the personalities that embodied the totalitarian impulse, the prophetic leaders and their cults. In a recent book, *The Stalin Cult: A Study in the Alchemy of Power* (2012), historian Jan Plamper impressively deconstructs the institutional and psychological mechanisms used by the Soviet system to achieve the complete submission of the individual to party authority and the internalization of cultic rituals. The reader interested in a refreshingly new interpretation of Stalin's role in codifying the mythological creed of Bolshevism at the time of the Great Purge will appreciate David Brandenberger's admirable *Propaganda State in Crisis: Soviet Ideology, Indoctrination, and Terror under Stalin, 1927–1941* (2012).

Strictly supervised, carefully edited, and in part authored by Stalin himself, the *Short Course of History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* was the Bolshevik counterpart to *Mein Kampf,* a collection of obsessions, mendacities, and self-serving shibboleths. It acquired the same sacrosanct status as Hitler's book. The whole propaganda system revolved around it as the revealed truth and, until Stalin's death in 1953, functioned as the alpha and omega of the Soviet political religion.

Understanding the relationship between totalitarianism and political religion means fathoming the nature of the official texts, demystifying them, and explaining how they managed to become the equivalent of the Gospels in the political and moral imagination of millions. It also means revisiting not only the moments of blind fanaticism of Bolshevism and national socialism as "temptations" (to use historian's Fritz Stern's term) but also the role of awakening, heretical propensities, and ultimate apostasies. In fact, therein lies a major challenge for the political philosopher interested in the totalitarian conundrum: why there were so many heretics in the communist "church" and so few in the fascist one? Maybe the answer is precisely in the ideological matrix, in that ambivalent "paleo-symbolic structure" (a term proposed by Alvin W. Gouldner) that Aron called the "opium of the intellectuals."

Debating Moral Education: Rethinking the Role of the Modern University. Edited by Elizabeth Kiss and J. Peter Euben. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010. 368p. $94.95 cloth, $25.95 paper.
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— Hank Edmondson, *Georgia College*

These essays are characterized by a tone of skepticism or of hard reality—depending on one's perspective about the possibilities of moral and civic education. Though of mixed quality, they are serious and informed contributions to the increasingly elusive goal of ethical instruction in the postmodern era. The essays, moreover, given their mature character, are also quick to identify glib and misguided pitfalls into which too many self-fashioned moral educators fall, especially the tendencies to mistake moralizing and political propaganda for meaningful instruction.

The editors of this collection put the reader on alert by announcing that the contents proceed from a conference on the subject at Duke University. The question then becomes whether the collection has made a successful evolution from a group of conference proceedings to essays that cohere in a way that the best university press books do. The answer is "not entirely," though there is enough material here to make this volume of interest to those involved with the question of moral and civic education.

The introductory essay by Elizabeth Kiss and J. Peter Euben exceeds the obligatory summary of an edited book's contents; it is also an insightful and surprisingly comprehensive overview of the contours of contemporary moral education. One wishes that there were more room to develop this global and insightful discussion; with expansion, it could lend itself to an authoritative book of its own. The second essay by Julie Reuben offers a similar overview in that it provides a summary of the development of moral education; in this case as it has been historically joined at the hip to religion. It lacks the depth of the previous essay but offers a helpful if more tailored introductory perspective on the subject.

The essay by the late Wilson Carey McWilliams and Susan Jane McWilliams is the most elegant of the lot. It displays the McWilliams's deep and penetrating liberal learning. The intelligence and logic of the prose, moreover, offers a guide to the manner in which these questions might be pursued. Relevant is the anecdote about the master teacher, who, when asked to explain excellent teaching, simply responded "Come and see" as he headed off to class. Indeed, what may be most valuable about this piece is that it will suggest to the thoughtful reader that the manner in which, and the intelligence with which, these issues are undertaken may be far more meaningful that any tentative conclusions that might be achieved. That said, the essay's concluding suggestion that moral educators might "articulate the second voices of American political culture" that mitigate the driving impulses of individualism, self-preservation, and self-interest is inspiring. This essay stands in contrast to at least a couple of others that seem to rely too much upon the latest "study" to fortify the author's argument. In those cases, what seems to aggravate the author's skepticism is the implicit possibility that if it cannot be demonstrated, it cannot be true. The same charge, of course, is made of liberal education in general.

These chapters oscillate between a skepticism that moral education cannot be taught and a conviction that moral education must be taught. There is no better illustration than James Bernard Murphy's essay "Against Civic Education in Schools," in which he argues (perhaps a bit cynically) that the efforts of teachers to institutionally impart morality is so compromised by the prejudices and foibles

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of the human condition that it cannot be reliably pursued. His concluding paragraph, though, provides a rather forceful and thorough list of the moral and civic values that should be imparted in college. The author would most likely argue that this apparent contradiction is avoided because the pedagogical objectives he advocates are carefully chosen and modest enough in their aspirations that their pursuit might avoid the deficiencies of which he earlier warned.

There is an imaginative quality to several of the contributions as the authors attempt to turn some of the arguments against moral education on their head. For example J. Donald Moon argues that the skepticism evident in the debate over moral education is in truth a component of a healthy democracy and that such skepticism should enhance the moral sensibilities of faculty and students alike. Likewise, although some may argue that multiculturalism has emasculated meaningful moral education, Lawrence Blum seeks to employ an invigorated sense of multiculturalism as a framework for a contemporary approach to ethical education.

Part II of the volume centers on the writing of Stanley Fish. This strategy creates something of an imbalance in the text because for all of the insight that this section brings, Fish's writing—and the responses to it—draws attention to him as much as it does to moral education. Such is the cost of the celebrity acquired through his regular columns on education in the *New York Times,* as well as the "edgy" tone that popular writing inevitably confers on his—or anyone else's—work. Perhaps this section might have been better placed later in the book in order to allow the other essays to gather sufficient momentum to define the volume.

Michael Gillespie's closing essay on sports and ethics is a pleasant conclusion to the book. His argument that students may best achieve character education through scholastic sports bears merit, although he may overstate the formative possibilities of the casual sports in which the great majority of college students engage.

What is left to be desired in this volume? More attention to the virtue ethics tradition would have been welcome, as well as more consideration of the American Founders' views on moral and civic education. Ethics by personal example is dealt with only in passing, but, traditionally, this may have been where one would look first for moral instruction. In this respect, political scientists and philosophers may have something to learn from their allied discipline, public administration, which has dealt more forthrightly with questions of ethics and never did succumb to the chimera of value-free education as wholeheartedly as did political science. Talk of "moral exemplars" is commonplace in Master of Public Administration programs.

This leads to another consideration: Are all of these inquiries as applicable to graduate education as they are to undergraduate? On the one hand, graduate students are older, and arguably their character is more firmly set; on the other hand, they typically enjoy closer mentoring relationships with faculty. Accordingly, they are susceptible to a different level of character formation, namely, that more closely aligned with professionalism. Gillespie notes in his essay that three concerns dominate the lives of students: "alcohol, sex, and a concern about their future lives and careers" (p. 297). (There may be reason for hope here: The last I heard, students are preoccupied with alcohol, sex, and parking.) There is little doubt that since many students may be disinclined to think beyond the superficial and material, moral instruction may be more difficult. But perhaps graduate students are inclined to think and feel more deeply about important matters than their undergraduate counterparts. If so, there is an opportunity to focus these kinds of inquiries on graduate education.

One also wonders if the essays give sufficient attention to the collapse of intellectual authority in moral instruction. As it is, it might be argued that the authors are more preoccupied with the symptoms of that collapse. In a similar vein, do these essays skirt around the question of progressivism and nihilism and their effect on education? The index has only a single entry on "Nietzsche" and hardly more on "John Dewey," giving little attention to their opposition to curricular, religious, and philosophical authority.

For the most part, this collection is well edited, though a couple of essays appear to have been a bit rushed from the podium to the press. Such is the nature of the business. *Debating Moral Education,* then, its particular deficiencies notwithstanding, will provoke meaningful reflection and constructive dialogue among those who take it up.

Every Twelve Seconds: Industrialized Slaughter and the Politics of Sight. By Timothy Pachirat. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011. 320p. $30.00.
doi:10.1017/S1537592712003283

— Paul Apostolidis, *Whitman College*

In his intriguing new book, Timothy Pachirat sets out to do political theory via unconventional and provocative means. He observed the operational processes of a large meatpacking plant at close range, participated in those processes as an employee, and reflects here on what he encountered. This project raises important questions about the interrelations among "sense-experience," moral judgment, and political action. And although its silences on certain substantive and methodological issues can be frustrating, the book succeeds in bringing to the fore both a valuable new perspective on the politics of the visual and a procedure of engaged analysis from which political theorists can learn a great deal.

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