

## EDITORIAL FOREWORD

A complete autobiography can never be written before the author is deceased; but by then it is too late. Robert S. Hartman completed his personal/philosophical autobiography on Oct. 10, 1963, but he was to live almost another ten eventful years until September 20, 1973. The rest of the story of his life is told by Arthur R. Ellis in the Appendix titled "The Final Years" which appears at the end of this volume. Hartman's *Freedom to Live: The Robert Hartman Story* was written originally for presentation to management development seminars sponsored by Nationwide Insurance Company during 1962 and 1963 as a way of introducing businessmen to the man Robert S. Hartman and to his formal axiology. We would like to thank Mr. Lee A. Thornbury, Senior Attorney of Nationwide Insurance Company, for reviewing the manuscript and determining that Nationwide Insurance has no claim upon it.

Between 1968 and 1973, Robert S. Hartman was a research professor at the University of Tennessee. During this period, he usually taught for half a year here at U. T. and the other half was spent at the University of Mexico, where he was also a research professor. I was fortunate enough to get to know him and to sit in on a number of his classes during that period of time, and we had many lively philosophical debates. I never quite came to agree with him on every philosophical issue, but I certainly recognized that he was a philosophical genius from whom I could learn many important things. I hope that the reader of this autobiography will be able to say the same, while reserving the right to disagree where necessary, as I have always done.

In many ways, my own thinking has been more influenced by Bob Hartman after his death than during his life. More than any other philosopher, he has helped me to understand and appreciate the intrinsic value of individual persons, of unique

centers of conscious experience and activity. Other philosophers have usually found intrinsic value only in universal repeatable qualities like pleasure, knowledge, virtue, the moral law, creativity, etc., not in individuals. Unfortunately, any identification of intrinsic values with repeatable universals has the effect of relegating to the status of extrinsic goods the conscious individuals in whom the universals are instantiated. In traditional ethical theories, whether they give hedonistic or pluralistic accounts of things that are intrinsically good, individual centers of consciousness are relegated to the status of extrinsically useful but intrinsically worthless receptacles into which good things like pleasure, truth, conscientiousness, the moral law, etc. can be poured and temporarily stored. Robert S. Hartman provides us with a poignant corrective to this bias toward universals and against individuals that has dominated traditional ethical theory. His theory does not diminish the capacity of universal goods to enrich our lives, so Hartman's emphasis on the intrinsic worth of individuals must be taken with utmost seriousness as a corrective to the biases inherent in traditional ethical theory. As he will show in the following pages, the whole fate of life on earth may depend on it.

Unfortunately, it is not philosophers alone who have disvalued or undervalued individuals. Many persons, especially those in positions of power and influence, are and have been willing to sacrifice the well being and even the lives of individual persons for extrinsic and systemic goods. The world over, persons (and other valuable living things) are constantly being destroyed for the sake of extrinsic goods such as wealth, oil, jobs, power, territory, or social status, or for the sake of systemic goods like religious dogmas, political ideologies, ethnic purity, national sovereignty, and military glory. Robert S. Hartman can help us to understand the folly of these valuational perversions.

I have strongly supported and encouraged the publication of this autobiography, partly because it tells an engrossing story of the fascinating life of a person that I knew as a colleague and a friend and mentor, partly because it shows how he arrived at his passionate and deeply reflective convictions about the intrinsic worth of individual persons, and partly because it shows that it is so easy to miss this essential truth in so many different ways. The consequences of doing so are disastrous for every individual and for the whole of humanity.

Arthur R. Ellis, a good and active member of the Robert S. Hartman Institute for Formal and Applied Axiology, recommended to me that we publish Hartman's autobiography and did most of the editorial work essential for its publication. I am happy that we are able to publish *Freedom to Live: The Robert Hartman Story* as the first volume in the Hartman Institute Axiological Studies series.

Arthur R. Ellis and I would like to give special thanks to Mrs. Rita Hartman for granting us permission to publish this autobiography and for supplying us with the first seven of the photographs that are reprinted at the end of this book. We would also like to thank Dr. David Mefford for supplying us with the eighth photograph of Dr. Hartman lecturing at The University of Tennessee in 1970 which appears on the back cover of this book. Finally, we express our appreciation to Houghton Mifflin Company for giving us permission to quote from Lloyd C. Douglas, *The Robe*, 1942.

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