

Observation Report Spring 2014

Observer: William James Earle

Observee: Daniel Restrepo

Course: Philosophy 1792 "Global Ethics"


Section: FMWA

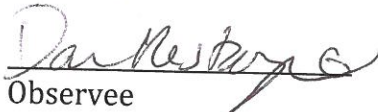
Date: April 30, 2014

Restrepo's style makes you feel, at first, that the class is disorganized. It turns out, however, as I realized the more I listened, that Restrepo was gradually shaping a coherent examination, but from many points of view, of "the tragedy of the commons" (associated with Garrett Hardin) and the whole issue of sustainability. Part of the class consisted of presenting relevant data on population. Are there too many people? Will there be too many people soon? Are the wrong kinds of people having children? Is there not enough food? Or (as Sen has suggested) is it just a matter of some people not having the money to pay for food?

All of these questioned were discussed even if, not surprisingly, not given definitive answers.

This was a late-afternoon class, a sleepy time of day, but I am pleased to report that the students were all very attentive. They clearly like Restrepo, were enjoying the class, and liked to participate. There's something casual, or anti-magisterial, about Restrepo. He does not—unlike, alas, me—produce long sentences which overwhelm potential responses. I learned something about effective pedagogy watching this class.

 May 13, 2014
Observer


Observee