



DUCHESNE HIGH SCHOOL

shaping leaders in mind, body, and spirit

Hi all,

Over the last few weeks I've written about Etty Hillesum and Edith Stein. The third philosopher David Brooks discusses in "[The Feminine Way to Wisdom: Etty Hillesum, Edith Stein, and Simone Weil](#)" might be the most complicated. Like Hillesum and Stein, Simone Weil believed that paying attention is a moral act. She believed that attention is "the rarest and purest form of generosity." Such generosity involves "not imposing yourself on another person." Instead, those who generously pay attention possess a "willingness to subordinate oneself to another person, a willingness to follow their agenda, a willingness, she wrote to see others 'as they are related to themselves, and not to me.' Proper attention is the ability...to contemplate what cannot be contemplated—the suffering of another."

"To contemplate what cannot be contemplated" is quite the challenge. The first essay read by students in Notre Dame's Masters in Theology program is Weil's "[Reflections on the Right Use of School Studies with a View to the Love of God.](#)" In it, Weil places the challenge in academic terms. She is convinced that studying is valuable, but not necessarily in terms of the content studied. Working a math problem for an hour (whether you reach the correct solution or not) develops one's ability to pay attention. Her approach requires one to be open to the truth, allowing it to come to the studier, rather than frowning one's brow, contracting one's muscles and physically paying attention. For Weil, being open to the truth allowed one to receive it much more readily than doggedly pursuing it. That kind of openness can lead to an attention that allows one to catch a glimpse of what another's suffering might truly entail.

Despite her focus on attention and her desire to contemplate the sufferings of others, Weil was noticeably blind in one particular area. While virulently anti-Nazi, Weil was also anti-semitic and did not believe the Jewish people should be considered a people. What do we do with people like Weil, people who have so much to offer in one sense, but who are also so obviously wrong in another. For me, Weil prompts serious self reflection. She devoted her life to paying proper attention so that she could get a sense of what it means for others to suffer, and yet missed the obvious suffering right in front of her. When I read the stories of Hillesum, Stein, and Weil, I am inspired to hone my attention, to be the kind of person that doesn't impose myself on others, but rather sees them for who they are, related to themselves and not me. At the same time, I need to rigorously examine the ideas and beliefs I bring into my interpersonal interactions. How might they blind me to the realities of the people in my life.

Attempting to see others "as they are related to themselves, and not to me" seems to be incredibly valuable as we interact with our colleagues, friends, and family. It seems imperatively important as we interact with the adolescents in our lives. The same adolescents who are still figuring out what it means to relate to themselves.

Pax,

Dominic D'Urso



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Upcoming Events

October 6

2003 Soccer State Championship Reunion/Swiftie Night:

On Friday night we will honor the 2003 Boys Soccer State Championship prior to our game with Priory. At halftime, the danceline with over 100 grade-schoolers will perform. It should be a fantastic night. I hope everyone can make it.

October 9

Picture Re-Take Day: Our photographers will be on campus for the students who missed the first picture day and those who are dissatisfied with their pictures.

Home Doubleheader – Volleyball & Soccer

October 10

Blood Drive: Duchesne will host a blood drive in our PAC from 9:30-1:30. If you would like to donate, contact Mr. Schneider.

October 12

Last Day of Quarter 1

All School Mass: We will celebrate mass as a whole school community on Thursday. All of our families are welcome to attend; we'd love to see you. The mass will not start before 9:45. To ensure that we have enough chairs, please email Robyn Fuchs (rfuchs@duchesne-hs.org) if you plan to attend.

Home Volleyball

October 13

Career Day: Career Day is a half day of school. Students will start in their Communios at 7:45. From there, they will rotate through a variety of workshops. The morning will conclude with a career fair. For additional details, please see Mrs. Grass's note in this month's Parent Newsletter.

Home Football

October 16

Faculty Inservice: The students will not have school on the 16th.

Senior Night!: Both Volleyball (@ 5:00) and Soccer (@ 6:00) will celebrate their senior nights.



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October 19, 21, 22

Fall Play: Duchesne Performing Arts proudly presents *The Young, the Bold, and the Murdered*, with performances at 7:00 on Thursday and Saturday Nights and a 4:00 matinee on Sunday.

October 20

Home Football

October 23

Home Soccer

October 24

Home Soccer

October 25

Parent/Teacher Conferences: Teachers will be available to meet with parents from 3:00-4:30 and again from 5:15-6:30. Those meetings will take place in the PAC; there is no need to RSVP.

October 29

Open House: The school will be open to prospective students and families. Many of our current students and parents will be on campus to give tours and answer questions.

October 30

No School

