirst argues that the general goal of education is the “...initiation into those social practices in relation to which each individual can find their greatest satisfaction and fulfillment.” (Hirst, 1999, pg. 131) White states that education aims at “...providing every student [not just the privileged] with whatever mental equipment they need to become *autonomous* individuals, bearing in mind that self-directedness can never be wholly constraint-free ...” (White, 1999, pg. 185)

eral theorist might think that an introduction to philosophy should aim to inculcate critical thinking skills and expose students to contemporary philosophical movements in academia and the broader intellectual climate of the day. A more widespread philosophy of education in North America and Europe is primarily concerned with national economic development in a global competition, emphasizing almost exclusively vocational training and professionalization (Directorate-General, 1996; Spellings, 2006).³ On this view, philosophy plays a minor role in education and it is likely that the humanities as a whole will simply whiter away (Nussbaum, 2012).⁴

In this paper, I neither gather evidence from the classroom nor apply general theories of education. Instead, I propose, right off the bat, a conception of what it is to teach introductory philosophy and then extract pedagogical information from that conception. I rely on intuitions about teaching in general and teaching philosophy in particular, manifestations of conceptual competence had by anyone who knows how to teach philosophy. This approach does not devalue classroom observations or general theories of education. On the contrary, it can advance them further. If there are inconsistencies between the results of this approach and either general theories of education or classroom experience, they should be weighed against each other. If there are no inconsistencies, the findings are still open to further refinement from classroom experience.

2 Against Some Conceptions

Training How to do Philosophy. One natural thought is that teaching introductory philosophy aims at teaching learners how to do philosophy. On this view, a particular lecture or tutorial is good when content choice, arrangement and delivery is optimized for skill acquisition. Philosophers spend much of their time reasoning deductively, reasoning inductively, defining concepts and making objections in a dialectical process. The best way to instill these skills is to introduce the relevant technical notions, show examples

³EU Commission for Education claims that philosophical issues about education have come to an end. The purpose of education is “...to ensure employability and capacity of economic life, ultimately to serve the economy of the member states.”(Directorate-General, 1996, pg. 23).

⁴Nussbaum, commenting on the US Department of Education’s commission report (Spellings, 2006), says ‘the arts and humanities ...so important for decent global citizenship, are basically absent, and the suggestion of [the report] is that it would be perfectly all right if [philosophy and the humanities in general] were allowed to wither away, in favor of more useful disciplines (Nussbaum, 2012, pg. 13).

and, then, train through practice problems and continuous feedback.

The immediate problem with this view is that none of these skills are particular to philosophy. Dialectic in the sense that proposals are considered against alternatives and objections is undertaken in any intellectual pursuit. Deductive reasoning is practiced in mathematics and logic, inductive reasoning is the staple of science and every day decision making. And, any precise view, a company mission statement or piece of legislature, must define its terms. A learner can be taught these skills without so much as mentioning a philosophical concept. Surely, an introduction to a subject must shed light on the subject itself and it cannot do that if its central concepts are not mentioned. Generally speaking, the practice of teaching an introduction to any one subject is a distinct activity, in the sense of having a distinct primary goal from any other teaching practice; for example, teaching an introduction to chemistry, teaching an introduction to biology, teaching an introduction to philosophy are three distinct practices.

One might claim that some specific method is characteristic of philosophy and, so, teaching nothing other than skills needed to follow that method count as teaching philosophy. It is not clear, however, that there is such a method. Take, for example, formal reductions, which eliminate a concept by showing that it is some other complex concept. Formal reductions rarely succeed and are highly ambitious philosophical projects, but they can be given for non-philosophical concepts, say *bachelor* or *bachelorette*. Even if there is some narrow method that only dealt with philosophical concepts, one would immediately rule out other methods from the curriculum. Formal reductions immediately rule out aphorisms and high-level empirical studies and any other narrow method would have the same effect. Intuitively, a conception of teaching an introduction to any subject that did not permit contemporary or influential contested methods from being part of the curriculum is not a good one.

Transferring Propositional Knowledge. Another natural view is that an introduction to philosophy aims at transferring propositional knowledge, specifically the views and arguments of influential philosophers and movements over the centuries. Although actual philosophical views, with all bells and whistles, could not be transferred in reasonable timespan, crude simplifications could and, in any case, they are enough to prepare students for courses dedicated to sub-disciplines. Testing, heavily dependent on memorization, is presumably in place for this very reason — whether it does help ensure transfer or retainment is another matter. If knowledge transfer

is the primary goal then what makes a philosophy lecture better is the extent to which content choice, design and delivery facilitates the transfer of propositional knowledge.⁵

Unlike skill transfer view, this view requires that lecture content is philosophical and does not rule out any prominent or historically important philosophical views from the curriculum. However, it does not say anything about motivation. Maximizing efficient transfer in no way ensures emotional engagement with philosophy during the lecture or after the course is over. Beating students over the head with information they must memorize may be the best way to transfer views to learners, but it does not ensure and probably stymies lasting wonder and motivation.

If it were suggested that a lecture organized in *good* ways would provoke interest in philosophy for just about everyone, the problem remains: what are good ways to organize a lecture? And, once we know that, will the primary end be knowledge transfer or something else?

Conveying the Significance of Philosophy. Finally, one might think that teachers should strive to convince students that philosophy is important for understanding culture, art, science and for active participation in a democratic society. The advantage is that sufficient grasp of philosophy's importance provides a prima-facie reason for its study, even if students' all-things-considered career judgment ultimately goes in another direction. But, as before, motivation is not ensured. Having a reason to do something does not necessarily provide motivation. Having reasons to buy a car — its reliability, low price, and comfort — is not sufficient to generate motivation to buy that car. Similarly, knowing the benefits philosophy brings does not guarantee curiosity or further interest.

⁵It is natural to think that an introduction to philosophy has this aim, if one subscribes to the view that all educational aims are subservient to the acquisition of propositional knowledge. Hirst, early on, defended this position: "...fundamental objectives of education are developments of the rational mind [acquisition of knowledge]" and that all non-cognitive (character, moral, political, physical) aims of education are in service of the cognitive (Hirst, 2010, pg. 16). He explains, "...to my mind understanding the nature of curriculum objectives is first and foremost a matter of understanding what is involved in the acquisition of knowledge. Other objectives would seem to be intelligible in character only in relation to the acquisition of knowledge. The forms of character development and skills that are frequently sought, for instance, are what they are in part because of the cognitive elements they necessarily involve." (Hirst, 2010, pg. 20)

3 Representation

Constraints and Approach. In the short discussion above, a number of principles (listed below) were intuited. Each conception examined thus far failed to satisfy one or more of these principles. They constraint the positive proposal developed in the remaining sections.

(Req.3.1) **Requirements** :: An adequate account of the practice of teaching an introduction to philosophy must require that

- R1. the practice illuminate what philosophy is.
- R2. the practice motivates further study of philosophy.
- R3. the practice is a distinct activity from teaching any other subject.
- R4. the practice not rule out contested views or methods from curricula.

We can now say that teaching introductory philosophy primarily aims at (R1) illuminating what philosophy is and (R2) motivating learners to study philosophy. However, this on its own is not sufficiently informative: we need to know what those two primary goals consist in.

Paper Plan. I develop the proposed view in several steps, each of which leans on Aristotle’s theory of fine art in general and Greek tragedy in particular.⁶ The first step, covered in this section (§3), is to argue that teaching introductory philosophy involves the kind of representation (*mimesis*) found in fine art. The second step, in §4, is to show that teaching philosophy partly aims at evoking curiosity and fear leading to something like tragic catharsis. The third step is to develop, in §5, a model for lecture design and, in §6, a diagnostic for imperfections in lecture design. Finally, in §7, I give a definition of teaching introductory philosophy based on the previous steps. Although aided throughout by Aristotle’s understanding of fine art, I am not claiming that he thought teaching philosophy is a fine art: he did not say so explicitly and it is not obvious he would have done so based on his broader views about education.⁷

⁶All tragedy should not be treated the same. Tragedy in the Christian context often emphasizes character flaws, hubris for example, so pity plays less of a role. Greek tragedy, on the other hand, promotes good characters who, often without knowing, make a judgment error (*harmatia*) and, so, evoking pity is essential.

⁷Aristotle does classify Socratic dialogue as a fine art, but this appears to be a reference to the art of narration and not to Socratic teaching per se (Barnes, 1984a, 1447a). In his *Politics*, he promotes music in early education — “The customary branches of education are in number four; they are — reading and writing, gymnastic exercises, and music, to which is sometimes added drawing.” (Barnes, 1984b, 1337b23) — and art on serious subjects for adults (Barnes, 1984a, 1451a37).

Representation. As part of their shared outlook, most educated ancient Greeks believed that all fine art is mimetic (Sorbom, 2002, pg. 19). Mimesis is the activity of creating works of art and *mimemata* — paintings, sculptures, tragedies, and so on — are the products of mimesis (Sorbom, 2002, pg. 20).⁸ The most common translations of ‘mimesis’ in English are ‘imitation’ and ‘representation’. Given how Aristotle uses ‘mimesis’ and cognates, most interpreters are not satisfied with either translation, but, since I will be adopting only the core of Aristotle’s conception of mimesis, the latter term is more appropriate for my purposes.⁹ In the *Poetics*, Aristotle refines the shared outlook by giving a theory of fine art, with tragedy taking center stage. The theory is really a sketch: the *Poetics* is a set of lecture notes, not a complete scholarly work, with substantial sections now lost. (Halliwell, 1998; Nussbaum, 2001).^{10,11} Despite this, it is historically without rival, the single most debated work of philosophy of art in the western tradition.

According to Aristotle, a work of art represents a *possible* state of affairs, action or character trait.¹² If the object represented did in fact exist or an action did happen, the artist does not aim to represent it as it actually is or as it actually happened. He does not attempt to make a photocopy of reality. In Jacques Louis David’s portrait *Napoleon Crossing the Alps*, Napoleon is represented on horseback, in embellished dress, directing troops onwards over the Alps, when in fact he traveled on a mule in a caravan a few days after the army crossed. In a tragedy, the object represented is a protracted action.

A tragedy represents “...an action (ethically) serious, complete
(having a beginning, middle and end) and of a certain magnitude

⁸Mimemata have the power to create mental representations upon viewing. Mimesis is, in a passive sense, the reception of mental images and in an active sense the production of objects intended to create mental images in the minds of the perceivers. (Sorbom, 2002, pg. 21)

⁹As Halliwell explains, “...the inadequacy of the still prevalent translation of mimesis as ‘imitation’ ...the semantic field of “imitation” in modern English ...has become too narrow and predominantly pejorative — typically implying a limited aim of copying, superficial replication, or counterfeiting — to do justice to the sophisticated thinking of Aristotle ... (Halliwell, 2002, pg. 152). See also (Sorbom, 2002) and (Kaufmann, 1992, pg. 37) for similar concerns.

¹⁰The brisk way in which the work was written has led some commentators to think that Aristotle had no theory at all (Butcher, 1898). I follow Halliwell’s measured defense that Aristotle, although he did not give a complete theory, gave a sufficiently detailed sketch (Halliwell, 1998).

¹¹Substantial sections on comedy and epic are lost, as well as commentary on *katharsis*.

¹²The age-old slogan that ‘art imitates nature’ is misleading in this regard, suggesting that only the actual world is or should be represented.

(not an instantaneous action but one that endures)” (Barnes, 1984a, XI.1449b22)

In Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* (Sophocles, 1982), from beginning to end, Oedipus seeks the cause of the plague and deals with the consequences of his finding. Now, there may have existed a king of Thebes named ‘Oedipus’, who may have in fact, let us say, unwittingly killed his own father and married his mother, but Sophocles, even if he knew of his predicament, does not aim to recount the events as they actually happened, as a historian would. Rather, he aims to tell a story that might have happened.¹³

the poet’s function is to describe, not the thing that has happened, but a kind of thing that might happen, i.e. what is possible as being probable or necessary. (Barnes, 1984a, 1451a37)

In the last passage clause, Aristotle adds that the action represented must be one that is likely or necessary to occur. The circumstances that Oedipus is in — left to die as a baby, rescued by shepherds, made king of a state he was not born in, unwittingly encountering his father and marrying his mother — are certainly unlikely circumstances for anyone to be in. But, given the circumstances, each decision Oedipus makes is one that would be made by any good character and, so, the final outcome is necessary or highly probable. This is an essential feature of a tragedy, one needed to create a human catastrophe.

A complete theory of representation would have to cover much more. In particular, it would need to tell us *what makes* a particular fictional work a representation of a possible action or state of affairs; why, for example, a rendition of Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* enacted on stage in the actual world represents a specific, possible action and not some other. Similarity between the actual enactment and the possible action is an obvious feature to look at, but, I will not go into this. For my purposes, it is enough to show what teaching introductory philosophy represents — indeed, that it represents at all — and not what makes a representation a representation.

A dialectical process that might have happened. An introduction to philosophy ought to, in every case, represent a dialectical learning process

¹³In Sophocles, *Antigone* (Sophocles, 2003a), where it is not entirely clear who the protagonist is supposed to be, the action represented may be Creon’s attempt to maintain order after a war or Antigone’s attempt at rectifying a violation of divine law, the burial rights denied to her brother, Creon’s nephew.

that might have happened.¹⁴ The process begins with initially appealing beliefs. The story unfolds as inconsistencies are discovered, justifications are made, or the absence of a justification is shown. The conflict continues as refinements are proposed, objections and replies raised. Conflict is again created when attempts to provide justifications make commitments to unsavory views.

Who is the learner of the learning process represented? It is sometimes tempting to think that the audience itself, even in large auditoriums, is inquiring with the aid of the lecturer or together with him. We get this impression from engaging lecturers that take questions from the audience — Michael Sandel, who teaches the popular ethics course *On Justice: What's the right thing to do?*, is a prime example (Sandel, 2018). However, this is just an appearance. Ultimately, the lecturer anticipates the trajectory of the debate beforehand and steers the discussion in a planned direction that audiences cannot alter. If they cannot alter the trajectory of the debate, they cannot be inquiring with anyone.

If we look at how objections, replies and arguments are typically articulated in lectures, we see that learners are assumed to be rational, engaged but remain unspecified. So, we say, “one now makes the objection ...and another responds, ...”, but we do not say specifically who this or that person is. The reason is that the identity of the inquirer is not relevant to the lecture.

¹⁴Tragedies are not teachings of philosophy and teachings of philosophy are not tragedies, because the former are delivered always in narrative form, while tragedies are always delivered in dramatic form. Song and music are also not appropriate for teaching philosophy but they are necessarily means of representation in tragedies. Nevertheless, we might wonder whether the object represented in tragedies and teachings of philosophy is not the same i.e. a learning process? We get certainly this impression from some tragedies. In both Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* (Sophocles, 1982) and *Oedipus Tyrannus* (Sophocles, 2003b), Oedipus is represented as inquiring into the cause of the plague and, subsequently, the identity of his fathers' killer. Common-sense is voiced, evidence for and against presented and a discovery made. Are there examples of tragedies where the object represented is not an inquiry? On first glance, Medea's decision, in Euripides' famous play, to get revenge against her husband does not seem to be an inquiry. She has been slighted and has a decision to make. However, even here, one could, perhaps, treat this as an internal inquiry, – to answer the question, what should I do given that I have been so? Antigone, the eponymous protagonist of the Sophocles' play, is certainly not inquiring into an issue — she's protesting Creon's treatment of her brother and, more often than not, demanding burial rights be respected. Creon, at first, appears to be only interested in maintaining order. However, because of the choirs reaction to Creon's initial reaction and Haemon's plea especially, Creon does contemplate and debate the possibility of reversing his decision, in effect giving into the demands of a public protest. This may be the very action that *Antigone* represents. It may be, then, that the object represented of tragedies and teachings of philosophy is the same.

Still, in some cases, the learning process represented could be one that refers to an actual person and the dialectic could have some semblance to how that persons' inquiry transpired.¹⁵ Immanuel Kant once received a letter from Maria Herbert, a bright, young philosopher he had never met, who sought advice and engaged Kant on issues of lying, love and suicide. The drama that unfolds in their letters and the substantial criticism of deontology that Herbert develops has been effectively used as scaffolding for an introduction to Kantian ethics (Langton, 2014). But, an introduction based on these letters does not and should not be seen as representing historical events; rather, the lecture represents a story about how things might have unfolded with key historical events preserved. It is not necessary to follow the letters exactly and a teacher could not be faulted for not doing so. If a teacher did aim to describe, in every detail, how a specific philosopher inquired into a subject or how a philosophical movement evolved, the lecture would be a *history* of philosophy, not an introduction to philosophy.

A dialectical process with a forced or necessary outcome. As was mentioned, Aristotle thought that, in a tragedy, the protagonist is for the most part forced or necessitated to make the decisions he does given his noble character. This idea extends to the sort of learning process a philosophy lecture ought to represent. The dialectical process that the learner goes through should be one that the learner is, for the most part, forced to take given the learner is a rational agent and a person with sound judgment and common-sense beliefs. Presenting a deductive or inductive argument for a view, say an argument for the existence of god, should be presented in such a way that it is clear the learner is 'forced' to accept the conclusion, unless he finds something wrong with the argument. What specific objection to the argument is raised is not necessitated — although there are on most issues only a few serious objections — but, once the chosen objection is made, a rational inquirer *must* revise the argument in an appropriate manner i.e. one that addresses the objection made. If a set of beliefs are shown to be inconsistent, then, unlike in an argument, nothing 'forces' the learner to the next step i.e. there is no rule of rationality that will, on its own, force an inquirer to reject or accept any one belief in the set so that the inconsistency is resolved. Here, common-sense comes into play. A rational learner is significantly forced when the strong plausibility of some beliefs is shown and,

¹⁵In a popular graphic novel that introduces readers to some problems in mathematical logic, Doxiadis and Papadimitriou depict a semi-biographical story of Bertrand Russell's inquiry during the early 20th century, in particular his discovery of Russell's paradox and the subsequent writing of *Principia Mathematica* (Doxiadis and Papadimitriou, 2015).

consequently, the inquirer must turn to exploring other beliefs. For example, the (apparently) inconsistent set of beliefs known as ‘the logical problem of evil’ can be avoided by rejecting the view that God is all-good, omnipotent or omniscient.¹⁶ But, doing so is not plausible, given the conception of God found in most religions. A rational learner, having been shown this is forced to inquire into the truth of the other premises, the existence of evil being the main one. In other words, dialectical processes that simply raise objections and alternatives in gerrymandered ways are not the sorts of dialectical processes a philosophical lecture aims to represent.

A dialectical process that illuminates well what philosophy is. Finally, the dialectical process represented must be one that contributes to the primary cognitive aim of teaching an introductory philosophy lecture, namely the aim of illuminating to newcomers what philosophy is. It may appear that this aim has no hope of being met by representing a possible, *fictional* learning process. After all, philosophy is concerned with the truth and, even if we are to look at other media for insights, documentary film and non-fiction literature appear to be better starting points. // Two points will help alleviate this worry and show how the primary cognitive aim is satisfied.

First, a point of clarification. I have not claimed that any *part* of the dialectical process should be fictional. Any historical and contemporary views taken up should be accurate and an introduction should be criticized for mischaracterizing them. But, the object that an introduction directly represents, a dialectical process, is not truth-evaluable i.e it is not true or false and cannot be criticized for accuracy. Documentary films and non-fiction literature represent historical events or portraits of individuals as they actually are and so, the representations they produce are truth-evaluable both in the views they mention and the messages that they convey about the subject matter they deal with.^{17,18}

¹⁶This argument in simplified form is as follows. 1. God is all-knowing. 2. God is all-good. 3. God is all-powerful. 4. God prevents all the evil that he knows about and can prevent (from 1-3). 5. Assume there is a God. 5. So, there is no evil in the world (from 4,5). 6. There is evil in the world (empirical). So, God does not exist. (by reductio).

¹⁷Through the recounting of a military general, Director Joel Oppenheimer in *The Act of Killing* depicts atrocities committed by members of a brutal dictatorship through the main persons’ recollections of the events. This film can distort, misinform and consequently be criticized. Fog of War: representation not of 10 lessons of war, but of McNamara’s life, the decisions he made, and the character he had developed, and the conflicts he ran into during his time. Also, an unofficial, decades late, defense of the US governments involvement in Vietnam

¹⁸Wider conception of a documentary that allows for the depiction of non-actual events

Although representations of dialectical processes do not have truth-conditions, they do have, what we can loosely call, illumination conditions i.e. conditions that obtain just in case the subject of the introduction, in this case philosophy, is illuminated perfectly or to the greatest extent to newcomers. Illumination is whatever insights during the lecture and during the course as a whole. Not everyone believes that fiction can deliver cognitive insights; in particular, the modern view of art is that it is entirely subjective, meaningless and has no cognitive value. This was not Aristotle's view — [poetry] is more philosophical and serious than history: in fact poetry speaks more of universals, whereas history of particulars. (? , (1451a36-8) —, nor is it the view of many philosophers of art today¹⁹. In any case, it is not my view that depictions of fictional learning processes are not informative.²⁰ I think they can shed light on what philosophy is. How this happens is more difficult to explain. Although a particular dialectical process is represented, the universal *philosophy* is illuminated. For example, if the processes chosen during several lectures only dealt with ethical issues, learners would not be illuminate philosophy to a significant extent and may mislead. Similarly, dialectical processes that deal only with deductive arguments will not provide sufficient illumination. In each case, a particular process is illuminating a general concept.

Classification by Object, Means and Manner. I mentioned earlier that Aristotle also refined the Greek mimetic picture of fine art by categorizing species of fine art in terms of the object, means and manner of

— e.g. Carl Sagan's documentary *Cosmos*, which although dealing with astronomy and physics, tells the story though a fictional voyage through the universe, from the perspective of the explorer or learner — is closer to an introduction to philosophy. However, as I elaborate in the next section, there are specific features of a the fictional representation that distinguish it from a science documentaries such as the necessary introduction of conflict and creation of fear, which are not central to an introduction to science.

¹⁹Noel Carroll, for example, identifies the primary function of art to be moral education.

Art is a primary means for enculturating peoples in the ethos of their society—where that ethos has, as one of its central components, morality narrowly construed. Art introduces us to that ethos and its morality, reinforces and clarifies our commitments to it, often through exemplary stories and characters; art inspires us morally by equipping us with ideals, and it can even suggest ways of criticizing prevailing forms of moral blindness.(Carroll, 2010a, pg. 175)

²⁰“...poetry (fine art) is something more philosophic and of graver import than history, since its statements are of the nature rather of universals, whereas those of history are singulars.”(Barnes, 1984a, 1451a37)

representation.²¹ This classification is helpful in drawing the comparison and distinguishing teaching philosophy from other species of kinds of teaching and other fine arts. The means by which an introduction to philosophy represents is ordinary verse. There is no room for language in verse with rhythm and harmony, dance or song, the characteristic means of tragic theatre. Also, the manner in which an introduction to philosophy is delivered is in the narrative, not dramatic, form. Lectures dramatically told would not be taken seriously and spectacle is almost always inappropriate.

If the above picture is correct, philosophy teachers and playwrights have a similar task: to imagine an action, which the play or lecture represents. But, where playwrights call on actors to enact the play, the philosophy teacher usually takes on the enactment himself i.e. the narration of the lecture.

4 Curiosity, Fear and Catharsis

What constitutes producing motivation for philosophy? I turn now to the motivational and emotional dimensions of teaching philosophy. In addition to illuminating what philosophy is, a teacher is tasked with motivating learners to learn about philosophy beyond the lecture. To do so is to inculcate curiosity for philosophy i.e. the learners positive disposition to take on philosophical questions and learn about philosophy beyond the lecture. What constitutes developing learners' curiosity disposition for philosophy? First, developing learners' curiosity requires evoking the feeling, not disposition, of curiosity — a positive, motivating reaction to a puzzle or question. Second, evoking the feeling of curiosity *for philosophy* entails evoking rational fear. Third, inculcating the disposition (not evoking the feeling) of being curious about philosophy involves some level of catharsis. More precisely, the proposed view is as follows.

(Thesis.4.2) Teaching philosophy and Emotions

- T1. **Fear and Curiosity for Philosophy:** The experience of (the feeling of) curiosity for philosophy is sufficient for the experience of fear for a properly rational and morally adjusted learner.
- T2. **Rational Fear of Philosophy.** The only thing a learner of philosophy should rationally fear is i) faltering in their own learning of

²¹“Epic poetry and tragedy, as also comedy, dithyrambic poetry, and most flute-playing and lyre-playing, are all, viewed as a whole, modes of imitation. But they differ from one another in three ways, either in their means, or in their objects, or in the manner of their imitations.” (Barnes, 1984a, 1447a14-1447a18)

philosophical matters; ii) faltering in their own intellectual or moral development needed for own learning of philosophical matters. Otherwise, one is perturbed, anxious or fearing irrationally.

T3. **Catharsis.** The best teaching process is one that i) evokes moderate levels of fear, and leads to ii) catharsis by a) alleviating the fear and b) encouraging overcoming.

T1. Fear and curiosity for philosophy. The intensity of fear appropriate for philosophy is relatively mild: tragedies and horror films, by comparison, evoke much more intense fears.²² Nevertheless, in philosophy fear can be palpable. In Trolley thought experiments, the learner is asked to imagine an oncoming train about to kill several people and then decide whether a lever should be pulled that diverts the train killing fewer people. The drama is by design and it works: learners become uncomfortable making the decision.

Generally speaking, experiencing curiosity does not entail experiencing fear, nor is it always rationally appropriate to experience fear just because one is curious about something. For example, being curious about how a rocket carrying a space shuttle can reach orbit is not normally accompanied by fear and nor is it rational to experience. However, being curious *about philosophy* on first exposure is impossible without some degree of fear and this is a rationally justified response. Of course, a person might not experience fear during a good lecture, because they are disengaged, inattentive or depressed: the claim only holds for rational, appropriately engaged and emotionally adjusted learners.

A specific argument may not evoke fear. This (T1.) does not mean that a lecture on any one argument will evoke fear. Rather, the idea is that a well-chosen dialectical process, which will include arguments and objections for opposing views, would at some point in the dialectic evoke fear. For those who have never had the inclination to believe in a higher power, the problem of evil will not elicit fear, since any argument that exposes the problem will only improve that person's position. Even if the argument fails, their initial beliefs will not be affected in any way. But, a well-chosen dialectic will also include arguments for the existence of God and the non-believer will have to wrestle with the possibility that there is a God and what it means to reject otherwise plausible premises that drive those arguments.

²²It is an essential part of Aristotle's definition of tragedy: "...with incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish its catharsis of such emotions. (Barnes, 1984a, XI.1449b22-31)

Learners must have sufficient background knowledge on the issue discussed. Moreover, T1. does not mean that any individual is a suitable learner, even if appropriately engaged. On some philosophical topics, learners will simply have no opinion at all. And, rightly so. Take for example the issue of what makes a good work of art. This issue will not resonate with learners that have undeveloped aesthetic sensibilities. For them, it would be difficult to relate to or even have inclinations toward certain philosophical views, because they simply do not have entrenched, implicit views on art. Probably, in our day and age, philosophy of art should not be part of the curriculum, even though it should be in societies where learners are exposed to art from an early age. The same holds for scientific and technical fields. If learners have no exposure to biology, they cannot be introduced to the philosophy of biology.

Learners must have sufficient background knowledge to what follows from the issues discussed. Finally, even when learners are appropriately engaged and have sufficient background knowledge, they may not be in a position to grasp the consequences of an issue — its significance — once they have been presented with an issue. Metaphysics and philosophy of language present the biggest hurdle here. Take for example the debate about name-reference. Kripke's arguments against descriptivism are easy to follow and learners tend to have opinions. However, the debate can sometimes seem inert, just an intellectual exercise, and hence not evoke fear at all. The problem is not that learners are not engaged or have no implicit knowledge or opinions on an issue, but that the issue simply does not matter. Philosophy of language should, therefore, be part of the curriculum only after, and in relation to, other philosophical subjects on which nuances of language make an impact and so evoke fear.

T2. Rationality fear of philosophy. Although natural to experience some degree of fear, there is something puzzling about experiencing fear when first exposed to philosophy. A philosophy lecture can only confirm what beliefs learners originally held, reveal inconsistencies or missing justifications. Whatever the outcome, the learner will be in a better epistemic situation than they were to begin with, so, it seems there is no bad outcome and nothing to fear. Is learners fear when first exposed to philosophy rationally justified or irrational perturbation? If it is an irrational response, then presumably teachers' should not try to evoke fear. Moreover, how fear is relieved will be significantly different depending on whether fear is justified or irrational. An irrational response, like an irrational fear of spiders or

a social phobia, calls for a therapeutic approach, while a rational response calls for some degree of alleviation but not therapy.

Rational Fear. Fear is an emotional state accompanied by a belief about a future event that is bad in some way for the agent or someone else and should be avoided. There has to be a less than minimal likelihood that the future event will occur. It is not rational, for example, to fear that a satellite will fall from the sky and kill you. Conversely, an event that will occur with certainty is also one that it is irrational to fear, even when the outcome is catastrophic; for example, it is irrational to fear an asteroid hitting the earth when it is certain that it will. Finally, there has to be a sense that the person has some control over the outcome. Take for example the rational fear a driver might have about an impending accident. Suppose the accident is an event in the near future and the accident is serious enough to either cause damage or injury. Furthermore, suppose that there is a less than minor chance that the accident will happen but that it is not certain to occur either. Now, we have to add that there is a possibility that a collision could be avoided by quick reaction and that the driver is in control of the vehicle, not intoxicated or paralyzed.

Rational fear during an philosophy lecture. What is a justified object of fear of learners during an introductory philosophy lecture? A learner might fear their beliefs are inconsistent or lack justification. The problem, however, is that although having inconsistent beliefs or beliefs we have no justification for is a bad state of affairs, it is not something that will happen or obtain in the future — it is something that is the case now. We simply do not know whether our beliefs, right now, are inconsistent. The emotional state is about the possibility that we are (presently) in a bad epistemic situation, a lot like given a preliminary diagnosis which may reveal a serious medical condition. This reaction is understandable and worthy of sympathy but it is irrational because one cannot do anything about it.

Alternatively, it might be that we fear *recognizing* that our beliefs are inconsistent or lack justification. This *is* a future event. But, although having an inconsistent belief set is bad, it is never bad *to recognize* or learn anything: whether it is the recognition that one's beliefs are inconsistent, lack justification of an inconsistency or a muddy foundation.²³ It would be better to recognize or learn something positive i.e. to acquire a new belief or a justification for a belief one already has, but the learner still steps into a better situation when he recognizes that his beliefs are inconsistent or not justified.

²³I am assuming here that we cannot learn or recognize anything that is false.

Neither alternative works. The only rational object of fear is the fear of something one can be in control over. There are two things a learner of philosophy can rationally fear. First, he can fear faltering in own learning of philosophical matters, for example making a mistake in reasoning. Second, he can fear faltering in developing his own intellectual abilities or moral character which are ultimately needed to be effective at learning philosophy. The intellectual abilities needed in philosophy are many: the disposition to be curious, creative, critical, persistent, resourceful and intellectually courageous. **Moral abilities such as laziness or lack of prudence also come into play. Developing these abilities and making proper decisions during a learning process are both future events. It is by no means certain the learner will do everything properly or develop perfectly one's own intellectual and moral abilities so that he can do philosophy effectively. On the other hand, the learner can avoid mistakes and work toward developing his abilities. ARE THESE PART OF THE NATURE OF TEACHING PHILOSOPHY, given HOW GENERAL THEY ARE?**

Nature of Teaching and Irrational Fear. As was said, two kinds of fear may be experienced. Irrational fear may be experienced by some learners, but all rational person's will experience a degree of rationally justified fear. Relieving each kind of fear requires different handling. A teacher who does not address irrational fear of their students would be remiss. However, alleviating irrational responses is not something that is properly part of the nature of teaching philosophy. Such response are contingent and will not be experienced by everyone nor should they be. Thus, I will not go into this topic further. Rationally justified fear, on the other hand, is something that is part of the nature of teaching philosophy, and, the nature of teaching philosophy demands that a good teacher address rational fears.

T3. Catharsis. Although it is central to the definition of tragedy and other fine arts, 'catharsis' appears once in the fragments that we have of the *Poetics*. 'Catharsis' is also used in the *Politics*, in reference to musical education of the young.²⁴ The nature of tragedy hangs on the specific interpretation of catharsis. Historically, it has been translated as 'purgation', 'purification', 'clarification' and subject to endless interpretations (also is there one sense for music, epic and tragedy or distinct sense for each? (Halliwell, 1998; Lear, 1988). Uncontroversially, catharsis is a psychological experience that involves the alleviation of the emotions that caused it — in

²⁴Music also aims at catharsis but to what extent is controversial (Barnes, 1984b).

the case of tragedy, pity and fear. We said that the primary goal of teaching introductory philosophy is to illuminate philosophy and generate motivation for further study. But, fear, even though rational, is an obstacle to motivation, and so good teaching calls for catharsis. The proper way is to, first, alleviate fear by providing students with the tools that make it likely for them to fail and to be in control i.e. . Second, since fear is inevitable and difficulties in philosophy cannot altogether be avoided, encouraging overcoming and persistence also helps with motivation. The point here is not to trivialize a problem by saying "anyone can do.", but to encourage going through stumbling blocks.

Catharsis also has the effect of claryfing a philosophical issue, just as it does in tragedy Nussbaum (2001). When learners experience catharsis on an issue, they gain clarity about the whole of the issue and the entirety of the dialectical process. Thus, generating catharsis also helps satisfy the cognitive goal of teaching, namely to illuminate what philosophy is.

Does a phil lecture with proper plot determine good emotional evokation and clarification? is success of goal entirely determined by plot?

5 A Model for Lecture Design

A Model for Lecture Design. In the next two sections, I turn to pedagogy and develop a model and diagnostic for lecture design. If the conception outlined thus far is correct, then it should conform to what we intuitively take to be good pedagogical practice and provide new insights. A teacher, as lecture designer, is tasked with constructing the lecture plot. By 'plot', I simply mean the sequence of actions (proposals, objections, replies) the rational learner makes in the learning process represented. The model for the lecture plot describes structural features that lecture plots must have to count as introductory lectures of philosophy and structural features that make a lecture plot better, all else being equal. I give, in this section, three examples that illustrate the model I have in mind. A complete model is beyond the scope of this paper, since it is a large undertaking, one best undertaken in collaboration with dramaturgists.

- features of plot that follow from a lecture that has a proper object of representation and evokes proper emotions
- features of plot that follow from a perfect lecture that illuminates the subject matter most, and generates most motivations (and so evokes perfect emotions)

Overturning Common-Sense in Sequence by Surprise. If fear is to be evoked at all, the dialectical process must start with apparently good views i.e. common-sense. No fear could be generated by providing arguments in favor of unimpeachable truths — if p then p , for example — nor for clearly false views that no one believes. Similarly, a tragedy, in order to evoke fear, must be about good characters. Tragic emotions could not be felt for the vicious or mostly bad characters.

Fear is evoked when the good character goes through a ‘reversal of fortune’ (*peripeteia*).²⁵ Likewise, in a philosophy lecture, views of common-sense during the philosophical dialectic come to make a turn for the worse. Here are two common-sense beliefs: a) all agents are morally responsible only if they can choose to do otherwise, b) all events are causally determined. At the start of dialectical process, these views have elevated status because they appear to be true. During the lecture, they are brought into conflict and inevitably the ‘fortunes’ of common-sense are reversed, until one belief at least has to be given up entirely or significantly weakened.

Aristotle stressed that fear is *best* produced when the reversal of fortune happens through a necessary sequence of events.

A reversal of fortune is the change of the kind described from one state of things within the play to its opposite, and that too as we say, in the probable or necessary sequence of events; as it is for instance in Oedipus: here the opposite state of things is produced by the Messenger, who, coming to gladden Oedipus and to remove his fears as to his mother, reveals the secret of his birth. (Barnes, 1984a, 1452a22-1452b2)

He adds that fear is best produced when the reversal of fortune comes about by surprise.

...Such an effect [fear and pity] is best produced when the events come on us by surprise; and the effect is heightened when, at the same time, they follow as cause and effect. The tragic wonder will then be greater than if they happened of themselves or by accident; for even coincidences are most striking when they have an air of design. (Barnes, 1984a, IX.1452a)

Consider a lecture plot that introduce the conflict at the beginning of the lecture. Clearly, this sort of plot, compared to one where the issue is

²⁵‘Reversal of fortune’, the standard translation, has been intensely debated over the centuries. Is it the circumstances that the protagonist is in that changes, his outlook or his intention? See (Lucas, 1923)

introduced slowly, would not surprise learners as much and so evoke less fear. A more surprising effect is made when the lecture first elaborates why causal determinism and the ability to do otherwise are so important and only then brings them into opposition.

Avoiding Deus Ex Machina. The notorious plot device *deus ex machina* literally means ‘God from a machine’, a reference to a God character that comes down onto the stage suspended from a crane.²⁶ Aristotle explicitly repudiated the device.

...in the structure of the plot ..., the poet should always aim either at the necessary or the probable. Thus a person of a given character should speak or act in a given way, by the rule either of necessity or of probability; just as this event should follow that by necessary or probable sequence. It is therefore evident that the unraveling of the plot, no less than the complication, must arise out of the plot itself, it must not be brought about by the ‘Deus ex Machina’, ...Within the action there must be nothing irrational. ...(Barnes, 1984a, XV.1454a33-b9)

Deus ex-machina devices are inadequate because ‘...[the denouement] should arise out of the plot itself. The best way to construct a plot is with “...the incidents of the play to seek after the necessary or the probable; ...whenever this incident follows on that, it shall be either the necessary or the probable consequence of it.” (Barnes, 1984a, 1454a33-b9)²⁷ Here he is reiterating what we mentioned earlier that the action represented should be one that is necessary to happen — that the protagonist is, as a human being or rational agent, forced to take. In *The Wizard of Oz*, *deus ex machina* is used. The film represents Dorothy’s attempt to find her way home and after several trials she is lead to the end of the yellow brick road where hope is lost. At this point, the good witch magically appears and tells her that she can go home immediately by taping her slippers three times. She does end up going home by doing so. The plot is resolved not through necessary decisions she makes but by an arbitrary external force.

²⁶Aristotle mentions Euripides’ *Medea*, in which Medea avoids her husband’s, seemingly inevitable, revenge for killing their children and murdering her husband’s bride to be when the sun god Helios abruptly appears and carries her away.(Barnes, 1984a, 1454a33-b9)

²⁷In a tragedy, improbable interventions by Dieties can occur, but they should be outside the plot — not affecting the action represented by a tragedy — “ The artifice must be reserved for matters outside the play—for past events beyond human knowledge, or events yet to come, which require to be foretold or announced; since it is the privilege of the gods to know everything. ”(Barnes, 1984a, XV.1454a16-1454b14)

In an introduction to philosophy, teachers sometimes resolve a conflict by appealing to an authority. The authority may be a philosophical tradition or a significant figure in the history of philosophy. Doing so would make the lecture represent the wrong sort of process. Instead of representing, as it should, an arbitrary learner dialectically inquiring, it makes the object an appeal to authority which is the opposite of any kind of inquiry and could have been stated at the beginning of the lecture without the lecture going further (Just as the good witch could have appeared at the beginning of the movie and told Dorothy how to get home). Another way to resolve the conflict outside the dialectic is to rule out competing views by appealing to more fundamental views outside the subject. To give a crude example, the issue of whether any moral consideration is owed to animals can be resolved by appealing to an error theory of ethics, which denies any moral facts or leads to relativism. These appeals are anticlimactic and, although bring about some level of catharsis, are not best.

Inevitability and Fear Through Montage. Dramatic techniques from film are also translatable. Take, for example, Hitchcock's provocations of fear in *Psycho*. As Irving Singer's explains, Hitchcock uses montage in the famous murder shower scene, switching back and forth from a close up of Anne and Bates over thirty times, to evoke fear. The effect on the viewer is heightened because the murder seems inevitable. Hitchcock described his decision in an interview shortly after the movie was released.

I wanted to preserve sympathy for her, so that it was essential that she fought against something stronger than herself' ...To have shot all that in a long view would have been useless. It had to be made up of these little pieces. With a first-class director the final cutting is a simple job, if he has constructed the scene in his mind in advance and knows what he wants to create. (Singer, 2004, pg.11)

By juxtaposing conflicting philosophical views, alternating between them rapidly to highlight the contrast, fear is created more directly than by, say, stating the view and drawing out extended logical consequences. Specific examples can also be contrasted. Images of destitute poverty and decadent wealth can be contrasted in succession, which would produce a stronger effect on an audience than presenting them separately at different times in the lecture. Of course, we should not aim to induce horror or anything close to that degree of fear and shock. It would be inappropriate to present dooms day environmental disaster scenarios that horrify. But, a montage

of images, before and after comparisons of forests lost, industries expanded and glaciers receded can be an effective technique to elicit moderate fear.

6 A Diagnostic for Lecture Design Imperfections

Art and Affect Diagnostic. A lecture is flawed if it represents the wrong object, by improper means, in an improper manner, but there are many factors that come into play, so it becomes difficult to tell why exactly the lecture is not going well. We can exploit the close similarity between teaching philosophy and various species of fine art to diagnose, more readily, imperfections in lecture design. The diagnostic runs as follows. Start by identifying an inappropriate audience reaction evoked during the lecture as a whole (not a single part of it). Match that reaction with the sort of fine art that aims to evoke it. Then, identify structural elements of the art form that contribute to evoking those emotions. Finally, if those or similar elements are part of the philosophy lecture, remove or adjust them accordingly.

Comedic Affect and Common-Sense. Suppose a lecture on the whole (not some part of it) evokes a comedic reaction, specifically it appears to be ridiculous. This is an inappropriate reaction in a philosophy classroom but its production is the primary aim of certain kinds of comedy. The character Kramer, for example, in the television series *Seinfeld* is a clumsy, shallow, ridiculous character who embarks on endless trivial, harebrained enterprises. Watching his enterprises fail induces laughter and never fear. One of the reasons we laugh at Kramer is that he is a bad, ignoble character on ignoble, bound to fail quests. He is not vicious — in fact, I would go so far to say that he is entirely harmless — nor are his quests highly immoral or detrimental to him or others: we simply could not laugh at vicious characters or highly immoral actions.

If a philosophy lecture evokes a comedic response and appears ridiculous, the lecture may contain ignoble elements. The lecture may be representing *apparently* ignoble dialectical processes or beliefs too far removed from common-sense. A lecture, for example, that began with a proclamation that our world is the best of all possible worlds or that mental and physical events occur contemporaneously owing to pre-established, non-causal harmony alone. Even a good dialectical process that raised good objections, replies, and so on would, in all likelihood, appear ridiculous to newcomers to philosophy. The lecturer may believe these views to be true, want to pass on the ‘knowledge’ to his students and extensive argumentation may even

show them to be true, but none of this matters: they are not the primary task of the lecture. The lecture content should then be altered to begin with ‘noble’ beliefs i.e. common-sense and only lead to or briefly mention esoteric views.

Magic Tricks and Elaboration. In a magic show, the audience is made to believe that the magician has done the impossible, brought an object into existence from thin air, perceived things that he could not have, in effect circumventing laws of nature. For a moment, conflict is generated about some of our basic beliefs, which does elicit curiosity. Although the audience may be amused and continue to wonder how the trick was done, they remain certain that it is a trick and so the lecture cannot evoke deep-seated fear or sustained motivation for further study of philosophy.²⁸

Philosophy lectures sometimes evoke a trivial curiosity of this sort along with the appearance that a trick is being played. Logical paradoxes, such as Zeno’s paradox and the Liar’s paradox are two examples. The former appears to show that motion is impossible and the liar’s paradox appears to show that truth is an incoherent notion. Teasing out what, if anything, is wrong is a challenging task. If the emotional affect is similar to a magic show, the audience will likely think that there is a trick being played — that the paradox only appears to be irresolvable or difficult and is a trivial illusion. A lecture to first-comers that deals with paradoxes is flawed. Only once learners sufficiently grasp what it means to have logical consequences and how they should be treated seriously can they be introduced to paradoxes.

7 What Teaching Philosophy is

Definition. Based on the discussion, we can now define the practice of teaching introductory philosophy and say what makes a particular lecture a good one.

Dfn. the practice of teaching an introduction to philosophy is the practice of representing a dialectical learning process, in ordinary verse, in narrative form, with incidents arousing fear that through catharsis illuminate what philosophy is and motivates further learning.

Ths. A particular introductory philosophy lecture is better the more it illuminates what philosophy is and the more it motivates learners to learn about philosophy

²⁸A similar reaction is created with riddles, which we know do not reveal anything, but hinge on a remote ambiguity.

Satisfying Requirements. In addition to requiring that teaching philosophy evoke curiosity and shedding light on what philosophy is, the definition also satisfies other requirements we set out at the beginning. It does not rule out contested philosophical views or methods from the curriculum or declare falsely one method or doctrine above all others as characteristic of an autonomous discipline. Fear and catharsis can be evoked, whether traditional definitions, high-level empirical studies or aphorisms are used. It must happen within a dialectical process though: presenting in isolation a high-level empirical study or interpreting a specific aphorism without considering alternatives or objections is not a philosophy lecture.

As defined, the conception distinguishes teaching philosophy from teaching any other subject. It may look as if teaching some areas of science are in concert with the definition proposed. For example, teaching an introduction to astronomy, in particular teaching about the scale of the universe may evoke similar fears.²⁹ But, exposure to universe scale cannot be done within a dialectical process, so, correctly, this is not a philosophy lecture. An introduction to astronomy in the 16th and 17th century, however, may have been taught by putting forth a dialectical process, which would evoke fear, but, if so, we would be teaching philosophy, or what was, at the time, called ‘natural philosophy’.³⁰ Similarly, the theory of evolution, although in conflict with religious doctrine, cannot be taught by representing a dialectical process. There is only empirical evidence to consider that should immediately trump any religious claims to the contrary. So, presenting the theory of evolution, which is different from the implications to other philosophical subjects, would rightly be ruled out from the philosophy curriculum.

Vindicates Criticism of Alternative Conceptions. The definition also shows why alternative conceptions *seem* appealing. Although training philosophical skills is not the primary aim, representing a dialectic and navigating through it requires showing how to think dialectically and developing skills of argumentation and definition. Thus, developing these skills must be part of the curriculum. Similarly, knowledge transfer of philosophical views must happen in a dialectical process but, again, transferring these views is not what we are ultimately after. Another view considered earlier was that an introductory lecture primarily aims at conveying the signifi-

²⁹Carl Sagan’s cherished *Cosmos* is a good example (Sagan, 2013).

³⁰Similarly, for mathematical concepts, such as infinity, irrational and complex numbers, which may illicit fear. In mathematics, stating the axioms that govern these notions may be interesting to learn and while learning learners may experience fear, but until a dialectical process is setup by a teacher, nothing philosophical is being taught.

cance of philosophy. The significance will be conveyed through the varied subjects considered in a lecture — ethics will convey the significance to individual development, political philosophy to social development and our own participation in a democratic society, and metaphysics and epistemology to the understanding of the world.

Teaching philosophy and Fine art. As we saw throughout, the similarities between teaching introductory philosophy and Greek tragedy are numerous. Architectural features of modern lecture halls are often those of Greek amphitheaters. Lecture duration is similar to the duration of a tragedy and an issue is, usually, contained within the lecture time-frame. Representation, evocation of fear and catharsis are the three main similarities. The lecture design is the lecture ‘plot’ and its construction is of greatest importance to a good lecture. Tragedy is also seen by many, including Aristotle, to provide philosophical insights (Nussbaum, 2001; Woodruff, 2008; Carroll, 2010b).³¹ With all the similarities, one could be forgiven for thinking that teaching introductory philosophy *is* a kind of tragedy. But, it is not Greek tragedy as Aristotle thought of it because tragedy requires evoking pity and an introduction to philosophy does not.³² Still, the overwhelming similarities between the two practices might be thought to be enough to give an argument from analogy that teaching philosophy is a fine art of another kind. Although this argument does give us a reason to think that teaching philosophy is a fine art, it is far from conclusive. The argument requires relevant i.e. artistic similarities to be given and it does not tell us what those are. Representation, for example, was taken by Aristotle to be a necessary feature of art but after the rise of abstract art and discordant music, most philosophies of art today do not require representation. Conclusive grounds, therefore, requires appeal to a theory. It remains to be seen if introductory philosophy philosophy have other properties; for example, significant form, beauty, aesthetics, emotional depth or proper associations

³¹There are other similarities. They are both rational crafts. Audiences can take pleasure in subject matter but also in the form i.e. the plot. It is clear that the general origin of poetry was due to two causes, each of them part of human nature. ...And it is also natural for all to delight in works of imitation. (Barnes, 1984a, 1448b5). We do so, despite pain, because we learn from the theater as from the lecture. Teaching philosophy emerged and tragedy originated from innate desire to learn. Teaching philosophy emerged from natural inclination of children to imitate (NO); maybe??

³²Shakespearean tragedy, arguably, does not place an emphasis on pity and, consequently, the protagonists does not make a mistake but typically has a character flaw. Still, these tragedies do not typically represent a dialectical learning process and so teaching philosophy are not Shakespearean tragedies for a different reason.

with art institutions.

Conclusion. I mentioned at the start of the paper that teaching philosophy has not received much attention from theorists. I hope to have shown how complex one narrow species of teaching philosophy can be and how further theorizing about teaching introductory philosophy can advance pedagogy. I also think that more precise theories than provided here can shed light on other philosophical projects, in this case on the nature of philosophy itself. But, that is another topic for another time.³³

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³³See my dissertation (forthcoming) for a defense of the strong relationship and methodological advances provided by the relationship between teaching concepts and the concepts themselves, in particular in analysis of meaning and analysis of non-semantic concepts.

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