

A Polanyian Approach To Conceiving And Teaching Introduction To Philosophy

Dale Cannon

ABSTRACT Key Words: introduction to philosophy, post-critical, methodological belief, allegory of the cave, teaching critical thinking, Michael Polanyi, William James

This paper represents one attempt to implement a post-critical approach to teaching introduction to philosophy, in contrast with the usual approach which serves to re-establish the critical paradigm that Polanyi's "post-critical philosophy" is meant to challenge and displace. It aims to have students discover their own fiduciary access to reality and rely upon it while slowly building competence in critical analysis of the principal intellectual options in the history of philosophy.

My comments assume that Polanyi's diagnosis and critique of the methodology of doubt that has characterized modern intellectual culture is substantially sound and that his case for the fiduciary grounding of, and personal participation in shaping, all rational judgment is cogent. I do not intend to argue for them here, or even to expound them to any significant extent.

The typical way undergraduate students are introduced to philosophy — especially in regard to epistemology but even more so in regard to *doing* philosophy (including writing critical papers, critically discussing philosophical theories in class, and critically reading philosophy) — involves entering an apprenticeship in critical reflection as that has been embodied in modern philosophy, with nuances of variation depending on the university setting, the teacher, and the graduate school that shaped the teacher's sensibility as a philosopher. [I wish to acknowledge that I am aware that there are many exceptions to this generalization. Please note that this generalization is already qualified.] While other disciplines than philosophy can and often do teach their students to think critically, more often than not it is the discipline of philosophy that is held to be the paradigm for critical reflection both for students and for instructors in post-secondary education. The typical introduction to philosophy course focuses on issues in epistemology and metaphysics, whether approached topically or historically, and more often than not has a major component devoted to the study of Descartes' *Meditations* — one of the first primary texts that philosophy students have opportunity to chew over at length. While it is highly unlikely that any student nowadays comes away from studying Descartes believing in Descartes' conclusions or the soundness of his major arguments, it is more than likely that the resulting paradigm which the student appropriates of what it is ideally to reflect and inquire critically is embodied in Descartes' own intellectual project: *to rebuild his understanding of things solely upon candidates for belief that can withstand his utmost efforts to doubt them*. This, I think, is so even when Descartes has not been the main focus of the course. In other words, Descartes' implicit motto — "Doubt, unless or until one has sufficient reason to believe." — is the paradigm principle of critical reflection and inquiry for the student of philosophy, the paradigm of critical reflection and inquiry not just in the study of philosophy but in any subject area, even when critical reflection in this sense is unlikely to be practiced seriously to any extent by the student in question. Insofar as these conditions hold true, the typical introductory course in philosophy serves to re-establish, or to be a major factor in re-establishing, for each new generation of college and university students the very paradigm of intellectual inquiry that Polanyi's

“*post-critical* philosophy” is meant to challenge and displace.

Consider for a moment what the Cartesian motto just cited means and implies. By itself the motto accredits an attitude of *doubt as such*, not doubt because there is some particular good reason to doubt, some serious counter-evidence to what one has heretofore believed or taken for granted. It advocates critical suspicion toward each and every candidate for belief capable of tempting you to believe it. Force it [the candidate for belief] to prove itself worthy of your belief first, before believing, before giving it your credence. Force it to prove itself worthy of belief on the ground whereon you stand, in the frame of reference you currently occupy, to the perspective you currently hold. In the process of introductory philosophical apprenticeship the motto — “Doubt unless or until one has sufficient reason to believe.” — is rarely paired with its inverse: “Believe unless or until one has sufficient reason to doubt.” No. It is presented pretty much on its own — implying that one needs no good reason to doubt, no sufficient reason to doubt, only good reasons to believe. There is, of course, a general, non-specific reason for the admonition to doubt, however: precisely to avoid being taken in by an unworthy candidate for belief, to avoid being wrong, to avoid being deceived. Above all, to avoid being self-deceived due to contributions (colorings, distortions, additions of secondary qualities) coming from one’s own subjectivity to the object of belief, making it seem more credible than it actually is.

As William James put it in his classic essay, “The Will to Believe,” the reason behind the admonition to doubt is *to avoid error* — a worthy goal to be sure. But the objective of avoiding error, James commonsensically points out, by itself will not suffice to bring you to any truth that you haven’t yet attained. By itself, doubt never ventures to seek out things not yet known in hope of discovery. James points out that the admonition to avoid error needs to be conjoined with the admonition to seek truth, to venture beyond the security of present certainties in the confidence (fallible to be sure) that things now uncertainly intimated will become known. Like Polanyi, James advocates the practical necessity of what Polanyi calls *acritical, methodological belief* in given circumstances (circumstances that James calls *genuine options*), where evidence on the surface doesn’t resolve what should be believed. Both principles — “avoid error” and “seek the truth” — need to operate in tandem, in an ongoing dialectical relationship, never one wholly without the other. One without the other is insufficient and liable to result in problems: either overbelief (credulity) or underbelief (skepticism), both of which disable serious intellectual inquiry.

Nevertheless, James’ argument and the essay from which it is taken, though occasionally presented in introductory philosophy anthologies, has for the most part gone unappreciated and unappropriated at the level of philosophical pedagogy, has generally been delegated to a topic in philosophy of religion, and is almost never considered worthy of consideration in basic epistemology. Even less Polanyi’s ideas and arguments in this respect. Where does this leave us? Precisely with the situation to which James alludes. Standard fare in introductory philosophy is learning how to detect and avoid error, how to expose fallacy, how to subject to impersonal critical analysis and skeptical ordeal any candidate for belief and any argument we may happen to encounter, period — not how to seek truth or gain confidence in its pursuit. (Indeed, not a little contemporary work in contemporary epistemology is devoted to attempts at jettisoning the concept of truth altogether.) As well it leaves the student with little if anything to counter the skeptical critiques of commonsense beliefs about ourselves and the world.

Anyone sensitized to Polanyi’s critique of the methodology of doubt, that continues dominantly to characterize intellectual culture in our time, and persuaded by Polanyi’s case for the fiduciary grounding of

rational judgment and our personal participation in shaping rational judgment, cannot in good conscience go on introducing students to philosophy as usual in this way. That, at least, is my conviction. Something has got to change. I have been puzzling for years on how to introduce students to philosophy *in a post-critical way* — not simply to “post-critical philosophy” as a body of philosophical content found in Polanyi and others (that they might happen to meet with in an upper division course, when the critical paradigm of intellectual inquiry for them will have already been well set). In other words, I seek to have my students’ introduction to philosophy be one where the paradigm of intellectual inquiry is *post-critical*. My comments here represent my current thinking about this topic and my experiences in attempting to implement a post-critical approach to teaching introduction to philosophy.

Alright, then, what does such an introductory course in philosophy look like? Or rather, what does my attempt at such an introductory course happen to look like? On the surface not a whole lot different than usual, for I have my students read from one or another anthology, including selections from Plato and Descartes, among others, and sometimes also a secondary overview of philosophy, have them write essays responding to assigned questions (recently I have experimented with team written essays), conduct classes in informal lecture and discussion style, broken up with small group discussion, etc. The difference lies more in how these materials, ideas, and arguments are handled, what questions are posed, what alternative possibilities are considered, and how students are invited to relate themselves in a fiduciary way to the things being explored.

Typically, I start off by introducing my students to two extended metaphors, both powerful and mutually reinforcing: (1) that “map is not territory” and (2) that the chief philosophical task in any philosophically problematic situation is “to find a way out of the cave.” Though these metaphors are introduced early on, they are used and repeatedly explored throughout the course.

Straightaway on the first day of the course, I pose for my students the thesis that the heart of philosophy involves a recognition that, whatever you may happen to be dealing with or thinking about, the mental map that you have of the subject matter in question — regardless of what map it happens to be and regardless of how good a map it happens to be — that that map is not the same as the territory it presumes to represent. It, the map, is a *representation*. If it is a good representation, it represents well and reliably (for certain limited purposes) the territory in question. But it may not be a good mental representation, or good in all respects, and it may be unreliable for certain purposes. In any case the map as representation is not the territory and that needs to be kept clear. *Philosophical thinking* is the effort to determine how good our mental map is (or maps, when we are considering more than one) in relation to the territory it presumes to represent, and not simply take for granted that the territory is wholly comprised by the map. It is to explore in wonder the extent to which the territory is more than, or other than, the map. The opposite of philosophical thinking, in this respect, is *philodoxy* (a term coined by Eric Voegelin): the love of opinion, or more strictly, the attitude which equates truth (the territory) with a given representation of it (a given map), and equates loyalty to the truth with loyalty to the map. To paraphrase Wittgenstein, philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of our mental maps.

The second metaphor is more complex and, if not properly qualified, more problematic. I introduce my students very early to the allegory of the cave in Plato’s *Republic*. But I immediately modify it to detach it from its connection with Plato’s metaphysics. Let me explain. Recall that the prisoners in the cave of Plato’s allegory take the shadows projected upon the wall (projected by images carried by other persons in front of

a fire) to be reality. They don't realize that the shadows are representations of images, which images are themselves putative representations of reality. Quite apart from Plato's rather contrived analogy of the situation of the prisoners with sense perception, the real genius of the story of the cave, as I see it, lies in its illumination of the predicament of persons who simply take the mental representations that peers, experts, or other persons in authority give them to be reality. Philosophical liberation and enlightenment comes in breaking free of that predicament and, first, examining critically the representations whose projected shadows one has heretofore been taking to be reality and, second, finding one's way out of the cave so as to have one's reflection draw upon one's direct acquaintance with the realities purportedly represented by these images. This interpretation of philosophical liberation works for objects we perceive with our senses no less than normative principles like justice – an important point that Plato appears to miss. I urge my students to consider philosophical thinking on their part to be the effort to escape the predicament of the prisoners in the cave, to examine critically the various mental maps of reality competing for their credence (including those of other philosophers – Plato's too, and those to which I introduce them — no less than the unphilosophical notions they bring to the course). Above all, I urge them to exercise and draw upon their own means of direct acquaintance with the realities in question – “to activate their own access to being,” in the words of Walker Percy — in the process of critically examining the mental maps they receive from others and in further developing their own mental maps (recognizing here too that territory is always other than map). I also call attention to the fact that the extended metaphor of escape from the cave (and further elaboration of it to be explained shortly) is itself an image projected on the wall of the cave to be critically examined along with the others.

To attempt to do philosophy utilizing the strategy of avoiding error (methodological doubt) without also seeking truth (methodological belief) is to escape the predicament of the prisoners in the cave but to fail to get beyond critically examining the images being paraded before the fire. It is to remain in the cave, to be stuck in the cave — and typically with the skeptical suspicion that there is no escape from the cave at all, no genuine knowledge of reality to be had. The skeptical suspicion that there is no external world, that it is radically other than we can know with our own powers of cognition, or that it cannot be known at all is a direct expression of this predicament. Note that such a suspicion is not merely theoretical; if taken seriously and not satisfactorily answered it has the immediate practical consequence of disabling our power of methodological belief, our power of pursuing truth. Yet this is the situation in which our students are too often left as a result of being introduced to philosophy.

Extending this line of thinking, in my course I introduce to my students the idea of *pitfalls on the way out of the cave* — pitfalls that may appear at first to promise a way out of the cave, only to turn out to be mental traps from which it is very difficult to extricate oneself. They are deemed pitfalls or mental traps precisely because they disable serious philosophical inquiry; they undercut the very capacity we have of getting anywhere by means of our own powers of reasoning, whether by ourselves or jointly with others. I introduce five specific pitfalls as we proceed through the course — relativism, ideological thinking, skepticism, nihilism, and scientism — what they are, what makes them plausible, and some reasoned ways out of them, reasoned ways of extricating oneself from them. Finding a way out of the cave involves becoming aware of the pitfalls and learning how to effectively counteract them with reason.

The two extended metaphors, map is not territory and escape from the cave, taken as reliable clues or guides in philosophy, have built into them certain presuppositions, which my students in various respects unpack and explore as the course proceeds. One is a distinction between knowledge by representation

(encompassing primarily propositional knowledge) and knowledge by personal acquaintance -- specifically knowledge by acquaintance of realities beyond the immediate contents of one's own mind, both tangible and intangible. This distinction we explore quite explicitly in relation to the major theories of perception, knowledge, and the mind in Western philosophy. Note that if knowledge by acquaintance of realities beyond the mind is possible, the knowing mind, is not *a closed container* cut off from the external world (except and insofar as it takes itself to be so), but is (in principle at least) *opened out upon a world extending beyond itself*, a world transcending in various respects any mental map the mind may have of it. So also, perceptual experience is not *representational* or not primarily representational (a depthless stream of sense data internal to the mind), but rather is *relational*, the multifaceted way we relate mindbodily to our environment, acquainting ourselves with it. (As well, I think it fair to say, in this respect, that the two metaphors assume a form of critical realism.) Knowledge by acquaintance is thus given a relative priority in relation to knowledge by representation — not, for the most part, by itself but as undergirding and giving personal realization and backing to whatever knowledge by representation we come to accredit and also as a fulcrum for calling into question the presumption to complete adequacy of any representation.

Another presupposition (implied in the foregoing) is the inherent capacity of each person to come to know the world in its transcendence beyond existing representations for herself, to come to know it by acquaintance, by personal relationship. It is only in light of that kind of knowing that knowledge by representation can rightly be assessed and appreciated. The exercise of this capacity involves *methodological faith* — indeed, a gradually maturing methodological faith that learns by apprenticeship. Importantly, where it is lacking, its exercise will require a confidence to be placed in the student's capacity by a mentor or teacher. The presupposition of methodological faith is explored explicitly in the course to some extent, but its most important role is realized at the level of solicited student participation and specific kinds of participation sought. Thus a primary objective is to engage, activate, and nurture my students' capacity to seek truth about things that matter.

The first serious philosophical reading we do in the course is from Plato and specifically from the early dialogues in order to get a clear grasp of Socrates as paradigm philosopher. We spend a good bit of time working at making sense of Socrates' irony, and how that irony can serve to sensitize a hearer or reader to different levels of meaning in the dialogues and analogous levels of meaning in anyone's own pretensions to knowledge and wisdom, including my students' own — i.e., how something said, taken in context, can have multiple levels of meaning discernible only as there is a corresponding inward development that has taken place in the person discerning them. [Interestingly, I have just begun to discover some interesting correlations between these levels and some theories of intellectual development among college students that have recently emerged from the work of William Perry, Mary Belenky and associates, and Joanne Kurfiss.] Let me briefly explain: Think of stages on the way between being a prisoner in the cave and finally coming to the cave's mouth. At the first level, a kind of pre-critical level, knowledge is supposed to be an answer provided by an expert and ignorance is thought to be lack of such an answer. At a second, apparently critical but still unphilosophical level, knowledge is supposed to be simply an answer one has come to for oneself (regardless of how) and ignorance is thought to be (a) not realizing this and/or (b) not yet having come to an answer for oneself. This would be the level of relativistic sophism. At a third, fully critical and conventionally philosophical level, knowledge would be having an answer with justification that withstands repeated critical examination, and ignorance would be lacking such an answer.

There is a fourth Socratic level, often overlooked, partly because it has an air of paradox about it. I

would like to call it a *post-critical* level. It is where knowledge ceases to be identified with having an answer and only emerges when the existing available answers have been examined and have been found wanting in one respect or another. Some answers are clearly better than others, but none can be taken as absolute, as having complete adequacy. This level is what Nicholas of Cusa, having Socrates in mind, was later to term “learned ignorance” – which, though sounding negative to ironically undeveloped ears, is actually profoundly positive. It is a recognition that true knowledge, knowledge at this fourth level, is a developed consciousness of the present partiality, fallibility, uncertainty, and incompleteness of one’s explicit grasp of the reality in question *vis-à-vis* one’s recognition (a knowledge by acquaintance) of the presence of the reality objectively there, transcending one’s fully adequate grasp. Note that being at this level is to be at the mouth of the cave, to be profoundly open to the reality in question that transcends one’s current grasp; indeed, there is an eagerness of “learned ignorance” to come to know it more. On the other hand, the ignorance that Socrates termed most culpable, which is fully appreciated only at this fourth level, is the pretension to know more of the reality, to grasp or possess in representation more of the reality, than one actually does. It is an ignorance of one’s true ignorance. To truly come to know and own up to one’s ignorance (to come to have “learned ignorance”) is simultaneously to come fully into possession of the little knowledge, but most precious knowledge, of what one truly does know. At this fourth level, explicit, propositional knowledge (held, be it noted, philosophically, not philodoxically, i.e., held in learned ignorance) is recognized not to be the truth itself but our own best present grasp of the truth, yet to be revised and modified as we proceed. Indeed, the primary meaning of truth shifts from correct representation of reality to personal fidelity to reality.

[Plato’s so-called theory of the forms is the inherently paradoxical attempt to develop a positive (explicit) metaphysics of the transcendental (trans-explicit) realities into which Socrates inquired. It (the explicit theory) is secondary, derivative, and — according to Plato himself — highly problematic *vis-à-vis* the tacit recognition for oneself of those realities. It is not to be equated with those realities themselves or even with a fully adequate representation of them. Plato clearly recognized it was not, despite the dominant interpretation that has been given his work in contemporary philosophy.]

I need to say that some students are relatively quick to catch on to what the fourth level I have just explained is about, others catch on to it with more difficulty, and still others have difficulty making sense of it at all, even by the end of the course. I have no magic tricks up my sleeve. Some of my students, I have come to believe, are simply not ready for the shift to thinking at the fourth level. Often many are unready to make the shift to the third. Which brings me to a minor digression: A good deal of what I am trying to do with my students in this course involves helping them come to see things from a different perspective, from a different frame of reference, and with a different paradigm than they are accustomed to. Helping them make this transition certainly is an art and not a science, and certainly no technology. Indeed, in important respects it is a matter of spirit. And sometimes I feel wholly inadequate to the task. Nevertheless, most of my students do make it, I believe.

In any case, as I have already indicated, in the course we go on to explore a variety of issues and arguments in subsequent Western philosophy, including a close reading of Descartes’ *Meditations*, among other classic texts. But now we are in a position to read them and the *Meditations* in a different light than usual, with some independent sense of the territory they seek to map. Moreover, we explore philosophical views not as historically displacing each other in a one-directional, progressive succession, but as explorations of much of the same territory but from different angles, with different concerns and agendas. This involves

methodological empathy: a specific kind of methodological belief where (as Coleridge put it) you suspend your disbelief in order to see what it is like to explore a subject by means of assumptions different from your own. In the class we juxtapose one philosophical view and associate arguments alongside others and see how they respond to each other. Thus Aristotle is not seen as displacing Plato, and Plato is given, in our imagination at least, an opportunity to respond critically to Aristotle's critique. I encourage my students to place the great philosophers in dialogue with each other so no significant voice gets lost just because it is earlier than another. So also with the conflict between Rationalism and Empiricism, where Rationalism is usually given short shrift, especially in relation to the development of modern science. In Medieval Philosophy we listen to the Christian Platonists as well as the Christian Aristotleans, the Monastic philosopher-theologians as well as the Scholastic philosopher-theologians, the classical realists as well as the nominalists. We pay attention to the spokespersons for change and contingency, the Heracliteans, as well as the spokespersons for stasis and rational necessity, the Parmenideans. In Twentieth Century Philosophy we consider both Analytic approaches as well as Phenomenological approaches. Overall, we are primarily interested in becoming acquainted with those aspects of the territory these philosophers are seeking to bring to light (certain crucial aspects of the human condition) above and beyond the "territory" consisting of their maps.

All of this would amount to historicism, another form of relativism, without the active participation of my students in sorting the issues out for themselves and their confidence that in so doing they were deepening their acquaintance and familiarity with the realities in question. That is to say, requisite to the process is their own methodological faith in reaching out to encounter reality and be faithful to what they find thus disclosed. To seek the truth is to draw near to reality in its transcendence beyond our expectations and to be drawn into a relationship of deepening fidelity to it.

At the climax of Polanyi's chapter in *Personal Knowledge* entitled "The Logic of Affirmation," Polanyi explains Augustine's maxim, *nisi credideritis non intelligitis*:

It says, as I [Polanyi] understand it, that the process of examining any topic is both an exploration of the topic, and an exegesis of our fundamental beliefs in the light of which we approach it; a dialectical combination of exploration and exegesis. Our fundamental beliefs are continuously reconsidered in the course of such a process, but only within the scope of their own basic premises (PK 267).

This is the task to which I summon my students: critical exploration of certain intellectual maps in dialectical relation with an exegesis of their own developing methodological faith-convictions which constitute their own present access to reality, their means of acquaintance with it. Primary fidelity is owed to the reality to which these faith-convictions give access, not to those convictions themselves. Reliance upon them needs to be philosophical not philodoxical. Thus I do not directly challenge their faith. To the contrary, I invite them methodologically to rely upon their present convictions *in a philosophical way, as distinct from a philodoxical way*. Post-critical reason (post-critical critical investigation and scrutiny) in this sense requires faith. Students need to realize this truth not only in theory, but even more so in practice.

In sum, my aim in introducing my students to philosophy is to have them discover their own fiduciary access to reality and rely upon it while slowly building their competence in critical analysis of the principal existing intellectual options that have been worked out in the history of philosophy.

Bibliographical Notes

William James' classic essay, "The Will to Believe," is widely anthologized, but its original publication is in *The Will To Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1896).

The reference to Ludwig Wittgenstein is to his statement in *Philosophical Investigations*, "Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language."

The concept of *philodoxy* in relation to *philosophy* is discussed in various places within Eric Voegelin's work. See his *Amnesis*, trans. and ed. by Gerhart Niemeyer (Notre Dame and London: U. of Notre Dame Press, 1978); Eugene Webb, *Erich Voegelin: Philosopher of History* (Seattle and London: U. of Washington Press, 1981); and Eugene Webb, "Faith, Truth, and Persuasion in the Thought of Erich Voegelin," in *Voegelin and the Theologian*, ed. by John Kirby and William M. Thompson (Toronto Studies in Theology, vol. 10; New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1983), pp. 356-369.

Polanyi's fullest discussion of acritical, methodological belief is in Part Three of *Personal Knowledge*, but there is a good, brief introduction to the idea in Lecture One of *The Study of Man*. Aside from Polanyi's discussion of the fiduciary coefficient of our judgment and the role of acritical belief in all of our knowing, very useful discussions of methodological belief may be found in Peter Elbow, *Embracing Contraries: Explorations in Teaching and Learning* (New York and Oxford: Oxford U. Press, 1986), esp. "Methodological Doubting and Believing: Contraries in Inquiry," pp. 254-300; Wayne Booth, *Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent* (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1974); and James E. Loder, *The Transforming Moment* (Colorado Springs, CO: Helmers and Howard, 1992).

Walker Percy's idea of our "access to being" may be found in his essay, "The Loss of the Creature," in the collection, *The Message in the Bottle* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1975), pp. 46-63.

The references to theories of intellectual development in college students include William G. Perry, *Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in the College Years: A Scheme* (New York: Hold, Rinehart, 1970); Mary F. Belenky, Blythe M. Clinchy, Nancy R. Goldberger, and Jill M. Tarule, *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind* (New York: Basic Books, 1986); and Joanne G. Kurfiss, *Critical Thinking: Theory, Research, Practice and Possibilities* (ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 2; Washington, DC: Association for the Study of Higher Education, 1988).

My discussion of levels of meaning to which Socrates' irony sensitizes us has been shaped by Søren Kierkegaard's *The Concept of Irony with Constant Reference to Socrates*, trans. by Lee M. Capel (New York: Harper and Row, 1965); and Robert Paul Wolff, *About Philosophy* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1976), p. 7.

Nicholas of Cusa's concept of "learned ignorance" may be found in almost any good book on later Medieval philosophy. For Nicholas' own account, see Jasper Hopkins, *Nicholas of Cusa on Learned Ignorance: A Translation and an Appraisal of De Docta Ignorantia*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Banning Press, 1990).

Notes on Contributors

Dale Cannon is Professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Western Oregon State College, Monmouth, OR 97361. He has long been interested in Polanyi, having written his 1969 Duke dissertation under William H. Poteat on “Mastered Irony: The Point of Entry Into a Post-Critical Epistemology.” Cannon has, on several occasions, been a presenter or respondent at Polanyi Society annual meetings; he has written a number of articles for *TAD*. He is interested in corresponding with teachers of philosophy who are interested in rethinking the teaching of philosophy from a perspective opened up by Polanyi and post-critical philosophy (email: cannodw@wou.edu).

Éva Gábor is Professor Emeritus in philosophy at Technical University of Budapest. Her area of specialization is social philosophy; she has interest in figures like Karl Mannheim as well as Michael Polanyi. She is one of the editors-in-chief of *Polanyiana* and is President of Michael Polanyi Liberal Philosophical Association, 1111 Budapest, Műegyetem rkp. 3. K. I. 59, Hungary; (e-mail: GABORE@TTTK2.TTTK.BME.HU).

David Rutledge is Professor of Religion and Coordinator of Humanities at Furman University, where he teaches courses in religion and science, and religion and ecology. He began his study of Polanyi with William H. Poteat, and it has remained background to most of his later work. This is clear to the discerning reader of his *Humans and the Earth: Toward a Personal Ecology* (Peter Lang, 1993). Rutledge has won awards for his teaching, and specifically for his religion and ecology course at Furman (email: David.Rutledge@furman.edu).

D. M. Yeager is the person to whom William H. Poteat said, on different occasions: “You are a perfect fool for Christ” and “What worries me about you is that every time I say something philosophically outrageous, you perk up and expect me to take it further.” Nonetheless, on the principle that nothing out of nothing comes, she now teaches bankrupt traditions in the Department of Theology at Georgetown University (e-mail: YEAGERD@gunet.georgetown.edu).