



❖ 'Knock knock' by Rahul Inamdar

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❖ An excerpt from ‘Cultivating humanity’ : Book by Martha Nussbaum

Martha Nussbaum is an American philosopher (she is currently associated with University of Chicago) - her main areas of work include ancient Greek and Roman philosophy , political philosophy , gender issues and ethics. In her award winning book ‘Cultivating Humanity’ she engages with questions such as ‘ How can higher education today create a community of critical thinkers and searchers for truth that transcends the boundaries of class, gender, and nation?’

Our campuses are producing citizens, and this means that we must ask what a good citizen of the present day should be and should know. The present-day world is inescapably multi-cultural and multinational. Many of our most pressing problems require for their intelligent, cooperative solution a dialogue that brings together people from many different national and cultural and religious backgrounds. Even those issues that seem closest to home—issues, for example., about the structure of the family, the regulation of sexuality, the future of children—need to be approached with a broad historical and cross-cultural understanding. A graduate of a U.S. university or college ought to be the sort of citizen who can become and intelligent participant in debates involving these differences, whether professionally or simply as a voter, a juror, a friend.

When we ask about the relationship of a liberal education to citizenship, we are asking a question with a long history in the Western philosophical tradition. We are drawing on Socrates’ concept of “the examined life,” on Aristotle’s notion of reflective citizenship, and above all on Greek and Roman Stoic notions of **an education that is “liberal” in that it liberates the mind from the bondage of habit and custom, producing people who can function with sensitivity and alertness as citizens of the whole world.** This is what Seneca means by the cultivation of humanity. The ideal of the well-educated person as a “citizen of the world” has had a formative influence as Western thought about education: on Davie Hume and Adam Smith in the Scottish/English traditions, on Immanuel Kant in the continental Enlightenment tradition, on Thomas Paine and other Founding Fathers in the American tradition. Understanding the classical roots of these ideas helps us to recover powerful arguments that have exercised a formative influence on our own democracy. Our democracy, indeed, has based its institutions of higher learning on these ideals to a degree unparalleled in the world. In most nations students enter a university to pursue a single subject, and that is all they study. The idea of “liberal education”—a higher education that is a cultivation of the whole human being for the functions of citizenship and life generally—has been taken up most fully in the United States. This noble ideal, however, has not yet been fully realized in our colleges and universities. Some, while using the words “liberal education,” subordinating the cultivation of the whole person to technical and vocational education. Even where education is ostensibly “liberal,” it may not contain all that a citizen really needs to know. We should ask, then, how well our nation is really fulfilling a goal that it has chosen to make its own. What does the “cultivation of humanity” require? The classical ideal of the “world citizen” can be understood in two ways, and “cultivation of humanity”

along with it. **The sterner, more exigent version is the ideal of a citizen whose *primary* loyalty is to human beings the world over, and whose national, local, and varied group loyalties are considered distinctly secondary. Its more relaxed version allows a variety of different views about what our priorities should be but says that, however, we order our varied loyalties, we should still be sure that we recognize worth of human life wherever it occurs and see ourselves as bound by common human abilities and problems to people who lie at a great distance from us.** These two different versions have existed at least since ancient Rome, when statesmen and philosopher Cicero softened the stern demand of Greek Stoicism for a Roman audience. Although I do sympathize with the sterner thesis, it is the more relaxed and inclusive thesis that will concern me here. What, then, does this inclusive conception ask us to learn?

Three capacities, above all, are essential to the cultivation of humanity in today's world. First, is the capacity for critical examination of one's traditions—for living what, following Socrates, we may call **"the examined life."** That means a life that accepts no belief as authoritative simply because it has been handed down by tradition or become familiar through habit, a life that questions all beliefs and accepts only those that survive reason's demand for consistency and for justification. Training this capacity requires developing the capacity to reason logically, to test, what one reads or says for consistency of reasoning, correctness of fact, and accuracy of judgment. Testing of this sort of frequency produces challenges to tradition as Socrates know well when he defended himself against the charge of "corrupting the young." But he defended his activity on the grounds that democracy needs citizens who can think for themselves rather than simply deferring to authority, who can reason together about their choices rather than just trading claims and counterclaims. Like a gadfly on the back of a noble but sluggish horse, he said, he was waking democracy up so that it could conduct its business in a more reflective and reasonable way. Our democracy, like that in ancient Athens, is prone to hasty and sloppy reasoning, and to the substitution of invective for real deliberation. We need Socratic teaching to fulfill the promise of democratic citizenship.

Citizens who cultivate their humanity need, further, and ability to see themselves not simple as citizens of some local region or group but also, and above all, as human beings bound to all other human beings by ties of recognition and concern. The world around us is inescapably international. Issues from business to agriculture, from human rights to the relief of famine, call our imaginations to venture beyond narrow group loyalties and to consider the reality of distant lives. We very easily think of ourselves in group terms—as Americans first and foremost, as human beings second—or, even more narrowly, as Italian-Americans, or heterosexuals, or African-Americans first, Americans second, and human beings third if at all. We neglect needs and capacities that link us to fellow citizens who live at a distance or who look different from ourselves. This means that we are unaware of many prospects of communication and fellowship with them, and also of responsibilities we may have to them. We also sometimes err by neglect of differences, assuming that lives in distant places must be like ours and lacking curiosity about what they are really like.

Cultivating humanity in a complex, interlocking world involves understanding the ways in which common needs and aims are differently realized in different circumstances. This requires a great deal of knowledge that American college students rarely got in previous eras, knowledge of non-Western cultures, of minorities within their own, of differences of gender and sexuality.

But citizens cannot think well on the basis of factual knowledge alone. The third ability of the citizen, closely related to the first two, can be called the **narrative imagination**. This means the ability to think what it might be like to be in the shoes of a person different from oneself, to be an intelligent reader of that person's story, and to understand the emotions and wishes and desires that someone so placed might have. The narrative imagination is not uncritical, for we always bring ourselves and our own judgments to

the encounter with another; and when we identify with a character in a novel, or with a distant person whose life story we imagine, we inevitably will not merely identify; we will also judge that story in the light of our own goals and aspirations.

But the first step of understanding the world from the point of view of the other is essential to any responsible act of judgment, since we do not know what we are judging until we see the meaning of an action as the person intended it, the meaning of a speech as it expresses something of importance in the context of that person's history and social world. The ability our students should attain is the ability to decipher such meanings through the use of the imagination.

Our campuses educate our citizens. Becoming an educated citizen means learning a lot of facts and mastering techniques of reasoning. But it means something more. It means learning how to be a human being capable of something more. It means learning how to be a human being capable of love and imagination. We may continue to produce narrow citizens who have difficulty understanding people different from themselves, whose imaginations rarely venture beyond their local setting. It is all too easy

for the moral imagination to become narrow in this way. Think of Charles Dickens' image of bad citizenship in *A Christmas Carol*, in his portrait of the ghost of Jacob Marley, who visits Scrooge to warn him of the dangers of a blunted imagination. Marley's ghost drags through all eternity a chain made of cash boxes, because in life his imagination never ventured outside the walls of his successful business to encounter the lives of the men and women around him, men and women of different social class and

background. We produce all too many citizens who are like Marley's ghost, and like Scrooge before he walked out to see what the world around him contained. But we have the opportunity to do better, and now we are beginning to seize that opportunity. That is not "political correctness;" that is the cultivation of humanity.

❖ A 'poster' from the book 'Ignore Everybody' : By Hugh MacLeod

Hugh MacLeod is a cartoonist who blogs at <http://gapingvoid.com> and also occasionally writes books. (The blog, I think is an absolute 'must read')

Sing in your own voice. Don't worry about finding inspiration. It comes eventually. **BEING POOR SUCKS.**

EVERYBODY HAS THEIR OWN PRIVATE MOUNT EVEREST THEY WERE PUT ON THIS EARTH TO CLIMB.

Start blogging. The choice of media is irrelevant. Write from the heart.

THE BEST WAY TO GET APPROVAL IS NOT TO NEED IT.
Don't try to stand out from the crowd; avoid crowds altogether. **SAVOR OBSCURITY WHILE IT LASTS.**

You are responsible for your own experience. power is never given. Nobody cares.

Whatever choice you make, The Devil gets his due eventually. power is taken. **Do it for yourself.**

BEWARE OF TURNING HOBBIES INTO JOBS. Worrying about "Commercial vs. Artistic" is a complete waste of time.

Merit can be bought. Passion can't. When your dreams become reality, they are no longer your dreams.

allow your work to age with you.

Keep your day job.

Ignore everybody.

**If You Accept the Pain,
it Cannot Hurt You.**

Remain frugal.

Dying young is overrated.

If your biz plan depends on you suddenly being "discovered" by some big shot, your plan will probably fail.

NEVER COMPARE YOUR INSIDE WITH SOMEBODY ELSE'S OUTSIDE.

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING A CREATIVE PERSON CAN LEARN PROFESSIONALLY

IS WHERE TO DRAW THE RED LINE THAT SEPARATES WHAT YOU ARE WILLING TO DO, AND WHAT YOU ARE NOT.

Everyone is born creative; everyone is given a box of crayons in kindergarten.

Companies that squelch creativity can no longer compete with companies that champion creativity.

The hardest part of being creative is getting used to it.

Selling out is harder than it looks. You have to find your own schtick.

The world is changing **AVOID THE WATERCOOLER GANG.** **Put the hours in.**

Meaning Scales, people Don't.

The more talented somebody is, the less they need the props.

@hugh



❖ **Dr. Abhay Bang of SEARCH talks at TEDx Nagpur**

Access the video at : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5FO0fgn7nLc>



After completing their Masters from Johns Hopkins University in the US around 1984, Dr. Abhay Bang and Dr. Rani Bang came back to India and started to work in field of community healthcare in Gadchiroli. While working in this remote, underdeveloped and Naxalite dominated tribal area for last three decades, their organization has done path breaking and innovative work, making significant difference to critical areas such as infant mortality. Beauty of their approach to healthcare is based on a deep appreciation of the context of the community and also on best leveraging principles of modern science and research (they have published multiple papers in one of the most respected peer reviewed research journals in medicine, The Lancet)



About 'Treasures'

It's a compilation that I put together every once in a while, of things that I have found to be beautiful and meaningful.

Do share it with others who you think will enjoy it.

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