

Beyond Moral Stories

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“Tell me a story, Grandma.” That little face with those wondrous sparkling eyes, expectantly looks up at me, waiting for the story to begin. Though I hardly pause before relating the words and images of my story, in that fleeting moment, the many stories and “talk-stories,” to use Kingston’s expression,¹ that contributed to my moral life and the moral lives and character of others pass through my mind. It is these moral stories and talk-stories that I want to consider. But this is only a portion of my agenda, the primary part is to go beyond stories to question the relationships among stories, moral principles, and moral life.

ACT ONE: A “TALK-STORY”

When my mother began the story, we were transported to that earlier world of the story. From the depths of that earlier time, the story began: “It was still dark, the dark of night, not the darkness before dawn, when I rushed down the stairs, hitched my beautiful brown Sally to the wagon and prepared her for our long trip to market. Then, we set out, my father in one wagon, Sally pulling my wagon.” As my mother continued, I could picture the drive, the slow trip, the two lone wagons and horses, their local noise within a vast silence, the long distance across Staten Island, the cold some days, the rain and wind, the darkness, and then their arrival at market. In that crowded place where people easily chatted in many languages, men always expressed surprise to see a young girl, a child doing the work of a man. Approaching my mother’s father, my grandfather, they asked, “How can you allow this child, your daughter, to drive such a dangerous route? How old is she? Thirteen? Fourteen?” Through all of this, my mother quietly listened to their words and felt proud of her adult responsibilities.

Though it was a simple story, told with great feeling, each time she began, my brother and I eagerly listened as if we were hearing the story for the first time. Now looking back, I ask: “Why this story?” Why am I telling it now to you as the first example of a moral story? Why not begin with more grandiose, better structured stories, those that we read and now commonly share?

My mother told many versions of this and other stories at appropriate moments, times when we complained about the unrelenting cold of a painful walk to school, when my knuckles hurt from scrubbing shirts on a washboard, when we protested about the amount and difficulty of school homework, when we seemed bored or depressed. In the absence of reasons or explanations, the stories enchanted us. Only now do I understand; through these stories, the narrative of moral practice, we acquired and recognized the moral values and “moral idioms”² of our family first, and then of the larger segment of our community and society.

Magnification of my mother’s story reveals two forms of moral education. First, the moral education my mother acquired: Aristotle gives meaning to how virtues form, that through good actions, virtues develop, that “it is not unimportant, then, to

acquire one sort of habit or another, right from our youth; rather, it is very important, indeed all-important.”³ This emphasis on right habits needs extension in another direction. Habituation to certain virtues and action is related to other phenomena, in particular, the development of a moral perspective, the acknowledgment of the mysterious call of the moral word, the establishment of one’s place and relationship to a community and the world. This is not merely the “recognition” of one’s place or the “demand for recognition,”⁴ but a moral perspective with which to view others, the world, and social phenomena.

Given adult responsibility, another child might have been angry, ashamed, fearful, might forget or hide events, might have become alienated from parents. As this child, my mother developed certain virtues, dispositions to particular types of actions, and an intellectual and moral perspective not because of the one event revealed in her story, but because of her home, her family, its moral values and its relationships within a community. The one experience in itself did not create the moral person and her virtues; the experience, the ride to market, was embedded within a much larger context. Thus, even the particularity of the story is a shorthand. But a shorthand for what? The values and moral beliefs of a family and community: the “moral dream” accepted by her people — their moral history and moral perspective.

Second, the “talk-story.” Without the trajectory of their daily moral lives following certain themes, the talk-story might have had few moral lessons for two children. But conjoining the moral lives of these children with an admired, beloved moral model telling a story with deep moral meanings and values, the story’s messages become fixed within these children’s moral consciousness.⁵ Again, it is not just the one story or even many stories that provide moral education for these children. At times, the story serves as a reminder, a reminder of the moral idioms that they have been learning, and that they accept and practice. Moreover, as a reminder, the story often adds breadth and depth to their moral idioms.⁶ But no matter how the story is viewed, it does not just refer to itself, but to something beyond itself.

ENTR’ACTE ONE

Turning away from conceptual analysis, thin descriptions, calculative reasoning, and deductive reasoning based on abstract first principles, talk-stories reclaim an even older genre of moral education. Rather than a “rhetorical device for expressing sentiments,”⁷ stories disclose thick descriptions of human lives and moral phenomena. The difference between “thin” and “thick” descriptions is instructive. Thin descriptions are overviews, abstractions from the concrete world, summaries, shorthands, and limited perspectives without history or context that concentrate on a few focal characteristics. Thick descriptions expose deep properties and peculiarities, disclose the detail of a culture or a personal life, reach for the historical and contextual.

With this distinction between moral principles as thin descriptions and stories as thick descriptions, it would be tempting to conclude that moral education should be based on stories. But even if we benefit from stories, this does not mean that stories alone can now provide the rich and complex moral discourse necessary for

moral education and moral life. In the remaining time for this entr'acte, I question the distinction between "thin" and "thick" textures and descriptions. During a period of challenge to all types of traditional, antithetical categories, dualisms, opposing terms, and boundaries, it is not surprising that new dualisms have emerged. Why are these newer boundaries any more tolerable than older ones?

By the new scale, "thin" is bad, "thick" good. But is thin always bad and thick always good? A watery, thin bean soup is certainly less tempting than a thick one, but a thin, light gravy may be preferable to a thick, flour-laden one. The issue here is not some absolute criteria of thin or thick in itself, but what the object being described requires. At a single meal, it is more appetizing to have both thin and thick, rather than all thin or all thick.

What of thin and thick in moral situations, life, and discourse? Again, there is no one correct answer. Even demarcation of what is thin and what is thick is illusory. Maybe, on one side of a continuum, we have an exaggerated thin, moral text, "Thou shalt not..." and at the other side, the excessively thick texts of George Eliot, Proust, or Musil. But would we want to surrender either of these opposites? Someone may comment, "Don't be naive, this is not the way thin and thick are being used; but rather, one refers to the reasoning and rationality of Enlightenment philosophies, the other to the expansive narrative of postmodern thought." It is not naiveté, but questioning, as others have,⁸ whether the exclusive form of moral discourse can be either thin or thick, or whether one of these must have priority. For now, I put aside troubling questions about what comprises reasoning, "the" rational or forms of rationality, stories, narrative and whether there is the possibility of agreed upon meaning for any of these. Instead, the issue here is whether the wrong questions, the wrong problems are being addressed. A different way of looking at the issue is whether all stories and all abstract, reasoned arguments should have our equal attention, and whether each style, having both shortcomings and strengths, may be needed for different work, each to complement and enrich the other.

ACT TWO: A NOVEL

In *Love's Knowledge*, Martha Nussbaum supports ideas that provide another entrance into moral stories for moral education.⁹ Her suggestive resources encompass "finely tuned perception," a dialogue or interplay between perception and rules, (actually rules of thumb), "attentive fidelity," and moral improvisation.¹⁰ What better way to examine the role, the strengths and shortcomings of moral stories for moral education than a rereading of Henry James's *Portrait of a Lady*.¹¹ Through this story, we appreciate the moral lives of Isabel Archer, probably James' favorite protagonist, and of the friends, suitors, and relatives that surround her, watch her, exploit her, and adore her. To understand Isabel Archer is to discern a deeper moral story, the story of the foibles of moral life and the moral question about what a person's obligation is to herself and to others.

A thin description of the novel's plot is unpretentious: A naive, but intelligent, spirited, and highly idealistic young woman, Isabel Archer, is taken to Europe by her aunt. In England, Isabel rejects marriage offers from both an aristocrat and a wealthy American. At the bidding of Ralph, his son, her uncle bequeaths a fortune to Isabel.

As an heiress, she goes with her Aunt to Florence, there meeting the shallow, arrogant Gilbert Osmond, who she eventually marries, a marriage that destroys her life desires and chances for happiness. In the closing chapters of the novel, Isabel, disobeying her husband, goes to England to be with her dying cousin Ralph, and finally, returns to Rome to her husband and marriage.

This is not a simple story, a “soap opera” of an earlier period, but an intriguing, complex moral tale, with the starts and stops, the turns and twists of a particular moral life and the construction of a moral self. Henry James explicitly broaches the topic of this self in a conversation between Madame Merle and Isabel Archer. Madame Merle, a paragon of appearances, of “charming surface,”¹² maintains, in the pattern of the sociologist Erving Goffman, that:

every human being has his shell and that you must take the shell into account. By the shell I mean the whole envelope of circumstances....What shall we call our “self?” Where does it begin? Where does it end? It overflows into everything that belongs to us — and then it flows back again. I know a large part of myself is in the clothes I choose to wear. I’ve a great respect for things! One’s self — for other people — is one’s expression of one’s self; and one’s house, one’s furniture, one’s garments, the books one reads, the company one keeps — these things are all expressive.¹³

In disagreement, Isabel hesitatingly offers an alternative view:

I don’t know whether I succeed in expressing myself, but I know that nothing else expresses me. Nothing that belongs to me is any measure of me; everything’s on the contrary a limit, a barrier, and a perfectly arbitrary one. Certainly the clothes which, as you say, I choose to wear, don’t express me; and heaven forbid they should!¹⁴

Through Isabel’s hesitant words, and then later, her inner thoughts, James reveals the shortcoming of “playing a part” and rejects moral character based on external appearance. For Isabel, it was the inner person, how the person thought and imagined, what the person’s values and moral ideals were, and what conscience and ideas guided the person’s life. For Madame Merle, all is outward appearances and roles, the blending in with diverse men and women, the roaming from country to country, from great house to great house, and expressing what some other’s values are. While their words indicate the difference between two ways of looking at moral life, their lives and the decisions they make based on their beliefs disclose the practical implications of accepting each position.

This division between the opinions and moral lives of Madame Merle and Isabel Archer reveal something else: another way of looking at the division between the particular and the general, the concrete and the abstract, moral stories and moral principles. Before considering these relationships, it is necessary to return to Isabel Archer. For if Madame Merle’s emphasis on outward appearances — on the particular and concrete — was flawed, Isabel Archer’s belief in the mind was similarly flawed. She marries Gilbert Osmond for his mind, a “beautiful mind,” but a mind that gave his house:

neither light nor air; Osmond’s beautiful mind indeed seemed to peep down from a small high window and mock at her [with]...a sovereign contempt for every one but some three or four very exalted people whom he envied, and for everything in the world but half a dozen ideas of his own.¹⁵

The difference between Isabel Archer and Gilbert Osmond is striking:

Her notion of the aristocratic life was simply the union of great knowledge with great liberty; the knowledge would give one a sense of duty and the liberty a sense of enjoyment. But for Osmond it was altogether a thing of forms, a conscious, calculated attitude.¹⁶

Isabel tells herself how an intelligent, free, thoughtful, imaginative young woman could have chosen Osmond, with his “evil eye.”¹⁷ Osmond, she thinks,

was not changed; he had not disguised himself, during the year of courtship, any more than she. But she had seen only half his nature then, as one saw the disk of the moon when it was partly masked by the shadow of the earth. She saw the full moon now — she saw the whole man. She kept still, as it were, so that he should have a free field, and yet in spite of this she had mistaken a part for the whole.¹⁸

Through the words of Isabel’s inner thought, James reveals the shortcoming of judging the self on the basis of one dimension, of half the moon. But what is the whole universe of the moral self? James has told us much about the moral self, has left us puzzled, thinking about what sort of moral self would avoid the imperfections of Isabel Archer and Madame Merle. In his images of the partly masked disk of the moon, the part instead of the whole, and the small high window, James also suggests something about stories themselves. Readers seem “to peep down from a small high window,” and only view a story from a single perspective; maybe through imagination the perspective is extended,¹⁹ but not so that it takes in the infinite perspective by which to interpret that story.²⁰ Too often, our moral selves take the place of Gilbert Osmond who narrows the story, Madame Merle who tries to manipulate the story, or Isabel Archer who struggles and fails to create a more spacious story. In moral stories, even taking the role of an imaginary narrator would not provide solace. Knowing the story, repeating the story does not reveal the meaning of the story. Can another moral story provide a clue as to how moral stories function to transform moral lives and provide moral education? To this we turn after our next entr’acte.

ENTR’ACTE TWO

According to Robert Coles,

The whole point of stories is not “solutions” or “resolutions” but a broadening and even a heightening of our struggles — with new protagonists and antagonists introduced, with new sources of concern or apprehension or hope, as one’s mental life accommodates itself to a series of arrivals: guests who have a way of staying, but not necessarily staying put.²¹

Stories reveal the lives and values of particular individuals who live at a given time and in a specific context, whose stories are affected by gender and race, religious beliefs, culture, and community, and whose tales contain a continual interplay of these differences with similarities.

The guests that may become participants in readers’ mental lives take these readers to other worlds and introduce them to other ways of understanding and living moral lives.²² These other worlds, no matter their distance in space and time, whether real or fictional, do not remain “other” worlds. By becoming part of readers’ mental lives, these other worlds may prod readers to transform their lives and view ethical dilemmas differently. Thus, “Learning to read novels, we slowly learn to read ourselves.”²³

When stating that “the whole point of stories is not ‘solutions’ or ‘resolutions,’ but a broadening and even a heightening of our struggles,” Coles recognizes two aspects of moral life:

First, unlike learning certain tasks and skills, such as how to tie a bow or tell time, becoming a moral person and living a moral life are not finally completed projects. Even with particular ethical dilemmas, there may only be temporary resolution, at times, no final closure: problems just recede into the background or fade as other problems take center stage. With stories, one writer claims, “the truth is never final, never fixed.”²⁴ Namely, with each new entrance to the story, with additional fabric added to the story, with each retelling, the story becomes another, separated from and yet, conjoined with the original story.

Second, stories do not provide ready-made answers to be applied to moral dilemmas, but instead, expand awareness and sensitivity.²⁵ They direct attention to complex dimensions of moral situations and dilemmas in ways that were not previously appreciated.

Through stories, readers travel to other worlds, to other places, and in these other worlds, may feel and see, sympathize with and abhor actions and lives. These different worlds also allow readers to picture and feel their own personal world with a new vision and vitality. By reading stories, one’s personal world is invigorated; the flattened becomes multidimensional; the barely visible becomes clearer; and through an imaginary voyage, we gain greater understanding and sympathy for the complexity of moral life. At times, we find that the distant, unfamiliar world of the story is not so distant, not an unfamiliar world, not just a story; it is our world.

Stories may or may not be well told; they vary in quality, style, and in their ability to engage us. The standards for judging a good story are not identical with the standards for understanding moral situations and problems.²⁶ Readers usually do not judge whether a story is good or bad on the basis of the moral character of its protagonists. The protagonists of a good story may be heroic, courageous, cowardly, kind, generous, compassionate, intelligent, boorish, mean, selfish, powerless, or powerful. Stories in themselves, especially if they do the work of good stories by being rich and interesting, do not readily supply moral criteria and standards in the way that philosophic analysis or ethical theory traditionally have.²⁷ In fact, if it provides explicit moral criteria, a story is no longer a story; it is philosophy, perhaps bad philosophy, and most certainly, a bad “fictional” story.²⁸

If moral criteria are not overt and full blown components of the story, how does a story communicate its moral messages to readers? Why do readers recognize approbatory or disapprobatory moral lives? How do stories heighten the moral awareness or sensitivity of readers? How are stories able to disclose messages for moral life? Do readers of stories first have to possess appropriate moral qualities, moral sensitivities and awareness, moral standards, or moral principles in order to recognize the moral meanings and implications of stories? Are the moral sensitivities, beliefs, and attitudes of readers a scaffold onto which these readers build further moral structures?

Stories themselves may at times divulge moral standards and virtues. The fact that these standards and virtues are not explicitly stated does not mean that they do not exist or that they are not revealed to readers. Akin to protagonists in stories, human beings do not always plan and structure their moral lives with clearly

articulated moral principles. R. M. Hare asserts that people ask one question even if a considerable portion of their moral behavior is based on intuition: "How shall I bring up my children?"²⁹ Yet, it is doubtful whether most parents, even exemplary parents,³⁰ explicitly ask this moral question at the birth of their children. This does not imply that moral dimensions are absent from parents' caring for or the raising of their children; rather, in their own lives and when raising their children, people live in ways akin to the way threads, patches, and designs comprise stories.

Moral stories do not occur in a fragmented way; similarly, the moral web that defines our moral selves consists of challenging and complex, yet fragile constructions. When reading a story, we recognize how protagonists struggle to find their moral paths within communal and social constraints, and within the confines of their economic, religious, gendered, and ethnic worlds. The disclosure of moral messages may emerge through a dialogical relationship between the reader and the text, with the reader bringing various experiences, beliefs, and standards to the story, and the story, if it is a good story, and a rich sophisticated narrative, awakens the reader to yet other moral messages, meanings, and notions.

The ability of stories to increase moral *awareness* is crucial since moral shortcomings often arise because someone does not recognize a situation is potentially a moral situation, or identify the complex dimensions of the moral dilemma. Reasoning and questioning, searching for ways to solve an ethical dilemma, helping or caring for another, and being altruistic occur if someone first recognizes the moral dimensions of a situation or relationship. If stories did nothing but increase moral awareness, they would have a substantial role to play. However, I believe that stories function in other ways: that in addition to raising moral awareness, stories may also suggest moral standards, ideals to be attained, vices to be avoided, ways of living moral lives, and moral shortcomings to avoid.

A final problem remains: Does this advocacy of stories suggest that stories can be the sole basis of all moral education? Have we wholly dispensed with moral principles, rational discourse, and reasoning and instead become content with the moral particularity of stories.³¹ A final story may provide the answer.

FINALE: OTHER STORIES AND MOVING BEYOND STORIES

I now turn to another type of story, one that moves beyond the mother of a loving, caring family, and beyond the heroine of a novel of another era. I thus move beyond both family and community, beyond their historical narrative and particular context. I move beyond micro-moral concerns about views of the self and other, and one's obligation to both — to a larger territory. Even though it begins with specifics, this relates to a broader context. It originates in the dark, ugly, and hidden side of our age, in the pain and suffering of human life. The first part of this third story takes place at the time of the Civil War.³²

Marion, a child of eight, lives in a foster home. A neighbor, hearing Marion's continual screaming and moaning, but never seeing Marion, seeks help for the child from numerous legal agencies, institutions, and people without any success. The police and court officials say that no law has been broken. Tenaciously, the neighbor continues until she finds someone to support her effort; this person is the head of the local ASPCA.

The problem for the neighbor is that in the public domain, Marion has no legal rights; she is not included in the framework of justice. Her life is wholly dependent on the private domain, on the affectional ties of a caring family, without any public provisions if the family is abusive. Since neither public arrangements nor private, affectional ties existed, Marion's life was not protected; nobody was concerned or had authority to intervene, to protect the child from the abuse and neglect in the foster family.³³ When I say "nobody" was concerned, I refer to many people — some spoke through the voice of public roles, others were private persons — but all were aware of Marion's plight and would not interfere with the neglect and abuse. Only one neighbor heard Marion's story and interpreted it as requiring action. Only one person reached out to Marion; only one person spoke a language of responsibility.

The story was not heard in the public or the private domain. In Marion's case and many others, a background of rights and justice was needed not just to protect a child when the affectional ties of the family did not exist, but also to provide a moral framework from which those silent neighbors in the private domain might hear and understand Marion's story. The justice and rights background was needed on two counts: First, on a public level, it would provide a basis for ameliorating the child's life, for removing her from the abusive situation. For far too long, the neighbor, hearing her story, was unable to go beyond the screams of the story. Only a public justice structure would allow the neighbor to transform her responsibility into action. Second, on a private level, inclusion of Marion in a justice and legal structure would provide a means to transform people's moral perspective and heighten the awareness of those in the private domain. Marion screaming her story did not suffice. Others needed to hear, to recognize the story.

A new Marion story occurred in the 1960s. At that time, the rights and justice structure to protect Marion were in place. The people who heard Marion's story, told through screams and signs of neglect, were able to report to legal authorities to have Marion taken out of the abusive familial conditions. But the judge in the case did not accept that legal protection was sufficient. Something was missing. Marion's story was interpreted through an external set of standards, through a rights and justice perspective. The judge in the case believed another perspective was needed to interpret and respond to Marion's story. To provide this other perspective, the judge created the idea of court-appointed child advocate volunteers. A trained volunteer, handling a single case, had many ways to respond to the child's story, such as meeting with the child and family, teachers, child protection and health workers, court officials, and therapists, making various recommendations, and initiating different activities to benefit the child and remediate family conditions. The volunteer became the eyes, ears, and heart of the Court. The volunteers's role can advance our discussion of the need to move beyond moral stories.

Being outside the original moral story and working to move beyond that story, the volunteer has two roles that are symbolic of a variety of moral perspectives. The volunteer works to mend the world of the child; this means creating conditions so that the child can become a member of a caring, loving family, community, and environment. In the first place, the volunteer is not behind some veil of ignorance

or a generalized other, but someone who hears and understands the thick texture of the child's story. At the same time, the volunteer knows the details and conditions of abuse and neglect, asks and assesses what conditions and services the child needs to become whole again, and part of a caring, loving family, the volunteer also becomes someone who directly cares for the child. The volunteer cannot be called a negotiator between a justice-rights system and a caring family; for at the time she enters the case, there is an abusive not a caring family. She is not someone who is the blindfolded symbol of justice who utilizes the resources available from the justice system to return the child to a caring network. Yet in another sense, the volunteer embodies both positions when she moves beyond the original story. To do this, the volunteer uses external principles and values, justice, and rights in combination with more private and personal values, care, compassion, and altruism to write a new story.

Now, turning from these stories of the pain and suffering of the two Marions and their relationship to moral standards, to justice and rights, to care, compassion, and altruism, there is a further issue to be discussed. Instead of just being stories of moral situations, the latter story of moral practice may tell us something about ethical theory. I do not aim for some type of higher synthesis or to eliminate "contrastive languages."³⁴ First, there is value in accepting "contrastive languages" as a way of heightening moral conflict, not particularly within society, but within each of us,³⁵ to increase our moral understanding, awareness, and sensitivity. Second, moving away from common venues for moral theory and changing the arena of moral practical and theoretical moral discourse have the potential to restrain more virulent rhetoric and foster increased conversation and dialogue.

But there is an even more compelling lesson here. The volunteer who sought to mend Marion's world represents a different way of portraying our present moral dilemma. She symbolizes someone who reaches out, who sees, who is tied to the Other, and speaks a different moral language, an "ethic of responsibility,"³⁶ that draws on contrastive moral languages. Emmanuel Levinas describes this responsibility as:

untransferable, no one could replace me. In fact, it is a matter of saying the very identity of the human I starting from responsibility, that is, starting from this position or deposition of the sovereign I in self consciousness, a deposition which is precisely its responsibility for the Other. Responsibility is what is incumbent on me exclusively, and what *humanly*, I cannot refuse.³⁷

1. Maxine Hong Kingston, *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts* (New York: Vintage International, 1989).

2. John Kekes, *Moral Tradition and Individuality* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 135-38.

3. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Terence Irwin, 1104a.

4. Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in *Multiculturalism and "The Politics of Recognition,"* ed. Amy Gutmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 25-73.

5. If the story were an exact recounting of a moral problem facing the children, then the story probably would not be a story, but a didactic lesson of how the children should behave.

6. Kekes, *Moral Tradition and Individuality*, 138-44.
7. Kathy Carter, "The Place of Story in the Study of Teaching and Teacher Education," *Educational Researcher* 22, no. 1 (January-February 1993): 5.
8. For example, Harvey Siegel, "What Price Inclusion?" in *Philosophy of Education 1995*, ed. Alven Neiman (Urbana, IL: Philosophy of Education Society, 1996), 1-22.
9. Martha C. Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).
10. *Ibid.*, passim.
11. Henry James, *The Portrait of a Lady* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1975). For an earlier session at the Philosophy of Education Society that motivated my renewed interest in this novel, Patricia Rohrer, "At What Price Individualism? The Education of Isabel Archer," in *Philosophy of Education 1993*, ed. Audrey Thompson (Urbana, IL: Philosophy of Education Society, 1994), 315-23 and Betty A. Sichel, "Who is Isabel Archer?" *Ibid.*, 324-26.
12. James, *The Portrait of a Lady*, 167.
13. *Ibid.*, 175, cf., 205.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*, 360.
16. *Ibid.*, 361. For a criticism of calculative reasoning, Stuart Hampshire, "Public and Private Morality," in *Public and Private Morality*, ed. S. Hampshire (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 23-53.
17. James, *Portrait of a Lady*, 355.
18. *Ibid.*, 357.
19. Gregory Currie, "The Moral Psychology of Fiction," *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 73, no. 2 (June 1995): 250-59.
20. Alexander Nehamas, "The Postulated Author: Critical Monism as a Regulative Ideal," *Critical Inquiry* 8 (1981): 133-49.
21. Robert Coles, *The Call of Stories* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1989), 129.
22. For example, Robert Coles and Jane Hallowell Coles, *Women of Crisis II: Lives of Work and Dreams* (Reading, MA: Addison Wesley/A Merloyd Lawrence Book, 1980), 3-4.
23. Mark Schorer, "An Interpretation," in *The Good Soldier*, ed. Ford Madox Ford (New York: Vintage Books, 1983/1955), v.
24. William Ayers, "Teachers' Stories: Autobiography and Inquiry," in *Teacher Personal Theorizing*, ed. E. Wayne Ross, Jeffrey W. Cornett, and Gail McCutcheon (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 48.
25. Lawrence A. Blum, "Moral Perception and Particularity," in *Moral Perception and Particularity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 30-61.
26. Wayne C. Booth, *The Company We Keep: An Ethics of Fiction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), passim.
27. For the relationship between philosophy and literature, see Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge*.
28. Of course, it may be a sermon, even a good sermon, but that is another matter.
29. R. M. Hare, *The Language of Morals* (New York: Oxford University Press/A Galaxy Book, 1964), 74, cf. 75.
30. Mary Field Belenky et al., *Women's Ways of Knowing* (New York: Basic Books, 1986), e.g., chap. 8, "Family Life and the Politics of Talk," on silent women who find their voice because they want to change their children's lives.
31. Cf. Paul R. McHugh, "What's the Story?" *The American Scholar* 6, no. 2 (Spring 1995): 191-203.
32. During the same decade, a similar story could have been told about a child in Great Britain, Brian Corby, *Child Abuse, Towards a Knowledge Base* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1993), chap. 3, especially, 17-18.
33. Though there is no discussion here of how to define abuse and neglect, there is need for further work in this area, e.g., see: Panel on Research on Child Abuse and Neglect, *Understanding Child Abuse and Neglect* (Washington, D. C.: National Academy Press, 1993), chap. 2, "Identification and Definitions."

34. Richard Tuck, "Rights and Pluralism," in *Philosophy in an Age of Pluralism*, ed. James Tully (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 162.
35. A rewording of Jean Bethke Elshtain, "The Risks and Responsibilities of Affirming Ordinary Life," in Tully, ed., *Philosophy in an Age of Pluralism*, 68.
36. Ibid., 79-80. Cf., Vaclav Havel, *Disturbing the Peace*, trans. Paul Wilson (New York: Vintage Books, 1990); Emmanuel Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity*, trans. Richard A. Cohen (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1985), 95-101; and *Time and the Other*, trans. Richard A. Cohen (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1987), e.g., 111-15.
37. Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity*, 101.