NOTE OF THANKS

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THE DEMOS AND THE DICTATOR

Anthony Roda

In the Spring semester of 1988, before strongman Antonio Manuel Noriega of Panama was forced out of office by the intervention of the United States forces, I was trying to find a provocative way of introducing college students to some basic concepts for a course in “Social and Political Philosophy.” When I noticed the papers carrying stories of a political crises in Panama it occurred to me that by following the unfolding of events there, one might be able to gather sufficient materials and resources to provide a compelling method for our students to appreciate the intimate connections in political theory, political structures, and political actions. The benefits derived from this approach are threefold: 1) Students are introduced to a discipline through events which parallel and which may intersect with their own lives. 2) As students and instructors try to understand such events, they master the traditional concepts and metaphors of the discipline with their respective limitations. Finally, 3) Students develop a deep appreciation of the dynamics of history as well as an historical perspective, a contrast to the ahistorical consciousness pervasive in contemporary culture.

In addition to the above consideration the concepts and distinctions treated are intimately connected with the articles in this issue of Educational Change. Furthermore, the issues are critical or as William James would say, “living hypothesis” and, thus, should go some way in provoking additional reactions of the kind found in the “Notes and Comments,” the new feature initiated with this issue of our journal. At any rate, the following are the meager fruits of that small project which in part captivated my attention and energies in 1988.

On Thursday, February 25, 1988, the President of Panama, Eric Arturo Delvalle, appeared on his country’s nationwide television and publicly requested the voluntary resignation of General Manuel An-

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tonio Noriega, as head of Panama’s Defense Forces. Without losing the momentum of events Panama’s National Assembly, at the behest of Noriega, gathered 38 of its 67 members and voted in unison to remove, not only President Delvalle but his Vice President Roderick Esquivel as well. Manuel Solis Palma, Education Minister, was sworn in to replace Delvalle before the sun rose on Friday, February 26, 1988.

Delvalle, Panama’s ex-president and Manuel Solis Palma, the declared president by Panama’s National Assembly, acting on behalf of Noriega, represent the two sides of the struggle of which the above events are a symptom. The action of the National Assembly transfers, or is an attempt to transfer, Delvalle’s authority to Manuel Solis Palma.

The extra-ordinary circumstances surrounding the action of Panama’s National Assembly clearly indicate that no routine transfer of power had occurred. After asking Noriega to step down, Delvalle found himself virtually under house arrest; while his efforts to name a successor to Noriega, Marcos Justines, served only to underscore the de facto decorative function of his office. Justines simply refused the appointment and declared his support for Noriega.

These considerations focus on one of the most recalcitrant problem and central concern which arises in the study of this all pervasive human association we call political, namely, the source and the justification of political authority.

Plato (427-347 B.C.) and Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) considered political associations as the natural consequences of human contingency; and the very word political derived from polis, the Greek word for city and the major political unit of the Hellenic world suggests dependency. Aristotle (exhibiting the cultural bias of a male oriented society) argued that “man is by nature a social and political being” which also suggests a living organic relationship among the members (citizens). He favored a polity because its constitution distributes political sovereignty among many in contrast to only one in king-

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ship and a few in aristocracy. For him, these three constitutional arrangements are of the right kind because they aim at the common good in contrast to the deviations from these, democracy, tyranny, and oligarchy which aim at the good of only the sovereign part of the population. Consequently, the two primary considerations which legitimize the political authority are: (1) the authority must be consistent with a right kind of a constitution which implies that (2) the authority is exercised in pursuit of the common good. This second principle or corollary is sometimes referred to as the *cui bono* or for whose good (interest) principle.

Aristotle was obsessed with the frequent upheavals, a familiar occurrence in the cities of the ancient Greek world. Thus, it is not surprising that he attaches so much importance to constitutional continuity, his criterion for the identity of the state (polis). At the same time, one should note that the duration of a constitution is an indication of its viability. A point that is often made with respect to the U.S. constitution. Besides the general desire for knowledge, Aristotle’s analysis of the causes that preserve and dissolve constitutions was intended to help avoid violent change. Aristotle considered force and fraud among the primary methods used in effecting changes while he listed among the primary causes profit, dignity, cruelty, fear, excessive power, contemptuous attitude, and disproportionate aggrandizement.

These causes as he analyzed them, are the conditions that result from equality or inequality of one form or another. Here one is tempted to wonder aloud: How is it that the state which is the final cause (end) of a natural process that enables man to secure “the good life” exhibits both proper and improper constitutional forms? For Aristotle, both are consistent with his organismic world-view, which affirms the continuity of the state, with the rest of the natural world. Consequently, the state, the *polis* or the political association is subject to the processes of growth and decay which Aristotle found present in nature.

In contrast to Aristotle, Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) viewed

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the political association (the state) as an *artificial body* which he named the Commonwealth. As such, the state was conceived as an *agreement* of self-interested individuals who act in unison through a *sovereign*. The individuals that form part of the *social contract* (agreement) are bound by it as long as the Leviathan⁴ (sovereign) is able to fulfill his part of the *covenant* (contract), i.e., maintain civil order. Should the sovereign be unable to preserve civil order, the rights (especially the right to violence) revert back to the individuals and the political relations between the sovereign and the subjects (individuals) dissolve. The power concentrated in the sovereign through the social contract is again dispersed to the original source, the individuals.

In Panama’s affairs, one finds that, in spite of the action of its National Assembly, the attempt to effect a smooth transition of *authority* - from Delvalle to Solis Palma—did not turn out as Noriega would have hoped. Rather than relinquish his power, Delvalle went into hiding, pushing his *de jure* claim as the legitimate President of Panama.⁵ Furthermore, he has issued a proclamation ordering Panamanian embassies to withhold all payments owed to Panama. “Mr. Delvalle’s proclamation... calls for all funds, taxes, and fees owed to Panama to be placed in an escrow account.”⁶

The conflict between Panama’s National Assembly, which pushed Noriega’s case through Solis Palma against Delvalle represents the classic case of *de facto* rule versus *de jure* rule. Noriega’s claim depended on the control of the military, i.e., force, whereas Delvalle’s claim depended on the legitimacy of his office as specified by the Panamanian constitution. It is this very constitutional claim which Noriega tried to undermine by hastily re-convening the National Assembly in a manner that guaranteed a vote favorable to his wishes. The reports⁷ at the time indicated that Noriega still controlled the armed forces and Panama; but Delvalle, through his proclamation, caused not only an internal *authority crisis* but a severe financial one. In part, the proclamation’s force resided in the United States’ recognition of Delvalle as the legitimate and lawful president
of Panama. One cannot doubt that United States’ policy did not have some effect on the consular offices in New York, West Germany, Britain, and Italy to withhold funds from the Noriega regime. The freezing of Panama’s assets in the U.S., as well as U.S. plans to withhold fees for the use of the Panama Canal strained Panama’s finances to the breaking point. The questions in the Spring of 1988 were: How long will Noriega control events in Panama and be the de facto ruler? Will the de facto ruler turn into the de jure ruler?

The distinction between de facto and de jure rule, which the Panamanian conflict illustrates, goes to the very heart of political theory, i.e., who should have the authority to rule? As one answers the above question, one also provides an outline for the kind of society one recommends.

Ever since the appearance of Plato’s Republic in which he analyzed five different forms of governments and in which he suggested a direct relationship between the rulers of a society and the form which that society exhibits, the question of who should exercise rule has been foremost with political thinkers of every persuasion. In our own country, contestants in both Democratic and Republican primaries speak to the same concern. In part, each contestant is asserting the possession of those qualities that a president ought to have; and each claims that he should rule, or he should exercise the president’s function which to a large extent sets the direction of the country.

Some remarks on democratic government in the tradition of John Locke (1632-1704) will sharpen one’s appreciation of the above issue and provide additional contrast in political processes. In Locke’s tradition there is a claim that law rather than force should be the basis of government. Furthermore, human beings have rights (such as life) which do not depend on government and cannot be usurped by it. Of no less importance is the principle that government is to be responsible to the will of the people, which is determined through the vote. The rights of the governed and the governors are protected through the social contract which theoretically form and control the social

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relations of all the parties of the political community.

In general, the above tenets form the foundations of Lockean democratic theory and are distinct from Hobbes’ views. Though, both Hobbes and Locke originate government through the social contract, which specifies the expectations with respect to the rulers and the ruled, Hobbes is closer in both time and sympathies to Machiavelli whereas Locke seems in many respects closer to the historical constitution which characterizes that of the United States. It should be borne in mind that the social contract theory may be adopted to both autocratic as well as democratic governments.

Due to man’s egoistical nature, Hobbes argued against the possibility of democracy. Accordingly, what one may reasonably expect from government is security from the violence of other individuals. It is the fear of such violence that leads reasonable men to opt for civil order rather than continue in a precarious state of nature. For Hobbes, though, civil order is impossible unless human beings turn over their individual and natural right to violence (state of nature) to one designated as a sovereign (Leviathan). The sovereign in turn guarantees civil order and its attendant security through the concentration in his person of all individual violence. Such concentration accounts for the Leviathanal powers which according to Hobbes holds sway and bring about order. Though, the sovereign may abuse his power in individual cases and particular applications, Hobbes tolerated such abuses in return for the benefits of civil order over the lawlessness of a chaotic state of nature. These terms (social contract, state of nature, civil order, etc.,) occurring in Hobbes’ Leviathan refer to parts of the conceptual model which Hobbes constructed in order to examine political relations and structures within the social fabric, and as such these need not have a spatio-temporal reference. On the other hand, once these concepts are added to the lexicon of political discourse a social body may reflect behavior which is organized as though there is a social contract intended to preserve order and avoid degeneration into disorder.

Preface
Locke and Hobbes represent what are called the democratic and the anti-democratic tendencies in government respectively, though both justified the legitimacy of government through the mechanism or instrument of a social contract.

The United States’ experience as an independent nation provides one with a unique example in the study of modern democratic theory and institutions. In the unfolding of its democratic ideas the U.S. exhibits an ambivalence (tension) between liberty and security reminiscent of the contrast between Locke and Hobbes. On the U. S. soil this contrast has been associated with the concrete personalities of Thomas Jefferson representing liberty and equality and Alexander Hamilton representing security and energy. Historians have portrayed George Washington’s cabinet largely dominated by the personalities of Jefferson and Hamilton with the former arguing the case for the common man, which meant the farmers, and the latter urging the need for a strong central government. The former’s priorities were on the side of equality and liberty at the expense of a strong central government (efficiency) whereas the latter valued security and efficiency over equality and liberty.

These two men with their individual proclivities exhibit the longing that human beings have for both freedom as well as security. Yet, in concrete everyday cases one compromises one or the other depending upon which specific need is most pressing under the circumstances. In cases of external threats or extreme internal disruptions liberty or freedom is likely to suffer and security takes pre-eminence in the minds of the leaders or the people or perhaps both. Some actions may even involve abuses of the customary freedoms and constitutional civil rights such as privacy, private property, etc.

In the Spring of 1988 General Noriega’s regime through President Manuel Solis Palma decreed a “state of urgency” whereby the “constitutional guarantees, including those governing freedom of expression, private property, search and seizure, and habeas corpus” were suspended. It appears as though Noriega acting through Solis Palma was trying to tighten his control over Panama in the face of

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extreme economic pressures by the U. S. as well as civic pressure from the opposition in Panama. The question that must be examined is whether such maneuverings were for the people of Panama or only for Noriega and his closest associates.

Following Aristotle’s *cui bono* (whose good) rule a distinction may be made which sheds some light on the above issue. In Aristotle’s discussion of the right (legitimate) forms of constitutions in contrast to wrong (illegitimate) forms he stated that a right constitution will have as its goal the good of the entire state rather than the good of only one part or individual of the state. As an example, one could even use the U.S. tax reform act of 1986. The act could be studied in terms of how the specified tax rates affected the different parts of the U.S. population through analysis of the various incomes and the consequent effect the tax rates had on such incomes. Such analysis would provide a partial answer to the *cui bono* question with respect to that specific legislation. The same kind of analysis with respect to the “state of urgency” declared in Panama, though much more problematic, should yield some insights to the *cui bono* issue with respect to the Panamanian people. However, given the state of affairs in Panama such detached analyses are not likely to be forthcoming.

In his investigations of the moral life, William James\(^\text{10}\) distinguished three basic kinds of ethical questions which apply quite neatly to the study of politics and consequently political philosophy. The basic questions around which James organized his inquiry are the psychological question, which investigates the *origins* of moral values; the metaphysical question, which investigates the *meaning* of fundamental ethical terms such as “good,” “obligation,” “duty,” etc., and the casuistic question which investigates how to *measure* good or obligation. One should add that this third question is concerned with ethical standards. Consequently, the use of the word measure is not intended as implicit approval of a purely quantifiable ethic of the sort attempted by the utilitarian Jeremy Bentham in his hedonic calculus. In short, this last question focuses on the analysis of the standards or norms that have been used in judging or evaluating human...
actions and traits of character or what some ethical thinkers have called *normative ethics*. These same thinkers classify as *meta-ethics*, the inquiry into the meaning of ethical terms, and generally regard the study of the origins of values as only a *part of descriptive ethics*, which makes use and includes all the special disciplines concerned with the human being. These include the humanities such as literature, religion, languages; the social sciences such as history, psychology, economics, and even the natural sciences such as biology and chemistry may have some relevance.

In political discourse, the above triadic distinction quite often is collapsed into a distinction between *descriptive political inquiry* and *prescriptive political inquiry*, which is analogous to the distinction in ethics between descriptive and normative ethics. As an example of descriptive political inquiry one could inquire into the background of General Noriega.

Through historical research one is informed that Noriega was trained and backed by the U.S. until the development of the above events. One could go as far as to say that the U.S. supported his *de facto* rule and only since the early summer of 1987 was there a concerted effort by the U.S. to force Noriega out of office.\(^{11}\) In view of these considerations, this state of affairs takes on a different dimension.

As one pursues the various strands of the Panamanian issue, one finds that what initially seemed to be a clear cut case of a two bit strongman imposing his will on his people, turns out to be riddled with collusion and corruption of some American officials\(^{12}\) which may have facilitated drug distribution by the Medellin cartel, the very charge brought against Noriega by U.S. federal grand juries. The problematic and ambivalent nature of the Noriega affair is illustrative in general of the tension and ambiguities inherent in political life and in particular in American foreign policy. Such difficulties, if anything, should make one even more assiduous in the pursuit of the factual. The additional confusion that external forces such as the

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economic pressures that the U.S. exerted in the case of Panama, only serves to underscore the immense difficulty faced in organizing and making sense of the subject matter of politics.

For the most part, factual consideration of this kind would be treated by William James’ psychological question. The attempt to determine the origin of any political order or rule involves one in providing an account of the focus that brought about that particular rule or order. In the case of Panama, one cannot render an adequate account of the Noriega regime without considering the dimension that the U.S. economic factor had on Panama’s internal affairs. The same would hold if one were investigating Hungary’s or Poland’s regime. In those cases one would have to assess the role of the Soviet Union’s economy in those countries as well as other pertinent forces. At this juncture, a warning is in order i.e., the attempt to achieve conceptual clarity, a clear grasp of the key ideas that form the skeleton of the discourse, which is the primary concern of James’ metaphysical question plays a significant role in determining the factual. For the most part, James’ psychological and metaphysical questions focus on descriptive inquiry, but James’ analysis adds a dimension to the discourse that would ordinarily be lost if treated only as one topic. On the other hand, what William James investigates under the label of the casuistic question would be considered prescriptive inquiry. Of course, it goes without saying that considerable spillage will result from the prescriptive to the descriptive and vice-versa.

As one reviews the U.S. policy towards events in Panama since June 1987 one is faced with what appears as a divided consciousness among the various departments and agencies of the U.S. government. In Miami, the U.S. Department of Justice brought charges against Noriega for drug trafficking and other criminal activities; on the other hand the State Department attempted a deal to drop the charges for his agreement to step aside. In this process, one observes the conflicting demands of the prudential (the quick fix) with the those of the moral (the genuine practical). During the preceding years (since the late 1960’s) in dealings with Noriega and his cohorts the U.S. had
turned a blind eye and a deaf ear towards their clandestine and not so clandestine activities. This policy had finally caught up with the U.S. to a degree that “U.S. credibility is in tatters,” both at home and abroad; consequently, making policy recommendations (prescriptive inquiry) with respect to Panama had been made nearly impossible. Flirting somewhere between the prudential and the legal had left the U.S. open to charges of using both force and fraud to get its own way and reduced its moral stature to Noriega’s level. One cannot continue to preach democracy and at the same time use techniques worthy of Machiavelli’s prince (e.g. Oliver North) to achieve one’s goal.

Such considerations bring one clearly within the area of prescriptive inquiry. As already indicated this aspect of political inquiry provides analyses of processes and recommends courses of action. In short, it inquires into the methods to be used in accomplishing specific political goals. It is no secret that U.S. wanted Noriega out of power and preferably out of Panama. Still the U.S. had refrained from the use of military force in Panama although it did not hesitate to use it in Grenada to remove a despotic regime. Noriega’s regime appeared no less despotic and in many ways far more dangerous to the well-being of the U.S., undermining its youth with drugs and threatening its future as a viable society.

One cannot help but sense frustration in face of U.S.’s inability to clearly articulate a course of action; at the same time one cannot help but wonder why? Could it be that the U.S. derived some benefits in return for cooperation with Noriega during his long and problematic presence in Panama. Elliott Abrams had claimed that there was no deal or exchange of something for something (“no quid pro quo” - Abrams words). Such a claim mystifies rational discourse, and one cannot help but wonder at the relative silence of the U.S. administration during the Panamanian conflict as well as previous administrations. Sheer ignorance on the part of the entire staff of diplomatic foreign officers in not a convincing explanation.

An attempt has been made to discuss prescriptive and descrip-

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tive inquiry through an examination of an abnormal case on the international scale. The reason for the choice is that the study of the aberrant exhibits much more clearly the principles and procedures underlining everyday political behavior. The case also focuses on the ultimate concern of politics provided one has not become so cynical as to find the concept of legitimate rule totally meaningless. The use of force and deception are among the most recalcitrant aspects of the human political experience. In whatever form, these threaten and compromise democratic processes and institutions. Collusion with such non-democratic means to achieve short or long range goals also compromise democracy.

Noriega’s Panama is a grim illustration of force and deception. It is an example of how a self-serving and ruthless regime hoodwinked the U.S. with small favors. In return, the U.S. turned a blind eye to the regime’s criminal activities and abuses of the human rights (touchstone of President Carter’s administration) of Panama’s citizens.

As the process of interaction between the U.S. and Panama is unraveled one notes a peculiar game of hiding and seek. Both the U.S. and Panama tried to add a veneer of respectability to political activities in Panama. In 1979 when the Shah of Iran needed a place to stay, President Carter’s chief of staff Hamilton Jordan bypassed Panama’s “civilian president,” who had been installed at U.S. insistence, and went directly to General Omar Torrijos, who in the privacy of his house approved Jordan’s request in seconds. Jordan clearly recognized and used the distinction between de facto rule (General Omar Torrijos) and de jure rule (legitimate civilian government) to avoid the slow unpredictable legitimate civilian channels of the recognized representatives of the people of Panama. These maneuverings were not lost on Noriega. As it has already been pointed out when President Delvalle requested Noriega’s resignation he (Noriega) immediately effected the election of a new civilian president, Manuel Solis Palma.

Both the U. S.’s insistence on a civilian president for Panama as
well as Noriega’s immediate convocation of Panama’s National Assembly for the election of a new civilian president were motivated by the recognition of Panama’s legitimate constitutional institutions and procedures. These were attempts at following the letter of the law without adhering to the spirit. It was important for Noriega to project a definition of himself as a general under a legitimately constituted government that represented the legitimate aspirations of its people. This projection was a form of lip service to legitimate institutions. However, it was a straw that the people of Panama could cling to in order to reclaim their human and civil rights which had no de facto existence.

On this view lip service was the remaining trace of a people’s de jure rights and a hope on which to stake their claim to those rights as well as a motivation for future champions (be they individuals or groups of individuals) of those rights. Noriega and his generals understood the uses of lip service as the closing of the opposition newspaper La Prensa so well illustrates. For the Panamanian demos the fundamental question was how to turn the de jure into the de facto. It is also the fundamental consideration and the heart of prescriptive inquiry.

This analyses was terminated before the intervention of U.S. forces and the removal of Noriega from Panama.

Of the articles that follow one was presented at the 1995 N.Y.S.F.E.A. meeting at SUNY Cortland (‘Likely Implications of the Thought of Dewey and James Regarding a School Prayer Amendment’ – Norman J. Bauer) and another is an outgrowth of the presentation at that meeting (‘Preparing Teachers for the 21st Century: Connecting Preservice Teachers with Community’ – Magnus Bassey).

The remaining articles were presented at the 25th Anniversary Meeting of N.Y.S. F. E. A. at SUNY Oneonta. At that meeting John Marciano delivered the keynote address, “Civic Illiteracy and Education” with which this issue of Educational Change opens.

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ENDNOTES

2. Greenwald, loc. cit.
7. The report by Larry Rohter, “Banks in Panama Ordered to Close,” *New York Times*, March 5, 1988, p. 1 and p. 4, indicates that there is still order in spite of the *de facto* government’s edict to close banks. This action created a liquidity crisis which forced large number of businesses to close while those that opened accepted only cash for purchases.
8. Plato, *Republic VIII*. After the analysis of aristocracy, in Book VIII Plato analyzed timocracy, rule by valor, oligarchy, rule by wealth, democracy, rule by the general citizenry and tyranny, rule by the despot.
11. In Larry Rohter “America’s Blind Eye,” *New York Times Magazine*, May 29, 1988, p. 25, we find the observation, “But even if an arrangement requiring the corrupt and repressive dictator to step down or leave the country is made, it would not necessarily end a political system that, many Panamanians and Americans agree, was created, nurtured and sustained with United States help.”
12. In T. Morganthau, “Anatomy of a Fiasco,” *Newsweek*, June 6, 1988, it was reported that “Oliver North once tried to enlist Noriega in a scheme to fake a Sandinista arms shipment.” p. 36.
15. Rohter provides the account that “Jordan flew to Panama and bypassing the civilian president who had been installed at American insis-
tence, went straight to one of Torrijos’s homes to ask him to take in the Shah.” *Ibid*, p. 26. We also find that Torrijos within the confines of his “private house in Panama, puffing on his cigar, had made his decision in seconds.” The Shah spent three months in Panama.

16. Rohter, loc. cit.
CIVIC ILLITERACY AND EDUCATION

John Marciano

First of all, I wish to express my deepest appreciation to the Executive Board for the invitation to speak at this 25th anniversary of the association. I am deeply touched by the honor, even greater because I share this evening of celebration with our dear colleague Norm Bauer who has recently retired from SUNY Geneseo. Some of us in this room go back many years with NYSFEA, and I always look forward to the stimulating discussion and the renewal of collegiality each year. Those of you here for the first time: I welcome you and hope that you come back year after year. Twenty-five years ago, intellectuals were part of the struggle to end a criminal war in Vietnam, and end social, economic and educational injustice at home. Now, in the “postmodern” era, the movements of 1971 are ancient history and many intellectuals struggle over how to deconstruct a paragraph. Russell Jacoby has addressed this issue with his customary wit and historical insight in a recent Chronicle of Higher Education.

I would like to preface my remarks about civic illiteracy — which come from the introduction to my book: Civic Illiteracy and Education: The Battle for the Hearts and Minds of American Youth (forthcoming April 1997, Peter Lang) with a very brief review of what was happening in 1971 when this association began — throughout the nation and in Cortland where we had our first gathering. This review will give some historical context from which to examine the present. My thanks to Bill Griffen, who keeps a careful journal of issues and events, and John Ryder for his recollection of that time.

Some historical benchmarks from 1971 include: January: Phil Berrigan and others indicted in plot to kidnap Henry Kissinger; Cortland students and faculty send about 30 people to Harrisburg for the trial in April. January: Berrigan brothers on cover of Time Maga-
zine as “Rebel Priests” — compare their principled commitment to human rights and justice with those clergy who make up the Christian Coalition. April: Twenty-five years ago this weekend, the Grateful Dead play before some 5-6,000 at SUNY Cortland. The City Council passes a resolution barring them from ever playing within the city. May: May Day demonstration against Vietnam War in Washington with 7,200 arrests in one day and 13,400 for four days — the largest mass arrests in U.S. history. Late April-early May: SUNY Cortland “Conspiracy for Change” — week-long and all-day radical classes, workshops, and demonstrations. June: Bill Griffen and I are invited to the Cortland County Bar Association annual dinner to address that group on the Berrigan/Harrisburg trial and events surrounding the Vietnam War and protests; it was our last out-of-court appearance before lawyers. September: Members of the Onondaga Nation stop construction on Route 81, to block an effort to take reservation land. September: Attica prison protest and seige by state troopers lead to 41 deaths. October: SUNY Cortland students get Cortland Common Council to pass an anti-war resolution which makes national news.

1971-72: Education Department Pilot Program in a Binghamton elementary school, where students did their methods and student teaching; there has been nothing close to it since. I sat in awe as those students took on the Binghamton Superintendent of Schools, who was about to fire a young teacher in that very school. The Cortland students were so incensed that they demanded a meeting; he did not change his mind, but their courage and articulate challenge to his authority on behalf of a colleague have stuck with me after all these years. They and other students at Cortland were engaged in the struggle for civic literacy through their inquiries and activism; their courage, insights and involvement have not been matched since, and the comparison with today’s Cortland students — especially in Education — is striking.

Now, to some brief comments on Civic Illiteracy. Columnist Mike Royko of the Chicago Tribune has a crude but fairly accurate...
statement that captures the analysis in my book about the profound level of civic illiteracy among youth — which has been crafted by a corporate, political and educational elite that fears “democratic dis-temper” among the citizenry.

Let’s be honest: When it comes to foreign involvement, Americans don’t know their butts from the nearest border . . . We Americans [are] the most geographically and politically uninformed, unenlightened and ignorant people who have ever claimed the title of World Leaders.... Now if you ask what teams are making the NFL playoffs, that’s different. Look at it this way: When was the last time Herzegovina was in the Super Bowl?

Introduction to [Civic Illiteracy] Land of Promise; One Flag, One Land; Our Land, Our Time; America: The Glorious Republic; Spirit of Liberty: An American History; The Americans: A History of a People and a Nation; A Proud Nation; Heritage of Freedom; The Challenge of Freedom. These history textbook titles reverberate with visions of democracy, freedom, and patriotism — what America is all about. They inspire one to think about the glorious traditions and lessons that should move youth.

There is a different view of our history, however, that rarely makes it into schools, textbooks and mass media. This “other side” must be presented if youth are to think about and challenge the distortions, omissions and lies that shape history lessons about the country and its wars. This book is about the contest for the hearts and minds of youth, about what is termed “civic literacy” — the ability to think critically and objectively about the nation’s fundamental premises and practices.

Influential educators faithfully support a dominant-elite view that has fostered an uncritical patriotism and militarism, undermining thoughtful and active citizenship in a democracy. In contrast, I argue that education, often through history textbooks which are the primary source of civic literacy instruction, offers youth a distorted

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view of America, promoting civic illiteracy and turning civic responsibility into patriotic conformity. Allan Bloom’s *Closing of the American Mind* has actually been fostered by those who influence educational policy. Dissenters, therefore, must challenge the empty patriotism, yellow ribbons, and militarism that shape the nation and our schools.

Today, there is a crisis of civic literacy and democracy; the representation of our history in schools will help to shape its outcome. This crisis has arisen because we do not educate students to criticize and challenge the nation’s policies, especially those involving war. Despite the many claims that civic literacy is crucial to education and democracy, patriotic and militaristic propaganda has dominated history lessons in our schools. Such education leaves students unable to make reasoned judgments, preparing them to give unthinking support to American wars.

The crisis of civic literacy that I wish to address, however, is not the one discussed by educational reports, and by corporate, educational and political leaders. It exists because the dominant elite that runs this country requires youth and citizens who can be manipulated. This elite is comprised of corporate officials, influential educators, and political figures who govern the nation and shape its civic debate. These leaders see the foundations of our country and educational system as sound and our institutions and leaders as decent and humane, but they believe that mistakes are made because purposes are not questioned. The source of this crisis is not merely youthful ignorance of the basic facts of important historical events, though this deficiency certainly exists. Its roots lie in the elite’s fear that civically-literate youth will become informed and involved citizens; civic instruction, therefore, is organized to prevent such a danger. Civic illiteracy, which helps to keep youth and other citizens stupefied, is perfectly reasonable once we understand the purpose and nature of “citizenship training” in the schools: to undermine the critical and liberating potential of education.

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The images and beliefs inspired by the titles listed at the beginning of this introduction are those that influential political figures and educators want youth to embrace. The dominant elite fears what Harvard professor and former Pentagon official Samuel Huntington called “the democratic distemper” in the people, especially youth. If youth question and challenge issues and policies, this elite will face an “excess of democracy” of the kind that emerged in the 1960s when social movements challenged respected authorities and established policies. Such movements threaten the power and stability of established institutions. The history lessons about patriotism, war, and these movements, therefore, are simply one educational tool in the struggle to vaccinate the hearts and minds of youth against this “distemper.”

Those who shape our perception of world events, including history textbook authors, present similar views on matters of state and war despite apparent differences on particular issues or policies. Their general position is expressed in high school and media history discussions and lessons. Rarely heard by youth, however, are radical views that challenge the fundamental beliefs about America and war that students and citizens learn and take for granted.

The radical or “other side” was expressed by the late Andrew Kopkind, writer and journalist for The Nation. Writing after the conclusion of the Persian Gulf War, Kopkind argued that “America has been in a state of war — cold, hot and lukewarm — for as long as most citizens now living can remember”; that this state of war has “been used effectively to manufacture support for the nation’s rulers and to eliminate or contain dissent among the ruled.” This “warrior state is so ingrained in American institutions ... in short so totalitarian — that government is practically unthinkable without it.” But this war mentality is a good cure for “democratic distemper,” because it “implies command rather than participation, obedience over agreement, hierarchy instead of equality, repression not liberty, uniformity not diversity, secrecy not candor, propaganda not information.” This war system permeates every institution in our society, including our schools. Opposed to the “kinder gentler” rhetoric that
we hear in commencement and political addresses, it glorifies patriotism and war and profoundly shapes the crisis in civic literacy.

3

The Format of the Book: Chapter Outlines and Argument

Chapter 1: The Crisis in Civic Literacy and Foundational Principles

Chapter 1 will examine the “crisis in civic literacy” and fundamental principles, as presented by influential educational reports and theorists who have defined the debate. These will include the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching Report (High School: A Report of Secondary Education, 1983), the Education for Democracy Project Report (Democracy’s Untold Story, 1987), the National Endowment for the Humanities’ American Memory: A Report on the Humanities in the Nation’s Public Schools (1987), the Report on the First National Assessment of History and Literature (1987), and the perspectives of Allan Bloom, William Bennett, and R. Freeman Butts. This review will serve as the basis for the challenge in later chapters to the nature of American society and civic literacy.

Chapter 2: America: The Dominant-Elite View

In order to critique the principles of civic literacy and education, we must examine the dominant-elite view about the United States, including its history and stated ideals, as expressed through its professed commitment to human rights and its role in the world. This view shapes the debate on civic literacy, country, and war, and those presenting it define the issues to which citizens and youth then respond. They include Robert Bellah, Bennett, Bloom, and Paul Gagnon.

Chapter 3: America: A Dissenting View

The dominant-elite view of national reports and leading educators will be contrasted with dissenters such as Noam Chomsky, W.E.B. DuBois, bell hooks, June Jordan, Michael Parenti, and Howard Zinn, voices rarely heard in contemporary political discussions in the media, and virtually excluded from our secondary history classrooms.

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Their dissenting critique gives us a much more truthful understanding of American history and contemporary events. The chapter explores DuBois’s and Manning Marable’s insights on how racism ultimately shapes youth’s knowledge about peoples and nations in the Third World, and what this has to do with American wars. Since 1945, for example, the United States has committed aggression against people of color in Cambodia, Cuba, Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala, Grenada, Iraq, Korea, Laos, Lebanon, Nicaragua, Panama, Southern Africa, and Vietnam. Racist justifications found in history lessons and textbook accounts of American domestic and foreign policies and wars have legitimized this aggression.

The dissenting view continues with Ward Churchill’s and Annette Jaimes’s insights on U.S. aggression against Native Americans; reflections on patriotism from Henry David Thoreau, Leo Tolstoy, and *The Nation*; and feminist reflections on nationalism, women, and war from Jean Elshtain, Linda Gordon, and Betty Reardon. A discussion of civic literacy and society must include an examination of the relationship of gender to patriotism and war. The indoctrination that results in the emulation of militarism is not just fostered by school history lessons, but is nurtured by cultural gender stereotypes that glorify U.S. military exploits.

**Chapter 4: The Radical Tradition in Educational Criticism**

To continue dissenting perspectives on the dominant-elite view of America found in chapter 3, it is necessary to review the critical/radical scholarship that has arisen in educational studies over the past three decades. This section will include a discussion of the insights of Michael Apple, Ann Bastian, Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, Martin Carnoy, Maxine Greene, and Kathleen Weiler.

**Chapter 5: Civic Illiteracy and American History Textbooks: The U.S.-Vietnam War**

The dissenting views in chapters 4 and 5 establish the context and foundation for the argument that educational texts, as part of the schools’ larger political purposes, have fostered civic illiteracy by promoting an uncritical patriotism. To illustrate the general thesis

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that civic illiteracy is fostered in schools, I will challenge the domi-
nant-elite view with a concrete analysis of how the U.S.-Vietnam War is presented in American history textbooks. These texts remain a key source of civic learning for high school students, especially about past wars; they equate U.S. policy with honorable intentions and justice while acknowledging errors of judgment and horrible ca-

History textbooks support the dominant-elite version of the ba-
sic premises and practices of the nation, including: the U.S. is a de-
mocracy run in the interests of the people; government and educa-
tional leaders desire civically-literate and informed youth; the U.S.
pursues peace and justice and is always trying to do good; and that although aggression and violence have been a part of our history, they are accidental by-products of essentially humane policies. I will challenge this benign view by weaving a narrative view of 20 history texts published in the 1980s, describing the U.S.-Vietnam war in the language of the textbook authors. Distortions and inaccuracies will be examined by using dissenting sources that are rarely part of schools’ curricula.

Chapter 6: The Persian Gulf War

To continue the discussion of education and war, chapter 6 dis-
cusses civic illiteracy in the context of a detailed history of the Gulf War. Part I reviews the war from the “yellow-ribbon” or dominant-
elite perspective; Part II offers a dissenting critique of the war based on evidence rarely encountered in the mass media or schools.

Chapter 7: Civic Literacy during the Gulf War:
Critical Pedagogy and an Alternative Vision

This chapter will examine civic literacy efforts undertaken in schools during the Persian Gulf War, drawing upon available research and information provided by teachers. I will report on the views of some teachers who fostered the critical dialogue envisioned by the leading educational reports and theorists as essential to civic knowl-
edge. This critical dialogue happened because they practiced the es-

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sential virtue of civic literacy in a democracy: engaging students and citizens in an informed dialogue on an important historical event. These educators embrace the highest ideals of the nation and their vocation; they are the heroes and heroines in the struggle for civic literacy.

We must have a radically different vision of civic literacy in order to challenge the powerful influence of the dominant elite, and the school history lesson version of U.S. wars. This new vision and approach are needed to counter the patriotic and militaristic indoctrination that our youth receive. Our social and educational institutions continue to pledge allegiance to civic literacy, compassion, and peace, while the nation’s leaders remain militaristic and violent. We need to understand how these destructive policies have been supported by educational institutions, and how a genuine civic literacy can help to transform them.

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My interest in writing this book is not merely academic. Powerful personal and political experiences have moved me to address the subject and controversy that are the heart of this work: my involvement in the anti-Vietnam War movement of the 1960s and 1970s; my work with Vietnam veterans on the war and related issues; my brother’s combat service in Vietnam, and the death of his best friend with whom he went through basic and advanced infantry training; my personal contacts with Noam Chomsky, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Benjamin Spock, and Howard Zinn, all of whom have spoken and written eloquently about issues of war and peace; co-authoring Teaching the Vietnam War (1979); teaching students at the State University of New York, College at Cortland for the past 27 years; and my efforts as an activist on issues of education, peace, and social justice for the past 31 years.

Regardless of the judgment on the questions under discussion in this book, becoming civically literate about patriotism and war is not merely a minor debating point in another educational report or

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publication. What youth learn about the U.S.-Vietnam War and the
Persian Gulf War can literally mean devastation or peace, especially
for the peoples of the Third World and, ultimately, for America and
the globe. As the historian Howard Zinn argues, “we can reasonably
conclude that how we think is not just mildly interesting, not just a
subject for intellectual debate, but a matter of life and death.”

State University of New York, Cortland

ENDNOTES

1. Samuel Huntington, “The United States,” in Michael Crozier, Samuel
Huntington, and Joji Watanuki, The Crisis of Democracy: Report On
The Governability of Democracies To The Trilateral Commission (New
a must for those who wish to understand the dominant-elite’s response
to the progressive movements of the 1960s and 1970s.
3. Ibid, 447.
4. Millions of Americans wore the yellow ribbon as a symbol of
support for the troops, and ultimately the war itself. The symbol
represented the overwhelming view in the country, especially after
U.S. combat action began. The yellow ribbon perspective totally
overwhelmed any civically-literate dialogue on the premises,
purposes, and strategies of the war. See chapter 7 of my forthcoming
book.
5. Howard Zinn, Declarations of Independence: Cross-Examining Ameri-

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A FOOL’S PARADISE?

The Subtle Assault of the Hard Sciences of Consciousness Upon Experiential Education

Greg Nixon

[ABSTRACT: Advances in artificial intelligence and neuroscience claim to have begun to undermine the assumptions of the arts and educational theory community by explaining consciousness through either a reduction to mathematical functionalism or an excrescence of brain biology. I suggest that the worldview behind such reductionism is opposed to the worldview assumed by many educational practitioners and theorists. I then go on to outline a few common positions taken in the burgeoning field of consciousness studies which suggest that—though many attributes of consciousness have been identified and explained—individual consciousness itself remains as much of an enigma to scientists as to the rest of us who experience it. However, I do suggest the necessity of intersubjectivity for conscious evolution.]

“The astonishing hypothesis is that ‘You’, your joys and your sorrows, your memories and your ambitions, your sense of personal identity and free will, are in fact no more than the behaviour of a vast assembly of nerve cells and their associated molecules. As Lewis Carroll’s Alice might have phrased it: ‘You’re nothing but a pack of neurones!’ ”

(Francis H. C. Crick, The Astonishing Hypothesis)

“The fool is subversive because she threatens to reveal that existence is a dream, and that the language of the mundane, of the world of everyday consciousness, is a curtain drawn by ‘normal’ people to shield their eyes from the abyss.”

(David Kennedy, “Child and Fool in the Western Wisdom Tradition”)
§1. Foundations. Teacher educators in foundations have long realized that education has both instrumental and culturally constructive (or aesthetic) purposes. The educational enterprise seems to have begun amongst our hunting and gathering ancestors for reasons of survival and, secondarily, personal experience. Physical survival skills are found in the rest of the animal kingdom. Much of our verbal exchange and other skills of symbolization associated with cultural elaboration, on the other hand, seem unnecessary enhancements of survival needs. People must learn techniques of survival efficiently and apply them early so we can all continue being fed, sheltered, and protected. But people must also gain experience in the ongoing cultural elaboration we call the arts and humanities so they may participate in further cultural creation and expand the cultural mind—as well as be guided on the personal journey through the stages of life. The deepening of conscious experience through such things as imaginative and narrative productions is brought about by freely and continuously transcending one’s immediate contexts. Such experiential education remains a major concern today, usually tolerantly coexisting with the more practical lines of learning centered on survival skills and instrumental training.

Since at least the beginning of this century, schools have expected students to exercise the prerogatives of independent centres of consciousness. Why else would we encourage the teaching of democratic free choice? Why else does the curriculum assume the value of getting students to learn responsible decision-making, to express themselves in writing assignments or through visual or dramatic means? It is only with the assumption of such self-managed minds in each person that the importance of learning history or the great works of literature is understood. This is not even to mention the rewards we give to those who behave properly, work hard, and excel athletically or academically—and the withholding of such rewards from those who do not. More recently, we have been expecting schools to encourage cooperative groupwork, critical thinking, and multicultural viewpoints. We expect our students (and each other) to have minds which can empathize, achieve deeper understanding,
and create socially acceptable goals for themselves. Surely such expectations assume each person has an independent mind which connects readily to other minds and to the world itself.

The study and understanding of the institutions of education, generally seen as a social science, may no longer manage to straddle the chasm between experimental science and experiential humanism. Science and technology’s explorations into mind and consciousness are threatening to overrun their territory and throw down assault bridges upon the weak-kneed mediations of social science, overthrowing entirely the fool’s paradise of the arts and humanities. It seems only sensible that those of us in educational foundations should become aware of the progress of the hard sciences in this area.

§2. The Hard Sciences. Despite the hard-worked rhetoric of the humanistic, artistic, and literary viewpoints, we know that nothing can receive the official stamp of truth or possibility until it has passed through the rigour of scientific analysis. This is the mainstream worldview today. This especially refers to what I am here calling the hard sciences to distinguish them from the softer, more socially oriented sciences.

With respect to consciousness, the primary hard sciences which threaten to reduce the mind to an “epiphenomenon” as either a biological product or a deterministic function are neuroscience and its technological twin, artificial intelligence—both forms of cognitive science. The realm of artificial intelligence research might prove that consciousness is merely a mathematically predictable function of the brain’s electro-chemical interactions which could just as well be a function of the computer’s electro-binary circuitry. Neuroscience is closing in on its search for a sort of grand unification theory (GUT) of the brain in which all aspects of conscious awareness will be explained through specific biological processes—the situation described by Francis Crick in the epigraph above.

Computer technology continues to make inroads into the educational process but so far, most agree, communication has only been

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enhanced. The marvelous manner in which computers input, retain, and calculate data may be highly suggestive of the workings of the conscious mind, but such a model of learning has not yet greatly influenced our fundamental pedagogical worldview. Although some may speak on the one hand of learning as “input,” testing as “output,” remembering as “data storage,” and thinking as “data processing” while on the other hand speaking of the computer’s “intelligence,” “memory,” “thinking,” “knowledge base,” or even its “arousal time,” that doesn’t reflect any change in primary assumptions about the prerequisites for awareness. Or does it?

And even though neuroscience has demonstrated the brain’s once mysterious method of inputting and storing data (now called information), doesn’t our ultimate respect for the individual’s unique learning style remain unquestioned? Neuroscientists have given us images of the brain in action and have pinpointed most of the brain’s centres devoted to particular tasks of processing information. It’s no wonder that a textbook, audiovisual, and seminar industry has arisen to train teachers in “brain-based learning.” For a chunk of those professional development funds, there’s no shortage of educational entrepreneurs who will train teachers to teach “to the brain” or to set up “brain-friendly environments,” as though the person were just extraneous wrapping around the organic CPU.3

Not to be alarmist, but as the AI technicians proclaim the inevitable construction of conscious machines and the neuroscientists seem to move toward a self-contained total explanation of consciousness as a cerebral byproduct, all this educating by interactive facilitation or “learning to learn” will come under severe strain to justify its activity. If the brain or mind works as either of these approaches demonstrate, then the flaming scientific sword of demonstrated proof is about to be raised before the east gateway of paradise and the fools of cultural intersubjectivity will be required to exit forthwith.

§3. Consciousness and the Brain. The brain is the central processor for all our incarnate existence so it is no wonder we are in the midst of what has been declared “the decade of the brain.” Many
popular magazines including *Newsweek*, *Scientific American*, *Discover*, and *National Geographic* have devoted special issues to the wonders of the brain. Publishers’ advertising brochures received by education departments extol new books about the bicameral brain, or the brain explained, or the brain’s newly discovered secret key to learning. Since the once humble brain is being accepted as the complete source of human consciousness, that chunk of pink-grey matter seems to be undergoing a sort of deification to the status of World-Creator. What world would we have without consciousness? Who created our consciousness? El Cerebro, that’s who!

But, again, who we are seems to depend on the fundament of the brain’s assumed creation. The “fundament” may be functionalism or evolved, self-contained brain biology, neither of which gives us educators any reason to promote interactive, expressive, or experiential education. The fundament of mind may also be a biology so subtle it involves quantum mechanics, or it may be beyond physics in another reality altogether. The latter two choices open the possibility of the mind as either a resident of the implicate,\textsuperscript{4} self-aware\textsuperscript{5} quantum universe or a non-material agent altogether. How these latter types of dualism explain conscious effects on the daily material world is less clear, however.

The mathematician Roger Penrose clarifies these four alternatives to questions about the brain, consciousness, and functionalist computation. This summary may help us to understand the majority positions and to consider the assumptions employed in education. The list is both comprehensive and succinct enough to be cited here:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{A.} All thinking is computation; in particular, feelings of conscious awareness are evoked merely by the carrying out of appropriate computations.
\item \textbf{B.} Awareness is a feature of the brain’s physical action; and whereas any physical action can be simulated computationally, computational simulation cannot by itself evoke awareness.
\end{itemize}

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C. Appropriate physical action of the brain evokes awareness, but this physical action cannot even be properly simulated computationally.

D. Awareness cannot be explained in physical, computational, or any other scientific terms. ⁶

A may be called functionalism or “strong AI” and is the position, for example, of philosopher Daniel Dennett who considers the case closed in his popular *Consciousness Explained* ⁷—and of most computer scientists. One immediate implication of the fact that the brain’s complex interactions can in principle be mathematically calculated is that such calculations could just as well take place elsewhere than the “wetware” of the brain. This opens the door for the hardware of computer technology to become another substrate for the complex interactions from which consciousness can emerge. Of course, the second implication of this is that there’s every reason to expect that the silicon substrate—the computer, robot, or android—will achieve more complex processing than is possible for a human brain. The computer’s processing is already more rapid, if still less adaptable. ⁸

All these speculations still refer to the distant future. For the time being only the AI worldview need concern us. If such a paradigm were to become widely accepted then the problem for educators would be greatly simplified. Education driven by a sort of mechanistic determinism toward complexity would merely be a matter of acquiescing to the technological imperative. The fool’s paradises of the arts, humanities, and social sciences would no longer serve much purpose. It would be time to stop being so humanistic, time get out the tool kits and build the machines which will supersede us. All the sooner to transfer our memory programs into immortality!

B is “weak AI” or generativity and would equate with the view that only the ultra-complex biology of the brain can produce consciousness. The brain’s evolved reflexive understanding makes it impossible for computers to mimic such a history of learning. This

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has been called “carbon chauvinism,” meaning only an organic brain can be conscious. This is the position of well-known philosopher John Searle.\textsuperscript{9}

As an extension of \textit{B} and edging into \textit{C}, it should be noted that Penrose ignores the groundbreaking work of Gerald Edelman.\textsuperscript{10} Edelman suggests that through competition amongst neural assemblies for conscious attention (known as Neural Darwinism) our values and experience affect our cerebral evolution. Penrose is likewise dismissive of the effects of language upon consciousness. This is unfortunate, because it is considered by some authorities like linguist Derek Bickerton\textsuperscript{11} that language has created intersubjective networks which have done Edelman one better by externalizing synaptic-like connections in the form of cultural intersubjectivity which has led to the evolution of syntactic substructures in the brain. The suggestion is that the brain responds to cultural/conscious evolution.

\textit{C} is Penrose’s choice. The difference between it and \textit{B}, according to Penrose, is the Gödelian noncomputability of many of the processes of consciousness which implies potential free will. Here consciousness is identified with the \textit{orchestrated} objective reduction of the quantum wave function or space-time selections associated with the electrons in the atoms of brain microtubules.\textsuperscript{12} In this view, the quantum mind may act before brain processing begins. Until a quantum computer is built, AI will never be able to duplicate such subtle activity. The problem is that the quantum realm is obscure and, like \textit{A} and \textit{B}, still attempts an objective explanation for subjectivity (conscious experience). How postulated randomness implies free will is another unanswered question.

\textit{D} is the “spooky”\textsuperscript{13} alternative which believers call spiritual or mystical. It places the mind in a non-material reality and so allows for infinite experience and free will. Sir John Eccles\textsuperscript{14} is one Nobel laureate neuroscientist who supports the dualism of \textit{D}.

Both Penrose’s interpretation of the strong AI position of \textit{A} or the neurologic extreme of \textit{B} imply that a great deal of what we have

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been doing in schools and universities for thousands of years has been an utter waste of time. First of all, the consciousness we experience would have been shown to play no significant role in our behaviour, just as predicted by Watson, Skinner et al. The causal factor in behaviour, however, would no longer be primarily the environment but the function or generativity of the brain. Secondly, we could now look to improve ourselves by improving such functionalism or generativity. In the case of functionalism, that would mean improving the information processing which causes intelligence—and that may involve the change to a new and improved substrate. In the case of biological generativity, that would mean taking genetic and neurobiological adjustment much more seriously. Ironically, the reductionistic realization opens the potential for expansion of whatever to which consciousness is reduced.

With such assumptions from which to start, we could begin to plan for a social vision based on a verified reality. If we concluded that only a brain and nervous system can become more consciously intelligent, then we could close the decade of the brain with the apotheosis of the brain itself, and plan for ways to expand the potential of its biological processing. Education could now include biological improvements and direct attachments to more efficiently functioning technological substrates.

The question is, can either one of these positions—as defined by Penrose and excluding notions such as those of Edelman and Bickerton—account for conscious experience? Some researchers, like Dennett, would answer that they can indeed explain conscious experience but most admit the question of consciousness remains absurdly resistant to their methods.  

Have Penrose’s C or Eccles’ D discovered a reason or explanation for consciousness? Here all agree the answer is “no” or “not yet.” Even if the “Eccles Gate” or the Penrose/Hameroff microtubule dimer—where the proto-conscious quantum wave is said to collapse into measurable physical effects—were unequivocally dis-
covered, a reason or explanation of why quantum physics should produce awareness would still be forthcoming.

§4. Alternatives? This is not the place to develop a theory of consciousness which may be more amenable to the aims of education. However, some of the lacunae of Penrose’s four alternatives may be noted and a few directions for further exploration can be suggested.

The question comes round again to the profound difference between the phenomena of the material world—or their functioning—and the phenomenology of conscious experience itself. Although functionalism and generation certainly explain many, perhaps most, aspects of consciousness, neither explains consciousness itself. All the mapping and testing the brain has undergone has revealed no specific location as the source of the conscious mental field. The immediate fact that consciousness exists in and of itself is so primary, so utterly of a different order than our consciousness of anything else that it is likely it will never be reductively explained by AI or neuroscience. All objective researches must deal with the epistemological problem that they are themselves products of conscious experience. To objectify a mind-independent reality, then to look for mind in that mind-independent reality, is a bizarre sort of logic to say the least.

This is the point of philosopher David Chalmers’ much ballyhooed recent distinction between the “easy problems” and the “hard problem” of consciousness. The easy problems include explaining all the attributes and data of consciousness. “The really hard problem of consciousness is the problem of experience.” This difference was adroitly noted as far back as 1879 when psycho-neurologist John Tyndall conceptualized the impossible rift:

The passage from the physics of the brain to the corresponding facts of consciousness is unthinkable. Granted that a definite thought and a definite molecular action in the brain occur simultaneously; we do not possess the in-
tellectual organ, nor apparently any rudiment of the organ, which would enable us to pass, by a process of reasoning, from one to the other.20

In all fairness, it should be noted that many hard scientists scoff at what they see as desperate equivocation on the part of those “mystics” who refuse to view themselves objectively. Subjective consciousness is just another objective fact to them and, as such, needs to be studied, classified, and dissected objectively. A common response to the hard problem by researchers is to dismiss it by claiming that consciousness is no more startling an attribute of the brain than wetness is of water. Just as hydrogen and oxygen combine to produce the unexpected quality of wetness, so brain molecules work together to produce the unexpected quality of consciousness. A little reflection, however, will reveal that consciousness is of a qualitatively different order than wetness: It is not objective in any way whatsoever until we objectify it conceptually.

The sciences of consciousness are being forced to reconsider the introspectionism that has virtually disappeared since William James. It seems Searle with his inner quality of “understanding,” Penrose with non-computable “comprehension,” and Chalmers with the “hard problem” have just rediscovered philosophical phenomenology! Phenomenology in general takes for granted that conscious experience can only be explored experientially. To discover its origins, something more than a search for location in a function or area of the brain is clearly required. Phenomenology understands that both subjectivity and objectivity are early discriminations made within a primary undiscriminated, unstructured matrix of awareness without experience. Such a negative concept—negative because it contains all dualities and thus cannot be defined or categorized—was called the apeiron (meaning “without boundaries” or “beyond experience”)21 by Pythagoras and Anaximander, the pleroma by alchemists, and nonbeing by Martin Heidegger. Experience of something can only begin with the first limitations placed upon such a matrix. Individually, we experience such limitations immediately upon finding our-

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selves “thrown into” physical and cultural contexts from the moment of our birth.

Phenomenologists have pointed out the epistemological impossibility of attempting to explain conscious experience through products of that conscious experience. All thought—all the reality we know, in fact—exists within contexts we have re-cognized and imagined through experience, beginning with extension into three-dimensional space and linear time. This is not to indicate any conscious constructors of conscious experience. Far from it. But experience of something can only begin with contextualizations of that experience. And our first context of embodied experience is that of our own bodies. Israel Rosenfield (and other scientists) have stated that identity itself begins when we sense ourselves embodied, sense which parts of the world are ours to control. This proprioception takes place before the acquisition of language or even the re-cognition of others. Rosenfield theorizes that perception “is always from a particular point of view, and is only possible when the brain creates a body-image, a self, as a frame of reference.”

The brain itself, it appears, is just the immediate physiological context—and limitation—of experience from an infinite possibility of contexts within space and time. How can such a source for consciousness in unstructured experience ever be reduced to functions or locations in the brain alone? It appears likely that it cannot. None of the neuroscientific research has given any indication of “doorways” from nondifferentiated experience the —apeiron— to conscious experience of the world. As indicated, Penrose, Eccles, and others feel such doorways may have been located through the quantum. Still others—Karl Pribham in particular—have held out for a neuroscience which reveals that the brain functions wholistically and holonomically. Though changes in various individual neurons can be observed to happen as a result of learning, the “information” that is learned does not subsequently exist as “bits of data” recorded in these neurons (the computer paradigm). Rather the memories of the

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learning exist as fluctuating dynamic patterns of electrical activity generated by the entire brain. Stephen Rose would say the entire organism. Such fluctuating dynamic patterns of the entire brain strongly suggest holonomic principles.

Still it may be wondered how such holonomic patterns could have any effect on our experiencing of what seems to be a pre-established, pre-experiential world. This is not the place to delve into the further reaches of schema theory or the unconscious processing of habit routines. It may be enough to point out that such notions as the “flow of information” in the brain give an imperfect picture of the brain’s complex functioning. In the visual cycle, for example: If the retina of the eye sends its “visual data” to the thalamus (which has been likened to a relay station for sensory data), which then sends this signal to the primary visual cortex for the first stages in the of visual information, why should the primary visual cortex send a nerve pathway directly back to the same area of the thalamus from which it has just received the data? The backprojection is not insignificant: Recent findings indicate in the case of vision that there are ten times as many nerve fibers in the “backwards” direction as in the direction in which information is supposed to flow. This indicates the possibility that the world seen or experienced is as much a product of whole brain projecting as it is from purely outside-in receiving. The body itself is seen here as the primary context of experience and—through the body—the world we are “thrown into” and create becomes the secondary context.

Instead of being reduced to a point of origin less than itself, the origin of conscious experience is here understood to derive from a larger unbounded apeiron or essence. But this sort of panpsychism is more akin to awareness or aliveness than to human consciousness per se. If Chalmers’ hard problem seeks the origin of such awareness/aliveness, he seems more to be asking the Heideggerian question of being: “Why is there anything at all, rather than nothing?”—a hard problem indeed! Human consciousness in the self-contained manner we ourselves experience it seems to require more

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contextualization than brain or world can provide. It requires the
mythic perimeters and symbolic interaction of culture.

Such an approach suggests an alternative to a functionalist or
generative reductive explanation of human consciousness. It also
narrow the field from the universal consciousness suggested by
panpsychism. Some may wonder what else could cause conscious
awareness other than either the brain or its functions. C. S. Peirce
(and, for that matter, Karl Marx) suggested that consciousness is not
an epiphenomenon of the phenomenal brain, but is, instead, the in-
ternalization of culture. Consciousness as we know it only came to
be when language awoke in us an inner world of representation.28
This is to say that consciousness is not primarily subjective but
intersubjective. As suggested earlier by Bickerton, it arises through
the active process of cultural interchange we know generically as
language. Consciousness is each other.

The processes of human subjective construction and world ob-
jective construction from culture and language are well-documented.
This is the definitive context of consciousness. We find ourselves
thrown also into an intersubjective world of cultural determinants
whose very language allows us to objectify our subjective experi-
ence. This allows us to imagine experience as “in here” and a prod-
uct of the very processes we experience as perceptions. We can then
proceed to isolate “human conscious experience” and seek out its
cause in function or generation. Such an objective reduction only
seems possible as the result of a previous reduction of contexts:
apeiron, body, world, culture. Unfortunately, we can neither prove a
“pan-experientialist” apeiron nor disprove it objectively; only raw
experience can reveal it. In fact, awareness-in-itself only discovers
its objects through conscious entities. In this view, the brain is more
like what William James called “a reducing valve”29 than the ulti-
mate Creator of awareness. Here, El Cerebro is just a combination
scribe and errand boy (but one absolutely essential to the existence
of information—and one which responds to it accordingly).

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Even if the universe had the quality of proto-consciousness or primal awareness, it would be aware of nothing until objects were created which could reflect back its awareness onto itself. The same applies to individuals. Unless we can relate to others early in our lives who reflect back to us the objective fact of our own existence we will never become conscious of that existence as an objective fact. We would exist but we would not know we exist. In this sense, we would be experiencing but unconscious—aware but not aware of it: proto-conscious.

§5. Conclusions. Through a phenomenology of first-person experience which refuses to be reduced to what Dennett has called “third-person absolutism,” I have intimated the possibility of the origin of consciousness in a universe with what Einstein called “inner illumination.” Secondly, I have taken the ideas of Edelman to show how complex experience may alter and overlap synaptic connections in his theory of Neural Darwinism to focus this illumination into consciousness. Thirdly, I employed Bickerton to proclaim that language has irrevocably contributed to the evolution of a unique human brain in which cultural experience and cerebral potential are dynamically intermingled. Fourthly, I skimmed the brain’s imputed holonomic capacity to suggest how it might be physically possible for human worlds of representation and meaning-making to exist as our lived reality. Lastly, I have attempted to point out that our conscious lived reality is ultimately cultural, intersubjective, and creative. The role of experiential education now becomes seen as a fundamental human need.

However, one only has to look at the most recent slew of education articles to see that the worldview of the educational project is slowly being overwhelmed by the proofs and assumptions of hard science. Perhaps it has always seemed this way. My concern is that, with the move to reductively “explain away” consciousness, educators are having a harder time justifying the traditional expressive, contemplative, or experiential emphases of literature, creative writing, social studies, dramatic arts, visual arts, and music. This applies

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just as seriously to such endeavours in higher education as curricula-
lum theory, educational philosophy, cultural studies, and all founda-
tional discussions of particular subject areas. Combined with the
conservative retrenchment and the push to make schools save the
economy, the reduction of consciousness threatens to compel educa-
tion to a mere functionalism. This suggests a political position in
which cultural phenomena are also reduced to functional or biologi-
cal epiphenomena and all the dystopian fears of science fiction writ-
ers become realized.

It seems clear—at this point at any rate—that the language of
objective reductionism is completely insufficient for describing the
experience of consciousness. Consciousness itself can be understood
as ultimately unexplainable because of the epistemological difficulty
of explaining experience through an object created through that ex-
perience. Our language struggles to exceed itself. Even hard scient-
ist Crick understands that awareness must compare and differentiate
to express itself: “The implication is that we can never explain to
other people the nature of any conscious experience, only its relation
to other ones.”32 Meaning is never reductive or isolated. Conscien-
tness itself is also understood as not being totally reducible to each
subject because of the linguistic intersubjectivity which creates its
particular manifestation in each of us as cultural beings. We will
continue to understand the world through the cultural microcosm into
which we’ve found ourselves thrown, although we will also continue
to discuss the possibility of nonobjective experience and illuminated
awareness.

Education is primarily a cultural phenomenon and since we seem
to be both products and creators of culture we need to continue to
question and evoke its meaning. At this point we continue to call
ourselves a democracy and, as such, the truths by which we live can
only be derived through intersubjective participation and personal
response. The insights of science can never be ignored, of course,
but as long as education takes the experience of life as seriously—
and as foolishly—as it takes its explanation, the arts, humanities, and

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educational studies should feel secure from incursions from the far shore. Unless our responses can be reduced to computable functions or organic epiphenomena, we will need to continue to interact freely and equally, to explore intelligently the mystery of being, and to perform our existences under the cloud of absolute unknowing. Fools must be subversive, for their onrushing experience refuses to be enclosed in the stasis of totalized reductive explanation. And we can only hope that the wisdom of such “fools” continues to be promoted through educational action.

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**ENDNOTES**

8. Last year, after an initial loss, world chess champion Gary Kasparov defeated IBM’s Deep Blue, the most powerful computer chess network ever assembled, programmed by masters.

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15. At a recent conference—“Tucson II: Toward a Science of Consciousness” (April 8-13, 1996, Tucson, Arizona)—an international panel of noted worthies from consciousness studies all agreed that no science or theory has yet explained the mystery of consciousness—with the sole exception of Dan Dennett.
16. Eccles and his associate Friedreich Beck (e.g., Beck & Eccles. “Quantum Aspects of Brain Activity and the Role of Consciousness.” *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 89. December, 1992. 11357-11361) have done intensive research which suggests there is a “gate” which brings about the collapse of nonlocal wave fluctuations of the quantum continuum to create the classically measurable particles of normal, material physics. The collapse is equated with mental decisions (at either the conscious or unconscious levels).
17. Hameroff & Penrose, previously cited.

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24. “Holonomic” is used to indicate a three-dimensional *process*, as differentiated from the static three-dimensional imagery indicated by “holographic.” The term was first used by George Leonard in *The Silent Pulse*. New York: Dutton, 1978.


26. Rose, previously cited.


28. According to neurobiologist Walter Freeman, the patterns of neural activity we experience are not even representations of the world. To this we must add memory: “That pattern does not ‘represent’ the stimulus. It constitutes the meaning of the stimulus for the person receiving it. The meaning is different for each person, because it depends on the past experience of the person.” In “Happiness Doesn’t Come in Bottles.” *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 4 (1). 1997: 6770, p. 69.


30. Dennett, previously cited.


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Public school demographics in the United States have changed dramatically over the past decades. However, despite the changing demographics studies show that teachers lack the knowledge and the preparation needed to work with diverse populations (Avery & Walker, 1993). Indeed, most teachers have very limited understanding of other cultural and linguistic groups. Studies show that middle-class teachers know very little about the values and characteristics of lower-class students. Also, in a recent study, it was found that less than 20 percent of preservice teachers were willing to teach in diverse settings. In the same study, about 40 percent of the preservice teachers responded that their training did not prepare them to teach in diverse environments (Avery & Walker, 1993). Besides, most teachers are not aware that schools sometimes perpetuate inequalities or that cultural conflicts can be barriers to learning (Cooper, Beare & Thorman, 1990).

Also, a striking discontinuity exists between students and the teaching population. While students are increasingly minority, the teaching population is predominantly white and middle-class. The changing demographics pose serious challenges to teachers. This is particularly so when students’ cultural values conflict with middle-class values of the teachers (Gay, 1993). In addition, some teachers sometimes behave in ways which impact negatively on classroom interactions and practices. As Geneva Gay (1993) points out, “these conditions do not create ‘safe and supportive’ environments for learning. . . Instead, the result is classroom climates charged with adversarial opposition, distrust, hostility, and heightened levels of discomfort and tension” (p. 290). Apparently, some children fail to
learn in school because of uncomfortable classroom climates. James Banks (1986) made this point very well when he wrote:

Teachers are human beings who bring their cultural perspectives, values, hopes, and dreams to the classroom. They also bring their prejudices, stereotypes, and misconceptions. Teachers’ values and perspectives mediate and interact with what they teach, and influence the way messages are communicated and perceived by their students. (pp. 16-17)

Given the above realities, Geneva Gay (1993) advises that teacher preparation programs should be designed to teach preservice teachers how to be “cultural brokers” and how to be “competent in cultural context teaching.” A cultural broker, according to her is:

one who thoroughly understands different cultural systems, is able to interpret cultural symbols from one frame of reference to another, can mediate cultural incompatibilities, and knows how to build bridges or establish linkages across cultures that facilitate the instructional process. Cultural brokers translate expressive cultural behaviors into pedagogical implications and actions. (Gay, 1993, p. 293)

How can we help teachers become cultural brokers? Teachers can become cultural brokers by studying about different ethnic and cultural groups; by having firsthand experiences in actual classrooms and cultural communities; and by cross-cultural awareness. Cross-cultural awareness is competency in recognizing, interpreting and understanding cultural elements that contrast with one’s own behaviors, values and beliefs.

This means that teachers should be aware of the cultural contexts that shape not only their own but their students’ way of knowing as well. In this way, teachers can see in different but in more inclusive manner. Helen Harrington (1994) argues that in order to

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achieve this goal, “teachers must (study) society writ large, about the historical and cultural roots of who and what we are as a nation and a people” (p. 194). In other words, teachers should understand diversity because self-understanding emerges through engagement with others who may think and act differently from us. According to Harrington (1994), this may mean stepping outside our ways of knowing and acknowledging that others may see things in ways that are different from ours. In order to prepare teachers who are cultural brokers, that is, teachers who see the psychological world of their students; teachers who show empathic understanding for their students and are sensitive to their needs; and teachers who are able to provide students with teaching-learning environments and curricula that reflect the cultural experiences of the different ethnic, social and racial groups, some colleges have introduced the “Early Field Experience” program. This is a program where, as part of their multicultural education and social foundations of education course requirements, teacher education majors are required to do some hours of preservice observation and training. In one such program in a teacher education department in suburban Upstate New York, students are required to take a full semester of course work in multicultural education and foundations of education as well as undertake some hours of preservice observation and training in social agencies and in traditional and non-traditional school settings. They are also required to observe suburban, metropolitan and poor rural schools to acquaint themselves with social and cultural diversity and the many social problems that impinge on students’ success in school. This program consists of two components, the classroom component and the field component. The classroom component consists of lectures on such topics as poverty, stereotypes, the hidden curriculum, inclusion, cross-cultural awareness, sexism, racism, bilingual education, multicultural curriculum, multicultural learning, ethnocentrism, etc. The extent to which these topics are covered depends on the individual instructor. The field component of the course begins at the conclusion of the semester’s work. In the field, students are required to take extensive notes and to observe the extent to which the problems studied in class manifest themselves and impinge on students’ ability to learn. Students are
particularly required to observe classroom dynamics including but not limited to the following: whether teachers feel comfortable discussing racial issues and reflect racial openness; whether teachers are tolerant of inclusion; whether teachers encourage diversity of viewpoints and diversity in the curriculum; whether teachers have high expectations for all their students irrespective of race; whether teachers fully understand the effects of poverty on students’ academic achievement; and whether teachers have the training necessary to work with culturally diverse student population.

Some of the students involved in this project have shared their experiences with the instructors. A student who visited “Family Services” noted: “Going to Family Services made me realize how many underprivileged families and children there are in this area which is something we tend to forget in our everyday routine”. Concerning the schools she wrote, “area schools need to be aware of the social and economic needs of students in their communities to enable them provide services which would enhance students’ academic achievement”. The student continued by saying that in all the three social agencies she visited, she found parents with children living under poverty. According to her, these experiences had profound impact on her because for the first time she came “face to face with poverty.” Another student who visited a bilingual education class maintained: “The program I visited had students from Germany, Jordan, Vietnam, and Turkey”. He noted that all the students in the class spoke relatively good English but needed practice in writing skills. “In the class” he maintained, “students discussed how difficult learning English really was because of the different ways of spelling words that sounded alike”. Also, the bilingual students thought it was strange how Americans say “we get in a car” but “get on a bus”. Another student wrote, “I observed an elementary school. In the second grade classroom, there was a student who is handicapped and could communicate only through a computer. In this classroom I was particularly pleased to see how the teacher treated every student as equal”. A student who observed an alternative high school noted:

I was very shaken when I first entered the school. But, I

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summoned up courage to see the principal. The principal asked me what I knew about the school and students. I was very honest and told him that the school was meant for “trouble makers”. The principal was kind enough to explain to me the mission of the school...At first, I felt very intimidated by the students. But with time, I was able to talk to some teachers and students. I learned a lot about the students because many of them openly told me about things they had done in the past. They asked me about life in college and I asked them about their school. In the end, I realized that they were just teenagers.

Some of the students involved in this project have expressed how valuable the experience has been. In a written report, one of the participants stated:

At first, I thought this project was going to be a bore, but it ended up being a very interesting experience to me. In fact, I learned a lot about how little I knew about other cultures. Probably the most important thing I found out about myself is that I should take more multicultural courses. I am now thinking about taking some black history courses. Because I’ve realized the importance of being educated and aware of other ethnic backgrounds, especially to be an effective teacher.

Another student wrote: “I enjoyed participating in this project. I found the project a valuable learning experience. I would like to see more courses involving multicultural education added to the educational requirement. I feel it’s an important aspect in today’s educational experience.”

Responding to the classroom component of the course, a student participant stated:

This class was very informative to me. I worked with children last summer most of whom were minorities. I was able to relate things that I dealt with during the summer
with what I learned in this course. Multicultural education is an important course for teachers to take because diversity is a fact that teachers have to deal with in their classrooms.

Indeed, empirical studies show that preservice teachers who have been provided cross-cultural experiences feel more comfortable discussing racial issues, maintain associations reflecting racial and ethnic openness, believe that they have the necessary training to teach in culturally diverse setting, and are likely to encourage a variety of viewpoints among students than those who have no cross-cultural experience (Cooper, Beare, & Thorman, 1990). These teachers are more likely to help their students develop skills needed to survive in a dominant culture without “denying the existence of other values equally appropriate in minority children” (Cooper, Beare, & Thorman, 1990, p. 3). In another study Patricia Larke, Donna Wiseman, and Charmaine Bradley (1990) found that preservice teachers with cross-cultural experiences are more likely to believe that minority students have capabilities and strengths on which teachers could build. These types of teachers are more likely to use adjectives such as caring, responsible, polite, and creative in describing minority students than those who have no cross-cultural experience. They are also more likely to perceive minority students from positions of strength.

With respect to the curriculum, the participants observed that they found teachers who provided teaching-learning environments and curricula which reflected the cultural experiences of different ethnic, social and racial groups most effective. This is because most of the students they interviewed thought it was important to see reflections of themselves in the learning environment. This means, teachers who emphasize cultural relevance as a means of motivating students into accepting what they teach are often more successful in the classroom. A preservice teacher involved in cross-cultural experience said it best when she stated: “I believe students take more of an interest in history when their cultural background is brought in” (cited in Valli, 1995, p. 124). Apart from the curriculum, classroom

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bulletin boards should represent peoples from different cultures, geographic regions, races and gender. As Christine Sleeter and Carl Grant (1991) point out, knowledge should “include a perspective of history from the students’ point of view and be selected and constructed in relationship to the students’ desires, visions, descriptions of reality, and repertoires of action” (p. 50). Indeed, Henry Giroux (1989) affirms that empowering education must provide students with “a curriculum and an instructional agenda that enable them to draw on their own histories, voices, and cultural resources in developing new skills and knowledge” (p. 729). According to Soren Kierkegaard (1846/1944), learning would be meaningful to every student if it takes cognizance of “the concrete and the temporal, the existential process, the predicament of the existing individual arising from his (sic) being a synthesis of the temporal and the eternal situated in existence” (p. 267). This means, educators should take seriously the strengths, experiences and goals of their students because as Kierkegaard (1853/1959) once put it, “One must know oneself before knowing anything else. It is only after a man (sic) has thus understood himself (sic) inwardly, and has thus seen his way that life acquires peace and significance” (p. 46). Indeed, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi summed up this point in the early part of the 19th century in the following words: “For it is my opinion that if public education does not take into consideration the circumstances of family life, and everything else that bears on a man’s (sic) general education, it can only lead to an artificial and methodical dwarfing of humanity” (cited in Nel & Seckinger, 1993, p. 396). Pestalozzi further argued that learning should be connected with personal belief systems and prior experiences. Paulo Freire (1993) makes the interesting point that it is important that the “school system knows and values the knowledge of class, the experience-based knowledge the child brings to it” (p. 41), because if learning is not made relevant to students’ real life experiences, school becomes a place where students learn only compliance to adult authority and consequently students experience subject matter that is boring. This is why Maxine Greene (1978) argues that “the life of reason develops against a background of perceived realities...” (p. 2). Hence, concepts should be related to events that are pertinent to the lives of
students or to their cultural knowledge, for humanistic psychologists make the point that learning is likely to occur if students realize that the subject is related to the maintenance and enhancement of the self. In his book, *Experience and Education* John Dewey (1963/1938) cogently defined educative experience as one in which students and teachers find meaning in their lives. This is how he made this point: “...I have taken for granted the soundness of the principle that education in order to accomplish its ends both for the individual learner and for society must be based upon experience - which is always the actual life-experience of some individual” (p. 89).

Finally, the participants in the “Early Field Experience” were unanimous in their opinion that the best pedagogical practices they observed in the classrooms were those that emphasized reflection and inquiry because such practices provided contextual connections between skills development, understandings and application of skills. Students in such classrooms not only were able to develop skills, but were able to evaluate why, how and when to use knowledge. Teachers in these classrooms constantly challenged the way students constructed knowledge. These teachers share the common aspiration of enabling their students to make connections between what they learn and their everyday experiences.

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REFERENCES


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*Preparing Teachers for the 21st Century*
Introduction

A bricoleur, according to Lévi-Strauss (1974: 16-17) is, “someone who works with his hands and uses devious means compared to those of a craftsman” (Hatton, 1989). The word “bricoleur” is difficult to find in an English dictionary. The best approximation that we might look for would be in the term “handyman.” A handyman performs odd jobs, fixes everything within his realm of expertise, and usually moves onto another locale where he may apply such skills again. Handymen are not without their important roles in the fixing and maintenance of existing structures. The idea of a handyman can be contrasted with that of an engineer. Engineers, working from principles, design and oversee the manufacture of distinctive new products. The engineer works perhaps within a field of specialization, such as chemistry, electricity, or hydraulics, and certainly must work within the constraints of laws of nature and environmental limitations, but the work of an engineer is not bound by day to day maintenance or repair of physical objects.

According to Hatton (1989), bricoleurs have four distinctive characteristics which they employ in their attempt to fix or solve problems. First, they use the materials they have on hand. Second, their means, or tools, are limited. They attempt to fix a problem based upon what tool they have, and not upon what tool may be best. Third, the employment of materials and means is limited to past experience. Fourth, the bricoleur’s response to a task is limited to an ad hoc rearrangement of the existing environment. A new shelf or new parts may be fitted, but essentially the room remains the same size and function.
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Hatton (1989) continues by drawing parallels between teachers work and that of a bricoleur. Giving examples of conservatism, limited creativity, repertoire confinement, underdeveloped use of theory, and a reliance on ad hocism, she points out that teacher training, following as it does some 15 years of prior socialization, is essentially confirmatory in nature. Extensive use of practicums and student teaching more often force even the potentially reflective teacher to adopt strategies formed on the job. The most serious implication of viewing teaching as bricolage, is to acknowledge that many, it not most, teachers lack any skills that may be thought of as reconstructive (Dewey, 1916).

In order to discern if English teachers’ work can be described as that of a bricoleur, secondary English Teachers in New York and Puerto Rico were surveyed about their methods for teaching Limited English Proficient (LEP) students. English teachers in both states were chosen because of their professional language instruction orientation and because all students must participate and demonstrate competence in English in order to graduate, though the contexts and requirements are very different. In New York a LEP student must master the fundamentals of English in order to master course content sufficient to pass classes required for high school graduation. Mastery of English is usually necessary for success in the college environment as well. In Puerto Rico, the state requires twelve years of “English as a Second Language” and twelve years of Spanish language and culture by each student in its public schools. Private schools match this requirement and often take it a step further with many classes in the sciences being taught using English language textbooks. The documented high dropout rates in both states (NCLR, 1990) of individuals of Puerto Rican descent, a figure approximating 50%, give rise to the concern that factors of cultural discontinuity (Trueba, 1990) may be at the center of this problem. This preliminary study investigates the perspectives of the cultural brokers most directly involved, teachers. This preliminary study was designed to sample classroom teachers’ views concerning student success in school, classroom teaching methods, and opinions on the use of English in the classroom when teaching non-native English speakers.

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Background

The mere invoking in the public of the term Bilingual Education today is tantamount to declaring oneself a participant in a grand scheme to dismantle the American way of life (Secada and Lightfoot, 1993). A recent Time/CNN poll shows that in a two year span from September 1993 to September 1995 demonstrates a significant shift in public opinion towards an English only instructional mode. Whereas three years ago 40% of the general population thought that public school should teach all children in English, the percent today stands at 50%. Furthermore, the same poll shows that 65% of those surveyed think that there should be a law enacted that makes English the official language of this country (Time, 1995). The historical and constitutional precedents that would be violated by such an act (Crawford, 1989) do not seem to diminish the momentum which policy directions are moving in this regard. State and Federal budgets are being cut for both ESL and Bilingual instruction, and politicians sensing some way to champion the mood of discontent, and trim a budget, are proposing eliminating programs altogether while introducing legislation to make English the official language. It is no small coincidence that three states critical to all presidential elections, California, Florida, and Illinois, all have passed some form of English Only resolution (Casanova and Arias, 1993). One might think that such a sentiment would be more appropriate to a monolingual monocultural political entity, yet it is taking place at a time when our educational institutions are facing on a daily basis one of the largest nationwide changes in the language composition of public education students since the 1800s (Casanova and Arias, 1993)

Estimates suggest that almost 20% of the population of the United States is considered to have a language minority background. 1990 figures show that in New York State fully 23% of the population over 5 years of age is considered to have difficulty speaking English. That represents about 1,766,000 people. According to the same sources, the foreign born population in New York is approximately 2,852,000, an increase in a ten year span of over 40%
(Casanova and Arias, 1993). Within New York City, 15% of school age children have limited English proficiency, the majority of which go to public schools whose classes contain the largest ethnic minority populations. However, we need not look at a much maligned metropolis such as New York City to see such figures.

In the New York “Capital District,” an area comprising the Counties of Albany, Rensselaer, Schenectady, and Montgomery, schools are experiencing steadily increasing numbers of non-English speaking students. Data taken from the New York State 1993-1994 BEDS information show increases in LEP student numbers ranging from 40% to several hundred percent depending upon the school. The increases are not uniform, nor are the immigrants from one language group. Albany reports needing tutors for their students in Spanish, Chinese, Polish, Russian, Japanese, Korean, and Farsi. Schenectady county adds to this list the languages of Polish, Italian, Greek, and Pushtu. While there are certainly a great variety of language needs the primary second language concern is Spanish. Of the approximately 330 identified LEP students in Schenectady schools, a full 80% are Spanish speaking; the majority of whom trace their heritage to Puerto Rico. In spite of this obvious gap between services needed and trained personnel, none of the areas five major institutions of higher education offer a bilingual teacher training program. SUNY Albany does offer a TESOL program, but most graduates of that program find employment outside the immediate area, often overseas. Within this context, it interested the researcher to survey those directly involved with the activities of cultural transmission, the teachers.

Methodology

Thirteen English teachers in New York were selected from a variety of schools in the “Capital District.” English teachers were sought because of their professional training in language development. In San Juan, Puerto Rico thirteen English teachers were also surveyed, though in that context they described themselves as “ESL” instructors. A working assumption was that expertise with the lan-
guage learning process in an “immigrant providing environment” would provide an interesting contrast with those teachers in an “immigrant receiving environment.” An eleven question Likert scale survey was used for the gathering of data (appendix 1). The survey instrument was adapted from a design used by Rothenberg et al. (1993). The scale ranged from 1 to 7, with 1 indicating strong agreement, and 7 indicating strong disagreement. In addition to the Likert scale questions, five short answer questions were asked about teaching resource material. Questions 1 to 5 focus on teacher beliefs about factors relating to school success. Questions 6 to 9 focus on classroom responses to LEP students. Questions 10 and 11 ask questions about the use of using English exclusively in the classroom. Fill-in questions 12 to 16 provide for more detail regarding materials and methods used during class.

Results

The responses of the respective groups were analyzed on a question by question basis. The Likert responses were then averaged. Based on the scale of 1 to 7, the mean scores were then categorized into three basic groups: disagree, unsure, and agree. An average score range of 1 to 3.5 was considered to represent disagreement with the question. An average score of 3.5 to 4.5 was considered as unsure. Averages above 4.5 indicated agreement with the question. Table 1 provides the means data presentation.

Table 1
Questionnaire Responses as Means
N = 13 in each sample group

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<tr>
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<th>Student Outcomes</th>
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<td>Puerto</td>
<td>Q1 2.31</td>
<td>Q2 4.69</td>
<td>Q3 4.62</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rico</td>
<td>Q4 4.54</td>
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<td>Q6 5.38</td>
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<td>Q7 5.23</td>
<td>Q8 3.08</td>
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<td>Q10 4.08</td>
<td>Q11 4.54</td>
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<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Q1 3.46</td>
<td>Q2 5.85</td>
<td>Q3 4.38</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Q4 4.77</td>
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A Bricoleur’s Approach to Teaching English
Graph 1 displays the relative strength of the paired responses. Bars below the 0 line indicate strength of agreement with the questionnaire, while bars above the 0 line indicate relative disagreement with the questionnaire.

An analysis reveals many interesting facets about the responses. First there is accord between the two populations on four questions, Q1, Q2, Q4, and Q11. There is similarly strong disaccord between the two populations on Q7 and Q8. For the Puerto Rican responses one sees unsure responses to questions Q9, and Q10. The New York teachers show unsure responses to questions Q3, Q5, and Q6.

Concerning student outcomes, both groups of teachers strongly disagree that teachers should teach all their students the same way regardless of ethnic, family or language backgrounds. However, there is more uncertainty concerning what elements most impact students’ success in school. The Puerto Rican teachers indicated basic agreement to questions 2 through 5. They think that family, culture, and dialect differences do impact students’ success in school. They indicated that they believe schools do allow equal opportunity for academic success in spite of the differences noted above. New York teach-

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ers felt very strongly that students’ family backgrounds have the greatest impact on students’ success in school, but were less certain about the linguistic component of family background. They were also unsure with the questionnaire statement, Q5, that “schools allow all students equal opportunity for academic success.”

The “Methods” section of the questionnaire reveals no accord between the two teacher populations. The Puerto Rican teachers strongly support the ideas of changing reading materials and management strategies depending upon the students’ cultural backgrounds (Q6, Q7, Q8). In addition they appear to believe that academic goals (Q9) for students from minority family backgrounds should be the same for all students. New York teachers, on the other hand, generally feel that the same reading materials should be used (Q7) regardless of cultural backgrounds, and they support the idea that classroom management strategies should remain the same regardless of the students’ backgrounds. They tend to agree with the statement (Q9) that “academic goals and objectives” change when teaching students from minority family backgrounds.

Questions Q10 and Q11 focused on English use in the classroom. Puerto Rican teachers were unsure whether learning English should take precedence over subject matter. New York teachers were strongly in support of the idea that learning English should take precedence over subject matter. Question Q11, regarding using only English in the classroom shows agreement by both groups, however this was qualified in the short answer responses. The Puerto Rican teachers wanted only English in their English classroom, while most of the New York teachers viewed it strongly as a school wide statement. Could one not promote a “bilingualism only” proposal?

Written responses to questions 12, 13 and 14 are very revealing. The Puerto Rican teachers reported having available to them teaching supplies (Q12) such as “big books, videos, Sesame Street, records, movies, dictionaries, thesauruses, and books on synonyms and antonyms.” The New York teachers often indicated “none” or

* * *

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bilingual dictionaries. Similarly school resources available (Q 13), show New York teachers relying on the ESL teacher in the school or the foreign language teachers. The Puerto Rican teachers indicate the availability of computer programs, entire sections in the library, and the availability of good English teachers. Effective strategies for teaching limited English speakers (Q 14) reflects a similar split. The Puerto Rican teachers indicate the use of whole language strategies, role playing, story telling, immersion, cooperative work, guided reading, tutoring, songs, and visuals. The New York teachers indicated only “one on one” help, and small group instruction.

Discussion

The results of this preliminary study appear to show a wide difference of opinion regarding teachers’ methods for the successful teaching of LEP students in both New York and Puerto Rico. Rothenberg et al. (1993) found that student teachers were uncertain about specific methods to be used when teaching students of different language backgrounds. The current study reveals that Secondary teachers in New York hold some of the same uncertainties. While they generally agree that teachers should not teach students in the same manner, when asked about specific methods and language use there is either uncertainty or a lack of flexibility. Some school programs appear to lack even the rudiments of second language support elements. As previously noted, such support must encompass both an awareness of cultural frameworks as well as a program of transitional or bilingual language development. Lucas (1993) states that secondary students who enter U. S. schools face serious challenges in their attempt to complete their education. Language, as a cultural symbol, conveys meaning beyond mere word definition. Ogbu (1987) and Fordem and Ogbu (1986) have thoroughly discussed the phenomenon of resistance cultures and the penalty some students feel when they must “act white.” Secondary programs with even a few limited English proficient students must give some consideration to the (re)training of its “language arts” teachers.

The responses from Puerto Rico present a different picture of
language learning. There the state endorses a long period of language training, twelve years. While this does not guarantee literacy, there are many who acquire such skills. Certainly there is an economic motivation that says that dual language learning will be useful in future careers. Though the island’s educational history with the U. S. mainland has been uneven (Crawford, 1989), today a serious effort is underway to produce fluent bilinguals. Puerto Rico, a multicultural island culture, while much poorer in terms of per capita income than New York, can envision a dynamic language fluency program for its citizens.

Our present educational dilemmas are many, but a failure on the part of educational planners to provide all students with an equal opportunity to learn was, at least until very recently, considered a challenge to overcome. The New York teachers in this study seem to acknowledge that schools do not allow equal opportunity for academic success, yet current political leaders continue to treat language arts learning (domestic and foreign) in general, and teaching limited English proficient speakers in particular, as relatively unimportant, unless it is a matter of speaking an “official” English.

It would appear that politicians expect educators to comply with proposals which promote teachers’ ad hocism. English teachers, inadequately trained in second language learning, and cultured by a rigid system of conformity, are unable to respond effectively to the conflicting orders. Perhaps the most revealing evidence of the current condition is demonstrated by a written comment by one of the sampled teachers. When asked, “What seems to be the most effective strategy/technique you use to achieve your lesson goals when working with LEP students?” he replied, “That’s a new one on me.”

The link between school success, and the strength of literacy programs needs to be further investigated. Language fluency, the central element of intelligence (Vygotsky, 1978) may provide a means by which we can still create a less divisive and more democratic society (Dewey, 1916). The opening discussion on bricolage may help us view the dilemmas in which teachers are placed. Without a theo-

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retical vision of possibilities, teachers will be unable to successfully respond to the complexities of their classroom. Further, without a vision and knowledge of the means, teachers will be least able to participate in the formulating of viable new models of education. They will remain bricoleurs.

_The Sage Colleges_

**Appendix 1**

**Questionnaire**

Secondary English Teacher Questionnaire concerning Limited English Proficient Students

Please rate the following items on this questionnaire on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing strong disagreement and 7 indicating that you strongly agree. Written comments are welcomed in addition to the scale.

1 = strongly disagree  
4 = unsure  
7 = strongly agree

1. Teachers should teach their students the same way, regardless of the students’ ethnicity, family, or language backgrounds.

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. Students’ family backgrounds have the greatest impact, among all factors, in their success in school.

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. Language and dialect differences greatly impact students’ success in school.

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. Students’ cultural backgrounds greatly impact their success in school.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. Schools allow all students equal opportunity for academic success, regardless of the students’ home background, ethnicity, or language.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. I change reading materials according to students’ language and dialect backgrounds.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. I change reading materials according to students’ cultural backgrounds.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8. I use the same classroom management strategies regardless of students’ family, language, or ethnic backgrounds.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

9. I change academic goals and objectives when teaching students who come from minority family backgrounds.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10. Learning English should take precedence over learning the subject matter for students with limited proficiency in English.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

11. Students with limited proficiency in English should be encouraged to use only English when in the classroom.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

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Please briefly describe the following.

12. What teaching supplies are available to the Limited English Proficient (LEP) speaker in your classroom? (bilingual dictionary)

_________________________________________________________________

13. What school resources are available to the LEP student in your school?

_________________________________________________________________

14. What seems to be the most effective strategy/technique you use to achieve your lesson goals when working with LEP students?

_________________________________________________________________

15. In an “average” day, how many students attend your classes who are either classified LEP or are close to that classification?

_________________________________________________________________

16. Other comments or observations that you may have.

_________________________________________________________________

Thank you very much for your cooperation and ideas.

The Sage Colleges

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George Iber
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George Iber
AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH IN THE DOMINIONS: MAKING THE CASE FOR DECENTRALIZATION IN INTERWAR SOUTH AFRICA

Richard Glotzer

A surprising number of men in important positions in South Africa have either studied in America or spent a period in visiting American schools. These men have had the opportunity of reaping the harvest of American contributions to educational advancement.

Professor Paul R. Mort, Teachers College, Columbia

The 1930s witnessed the beginnings of a critical examination of centralized educational administration in the Dominions of the British Commonwealth (South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Canada). This article, an abridged version of a longer study, describes the efforts of a small network of educators, often with ties to Teachers College, Columbia, Carnegie Corporation, and the international progressive education movement, to promote a program for decentralizing the administration of education in South Africa.

As an educational issue, administrative decentralization hardly captured the public imagination. The landmark regional conferences of the London based New Education Fellowship (NEF), an organization dedicated to progressive education in Europe, and by extension, the emerging democracies of the British Commonwealth, heightened consciousness of small sections of the lay public in the Dominions, but it was teachers who understood the issues most clearly. School inspections, teacher training, appointments and promotions, setting curriculum, all controlled by centralized bureaucracies, imposed irksome controls on teachers and schools. Centralized control assured uniformed standards and access but left little room for innovation. In the 1930s, progressive educators, while still emphasizing the child
centered school with all its attendant issues, were also interested in class issues, curriculum reform, and in the United states, “social reconstruction.”

Integral to the issue of control was the relation between various levels of government and local communities in the financing of public education. Britain would have no Commonwealth institute for educational research until the 1930s. The search for new ideas often brought Commonwealth educators to North America.

In the 1920s Teachers College, Columbia University, emerged as the preeminent American institution in the field of Education. Students from South Africa were among the first to attend the College in large numbers, maintaining ties to the College through a well organized alumni group. In the late 1920s this connection was reinforced by the College’s evolving relationship with New York’s Carnegie Corporation. In 1923 Frederick Keppel, himself with long standing ties to Columbia, assumed the Presidency of Carnegie Corporation. James E. Russell, Teachers College’s distinguished Dean, joined Keppel as his Special Assistant in 1926.

Keppel sought to broaden the Corporation’s “Special Fund” work, then centered on Canadian higher education. In this Keppel was encouraged by another New York philanthropy, the Phelps Stokes Fund. Under Keppel’s friend, Anselm Phelps Stokes, the Fund had extended its interests in American Negro Education to Africa. Over time, personal friendship and shared professional interests led to informal cooperation. As Keppel wrote to Phelps-Stokes:

. . . I don’t see why you shouldn’t charge up Tanganyika and Uganda to the Carnegie account. In fact, if you have time to take a good look at the British Sudan on your way north from Uganda, I don’t see why you shouldn’t charge everything but your incidental visit to the Belgian Congo on us...As to my own wanderings, it is British Guiana and not New Guinea.

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In 1927-28 Russell visited Britain’s African and Pacific Dominions and Colonies. The following year Keppel and Corporation Secretary James Bertram retraced Russell’s extensive tour.

For Carnegie Corporation overseas development was uncharted territory. Rural infrastructure, race relations and public education in its broadest sense, were their usual concerns. Over fifty percent of Americans lived in rural areas, sometimes under conditions as rudimentary as those found on the South African Veld or Australian Outback. The ameliorative impact of the automobile, telephone and radio was relatively new, and the benefits accrued from boldly fashioned educational legislation, were incremental and uneven. One room schools existed less than an hour’s drive from New York City. It is not surprising then that when Keppel solicited project proposals in Cape Town, he was taken with an outline for a comprehensive study of South Africa’s white poor, which the Corporation subsequently funded. The outline was drawn up by E.G. Malherbe, a tenth generation Afrikaner and a Teachers College Ph.D. who had recently joined the Education Faculty of the University of Cape Town (1924).

The findings of the Poor White Commission was published in September of 1932 amidst growing economic depression. What Keppel had endorsed in 1927 as a social science inquiry, now stood as a highly charged political document, demonstrating how in this “white man’s country”, Afrikaners bore the brunt of [white] economic discrimination. With [white] unemployment edging up to 300,000, national debate on the Commission’s Report soon followed. Nineteen thirty-four saw two major “poor white” conferences. The first, a large international affair, was sponsored by the NEF. (Malhebe was a founder of the South African NEF.) Carnegie Corporation paid the travel expenses of Mabel Carney, John Dewey, and Harold Rugg, from Teachers College. All three, particularly Dewey and Rugg, had ties to the U.S. based Progressive Education Association (PEA). Held in two sites and with over 4000 delegates, the conference put South Africa on the map as a country that was serious about progressive education. In October the Poor Relief Council of the Federated Dutch
Reformed Churches, held its own Volkskongres in Kimberely. This conference, less glamorous than the NEF, was to have more serious consequences since it was recognized as an important milestone in the coalescing of Afrikaner nationalism.

Malherbe, the principal investigator [and author] of the Education volume of the Commission’s report, was awarded a Carnegie Travel Grant for 1933 to investigate issues that had arisen during his “poor white” field research.10 His grant proposal, written in August of 1932, was surprisingly informal, suggesting how his relationship with Keppel had progressed.11 At Keppel’s urging he investigated poor whites in the American South as well as school finance in the U.S.A. and Canada. Malherbe’s former Teachers College Office mate, Paul Mort, accompanied him to Canada.12

By the early 1930s Mort, like Malherbe, was developing into one of the more prominent educators of his generation. Mort had began his teaching career at 16 in a one room school in Indiana. After completing a B.A. degree at 21, he was employed as a high school principal and superintendent. Recruited by Dean Russell in 1920, Mort came to Teachers College, Columbia, completing an M.A. in 1922, and Ph.D. in 1924. After completing his dissertation, *The measurement of Educational Need: A Basis for Distribution of State Aid*, Mort was asked to join the Teachers College faculty.13

By the 1930s Paul Mort was one of the foremost American authorities on the financing of public education. He was particularly interested in the methods by which states with substantial variations in wealth and population could provide basic school programs that were of equal quality. The first decades of the century had demonstrated that simply providing funds through some centralized source did not take into account such complexities as the desire for local control of schools and the unique needs and conditions of school districts. Money by itself did not necessarily motivate districts to experiment with adjusting to new educational methods and ideas. There was no one formula for achieving what had become known as “equalization.”

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Mort’s ideas on school finance were in part based on the earlier contributions of Ellwood P. Cubberley, Robert Haig, and his graduate school advisor, George D. Strayer. Like his predecessors, Mort believed that state’s should provide educational opportunities with some minimum level of education common to all localities. State and local taxes should be used to fund such programs, with local tax rates adjusted in relation to the economic circumstances of a community. Mort was also a strong advocate of a federal role in funding public education. Just as within states there were communities with wide disparities in the ability to support education so were there poor and wealthy states. While the Strayer-Haig model of equalization, developed in the mid-1920s, stressed equalization and basic foundation programs, Mort’s advances on this model stressed local initiatives and the identification of key districts (usually wealthy ones) upon which the local contribution of other districts could be set.

Having developed a means by which an acceptable minimum school program could be measured, Mort sought to develop an objective means by which states could determine appropriate levels of funding for equalization programs. His mature ideas were set out in two important books, State Support for Public Education (1933), and Federal Support for Public Education (1936). Mort’s research had shown that sparsely populated school districts were required to operate small schools spread over wide areas. Such districts could not achieve the economies of scale provided by larger schools, and school consolidation was not always possible. (Less populated districts might actually require more teachers than more populated ones.) By developing complex sets of regression equations, Mort was able to statistically estimate teacher/pupil ratios based on school attendance and size. He developed separate equations for primary and secondary schools, and found that a district could compute the average number of teachers it would require. Thus the “weighting” of pupils in determining the number of teachers needed gradually became a basic component of determining an equalization formula.

Malherbe had long encouraged Mort to consider visiting South
Africa. Director of National Bureau of Educational and Social Research since 1929, he could offer Mort the opportunity to observe how equalization and innovation might proceed under different social and governmental conditions. In early 1935 Mort drafted a proposal for an exploratory study, matching up-to-date schools in American and South African communities. Initially rejected by Carnegie’s outside reviewer as unclear and too unwieldy, Mort was brought into the review process and his second proposal was accepted.\textsuperscript{18} Mort would compare how locally controlled and financed schools and centrally financed and controlled schools maintained minimum academic programs, and how each engaged in innovation to meet new educational needs. The central issue for Mort involved determining the effect of local social effort on schools.

Awarded a $5000 grant, Mort arrived in South Africa in March, 1936. His visits to schools in the Union’s four provinces gave him a first hand look at South African Education as well as necessary empirical foundation for theorizing. Mort visited 47 schools, recorded 110 interviews and surveyed administrative and supervisory personnel. He began a survey of educational literature and tackled the problem of constructing comparable units for measuring [white] school expenditures.\textsuperscript{19}

The findings of Mort’s work were published in book form as \textit{Adaptability of Public School Systems} (1938).\textsuperscript{20} Designed to be the prototype for a series of studies involving the Dominions, the book is awkward to follow.\textsuperscript{21} Mort would have done well to stress the tentative, experimental nature of the research. While the emphasis is on theory, comparisons are made between the U.S. states discussed (New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Delaware) and the four provinces of South Africa. Of the dominions, Mort claimed South Africa provided “...the most satisfactory conditions for the initial study.”

Like other Teachers College, Columbia, faculty who were interested in South Africa, Mort saw the country’s development as simi-
lar to the United States. It is noteworthy that in Adaptability, he omits mention of the United States’ own parallel universe of segregation - the South. (Both Delaware and North Carolina practiced formal segregation in education.) Mort no doubt foresaw the difficulties inherent in discussing the race question. One could hardly speak of adaptation or equalization in South Africa’s “native schools”. In the American South, advocates of state’s rights were hostile to advancing a federal role in equalization, fearing a closer look at the structure of southern education, particularly its racial aspect. Advocacy of a similar system for South Africa would suggest a preference for a uniform “native education” policy, itself a volatile issue. Whatever Mort’s intentions, the result was to leave the impression that the two societies were similar and were confronting similar problems.

The central question of the “Adaptability” study concerns determining the circumstances under which school systems were willing to integrate either individual adaptations, or adaptation itself, as part of their structure. In the context of the school, adaptation was meant to mean “...the sloughing off of outmoded purposes and practices by school systems and the taking on of new ones to meet new needs.” The study attempted to illustrate how variations in method of support, control and size, influenced communities or school districts to innovate over a range of issues.

Mort’s work was well received in South Africa, and some interesting findings did emerge. Mort was particularly intrigued by the apparent ability of South African schools to engage in innovation and adaptation without a strong local tax base and he wanted to examine this finding more closely. In an expanded second proposal written in 1936–37, Mort was assured of closer cooperation from the provincial education departments. The Council of Provincial Administrators recommended school inspectors be assigned to work with the investigating team. There were also assurances of logistical support. Such assurance were most useful, since the Provincial Departments, critical of Mort’s emphasis on urban schools, wanted the study to include a rural sample involving substantial traveling distances.
and greater expense.\textsuperscript{27} In the end Mort proposed comparing 40 urban communities in South Africa with 120 matched communities in the United States; There would also to be a matched sample of rural schools.\textsuperscript{28}

In this expanded study, Mort would bring three research assistants (“field workers”) to South Africa for six months, and hire an additional seven in the United states for another six months. He would also have the personal services of an additional assistant for twenty months. The provinces were each to appropriate £500 ($2500) to cover the costs of a school inspector visiting the United States for four months of field training.\textsuperscript{29} And Malherbe was to take leave from NBESR.\textsuperscript{30} It was a grand plan and expensive.

Mort’s initial budget of $75,500, with a completion date of June 1938, was too rich for Keppel’s blood.\textsuperscript{31} The Corporation’s Blue Sheet, the record of the Mort/Keppel budget interview, is cryptic; “What he has in mind..is a $75,000 job”.\textsuperscript{32} A $62,700 budget followed, with scaled back plans for six months of field work and a completion date of June, 1939.\textsuperscript{33} The financial aspect aside, Keppel worried about public opinion. Carnegie interest in African welfare and education had been viewed as foreign meddling. By the mid 1930s the Corporation was anxious about political trends in South Africa. White ethnic conflict and government intransigence on African rights, seemed to Keppel, to court disaster. Australia and New Zealand, of increasing strategic importance to Britain and the United States, were becoming more attractive for Corporation work.\textsuperscript{34} A groundwork had been laid by Russell’s 1928 visit.\textsuperscript{35}

... here is a great continent which is bound to play a great role in world affairs as affecting the Pacific. It is blood brother to us and will always be a “white man’s country”. It is trying out problems in democracy which..must inevitably be an example to us. It is an integral part of a ring around the Pacific beginning with Canada and our West Coast and running on to Hawaii, New

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Zealand, Australia and the Philippines. We can’t ignore it without lose. The time is ripe for closer contacts and the safest way is through educational agencies.36

Within Australia and New Zealand, the Corporation’s chief associates, Frank Tate and Kenneth Cunningham, functioned in much the same way as their South African counterparts. They worked through an educational body, the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), established in 1930. Like the University of London’s Institute of Education, established in 1932, and headed by Fred Clarke after 1936, ACER received Carnegie support.37

In early 1936, as Mort prepared for his research in South Africa, his colleague, Isaac Kandel, Director of Teacher’s Colleges’ International Institute, embarked for a half year study of Education in Australia and New Zealand. As Kandel went about his work, Kenneth Cunningham, a Teachers College alumnus, inspired by his experience at the South African NEF Conference, arranged to make New Zealand and then Australia, sites for regional NEF conferences in 1937. Kandel was a featured speaker at both venues, with Teachers College and the PEA also represented by Edmund deS. Brunner and Harold Rugg. At the Australian NEF Malherbe introduced his research with Mort.38 He was gauging public reaction.

In early 1938 Mort awaited word on his proposal. Encouraged by growing interest in his work, he was optimistic. Still Keppel hesitated, put off by the substantial cost and anxiety about a rapidly deteriorating world situation. In the end it was an assessment of Adaptability., prepared by a Corporation associate, and President of the PEA, William Carson Ryan, that decided the issue. The review was prepared for Trustee Walter Jessup:

You ask me about Mort and Cornell’s “Adaptability of Public Schools Systems”, which I have just read. I answer with some reluctance, because starting out with a bias in favor of both Mort and Teachers College, I am distressed with what I find. The book seems to me incredibly bad.39
A careful reading of Ryan’s review suggests that it was the review, as much as Mort’s experimental work, that missed the mark. *Adaptability*... would have been unsettling to anyone expecting conventional educational research. Mort himself, had struggled to clarify basic concepts. Although no formal letter survives in the Carnegie Archives, Mort’s proposal was apparently tabled, ending any hope of continuing the project.

If Mort’s pioneering work failed to get beyond the exploratory stage, his research and preliminary findings stimulated discussion and introduced new ideas. In time, Mort’s ideas on school finance and control would find their way into educational vocabularies in all the Dominions. Writing Malherbe on the occasion of Mort’s passing, Teachers Colleges’ William S. Vincent noted that he had “...gained the impression that one of the most important experiences he [Mort] ever had was his visit to South Africa.”

Were Carnegie sponsored efforts early signatures of American intellectual and cultural expansion? The Carnegie presence in Britain’s interwar Empire/Commonwealth defies easy characterization, especially in this short space. Anglo-American rivalries were often subtle, and mediated by such shared notions as the preeminence of [white] Anglo-Saxon Culture, and its “responsibilities” to less developed peoples. Progressive education, nested in the context of technologically advanced industrial democracies, provided another set of mediating values. By the late 1930s the Dominions of the Commonwealth were more preoccupied with the dangers of fascism and the prospect of world war than Anglo-American rivalries. The sunset of the British Empire and ascent of a Pax Americana still lay in the future.

*State University of New York, Oneonta*

**ENDNOTES**

2. Patricia A. Graham, *Progressive Education: From Arcady to Academe*,

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7. The Special Fund was renamed The Dominions and Colonies Fund in 1926 following a first grant to Kenya Colony for Native Education project.


9. Harold Rugg and W. Carson Ryan were the prime movers behind the PEA having formal (albeit weak) links with the NEF. Progressive Education..., p.98.


11. The question to be investigated; “..On what formula shall one allocate state subsidy to education so as not to penalize the poorer areas unduly, and at the same time to stimulate and encourage local initiative?” is clear enough. There is no accompanying plan or method for study. Malherbe Grant Proposal. August 28, 1932. E.G.Malherbe Correspondence, Box 209, Grant Series I, CC.


13. Personal communication, Dr. Frank Cyr, April 15, 1989, Stamford, New York.
York. Dr. Cyr (1900-1995) was a student of Mort’s and a member of the Teachers College faculty from 1934-1965. Cyr is best remembered as “the father” of the yellow school bus.


15. In the mid 1930s Mort chaired PEAs Committee on Federal Support to Education.

16. Ibid. pp.224-229. Also see Mort’s State Support for Public Schools New York, 1928.


19. Statistical analysis was Mort’s forte, and he quickly discovered that demographic factors distorted South African statistics which initially suggested that unit expenditures for education were slightly higher than in the United States. Closer examination showed that sparsity of population accounted for the differences.

20. Paul A. Mort and Frances G. Cornell, *Adaptability of Public School Systems*, (New York, 1938). Frances Cornell, Mort’s research assistant (and bridge partner) was not involved in the South African aspect of the project.


24. In 1938 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that states operating racially separate school systems were required to provide equal facilities. This requirement opened the door to possible compliance inspections. See *Gaines v Missouri*, in M.M. Chambers, *The Colleges and the Courts*, 1946-50., New York, 1952, pp.16-29.

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25. Mort and Cornell, Adaptability..., ix.
27. Ibid, p.7.
29. Ibid, p.5.
32. Keppel/Mort Blue Sheet, November 5, 1936. Mort File, CC.
33. Ibid.
34. The Corporation had just agreed to fund an extensive examination of the Pacific Dominions (primarily Australia) to be carried out by C. Hartley Grattan, a prominent writer on political and economic issues. Laurie Hergenhan, No Casual Traveler, Hartley Grattan and Australia-US Connections, Queensland, 1994.
35. Following Russell’s 1928 visit to the Pacific, Carnegie Corporation, aided by Charles Rush, TC’s Librarian, compiled an extensive list of [American] books in Education and Psychology (approx. 125), many written by Teachers College, Columbia Faculty. Collections were then offered gratis to Teacher Training Colleges, Universities and Directors of Education in Australia and New Zealand. “Australia and New Zealand 1929 Distribution of Books file”, Box 50, Grant Series One, CC.
36. Russell to Keppel. April 2, 1928. Grant Series One, Box 316.
37. The lack of a Council or Bureau had been one of Fred Clarke’s chief criticisms of Canadian Education.
38. Kandel was tactful in his published [public] observations on Education. His private report to Keppel was far more severe. Cf. I.L. Kandel; Impressions of Education in New Zealand and Inverted Snobbery and the Problem of Secondary Education, Studies in Education No.2., N.Z. Council For Ed. Research, 1937, also Types of Administration (with particular reference to the educational systems of New Zealand and Australia), Melbourne, 1938, and “Report on New Zealand and Australia”, Typescript, 1938, CC. For Malherbe’s Comments see K.S. Cunningham (Ed), Education for Complete Living, Melbourne, 1938, also Leicester Webb, The Control of Education in New Zealand, New Zealand Council for Education, Whitcomb and Tomb Ltd., Auckland 1937. (I am indebted to Professor White for sharing Kandel’s private
39. William Carson Ryan was with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1936-40), he had previously been with the Rockefeller Commonwealth Fund. A member of the NEF, Ryan was President of the Progressive Education Association from 1937-39. Ryan to W. Jessup, May 27, 1938. Mort File, Box 229, GS1, CC.

LIKELY IMPLICATIONS OF THE THOUGHT OF DEWEY AND JAMES REGARDING A SCHOOL PRAYER AMENDMENT

Norman J. Bauer

“. . . the future of the religious function seems preeminently bound up with its emancipation from religions and a particular religion.”

John Dewey (1934 a)

“. . . the religious function in experience can be emancipated only through surrender of the whole notion of special truths that are religious by their own nature, together with the idea of peculiar avenues of access to such truths.”

John Dewey (1934 b)

“‘The religion of humanity’ affords a basis for ethics as well as theism does.”

William James (a)

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; . . . .”

First Amendment

“Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee, and we beg Thy blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers, and our country.”

New York State Board of Regents

“The place of religion in our society is an exalted one, achieved through a long tradition of reliance on the home, the church and the inviolable citadel of the individual heart and mind. We have come to recognize through bitter experience that it is not within the power of government to invade that citadel, whether its purpose or effect be to aid or oppose, to advance or retard, the rela-
tionship between man and religion, the state is firmly committed to a position of neutrality.”

Tom Clark, Justice
U. S. Supreme Court

“Protecting religious freedoms may be more important in the late 20th century than it was when the Bill of Rights was ratified.”

Sandra Day O’Connor, Justice
U. S. Supreme Court

The appropriate place of religion in America’s public schools has long been a difficult issue. With the emergence of our system of public schooling in the 19th century, questions arose about the place of religious values and convictions in the common schools that were organized to welcome children of all faiths. These questions led to severe conflicts in many communities. For instance, in Philadelphia full-scale riots and bloodshed erupted in the 1840s over which version of the bible should be used in classroom devotions. Cincinnati was sharply divided by the “Bible War” in the 1870s. Many Americans gradually came to realize that interfaith harmony and community goodwill could best be realized by keeping public schools neutral on religious questions.

The U.S. Supreme Court affirmed the wisdom of this realization in 1962 when it ruled that government-mandated prayer, Bible-reading and other religious exercises are inappropriate in our public schools. The justices claimed that the church-state separation implications of the ‘establishment’ and ‘free exercise’ clauses of the first amendment forbade such government meddling in the realm of religious worship. Despite this decision, however, many people in our country, including powerful political leaders, either misunderstood or, worse, deliberately distorted the scope, meaning and intentions of this decision.

This became abundantly clear during the weeks immediately following the sweeping Republican victory on November 8, 1994,

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when one of the most prominent topics of discussion among the Republican leadership was the need to construct and adopt an amendment to the U.S. Constitution which would strongly encourage, if not compel, students in our nation’s public elementary and secondary schools daily to recite an oral prayer.

Two enduringly prominent American philosophers, John Dewey and William James, had much to say about the notion of religion and prayer. The purposes of this paper are (a) to become aware of the religious perspectives which emerge from selected ideas derived from the thought of each of these thinkers, and (b) to use these perspectives as the basis for responding to five questions which reveal the likely consequences for our American culture if a school prayer amendment were proposed by our Congress and approved by thirty-eight or more states.

I shall pursue purpose ‘a’ by employing a number of categories which have a bearing on the perspectives of Dewey and James about religion. Within each category will be found one or several passages from their publications.

Two matters need to be clear at the outset. One, the writer has a deep commitment to the belief that the principle of church-state separation which has been a powerful barrier to those who would impose their theological dogmas on others must be, as much as possible, sustained in our country. Second, it should be clear at the outset that in a paper of this length it is possible to use only a few of the significant ideas which were expressed by Dewey and James which have ramifications for religion and for a prayer amendment.

JOHN DEWEY

**Pragmatism**

“Pragmatism,” as Dewey perceived the meaning which Mr. James gave it “is a temper of mind, an attitude; it is also”, in Dewey’s eyes “a theory of the nature of ideas and truth and finally, it is a
theory about reality.” (Dewey, N.C., 303).

As he understood it, Dewey proclaimed that “Pragmatism thus has a metaphysical implication. The doctrine of the value of consequences,” he claimed, “leads us to take the future into consideration. And this taking into consideration of the future takes us to the conception of a universe whose evolution is not finished, of a universe which is still, in James’ term, ‘in the making,’ ‘in the process of becoming,’ of a universe up to a certain point still plastic.” (Dewey, 1931, 25).

**RELIGION VERSUS RELIGIOUS**

Dewey consistently differentiated between the noun ‘religion’ and the adjective ‘religious’. Religion, he claimed, “... always signifies a special body of beliefs and practices having some kind of institutional organization, loose or tight.” (Dewey, 1934a, 9-10).

Religious, on the other hand, “... denotes nothing in the way of a specifiable entity, either institutional or as a system of beliefs. It does not denote anything to which one can specifically point as one can point to this and that historic religion or existing church.” (Dewey, 1934a, 9-10).

Consistently arguing that institutionalized religion was something more than a personal emotion, he claimed that “to say it [religion] is institutionalized is to say that it involves a tough body of customs, ingrained habits of action, organized and authorized standards and methods of procedure.” (Dewey, 1929, 799).

Dewey also claimed that “never before in history has mankind been so much of two minds, so divided into two camps, as it is today. Religions have traditionally,” he argued, “been allied with ideas of the supernatural, and have often been based upon explicit beliefs about it.” Continuing, he claimed that “today there are many who hold that nothing worthy of being called religious is possible apart from the supernatural . . . . “ “The opposed group,” he pointed out, “consists

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of those who think the advance of culture and science has completely discredited the supernatural and with it all religions that were allied with belief in it.” (Dewey, 1934a, 1).

“...religious qualities and values if they are real at all,” Dewey went on, are not bound up with any single item of intellectual assent, not even that of the existence of the God of theism; ... “Indeed,” he went on, “under existing conditions, the religious function in experience can be emancipated only through surrender of the whole notion of special truths that are religious by their own nature, together with the idea of peculiar avenues of access to such truths.” (Dewey, 1934a, 32-33).

Science

Dewey possessed a passionate belief in reflective thought, his conception of the method of science, and he perceived the profound impact that this method was having on our lives. He also recognized that “the fundamentalist in religion [was] one whose beliefs in intellectual content have hardly been touched by scientific developments. His notions about heaven and earth and man, as far as their bearing on religion is concerned,” he vigorously argued, “are hardly more affected by the work of Copernicus, Newton, and Darwin than they are by that of Einstein. However, he consistently pointed out, “the context of his actual life, in what he does day by day, and in the contacts that are set up, has been radically changed by political and economic changes that have followed from the applications of science.” (Dewey, 1934a, 63).

Natural Religion

Dewey was further convinced that if “the naturalistic foundations and bearings of religions [were] grasped, the religious element in life would emerge from the throes of the crisis in religion.” Moreover, “religion would then be found to have its natural place in every aspect of human experience that is concerned with estimate of possibilities, with emotional stir by possibilities as yet unrealized, and

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with all action in behalf of their realization. All that is significant in human experience,” he consistently claimed, “falls within this frame.” (Dewey, 1934a, 57).

Indeed, “. . . natural religion,” he asserted, “no more” denied the intellectual validity of supernatural ideas than did the growth of independent congregations. It attempted rather to justify theism and immortality on the basis of the natural reason of the individual.” (Dewey, 1934a, 64).

Epistemology

Dewey claimed that “. . . the characteristic of religion,” from the point of view of dogmatic, institutionalized religion, “is that it is - intellectually - a secret, not public; peculiarly revealed, not generally known; authoritatively declared, not communicated and tested in ordinary ways.” Deeply concerned about the contradictions in learning which this characteristic of religion possessed, he consistently asked, “What is to be done about this increasing antinomy between the standard for coming to know in other subjects of the school, and coming to know in religious matters?” For “. . . as long as religion is conceived as it now is conceived by the great majority of professed religionists, there is something self-contradictory in speaking of education in religion in the same sense in which we speak of education in topics where the method of free inquiry has made its way.” (Dewey, 1940, 82).

WILLIAM JAMES

Pragmatism

Pragmatism, James used to argue, is a new way to handle old ways of thought. Pragmatism is what James would call a mediator, a reconciler, a method of thinking which ‘unstiffens’ our theories. “In other words, there can be no final truth in ethics,” according to James, “any more than in physics, until the last man has had his experience and said his say.” Indeed, he went on,” . . . in the religious field she [pragmatism] is at a great advantage both over positivistic empiri-
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Pragmatism and God

Pragmatism also, in James’ perspective, “widens the field of search for God. Rationalism sticks to logic and the empyrean. Empiricism sticks to the external senses. Pragmatism is willing to take anything, to follow either logic or the senses, and to count,” in his view, “the humblest and most personal experiences.” Pragmatism, James claims, “... will take a God who lives in the very dirt of private fact - if that should seem a likely place to find him.” (James, in Stuhr, 143).

Epistemology of Pragmatism

Pragmatism’s “only test of probable truth,” asserts James, “is what works best in the way of leading us, what fits every part of the life best and combines with the collectivity of experience’s demands. . . . If theological ideas should do this, if the notion of God, . . . should prove to do it, how could pragmatism possibly deny God’s existence? She could see no meaning in treating as ‘not true’ a notion that was pragmatically so successful. What other kind of truth,” James proclaims, “could there be for her [pragmatism] than all this agreement with concrete reality?” (James, in Stuhr, 143).

Ethics and Truth

James claimed that “... there is no such thing possible as an ethical philosophy dogmatically made up in advance. We all help,” he asserted, “to determine the content of ethical philosophy so far as we contributed to the race’s moral life.” (James, in Stuhr, 143).

Belief

James was particularly adept at constructing stories to make a point. In one case he explains the notion of ‘belief’ by asking us to
“let us give the name of ‘hypothesis’ to anything that may be proposed to our belief; and just as electricians speak of live and dead wires, let us speak of any hypothesis as either ‘live or dead.’ A live hypothesis is one which appeals as a real possibility to him whom it is proposed . . . deadness and liveness in an hypothesis are not intrinsic properties, but relations to the individual thinker. They are measured,” according to James, “by his willingness to act. The maximum of liveness in an hypothesis means willingness to act irrevocably. Practically,” he argues, “that means belief; . . . .” (James, in Stuhr, 166-167).

Respect for many creeds

Perry points out that “it is difficult to distinguish between James’s own personal faith and those faiths of others which he not only tolerated and respected, but understood with so much sympathy that he felt their echo in his own breast. Furthermore, Perry observes, “it was a part of his creed that there should be many gospels, and it is not easy to tell when he was illustrating this general principle and when he was expounding that particular gospel by which he was saved. In a sense his whole genius,” Perry goes on, ‘lay in multiplying differences and alternatives, and in justifying each idiosyncrasy in its own terms.” (Perry, 264).

The bible

Asked whether the bible was authoritative, James replied “No, no, no. It is so human a book that I don’t see how belief in its divine authorship can survive the reading of it.” (Perry, 269-270).

Church vs. nature

“The spirit of the two systems [nature and church], James argued, “is so utterly diverse that to an imagination nurtured on the one it is hardly conceivable that the other should yield sustenance . . . .” Continuing in the same vein he confessed to his own inner dispositions with the assertion that “I must personally confess that my own
training in natural sciences has completely disqualified me for sympathetic treatment of the ecclesiastic universe. . . . It is,” he admitted, “impossible to believe that the same God who established nature should also feel a special pride at being more immediately represented by clergymen than by laymen, or find a sweet sound in church-phraseology and intonation, or a sweet savor in the distinction between deacons, archdeacons and bishops. He is not,” James opined, “of that Ä prim temper.” (James, 1902, 1906, 214).

**James’s religion**

James’s religion, according to Perry, “took the form neither of dogma nor of institutional allegiance. He was essentially a man of faith, though not a man for any one church or creed against the rest. Unlike his father, he was not interested in elaboration and specific formulation even of his own personal beliefs. He confined himself to the intellectual acceptance of what he regards as the substance of all religions. He insisted,” Perry claims, “upon retaining not only the ideality but also the actuality of God - as a conscious power beyond, with which one may come into beneficient contact; he believed in the triumph, through this same power, of the cause of righteousness to which his moral will was pledged; and he entertained a hopeful half-belief in personal immortality. These specific doctrinal affirmations, together with his belief in believing, his sympathy with every personal belief which brought to an individual the consolation or the incentive that he needed, and the quality of tenderness and general good will which pervade all of his relations with his fellow men, make up the substance,” believes Perry, “of his personal religion.” (Perry, 270).

**Two forms of faith**

“. . . the ideas which are developed in the Varieties represent one of two threads which can be traced back continuously to his youth. There were always two kinds of faith, the fighting faith and the comforting faith; or, as they might be called the faith upstream and the faith downstream. The former is the faith,” James believed, “that
springs from strength. Preferring the good to the evil, the moral person fights for it with the sort of confidence that the brave man feels in himself and his allies, exulting in the danger and in the uncertainty of the issue. This is the faith of James’s growth-mindedness, . . . . The second is the faith that springs from human weakness, and asks for refuge and security. In the fighting faith religion is a stimulant to the will; the comforting faith, on the other hand, is at the bottom of one’s heart, relaxing. Though one may grow with great earnestness, one is aware [in this comforting faith of being carried to port - safely, inexorably - by the very current in which one floats.” (Perry, 253-254).

James’s meaning of religion

Perry points out that “while James identified religion with certain specific experiences, and with specific facts, events, forces, and entities which these experiences revealed, he did not identify religion with any particular creed. By religion he means historic religions, but in respect of their common content and not their particular dogmas.” (Perry, 257).

LIKELY IMPLICATIONS

I shall pursue purpose ‘b’ by using the ideas in these categories to suggest the likely implications, the likely consequences, for our culture, which the adoption of a school prayer amendment portend. To begin with, when the Republican leadership announced following the November, 1994, elections that they would commit themselves to the development and passage of a constitutional amendment “to restore the right to pray” in our public schools, they returned to a commitment that President Ronald Reagan announced on May 6, 1982, thereby reopening a thirty-four-year old controversy.

The likely implications of a school prayer amendment for religious liberty, interfaith harmony and the integrity of public schools, as we will see, which emerge from the categories of thought which we have constructed are many and varied. Let us approach these im-

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plications by constructing responses to five significant questions.

1. *Could we not experiment with different kinds of prayers, or, perhaps, alternate the prayers of one group with another?*

Clearly both the views of James and Dewey regarding pragmatism suggest that a positive response to this question would lead to serious consequences. *The Encyclopedia of American Religion,* for instance, tells us that there are about 2,000 different religious groups in the United States. How could we possibly find time to accommodate them all? While the thought of attempting to do this would certainly reveal an ‘unstiffening’ of our nation’s principle of separation of church and state, it would lead to unconscionable, administratively unworkable, absurd administrative dilemmas. Further, it would mix institutionalized religion, as Dewey points out, with personal views, something which would further exacerbate the division of our citizens into what James would argue are two competing systems, two competing camps. Surely many people do not want their children to recite the prayers of religions with which they do not subscribe.

2. *Couldn’t a teacher who wishes to model good behavior before his or her students demonstrate this by leading a class in prayer?*

Here, again, we see the impact of the lack of understanding and appreciation of both Dewey’s notions of ‘religion’ and ‘religious’, and James’s notions relative to the institutionalized church and nature. Both thinkers perceive the values to be derived from recognizing the natural content of the religious elements in human living and the need for those engaged in public school teaching to exemplify such powerful spiritual values as brotherhood and sisterhood, integrity, love, truth, honesty, friendship, respect, responsibility, along with a passionate commitment to academic and moral excellence.
as being \textit{naturally} ‘religious’ rather than thinking of them as being derived only from orally reciting a prayer about a connection with some transcendental deity. It would surely be wrong, if James is at all correct, to imply, as such a prayer would certainly do, that there is but one gospel, but one way to achieve salvation.

Further, it would be simply unfair to expect a teacher to lead a religious exercise or devotion which is, as James would say, a ‘dead hypothesis’, one which the teacher may not accept at all. Even if the teacher were to be excused because of the lack of liveness of the hypothesis, even if a student were, for instance, to be asked to lead a prayer, there is the large likelihood that divisiveness would emerge among the students, to say nothing of their parents. Again, as James points out, we need to respect many gospels, particularly in the diverse society which constitutes the United States. Public school classrooms, to consider the the pragmatic view of Dewey, could easily turn into battlegrounds as religious groups would vie for control.

The best way for a teacher to model excellent behavior would be by treating all religious beliefs with fairness, by avoiding the acceptance of either a ‘dead’ or a ‘live’ hypothesis, again to use the words of James.

3. \textit{Isn’t there a prayer that would please most people, like the Lord’s Prayer?}

James speaks to this matter forcefully with his view of the Bible. Clearly the bible is not authoritative in the absolute sense, any more than a particular prayer, be it the Lord’s Prayer, or any of a number of alternative prayers, would be. Choosing to recite this prayer or any other prayer would constitute tyranny of conscience for many individuals. Indeed, Dewey would point out that the probability would be that the only kind of prayer that might please all of our religious tra-

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ditions would be likely to be so watered down and vague that it would be insulting to most sincere members of any religion. Far better, he would argue, that we point out the generic existence of natural religious values in every aspect of human experience, particularly such liberating habits of mind that compel us to search for possibilities, both in terms of ends-in-view and in terms of means, a habit of mind which can only enlarge our range of thinking about how to shape the future in increasingly rich and humanly desireable ways. James would concur with his stress on the need to multiply our differences, on the need to acquire a sympathy in our breast for all ways of perceiving religious values.

Further, we should stress the fact that a prayer such as the Lord’s Prayer is a prayer from the Christian tradition. It would surely not be acceptable to Jews, Moslems, Hindus, atheists, and other non-Christian faiths. In addition, there are Protestant and Catholic versions of the Lord’s Prayer. While this might be appealing to some, to many others such an ‘unstiffening’, to employ James’ idea, of our traditional desire to remain neutral relative to religious values, to sustain the wall of separation between the church and the state which has served our country so well, would surely lead to the vexatious problem of deciding which version to handle; and who would make this decision? From the view of science and its reflective component, as Dewey employs it, what type of ‘not yet’, of end-in-view, of future, do we wish to construct for our nation? Clearly the likely consequences of an arbitrary choice of a prayer to be said orally would lead to sharp conflicts among students and their parents. It would be best to recognize, as James so presciently points out, the need to respect the individuality of students, teachers, and parents, to recognize that the religion one accepts needs to be one that each person finds best for that person; clearly the imposition of single prayers on all people in our schools would demolish this personal right and be an egregious mistake.

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4. What is wrong with letting local and state authorities make the decision about how to handle the school prayer question?

We should never lose sight of the fact that the the Bill of Rights applies to all states, to all people in our country. Basic civil liberties, including religion, including the right to believe and practice one’s beliefs in terms of one’s own personal conscience, are not subject to the limitations of our state borders. To suggest this is to misunderstand the nature of our federal political system. Diversity of religious belief, respect for creeds, is not limited to particular geographic locations. Indeed, this may be one of the most disturbing aspects of the proposed amendment which has emanated since the fall, 1994, elections.

Consider the possibility that such an amendment, if adopted, would include language which would make it possible for states and localities to develop their own voluntary prayer, to be free to choose their own ways of worshipping a deity. Clearly someone, some group, would have to have the power to determine the content of such prayers. Just as certainly, such prayers would not constitute ‘live’ hypotheses for many in the state or particular locality. How oppressive such prayers would be for those attending or working in our public schools!

5. Isn’t the religious liberty of those who want to pray in our public schools being violated today?

Absolutely not! Indeed, just the contrary is the case. Students, teachers, others in the public school, can reflect on a deity if they so choose at any time during the school day. It is not hyperbole to make the claim that many students and teachers in our public schools not infrequently engage in such practices during every school day. But they do it privately, silently, in their own way, within their own private consciousnesses. This is the way it ought to be. We ought not

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try, as James points out, to identify religion with any particular persuasion, we ought not try to inculcate any particular dogmas in our public schools. Rather we need to sustain that form of what James calls a ‘fighting faith’ a faith which enables us to fight against those who would tear down the wall of separation between church and state which has been, arguably, the most significant contribution that our country has made to the political and social evolution of humankind.

SUMMARY

In this exploratory paper I have made an effort to identify a number of the ideas generated by William James and John Dewey which have implications for our society in terms of any effort which may be made by the leaders of our nation to adopt a school prayer amendment which would affect our public schools. It should be kept in mind that these ideas represent only a sampling of the perspectives which these philosophers developed relative to this matter. These perspectives were then drawn upon to develop responses to five significant questions which were designed to reveal the likely implications of the thinking of these two philosophers relative to the problematic with which this paper is concerned.

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First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The first sixteen words.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

Editor’s Note: It is with a certain reserve that Educational Change initiates a new and, hopefully, permanent feature of the journal. Unfortunately, as with all beginnings, they are far more difficult and problematic than is often anticipated.

Through no fault of their own, timely constraints made it impossible for the authors of the articles criticized in this section to provide a response which could have been included in the present issue; and, for this the editor apologizes.

In view of this unfortunate state of affairs an adequate opportunity will be provided for all authors to respond in the forthcoming issue; and further, readers are encouraged to contribute letters, notes and comments on any and all articles and criticisms as well as any and all aspects of this publication.

The Editor

REPLY TO RODA’S COMMENTS ON “THE ENDS OF EDUCATION”

Jane Fowler Morse

Professor Roda of SUNY Oneonta raises several important issues in his response to my article, “The Ends of Education,” which I would like to address. The first problem is how to apply a transcendental ideal to specific cases. Such ideals often seem vague, as does mine: “Education should actualize the potential of all people in the practical, theoretical, and technological spheres, including recognition of the autonomy of citizens in a global society.” The “lingering question” which Roda rightly asks is, “How does the transcendental ideal function in education?”
Autonomy is the second issue Professor Roda raises. How can Kant accord autonomy to all rational beings while insisting that they obey the categorical imperative, which compels them to assent? In connection with autonomy, Professor Roda raises the problem of evil. If we allow autonomy to be the end of education, how can we discipline students whose behavior is unacceptable? Doesn’t autonomy allow human beings to pursue their own intentions, even if these are, as Professor Roda says they may be, “evil”? Roda suggests that Kant must either, like Leibnitz, assume a preestablished harmony; or, like Aristotle, discipline children by habituation first; or, impose a post-established harmony (as teachers who discipline by punishment do). If I am right, in Roda’s view, preestablished harmony doesn’t exist, post-established harmony is undesirable, and the Kantian categorical imperative is contradictory.

Roda also formulates the problem as tension between individual rights and human rights, which he doesn’t think Kant resolves. He finds a solution in Dewey’s explanation of human nature as a combination of “habits, impulses, and intelligence,” which leaves it “open-ended” whether intelligence (Kant’s rationality) will lead people to act constructively. I hope I can address these important issues in such a way as to foster continued conversation on the final cause of education.

First: how does a transcendental ideal apply to cases? Like the categorical imperative itself, it functions as a rule to guide action, rather than prescribing particular responses. Action may well differ in specific instances due to a variety of causes. Hence, a transcendental ideal gives us a rule to check proposed or actual educational practice. Does it foster autonomy? Does it help children to reach their potential? Does it recognize a world community of all rational beings? The answers to these questions are not necessarily easy or obvious, but they are what we should think about as reflective educators.

Let me illustrate how to apply the transcendental ideal to practice with a lesson I observed recently. A group of eleventh grade stu-
dents were preparing for the Regents Competency Test. They were presented with a series of notes on the fascinating topic of foot ailments – corns, calluses, and arthritis. They were supposed to practice organizing the notes and writing a report for the test. Unfortunately, it was hard for them to work up any enthusiasm for this task, given the nature of the material. They squirmed, complained, and delayed starting, rather than working on improving their writing skills, which was the goal of the activity. Furthermore, the lack of autonomy offended them. Why could they not write on a topic of their choosing? Or at least one that might interest them? Why foot ailments? Finally, they were required to work on this task alone, since they would be tested alone. This effectively removed the last thing that might have motivated them – the social experience of working with each other. A teacher reflecting on the transcendental ideal of education might change this lesson. But the ideal does not specify any particular change among many possibilities. That is for the teacher to decide.

Professor Roda’s next question concerns autonomy. How can we be compelled to assent to a principle that commands us to be autonomous? Is this contradictory? This is harder, because the answer requires tracing out the argument of Kant’s *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*[^4]. In brief, Kant distinguishes between empirical freedom and the freedom that the categorical imperative requires we infer that we have: free will. People are, after all, objects in nature, and as such are subject to the laws of nature. Hence they have no empirical freedom. It is only as rational beings that humans can assert they have free will. As Kant says, “freedom ascribed to the will seems to stand in contradiction to natural necessity.” His resolution: this is true of nature, but not conduct. “…in its practical purpose [that is, in the arena of conduct] the footpath of freedom is the only one on which it is possible to make use of reason in our conduct.” So Kant concludes that “philosophy must therefore assume that no true contradiction will be found between freedom and natural necessity in human actions, for it cannot give up the concept of nature any more than that of freedom.”[^5] For Kant we can infer the existence of non-empirical freedom because it makes ethical conduct possible.

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This does not conflict with empirical determinism, in Kant’s view.

Next Dr. Roda raises the question of evil purposes. Would including autonomy in the transcendental ideal, allow students to pursue evil purposes as well as good? Kant thinks that people can either act according to their inclinations or as people who possess free will. The former are objects in nature; the latter act according to reason. Only rational action can be moral, according to Kant. Furthermore, if people are acting from desires, they may act well, or badly, but they will do so only accidentally, or amorally. How do we judge their action? Says Kant, by the categorical imperative. Does their action treat other people as ends in themselves and not merely as a means to their end? If so, the action is not evil (even if it turns out badly, according to Kant.) In other words, the categorical imperative itself gives us a means to distinguish evil actions from moral actions. Nature is “red in tooth and claw” because natural creatures don’t act morally. They are amoral. Rational creatures can act morally or immorally precisely because they understand the categorical imperative. Being moral entails acting intentionally, according to Kant. It seems to me that Kant’s view of morality as rational lies at the root of objections to a conception of education as mere training, as well as other common sense ideas.

Finally, how does Kant resolve the tension between individual rights and social responsibility? The third formulation of the categorical imperative addresses this issue. If we recognize the value of autonomy for ourselves we will recognize it for others. The third formulation commands, “Every rational being must act as if he [sic], by his maxims, were at all times a legislative member in the universal realm of ends.” This results from a recognition that every rational being who regards him or herself as an end in him or herself, must also regard all other rational beings as ends in themselves. This is the whole point of the categorical imperative. Kant was a staunch advocate of republicanism despite the collapse of the French Revolution because republicanism, rightly enacted, recognizes individual autonomy within the context of a state. The categorical imperative does

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not guarantee that everyone will always act according to it, but Kant thinks they could, at least some of the time. When people fail to act according to the categorical imperative, they are acting as natural creatures subject to inclinations (desires). But they can act according to the categorical imperative. Education should promote that potential.

I hope I have sufficiently addressed the notion that Kant’s categorical imperative is contradictory. It seems to me that Kant resolves the tension between individual rights and state control. In a republic we obey the rules because we make them up. We recognize that they are necessary. That is the upshot of autonomy, which, after all, means “giving the law to oneself.” Kant’s idea of autonomy grants freedom, not license. I also hope the sense in which his categorical imperative is open-ended is clear from my example of how we use a principle to judge actions. The difference between Dewey and Kant is that Dewey is a naturalist and Kant is a deontologist, in respect to ethics. Dewey’s open-endedness comes from his naturalist’s perception of the world as infinitely various. In Kant’s deontological view the variety of the world makes sense when it is ordered by principles that humans formulate. This goes for ethics as well as science. The particular actions that people take vary according to the circumstances in which humans find themselves, but the principle remains the same. My hope is that a transcendental ideal for education will provide a similar principle by which to judge educational practice.

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ENDNOTES

3. I think Kant uses the term “rational beings” to broaden, rather than to
restrict, the class of beings who would recognize the categorical imperative. For Kant, as for Aristotle, human beings are primarily rational, but Kant specifically includes other beings who are also rational. If there are any, they will also understand the categorical imperative.

4. For a fuller treatment I refer the reader to my article “Fostering Autonomy,” forthcoming in Educational Theory.


7. Kant, op. cit., p. 56.

8. Unless, of course, the action does not concern morality; in that case they may be acting according to hypothetical imperatives. See Kant, op. cit., pp. 31ff.

9. Kant hesitated to use the word “democracy”, perhaps because it had the connotation of mob rule, the meaning assigned to it by Aristotle in the *Politics*.

*Jane Fowler Morse*
C. WRIGHT MILLS, MEDIA, AND MASS: ONLY MORE SO

Anthony M. Cinquemani

Timothy Glander’s account “C. Wright Mills and the Rise of Psychological Illiteracy”1 of Mills’s Power Elite as having a subtext in Lazarsfeld and context in Columbia University is interesting in a particular way, though one imagines that observation, in the Columbia of the Fifties, of the nearly Trappist isolation of department from department, and colleague from colleague would have led Mills to some sort of monastic model. A rereading of The Power Elite2 suggests less the need to know its occasion or provenance (reductive concerns) but rather to recognize its larger significance, especially Mills’s prescience and the astuteness of his formulations (and maybe the need for certain refinements of his ideas and terminology, not least the need to replace the rather silly term psychological illiteracy with something in plain, though necessarily abstract, English: incapacity for critical judgment, perhaps. Certainly not inopia, the inexpressibility of a thought, for thought is not evident in the mass. Used in the non-judgmental sense, stupidity might do, as the condition of being in a stupor.)

I would zero in on some of the same passages that interest Professor Glander, especially those concerning the media. Mills’s observation, as early as 1953, that “In a mass society, the dominant type of communication is the formal media, and the publics become mere media markets” is strikingly accurate and wanting only in consciousness of the degree to which the media would become pervasive, no: intrusive, no rather: constitutive.

I remember being impressed, reading Freshman English exit examinations in the early Seventies, with the definition of freedom proffered by one student—”Freedom’s just another word for nothing left to lose”—until this definition reappeared in a dozens of other
papers I read later in the day. “The intrusive power of the media,” I thought (once I learned it was a Janice Joplin lyric). Then it occurred to me that most of the student writers were incapable of stipulating a definition of freedom, in part out the long lying-fallow of their brains, in significant part because the media had preempted thought. Further, they probably had little understanding of the lyric’s meaning. They were merely reporting a mediated slogan, an expression of the Zeitgeist, like that modern apothegm, “Shit happens.” To recover Mills’s “public” man, capable of formulating opinions, we would have to salvage whatever is left of him after he is stripped of MTV, CNN, and http://www., whose Italian translation, ragnatela mondiale, is useful in conveying the sense “spider-web” and therefore the suspicion that we may be flies.

This is where refinement of Mills is necessary. In Mills’s much-to-be-desired public,

(1) virtually as many people express opinions as receive them. (2) Public communications are so organized that there is a chance immediately and effectively to answer back any opinion expressed in public. Opinion formed by such discussion (3) readily finds an outlet in effective action, even against—if necessary—the prevailing system of authority. And (4) authoritative institutions do not penetrate the public, which is thus more or less autonomous in its operations.3

The fact of the present, setting aside the question of numbers, is that not only do people not express opinions: the thought upon which opinion must be based is preempted by a sort of media-determined taxonomy. Items (2) and (3) above might be thought to be served by media “interactivity” (phone-in polls, e-mail responses, faxes to CSpan); however, anyone attentive to such responses recognizes them as derivative from media discourse and confirming media formulae.

Most seriously, training in thought, especially in the liberal arts where post-modernism reigns, is now a matter of the clever for-
mulation (that is, the relentless mediation) of texts whose autonomy is denied. The irony here is that (4 above) critics posing as exponents of an autonomous public, and dismantling the constructions of evidently authoritative institutions (by, let us say, decentering the subject, or denying the autonomy of the text), offer themselves, a sort of zero-sum readers, as necessary mediators in the experience of reading. The direct experience of people, phenomena, and books gives way to “virtual reality” and other forms of mediated experience: Larry King, Ricki Lake, and Stanley Fish.

When Mills’s public is turned into a mass more gelatinous than he imagined, “knowledge does not. . .have democratic relevance in America” (353). The mass thickens.

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ENDNOTES


C. Wright Mills, Media, and Mass
The issue of academic achievement among minority students has a significance beyond the concerns of contemporary educators. In this century, generations have been raised to believe the United States a “melting pot”, subjecting new comers to a rough welcome lasting a generation but leaving subsequent generations “socialized and assimilated”, poised to pursue their own idea of “The American Dream”. There is, however, ample evidence suggesting that as we glory in the success of some groups, others with long histories in this society, experience little mobility.

Public debate about the Melting Pot is often emotionally laden, and to many strikes directly at the American creed. Like the Culture of Poverty Theory, emotionally satisfying because of the correspondence between “observed” behavior and supposedly generalizable “fact”, the Melting Pot Theory predicts mobility for contemporary immigrants drawn from experiences of immigrants in earlier periods. The ideological vision remains one set in the late 19th century for an expanding, industrializing society. At a time when basic educational skills and advanced training are increasingly important for the workforce, large numbers of minority students are leaving school, with calamitous results for themselves and ominous implications for the society.

In his thoughtful paper\(^1\), George Iber presents the issues of acculturation, assimilation, ethnicity and their relation to academic success. Offering the perspectives of John Ogbu and Henry Trueba, both educational anthropologists, readers are offered structural (Cultural Ecology) and social-symbolic (Cultural Discontinuity) models of interpretation.

We are asked first to consider whether the structural features of
society effectively block minority-immigrant acculturation. Ogbu argues that failure of the Melting Pot leads to marginal assimilation, and the development of alternative definitions of success and failure, grounded in a societal critique with premises drawn from group experience. Such alternative definitions may contain some truth but they may also be self defeating. Social prohibitions against following mainstream values may be termed “selling out”, being a “tio taco” or “acting white.”

We next consider Trueba’s social symbolic or social interaction perspective suggesting that while acculturation and assimilation may indeed be incomplete - or blocked, it is the interaction between students, teachers and the school, that short circuits academic achievement. Embodying middle class values, the school itself generates alienation born of frustration and “cultural discontinuity”. Ogbu might argue here that the school is the site where competing values are easily testable. And in the face of discrimination, poor employment prospects, and a mass media which equates personal worth with wealth and distorts images of ethnicity, the values of the school lose out to those derived from social experience or ethnic solidarity.

Dr. Iber now sets about illustrating how we might examine the competing claims of Ogbu and Trueba, offering data collected by Amada Padilla and Susan Keefe, who in addressing the pluralistic nature of American society, postulate that acculturation and ethnic identity are separate processes. Padilla and Keefe operationalize “acculturation” by identifying Language Preference, Respondent’s Cultural Heritage, Parents Cultural Heritage, and Cultural Identification, as variables. Ethnic Social Orientation, Ethnic Pride, and Perceived Discrimination, are variables they derive from “ethnicity”. The issues they raise are intriguing since Padilla and Keefe address intergenerational differences. They ask what happens in acculturation and ethnicity over time, and how does it affect school achievement?

The data identify generational differences in academic performance supporting Ogbu’s contentions. Their sample of Mexican born
immigrants did better in school than American born Chicanos in the study. It is also true however that a marked cultural acclimatization had taken place, with Language Preference and Cultural Heritage declining the most. Parent’s Cultural Heritage and (general) Cultural Identification declined the least. This suggests that ethnic identity is influenced in the first instance by functional issues. English is of immediate importance (especially in school) and exposure American culture influences cultural identification, especially during one’s formative years. But does it necessarily follow for minorities that acculturation leads to discrimination and poor school achievement as a manefestations of rejection?

In his recent book Beyond the Classroom (1996), Laurence Steinberg, relying on a large heterogenous sample of secondary school students, found stable differences between ethnic groups in the area of school achievement. Controlling for socioeconomic status and taking account of within group variations, Steinberg and his colleagues found a now familiar pattern of descending achievement; Asians, Whites, Latinos and Blacks. Causal explanations relying on innate different were rejected, indeed, the data confound such explanations.

Steinberg and his associates too found that immigrants outperformed nonimmigrants on measures of school achievement.

On virtually every factor we know to be correlated with school success, students who were not born in this country outscore those who were born here. when we look only at American-born students, we find that youngsters who parents are foreign born outscore those whose parents are native Americans.

In brief, Steinberg suggests that acculturation has a negative relationship to school performance for all ethnic groups. Students brought up in the United States “..achieve less, are less interested in school, and are more likely to engage in problem behavior, and are more interested in socializing than their nonnative counterparts from the same ethnic group.” The smoking gun is social environment,
and here Steinberg’s discussion of peer group influences is revealing.

Asian students are strongly directed (from the home) toward high achieving peer groups. (Achieving peers even compensate for a less than optimal home life.) Citing Ogbu, Steinberg notes that the mass media singles out and glorifies low-income Black culture which denigrates school achievement. With peer groups in many high schools ethnically segregated, Black and Latino students often have difficulty gaining admission to (or forming) achievement oriented peer groups. But he says that in general many students (except Asians) regard identification with school “brains” stigmatizing, suggesting that one dimension of the issue of “acting white” is merely an extreme extension of a common social prohibition -”acting smart”.

Steinberg and his colleagues suggest that “getting by” without showing off is the dominant mode of thinking among teens of all groups -except Asians. Students recognize that there is a “trouble threshold” for academic performance and grades. If they fall below the threshold they can expect sanctions from parents. For Asians it was A-, for Whites it was between a B and a C, and for Blacks and Latinos it was a C-. It is disturbing that Steinberg concludes that for Black and Latino students, parental efforts in the home to encourage achievement, may be overpowered by peer group values antithetical to achievement. Recognizing that discrimination remains a constant in many aspects of American life, early decisions to ignore mainstream standards of achievement may have lifetime consequences, defying the predictions of the melting pot.

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2. Signithia Fordham and John Ogbu, “Black Students’ School Success: Coping with the Burden of ‘Acting White’ ”, The Urban Review,
(Vol.18., No.3. 1986), pp.176-204.


5. Ibid.

*Academic Performance of Minority Students: A Commentary*
BENEATH THE BEYOND

Dr. Michael K. Green

William Griffen in his article “Beyond Technology,”¹ rages against the machine in the form of computers and information technology (CIT). His raging unfolds on three levels. At the most basic level Griffen purports to provide evidence in support of his views. The question here becomes, how strong is his evidence? On a second level, Griffen proposes a view of society and our social system that he thinks explains a whole host of social situations. On this level, the question becomes, how adequate is this theory to explain our current situation? Finally, on a third and, if I might say so, deeper level, Griffen assumes throughout his article a metaphysical view of the world and of the relations of human beings to that world. My aim is to evaluate his evidence and to bring into focus some of the assumptions he makes about society and the world that are questionable.

Viewed as a reasoned defense of a position, Griffen’s article is sorely lacking. He relies upon a host of fallacies at crucial points in his argument. One can find *ad hominem*, *post hoc*, appeal to emotions, strawmen, and false alternative fallacies. His phalanx of fallacious arguments begins on the first page in which supporters of the Industrial Revolution are called “stark, raving mad.” (p. 95) This is quite obviously an *ad hominem* argument that does not address the issue in question. A similar *ad hominem* is used to say that the views of those who believe that technology is neutral are “stupidity plain and simple.” (p. 99) On the first page one can also witness a post hoc fallacy in which it seems to be argued that a host of problems have arisen after the Industrial Revolution; therefore, it follows that the Industrial Revolution is the cause of these problems. More evidence is needed to support this contention.

The whole tone of the article is one of extreme emotional dis-
tress. He dismisses views as “nonsense,” (p. 96) without providing any evidence that they are nonsensical. He asserts that life is more “threadbare” (p. 95), the environment is “rapidly degrading,” computer technology has “mindless momentum” (p. 98) society pursues “carelessly examined ends,” (p. 99) the workplace lacks “democratic solutions” (p. 97), and the individuals who participate in market economies are like marionettes (p. 101). In each of these assertions, he relies upon emotionally-laden words in the place of clear argumentation. He seems to assume throughout the article that either production is for profit or it is for human needs, such that if it is one, it cannot be the other. This seems to me a blatant fallacy of false alternative. He also relies upon a strawman argument when he reduces the complex question of technological change to the displacement of five temps from the job market to welfare. Finally, he also commits the fallacy of division when he seems to argue that because no one controls the whole economic system; therefore, it follows that no one controls any part of it. (p. 97) In criticizing Griffen’s article from the logical point of view, I have, perhaps, done it an injustice, because I think it was meant to be a rhetorical piece exciting the audience to action and not a reasoned argument. Evaluated from this point of view, it is surely a powerful attempt at persuasion.

This leads us to the second level of his article, what view of society and human beings underlies Griffen’s article? His basic arguments seems to go something like this:

1. All the major parts of the current economic system are a threat to the planet.

2. Industrialism is a major part of the current economic system.

3. Therefore, industrialism is a threat to the planet.

4. (CIT) is a form of industrialism.

5. Therefore CIT is a threat to the planet.

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Several questions arise at this point: when is something a threat to the planet, what is his conception of the current economic system, what is industrialism, what is the relation between industrialism and the current economic system, and finally what is the relationship between CIT and industrialism? Let us briefly deal with some of these.

The basic structure of the theoretical part of Griffen’s article is to begin by identifying a set of current social problems, proposing a causal explanation for these problems in terms of the current economic system, and then presenting a solution (at least implicitly) to these problems by abolishing the cause of them.

The problems that concern Griffen can be classified into three major groups. The first set are problems of “social justice.” These include sexism, poverty, injustice, inequality, and exploitation. The second set are problems of environmental degradation. These include extinction of species, deforestation, soil erosion, global warming, pollution, oil spills, toxic waste, urban congestion, and overpopulation. The third set are problems of alienation, which seems to include lack of autonomy and of workplace democracy. The first question that could be asked is, are these all indeed problems? Let’s take one issue for a moment—global warming. There is certainly disagreement over whether it is happening or not. Also, even if it is, it might not be undesirable. A somewhat warmer planet might be more inhabitable for human beings in addition to expanding the areas suitable for food production. Further, many of these problems seem to exist in any given social system, and thus cannot be caused by one particular type of social system. This is certainly a plethora of problems to have a single cause. Or does it have a single cause? Although Griffen entitles his article, “Beyond Technology,” I think it would have been better titled “Beyond Capitalism.” Although at times it seems that all these problems are caused by technology, it turns out that technology is controlled by the social system in which it is embedded. Thus, technology is merely an intermediate cause, and the ultimate cause of all these problems, then, is the economic system of competitive capitalism. He is not entirely consistent here, because at one point (p. 101) he talks about technological
determinism, which would make technology the ultimate cause and not the social system in which the technology exists.

What conception does Griffen have of this economic system? According to him, we have a growth economy (p. 100). What does this mean exactly? According to Griffen, our economy has an established and unfair pattern of distribution (p. 96), it perpetuates growth (p. 96), concentrates wealth in an unjust manner (p. 96), is structured so the few rent the labor of the many (p. 97), has a workplace hierarchy that prevents democracy (p. 97), marginalizes and exploits workers (p. 97), sacrifices real wealth to symbols of wealth (p. 98), and doesn’t respond to human guidance (p. 100). All these accusations are pretty much a common part of the warmed-over (some would say moldy) Marxist medley of accusations against competitive capitalism. It seems that this framework is going to need a tremendous amount of reworking and rethinking if it is to present itself as a viable alternative. Griffen, however, just assumes its validity.

An appraisal of Marx’s thought is certainly beyond this review. However, a few remarks are in order. The whole contest and debate between capitalism and communism was one between two philosophies that had the pretension of bringing civilization to the world in terms of the cultural forms and norms of a particular way of life. Initially with Marx, capitalism was represented by the Anglo-Saxon cultural complex. Within this complex, the warrior ethos was very highly developed. As a result, this cultural complex was based on conflict and alliance, and the civilizing mission for such a cultural complex came to be conceived of as the subjecting of this conflict and competition to rules. Thus, individuals were to move from a state of total conflict in which there were no rules (a State of Nature) to one in which there were rules that provided social fortresses (individual rights) that would protect the individual competitors and distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate forms of conflict and competition. Marx confused market relations with one specific form of market relations, namely the Anglo-Saxon model. However, as history has shown, different cultures have developed quite different

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market economies as economic relations have become modified to fit into various cultural complexes. Thus, the French, the Germans, the Japanese and even the Chinese, to mention a few, have quite different types of market economies because they have quite different cultures. The Anglo-Saxon model has not come to dominate the world, as Anglo-Saxon capitalism would have you believe.

Marx and Marxism arose as a philosophical protest against the cultural and economic world of Anglo-Saxon capitalism. During times of rapid social change or among marginal individuals, i.e., individuals excluded from the social structure, cultural revitalization movements can arise. During such processes, new identities are created, as utopian images of society are developed. These images provide, supposedly, a plan for how society can be re-created after the present social order has collapsed and/or been destroyed. Such movements are characterized by millenarianism and messianism. Modern communism can trace its origins back to Joachim of Fiore in the thirteenth century, and his three-fold process of human liberation. He influenced the various Radical Protestant movements, who in turn influenced the modern communistic movements. Marx undertook to secularize this tradition. In his version, those who were marginal in the current order, the proletarians, were going to rise up and destroy the whole capitalistic order. The Revolutionary Spirit would take possession of the masses and lead them to the New Jerusalem. It is no accident that Marxists and communist movements existed among nations that had been colonized, since these movements represented cultural reconstitutions in which colonization was prevented or ended and indigenous cultural forms were re-worked. Marxism in essence served as the intellectual justification for a host of nationalistic, cultural revitalization movements among cultures whose history and way of life was not compatible with the Anglo-Saxon version of the market economy. (Fascism served the same function for other European cultures with different histories and different cultural complexes.) Russia on the eve of the Russian revolution was experiencing a type of cultural occupation, as the upper classes were thoroughly Westernized and had a rather dismal view of the indigenous Russian cul-

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ture. Communists countered this by praising Russian achievements in every field and attempting to destroy every other ethnic or cultural group, just like Anglo-Saxon capitalism did.

Once the debate between capitalism (i.e., the Anglo-Saxon version of market relations) and communism is seen for what it truly is, (i.e. a cultural conflict), then it can be seen that both lost. Neither became nor could become world-dominating systems. Once this conflict is seen as a cultural one, then one can also understand what the real nature of human existence is, human beings live an inherently cultural mode of existence. Since there will always be a plurality of cultures, there will always be a plurality of ways of solving the problems of being a human being.

What is the problem of being a human being? There is probably no more basic human quest than the attempt to discover or impose order on a seemingly disorderly world. Human beings typically develop a distinction between an orderly cosmos in which human beings and action can flourish and a disorderly chaos in which human beings and action can’t flourish. With order comes predictability and certainty, while with disorder comes unpredictability and uncertainty. With unpredictability and uncertainty comes risk. Different individuals and different cultures inhabit different worlds. Some inhabit a “china shop” world in which the slightest wrong move can lead to catastrophe. This is the world that Griffen seems to inhabit. From this perspective the world is “a terrifying unforgiving place and the least jolt may trigger its complete collapse.” Others live in a world of extreme flexibility which can rebound from nearly anything that is done to it. The world is like the children’s play room at The Discovery Zone; one can jump all over it and it returns for more. At the core of the difference between Griffen and his Marxism and the competitive individualism of Anglo-Saxon capitalism is this fundamental difference in the conception of the world. Griffen’s view is risk-averse, while competitive individualism embraces risk.

A society that can adapt to new situations and find solutions to

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new problems need both kinds of individuals and world-views (as well as others) to serve as checks and balances on each other. A society without risk-taking individualists stagnates, as happened to the Soviet Union. Actually, what happens is that the activity of the risk taking individualist goes underground and spawns a black market, which can corrupt a society to the core. The Russians are currently dealing with this problem as the fall of communism has just unmasked the underground market that had existed during the Soviet era. A society in which the risk-taking individualists are completely in charge would create so much disorder and chaos that most people would not be able to find a meaningful mode of existence with such a system of uncertainty. The problem for each historical epoch is to strike the proper balance between various problem-solving strategies that are essential for social existence. During the transition from an agrarian to an industrial economy under the Anglo-Saxon model, Marxism served to point out the plight of those who did not participate fully in the benefits of these changes. Big business, big labor, and big nation-states arose and served as checks and balances, more or less successful, on each other.

We are now entering another era of transition in which the mass production era will be replaced by a robotic, computerized mode of production in which batch production and market and social fragmentation will increase to the detriment of large entities, whether big business, big labor, or big nation-states. A new definition of humanity and of human existence is emerging that will replace the definition based upon mass production, which replaced the agrarian one, which replaced the hunter-gatherer one. With the increase in information technology, cultures no longer need to be tied to a specific geographic region, and smaller groups will be able to preserve and perpetuate their cultural differences. Social fragmentation and decentralization will probably be the most likely outcome. Individuals who lack the proper skills to enter the information world and to acknowledge and appreciate cultural differences will be left behind as they become unskilled relative to the new requirements of social existence. The difficulty before us as educators is to move our students

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into this new era while developing within them a sensitivity to the needs of those who are experiencing difficulties making this transition. Griffen’s voice in the wilderness can serve to awaken us to these responsibilities. However, I am afraid that humans will never get “Beyond Technology,” since one of the ways that we have made ourselves human is through our technology, and it is through technology, in combination with cultural forms, that human existence will continue to re-create itself in the future.

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TERNASKY ON TOLERANCE

Douglas W. Shrader

Contemporary teachers are asked to teach a multicultural curriculum in a pluralistic society characterized by widespread disagreement, cynicism, and ethical relativism. It is a difficult and often frustrating assignment which has left many befuddled and confused. The pedagogic waters are muddied further by a slew of worries concerning political correctness, highly emotional and politicized debates about families and family values, and uncertainties regarding the proper application of the principle of separation of church and state. It is an atmosphere which fosters both permissiveness and conflict. Students are often challenging but unchallenged. As a result they may be discourteous, rude, and undisciplined. Many conclude, at an early age, that “anything goes” — any view, they assume, is just as good as any other.

P. Lance Ternasky, in a recent article in this journal, speaks of education as social transformation and envisions “a time when certain debates that currently rack the body politic will be viewed solely from a historical perspective.”¹ To navigate in the current waters, perhaps even to steer a course toward a less troubled future, Ternasky advocates dialogue, understanding, and tolerance. He begins by arguing that:

Tolerance is born of neither ignorance nor insecurity, nor is it the product of indifference. To tolerate a practice or belief we find innocuous or irrelevant cannot count as an act of toleration. To say that we tolerate broccoli or polyester is silly, just as it is foolish to say that we tolerate something we wholeheartedly endorse. For tolerance to operate, there must be disagreement and the issues under debate must matter to the quarreling parties.²

Ternasky’s writing is characterized by a clear, unapologetic moral tone. The tolerance he advocates is designed to apply to deep-
seated religious, ethical, and political differences. Perhaps simply because the stakes are high, because the matters under consideration matter more than most, Ternasky refuses to settle for an analysis of tolerance as a principle which guarantees the freedom to think, speak, or act in whatever manner one may please. For Ternasky, tolerance entails conflict and disagreement. It is not a simple matter of shrugging one’s shoulders and mouthing the modern mantra: “to each his own.” He explains:

Tolerance contains as a constituent the presumption of error, and it is characterized not by one’s sympathetic acceptance of seemingly indefensible or offensive ideas or practices but by one’s willingness to temporarily endure them. ...I tolerate your beliefs or behaviors because I cannot now convince you of your error.

Taking this line of reasoning one step further, Ternasky asserts: “all ideas held strongly enough to warrant tolerance by another also contain the implicit desire to proselytize.”

To create and sustain an environment which promotes both toleration and proselytizing, Ternasky advocates spirited public discourse guided by standard principles of civility and rational exchange. We should neither presume nor pretend that we have all the answers — or even all the relevant data. Even in circumstances in which we are firmly and seemingly unshakably convinced of the correctness of a given position, we must make sure that the debate is open to all. We must listen with an open mind and speak an open language, articulating our arguments clearly and forcefully in a style and manner accessible to the general public:

Every party to the debate is required to give good reasons — reasons capable of persuading the critic. Although one could conceivably have the answer, it would be lost to one’s critics if one were unwilling to communicate in a language understood by all. The ability to persuade listeners that such reasons exist is dependent upon one’s willingness to enter into an honest, energetic, and undominated dialogue — simply asserting the truth is never enough.

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There is much in Ternasky’s account which I like. Tolerance, especially when paired with a commitment to dialogue and understanding, is a powerful tool for dealing with the uncertainties and confusions described in the opening paragraph. Without it there is little hope for peaceful and rational resolution of our most vexing conflicts, differences, and disagreements.

There are also elements of Ternasky’s account which I find troubling. Perhaps simply because he has chosen to focus on the context of disagreement, the tolerance he describes seems incurably adversarial, even patronizing. Given the choice between talking and fighting, I would rather talk. But I would also prefer that the talking go beyond mere proselytizing, argument, and debate.

The American Heritage Dictionary defines tolerance as “the capacity for or practice of allowing or respecting the nature, beliefs, or behavior of others.” In extreme cases this may be little more than putting up with something I cannot do anything about. However, we sell ourselves — and tolerance — short if our primary or dominant meaning becomes “I firmly believe you are wrong and will seek, at every opportunity, to convince you of the error of your ways.” Such a concept is limiting rather than liberating — closing rather than opening doors.

I do not believe that tolerance requires us to continually challenge those whose views or behavior differ from our own. Sometimes we can learn more by listening quietly, with compassion, humility, and respect. Nor do I believe we are necessarily unreasonable or intolerant if we refuse to engage the debate on each and every occasion. Though Ternasky speaks alternately of dialogue and debate as though the terms were interchangeable, I find tremendous differences between the two. Debate separates you from me; dialogue joins us in mutual exploration.

The English term “tolerance” derives from the Latin “tolerâre,” meaning “to bear.” Though it can mean “to endure”, “to bear” can also mean “to support.” In fact, it is this notion of supporting or
lifting, not reluctant endurance, which constitutes the primary meaning of tel-, the Indo-European root of “tolerance.” The variant *tlā-
becomes “Atlas” — the titan who, in Greek mythology, supports the world upon his shoulders.\textsuperscript{11} If we are to use tolerance as a tool to build a community of mutual caring, respect, and support, it is an etymology we would do well to remember.

I also have reservations concerning Ternasky’s proposal of a neutral language.\textsuperscript{12} I agree with his goals of clarity and communication, but fear the specifics of his proposal invite oversimplification, distortion, and perhaps most seriously: shallow understanding masquerading as enlightened truth. It is far better to cultivate a willingness to learn the language (values, heritage, commitments, and practices) of others, and to patiently teach them ours. Proponents of one religion (for example) can learn a great deal by cultivating an understanding, appreciation, and respect for the religions of others. But much of the potential value is lost if the goal is to convert or be converted (i.e. a substantial portion of the benefit involves discovering a richness which no single tradition can adequately capture or represent for all people). Similarly, we shortchange ourselves and set our sights far too low if our understanding depends on either (a) translating the second tradition into the language, beliefs, and practices of the first or (b) translating both traditions into some neutral, “non-religious” language (e.g. a mere description of x doing y on occasion z).

Finally, while I wholeheartedly applaud the links which Ternasky establishes between tolerance and understanding, I believe he may have been too quick to sever links between those concepts and freedom. In his 1859 essay, \textit{On Liberty}, John Stuart Mill delineated four reasons for safeguarding freedom of opinion, and freedom of expression of opinion. They apply, with striking effect, to tolerance as well:

First, if any opinion is compelled to silence, that opinion may, for aught we can certainly know, be true. To deny this is to assume our own infallibility.

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Secondly, though the silenced opinion be an error, it may, and very commonly does, contain a portion of truth; and since the general or prevailing opinion on any object is rarely or never the whole truth, it is only by the collision of adverse opinions that the remainder of the truth has any chance of being supplied.

Thirdly, even if the received opinion be not only true, but the whole truth; unless it is suffered to be, and actually is, vigorously and earnestly contested, it will, by most of those who receive it, be held in the manner of a prejudice, with little comprehension or feeling of its rational grounds. And not only this, but, fourthly, the meaning of the doctrine itself will be in danger of being lost, or enfeebled, and deprived of its vital effect on the character and conduct: the dogma becoming a mere formal profession, inefficacious for good, but cumbering the ground and preventing the growth of any real and heartfelt conviction, from reason or personal experience.  

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2. Ibid.
3. Ibid. — note, specifically, pp. 117, 124-125, and 128-129.
4. Ibid. — see, especially, pp. 119-120.
5. Ibid., p. 118.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., pp. 125-126, 128.
8. Ibid., pp. 125-126.
9. Ibid., p. 127.
11. Ibid.