

# **Introduction to My Writings**

by

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It is my teaching which has paid my bills, and it is also my experiences as a teacher that have inspired very much of what I have done, including the majority of my writings. I have been most fortunate to have the many teaching opportunities I have had for the last thirty years or so. It is impossible to fully account for almost anything, I have found, and so I cannot say precisely where these written pages first began, but it is difficult to imagine their composition without the many authors, ideas, and experiences my students and I have wrestled with over the years as we have tried to secure the best and most durable

insights, without averting our eyes from the challenges to our own values and commitments that were implicated in that search.

The greater portion of this writing may be termed “applied philosophy.” And those sojourns are really part of a great conversation. Certainly, the echoes of estimable names in the history of thought can be easily located. However, the conversations that more immediately echoed for me as I set words to paper were the everyday conversations I have enjoyed with students, colleagues, and, not least, with my wife, Nancy. These are the very real and living voices which seemed to be in the room with me.

This is, frankly, why I wish to have these writings archived. They have derived from conversations about things that matter, where the dissembling and distractions of early attempts at clarity and honesty seem to have been shaken loose by the very act of having many real lives, of different life narratives, try them out in each others presence. These are conversations and experiences that feel worthy, and that seem to hold their value as they heuristically approach some core narratives.

I hope to have other bits to add to this collection from time to time. Still, I have no idea how much time that is. It

has seemed important to me, in the last few years, to place these selections, evidences of both wonderful and trying times, and lovely human expressions, in a secure and available space. In considering this, it occurred to me that perhaps it should also be “interactive,” allowing for commentary and conversation of its own. After much deliberation, though, I just didn’t feel comfortable doing that. I had no confidence that I would have the wherewithal to be that good correspondent.

Cotati, CA

2009

### **Applied Philosophy**

*We’re All Gonna DIE! (mortality as an ally).* 2009

*Persistence of Visions (Reflections on living from the classroom and elsewhere).* 1999

“The Garden in the Machine.” 1986

### **Fiction**

“The Carbones Meet the Mob.” 2005

*Floatie (a novella).* 2004