

## DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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*Aristotle on Teaching: Scientific Knowledge, Moral Education, and Intellectual Virtue*

My dissertation offers a novel interpretation of Aristotle's account of teaching (*didaskalia*). In Part I, I defend my claim that we can find in Aristotle's works a conception of teaching, which is a crucial yet under-explored part of his theory of education. In Part II, I use this interpretation to settle two long-standing debates in Aristotle's ethics concerning the development of the virtues of character and practical wisdom. Finally, in Part III, I show how my reading helps Neo-Aristotelian moral educators respond to the objection that Aristotelian education deprives students of their autonomy.

I begin my interpretation in Part I with Aristotle's clear yet general statements about teaching and 'those who teach.' Chapter 2 establishes that for Aristotle the goal of teaching is to instill 'scientific knowledge' (*episteme*) in students. On my view, scientific knowledge should be interpreted in this context as the possession of true, well-reasoned accounts (*logoi*), which are ultimately grounded in explanatorily basic, subject-specific first principles. Chapter 3 then shows how Aristotle's comments about the pre-conditions for teaching and didactic learning support this reading of teaching's ultimate goal. Teachers must possess the scientific knowledge they intend to teach, and students must both (i) have some prior knowledge of the subject being taught, and (ii) be familiar with the basic rules of logic. Chapter 4 concludes Part I by describing Aristotle's teaching methodology. Teachers use induction, definition, and analogy to generate students' conviction in indemonstrable first principles. Once students grasp these principles, teachers use demonstration and definition to explain what follows from them. When students internalize the whole account such that they can produce it themselves at will, the instillation process is complete.

I turn to Aristotle's moral philosophy in Part II. Chapter 5 contrasts teaching with habituation (*ethismos*)—the method of education primarily responsible for bringing about the virtues of character in the appetitive part of the soul. Some of the most prominent interpretations of Aristotle's theory of moral education contend that habituation must involve some teaching. I argue against this view by showing how Aristotle consistently maintains that teaching is solely devoted to cultivating intellectual virtues in the rational parts of the soul. Chapter 6 takes up a long-standing debate about what Aristotle's practically wise person (*phronimos*) knows. According to the Grand End View, the *phronimos* possesses a philosophical conception of the human good, which he uses as a lodestar in his decision-making. I support the Grand End View against its critics by arguing that since (i) teaching cultivates the intellectual virtues, one of which is practical wisdom, and (ii) teaching instills scientific knowledge, which includes a grasp of the explanatorily basic first principles of a subject, therefore, (iii) a necessary component of practical wisdom involves comprehending the first principle of action—*i.e.*, the human good (*eudaimonia*) as the final goal of *praxis*.

Finally, in Part III, I use my interpretation of teaching to fortify Aristotle's educational theory against the objection—often called 'the paradox of moral education'—that habituation robs students of their autonomy. That would be fair enough, if education only included habituation. But Aristotelian education also includes teaching, which furnishes students with the ability to provide true, well-grounded accounts. This ability, I argue, actually strengthens students' autonomy.