

18 September, 2013.

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Dr Erika Kerruish  
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Dear Erika,

I understand that you would be a very busy woman. I am hopeful that you can take the time to read this letter to you. I have just recently come across your work in the SOC 10399 - Philosophy on Screen: Film and Television - course. A friend of mine is enrolled. He knows of my love of philosophy and has allowed me to check it out.

A couple of days ago I came across Nietzsche's Thus Spake Zarathustra. I have only read a few pages. Then I read your work and noticed that you have an Honours degree in philosophy and your thesis is on the work of Friedrich Nietzsche.

That is one of the things that has prompted me to write to you. I don't believe in coincidence. So after a restless night of being badgered by concepts and paradigms and such, I needed to write. With you in mind I wrote this:

Course notes.

Course - 2011 - 2012.

Facilitators reject out right intellectual conversation. They will not engage in any discourse that may allow themselves to feel not fully and totally in control or in authority during <sup>any</sup> type of discourse.

They feel they must dominate all aspects of a conversation, less they feel that their position/power structure of knowledge is threatened.

They did feel that in a profound way because their attitudes and lack of respect was eventually something they chose not to hide.

How easy is it for them to treat someone in an acromonious fashion when that person is already viewed as a pariah. The social consciousness of our time imprints that attitude. Combine that with structured rote learning and it becomes a recipe for problems to anybody that engages in free thinking, critical thinking, reflection, evaluation and inquiry.

To not conform in a submissive compliant way, to want to talk/debate certain aspects of ways of thinking, to engage in philosophical argument is seen as a threat not only to their rigid and limited knowledge but to their very selves - lifestyle and system that supports those concepts.

It has been said: Ignorance is bliss. But I do not believe this for a moment. Ignorance leads to delusion and an empty and shallow life. It is <sup>through</sup> our heightened and expanded awareness that we experience bliss.

To hold tenaciously to a limited knowledge base that in itself is not a correct science, to punish people for not adhering to every aspect of that knowledge, that rote learning structure, is one of the narrow pattern formations that are consistent with in the

actions of ignorance. Another action that is ~~common~~, banal and a desert in the realm of growth and change and just as common, is the deriding of the perceived enemy threat. Again not hard to achieve when the perceived threat is already a pariah. This pattern is well documented throughout past and recent history. It seems truth or even the pursuit of truth is perceived as a threat. By the way in which I have been subjugated and treated without having participated in any action or even spoke of the potential of such, is indication of the fear of exposure that people are so fearful of. Exposure was never an intent, emioleration was the intent, and still is.

As a result from those subjugation tactics I find myself refused access to education/university studies, therefore my ability to access information or use a computer or photo copy are practically non-existent. People change through the aspiration to be greater than they are. If a teacher/facilitator can not understand this basic axiom, it is a strong indication that they would be unable to see it in other people. As such, with no aspiration other than to move through the modules as quickly and efficiently as possible, to pump the numbers through, to clock on, to clock off, it is of little wonder change and growth are not easily seen.

or even looked for.

Limited knowledge - Limited vision

If you look at someone with ordinary vision you'll think about their bad qualities and their past action. Just because a person once did something bad, you'll hold on to it. You won't change your vision and see that this person has changed now. If you don't change your vision then you do not see change, let alone embrace it.

Most psychologists view it as a personal insult to have philosophical thoughts, ~~and~~ yet from philosophy all things are understood. You Erika, put it very elegantly when writing your introduction and was one of the inspirations for my letter to you.

Philosophy seeks to understand basic questions regarding our existence, such as: what is truth and knowledge? What is a person? what is goodness? How should I treat others? what is beauty? It is often driven by wonder of the world and our place in it. Philosophy also tries to understand what constitutes good reasoning and reflection.

We change through the aspiration to be greater than we are. The pursuit of the very things that you express so well, but so happens to be the very things the ignorant ones do not understand in depth and as you probably know; what they don't understand holds no value to them, is seen

as an obstacle and needs to be crushed.

The course in which I was involved and later removed from is of no real relevance to this letter to you. The actions of the facilitators would not be unknown to you. It doesn't matter what sector or part of an institution or people that we care to observe, the patterns and threads of action and intent are all the same. The motive is the same, the result is the same. Their names are unimportant, systems do not change by targeting individuals. Creativity, passion and individuality seems to be their biggest threat yet change cannot occur without these things. Is it any wonder that this period that is upon us is viewed by some as one of our darkest. 'The age of anxiety'.

During the course it was mentioned in a couple of ways that I was delusional. Since then I have (from my cell) and with little help achieved entry into Uni through the SSK12 course at Murdoch. Having never studied before and receiving the reference books halfway through the 10 week semester, I was under the pump. For the main body of work I received 3 High distinctions. I wasn't able to master the essays so my final score was acceptable but low. The point being that my ability to draw on concepts and paradigms and produce validated argument was far from delusional and yet I have been

subjected to a myriad of negative attitudes for doing just that I applied and was under the impression that I was to begin study at Macquarie Uni for a B.A. in philosophy. PhI 130 - Mind Meaning and Metaphysics and PhI 120 - Critical Thinking were to be the first 2 units. The undergraduate degree is described as such: Students can go into a wide range of careers upon completion of this degree, including business, education, government and other sectors. For many students, this degree will just be the beginning as they continue with postgraduate study.

I have been refused on security issues and the fact that re-payment of Hex would add further burden to me upon release. Many prisoners study externally. Many also have little or no prospect of release. Yet they are able to engage. Of course both the reasons cited are excuses not valid reasons.

I envisaged the possibility of refusal a while back and had drafted a letter with the view of sending it to the various philosophy departments in universities around Australia. My hope was to garner support. That hope remains relevant.

Some may say that I am a prisoner and have no rights. In many regards that is true. But I am an Australian citizen and I do have the right to an education. Education should not be used as a punishment tool. To better one's self should be encouraged. It seems now that I have to fight to better myself. This now is the main

reason I write to you Erika. You have achieved a great deal through your study. You of all people would understand the joy of growth and the awareness that it brings. The benefits of study in the area of philosophy are sometime beyond description. Because philosophy has and does influence everything we do as humans it is involved in all walks of life. It is through all professions. All other study is limited in comparison.

I have studied a philosophy for over a decade now. It is all encompassing yet relatively unknown. Through guidance, meditation and the contemplation of all aspects of what it means to be human, I am placed in a good position to make a difference. Not only in my own life but in the life and journey for others. My primary objective is to searve

As you can imagine prison is a microcosm of society. They say that you can judge a society by how it treats its prisoners. This is not a big thing to understand. The social influence and consciousness is ~~beared~~<sup>beared</sup> through the people in charge of our lives and treatment. Both the good and not so good aspects.

As you would understand also; the flip side of that is that what happens here also influences society. The English philosopher and social theorist Jeremy Bentham in 1785 demonstrated that. Resulting in what one architect has called 'sentiment of an invisible omniscience'. It took the power of the gaze to a whole new

level. Being a prisoner is not a disadvantage for me. I am able to use my situation to an advantage. My knowledge is not from a text book or someone else's idea of how things are or should be, it is from self inquiring and having 'in your face' examples, the intensity that provides, on a daily basis.

A wise person will take every situation and turn it to his/her advantage. Even if the advantage is to further strengthen ourselves and our resolve. If our intent is based in service of others then the channels are open for good things to occur.

So as you can imagine philosophy is much more to me than a career path. The study through university would enable me to make a difference. To use my adversity to an advantage. In obtaining a degree I would be better placed to turn an otherwise wasted life into one of meaning.

I thank you for your time and remain hopeful of a reply.

Kind regards.

Chris Bentley

