

DEDICATION

For his love of teaching, for his commitment to his students, and for all he has done to promote the open and free exchange of ideas, this issue of Educational Change is dedicated to

Dr. Norman J. Bauer.

NOTE OF THANKS

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Preface

The following comments on G.B. Vico, A.N. Whitehead, and John Dewey, which for the most part, follow the outline of my "Spring 1994 Sabbatical Report," are given here as a way of introducing and providing some context for this issue of Educational Change.

The great works of the past such as Vico's On the Study Methods of Our Time not only fascinate us for the human interest inherent in them, as records of our past, but in dealing with the problems of their times they may be instructive in shedding light on our own failures and provide an avenue to ward off additional misfortunes. And, failure and adversity seem to be ultimate traits of human experience.

In Human Nature and Conduct Dewey provides a relatively neutral pair of traits in conflict and uncertainty. These terms (conflict and uncertainty) do not capture the connotation of privation evoked by failure and adversity and, if I understand Dewey, were not intended to do so. If anything, Dewey attempts to present them as potentialities for the avoidance of failure and the promotion of fulfillments. Seen as such failure and fulfillment are the limits to the possible consequences of conflict.

In part the merit of the works under consideration is in the attempt by their authors to address the adverse conditions, especially with respect to educational institutions, during their own times, i.e. Vico's Naples of the late 17th and early 18th century, Whitehead's England of post World War I and Dewey's United States preceding World War II. Attempts by society and educational institutions to evade the phenomena of failure is bound to the same end as attempts to stop aging or efforts to evade other intractable human experiences. These forms of evasion lead to a social world in which the focus is exclusively on what is pleasant (the ostrich syndrome) such as youth and success. In the construction of a social world with such parameters one is caught in an endless attempt to cover (hide) the intractable in human experience which, however, cleverly or ingenuously concealed, continues and persists in a more confused and more dangerous form. Such denial is similar to other social processes which lead to fragmentation and incoherence and ultimately to disintegration.

In Chapter XIV of On the Study Methods of Our Time which addresses the drawbacks of the universities as well as the remedies, Vico focuses sharply on the problem of fragmentation and coherence. The tension among the competing perspectives and disciplines expressed by Vico aptly captures our own frustration in framing basic curriculums and mission statements which should direct us to aim for and provide the essential coherence for the coordinated efforts of faculties, students and entire college communities.

Today, students who may be trained in the art of discourse by an Aristotelian are taught physics by an Epicurean, metaphysics by a Cartesian. They may learn the theory of medicine from a Galenist, its practice from a chemist; they may receive instruction in the Institutes of Justinian from a disciple of Accursius, be trained in the Pandects by a follower of Antoine Favre, in the Codex by a pupil of Alciati. Students' education is so warped and perverted as a consequence, that, although they may become extremely learned in some respects, their culture on the whole (and the whole is really the flower of wisdom) is incoherent.

The integrity of coherence so elusive in Vico's Naples has become even more difficult for us and consequently an obstacle to the expression of the genius of our public mission. These considerations seem to be a version of the ancient problem of unity and multiplicity. The terms pushed to their individual extremes reveal the problem of the too much and the too little. Too much unity and too much variety place unusual burdens on societies and institutions which ultimately collapse from the sheer weight of too much or the frail structure of too little. Too much unity may turn into tyranny and too much multiplicity may degenerate into chaos. Aristotle's extremes of excess and defect are operative in the above account.

The above distinctions have their counterparts in educational theory and practices and, consequently, are crucial to the foundations of pedagogy. Vico's On the Study Methods of Our Time, in a sense, is a commentary on Renè Descartes' philosophical method (Discourse on Method) and is based on the claim that it rests on the indubitable foundation ar-

rived at in the Meditations, namely the absolute certainty of the *cogito* (ego). As every student in an introductory philosophy class soon learns the problem is that of moving from the indubitable internal subjectivity of the *cogito* to cognitive claims which are external to it (*cogito*).

Vico's critique of Descartes' analytic method is the result of his attempt to provide an explanation for human knowledge. He argues, as Aristotle did with respect to subject and method, that Descartes' method is appropriate only to a specific subject matter, namely, deductive mathematics. Therein lies the reason for Descartes' rejection and scorn of the humane studies, history, rhetoric, languages and other social studies. The failure of Descartes' dream lies in overextending his method. The attempt to apply his geometric method to all areas of human knowledge would not in itself have been harmful; rather the harm is in the rejection of those disciplines which resist or remain intractable to his method.

The strongest claim Descartes could have made would have been to indicate that the humanities, the social sciences, and probably the natural sciences, do not exhibit the precision of analytic geometry. If Aristotle is correct in his claim that a wise man does not expect necessary demonstrations from an orator nor probable ones from a geometrician then from this perspective, Descartes must be deemed foolish.

The above are issues which will determine the manner in which teachers approach their task and the expectations or outcomes of their respective disciplines. For Vico of On the Study Methods of Our Time it implies coming to terms with the "instruments," the "complimentary aids and procedures" and the "aims" of education. For Whitehead of The Aims of Education the keys are the role which "romance," "precision" and "generalization" have in the life of the students and the difficult job of finding the appropriate balance. Finally, for Dewey of Human Nature and Conduct one must look for the answer in the harmonious ordering of the essential components of human nature, i.e. "habit," "impulse" and "intelligence." Although, these three great thinkers used different terms and addressed different aspects of education they had a common underlying concern—the need to unify and integrate rather than succumb to the fragmentary scattering experiences which characterizes much of the process of learning. Maybe, here is the need for genuine mission statements (visions) which are not loose and vague at-

tempts at placating competing faddish claims which distract one from addressing fundamental human needs.

Beginning with Aristotle's division of the virtues into civic, intellectual, and technical or productive Professor Jane Morse from SUNY Geneseo complements it with the ethical analyses of Immanuel Kant and John Dewey to arrive at a more balanced view of the "Ends of Education." Aristotle's virtues are derived from *pragma* (πράγμα), *theoria* (θεωρία), and *techne* (τέχνη). To this Dr. Morse adds an account of Aristotle's four causes (final, formal, efficient and material) which she puts to good use in her analysis of recent educational policy (the last thirty years). For Aristotle's our final cause (end), happiness, is achieved through excellent action; and this is nothing but virtuous action. In short, well-being (happiness) is well-doing. For Aristotle, then, education in its broadest sense is devised to enable humans to reach well-being (well-doing).

Kant transforms Aristotle's final cause into a transcendental ideal which aims at fulfillment, and at the same time, is both open-ended and autonomous. Kant's desire for a universal principle expressed in his famous categorical imperative to which rational human beings assent while autonomous is a source of considerable tension. However, he would have his cake and eat it too, since, by a sleight of hand, he relegates anyone acting autonomously who does not assent to his universal categorical imperative to the class of non-rational beings, in the language of Freud, irrational beings.

The tension between humankind and the individual remains unresolved unless one assumes a kind of Leibnitzian pre-established or post-established harmony. Kant's insistence on autonomy has particular and democratic propensities with the consequence that there is no guarantee that individuals will "act autonomously as members of a kingdom of ends." We still have the lingering question: How does the transcendental ideal function in education?

John Dewey, especially sensitive to these issues, tries to negotiate these tensions (as indicated above) by analyzing human nature as a combination of habits, impulses, and intelligence. Recognizing that intelligence has no pre- or post-established priority in human actions, he leaves

it potentially open ended that its (intelligence's) beneficial influence may work its magic for constructive human behavior.

According to Morse educational reformers may fail in either of two ways. "One is to fail to formulate the proper ends for education. The other is to neglect the final cause in favor of material, efficient or formal causes." In these ways Morse accounts for many fads which have been put forth in the name of educational reform, of which many have been fueled by behavioristic methodologies in an endless cycle of stimulus-response patterns. These responses quickly come and go, only, to be replaced by other responses which trap the educational process in a self-fulfilling behavioristic process. Complicating this, there is the confusion which the social order imposes on the educational system, i.e. holding up the goals of power, fame, and riches as the true ends of education. Unfortunately, our educational leaders succumb to these false idols while paying lip service to the ideals of civic, intellectual and technical virtuosity.

In her examination of the more prominent reforms (responses) that took place over the last thirty years, Morse shows that, oftentimes, the conceptual confusion of the Aristotelian causes results in misguided policies which (1) focus on symptoms rather than causes or (2) replace material, efficient, or formal causes for the final cause

E. D. Hirsch's Cultural Literacy and A. Bloom's The Closing of the American Mind are examples of such confusion. Here the content is treated as though it were the end of education. By the same token other responses such as reforms for inclusion and diversity must also be analyzed from the perspective of the final causes which they serve, and the same goes for "canonical" and "non-canonical" authors. The "romantic naturalism" of J. J. Rousseau exemplified by "free schoolers" and "de-schoolers," such as A. S. Neill and I. Illich, must be treated similarly as well as the other reforms which have surfaced over the last thirty years.

Having shown us the misguided ways of educational reformers, Professor Morse goes on to underscore the critical need for conceptual clarity with respect to the final causes. We must know where we are going if we are to find our way there. "Clearly final cause determines the others. We must know why we are doing something before we can

ascertain in what order, by what method, and with what materials we should pursue our purpose.” It is of paramount importance for us to be as conceptually clear as we can be with respect to our educational ends; but, given Professor Morse’s formulation of the final cause of education as a transcendental ideal, i.e. “education should actualize the potential of all people in the practical, theoretical, and technological spheres, including recognition of autonomy of citizens in a global society,” we are faced with the same difficulties she has already pointed out with regard to the many vague utterance which serve as mission statements such as, “We will successfully teach all students,” or “to teach—to search—to serve,” the present motto of our own state university system.

Some closing remarks on Professor Morse’s “Ends of Education” reveals, what I consider, the crux of the difficulty with respect to Dr. Morse’s application of the Aristotelian causes to education. I should begin by pointing out that “autonomy” has a positive connotation similar to “freedom.” In communication the positive emotional tone obliterates the other possible ramifications latent in genuine “autonomy,” i.e. a potentiality for “good” as well as “evil.” If we accept the multiple potentiality inherent in “autonomy” how shall we conduct ourselves in actualizing the ends of education? Shall we habituate students towards “good” inclinations as Aristotle suggested and limit “autonomy?” Dr. Morse realizes the shortcoming of this view since she attempts to rectify it with Kant’s moral analysis. However, Kant’s analysis, as I previously suggested, gives “autonomy” with one hand and withdraws it with the other, i.e. when an “autonomous” individual does not arrive at Kant’s moral imperative that individual is relegated to the class of non-rational beings.

My suspicion is that underlying Morse’s analysis there are two views of teaching which her sources amply confirm. On one hand, there is the Aristotelian view which treats teaching as a “craft;” on this view the end (final cause) is known in advance and one, merely, has to find the appropriate means (formal, efficient and material causes) to get there. On the other hand there is the view that treats teaching as an “art.” This view seems to emphasize “autonomy” which Dr. Morse derives from Kant. However, this option runs the risk of the novel (good and evil), the unpredictable (good and evil) or open-ended quality (good and evil)

which Professor Morse has articulated. Again, this brings us to Dewey's emphasis on the ultimate traits of experience, "conflict," and "uncertainty." Being clear about these issues will help one appreciate the very difficult process with which we are dealing.

Our remaining contributions fall into two broad categories. The first three, those of Drs. Douglas Shrader, John Ryder, and Timothy Glander amplify some of the theoretical and structural concerns outlined by Professor Morse; whereas, the next four, those of Drs. Edith Gordon, George Iber, William Griffen and Richard Glotzer treat special issues which are essential in informing the ongoing educational dialogue. Finally, Dr. Lance Ternasky attempts an analysis of tolerance which tries to establish guidelines for negotiating the conflicting demands within the social order.

"The Lessons of Émile" by Professor Shrader from SUNY Oneonta is an attempt to elicit the basic principles of J. J. Rousseau's educational theory. Dr. Shrader teases the prominent insights from this influential classic; at the same time he maintains sufficient distance to appreciate its strengths and recognize its weaknesses. With his broad scope, he suggests parallels with Taoism pointing to the harmonious interaction between the individual and his surroundings, the aim (final cause) of both Rousseau and the Taoist sage. However, this requires that special attention be given to the often neglected aspect of learning, the emotional and affective demands on the teacher and on the student. Perhaps for this reason, Dr. Shrader re-directs us to Rousseau's text: "the story of human nature is a fair romance. Am I to blame if it is found only in this book? It ought to be the story of mankind." These words should be an occasion to re-consider and re-read humankind's "love story" and bring back the "romance" Whitehead refers to in The Aims of Education, and which is essential for the occurrence of education.

Professor John Ryder from SUNY Cortland provides a brief but effective statement of the obstacles and problems which issue from his analysis of schooling in a democratic society. His remarks are an outgrowth of his comments on Robert Westbrook's (University of Rochester) "Public Schooling and American Democracy." Both Westbrook's analysis and Ryder's comments were delivered at the Spring 1995 Annual Meeting of the N.Y.S.F.E.A. at SUNY Cortland. As found in this

publication, Ryder's remarks have an integrity all their own and may be read independently or in conjunction with Westbrook's analysis. Dr. Ryder focuses on the conditions Dewey considered critical for democratic societies, i.e. "shared interests" and "communicative interactions." These conditions are the *elan vital* for democratic societies, while the degree to which they are actualized is the measure of how democratic a society is. With the above parameters, what are schools expected to accomplish? Of course, as Professor Ryder indicates, many ramifications and thorny issues flow from this question. However, in a very general way, he along with Dewey argues for schools which promote a cultural environment which nourishes traits of character and dispositions conducive to those "shared interests" and "communicative interactions" characteristic of democracy. However circular this may sound Professor Ryder is aware of the problems and his comments are informative and provide some clarification.

Among the many obstacles which hinder the development of democratic life there are two social factors which are especially prominent. The first, of these, points to the existence of classes which institute special privileges and requirements unrelated to specific needs or functions and, consequently, hinder the demands of "distributive justice." Ryder says that, "As long as the control of the productive property of the society is concentrated in relatively few hands, and the distribution of wealth is correspondingly disparate, the shared interests and communicative interactions which democracy requires will elude us." Such a state of affairs may be promoted by two interrelated phenomena, i.e. "the inertia of existing educational traditions," and the realization by those "entrenched in command of the industrial machinery" that a pervasive democratic educational system would threaten their ability to promote their own vested-interests and use "the less fortunate others" for their own ends. The second major obstacle to democratic life is the phenomena of "nationalism" and "national interests." This issue results from the conceptual limits imposed by a restrictive sense of human community. It is a daunting problem and challenges the human spirit and imagination to the task of removing artificial barriers while preserving and promoting devotion and loyalty to those ends that bind humans and promote "shared interests" and "communicative interaction."

A subtle aspect of the potential for manipulation by those in privileged positions through the process of communication is explored by Professor Timothy Glander from Nazareth College of Rochester. In his "C. Wright Mills and the Rise of Psychological Illiteracy," he provides an outstanding account of C. Wright Mills' concept of "psychological illiteracy." Dr. Glander realizes that the sociological shifts from "a community of publics" to "a mass society" which result in a condition pervasive with "psychological illiteracy" cannot be laid at the doorstep of any one class or individual. However, he provides evidence that suggests that Mills' The Power Elite is not only a methodological critique of the mainstream American sociology of the times and of Paul F. Lazarsfeld's Personal Influence, in particular, it is also a moral condemnation of the motives, the ends, and the uses of such scholarship. The publication of The Power Elite, which saw the social scientists as "servants of the power elite" who provided the elites with the theoretical framework and the techniques "to control the mass society," made it more difficult for Mills to obtain research funds. At any rate, armed with these new sociological insights (the two-step flow communications," "personal persuasion and influence of opinion leaders," etc.) "the power elite" has not been reluctant to encourage "psychological illiteracy" in order to manipulate "mass society," especially in promoting its own power, prestige or pecuniary interests.

In "The Changing Perception of Women's Role in Education in New York, 1972 and 1996," Dr. Edith Gordon gives us a clear account of the critical developments in the struggle for gender equity on the national, state (N.Y.), and local (Long Island) level which have taken place since the passage of Title IX Higher Education Act of 1972. She focuses on the overwhelming difficulties which women have encountered in the struggle to overcome entrenched patterns of exclusion (supported both by attitudes and emphasized by the gender-biased linguistic habits). These attitudes and habits which are pervasive in administrative and leadership positions tend to translate into general patterns of exclusion with considerable impact on the distribution of incomes. While noting some improvements in attitudes and established priorities Dr. Gordon alerts us to the risk that the present financial crises (national, state and local) may undermine these advances.

“Academic Performance of Minority Students,” is a study by Professor George Iber of The Sage Colleges which does not confirm either the “cultural ecology” model of John Ogbu or the model of “cultural discontinuity” of Henry Trueba. Iber’s analysis of the first and second generation Mexican-American high school students in Liberty, U.S.A., leans towards the views of D. Fetterman, i.e. “the approaches of cultural discontinuity and cultural ecology address the same problem at different levels.” Consequently, in determining success or failure of high school minority students, confirmation of one theory or the other depends on the trait selected for comparison. For example, “acculturation trait” results supported both theories while “ethnic identity” comparison supported the “cultural ecology” model of Ogbu, and the “mainstream interest” score supported the “cultural discontinuity” model of Trueba. Iber concludes that, in policy making, a joint approach must be used to assess and ameliorate problems faced by minorities.

Professor William Griffen of SUNY Cortland provides less than an enthusiastic response to the explosion in information technology. He takes issue with the promises made by the advocates of the information technologies and suggests that these technologies are anything but “neutral.” His analysis, “Beyond Technology,” expresses serious concerns with the impact these new tools have on the “quality of life” and “social justice.” Rather, than speed headlong into the information highway, Griffen urges us to examine closely the impact these new developments have on the social order, and the distribution of resources and incomes. Further, we must examine whose “ends” these technologies serve, and finally, how do these technologies serve the public interest whose resources are drained in order to develop them. Undergirding Griffen’s analysis is the concern for the democratic order which is being undermined, even more, by removing both the decision making process and the financial resources further from the “common man.”

“Philanthropy in Educational Foundations: Conscience of The Public Good or Instrument of Control? Illustrations from Recent World History,” by Professor Richard Glotzer from SUNY-Oneonta, is a brief but excellent account of the influence of American Philanthropic Foundations on education with special consideration of their influence on race relations at home and abroad. Dr. Glotzer provides some evidence

that the influence of such foundations has rarely been detached or neutral. In general funds have been carefully allocated to perpetuate the political and social assumptions of the governing boards, staffed by "foundation men" drawn from universities, government, and business leaders. Using the tools of the emerging social sciences along with their dubious assumptions, Dr. Glotzer suggests that, these foundations functioned as informal and unelected vehicles of policy implementation. This raises the sensitive issue of the impact the distribution and allocation of these resources have on the future of democracy and democratic institutions in both "developed" and "developing" countries. These are critical concerns for the Foundations of Education.

It is appropriate that we close this issue of Educational Change with Lance Ternasky's, "Teaching Tolerance Amidst Disagreement." Given the present social and academic climate it is of considerable consequence that one tries, to arrive at the essential elements of a "genuine moral dialogue." Professor Ternasky constructs a model which requires the presence of three conditions. First, the conversation must be free of coercion and undominated. Ternasky's second concern deals with the relationship between knowledge and participation. He suggests that cognitive limitations should not preclude one from participation; for that matter, the clarification of moral issues have historically proceeded from a position of cognitive limitations. Further, such limitations seem to be ultimate traits of experience and thus should not be a bar to the contributions of each individual's moral experience. Finally, discourse should not be used as a way of precluding participation in the moral debate, i.e., one should not appeal to private, obscure, and technical language as a way of excluding participation among "equals." However, this raises the problem of the nature of "equality" and the problem of translating Ternasky's models and metaphors into the world of human action. In spite of Ternasky's balanced account, often times the darker sides of existence seem to carry the day. Perhaps, the more important question is: how do we bring about the conditions that make such dialogues possible? The brief exchange between Socrates and Polemarchus in Book I of Plato's Republic captures this concern adequately:

Polemarchus said to me: I perceive, Socrates that you and your companion are already on your way to the city.

You are not far wrong, I said.

But do you see, he rejoined, how many we are?

Of course.

And are you stronger than all these? for if not, you will have to remain where you are.

May there not be the alternative, I said, that we may persuade you to let us go?

But can you persuade us, if we refuse to listen to you? he said.

Certainly not, replied Glaucon.

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THE ENDS OF EDUCATION

Jane Fowler Morse

Practical, Theoretical, and Technical Excellences

In the moral and intellectual domains, the ends of education have remained much the same since Aristotle's formulation: to fulfill human potential for excellence in civic virtue, intellectual understanding, and technical or productive skills. Although some educators might add goals in the affective domain, Aristotle thought happiness consists in realizing human excellence by perfecting virtue and intellect, so he would not add goals dealing with emotional or spiritual development. In modern times we have also extended the right to be educated, which Aristotle limited to members of the polis, to all people. For Aristotle, human excellence falls into these three areas: to live in society, to know things, and to do or to make things. The first is concerned with justice and self-development; the second with theoretical knowledge of both abstract and empirical subjects; and the third with being skillful in the productive arts. The methods of education, therefore, are means to these ends. They would consist first in inculcating moral values, second in teaching theoretical subjects, and third in developing technical skills.

The first domain of human excellence — civic virtue — corresponds to the ancient concept of *πρᾶξις* (*praxis*) is derived from a verb *πράσσω* (*prasso*) meaning “to pass over or through territory,” and therefore “to fare well or ill.” From this it comes to mean “to achieve, effect or accomplish.”¹ The associated noun in Greek is *πρᾶγμα* (*pragma*). Often used of public business in classical Greece, the word is the root of “practical,” “practice,” “pragmatic,” and related words in English. The ends to be accomplished by humans in the first realm are pragmatic, having to do with how to live with oneself, which is the topic of ethics, and how to organize societies, which is the topic of social and political philosophy.

The second domain of human excellence — having theoretical knowledge — comes from the Greek word *θεωρία* (*theoria*), derived

from the verb θεωρέω (*theoreo*) meaning “to be sent as an envoy to an oracle of the god (*theos*).” From this, the verb comes to mean “to be a spectator at the games; to look at or behold.”² The associated noun, θεωρία (*theoria*), is the root of “theory” and “theoretical” in English. Theoretical knowledge is sought for its own sake, for, as Aristotle remarks, “All men by nature desire to know.”³ Aristotle considers a life spent seeking theoretical knowledge, the contemplative life, to be the highest expression of human excellence, since he thinks human beings are primarily rational creatures.

The third domain of human excellence — having skills in the productive arts — corresponds to the classical Greek concept of τέχνη (*techne*). Originally a noun meaning “an art or a skill,” *techne* has both a positive and a negative sense, as an art may be employed either skillfully or cunningly.⁴ It is the root of the English words “technology,” “technical,” and “technique.” The third domain of education combines the fine and useful arts. Since the Greeks did not distinguish them as we do, I have called *techne* “the productive arts” in this paper. Some of these involve making things, others, doing things.

An understanding of Aristotle’s four causes is also useful in analyzing educational policy. The final cause is that purpose for which a thing is done; the formal cause is the blueprint or outline of the thing; the efficient cause is the agent or source of motion by which a thing is done; the material cause is the stuff out of which a thing is made. Since education is a purposeful activity, the final cause of education is that human beings fulfill their potential for excellence in the practical domain, the theoretical domain, and the technological domain of human action.

Aristotle’s goal in educating an Athenian citizen is to produce an Athenian who possesses virtue to apply to the practical matters of living. This person has a disposition to do the good because he has been habituated to doing the good. It is the business of those who teach to accustom children to like what they ought to like, so they can act according to the right rule, willingly, from preference. Ac-

According to Aristotle, the continent man may act moderately by reason, but the truly virtuous man acts as he ought by preference. Liking to act according to the rule of moderation actualizes children's potential for excellence in the practical domain.

Secondly, it is the business of the educators to arrange the conditions so that children can develop their potential for theoretical excellence. There are relatively few geniuses, but many people are capable of the theoretical thinking necessary to practice various professions that require some theory. Many professions have both a practical and a theoretical component. In some the practical component is predominant; in others, the theoretical component predominates. Philosophy, higher mathematics and physics are largely theoretical. Music performance, surgery, and cooking require technical skill, but include a component of theoretical knowledge as well.

Finally, education develops the skills of making things and doing things. There are many kinds of *techne*, as diverse as computer programming, carpentry, diagnosing illness, sewing, or getting plants to grow. Technical skill may contain a component of theoretical knowledge, but there is an element of hands-on practicality in productive activities. These skills entail cultivation, but of capacities different from theoretical understanding.⁵ The fine arts also fall under the technical, requiring practice.

Aristotle understood the three competencies which an individual could develop, but held the productive arts in lower regard than the pursuit of theoretical knowledge. Everyone needs civic virtue, even artisans, but not everyone will be competent to rule under most existing conditions. Aristotle applied his analysis of the ends of education to a restricted group, the male citizens of Athens. Nevertheless, he is correct in his general conception of the ends of education, that is, to develop people's potential for various kinds of human excellence. Later writers on education universalize Aristotle's conception of education to include all people as citizens of the world, equally fit subjects for development.

Like theoretical knowledge, the productive arts are also sought for their own sake. A fine performance or a well-wrought urn are satisfying to the maker as well as to the user. Even less elegant works of art or skill that exhibit the progress of the maker are satisfying, regardless of the uses to which they may be put or the audiences they may please. A child may well take satisfaction in playing her recital piece well, even if she isn't ready for a Carnegie Hall debut.

These are the three excellences to be developed in fulfilling the potential of human beings: first, moral training to develop the potential to be good members of society; second, theoretical study to develop the rational capacity; and, third, technical practice to enhance the productive capacity of human beings. Education of the moral capacity starts immediately at birth as habituation and culminates when the individual's potential to fulfill his or her role in society responsibly is developed as well as might be. Education of the rational capacity encompasses all the subject matter of the liberal arts and sciences, crowned by philosophy, the practice of formal abstract thinking, as the coordinator of the disciplines. Practical skill applies the theoretical conclusions of the arts and sciences to enhancing and improving human life, while technical skill produces the goods and services useful in this endeavor. In Aristotle's teleological view, practice of these excellences constitutes happiness, which is activity of the soul in accordance with the intellectual and moral virtues that humans are capable of perfecting.⁶

Kant transforms Aristotle's final cause into a transcendental ideal. Fulfilling human potential is open-ended, although it is not merely a romantic whimsy. An ideal is something at which we aim as a goal, even if we cannot fully finish its accomplishment. Such an ideal would result from practicing Kant's categorical imperative, which demands that we always treat other people as ends in themselves and never as a means to our end, that we always act under a maxim that we would be willing to universalize, and that we act as members of a global community. Kant's universal ethic accords to all people the right to fulfill their potential to the highest degree pos-

sible, which entails recognizing their autonomy. In its most inclusive and general form, the ideal is to allow all human beings to fulfill their potential for excellence in practical, theoretical, and productive knowledge under their autonomous control. Kant's addition of autonomy as an educational goal introduces a new element to appropriate educational practice based on Aristotle's formula.

Human potential varies. Since the end of education is to fulfill the potential of each individual, whatever that may be, success is to be measured by the degree to which a person's accomplishments come close to that fulfillment, not by an external criterion which measures their accomplishments against those of another person, or some arbitrary standard. The standard is an ideal which sets a goal challenging whatever has been accomplished. Instead of classifying children by abilities (or disabilities), we should use categorical identification systems only to place children in programs designed to help them fulfill their potential.

Moral excellence, Kant adds, includes the exercise of autonomy as a necessary component of a full human life. Therefore to reach their full potential, people must become autonomous adults. The ideal must aim towards students becoming responsible for their own definition of themselves by the time they are adults. Such a view of the ends of education is consistent with an ideal that democracy is the best form of government. Thus we must add to the Aristotelian ends of education Kant's condition that autonomy be practiced. The final cause of moral education is to allow human beings to become autonomous as well as fulfilled.⁷

As Dewey points out, children also need to learn to value their own social effectiveness. What they do as individuals matters, but it also matters to their social group, since people are social. Dewey claims that all education is, at basis, education in ethics, since all activity is undertaken in relation to others.⁸ This lesson can be promoted in education at all levels. Students need to respect each other and teachers need to respect students as members of a learning com-

munity who know what is effective in their own learning process. Although the teacher possesses the technical knowledge of what and how to teach, nevertheless, good teachers seek feedback from their students, who alone can reveal whether they have understood the lesson. Many abuses in both education and society in general would be reformed by a proper perception that people ought to be autonomous, accompanied by educative practices that foster autonomy.

Although Aristotle thinks that human beings are most fully human when reason rules over the passions, since Freud, we often attribute to the passions a power to rule over reason. Yet Aristotle asserts that the reason ought to govern the passions. We admit that sometimes instinctual or passionate behavior takes over, but we also agree that in many situations Aristotle is right. He thinks rational individuals ought to govern their behavior by right rule, which results in continent people, people who can rationally choose to do the right thing. However, Aristotle thinks it is more reliable if people choose to be moral by preference, which he believes is established by habituation early in life. His moral education inculcates moral virtue through training children in good habits, offering them the opportunity to practice in living by the rule of moderation. Although we now recognize that passions run deep, we would do well to clarify what role reason does play in moral education. Kant, on the other hand, thinks that morality is rational. Autonomy, which is understood intellectually, is the basis of morality and ethical behavior results from following a rule, the categorical imperative. He does not suppose that training plays a large role, and the perfectly moral person is the one whose intention, or will, is to do the right thing, regardless of what he or she desires to do.

Even though theoretical knowledge alone does not instill moderation, there are both practical and theoretical components of morality. Younger children cannot reason sufficiently yet, which is why Aristotle thinks moral education begins by establishing a disposition to act by habituation or training. Since such dispositions form in very young children, it is crucial that education begin early. Reformers

who would like to reduce random violence in the schools while increasing principled, autonomous behavior among the youth must begin their reforms at the level of day care and early childhood education, in fact, even in the home, where all teaching begins. Later, educators must increase opportunities for students to act autonomously as they become capable of using reason to foresee the consequences of their actions. As students advance in their cognitive capacity, they become better at deliberating about the consequences of their actions and can be allowed more power to control them.

Aristotle's distinction between the productive and theoretical uses of reason neglects the complexity of modern technology, which requires correspondingly complex theoretical knowledge. Intellectual virtue is not only exemplified in the contemplative life which Aristotle envisioned as the highest, but also in complex productive activity. Consequently, since theory and technology are interlinked, Aristotle's view is superseded by the idea that technical skills are also worthy. Dewey's pragmatism, which links theory and practice, provides the corrective for Aristotle's scorn of manual arts.

We also need people skilled in technology, in both the fine and the useful arts. Art is better when it produces insight into the human condition. We criticize artists whose technical capacity is flawless but who have nothing to say, that is, whose art is not expressive of human meaning. Many other technical excellences include theory and practice as well. Even where there is a large component of manual dexterity, trades still produce valuable goods and services. These need not be relegated to a lower status. Humans, distinguished by their tool-making ability, ought to have the highest regard for people who are able to make and to manipulate tools as well as for those who know what underlies the use or manufacture of tools. Tools must be put to good uses, which involves moral virtue. Technical excellence therefore ought to be considered among the excellences that humans can cultivate to fulfill their potential. Human excellence can be theoretical, moral, or technical, and inevitably combines all three excellences to some degree.

In addition, people need to understand technology because it has a tremendous impact on human life. Humans produce technologies, and humans control them. The responsibility to make technology serve good purposes is incumbent on all people everywhere; technological knowledge is a part of having that ability. We cannot simply do away with technology, but we can have it serve good purposes, including preserving the ecological balance in the natural world so that our grandchildren can know what a frog is.

Finally, Dewey's contribution to the ends of education requires that all people be treated equally as members of a global society regardless of their gender, class, race, or nationality. In other words, respect is accorded to those who fulfill their potential in intellectual, moral, and productive capacities, not to those who belong to a certain group by chance. The end of education is global. This is the only way to overcome the provincialism implicit in the practices of groups who think it is morally acceptable to help their friends and hurt their enemies. Clearly, in a world where one people slaughter another because they are different culturally, where many cultures are repressive towards people because they are women, where racial prejudice creates differentials in such basic factors as infant mortality and average salary, we have not eliminated bias based on group membership. This goal, however, is already implicit in the formulation of the end that all human beings be educated to fulfill their potential. The end of education implies that people will be members of a global *polis*⁹ whose relations will be reciprocal and who act autonomously as members of a kingdom of ends.¹⁰

The Four Causes in Educational Reforms

It seems to me that there are two kinds of mistakes that educational reformers can make concerning the ends of education. One is to fail to formulate the proper ends for education. The other is to neglect final cause in favor of material, efficient, or formal causes. Reforms in materials, methods, or curriculum should not be implemented for their own sake, but only because they are conducive to

some end. When educational reformers lack a clear view of what they are trying to accomplish, whether the ends suggested by Aristotle and expanded by Kant and Dewey that I have outlined above, or some other set of ends, they may fail because they lack the vision that could inspire as well as inform practice. Reform that focuses on subsidiary causes without considering purpose can easily go astray. Public education in the United States is concerned to implement lasting reform that brings improvement in its train. Despite this concern, reform movements, from Conant's of the nineteen fifties to Madeline Hunter's of the nineteen eighties, have been short-lived. Flourishing at teacher in-service workshops for a few years, they vanish, to be replaced by a new fad. A general understanding of how these fail to incorporate the ends of education may help to understand and remedy the cyclic nature of educational reform in the public schools.

An example which is pervasive in American education is Behaviorism. Because behaviorism is a technology, a way of eliciting desired behaviors, it is unconcerned with final cause, why we should educate people. Behaviorism subordinates other causes to efficient cause; it is a methodology, a technology of behavior. As a technology, behaviorism provides a means of eliciting whatever behaviors someone might specify. All learning follows the stimulus-response model. Positive reinforcement increases desired behaviors; negative reinforcement decreases or extinguishes undesired behaviors. Teachers arrange contingencies and schedule reinforcements, but the purpose for which they implement these strategies lies outside the system. Since any reinforcer which increases the likelihood of the action's being repeated is as effective as any other reinforcer that has the same results, it doesn't make sense to distinguish kinds of positive reinforcers. If students like the consequences of the action, they repeat it. Although behaviorism shares the Epicurean acknowledgement that pleasure motivates people, a Skinnerian has no philosophical grounds for choosing katastematic over kinetic pleasure.¹¹

In the Skinnerian model, all learning is the same: pigeons learn by positive reinforcement, as do children and adults. Benjamin

Bloom's book *Human Characteristics and School Learning* provides a good example of the implications of this for educational practice. Since he assumes that everyone learns in the same way, Bloom concludes that educational differential comes about from different rates of learning. His concept of mastery learning would allow each student to proceed at his or her own pace through packets of materials that teach the same contents, in the same way. If students did not master the material the first time, they would be redirected by the packet to a second presentation. Eventually everyone would learn the same material, only it would take longer for some than others.¹² This approach reduces the complexity of teaching to one model, and proposes one solution, based on a methodology of teaching. The method itself ignores the social aspects of learning. It solves the problem of prejudice based on educational differential, but at the cost of failing to acknowledge real differences and oversimplifying the complexities of what is essentially a social task: teaching and learning.

Another difficulty with Skinner's model, since behavior modification is essentially manipulative, is that it cannot provide an adequate account of autonomy. Intermittent reinforcement works best on more cognitively advanced subjects. However, it is impossible to reinforce oneself sporadically. A subject cannot manipulate him or herself, just as a person cannot play a competitive game of chess with him or herself, or fool him or herself. This makes the model inappropriate for any learning that is self-directed.

Another problem with the influence of behaviorism on education is the concomitant strategy of writing measurable goals and objectives. Formulating goals and objectives that are measurable results in limiting the kinds of goals that teachers can write. For instance, since appreciation is hard to measure, a goal stating that students will appreciate literature is unacceptable. Being measurable comes to mean being easily tested and recorded; the behavior to be elicited must be observable, which is often taken in a naive, literal sense. Being observable turns out to mean being quantifiable, in practice. Since what constitutes accomplishment of the objective must be

specified beforehand in the individualized educational plan commonly used in special education, the standard of measurement is preselected, but may turn out to be inappropriate. This encourages teachers to substitute some easily recorded, measurable, specific goal for one which may be more significant but harder to document. The kind of global goals that could be visionary are not amenable to this treatment. Socrates pursues a transcendent goal – knowledge of the Form of the Forms. Such knowledge may be unreachable, but how will he know if it is, unless he tries to reach it? Behaviorism ignores final cause, which can distort practice.

In American education, another pervasive way of talking about reform is very like the Sophists of antiquity. Periodically, government reports warn us that our public schools lag behind those of our rivals: the Soviets during the post-Sputnik era of reform, the Japanese or the Germans now. We are encouraged to want the goals of the Sophists: power, fame, and riches, or worldly success in general. Success in the marketplace is taken to mark educational success. The rhetoric proclaims that we must be competitive so that we can occupy first place among the nations. Schools must improve so that we can keep our competitive edge, which means we must dominate world markets. If riches are our goal, and we judge merit by wealth, then we won't care how we get it. The idea is to wield power, not to govern wisely; to look good, not to be good; to make money, not to create value. This view of education makes the simple mistake of wrongly identifying the final cause of education as power, wealth, or fame. But power is only desirable if it is used for good purposes, wealth is only good when it is properly distributed, and fame should come to the wise rather than the notorious. Students should want to become politicians to be statesmen and stateswomen, doctors to heal the sick, or lawyers to bring justice to the downtrodden. Instead, the reason they give is that they want to be powerful, rich, or famous. These cannot be universal goals of education, since someone must be richer or more powerful than someone else to be successful in these competitive terms. We all chuckle when we hear Garrison Keeler's joke about the children of Lake Woebegone, who are "all above average,"

but, as Jonathan Kozol points out, having one group of children be above average requires that another group somewhere else be below average.¹³

Contrary to the rhetoric of the government reports, schools in poor neighborhoods continue to get worse while rich schools improve, according to Kozol.¹⁴ Marxist theorists Gintis and Bowles analyzed the actual correlation between years of schooling and socioeconomic status, finding that all the rhetoric about equal opportunity seems to be mostly that: rhetoric. Years of schooling and school success are found to have significantly less value in predicting adult socioeconomic status than the socioeconomic status of one's birth.¹⁵ Given this reality, some critics have become cynical about intentions to reform. For instance, Ira Shor, in *Critical Teaching and Everyday Life*, argues that the junior college system was designed to provide "custodial care" for the unemployed workers that Marx called the industrial reserve army. He even accuses the builders of the junior college system of creating parasitic institutions to stimulate the economy artificially by spending money on supplies.¹⁶ Others, critics of repressive regimes such as Paulo Freire, offer similar accounts of the oppression imposed by education.¹⁷ Economic success for a few is inconsistent with the universal scope of the ends of education. Fulfillment of the potential of all members of a global society is inconsistent with rhetoric about any particular nation or group being first.

The free school movement, current in the sixties and seventies, proposed radically changing the structure of schools to allow development of the creative powers of the child. Theorists of this movement believed Piagetian child psychology to recommend educational practices that allow the child to blossom by a process of natural maturation. Their belief in the desirability of natural maturation as opposed to any system that encouraged the child to follow the direction of another led them to establish schools with very little structure. Their guiding axiom is to leave children alone and they will develop in a better way because it will be natural. David Elkind criticizes the

pushing of our youth by a culture that forces children into adult modes and adult activities much too soon in his book, *The Hurried Child*.¹⁸ The happiness of the child is paramount to A.S. Neill, whose school, described in *Summerhill*,¹⁹ served as a paradigm for freeschoolers. Although freeschoolers may take the theory of inherent patterns of development too far, their model is the essentially humane model of Rousseau's *Emile*.²⁰ Their mistake is twofold: first, mistaking a natural process of growth for the end of a purposeful endeavor, and secondly, reforming the structure of the school, rather than the goals or purpose.

The deschoolers of the early seventies carry this further, proposing that "school is dead." Ivan Illich and Everett Riemer's solution to the problems of repressive schools is to abolish school as we know it and start again with a system of informal educational networks.²¹ Although the movement offered trenchant criticism of the system, its genesis is reactive. The essence of its vision is derived from what is wrong with the standard educational model. Although there are valuable aspects of the deschoolers' reactions, they depend on the existence of the wrong thing to which they are responding, rather than a positive vision of what we ought to aim for instead. We need to tear down useless old structures, but also must build up viable new ones to replace them.

Humanistic education is a kind of reform movement. Writers like James Herndon,²² John Holt,²³ Ken McCrorie²⁴ and Jonathan Kozol²⁵ engage in an essentially romantic rebellion against the Sophistic view. These writers describe poor facilities, inhumane conditions, and heroic efforts of some students and teachers to overcome them. This approach is idiosyncratic. Its accounts are narratives of the author's (or someone's) personal experiences in a particularly bad school. Reform depends on an heroic individual willing to do battle against terrible odds. This doesn't reform the system, just that person's classroom, temporarily. Such writers may well be sympathetic with the ends of education identified here, but they focus on efficient cause, thinking charismatic leaders will reform education. Although, again, we certainly need leadership, we also need a sense of purpose. Reform is harder to institute widely and permanently when

it depends on someone's personality as efficient cause. Dedicated teachers have a tremendous impact, but they cannot reform education single-handedly.

Another kind of mistaken focus takes content to be the end of education, sometimes a very specific content. E.D. Hirsch's massive list, in his best-selling book on cultural literacy, is subtitled: What Every American Needs to Know.²⁶ This wrongly identifies content as the final cause of education. Published in response to public demand, his companion volume, The Dictionary of Cultural Literacy,²⁷ compounded the error by undertaking to identify the items on the list in definitions two or three sentences long. More recently, a new series lists what your child should know grade by grade.

Hirsch's epistemology informs his idea of listing.²⁸ He proposes that we need to learn parts of everything so that we can recognize that part when we meet it in a larger context later. Hence, it is valuable to teach little children the names of the characters in Shakespeare's plays so they will recognize them when they read Hamlet when they are in high school. His view is formulated from a theory of perception; it is a variety of the perception-is-knowledge type of epistemology which Plato criticizes in the *Theatetus*. An epistemology based on appearances cannot account for how we know that what we perceive is what it appears to be. Hirsch's epistemology fails to address how we know the discrete parts of anything in the first place.

The mistaken focus on content seems to be a phenomenon of the conservatism of the nineteen eighties and nineties. Allan Bloom, in The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students,²⁹ asserts that diluting the standard classical curriculum with "relevant" authors, including black, female, and third world writers, has resulted in a generally lower level of education among undergraduates at the elite universities.³⁰ Bloom concentrates on particular ideas that he wants to teach, not the skill of analyzing a text. However, history

teaches us that ideas change. Although some authors may have had much influence, it is absurd to suppose that a certain body of knowledge constitutes an education. Presumably one could finish mastering it and be done. On the other hand, if students learn to figure out what the philosophical assumptions of influential authors are, then they will be in a position to assess what they think of anyone's presuppositions. They will also have a clearer idea of how philosophical positions have affected society. Development of such skills does not require reading a particular set of authors.

Many discussions about reading the so-called "canonical" authors have resulted from the idea that education constitutes mastering a certain content. Some people contend that there is not enough time to sacrifice the classic texts that everyone ought to read for some lesser works just because they are "politically correct." Each age sees what it wants to see; our revisions of the canon are a necessary part of this reinterpretation. History is *our* view of the past. It cannot be the past itself. As Kant tells us, we always see things as we see them, never as they are in themselves.

Another mistake takes mastery of content for what is interesting or useful about that content. Being able to regurgitate some assignment differs from truly understanding the material. Not only is it silly to merely repeat everything some person said as the only possible source of truth, it is also harmful because it perpetuates any errors there might be. This happened to Aristotle in the middle ages. We can also go wrong the other way, and abandon what is good in an author because there are some things we disagree with, which happened to Aristotle in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, it would be better to retain what is useful or applicable and discard what is not. Human knowledge accumulates gradually by sorting out ideas. The continuity of human thought is much too valuable to theorize anew each generation. But it is also important to be able to recognize what needs changing and be able to change it. Change for the sake of innovation is as absurd as conservatism for

the sake of tradition.

Postmodernism takes cultural diversity to override the commonalities of culture, making a universal ethic like Kant's categorical imperative seem arrogant at best, impossible at worst. But the point of Kant's ethical principle is that it is applicable globally. His third formulation of the categorical imperative requires that we always act as if we were members of a kingdom of ends. This would certainly include respecting other people's cultural traditions. *Perpetual Peace* shows how thoroughly Kant believed this; if everyone followed the categorical imperative, there would be no need for war, since the only justified wars are wars of self-defense, and no one would attack if all nations acted morally.

Cultural diversity can coexist with Kant's universal morality, however, in the conventions of any society which differ but are not contrary to the universal ethic. Ethnic practices exemplify conventions consistent with a universal ethic. Cuisine, music, costumes, language, folk art, and various kinds of manners and practices are matters of convention, worthy of respect as long as they are not demeaning to anyone, members of the group or otherwise. Aquinas has a nice way to discuss this issue; he says that human law must accord with the divine law, but can regulate human actions in ways not contrary to divine law. Multicultural takes national cultural practices to be more important than what is common to human societies. Although this may seem to be the way to correct a rampant nationalism that disregards the importance of cultural differences, and even seeks to obliterate other cultures because of their supposed inferiority, there is plenty of scope for a celebration of difference. The conventions people choose to practice are a matter of their preferences. Richard Rhoads formulates a similar idea in the conclusion of his book, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*. Rhoads recommends a strong United Nations but suggests relegating the idea of nationality to something like national theme parks.³¹ Nationalism is deeply ingrained in human beings, or else we wouldn't have as many troubles over this issue as we perennially have. But nationalism, rightly interpreted, is

also consistent with a universal principle of morality by which people can agree upon what is right. I maintain the ends of education are universal, consistent with a universal morality, and allowing scope for cultural diversity. Mistaking promotion of nationalistic purposes for the ends of education makes a global view impossible.

Another mistake occurs when the formal organization of education takes precedence over the accomplishment of the ends of education. Thinking that reform lies in changing the schedule of a school without examining what is accomplished by the changes is fruitless. Unless schedule changes serve the ends of education, they are merely formal. We don't rearrange how students spend their time for the sake of a schedule change alone. Students need the chance to practice autonomy, but most schools are organized with few opportunities. A schedule that allowed students more chances to practice autonomy would promote the ends of education. Curriculum is important in so far as it allows students to acquire the theoretical and technical knowledge they need to practice excellence. But they need the chance to develop into autonomous human beings, too.

Another formal aspect of education, grading, presents additional problems. Grades are often mistaken for final cause; yet, at best, all they can do is measure accomplishment of school tasks that relate to final cause in various ways. Grades also serve as motivation, an aspect of efficient cause. Distinction between grades as a measure of achievement and as motivation may help. Grades that measure achievement by a criterion-referenced standard, provided the standard is properly set, provide a measure of the level of mastery of a subject by different people. Grades which measure achievement by a norm-referenced standard merely rank students according to how they did on a particular measure in reference to a particular group of people at a particular time. Grades of this sort are affected by the composition of the particular group, the appropriateness of the task, whether the teacher succeeded in teaching the subject matter, the difficulty of the test, and the time it took the student to accomplish the tasks set by the test. On the other hand, curriculum-based assessment measures

student progress against a professional projection of a satisfactory rate of advance for that student. A portfolio contains a cumulative record of a student's best work. Grading is an aspect of formal cause which should foster the ends of education we hope to achieve, but it is not an end in itself.

Other recent reform movements have concentrated on teaching methods. Madeline Hunter's teacher effectiveness training is an example which was popular in the public schools in the nineteen eighties. Hunter rightly advises that teachers need to seek formative feedback, as well as give it to students. She has devised useful stratagems like signaling, which insure that teachers will immediately address the failure of students to get a point, instead of waiting until they fail a test. She faces the issue of teaching all the students in a class, instead of counting it a success if some understand what is being taught. However, Hunter does not address more than her claims cover — teacher effectiveness. She does not analyze student effectiveness, so to speak, nor the appropriateness of the content, nor the goals. But clearly final cause is more important; people have to know where they are going before they can decide how to get there.

Hunter does not suggest that her method is the only theory relevant to education, but over-zealous administrators who like the simple clarity of her model use lists of "Hunter's behaviors" to be exhibited by teachers as an evaluation instrument. This changes the model from a useful one that addresses a part of the efficient cause of education to a merely formal model which may or may not address the issue of effectiveness. a similar mistake consists of using lists of "Bloom's verbs"³² to judge what level of knowledge a teacher is addressing when she writes objectives containing verbs. This reduces what might be a useful analytical tool to a mindless exercise in formality. The effective schools movement is subject to a similar error. Administrators may focus on the appearance of success, aiming to reproduce the statistics of schools judged to be effective on some external criterion like test scores, drop out rates, or placement results, which do not, by themselves, indicate real success. When gov-

ernment officials report that our schools are failing, based on comparing scores on standardized examinations with other countries, they make a similar mistake.

Even well-intentioned reforms like inclusion can lead us away from what we want to accomplish if they become the end rather than the means of achieving the end. Inclusion, properly implemented, would undoubtedly contribute to fulfilling the potential of many special education students. But when inclusion is implemented merely by placing those students in a regular classroom without the support services needed to make it work, it may actually subvert the end and retard the progress of those it is intended to help. We need to formulate ways of implementing inclusion that are actually based on assessing whether or not the method chosen contributes to the goal. This will require thoughtful restructuring of the present system.³³

A new fad of the nineteen-nineties is “outcomes-based education.” This requires that a teacher do what good teachers have always done: figure out what the students should learn, teach it to them, and evaluate whether they learned it. The problem is that listing the outcomes often goes astray. Sometimes, outcomes are listed as course content. There is nothing wrong with listing content, but that is material cause, not final cause. If we are going to talk about curriculum, we ought to be clear that curriculum is content and content is not purpose. Other planned “outcomes” make other mistakes. In planning the district outcomes, schools address global goals. One example states: “We will successfully teach all students.”³⁴ The emptiness of this utterance should be apparent. The intentions are good, but formulating such a claim is absurd. It does nothing towards accomplishing such a goal, and indeed, may disguise a deceptively thin program.

A transcendental ideal is not a statement about future facts. Such a statement can only be a guess, at best. We can’t claim empirical knowledge about the future. Hume points out to us, we can only assume that the future will be like the past. A transcendental ideal is an

ideal towards which to strive. Unfortunately the whole outcomes-based idea mistakenly encourages teachers to think in terms of future facts instead of striving toward ends. "Outcomes-based education" is especially damaging when the real threat is this: if students don't accomplish the outcome, they must repeat the process until they do (which, by the way, ignores the question of whether the process is appropriate). The result of this implicit threat is to set the expectations low, so as to be assured of "success," especially where no additional time is allotted to already overworked teachers to carry out additional work. The temptation is to design easy examinations if the teacher has to reteach the material and re-administer the examination until everyone passes. "Outcomes-based education" is right in its intention to offer every student the chance to accomplish certain goals, but this is only successful if the outcomes are rightly determined and the conditions needed to carry them out provided. Again, if guidance from final cause is missing, concentration on instrumentalities may go astray.

In the first part of this paper, I have suggested what sorts of things we could say about the final cause of education, building on Aristotle's formulation, adding autonomy from the work of Kant, and extending these ends to a global society as Dewey insists. We may want to reformulate these ends, adding goals relating to emotional maturity or spiritual development. Whether we are satisfied with what I have developed or not, we ought to formulate the ends for which we engage in the purposeful venture of educating our youth. I think the final cause of education ought to be stated as a transcendental ideal. The formulation I have suggested is that 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.

In the second part of this paper, I have examined various reform movements which pass through our public schools every few years. I have tried to suggest that their cyclic nature may result from addressing only some part of the causes of education, the formal cause,

the efficient cause, or the material cause, or parts thereof, while failing to address final cause adequately. Clearly final cause determines the others. We must know why we are doing something before we can ascertain in what order, by what method, and with what materials we should pursue our purpose. My hope is that this analysis, brief though it be, will provide a framework by which to analyze educational change with a view to developing lasting and cumulative reforms in American public education.

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ENDNOTES

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3. Aristotle uses the generic term, ἀνθρωπος (*anthropos*), meaning mankind rather than the gender specific term, ἀνήρ (*aner*), meaning man. Aristotle, Metaphysics, Book I, Chapter 1, in McKeon, 243 [980a, 20-25].
4. Liddell and Scott, 1784-1785.
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7. See my paper, "Fostering Autonomy," forthcoming in Educational Theory, for implications of Kant's categorical imperative for education.
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28. Hirsch, Cultural Literacy, 48-56.
29. Allan Bloom, The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987).
30. This is the thesis of the whole book, but can be found stated generally in the opening sections. Bloom, 47-61.
31. I heard Rhoads expound on this idea in a public lecture in 1986 or 1987. It is also implicit in the last chapter of his book. Richard Rhoads, The Making of the Atomic Bomb (New York: Simon and Schuster: 1986) 778-788.
32. These are lists of verbs to be used in writing short term objectives on Individualized Educational Plans, or outcomes in outcomes-based plans, that are supposed to indicate the level of thinking skills addressed by Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives.
33. Jim Black, Systems Change Project, Syracuse University, "An Outline of a Process for Restructuring Service Delivery Models for Inclusion in New York State" (draft presented at The Council for Exceptional Children Conference: "School Reform: Rethinking Education as We Know It" (Geneseo, New York, April 1, 1995).
34. Lawrence, Kansas, USD 497 Mission Statement inscribed on all public relations materials and stationary issued in 1992-1993.

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THE LESSONS OF ÉMILE

Douglas W. Shrader¹

The year was 1712. The place: Geneva, Switzerland. The event: the birth of a child. The child's father, an eccentric watchmaker, was French. His mother, who died a few days following his birth, was Swiss. For the next ten years the child lived with his father in Geneva.² By his own confession, Jean Jacques Rousseau was an undisciplined and difficult child — lying, stealing, and general mischief-making came easily. So too did reading. Years later, seeking to understand the person he had become, the author of Émile reflected:

Tedium drove me at an early age to books. At six I happened to light on Plutarch; at eight I knew him by heart; I had read all the romances; they had drawn from me floods of tears before the age when the heart has awakened to an interest in romance. From this source sprang my taste for the heroic and romantic, which has never ceased growing to the present time, and has ended by blunting my taste for everything which does not resemble my day-dreams.³

When the dreamer was ten his father left him in the care of an aunt who enrolled him in boarding school.⁴ Two years was enough for all concerned. Anyone who has ever had to work with an intelligent but uncooperative child has perhaps a taste of the experience which Rousseau later described as an attempt to teach him “Latin and all the trifling rubbish that goes with it in the name of education.”⁵

Thus, at twelve, Rousseau's formal education came to an end. He was apprenticed to an engraver of watchcases, but ran away. He described the engraver as “a coarse, violent man” who “succeeded in tarnishing all the brightness of my childhood, in brutalizing my loving, vivacious character, and in reducing me, in spirit as well as in fortune, to the true condition of an apprentice.”⁶ By sixteen, he was

a vagabond, wandering about the countryside with neither purpose nor direction. He moved from benefactor to benefactor, experienced the lives and hardships of the peasants, developed musical skills, and continued to read and reflect about everything he encountered.

In 1741 he went to Paris where he was received well by Diderot and other leaders of the French Enlightenment. In 1746 Rousseau met Thérèse Levasseur, an uneducated servant girl who bore him five children. Twenty-two years later, in 1768, they added marriage vows to their controversial love affair.

In October 1749 this introspective romantic made the transition from reading to writing. The Dijon Academy offered a prize for the best essay on the topic, "Has the restoration of the Arts and Sciences had a purifying effect upon morals?" Rousseau answered a resounding "No!" In the prize-winning essay, Discourse on the Arts and Sciences, he argued that morals had been corrupted by sensuous art, licentious literature, and falsely conceived relationships between science and religion on the one hand and logic and feeling on the other. After thirty-eight years of near obscurity, the work launched Rousseau into the center of the European political and intellectual scene with such force that Diderot commented, "never was there an instance of a like success."⁷

Rousseau followed with an operetta (Le Devin du Village), a comedy (Narcisse), a discourse on The Origins of the Inequality Among Men, Discourse on Political Economy, a love story (Julie, ou La Nouvelle Héloïse), Émile, The Social Contract, and posthumously, Confessions. Rousseau regarded Émile as the culmination of his life's work. The Social Contract, often regarded as a foundational document of the French Revolution, was for Rousseau little more than an appendix to this, the primary work.⁸ Partially because of the views which it contained concerning religion, Émile became both popular and controversial. It was banned, condemned as the work of the Antichrist⁹, and a warrant was issued for Rousseau's arrest. The celebrated author became a hunted fugitive.

But neither Rousseau nor his work were easily arrested. He left Paris and took refuge with others, including a sixteen-month stay in England with David Hume. Immanuel Kant, awakened from his dogmatic slumbers by Hume, stated that no book had ever moved him so deeply as Rousseau's *Émile*. Goethe called it "the teacher's gospel."¹⁰ Mirabeau ranked it as one of the masterpieces of the age and Chateaubriand wrote: "If one could read no more than five works in the whole of literature, *Émile* would be one of them."¹¹

Two-hundred and thirty-four years later *Émile* remains a controversial yet influential work. It is not difficult to reconstruct the fire and passion with which it was once read. Nor is it difficult to imagine the passion with which it was written. Like *Julie*, *Émile* is a love story. It is a story of love between parent and child, teacher and pupil, *Émile* and *Sophia*, and Jean Jacques Rousseau and *Thérèse Levasseur*. It is a story of love for all humankind.¹² As such it is as much a theory of human development, nature, freedom, and fulfillment as it is a prescription for education.

The premise of the story is fairly simple. *Émile* is an affluent orphan "of ordinary ability" in a temperate climate.¹³ The tutor, the author of the text, has no task more important than the education of this single child. In practice, Rousseau regarded himself as a failure as both father and teacher.¹⁴ But in his literary incarnation as *Émile*'s tutor, he exhibits calm compassionate resolve, flawless foresight, universal understanding, and single-minded dedication to the welfare of his charge.

Rousseau begins with the observation that a child is not an adult. He writes:

Nothing is known about childhood. With our false ideas of it the more we do, the more we blunder. The wisest people are so much concerned with what grown ups should know that they never consider what children are capable of learning. They keep looking for the man in the child, not thinking of what he is before he becomes a man.¹⁵

From this simple observation, several consequences follow. First, a human is something which comes into being over time. Any adequate theory of education presupposes an empirical study of human development as well as a philosophical theory of human nature. While there is much in Rousseau's theory of development which we would now consider uninformed or naive, the judgment paradoxically confirms the extent to which we have accepted the general framework of his approach.

Second, there is no reason to presume, either from a moral or pragmatic perspective, that the goals and motivations of a child are parallel to those of an adult. For Rousseau, children operate almost entirely on the basis of self-interest (*amour de soi*): they seek pleasure and avoid pain. Any attempt to pretend otherwise only muddies the water and confuses both child and adult. Worse, it may hamper the natural moral development of the child.

Third, almost a simple corollary to the second point, the methods of instruction appropriate to an adult may be wasted on a child. Rousseau is particularly critical of books and language instruction. The man who read Plutarch at six shields Émile from books till age twelve. He writes:

I hate books. They only teach us to talk about what we do not know. It is said that Hermes engraved the elements of science on pillars for fear his discoveries might perish in a deluge. If he had impressed them firmly on the human brain, they would have been kept safe there by tradition.¹⁶

Stressing natural curiosity, pragmatism, and self-reliance, he chooses *Robinson Crusoe* as the first and primary text of Émile's adolescence. Lest we miss the symbolic importance of the choice, he writes:

... let us hasten to establish him on this island while he is able to find complete happiness on it, for the day draws near when he will no longer want to live alone, and when

Friday's company will not content him.¹⁷

For Rousseau, the stages of individual human development recapitulate those of the species as a whole. In fact, one may reasonably regard *Émile* as a microcosmic analogue of our collective being. We begin as innocent infants in a paradisiacal state of nature. From five to twelve we begin to develop selfconsciousness but still have no proper sense of self or power of reason. Reason and the sentiments develop from twelve to fifteen. Sexual awareness and social relations dominate the period from fifteen to twenty-two. *Émile* longs for a companion and is carefully introduced to the society from which he has thus far been meticulously sheltered. When the time is right, he meets Sophia and falls in love. His love for Sophia is strong, but his trust in the wisdom of the tutor is stronger. The tutor advises, "This is the age for love but not for marriage. You are too young to be the father and mother of a family."¹⁸ Thus from twenty-two to twenty-four *Émile* travels broadly and develops a sense of citizenship and social order. He returns a mature adult, ready to marry Sophia and instruct his own children according to the model provided by the tutor.

Although *Émile* has learned several trades through apprenticeship, notably that of a carpenter, his education has not been designed to prepare him for any particular vocation.¹⁹ Rather, the focus has been to create a physically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially adjusted individual who can choose his own path, adapt to changing circumstances, and maximize his own happiness as well as that of others. In the final analysis *Émile* is not one self but three: a natural self which somehow persists throughout the socialization process, a private familial self, and a self which functions as a rational autonomous citizen. To deny any one of the three would be to lose a component of being which cannot be replaced or duplicated by the remaining two.²⁰

The tutor's method throughout the entire educational process is simple but consistent. He determines through observation as well as knowledge of general principles *Émile's* readiness for a lesson of a

particular sort. He then carefully and unobtrusively arranges circumstances so that Émile may acquire through personal experience the optimal measure of learning appropriate to his needs and developmental stage. The method is one and the same, whether the topic be physics or religion, ethics or geometry.

Both motivation and reward are natural and spontaneous: curiosity and need. The tutor has need of neither carrot nor stick; there are no exams, no grades, and no formal evaluations. As a child, Émile is subject to the authority of the tutor. But that authority is presented as a matter-of-fact parameter of cause and effect. It is never given as a basis for belief or acceptance of a doctrine which cannot be verified on independent experiential grounds.

Rousseau's trust in this simple method reflects a commitment to two interconnected principles. Human development is presented as a product of an ongoing dialectic between nature and nurture. All things, including humans, are naturally good. Through inappropriate conditioning they are misshapen and deformed. Book I of Émile begins:

God makes all things good; man meddles with them and they become evil. He forces one soil to yield the products of another, one tree to bear another's fruit. He confuses and confounds time, place, and natural conditions. He mutilates his dog, his horse, and his slave. He destroys and defaces all things; he loves all that is deformed and monstrous; he will have nothing as nature made it, not even man himself, who must learn his paces like a saddlehorse, and be shaped to his master's taste like the trees in his garden.²¹

We may long for a mythic state of nature in which socialization was neither practiced nor necessary, but such is rather like longing for a return to the cradle. There is no going back and no escaping the influence of the societies in which we live. Since we cannot escape the influence, we must control and direct it in a positive fashion.

Any hope for the future of mankind is laid squarely to rest on the shoulders of the educational process.

Education, Rousseau continues, stems from three sources: nature (innate processes of growth and development), humans (the use which we learn to make of this growth), and things (what we gain by experience of our surroundings). To achieve the optimal effect, the three sources must work together. Since we cannot control nature, it is incumbent upon us to adjust what we can so that it works in concert with, rather than contrary to, the principles of natural development.

Those who have studied Taoism will recognize strong parallels, but differences as well. According to Lao-tzu's small text commonly called Tao Te Ching, the entire universe — human and otherwise — is a complex manifestation of a unitary power or force (the *Tao*). To appreciate the complexity of the *Tao* one must recognize three complementary faces. The invisible face — the unmanifest *Tao* — cannot be seen, named, or conceptualized. It is the *Tao* as it is in and of itself. This is the face whereof Lao-tzu says, "He who speaks does not know. He who knows does not say." The second face of the *Tao*, the visible face — the manifest *Tao* — is that which is found in all nature: it directs the growing of a tree, the flowing of a stream, and the swaying of grass in a gentle breeze. It also directs the lightning which splits the tree, the disruption of the stream by a rockslide, and the intense burning of a grass fire. The third face of the *Tao*, the inner face, merits a special name: the *Te*. Like the anamnestic *eidola* of the Platonic forms, the *Te* is carried deep but forgotten within the being of each and every human.

The tree has no choice but to grow according to the *Tao*. The stream has no choice but to flow according to the *Tao*. The human is different. We can live a full satisfying life in harmony with the rest of the universe according to the *Tao*; but we can also choose to swim upstream.²² Confused by the conflicting dictates of society, we may even find it difficult to find the *Te* within.²³ To help still the conflict,

Taoism advocates non-action (*wu wei*) and minimalist government. Ruling a large country, it is said, is like cooking a small fish: it is best not to overdo it. That government is best which governs least.

Wu wei is somewhat more difficult to explain. Some, not without warrant, translate the phrase as “effortless action.” The story is told, for example, of a butcher who used the same cleaver for many years. Though he never sharpened it, it never grew dull. The secret was not in the cleaver, but in its use. He explained, “Between the bones of every joint there is some space, otherwise there could be no movement.” Like the river flowing down the mountainside, the butcher simply allowed his cleaver to find those spaces and follow the path of least resistance.²⁴

In the Tao Te Ching, the concept of *wu wei* is expressed with stark simplicity: the way to do is to be. If your life is a natural expression of the *Tao*, no action is necessary. If it is not, none is sufficient. As a result, there is no standard moral code or set of divine commandments to regulate human behavior.

In Zen Buddhism, a religion strongly influenced by Taoism, the story is told of a young monk who worried that his monastic training may be a complete waste of time. “I have been here several years,” he complained. “I have done all that was asked of me, but still I have not discovered the appearance of my original face. I do not even know whether I had an existence prior to this one or whether I will have another life when this one is over. Tell me, is this just a colossal waste of time? Is there any hope for me? Is there a way?” The roshi listened patiently to the monk’s concerns, then asked, “Do you hear the babbling of the brook?” The monk paused, shifted his attention from his intellectual self-regarding concerns to the simple sound of the brook, then answered, “Yes.” The roshi responded, in characteristic Zen fashion, “Then there may yet be a way.”²⁵

While it is perhaps overreaching to characterize Émile’s tutor as a Zen master or Taoist sage, his techniques and goals bear striking

structural and philosophical similarity to the practices and values of both. Like them, he favors the teaching of the willow tree or the babbling brook to religious scriptures, literary classics, and the learned treatises of the intellectual elite. Like them, he teaches not by teaching, but by arranging circumstances so that inner illumination may occur. Like them, he seeks only to assist the development of a fully realized human being; occupation and social station matter only insofar as they affect attainment of this goal. And like them, he places strong emphasis on humble, ordinary things.

Asked the secret of Zen, a roshi replied, "When I am hungry, I eat. When I am tired, I sleep." The questioner pressed, "Doesn't everyone do that?" The roshi explained, "Oh no! Most people eat when they are not hungry and sleep when they are not tired. They talk with their mouths full and interrupt their sleep with regrets of the day or worries about the morrow. They attempt to do a thousand things at once, sacrificing each to the next and the one which came before. They are governed by social custom and the clock, and no longer hear the simple needs of their own being." Like the roshi, Émile will eat when he is hungry and sleep when he is tired. As a child, Émile will be free to be a child — nothing more and nothing less. As he progresses from stage to stage, the activities and expectations of the tutor will change accordingly. Because he understands the rhythms of nature (the *Tao*) he will not make the mistake of the foolish farmer who, impatient with the development of his crops, attempted to make them grow faster by pulling on their stalks at night.²⁶

When the time is right, illumination will come. As helpful as the teacher may be, it is the student who must learn the lesson. My eating will not sate your hunger; my drinking will not quench your thirst. As in *satori*, insight may come suddenly and with great force. Rousseau recounted the watershed experience in his life as follows:

I had just been to see Diderot, at that time a prisoner at Vincennes. I had in my pocket a copy of the *Mercure de France*, which I started reading as I walked. My eye fell

on the subject set for an essay by the Dijon Academy, which was the occasion of my first attempt at writing. If anything ever resembled a sudden inspiration, it was the feelings which I experienced on reading this announcement; I felt suddenly dazzled by flashes of illumination; crowds of clear ideas came to me in a moment, with a confusing force which left me inexpressibly troubled; my brain seemed dazed, like that of a drunken man... Could I ever have written a quarter of what I then saw and felt, how clearly should I have revealed the contradictions of the social system! With what force I should have exposed the abuses of our institutions! With what ease I should have shown that man is naturally good and only becomes bad through our institutions! All that I could retain of that host of all-important truths which revealed themselves to me in that quarter of an hour has been feebly scattered through my three principle works: The First Discourse, the Discourse on Inequality, and the Treatise on Education. The three works are inseparable, and together form one whole.²⁷

Rousseau's vision concerned human freedom, happiness, and the oppressive potential of social circumstances. Perhaps ironically, application of these principles in the era in which he lived produced an educational theory which presupposed the very conditions it was meant to produce, depended heavily on chance, required economic resource and social position far beyond the reach of most people, and assumed critical differences in the nature of men and women. Whereas *Émile* was educated to cultivate independence, *Sophia* was taught servility from infancy.

Rousseau notes similarities as well as differences between the genders, speaks of each as perfect according to their own nature, and thus eschews any talk of superiority or inequality. That said, he speaks of:

...the *first* difference which has to be noted in their per-

sonal relations. It is the part of the one to be active and strong, and of the other to be passive and weak. Accept this principle and it follows in the *second* place that woman is intended to please man. If the man requires to please the woman in turn the necessity is less direct. Masterfulness is his special attribute. He pleases her by the very fact that he is strong.²⁸

If perchance our contemporary feminist is not offended by this passage, she need only read on. Because men and women play different domestic roles, Rousseau prescribes a different education:

On the good constitution of the mothers depends that of the children and the early education of men is in their hands. On women too depend the morals, the passions, the tastes, the pleasures, aye and the happiness of men. For this reason their education must be wholly directed to their relations with men. To give them pleasure, to be useful to them, to win their love and esteem, to train them in their childhood, to care for them when they grow up, to give them counsel and consolation, to make life sweet and agreeable for them: these are the tasks of women in all times for which they should be trained from childhood.²⁹

As narrow and self-serving as these remarks may be, Rousseau is not through. To help *Émile* develop religious convictions which are truly his own, formed on the basis of personal experience and the natural exercise of reason, the tutor delays instruction as long as possible:

At fifteen he was not aware that he had a soul, and perhaps at eighteen it is not yet time for him to learn. For if he learns sooner than is necessary he runs the risk of never knowing.³⁰

Training, before the child is ready, introduces mere repetition of words and phrases as sanctioned substitutes for spiritual insight

and personal commitment. It closes the mind and nurtures narrow, idolatrous concepts. Rousseau cautions:

Let us be on guard against presenting the truth to those unable to comprehend it. The effect of that is to substitute error for truth. It would be better to have no idea of the Divine Being than to have ideas that are mean, fantastic and unworthy...

The worst thing about the distorted images of the Deity imprinted on children's minds, is that they endure all their lives, so that even when they grow up their God is still the God of their childhood.³¹

How strange these words, written to guide the education of *Émile*, seem when set against the following advice concerning Sophia's training:

It is obvious that if male children cannot form any true idea of religion it is still more beyond the comprehension of girls. For that very reason I would speak to them about it at an earlier age, for if it were necessary to wait till they were able to discuss these profound questions the chances are that they would never be mentioned at all. Just as a women's conduct is subject to public opinion, so is her faith subject to authority. Every girl should have her mother's religion, and every women her husband's. Not being able to judge for themselves in such matters, they should accept the conviction of fathers and husbands as they accept that of the church.³²

While the heresy differs, Rousseau's views are no more politically correct in late twentieth century America than they were in eighteenth century Europe. Paradoxically, for that very reason, they retain the power to challenge and expand our understanding of self, society, and education. Now, as then, *Émile* evokes and elicits as much as it instructs. Do we truly understand the development of a

child or the workings of the human mind? Do we push certain subjects too soon or introduce others too late? Have we lost the individual in an unfeeling bureaucratic system or misguided quest for social uniformity? Have we sacrificed our children on the altars of false gods or politically fashionable ideals?

There are many ways to read *Émile*. We can agree or disagree, affirm or deny, cherish or criticize. Whatever stance we take, the text provides a vivid reminder that our educational views and practices are never far from our philosophical, political, and social commitments. Some sections will produce a nod of the head or flash of recognition. Others are more likely to be dismissed as naive or uninformed. Along the way we gather not only an understanding of Rousseau's views, but a new perspective concerning our own. Like a Taoist parable or Zen *koan*, *Émile* is a simple story which touches us at a level just below the threshold of conventional wisdom. We lose sight of *Émile* and see ourselves.

Émile still issues a wake-up call. It still serves as a potent antidote to complacent opinion and unquestioning certitude. It still ignites the passions and initiates a process of challenge, response, recognition, and growth. Rousseau would perhaps envy our position, for we can learn from his errors as well as his insight. In true Socratic fashion, we can use his text to loosen the fetters of contemporary opinion and open our minds to new, creative options.³³ In the ensuing dialectic, we may find ways to elevate both the *Émiles* and *Sophias* of tomorrow to levels of awareness, freedom, and being of which Rousseau could only dream.

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ENDNOTES

1. A preliminary version of this paper was presented at the New York State Foundations of Education Association Annual Conference, SUNY-Cortland, April 1995. Sincere appreciation is expressed to both conference organizers and fellow participants, especially Norman Bauer, Edwin

- Cook, Michael Green, Achim Köddermann, and Anthony Roda.
2. Boyd (1911), p. 3. Stumpf, pp. 290-291.
 3. Letter to M. de Malesherbes (January 12, 1762). Included in Archer, p. 21. Regarding the influence of Plutarch, note Les Rêveries du Promeneur solitaire: Quatrième Promenade and Rousseau's 1756 letter to Madame d'Épinay. He and his father would sometimes sit throughout the night, reading romantic and sensational stories to one another (Boyd [1911], pp. 3-4 and Davidson, pp. 27-28)
 4. Boyd (1911), pp. 7-9. Davidson dates their parting to 1720, when Rousseau was but eight (pp. 26-32).
 5. Confessions: Davidson, p. 29. Cf. Boyd (1911), p. 7 and Stumpf, p. 291.
 6. Davidson, p. 32.
 7. Stumpf, p. 292.
 8. Thus he wrote to Duchesne: "My treatise on the Social Contract...being cited several times and even summarized in the educational treatise must pass as a sort of appendix to it, and the two together make a complete whole." Ellis, p. 1. cf. p. 4.
 9. Ellis, p. 9.
 10. Lawrence A. Cremin, preface to Boyd, The Émile of Jean Jacques Rousseau.
 11. 1797. André Boutet de Monvel, p. ix.
 12. Rousseau is clear in this regard. He writes: "The story of human nature is a fair romance. Am I to blame if it is to be found only in this book? It ought to be the story of mankind." (Émile—Ellis, p. 1). Cf. Boyd (1956), pp. 155-156.
 13. Boyd (1956), p. 20.
 14. *Ibid*, pp. 19-20. André Boutet de Monvel, p. vii.
 15. Rousseau's preface to Émile. Boyd (1956), pp. 5-6.
 16. *Ibid*, p. 83. Compare Plato's misgivings re writing in Phaedrus [275-278]: Shrader, "Words of Love: Eros and Rhetoric in Plato's Phaedrus".
 17. *Ibid*, p. 85.
 18. Boyd (1956), p. 160. For comparison, Sophia is eighteen.
 19. Early in Book I, Rousseau writes: "In the natural order where all men are equal, manhood is the common vocation. One who is well educated for that will not do badly in the duties that pertain to it. The fact that my pupil is intended for the army, the church or the bar, does not greatly concern me. Before the vocation determined by his parents comes the call of nature to the life of human kind. Life is the business

I would have him learn. When he leaves my hands, I admit he will not be a magistrate, or a soldier, or a priest. First and foremost, he will be a man. All that a man must be he will be when the need arises, as well as anyone else. Whatever the changes of fortune he will always be able to find a place for himself.” Boyd (1956), pp. 14-15. David Hume, in An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, expressed the principle as a personal maxim: “Be a philosopher; but amidst all your philosophy, be still a man.”

20. Rorty, p. 52.
21. Foxley, p. 5.
22. It is interesting and instructive to compare this notion with Jewish, Christian, and Islamic concepts of free will and original sin.
23. It is also interesting and instructive to compare this idea to the Socratic method of dialectical questioning and his practice of intellectual midwifery. The dross of *doxa*, even if correct, may obscure the *episteme* hidden within.
24. Adapted from Smith, p. 205.
25. Adapted from D.T. Suzuki, Zen Buddhism.
26. The story is one told by Mencius, reported in Smith, p. 203.
27. Letter to M. de Malesherbes (January 12, 1762). Archer, p. 23.
28. Boyd (1956), p. 131.
29. *Ibid*, p. 135.
30. *Ibid*, p. 114.
31. *Ibid*, p. 114.
32. *Ibid*, p. 144.
33. Note note 22..

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On Schooling and Democracy: Thoughts on the Relevance of John Dewey

John Ryder¹.

There are no doubt many issues and problems with which contemporary American education has to grapple, but it may be that none of them are as significant, because of its extensive ramifications, as the problem of the relation between schooling and the requirements of a genuinely democratic society. ¹ Many of the central concerns with which the problem of the relation of schooling to democracy deals have been dealt with many times: the “requirements” which a democratic society has of its schools; the historical background of the development of the common school and its place in democratic life; the tension existing in contemporary struggles over the character of schooling and education; the appropriate curriculum of a course in a democratic “civics”; the relation of schools to their communities; the problems of race and ethnicity in schools; the place of vocations and vocational training in schooling; the relation of the interests of private business to democratic schooling; and, finally, the possibility of schools being a source of democratic social change. I will not try to rehearse the ways these many thorny problems have been handled. I will instead focus on a couple of the questions which concern the nature of democratic culture, and consider the problem of schools in relation to it.

It would be appropriate to begin by saying that contemporary schooling fails to do what democracy requires of it, and that the contemporary rhetoric about education does not understand this failure to develop a democratic education. Actually, to ascribe the inaccuracies of the current rhetoric to a simple failure to understand is probably too generous a reading, since it is far more likely that those in leadership positions do not see the problem because they do not want to see the problem, or that they see it perfectly well, but have become adept at obscuring it. We probably need to say something to the effect that the demands of a genuine democracy differ so extensively

from our current circumstances, in society generally and in education in particular, that any useful and forward looking approach to the issue will have to be a fairly radical one. Perhaps the most profound American figure to have argued persistently for a radically democratic conception of education and society as a whole is John Dewey. I often think that many of us who appreciate Dewey's work fail to see just how radical his ideas are. This is not to say that Dewey is the only or in all respects the best place to look for a democratic treatment of education in modern times. Other names come to mind, the most outstanding of which is Paulo Freire. A comparison of Freire's and Dewey's ideas can make for very interesting reading, and there is a good deal in both of them that speaks to contemporary problems of education and democracy . I know of no one, for example, who has given such extended treatment of the question of what a democratically structured education might look like than has Freire. The entire dialogical process of arriving at generative themes and examining them to bring into focus pedagogically relevant material represents a kind of radically democratic education that few if any of us have even dared attempt.

However, despite the fact that the problem of schooling and democracy can and ultimately should lead us to consider Freire and others, for the purposes of this paper I will focus our discussion a bit closer to home, speaking in national terms anyway. Dewey may or may not be the most significant thinker to have concerned himself with democracy and schooling, but he is certainly at the very least one of the most important of them, and I would like to take the next few minutes to point to some of the features of Dewey's ideas about education and democracy in order to give that claim some substance.

We might begin with the observation that the criticism of contemporary education as insufficiently democratic may be moot depending on which conception of democracy and of education we are inclined to endorse. For example, if one regards democracy primarily as the legally provided opportunity to choose occasionally between candidates for political office from two or more organized par-

ties, then one might respond critics of contemporary American democracy that since American society provides such an opportunity, the criticism of the *system* as insufficiently democratic is off the mark. On this view, if there is insufficient democracy, it is simply because people do not care enough to participate, but then on this view that is their “democratic” right too, so in the end there really is no problem at all. If people want to participate they can, and if not, it is their choice. That response to the critics seems to me to be unanswerable *if* one accepts the conception of democracy on which it rests. Thus we are pushed necessarily to consider what we mean by “democracy,” or better, what we ought to mean by it. It is on just this question that I think Dewey makes one of his most important contributions.

It has become fairly commonplace among critics of American public life to refer to it as in some ways thin or “anemic,” a term which nicely captures its insubstantial and ineffectual nature. A conception of democracy wherein it means simply voting occasionally for a democrat, republican or “independent” is equally anemic in that it is completely devoid of the character of a more full blooded democracy, and is therefore unable to play the role in individual and public life which a richer conception might. Dewey thought so too, so he looked to construct a more valuable notion of what democracy might mean, and one of the places in which he does this most directly is *Democracy and Education*. First, he makes the point that democracy is not simply a political mechanism, but more importantly it is a way of life, a characteristic of social life in general, and ideally a characteristic of the individual members of that society. A democratic society is a society organized around certain principles, expectations and aspirations, and a democratic individual is a person who not only accepts those same values but is also predisposed to act on them. In his own distinctive way of speaking, Dewey says that “A democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience.”²

This definition already points to the traits of democracy which

distinguish it from other forms of society and ways of life. In good pragmatist fashion, Dewey does not want a conception which is simply drawn from his imagination, so to develop his idea he looks to societies to see if there are traits from which we could construct a workable notion. In any social group at all, he says, "we find some interest held in common, and we find a certain amount of interaction and cooperative intercourse with other groups. From these two traits we derive our standard."³ Every social group, in other words, requires shared interests and communicative interaction. These are necessary conditions of a society that hangs together, of a community, and Dewey defines democracy on the basis of these necessary traits. A democratic society is one which takes as its basic values the necessary conditions of social life, and which acts to deepen and promote those values. Specifically, a democracy requires and promotes "more numerous and more varied points of shared common interest...[and] freer interaction between social groups..."⁴ To put the point positively, a democracy purposefully encourages shared interests and increasingly extensive interaction and communication among individuals and groups in and beyond the society, while a democratic individual embodies and lives on the basis of those same traits. Put negatively, this conception of democracy means that any factors which tend to inhibit shared interests or communicative interaction are to that degree undemocratic.

The statement of the conception of democracy in negative terms can help us see why certain features of a society are obstacles to democracy. Dewey argued, for example, that class distinctions and divisions in a society are undemocratic precisely because they abort the pursuit of shared interests, and the same is true of racial and ethnic divisions. Whatever differences there may be in it, a democratic society will make an ongoing attempt to forge interests among individuals and groups that will bring them together rather than push them apart, that will serve to promote interaction and communication rather than impede it. Where the distinctions are necessary and in their own ways valuable, for example racial, ethnic or cultural distinctions, the democratic spirit will look for points of commonal-

ity; where the differences are not necessary, such as class differences, democracy must look to overcome them since they obstruct shared interests and communication.

A democratic community so understood, Dewey said, is “more interested than other communities have cause to be in deliberate and systematic education.”⁵ Whether such a democracy is really “more interested” than other social forms in education is not so clear, but it should be clear that such a democracy requires education of certain kinds and toward certain ends. A society that genuinely encourages shared interests and communication requires citizens who embody the same commitments. In turn, such a person requires character traits and intellectual dispositions which are conducive to such ends. A democratic individual must be able not only to want shared interests, for example, but he must also be intellectually capable both of recognizing obstacles to shared interests and of figuring out how those obstacles might be overcome. These traits require certain values as well as fairly well developed intellectual abilities, and these it is in part the role of education and schooling to develop.

This last point raises the question of the role of education in the pursuit of a more democratic society. Dewey sometimes said that it is unrealistic to expect schools to be the main agency of social change, given the many and complex factors which contribute to social difficulties. He has a point here, but it did not prevent him from saying in other places that in the long run it *is* the schools where the most systematic responses to challenges to democracy can be confronted. The reason is simply that the schools are the place where the democratic individual can be developed, possibly even in a society in which the other influential structures mitigate against democracy. That Dewey would think this is not surprising; every great theoretician of education has thought so! Plato thought that the virtuous society required an education which could produce the virtuous citizen. That is why his *Republic* is a book about education as much as anything else. Rousseau too thought that justice required an education which could produce a certain kind of person. The only way the General

Will is not oppressive is when the individual will freely accords with it, and the only sort of person for whom the individual will can accord with the General, is the natural person. Rousseau's society, in other words, can only be a society of Emiles. Along the same lines, then, Dewey's democracy, the pursuit of shared interests and ever broadening interaction and communication, requires an education which can produce individuals disposed to and capable of living a democratic life. In the end, whatever specific traits a democratic schooling must have, they will be determined by the ends which this conception of democracy establishes. Civics education, then, is not a specific part of a democratic curriculum, but instead is the end in a teleological sense; it is the theme and the purpose which binds a democratic curriculum together.

This discussion could easily go on indefinitely, so I will end by pointing to two features of our current social situation which seem to me to be among the most serious obstructions to democratic development. I take them both from Dewey. One of those social factors is the problem of class. As long as the control of the productive property of the society is concentrated in relatively few hands, and the distribution of wealth is correspondingly disparate, the shared interests and communicative interaction which democracy requires will elude us. Furthermore, as Westbrook pointed out, and as Dewey had said nearly a century ago, we can expect that those whose class interests are threatened by democratic education will try to prevent it. Dewey put it plainly enough when he said that our "ideal has to contend not only with the inertia of existing educational traditions, but also with the opposition of those who are entrenched in command of the industrial machinery, and who realize that such an educational system if made general would threaten their ability to use others for their own ends."⁶

The second general problem democratic education faces is the problem posed by nationalism and national interests. Dewey had thought that there might be a contradiction here. "Is it possible," he wondered, "for an educational system to be conducted by a national

state and yet the full social ends of the educative process not be restricted, constrained, and corrupted?" The problem, more precisely, is "with the reconciliation of national loyalty, of patriotism, with superior devotion to the things which unite men in common ends, irrespective of national political boundaries."⁷ In the end this tension will have to be resolved somehow, because we cannot do without either term of this relation. A public education which is not democratic is conducive to fascism, and a democratic education which is not public is a contradiction in terms. The narrow, parochial, and in the end stultifying limits of national, religious, racial, ethnic and gender boundaries can only be overcome when the public is committed to a social development which values the common interests and aspirations which define a democratic community.

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ENDNOTES

1. These remarks were originally given as comments on Robert Westbrook's "Public Schooling and American Democracy" at the annual meeting of the New York State Foundations of Education Association, SUNY-Cortland, April, 1995. The text has been changed somewhat to stand on its own, but some of the issues remain those which Westbrook had addressed in his paper.
2. John Dewey, Democracy and Education, The Later Works of John Dewey (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985), 93.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 88.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 92.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 93.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 328-329.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 104

C. WRIGHT MILLS AND THE RISE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ILLITERACY

Timothy Glander

Great works of social analysis and criticism, like great works of art generally, convey multiple layers of understanding and generate multiple forms of meaning to later generations of scholars who engage them. Certainly this is the case with C. Wright Mills's 1956 book The Power Elite, which accurately characterized many of the social and psychological trends which have come to prevail in post-World War II America: the permanent war economy; the increasing collusion of corporate, military, and national political interests; the distracting influence of vacuous celebrity; the narrowing of public discourse and political debate; the centralization of the means of power and the immorality and mindlessness of those who wield it.¹ With forty years of distance between today and the book's original publication date, it is now possible to begin to explore some of Mills's central concepts in historical context. For Mills, this context was shaped at Columbia University where he was an associate professor of sociology throughout the 1950s, and where he had a unique vantage point from which to observe the activities of this emerging power elite. Columbia University during the 1950s, and the Bureau of Applied Social Research in particular, was a virtual microcosm of this elite and its servants, and at least some of Mills's central concepts were based on his observations there. This explains, in part, the somewhat oblique nature of several of Mills's statements in this text, since political and professional pressures forced him to hedge on key points. This also helps to explain the significant connections between Mills's criticism of American society and his criticism of mainstream American sociology.

One such concept worthy of further exploration is that of "psychological illiteracy," which Mills thought was increasingly manifest as American society shifted from a community of publics to a mass society. Mills deals with the notion of psychological illiteracy in Chapter 13 of The Power Elite, entitled "The Mass Society." This

pivotal chapter is a slight reworking of a 1954 essay entitled "Mass Society and Liberal Education," which Mills wrote for the Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, and it articulates a clear purpose for education given the kind of social and psychological changes Mills describes.² If psychological illiteracy represents the emerging condition of human beings in a post-modern, mass society, psychological literacy represents the desired educational goal. Yet, what is this "psychological illiteracy," where does it come from, what are its consequences, and how might it be ameliorated?

In Deweyan fashion, Mills points out that human experience is essentially problematic; all human beings face personal troubles and problems. We learn when we confront these problems, understand the true meaning and source of these problems, and endeavor to solve these problems. This is possible, however, only when social organization provides the avenues by which these problems can be clearly identified and solved. When social organization does not allow for the articulation and examination of real problems, a kind of psychological illiteracy develops; people are frustrated by problems but find no means to clarify the meaning of those problems or understand their origins. For Mills, then, a psychological illiterate lacks the ability to understand the problems in which he or she is engulfed; a psychological illiterate does not have a clear view of himself or herself or the social world in which he or she lives.³

According to Mills, the primary factor in the rise of psychological illiteracy, and the transformation of the community of publics to the mass society, is the mass media of communication:

... in a community of publics, discussion is the ascendant means of communication, and the mass media, if they exist, simply enlarge and animate discussion, linking one primary public with the discussions of another. In a mass society, the dominant type of communication is the formal media, and the publics become mere media markets: all those exposed to the contents of the mass media.⁴

Although we continue to talk about public opinion being the outgrowth of autonomous discussion, as “the result of each man’s having thought things out for himself and contributing his voice to the great chorus,” in reality public opinion is manufactured by people in power, through the use of increasingly sophisticated persuasion and propaganda techniques, as well as newer communication technologies which invade privacy and “encroach upon the small-scale discussion, and destroy the chance for the reasonable and leisurely human interchange of opinion.”⁵ Mills refers to four central dimensions which distinguish a democratic community of publics from a mass society: 1.) In a community of publics as many people speak as those who listen; people are more or less able to formulate opinions based on their own personal experience and to share and debate these opinions with others, many of whom are personally known. In a mass society, a few people are in a position to speak to many million nameless and faceless people and to legitimate a certain view of reality. 2.) In a community of publics people have the opportunity to “immediately and effectively . . . answer back any opinion expressed in public.” In a mass society, on the other hand, there is virtually no way for people to respond immediately and effectively to the opinions provided through the dominant communication outlets; 3.) In a community of publics effective action follows from discussion and debate, while in a mass society “the realization of opinion in action is controlled by authorities who organize and control the channels of such action.” 4.) In a community of publics no instituted authority infiltrates and aims to control public discussion and debate. In a mass society secret police, agent provocateurs, and informers are used to harass, blackball, and intimidate people who might consider speaking out.⁶

Mills acknowledges that the decline of the public and the rise of the mass society is to a considerable extent the consequence of forces largely beyond anyone’s control. Nevertheless, the mass media have enabled the power elite to increasingly control, manipulate and manage public opinion, fostering psychological illiteracy and shaping, among other things, our standards of reality, our self-iden-

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tity, and diminishing our sense of political belongingness. This occurs because the mass media are “organized around stereotypes” by the power elite, and these stereotypes displace direct, personal events of experience as being the most significant way in which people encounter the world. Therefore, the mass media, with the power elite at the controls, work to entrench a psychological disposition in mass society which “is not attuned to the development of the human being. It is the formula of a pseudo-world which the media invent and sustain.”⁷ The stereotypes embodied in the mass media instill in people a predisposition or bias toward that content with which they are exposed: “People tend strongly to select those media with which they already agree. There is a kind of selection of new opinions on the basis of prior opinions.”⁸ Since there is no genuine competition among different media (and much less so today) all mass media seem to embody the same general content, with only slight variation. The only hope of resisting the homogenizing effects of the mass media, and the psychological illiteracy which they foster, is through an interpretation of the “experience of meanings,” the process of uprooting stereotypes so “that an individual sees things freshly in an unstereotyped manner.”⁹

Mills’s conceptualizations of the community of publics and the mass society are, of course, Weberian “ideal types”; they have not existed anywhere at anytime in pure form. Nevertheless, they provide a valuable means of understanding the major social and psychological changes which have transpired in the United States. Yet it is clearly the case that Mills is no relativist or neutral observer in his analysis here; the democratic ideal of the community of publics is more conducive to the positive development of human being than the mass society. The community of publics is premised on the belief that people can understand their worlds with sufficient reason to actually address the problems with which they are confronted. Mills writes:

The knowledgeable man in the genuine public is able to turn his personal troubles into social issues, to see their

relevance for his community and his community's relevance for them. He understands that what he thinks and feels as personal troubles are very often not only that but problems shared by others and indeed not subject to solution by any one individual but only by modifications of the structure of the groups in which he lives and sometimes the structure of the entire society.¹⁰

Yet this is precisely what a psychologically illiterate person is unable to do. Glued to the television screen or the radio receiver the person in the mass society is not in a position either to articulate clearly the source of his or her troubles and anxieties nor to determine whether these troubles are shared by others and perhaps have structural relevancy. Although the mass media provide a glut of information and news about the world,

they do not often enable the listener or the viewer truly to connect his daily life with these larger realities. They do not connect the information they provide on public issues with the troubles felt by the individual. They do not increase rational insight into tensions, either those in the individual or those of the society which are reflected in the individual. On the contrary, they distract him and obscure his chance to understand himself or his world, by fastening his attention upon artificial frenzies that are resolved within the program framework, usually by violent action or by what is called humor.¹¹

Psychologically illiterate persons cannot transcend their personal milieu; they are unable to get a view of the larger structure of society, nor to understand how this structure shapes their life experiences. The ultimate consequence of the rise of psychological illiteracy in a mass society is that people will continue to be mired in problems for which they will have little hope for resolution.

Educational institutions, from Mills's perspective, are subordinate institutions which in the twentieth century have been used pri-

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marily to provide vocational training and indoctrinate nationalist loyalties. Understood as such, educational institutions are best regarded as simply another mass medium. However, Mills does not preclude the possibility that educational institutions could be “hospitable frameworks” for political debate. As such, “the task of liberal education would be: to keep the public from being overwhelmed; to help produce the disciplined and informed mind that cannot be overwhelmed; to help develop the bold and sensible individual that cannot be sunk by the burdens of mass life.”¹² Mills was not optimistic about the likelihood of educational institutions averting this trend toward psychological illiteracy and the mass society, although he continued to sound a warning up until the time of his death in 1962. “Above all,” he wrote in 1956, “we must recognize that ‘the common sense’ of our children is going to be less the result of any firm social tradition than of the stereotypes carried by the mass media to which they are now so fully exposed. They are the first generation to be so exposed.”¹³

It is interesting to note that Mills’s concept of psychological illiteracy closely parallels his views of mainstream American sociology, which from his view was largely reductionistic, ahistorical, and pedantic. Like the “knowledgeable man in the genuine public,” the systematic social scientist must possess a transcendent view of the social order. As such, the social scientist must recognize the absolute centrality of history in social inquiry. In what might be the most concise statement on the importance of history in understanding human being, Mills writes:

Social science deals with problems of biography, of history, and of their interactions within social structures. . . . The problems of our time—which now include the problem of man’s (sic) very nature—cannot be stated adequately without consistent practice of the view that history is the shank of social study, and recognition of the need to develop further a psychology of man that is sociologically grounded and historically relevant. Without use

of history and without an historical sense of psychological matters, the social scientist cannot adequately state the kinds of problems that ought now to be the orienting points of his studies.¹⁴

This is a central and recurring theme in Mills's work; it is at the very cornerstone of what he defines to be the sociological imagination; and it provides the basis by which he can begin to explicate this notion of "psychological illiteracy." Human beings cannot be adequately understood independent of the social roles they play within modulating institutions and social structures. Historical forces of great magnitude transform these institutions and social structures and, in turn, transform the external biographies and internal psychological characteristics of human beings. The perennial objective for the social scientist, as it is for the truly *human* human being, is to have a deepened awareness of this relationship, and, as far as possible, to guide it in a rational and purposeful way.

It is clear that Mills thought, however, that most social scientists were not up to this task. Moreover, Mills was aware that mainstream American social scientists were increasingly becoming servants to the power elite by developing the propaganda techniques and theoretical justifications necessary to control the mass society. While at Columbia University in the 1950s he crossed paths with Paul Lazarsfeld, the founder and director of the Bureau of Applied Social Research (BASR) and the chair of the sociology department. Lazarsfeld was heavily involved in the creation of propaganda, advertising and public relations techniques, and government intelligence and military funding "made up more than 75 percent of the annual budget" at BASR. BASR was, in Christopher Simpson's words, one of several "important U.S. centers of postwar communications studies (which) grew up as de facto adjuncts of government psychological warfare programs."¹⁵ Personal Influence is Lazarsfeld's most important book and is widely considered to be the first academic expression of the famed dominant paradigm in communication research—the two-step flow of communications.¹⁶ As a young soci-

ologist, Mills actually conducted some of the field work for Lazarsfeld's Personal Influence during the early 1950s.¹⁷ But Mills became increasingly critical of Lazarsfeld and the Bureau's activities by the time he wrote The Power Elite. The mass media of communications are "among the most important of these increased means of power now at the disposal of elites of wealth and power," he wrote. "Some of the higher agents of these media are themselves either among the elites or very important among their servants." Without mentioning Lazarsfeld explicitly, Mills went on: "Alongside or just below the elite, there is the propagandist, the publicity expert, the public relations man, who would control the very formation of public opinion in order to be able to include it as one more pacified item in the calculation of effective power, increased prestige, more secure wealth."¹⁸ After discussing how the propagandist has had to change his approach to meet the growing distrust of the population, Mills implicates Lazarsfeld's Personal Influence as a book central to the work of propagandists, but again does not mention Lazarsfeld's name. Mills understood, perhaps more clearly than anyone else, the objectives behind the "two-step flow of communications"—the conceptualization of "personal influence"—on which Lazarsfeld worked so diligently to perfect. The propagandists, Mills wrote, have learned "to accept the principle of social context."

To change opinion and activity, they say to one another, we must pay close attention to the full context and lives of the people to be managed. Along with mass persuasion, we must somehow use *personal influence*; we must reach people in their life context and through other people, their daily associates, those whom they trust: we must get at them by some kind of 'personal' persuasion. We must not show our hand directly; rather than merely advise or command, we must manipulate. (Emphasis added)¹⁹

Mills's position at Columbia gave him an insider's view of the kind of work which was being conducted within the Bureau. It is unfortunate that Mills did not name Lazarsfeld directly since much of subse-

quent confusion about the nature of his work, and about the field of mass communication research generally, could have been avoided. Still, Mills's observation that propagandists had become concerned with "personal persuasion" and "personal influence" in a social context is a clear allusion to Lazarsfeld's Personal Influence.

And yet it is only a secret to historians of mass communication research that Lazarsfeld and Katz's 1955 text Personal Influence is essentially an attempt to refine the means by which propaganda could be aimed at "opinion leaders;" these historians continue to argue that Personal Influence represents an attempt to understand the larger social effects of the mass media.²⁰ Nevertheless, the evidence is overwhelmingly against this view. Edward L. Bernays thought that Lazarsfeld had stolen the idea of the "opinion leader" from him, although Lazarsfeld argued that he had given this notion a new twist by maintaining that "opinion leaders" could be found in all social strata and not just within the educated class as Bernays had maintained.²¹ Lazarsfeld himself spoke freely of the commercial and ideological applications of the two-step flow of communications research.²² And the United States Information Agency, among other organizations, noted its practical utility and trained USIA officers how to locate these opinion leaders and how to devise ways to influence them.²³ Like other work Lazarsfeld and the Bureau conducted for commercial and governmental organizations, the dominant paradigm of "personal influence" had its origins and reason for existence in the applied needs of the propagandist.

After Mills published The Power Elite in 1956, he found it increasingly difficult to find sources of research funding.²⁴ In a letter to Lazarsfeld on May 6, 1959, Mills wrote:

The N.S.F. [National Science Foundation] has turned down my research proposal . . . So has the Ford Foundation, the Health Department, and Columbia's own Council of Social Research. The N.S.F. rejection is going to make it tough on half time pay for the sabbatical year but

I think I can manage that somehow.”²⁵

Mills went on to ask Lazarsfeld if he knew where he might find “two or three thousand dollars to hire a part-time secretary.” Lazarsfeld’s response to Mills does not remain in Lazarsfeld’s papers. Nevertheless, it appears that Lazarsfeld, despite having easy access to large research funds, did not go out of his way to help Mills. On July 9, 1959, Mills wrote a second, highly sarcastic, letter to Lazarsfeld:

Thanks, anyway, for helping me with the money-bags. Never mind, I’ll write books in long-hand. And anyway, why the hell should you help — what’s in it for you?²⁶

The ideological and methodological differences between Mills and Lazarsfeld were well known; yet one suspects that the differences between Mills and Lazarsfeld went well beyond the criticism of Lazarsfeld’s “abstracted empiricism” which appeared in Mills’s The Sociological Imagination.²⁷ Lazarsfeld could accept this kind of criticism, and in fact he encouraged it by reprinting Mills’s methodological critique in an anthology he published several years after Mills’s death.²⁸ What Lazarsfeld may not have been able to accept, however, was criticism which held the very nature of his work up for moral scrutiny, and this is precisely what occurred in Mills’s The Power Elite. After all, the upshot of Mills’s thinly veiled commentary on Lazarsfeld’s book Personal Influence was that Lazarsfeld’s research into propaganda facilitated the development of psychological illiteracy.

One might consider Mills as an exemplar of the kind of “knowledgeable man” in a community of publics who he writes about, attempting to translate his personal troubles into social issues—to understand the relationship between his personal milieu and the larger social structure. Of course, Mills’s milieu was a unique one and it gave him rare insight into the power elite and mainstream American sociology, and the growing relationship between them during this period of cold war. Mills’s personal biography intersects with the

history of the United States during a period of enormous social and technological change, and he wrote about the consequences of many of these changes with great sensitivity. Yet he was marginalized for doing so. A study of his marginalization may tell us much about the social and academic worlds we have inherited.

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ENDNOTES

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3. For an insightful discussion of Mills and the concept of alienation see: Ernest Becker, "Mills' Social Psychology and the Great Historical Convergence on the Problem of Alienation." In The New Sociology: Essays in Social Science and Social Theory in Honor of C. Wright Mills. Edited by Irving Louis Horowitz (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964): 108-133.
4. Mills, The Power Elite, 304.
5. *Ibid.*, 299 & 214.
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8. *Ibid.*, 313.
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11. *Ibid.*, 314-315.
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15. Christopher Simpson, Science of Coercion: Communication Research & Psychological Warfare, 1945-1960 (New York: Oxford University

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16. See Todd Gitlin, "Media Sociology: The Dominant Paradigm" Theory and Society 6, no. 2 (1978): 205-253.
 17. Elihu Katz and Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Personal Influence: The Part Played by People in the Flow of Mass Communications (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1955).
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 23. See United States Information Agency, "Prestige, Personnel Influence, and Opinion" in The Process and Effects of Mass Communications, ed. Wilbur Schramm (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1954), 402-410.
 24. Barbara H. Chasin, "C. Wright Mills, Pessimistic Radical" Sociological Inquiry 60 (Fall 1990): 337-351.
 25. "C. Wright Mills to Dr. Paul F. Lazarsfeld, May 6, 1959," Paul F. Lazarsfeld Papers, Columbia University Archives, Box 15, Subject File: BSS-CH - Columbia University (1), Folder: Departmental.
 26. "CWM to Paul, July 9, 1959" Paul Lazarsfeld Papers, Columbia University Archives, Box 15 - Subject File: BSS-CH - Columbia University (1), Folder: Departmental.
 27. C. Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959).
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THE CHANGING PERCEPTION OF WOMEN'S ROLE IN EDUCATION IN NEW YORK, 1972 AND 1996

Edith L. Gordon

Women have fought to change societal limits and the rules which dictate acceptable gender behavior since before adoption of the "Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions" at the first feminist meeting in Seneca Falls in 1848.¹ Repeatedly, when feminist efforts have met with some success, events and/or male dominated power structures derailed that progress.² Twenty-four years ago passage of Title IX of the Higher Education Act of 1972 heralded a two-part evolution—even revolution—in thinking and action in education.³

A Brief Historical Review⁴

Before 1800, schooling in New York State consisted of boys taught by male schoolmasters. Girls were taught household skills at home. In the new republic, women's education was seen as necessary to mold new republicans. Private academies flourished in mid 1800s. New York State encouraged them to prepare public school teachers, and in 1867, 363 men and 1,122 women were trained. Feminist educators hoped that, when given the work option, educated women would consider marriage as a choice rather than a "trap."⁵ Economy-minded New York school boards began hiring women teachers, average age sixteen to twenty-five years, to perform the same duties as men, but were paying them even less, about \$300 per annum. Women teachers were lauded for having "native tact," giving attention to improving morals and manners, commanding deference and respect by their female delicacy and helplessness and giving and getting warm affection while teaching with disinterested zeal.⁶

By the late 1800s, school districts in close proximity were consolidating as **Union** Free School Districts and constructing large 'modern' two-story wooden schoolhouses,⁷ more generously funded than were teachers' salaries, \$350-\$500 per annum. Teachers on the secondary level received more salary than primary classroom teachers,

and before World War II, no matter how excellent the female teacher, a man was appointed to the higher-paying, policy-making position of principal. Despite the teachers' low pay, long hours and demanding work, there was no shortage of female applicants.⁸ The few male high school students at the start of the 20th century generally took the four-year college preparatory course while young women studied a general business curriculum to prepare for sex-typed office employment.

After 1945, World War II veterans' burgeoning families created an acute shortage of schools and teachers.⁹ Competition for teachers exerted an intense pressure on school boards and gave leverage to teachers' demands for higher wages. Men as well as women were attracted to the teaching profession during the Korean War period in the 1950s. Teachers associations, once the docile tool of school boards, became militant unions. They championed higher salaries and gender neutral pay for equal experience and assignment. Men still garnered the department chairs and key administrative positions.

Title IX Of The Higher Education Act Of 1972

Post war civil rights legislation eased sex discrimination, but President Lyndon B. Johnson's 1968 Executive Order #11375, banning discrimination by all federal contractors for the first time included educational institutions. It was cited in class action suits charging discrimination against women in hiring, promotion and salaries by colleges and universities.¹⁰

While women activists fought against quota systems and overt discrimination in the 1970s, feminist scholars researched women's history, psychology and developed interdisciplinary Women's Studies. They lobbied local, state and federal legislatures to pass anti-gender bias laws. Margaret Chase Smith (R. Maine) was the only woman U.S. Senator. Ten women joined 425 men elected to the House of Representatives in 1970. Congresswoman Bella Abzug characterized the time as one of enthusiasm, excitement, self-discovery and exhaustion. Every effort by the women representatives and their male

allies to effect reform in the 91st Congress was thwarted by the old guard power structure.¹¹

Although Congress had passed a number of higher education aid programs, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, for the first time provided federal aid to school districts serving large numbers of poor children, money for library books and educational materials, supplementary educational centers and services, programs for gifted children, for strengthening state educational departments, bilingual programs and drop-out prevention programs.¹²

Violent campus unrest in 1968 effectively halted enactment of federal educational legislation. Congress completed no action on any major education measure in 1969, and in 1970, the largest ESEA bill ever enacted by Congress was vetoed by President Nixon. In mid-1971 the Higher Education Act expired. Representative Edith Green, Democrat from Oregon,¹³ led the two-year effort by her House Education and Labor Committee and the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee to consolidate aid-to-education legislation. The resulting \$21 billion bill, held over until 1972, was refused clearance and floor consideration by the House Rules Committee.

Green's Special Education Subcommittee, which included three New Yorkers, laid the groundwork, during its 1970 hearings, for amending the Civil Rights Act to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex in federally financed programs and to remove the exemption to those in education. It would authorize the Civil Rights Commission to study discrimination against women, and would remove the exemption of executive, administrative and professional employees from the equal pay for equal work provision of the Fair Labor Standards Act.¹⁴

The committee heard women experts¹⁵ testify that discrimination often began with "Males Wanted" job advertisements. Regardless of a woman's training and abilities, she was consigned to typewriter or deliberately to a different job with less pay. The more her education, the greater the inequity. Testimony exploded myths such

as: women have a high rate of absenteeism; women only work briefly until marriage (The average age of working women was rising steadily); women work for “pin money” while men support families. (U.S. Department of Labor Women’s Bureau statistics showed that 60 per cent of the poor children in the United States were completely dependent on earnings of women. The problems of poverty are the problems of women, their dependent children and of older women with diminished opportunity for paid employment); women are innately passive and non-aggressive, hence unsuitable for many jobs.¹⁶

The Special Education Subcommittee hearings on discrimination against women by educational institutions in pay, in promotion and admission raised public awareness and changed the nation’s climate of opinion. The people’s representatives now proved willing to include Title IX in the Higher Education Act of 1972. On 23 June 1972, President Nixon signed the Higher Education Act into law,¹⁷ *with* Title IX assuring that

[N]o person...shall on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program (preschool to postgraduate, public and private)...which receives or benefits from federal aid.¹⁸

Among long-established sexist practices in schools was language that treated the masculine as the linguistic norm. Gender-neutral words, such as lawyer, chair person, mail carrier, police officer are increasingly accepted as correct usage.¹⁹ Before 1972, school primers and textbooks did not portray girls in active, positive roles nor mention women who helped to make historic changes or other contributions. Then newly published texts and trade books merely added mention of the role of women and minorities in history and in today’s society, but did not integrate feminist subjects or consider subtle implications.²⁰

Gender-driven expectations for girls as opposed to those for boys in the home and classroom, deeply imbedded in our culture and the female psyche, were exemplified in secondary school courses in

“home economics” for girls, while boys were enrolled in “shop.” Today a course on “home and careers” teaches basic survival skills such as cooking and home repairs to boys and girls alike. After passage of Title IX, a first priority was to counter previous negative attitudes toward females pursuing courses and careers in mathematics and science. As more girls have studied these subjects, their test scores are comparable with boys. Yet at each successive subject level, females tend to drop out.

This situation was explored at a gender equity conference in Princeton, New Jersey in 1993. Port Jefferson science teacher Linda Padwa returned from that experience and together with others, she organized a day-long Symposium for Girls Exploring Mathematics and Science, held at State University at Stony Brook, about which more later.²¹

During the 1960s and 1970s, the number of all-male colleges dropped from 236 to 99, and all-female colleges from 231 to 102, and by October 1994, there were only 81 women’s colleges; single sex colleges and universities declined from 25 to 6 per cent of the total. After 1972, some women’s colleges such as Vassar became co-educational. By 1980, only 2.3% of all college women were attending all-female institutions.²²

Yet enrollment in courses of study that tend to offer greater career rewards (engineering, electronics, aircraft mechanics and computer assisted drafting) is only 10 to 18 per cent female. Young women have difficulty gaining equal computer access. Meanwhile, programs in education continue to be disproportionately female. Males in New York State received only 15.5 percent of Bachelor of Arts degrees in education in 1990-91, down 2 percent from 1970-71.²³

Feminists of this decade believe that men have defined science inquiry to fit a typically male thought process which stresses logic and tends to function in isolation, rather than relational and intuitive thought processes that suit females. Difference in preferred style does not imply less quality on either side, yet that assumption is made.

Many male professors still imply to female students that their gender per se limits their ability to succeed in mathematics, science and engineering. In fact, some male professors teach the subject matter in ways that discourage women and undercut their interest and success.²⁴

An example of 1960s and 1970s' wasted potential of women is Abbey L. Boklan, one of only two women students in her law school class of '62. Turned away by many law firms because of her sex, Boklan was informed by then New York County District Attorney Frank Hogan that he would not permit any woman to prosecute a case before a jury. Boklan persevered and is today a County Court judge.²⁵

Traditionally, toys have been assigned according to gender—boys get war toys and girls receive dolls and kitchen toys, sanctioning the separate and domestic role of the female. In 1993, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg reversed tradition by hiring a qualified male law clerk because he requested flexible hours so that his wife as well as he could pursue demanding careers and share child care.²⁶

The first federal Health, Education & Welfare Department (HEW) guidelines for Title IX²⁷ stated that recipient school districts “select sports and levels of competition which effectively accommodate the interests and abilities of members of both sexes.” Despite new laws and regulations, girls' sports were often forced into the second tier or less because of public school coaching staff sport selection and school funds allotment, plus negative attitudes of teachers toward female athletes. With the criteria of healthy activity and actual improvement in agility, endurance and fitness of the least to the most athletically endowed child, the curricula for physical education became more inclusive and less competitive. National media focus in March 1995 on the successful NCAA champion UCONN women's basketball team was a breakthrough for women's college athletics. On some campuses less traditional sports, such as men's wrestling, facing government enforcement of Title XI and a shrinking athletics budgets, now are recruiting coed participants.²⁸

Under Title IX when a valid complaint of sex discrimination is filed against a school district, the district gets ninety days to comply voluntarily. After that, the government litigates, either by an administrative hearing or Department of Justice enforcement. In 1975, a dozen teachers challenged the district's generally accepted policy requiring pregnant teachers to take maternity leave in the fourth month of pregnancy and not return to teach for at least six months after giving birth. After a seven-year legal effort, a federal court ruled that pregnant teachers are entitled to sick pay while physically unable to work, with the option of taking unpaid leave with no minimum time offset.²⁹

Education for Gender Equity

In October 1975, all Nassau and Suffolk County school personnel were offered the first "Women's Studies" in-service program on the East Coast. The first course, "Sexism in the Public Schools," described sex-role stereotyping and socialization, examined the impact on children and explored the ways schools contribute to perpetuating sexism.³⁰ A second type of course tapped subjects not previously part of traditional curriculum, such as Sexism & Racism in the Media, Women's History, Women in Literature, and Rediscovering Women in Social Studies. Teachers and administrators from various school districts established bi-county female support and communication networks. Eventually they formed the Nassau-Suffolk Council of Administrative Women in Education, whose 150 practicing and aspiring administrators filed Title IX sex discrimination complaints against three school districts in 1975.³¹

One district personnel director, while acknowledging that his district's superintendent, assistant superintendents and eighteen school principals were male, asserted that the administrative hiring pattern over the past 15 to 20 years reflected the ratio of approximately 20 male applicants to one female applicant.³² Not surprisingly, in 1976 only three of the 200 applicants for the district's vacant position of superintendent of schools were women. Women outside the circle

of cronies were told, "You can't become a principal until you've first had experience as an assistant principal," were not given the opportunity to become assistant principals, and thus effectively were excluded from all but the lowest rung of the education career ladder.

As a result of legal challenges, by 1987 Kings Park led Long Island school district in promoting women, some of whom became catalysts for change. While school districts were giving a few white women the opportunity to gain the qualifications and experience needed to advance as administrators, African American female educators were told, "we have no black children." One Afro-American applicant retorted, "But then you cannot fail to hire me—your children are getting only half an education." Whether African American or white, once hired women school assistant administrators were seldom promoted.³³

Part of the pattern of exclusion of women from top administrative posts was a line of interview questions such as: Will your husband object if you have to go to meetings at night? Are you planning to have another baby? Are you emotionally strong enough to withstand the pressures of an administrative position?³⁴

In 1977, Dorothy Pierce, legal affairs director of the Council of Women Administrators, sued the West Babylon School District for denying her the post of district coordinator of state and federal aid. The administrative judge found that the man hired did not meet the qualifications set forth in the job description, while Pierce did. Pierce, on becoming West Babylon school district assistant superintendent for finance and evaluation credited her rise to "a different administration which has different attitudes."

Women administrators of the seventies were unlikely to encounter females leader models, nor were they likely to find a feminine mentor; their pay was lower and their career ladders shorter than men's. Women's issues still were not addressed in courses preparing women and men for administrative certification. Nevertheless, graduate degrees in educational administration awarded to women in New

York State more than doubled from 583 in 1972 to 1,408 in 1985.

Although women are a significant presence in the public workplace, equality remains an elusive aim for them. In New York State in 1988-89, 29.5 percent of the elementary school principals and 13.5 percent of the secondary principals were women.³⁵ Of Suffolk County's seventy-one districts, twenty-eight had no female assistant principals, and fifteen had no female principals. Statistics for 1992-93 at least for Long Island's Nassau and Suffolk Counties, suggest that few women are in assistant principal posts, the training ground for higher administrative positions. In large districts and choice upper echelon administrative positions, female representation in Long Island schools is low in light of the growing number of certified females.³⁶

Changing Role Perceptions

In the 1970s and 1980s, women managers expected to function in the male model: a hierarchical structure that values separateness, winning, besting an opponent, communicating through a chain of command. The male model emphasizes rationality, large-scale organizing and impersonal language. Feminists now articulate a female leadership style based on women exploring their own strengths and values.³⁷ Motherhood is an excellent apprenticeship for career preparation, USB President Dr. Shirley Strum Kenny believes. It helps develop poise, time management, negotiation skills, endurance, controlled emotions, immunity to embarrassment, dealing with hundreds of little items like paperwork, organizational skills, delegation of authority, creativity, planning, financial management, tact and diplomacy.³⁸

Consequently, women leaders in the workplace are likely to guide by modeling and persuasion, to seek connections between staff and communication at all levels. They require cooperation and collaboration and look for input from all, breaking down status distinctions. Women leaders seek to balance the demands for efficiency with a need to nurture the spirit of those with whom they work. They

are likely to recognize positive achievement openly, to stimulate employees, and to function through a team approach, allowing for flexibility. These tendencies are reflected in the design of the workplace, less vertical or pyramidal and sometimes compared to a one-plane web. This style of leadership has been recognized as an effective approach in the present "information economy," by such large corporations as Ford Motor Company.³⁹

The New York State and Long Island Initiative for the 1990s

In 1990, New York State Deputy Commissioner of Education Lionel Meno, wrote that "gender equity has not only not been achieved, it has not even improved in any measurable degree...The bias against women in educational administration has an adverse effect on all members of the educational community, students, and educators alike...we cannot afford to squander any of our resources. ...Women and minorities offer skills, ideas, qualities and viewpoints that are necessary for strengthening the process of education in the challenging decade ahead."⁴⁰

Employers may help women in educational administration to reach parity are by heightening awareness of the issues; improving access through attention to recruitment, education, and placement; encouraging advancement for women through mentoring, networking and professional development; eliminating the inappropriate stereotypes about what men and women can accomplish as educational administrators and establishing accountability by local districts.⁴¹

In the marketplace competition to recruit excellent women and men, the relatively low salary of educators discourages quality candidates. Young women in our public schools now have more employment options outside the profession of education than were available in the early 1970s.

Where school districts have employed women in administrative posts, sensitivity to the needs of females is evident. In 1993, female policy makers in the Three Village Central School District,

finding that girls are neglected in preparatory efforts as indicated by career testing in which males scored better than females, organized the district's first annual conference for fifth grade girls from eight Suffolk County school districts . Each year facilitators help students think about gender messages and increase understanding of options and enhance self esteem. The girls meet women doing non-traditional work. Each girl learns leadership skills and is encouraged to go back to her home district with the attitude "if it is to be, it's up to me," to share ideas with classmates and to help other girls gain a positive self image.⁴²

In a parallel experiment, 300 high school females and their teachers explored careers in mathematics and science at a symposium held at SUNY Stony Brook in January 1994. Two dozen women professors of mathematics and science at the university participated as mentors, guides and role models. One chemistry professor, meeting students in her research laboratory affirmed that a scientific career can mix with motherhood, but only **after** the woman's science training, (usually a Ph.D.) and after her career has been established.⁴³ This is because post-doctoral appointment, the bottom rung of the academic career ladder, is difficult for women in science to secure, effectively excluding women from an academic career in science research. In 1987, the average salary in every category of institutions of higher learning and at every level of academic rank was significantly lower for women than for men faculty.⁴⁴

Twenty-four years after passage of Title IX there are tenured women professors in many College of Arts and Science's departments at USB, including four in the Chemistry Department. Dr. Kenny has made good on her pledge to hire additional females and minority professionals. Said student government president, Crystal Plati, "It's about time...Women and minority students have the right to see faculty in those positions where they can excel."⁴⁵

In the fall of 1993, a USB consortium received a \$100,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to introduce a mentoring

program for incoming female freshmen with math and science talent. Known as Women in Science Excel, or WISE, this program engages thirty-five participating women early in their college careers before they make academic decisions that will shape their subsequent education. At the critical juncture between high school and college it motivates women to continue in mathematics and science education. WISE helps women develop confidence in their ability to learn and perform well in mathematics and other quantitative courses and uncovers a range of educational and career opportunities open to individuals with advanced quantitative and empirical skills. WISE creates a supportive social environment that encourages continuation. Following the science overview course, some women in the program who originally expressed career plans in biological science, are refocussing on chemistry, mathematics or earth and space science. The program includes and is supportive of women who traditionally have not had the right to attend college at all, and it promotes interactive teaching, a group approach to learning in which women function comfortably. Entering students are assigned mentors among advanced women undergraduates majoring in a science, women graduate students and women faculty. By its focus on recruitment and retention at the period of highest risk, the WISE program at USB seeks to increase participation by women in mathematics, science and engineering education and careers, building a model program that readily can be “mainstreamed” at USB and replicated or adapted at other learning centers.⁴⁶

Gender politics is another academic arena, especially in physical science departments, where hiring practices have worked against employing women. A National Science Foundation-sponsored site team of nationally known women physicists has been visiting universities collecting quantitative and anecdotal information on the status of women physics students and faculty on the campus and then looks at the situation nationally with the aim of the NSF presenting effective programs and practices for replication by science, mathematics and engineering departments.⁴⁷

In periods of weak federal commitment to enforcement of compliance to Title IX and affirmative action laws, progress toward gender equity since 1972 has been hindered. President William J. Clinton's appointment of women to cabinet posts, to ambassadorships, as under secretaries in federal departments and as federal judges expanded diversity at the upper echelons of government and set a standard for lower tiers to emulate. Former Vermont Governor Madeleine Kunin was appointed Deputy Secretary of Education. Since promulgating the 1992 New York State Action Plan, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of women college and university presidents. The choice in 1993 of Shirley Strum Kenny to be president of Long Island's USB was a signal to the academic divisions of the New York State university system that gender equity is a priority.

On the other hand, a plethora of recently elected conservative officials such as U.S. Representative Newt Gingrich and 94 freshman conservatives, Governors Pete Wilson of California and George Pataki of New York, are seeking to "reform" government by negating many of the changes of twenty-five years. Federal and state budgets have drastically reduced financial resources for education. While young people with personal resources move ahead, affirmative action and higher education become a fiscal impossibility for many.⁴⁸

Just when improvements like promotion of women on the same basis as men, in terms of their skills and effectiveness seemed achievable, of acceptable preschool child care for working couples and flexible work schedules for both women and men employees seem within reach we have Gov. Pataki's proposed 1996 budget, cutting over \$400 million from education (preparation for a productive life), while proposing \$360 million for constructing four new prisons (to punish).⁴⁹ Once again control of the purse strings by the government may coopt the feminist agenda. As this review of the history of women in New York education makes clear, changes have occurred. Since 1972, mandates of Title IX have been assimilated and become part of our culture. As often as issues of gender equity have been

subverted, women and their male supporters have raised them again. This may be required yet again.

Emeritus Three Village CSD, N.Y.

ENDNOTES

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2. Kate Millett, 80. Women learned to organize in the abolitionist movement. The original history of women's struggle for equality is Eleanor Flexner, Century of Struggle; Women's Rights Movement in the United States, (Cambridge, Mass:Belnap Press, Harvard University, 1966). A somewhat different perspective is Nancy Woloch, Women and the American Experience, (New York:Alfred A. Knopf, 1987). Catherine Birney, The Grimke Sisters, (Westport, Conn:Greenwood Press, 1885, reprinted 1969) describes the power of women as advocates and the plight of such women after marriage.
3. Congressional Quarterly Almanac, (CQA), Government Printing Office, XXVII, 1971, 385. Two recent articles on the barriers women in the professions encounter are "Capital Disrespect: A new book reveals the plight of female lawmakers in Congress" by Kevin Merida, Newsday, 4 April 1994, B3, and "Moving On, Not Up, in the Video Business," Anne Thompson, New York Times, Sunday, 3 April 1994, Bus. 23.
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 7. In 1853, the State enacted the Union Free School Act, allowing small districts to form a "union" or combine. See Edith L. Gordon, "The People and Their Schools," Long Island Historical Journal, IV:2 (Spring, 1992), 226.
 8. John Rury, Education and Women's Work: Female Schooling and the Division of Labor in Urban America, 1870-1930, (Albany: SUNY Press, 1991), 227.
 9. See LILCO Annual Statistical Reports, 1949-1953; for an example of post war growth.
 10. Winifred D. Wandersee, On the Move: American Women in the 1970s. Boston: GF.H. Hall, 1988, 104. Also transcript of Congressional hearings before the Special Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives, 91st Congress, 2nd Session, on Section 805 or HR16098. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office (1970), *passim*.
 11. Bella Abzug, Bella! Ms. Abzug Goes to Washington, edited by Mel Ziegler. New York: Saturday Review Press, 1972, *passim*.
 12. The Higher Education Act was first passed in 1867, to create land grant colleges. Provisions of the ESEA are outlined in Congressional Quarterly Almanac (CQA), (Wash., D.C.: U.S.G.P.O. XXVI (1970), 250.
 13. Edith Green, 1910-1987, was born in South Dakota, graduated from the University of Oregon in 1939, taught school for eleven years, worked in radio from 1943-47. A Democrat, she served in the House of Representatives 1955-1975. Biographical Directory of the U.S. Congress 1774-1989 (Wash.D.C.: U.S. GPO, 1989); CQA. XXVII (1971), 579, XXVIII (1972), 385.
 14. Congress and the Nation, V.III (1969), 598.
 15. Consultant Dr. Bernice Sandler brought to testify Chairperson of President Richard M. Nixon's Task Force on Women's Rights and Responsibilities, authors of the report, "A Matter of Simple Justice;" female

- university professors; members of the Women's Rights Committee of N Y U Law School; President of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc.; National Organization of Women (NOW) officials; the Pennsylvania Human Rights Commissioner; female House of Representatives members Patsy Mink, Hawaii and Shirley Chisholm., New York; and legislative program chair of the American Association of University Women(AAUW). *CQA*. XXVIII, 385-90; "Hearings" transcript, 1.
16. On the Move, 104; "Hearings" Transcript, 1, 6.
 17. *bid.* 498; On the Move. 105.. *CQA*, XXVII (1971), 587; XXVIII (1972) 385.
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 19. Dennis Baron, Grammar in the Classroom, (New Haven:Yale U. Press, 1986), 3, 8. Also, Dorothy C. Holland & Margaret A. Eisenhart, Educated in Romance: Women, Achievement & College Culture, U. of Chicago Press, 1990, xii. Bella Abzug, Bella! Ms. Abzug Goes to Washington, edited by Mel Ziegler. New York: Saturday Review Press, 1972, *passim*.
 20. Holland & Eisenhart, 3.
 21. Peter Marks, "Encouraging Girls to Enter a Mostly Male World," New York Times, 12 January 1994, B4.
 22. Tyack and Hansot, 280.
 23. University of the State of New York, State Education Department, "Equity for Women in the 1990s: A Background Paper Supporting the NYS Board of Regents Proposed Policy Paper and Action Plan for Equal Opportunity for Women." Albany, Dec. 1992, 4.
 24. "Women Scientists' Group Launches Effort to Probe the Plight of Female Researcher," The Scientist: The Newspaper for the Science Professional, VIII:1 (10 January 1994). Ellen Weaver is a member of the Association for Women in Science (AWIS). Evelyn Fox Keller, "Feminists Find Gender Everywhere in Science," Science Vol.260, 16 April 1993, 392. Also, American Association of University Women, The AAUW Report: How Schools Shortchange Girls, (Wash. DC: AAUW Educational Foundation, 1992, 73-4 and 78; David Sadker and Myra Sadker, Year III: Final Report, Promoting Effectiveness in Classroom Instruction (Wash. DC:National Institute of Education, Contract No. 400-80-0033, 1984).

25. For one of many references to Nassau County Court Judge Abbey Boklan, see Monte R. Young, "Bias Attack Indictment," Newsday, 23 October 1993, 11.
26. "A Talk with Ginsberg on Life and the Court" (excerpt from Docket Sheet), New York Times, 7 January 1994, B13:5.
27. The HEW guidelines included health, physical education, industrial, business, vocational, technical, home economics, music and adult education courses.
28. TV Sports news, 10 Feb. 1996.
29. The "Woman's Studies" in-service program was sponsored by the Feminist Press, Old Westbury, NY. Women's Time, Oct. 1975, 12.
30. "Combating Sexism in Public Schools, Title IX," Women's Time: A free Newspaper for Women on Long Island [Islip Terrace, NY] 3 (October 1975), p.1:3.
31. Lawrence C. Levy, "School Chiefs on the Firing Line," Newsday, 2 August 1979, p. 4.
32. Eve Glasser, New York Times, 23 October 1977, LI p.5, referring to Commack School District.
33. Ibid; Phyllis Lader, "Women in Education Move Forward as the Books Close on the 1980s," Smithtown News, 4 January 1990, p.1; author's interview with Willa Prince (reading coordinator [retired], Sachem School District), November 1993, and Joyce Turner (Assistant Principal [retired], Brentwood School District), 21 October 1994.
34. "Women Await School-Bias Ruling," New York Times, 23 October 1977, LI, p.4
35. Paul Vitello, "School Official Wins Bias Suit," Newsday, 27 June 1981, 7.
36. New York State Educational Department figures for 1988-89. On the problems for women in courses on the principles of public administration, see DeLysa Burnier, "Administrative Woman and Administrative Man: Teaching Public Administration from a Gender Inclusive Perspective," Feminist Teacher: Vol. 7 #1, 26-30. Some areas which concern women are noted in Newsday articles: Barbara Fischkin, "Sex Bias Ruled in Pensions," 26 April 1981, p.9; Geraldine Baum, "School Job Forms Said to Show Bias," 14 December 1983, p.37; "Women Leaders at Rally Call for End to Inequities in Pay," 27 August 1985, p.21. Four female superintendents in Nassau Co, and ten in Suffolk Co
37. Phyllis Lader, "Women Slowly Making the Grade in Principle Roles in Education," The Smithtown News, 28 December 1989 (Smithtown

- Archives, no page). Sally Helgesen, The Female Advantage: Women's Ways of Leadership (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1990), 246.
38. See Aurnier, 17; Helgesen, 246. On Kenny's views, Shirley Strum Kenny, "From Parenting, a Presidency," New York Times, 3 November 1991, Ed. Sec. p. 46.
 39. Helgesen, 234-246.
 40. The following four points are summarized from New York State Lead(Leadership in Educational Administration Development Center), A View from the Inside: An Action Plan for Gender Equity in New York State Educational Administration, 1, iii, 5-19 and v.
 41. The increasing proportion of women to men in educational administration has not kept pace with that of women receiving doctorates, master's degrees and state certification in educational administration.)Albany:SUNY, The State Education Department Information Center on Education, 1992) Women Administrators in New York State Public Schools, 1968-1991, 2.
 42. Dorine Ellell, "Women help Girls see Choices for Careers and Life," Three Village Herald 19 May 1993, 7. Three Village Central School District, "Women Helping Girls With Choices: A Conference for Future Leaders designed to Increase Career Options, Inspire Leadership, Enhance Self Esteem," 12 May 1993 Program Schedule.
 43. Peter Marks, New York Times, 12 Jan. 1994, B4.
 44. Academe: Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors (Mar.-Apr. 1987), 10.
 45. Carl Corry, "President Kenny Outline Strategies for Campus," Statesman, 29 September 1994, 3; Robert Fresco, "Focusing on Undergraduates: Stony Brook Chief pledges Improvements," Newsday, 29 September 1994, A18.
 46. "Stony Brook: Project WISE," National Science Foundation grant proposal, 35 pages. The following information is gleaned from this proposal. Information updated in a telephone interview with Dr. Wendy Katkin, April 12, 1995.
 47. Mildred S. Dresselhaus, Judy R. Franz, Bunny C. Clark, "Interventions to Increase the Participation of Women in Physics," Science, V:263, (11 March 1994), 1392.
 48. Stephen Labaton, "President's Judicial Appointments: Diverse, but well in the Main Stream," New York Times, 17 October 1994, A15:1; Susan Chira, "As No. 2, an Ebullient Point Person for Education," New York

- Times, 2 April 1993, A:3. Of one hundred twenty-nine Clinton-nominated judges who were confirmed, 44 are women. 60 percent are either women or minorities. Clinton's appointments compare with 8 percent for President Reagan and 27 percent for President Jimmy Carter.
49. 1996-97 Proposed New York State Budget (Printed for the Governor: Albany NY, 1996), pp. 86-105.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF MINORITY STUDENTS: TWO ALTERNATIVE THEORIES

George L. Iber

This paper examines the explanatory power of two popular theories of minority academic achievement, the “cultural ecology” and the “cultural discontinuity” models. It does so by investigating the relationship between aspects of acculturation, ethnicity, and academic performance of Mexican-American high school students in “Liberty, USA.”

ALTERNATIVE THEORIES

Spindler and Spindler (1987, 1990) view education as “cultural transmission.” Cultural transmission requires cultural learning. School is an institution of acculturation. In their recent work, (Spindler and Spindler, 1990), they posed the question, “Are our schools so heavily culturally loaded with mainstream values that many ethnic groups and social classes find themselves in opposition to the culture promoted in them?” Their general reply is that culture is a process that includes features of achievement and success, and their opposite, failure. Failure and success are not personally predetermined, rather they are products of the interaction between people, institutions, and cultural patterns. All three of these features can be found within the context of schooling. Why then do some students succeed while others fail?

Two divergent anthropological explanations for minority student’s academic success and failure have been proposed. One camp, represented by John Ogbu, an educational anthropologist, claims that structural factors in the social and economic system that prohibit full assimilation into society lead to the establishment of classes of people who view schooling as an institution that does not work in their interest. His model is referred to as the “cultural ecology” model. The other camp, represented by Henry Trueba, also an educational anthropologist, claims that the academic success and fail-

ure of the individual is primarily the result of the “culturally discontinuous” interactions between teachers and students.

The history of marginal employment of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans in this country is well documented (Acuña, 1988). Ogbu (1986) has proposed that much of the difficulty in schooling experienced by certain minority groups is tied to their perceptions of past and future occupational opportunities. He claims that it is not enough that a minority group may become acculturated. Full acculturation does not mean that full assimilation has been granted, or that it is necessarily desired.

In the United States, Blacks, Indians, Puerto Ricans, and Mexican-Americans are defined by Ogbu (1978) to be “caste-like minorities” who, because of a history of discrimination and exploitation, including the “forced” incorporation into the American capitalist economic and cultural system, have not been able to develop the status mobility systems or folk theories of success that include academic efforts. In short, they do not see how school contributes to their futures. He postulates that some minorities, as a group, have developed a perspective that equates achievement in schools as “acting white” (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). “Acting white,” implies a betrayal of one’s personal and group identity. The term “collective oppositional identity,” as used by Ogbu, refers to one possible characteristic of a group identity. A form of cultural resistance then develops towards schooling that may include academic failure or dropping out. This culture of resistance is justified through the incorporation of what Ogbu terms an alternative “folk theory of success” (Ogbu, 1978, 1987a, 1987b, 1990; Fordham and Ogbu, 1986).

Trueba challenges the claims made by Ogbu. He claims that if teachers and administrators in schools are brought to a greater understanding of the cultural background of the students, and teaching methods are modified to acknowledge different backgrounds, minority students’ failure and drop out rates would dramatically decrease (Trueba, 1987, 1988a, 1988b, 1990). Further, he states the resulting

taxonomies from macrosociological analysis with respect to the academic performance of minority groups are unfounded and negatively stereotype minority individuals (Trueba, 1988a, 1988b, 1990). Trueba (1987) asserts that Mexican-Americans are assimilating as rapidly as past immigrant groups, and that their apparent failure within the school system is based on issues of "cultural discontinuity" within the schools, and do not include perceptions of limited future occupational opportunities brought about by broader structural inequalities in society. Trueba's theory essentially proposes that children of minorities perform less well in school because schooling promotes middle-class majority cultural values and skills. Both the style of presentation, including language, turn-taking, teacher/student interaction, and the content of instruction are postulated to be in conflict with the minority individual's learning style, expectations, and needs. Culture, assumed to be central to the process of acculturation, must include developing a positive understanding of one's position in society and how to successfully operate within various social institutions, including schools. From Trueba's point of view, issues of group identity are not considered to play a major role in the academic success or failure of Mexican American or other minority groups.

Ogbu and Trueba agree that acculturation is an ongoing process. Both would agree that the acculturation traits of "Language Preference," "Respondents' Cultural Heritage," and "Parents' Cultural Heritage" should reveal a trend towards a loss of Mexican cultural knowledge for second generation students. The loss of native cultural traits has traditionally implied a corresponding gain of majority cultural traits. If acculturation were solely a matter of losing native cultural knowledge one could assume that, over time, new immigrants would be seamlessly woven into the fabric of mainstream culture; yet this has not happened for many minority groups (Padilla 1987).

Ethnic identity traits may be maintained in spite of the near complete acculturation of an individual (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970; Keefe and Padilla, 1987). Long term residence in this country does

not guarantee assimilation. The lack of opportunity for assimilation may lead to groups of individuals to look towards themselves for support and a sense of identity.

Academic performance of second generation students is postulated by Trueba to be higher than first generation students. Ogbu considers it likely that first generation students will out perform the second generation because the second has developed identity maintaining strategies that resist successful schooling.

The following research hypotheses were synthesized from the above:

1. Cultural-discontinuity theory, as espoused by Trueba, would be supported if the findings indicate that second generation Mexican-American students have: (1) lower acculturation trait scores, (2) lower ethnic identity trait scores, (3) a willingness to participate in mainstream acculturation, and (4) higher academic achievement than first generation students.

2. Cultural-ecological theory, as espoused by Ogbu, would be supported if the findings indicate that second generation Mexican-American students have: (1) lower acculturation trait scores, (2) higher ethnic identity trait scores, (3) a resistance to mainstream acculturation, and (4) lower academic performance than first generation students.

THE INSTRUMENT

In an interdisciplinary study by Susan Keefe and Amado Padilla (1987), an anthropologist and educational psychologist respectively, Mexican-American ethnic cultural knowledge and perceptions were defined and analyzed. The categories investigated by Keefe and Padilla correspond closely to the traditional concepts of acculturation and ethnic identity. The traditional concept of acculturation involves major cultural changes that result from prolonged contact between cultures. In essence, it is a modification of culture. Ethnic

identity, while also malleable, is generally defined as “a set of ideas about one’s own ethnic group membership” (Bernal and Knight 1993, p1).

Based on studies by Padilla (1980), Keefe and Padilla (1987) have postulated that within a pluralistic society, acculturation and ethnic identity are separate processes. Indeed, they assert that pluralism may foster ethnic-group identities. As they attempted to compare the cultural traits held by Mexican-Americans, they found that some traits were common across generations while others were dropped and some new ones were added. Comprising their measure of “Chicano Ethnicity” are two broad categories which they term “Cultural Awareness” and “Ethnic Loyalty.”

Cultural Awareness is a term used to describe an individual’s knowledge of objective cultural traits, such as the language and history of a country of origin. Ethnic Loyalty, by definition, refers to a preference for certain ethnic group characteristics, it is something which individuals may “create” concerning their identity.

For the purposes of this paper, the categories developed by Keefe and Padilla of Language Preference, Respondents’ Cultural Heritage, Parents’ Cultural Heritage, and Cultural Identification are termed “acculturation traits.” The categories of Ethnic Social Orientation, Ethnic Pride, and Perceived Discrimination are the “ethnic identity traits.” This study attempted to determine the degree to which certain aspects of Mexican-American culture indicate potential for academic success or failure for high school students, and whether the results support the educational theory of Ogbu or Trueba.

FINDINGS

The findings of this study revealed that both first and second generation MexicanAmerican students in Liberty were succeeding academically, and they had a motivation to participate in mainstream society. Measures comparing first and second generation students revealed a trend in the second generation towards acculturation based

upon acculturation trait measures. Both generations exhibited strong ethnic identity characteristics. There was no significant correlation between any of the acculturation or ethnic identity traits and student academic performance. This finding is similar to that of Vazquez (1990) for university students.

The academic achievement of both first and second generation students is revealing. This finding supports the theoretical model proposed by Ogbu (1987, 1990). The higher GPA scores of the first generation reveal that they may be the result, in part, of the quality of academic preparation by Mexican students in Mexico who are now seeking an additional high school degree in the United States (Macias, 1990).¹

Trueba's claim that first generation students are likely to perform less well academically than second generation students was not supported. His rationale for such a claim is based upon an assumed cultural and linguistic barrier. According to Trueba, the middle class schools of the United States, do not provide an academic program that is sufficiently tailored to a predominantly lower class immigrant population. The typically rural and lower class immigrants then perform poorly or fail due to their inability to adjust to the unfamiliar institution.

The acculturation traits of Language Preference, Respondents' Cultural Heritage, Parents' Cultural Heritage, and Cultural Identification each showed significantly lower scores for second generation students.² The scores established that first and second generation students are categorically different in their level of acculturation.

If acculturation traits showed no change one might assume that the environment was not significantly different from the native culture's environment. In "Liberty" this would seem an unlikely possibility, but in border sections of this country, or in closed barrio neighborhoods there may not be significant acculturation trait change.

While the students were experiencing acculturation, as indicated

by the change in acculturation trait scores, certain ethnic features did not appear to be changing as rapidly, if at all. The students continued to prefer socialization with members of their own ethnic group, they continued to have pride in themselves as Mexicans, and they continued to feel some degree of prejudice and discrimination directed towards them as a group. In spite of the relatively clear indications of a continued high level of ethnic identity it is not clear whether these traits alone can establish the existence of an oppositional frame of reference as theorized earlier by Ogbu (1978).

Caste-like perceptions and minority group “oppositional frames of reference” were investigated by asking questions of the students about their post graduation plans. This interview format was designed to help determine if the students were resisting mainstream acculturation. Twenty of the students indicated that they would seek some form of formal post-secondary schooling. Several of the seniors had been accepted to baccalaureate colleges, those that had not were planning on attending community colleges. If they follow through on their plans, their profile would be significantly different from the national statistics that show Mexican-American enrollment in post secondary institutions to stand at 30 percent of high school graduates (NCLR 1990), and at approximately 15 percent for the population as a whole (NCLR 1990). Four of the male students indicated a desire to join the military. The other four students thought they would most likely work after graduation, perhaps continuing school at a later time.

The interviews found that students thought they might settle in the town. The students expressed the desire for education to provide them with the skills and credentials necessary to be successful in future careers. Clearly mainstream values and goals were being adopted by the students. In all cases the parents or guardians of the students were employed in blue collar positions, many at the local turkey processing plant. Many students had part-time jobs at the plant as well. This situation of full employment may have a large bearing on the perceived opportunities and motivations for students’

performance.

Neither theorist seems to have an adequate explanation for the degree of success of these students. The acculturation trait results support the expected findings for both Trueba and Ogbu, the ethnic identity results support the expected findings for Ogbu, the mainstream interest score supports the expected findings for Trueba, while the academic performance results generally support Ogbu. While the pattern of acculturation and ethnic identity traits would tend to support the second hypothesis, that of Ogbu, the academic performance of the students and their desire to fully participate in mainstream culture confounds their positions.

SIGNIFICANCE

The findings demonstrated that these Mexican-American students were acculturating and that they continued to maintain a strong ethnic identity. Cultural features, as measured by this research, seem to not have a negative influence on academic performance. This is not an insignificant finding. Too often Mexican American students are viewed as having cultural deficiencies; something in the home, or background values may be accused of preventing academic success. "Culture" may serve to detract the educator from viewing the individual as an active participant in defining reality (Aguilar & Vallejo 1984). Studies have shown that ethnic biases may influence the labeling of minority children more frequently into problem categories (Juarez 1981). Tomlinson (1991) suggests that the school a student attends is a larger factor in determining academic performance than ethnicity. This study has demonstrated that acculturation and ethnic identity traits alone do not inhibit or necessarily enhance student academic performance.

Trueba (1988) speaks about the importance of peer socialization as a major factor to be considered in developing dropout prevention programs. Ogbu (1986, 1990) speaks of the importance that identity, and of being a part of a group, plays in determining the per-

ceptions a student has towards school. The pressure to not “act white” stands in the way of academic success for some minorities (Fordham and Ogbu 1986; Gregory 1992). Culture, as learned, is not static (Spindler and Spindler 1990). Individuals can and do choose to adopt cultural traits. The Spindlers’ definition of culture recognizes the important role that interaction plays in developing culture within an individual. No group is homogeneous. Mexican-Americans may view themselves as recent immigrants, or consider themselves to have roots in this country going back many generations. Individuals may share some cultural traits, but have considerably different perceptions of their position and power within this society.

While neither theory alone is sufficient to explain the findings of this study, the researcher believes that both theories can be used to help understand the academic successes or failures of any minority. The motivation to succeed in school cannot be long divorced from economic or cultural rewards offered outside of the academic environment. At the same time school programs must be designed to effectively develop the cognitive skills of students. As Fetterman (1989) has stated, arguments that suggest that one approach is better than the other are misleading, because the approaches of cultural discontinuity and cultural ecology address the same problems at different levels. Ogbu uses a macro analysis that can miss important local and individual variations, though he does not deny that some individuals will succeed. Trueba’s focus on the successful performance of minority individuals through a well designed curriculum may reduce the percentage of dropouts in select locations, but does nothing to address the primary motivating elements for success in school, its relevance to the student’s life at present or in the future.

Indeed, if we are defining culture as a process involving interaction with the environment, one would need to acknowledge the economic and social setting as an integral part of the environment of the Mexican-Americans. The relative economic success of any “minority” community may be the pivotal element in swinging a minority’s academic performance from failure to success, from drop-

ping out to participation.

The Sage Colleges

ENDNOTES

1. The mean GPA of those born in Mexico was 2.25, versus 1.93 for those born in the United States.
2. Mean scores for first versus second generation students are as follows: Language Preference (35.00 versus 25.93), Cultural Heritage (53.31 versus 43.93), Parents' Cultural Heritage (40.15 versus 34.87), and Cultural Identification (57.31 versus 49.8).

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BEYOND TECHNOLOGY

William Griffen¹

If we compare the six days of the Book of Genesis to the four billion years of geologic time, each day would equal 666 million years. On the last day of that week at 4 p.m. the reptiles appeared and at three minutes before midnight humans appeared. The industrial revolution began at 1/40th of a second before midnight! In presenting this time comparison, conservationist David Brower then observed:

We are surrounded by people who think what we have been doing for 1/40th of a second can go on indefinitely. They are considered normal — but they are stark, raving mad!²

The dominant, prevailing position in political discourse and academe is firmly in the “stark, raving mad” camp.

What has that last 1/40th of a second wrought? Extinction of species, overpopulation, nuclear contamination, global warming, soil erosion, oil spills, toxic wastes, pollution of air and water, tropical deforestation, urban congestion, alienating work, famine and on and on. In his very useful Earth and Mind, David Orr reminds us that in a typical day on planet earth:

we will lose 116 square miles of rain forest, or about an acre a second. We will lose another 72 square miles to encroaching deserts, the results of human mismanagement and overpopulation. We will lose 40 to 250 species, and no one knows whether the number is 40 or 250. Today the human population will increase by 250,000. And today we will add 2,700 tons of chlorofluorocarbons and 15 million tons of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. Tonight the earth will be a little hotter, its waters more acidic, and the fabric of life more threadbare. By year's end the num-

bers are staggering: The total loss of rain forest will equal an area the size of the state of West Virginia; and the global population will have risen by more than 90,000,000. By the year 2000 perhaps as much as 20% of the life forms extant on the planet in the year 1900 will be extinct.³

What is the relationship between computers and information technology (hereafter CIT) and that last 1/40th of a second and beyond? CIT is connected to the industrialism and continues to alter our planet and lives. In fact, it is more than connected: it is pervasive. CIT is a commodity, a service, a tool (not neutral I will argue), a play thing, a panacea for all kinds of human ills, a job, a career, an empire (see Bill Gates), an escape, a new religion; and (given the present distribution of power and resources in the world) a major threat to the race and planet.

Technophiles argue that CIT can be used to solve social and environmental problems. However, because most CIT is harnessed to an economic system with an established and unfair pattern of distribution, it perpetuates growth and concentrates wealth in the same inherently unjust manner. The rich are getting richer, the poor poorer, and all at the expense of a rapidly degrading environment. Can CIT be used to end the present plutocracy?⁴ It depends on how the problem is perceived. If the problem is seen as merely requiring more data processing and high speed tele-communicating then the problem will worsen.

The view that more information, accessible to more people, will usher in a glorious techno-utopian future is nonsense. The current value of information is based on its use to create growth in the market place. So long as present power arrangements prevail, information for growth, profit, and control will be the primary use of CIT. Information generation, processing, and communicating to ameliorate human and environmental problems will continue to be a minor priority. Put bluntly, if the age of information activity can turn a profit for the corporate elite, as Nike says: "Do It." If it also serves

some human and environmental needs, well, that's a fringe benefit.

Our economic system demands that we consume what we produce so as to stimulate further production and thus maintain the strength of the system. The system, however, does not require the health of its component parts to maintain its power.... The endless cycle of the production and consumption of information and services generates less and less meaning ... because it reduces the possibility of autonomous action with the system. Alienation is the result.⁵

The logic and imperatives of the present economic system preclude solutions to basic problems of social justice and equality. It cannot disrupt the relationship of the few renting the labor and talent of the many by democratizing the work place hierarchy. That solution from the standpoint of the many would be seen as a "problem" by the 1% at the top who rent labor and talent in order to perpetuate their ownership of more wealth than the 90% below them. Will the increased use of CIT and the present obsession with computer literacy in our schools lead to democratic solutions, as in the work place example above?

More likely, CIT will be used to further marginalize and exploit most of the world's workers. I'm looking at a typical "computers solve our problems" ad in the April 1995, Technological Horizons in Education Journal. The lead reads: "That information will take five months to process???" (We don't know if the information is related to cutting tropical forest, planning a new mall or sales campaigns for carcinogenic products). A worried executive is pictured pondering the processing of 8,300 surveys. The options: 5 months executive time, 4 or 5 temps at \$8 an hour to reduce the project to a month (\$6,500 plus!) or an NCS computer — one person and less than a day's work. Not included in the upbeat ad is a picture of 5 temps on welfare, if the computer option is taken. Similar ads "grace" the pages of all the general audience education periodicals—The Instructor,

Teaching K-8 Magazine, Computer World, American Educator, New York Times, Educational Computer Magazine, On Campus (AFT), etc. The problems and possibilities paraded endlessly in these sources center on nuts and bolts school management and cliché saturated, accomplish-everything-with-learning technology testimonials. Rarely, if ever, can one find in these sources a critical, reflective piece on technology affecting culture that isn't celebrated as progress.

Always missing, for example, is the following critical analysis.

It is simply not prudent to count on technological rescue to solve America's job problem, much less the global problem of which it is an inextricable part. The jobs crisis raises the most fundamental question of human existence: What are we doing here? The global economic system prizes the efficient production of goods more than the dignity of human beings—The surplus of gifted, undervalued, and unwanted human beings is the Achilles heel of this emerging global system.⁶

The mindless (except for market growth) momentum of the new age-of-information—propelled global order results in a reality where “every-day real wealth—breathable air, drinking water, human imagination and energy, and the health and development of children are sacrificed for mere symbols of wealth, mostly pieces of paper and bits of electronic data that tell us how rich we are.”⁷ It is the worst of trades and CIT functions to make the trade-off more persistent and more pervasive.

Technology is not just a tool set aside (separated) from all our problems. Technology with its inevitable use and misuse has given rise to both inequities, alienation, and environmental degradation. The prevalent instrumental view (now an ideology) that typifies most of the “age of information” advocates sees computers, networking, and information technology as neutral tools. This is a dangerous misleading oversimplification that denies the tremendous potential and reality of technology (all kinds) as a cultural determiner.⁸ Neil Post-

man, a professor of communication arts and sciences at N.Y.U., is forceful in castigating the “technology is neutral” myth. He states:

“To be unaware that a technology comes equipped with a program for social change, to maintain that technology is neutral, to make the assumption that technology is always a friend to culture is, at this late hour, stupidity plain and simple.”⁹

In another era, using the present “technology is neutral” logic, one might have argued that the steam engine could be used to advance human needs and ends or thwart them. True enough, but the introduction of the steam engine into the workplace and the culture beyond did much more. “Steam engine technology” and subsequent technique enhancement created the industrial era, what Toffler calls the Second Wave, and now new, vastly more complex technology is pushing us (some kicking and screaming) into the Third Wave. The techniques are not simply tools, they define newly emerging cultures and civilizations.

Seen as a way of ordering human activity, the total order of networks is anything but neutral or toollike. In its centrality to the daily activity and consciousness of...the function-serving human component, the technical order is more properly thought of as a way of life. ...the means come to undermine and reshape the ends, and the world is qualitatively altered. And what is worst, the system, once fully in operation, no longer responds to human guidance.¹⁰

Robert Merton was correct and succinct when he wrote, “The modern technological society...is a civilization committed to the quest for continually improved means to carelessly examined ends.”¹¹ Before wiring every school, campus, and home and tying all together in networks to speed down six lane, cyberspace freeways, ask the following:

1. If there is a positive relationship between the increased em-

phasis on computer technology and solving human problems, why do these problems persist or worsen? In other words, what is the evidence that the increased use of computers in the private sector and in public education has contributed to ameliorating environmental degradation, social injustice and alienation?

2. Are the problems of modernity best addressed by the further mass production and processing of data and information?
3. What is the record of social problems being solved by emphasizing information over ideas?
4. If education represents the public interest, how should we react to the reality that age-of-information technology overwhelmingly serves private and corporate interests while public needs, both human and environmental, go unattended? (A case in point — the present human services crisis.)

Despite grandiose claims to the contrary, information technology is overwhelmingly used to increase and reinforce inequalities through the normal functioning of the market (now more technologically enhanced than ever). Most of these high-tech endeavors have an overall degrading effect on the environment. Theodore Roszak has concluded, “Computers, even when we reach the point of having one on every desk for every student, will provide no cure for ills that are social and political in nature.”¹²

The increasing use of CIT should be subjected to a questioning process to determine to what extent a positive relationship exists between the increased emphasis on CIT and social justice. The overall claim for CIT playing a positive role is not substantiated by its past and present record of serving the common good.

There are two major “givens” of our time: a growth economy and increased technology. Human activity unfolds in these two areas as if on automatic pilot. Only a small fringe of scholars question

these givens and rarely do the media present their work for assessment. The media, schools, and political discourse are saturated and monopolized by the details of the givens that continue as major hegemonic forces.

The world proceeds as if no other possibilities exist. We must have economic growth because we must have jobs, and we must have jobs to buy back the goods and services being produced for growth. Firmly grasping the marionette strings above, the plutocrats keep it all in motion. It is motion with scant substance; activity with little meaning beyond itself.

Schools and colleges are asked: "Are we helping our graduates to meet the needs of the technological economy?" Whose technological economy? Whose needs are being met by this technology? Jobs are automated and merged out of existence, real wages decline, jobs are moved overseas, and we are asked to cooperate with those who create and profit from the crisis. Who decided that the public sector should be decimated?

Other questions must be asked: Why should we be adapting to and reproducing an economic system that is destroying the public sector? We teach our students to question the passive and nonreflective life. We champion empowerment. Yet, we remain downstream processing, digesting, and ultimately drowning in the flood of trendy reports and administrative minutiae while racism, sexism, injustice and ecocide persist. The times require much more than house-keeping and bean-counting.

What to make of the futurologist's highly publicized parade of learning technologies marching our way? A failure to recognize the reality of technological determinism and its accompanying social inequalities will insure an uncritical instrumental role for education in the Twenty-First Century. More energy, more time, more resources, more funds, and more institutional support will continue to be committed to CIT committees. The issues raised by Ellul, Mumford, Roszak, and others will be ignored. Their questions — crucial in the

long term — unfortunately can't be “committee-fied.” The committee on the “Impact of the Steam Engine” was never formed. The “Impact of the CIT Culture” committee doesn't exist. Teachers working independently may think, write, lecture and teach about “it,” but “it” has no home in terms of education committee members working on “it.” No series of teleconferences or even low-tech exchange networks are working on “it.” In short, while the means-drenched-technology-technique-information-highway concerns are on the academic agenda, the “where are we going and what are we doing to each other and our earth nest” is not!

One simple suggestion. For every distance learning, cyberspace, super-info highway, satellite uplink and downlink, interactive software, Image-Mail, Virtual Reality, Artificial Intelligence, Business Via Technet, Parentlink, BITNET, Classroom 2000, Accounting Information Systems committee formed, a human condition committee is instituted. We will have committees on poverty and technology, the environment and technology, violence — individual and state sponsored — and technology, social justice and technology, sharing power and wealth and technology, and alienation and technology. Don't be surprised if out of those committees there emerges the committee for Beyond Technology.

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ENDNOTES

1. This paper was read at the American Educational Studies Association Annual Meeting November 4, 1995.
2. From a 1992 HBO Special, “Earth and the American Dream” HBO Consumer Affairs, 1100 Avenue of the Americas, N.Y., N.Y. 10036.
3. David W. Orr, Earth in Mind: On Education, Environment, and the Human Prospect. (Washington D.C. and Covelo, California: Island Press, 1994), 7. A valuable summary of the ecology crisis is John Bellamy Foster's The Vulnerable Planet: A Short Economic History of the Environment (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1994).
4. No, Virginia, there is no democracy; there is only a plutocracy. For

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validation of that plutocracy see Edward N. Wolff's Top Heavy: A Study of the Increasing Inequality of Wealth in America (New York: The Twentieth Century Fund Press, 1995). For how the plutocracy is made acceptable to the people, see Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky's Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988).

5. Kathleen Woodward, ed., The Myths of Information; Technology and Post Industrial Culture (Madison, WI: Coda Press, 1980), from the Introduction p. xix.
6. Richard J. Barnet and John Cavanagh, Global Dreams: Imperial Corporations and the New World Order (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), 426, 425.
7. Ibid, 428.
8. There is a body of scholarship (see Ellul, D. Sloan, Mumford, Roszak, Sale, D. Noble, Lasch, Postman, Mander, L. Winner, Weizenbaum, etc.) addressing the modern phenomenon of autonomous technology and the technological imperative that takes the position that technology tends "to develop in its own momentum and requirements irrespective of the needs and purposes of society..." Douglas Sloan, Insight Imagination: The Emancipation of Thought and the Modern World (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1983), 28.
9. Neil Postman, in telephone conversation on 10/25/95.
10. Langdon Winner, Autonomous Technology (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1977)
11. Jacques Ellul, The Technological Society (New York: Vintage Books, 1964) from Robert K. Merton "Forward," vi.
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PHILANTHROPY IN EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS: CONSCIENCE OF THE PUBLIC GOOD OR INSTRUMENT OF CONTROL? ILLUSTRATIONS FROM RECENT WORLD HISTORY

Richard Glotzer¹

“...you are that the centre of something like Well’s open conspiracy, a freemasonry of free workers, who understand both one another and the common purpose, and so can cooperate with a minimum of organization.” - Fred Clarke to F.P. Keppel, President of Carnegie Corporation²

Corporate philanthropy is a uniquely American phenomenon that grew from specific social and economic circumstances at the end of the 19th century. The impact of both major foundations and less well known philanthropies has been enormous in the field of Education, both domestically and internationally. This paper sketches out the relationship between philanthropy’s domestic and international involvements in Race Relations and Education, outlining how this involvement makes the philanthropic enterprise an important aspect of Historical Foundations of Education.

Corporate organization was relatively new at turn of the century. If as corporate managers argued, the new structure permitted business to generate public capital for expansion, it also permitted the sheltering of wealth and the limiting of personal liability. There was also the question of whether corporate activity and ownership really rested with “the public”, as some claimed.³ Under Corporate organization the prospect of perpetuating influence and power beyond the single life time was greatly enhanced over conventional forms of ownership. Philanthropic foundations organized along corporate lines were subject to similar criticisms. A United States Senate committee held hearings on the subject in 1915.⁴ The Committee did not press for regulation, although concerns were voiced about the potential for those with vast resources to visit subtle political and

social influence on the public through organized giving. By the 1930s the unregulated (and private) nature of foundation activities was a common theme among social critics.⁵ In the 1990s similar questions are being raised about philanthropic participation in grass roots social movements. Critics on the left argue that foundation involvement deflects or dilutes grass roots politics while critics on the right argue that such movements are artificial and rely heavily on the bureaucratic organization of foundations themselves.⁶ The principles that guide contemporary philanthropy originates in a shift in political theory that began in the late 19th century.

Early 20th century corporatism was intimately linked with a new, more activist theory of government, inspired in part by the need to resolve pressing social problems generated by economic growth and urbanization. Inspiration also came from American social scientists familiar with the new German welfare state and French educational reform. As Jeffry Lustig has written, the new theorists of political economy rejected the tenets of natural law, particularly Social Darwinism and its corollary of absolute freedom of the market place.⁷ Social laws were historically derived, it was argued, and shaped by political and social factors. As such, government was an agency which could define and nurture national habits. This rejection of what Lustig terms "the minimalist state", based on the increasingly outmoded notion of least restraint and individual liberty, still recognized the primacy of private capital but reserved the right to regulate monopolies in the interest of preserving natural competition.⁸ Moreover some believed that government, led by an elite of civic minded public servants, was required to intervene in other areas as well - in fact wherever such intervention improved "national habits". It was in the area of national habit that philanthropy could augment the efforts of government.

Corporate philanthropy mirrored many of these principles. Such philanthropy was activist, led by social and economic elites of the society, and geared to the pursuit of goals conceived within the existing social order. The new "foundation men", drawn from business,

prestigious universities and government, relying on the new social sciences, presumed to know what society needed. Thus programs aimed at rural blacks, the white working class and indigenous peoples in Africa and elsewhere, were often articulated by individuals closely tied to government. Indeed, the composition of governing boards of foundations have often served as an informal means of coordinating the activities of government, business and philanthropic bodies.⁹ Managing race relations has surely been one of these activities.

Until the 1940s foundation support for Race Relations and Educational work was conservative in scope, hesitant in its moral breadth, and entailed relatively small expenditures compared to other types of giving.¹⁰ Most emphasis on black or “Negro Education” as it was formally known, was directed toward developing vocationally oriented education, within an existing social context of segregation, abridged citizenship, and limited economic mobility. The dichotomy between Booker T. Washington, proponent of “Industrial Education” emphasizing vocational skills, good social habits, and acquiescence to white paternalist leadership, and W.E.B. DuBois, advocate of full equality under the law (and Liberal Arts Education), is well known. That foundations, at least in the area of Education, supported the broad formation of “national habits”, providing for limited advancement while recognizing popular conceptions of racial inferiority, is a harsh indictment that stands best for a specific period, say until the mid 1930s. Some lessor known projects of philanthropy, i.e. supporting African and African-American students at institutions like Columbia’s Teachers College, marked the beginnings of a strategic shift in orientation. Critics like DuBois warned that this education was not necessarily for liberation but instead insured that educated blacks would become effective instruments of continuing subordination, both domestically and abroad. Thus the “backwardness” of one’s people was a white man’s burden shifted [experimentally] to black shoulders.¹¹

This shifting of burdens was in keeping with the new politics (and social sciences), as Woodrow Wilson, one of its important theorists, established. As Wilson’s writings on the Philippines reflect,

competition not only existed in business but between nations, and indeed, between races.¹² Leaders of an enlightened government like the United States, held an obligation to see that immature races submitted to an apprenticeship in civilization - both at home and abroad. For Wilson popular acquiescence to governance stemmed not from social contract but from historical tradition (habit) underscored by the potential use of force. These views were reflected in the perspective Wilson brought to the mandates question at the Paris Peace Conference (1919).

In Wilson's view, the concept of "Trusteeship" provided the necessary apprenticeship for African peoples, with trustees accountable to the League of Nations.¹³ That such arrangements carried no time table or guidelines for economic relations were matters that were conveniently ignored. As one scholar has noted, Trusteeship modernized the rationale for domination and gave imperialists a conscience.¹⁴ If Trusteeship provided the guise for dividing old spoils in new ways, it also helped create an environment favorable for American corporate philanthropy to involve itself in Britain's Empire.¹⁵

The expansion of American philanthropy into the British Empire occurred in the 1920s. Britain's 19th century policies toward her dependencies, requiring self sustaining economic development, masked an economic crisis which was both circumstantial and structural. Part of the crisis was Whitehall's resistance to rethinking policies which would better meet the changing conditions in the Dominions and Colonies. The failure of the Round Table Movement, a private effort by public men to recast the concept of Empire into an organic whole bound by culture and mutually beneficial economic and defensive ties, underscored the crisis of an imperial order unraveling.

The Round Table Movement, originally conceptualized by Lord Milner, made its headquarters at Chatham House, London, home of the Royal Institute for International Affairs. Through the Institute, Round Tablers established one of the first 20th century think tanks.

The British Round Table stimulated the formation of similar groups throughout the Empire although loyalists found themselves confronted with the growth of nationalism in the Dominions and demands for settler autonomy in the dependencies.¹⁶ The failure of the Round Table coincided with the expansion of American philanthropies into the Empire, in effect, the rest of the “Anglo-Saxon” world.¹⁷

In the early 1920s the Phelps-Stokes Fund, a New York based philanthropy with experience in Southern Negro Education, sponsored fact finding commissions for East and West Africa. The Commission reports served as a background for the preparation of a Colonial Office White Paper, Education in British Tropical Africa (1925).¹⁸ This White Paper was in some measure a response to the criticisms Britain was receiving about “native progress” in her Colonies. If American foundations offered expertise at little cost, they also brought a theoretical orientation toward racial and educational affairs reflecting their contemporary domestic programs, which were more attuned to conservative southern mores than black advancement. Thomas Jesse Jones, an American “negro education expert”, wrote both Phelps Stokes Reports. In 1917 he had authored Negro Education: A Study of the Private and Higher Schools for Colored People in the United States, advocating vocational rather than liberal arts training for blacks.¹⁹

The most significant aspect of the American philanthropic involvement in the 1920s and 1930s in Africa was the commitment made to the Union of South Africa. In 1928 Carnegie Corporation set aside \$500,000 for a five year South African program. By 1940 nearly \$900,000 would be spent by the Corporation alone in South Africa, nearly a third more than Carnegie spent in the rest of British Africa over the same period.²⁰

South Africa has always occupied a unique place in the American consciousness. In many respect the experiences of the two countries resonate with one another, a fact not lost on those intent on cementing bonds between the two countries. Geography and geology

early on gave South Africa a special strategic importance and affluence, making the Union a First World outpost in Africa. Cooperation of a both an overt and clandestine nature over the decades have made South Africa part of the western world, both materially and symbolically. Disapproval of racism and the abridged system of “parliamentary democracy” which until recently characterized white minority rule, was minority opinion in the United States until after well after World War II. For foundations, South Africa’s racial crisis has always been the point of focus because of the implications for American race relations.²¹

During World War Two there was little overseas activity for American foundations. However, the importance of domestic race relations was heightened by black migration to America’s northern cities. In 1937 Carnegie Corporation had engaged the Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal to examine American race relations. His research was also to provide a guide for philanthropic work.²² An American Dilemma was published in 1944. Myrdal’s analysis, emphasizing class, group status and access to opportunity, represented a departure from foundation thinking on race.

In An American Dilemma Myrdal argued that like laissez faire economics, laissez faire race relations could have calamitous consequences. Aside from the contradiction of the United States demanding military service from disenfranchised African-Americans in a war against racially inspired fascism, it was clear that a new direction was required for post war race relations. With An American Dilemma, American philanthropy, with tacit governmental consent, was publicly announcing a shift away from old historical traditions (national habits) to less discriminatory national habits and social norms.

Like the United States, in South Africa the growth of domestic industries during the war stimulated black migration to the sprawling townships surrounding the country’s “white” cities. The Fagan Commission (1946-48), advised that black urbanization could not be reversed. Moreover, because total segregation was impractical, laws

which impeded the development of a stable urban workforce should be modified or removed.²³ In 1949 Carnegie Corporation sounded out moderates about sponsoring a study of race relations and industrialization, "Economic Aspects of a Multi-racial society", in effect, "A South African Dilemma."²⁴ In the end the Corporation held back, aware of growing South African anxiety over trends in American race relations and American interest in decolonization. Few imagined the program of social engineering that the newly elected National Party was about to initiate, including the British.

In post war Britain policy makers planned to shift the center of a smaller Empire to Africa, rich in natural resources.²⁵ Africans would settle for better administration and more rigorous support for their rights against settler communities, or so the thinking went. This was a serious miscalculation on Whitehall's part. Throughout the 1950s Britain was faced with a continuous series of emergencies, in Africa and elsewhere, reflecting the demands of dependent peoples for an end to colonialism. By 1957 American foundations had began talks with the U.K.'s Permanent Representative to the U.N. Trusteeship Council about the preparation of emerging nations. One indirect outcome was the formation of the Ashby Commission, charged with studying the higher education needs of a soon to be independent Nigeria.²⁶ The Ashby Commissions' report, entitled Investment in Education (1960) became a widely studied document for African development.²⁷ The Commission supported the development of new universities and social science institutes, to be funded by the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations. American social science theories and methodologies were to be brought to Africa's new universities, in part by American philanthropy, which would also underwrite the training of practitioners of these theories.²⁸

Within a decade of Nigerian independence, armed struggle encompassed Africa's remaining white minority regimes. Once considered bastions of civilization on a "dark continent", in an age of emerging nations, white settler regimes were embarrassing reminders of colonialism. In an era of Cold War geopolitics the strategic impor-

tance of such regimes had, however, been enhanced and the West could ill afford to abandon them. In the 1950s and 1960s, "the Golden Age of Apartheid", as advocates of Separate Development saw it, relations between American philanthropy and the South African state reached their nadir. However, by the early 1970s, escalating insurgency was making movement away from overt racism more compelling.

In 1975 the Carnegie Corporation made its first South African Project Grants since the 1950s. The following year uprisings swept the country. Between 1976 and 1980, Carnegie expenditures in South Africa went from \$191,000 involving three programs, to over \$750,000 spread over eight programs.²⁹ By mid 1980s the state had acquiesced to Carnegie support for a Centre for Legal Studies, a Legal Resources Trust, and a Black Education Research Trust, programs resting the assumption that South Africa would remain a capitalist state tied to the world economy.³⁰

With the release of Nelson Mandela in 1991 and negotiations leading to general elections and an interim constitution, the long term commitment of American foundations to South Africa appears to have been sound. It remains too early to make predictions. The degree to which real power and resources are redistributed to the African majority will in large measure tell the tale. It remains instructive to note that the efforts of Carnegie philanthropy, as well as the Rockefeller and Ford philanthropies, have helped bring South Africa and Nigeria, Africa's two largest, resource rich and advanced nations, firmly into the capitalist world economy. It is not surprisingly that their respective educational systems, especially at the university level, are increasingly like our own.

This paper has sketched out some of the more far reaching involvements of American Philanthropy as it relates to Educational Foundations. Implicitly this paper asks readers to weigh the wisdom of permitting the philanthropic enterprise to function as an informal (and unelected) vehicle of policy implementation in a democratic

society. How comfortable are we with having the future direction of society set by philanthropy? And how comfortable should we be with philanthropy augmenting the role of government, when global changes in technology and economic organization pose new challenges for democratic institutions? These questions should be raised by those teaching Foundations of Education, for our students are the generation that must fully grapple with these issues.

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ENDNOTES

1. This is a revised version of a paper presented at the New York State Foundations of Education Association Annual Conference, April 1995.
2. Clarke was soon to become Director of the Institute of Education at the University of London. The reference is to H.G. Wells' call for an elite of gifted individuals, motivated by spiritual idealism, to guide the world toward a rational and equitable political and economic system. Wells assumed an enlightened capitalism would be the engine powering world reform. Clarke to Keppel, June 13, 1935. Clarke File, Box 104, Grant Series One, Carnegie Corporation Archives, Butler Library, Columbia University, New York. (Hereafter CC)
3. Maurice Zeitlan, "Who Owns America? The same old Crowd". in Maurice Zeitlan, The Large Corporations and Contemporary Classes, (New Brunswick, 1987).
4. Barbara Howe, "The Emergence of Scientific Philanthropy, 1900-1920: Origins, Issues, and Outcomes", In Robert F. Arnove (Ed), Philanthropy and Cultural Imperialism, (Boston, 1980), pp.25-54.
5. Horace Coon, Money to Burn. Great American Foundations and Their Money, (New York, 1990 orig. 1938).
6. J. Craig Jenkins, "Social Movement Philanthropy And American Democracy", in Richard Magat (Ed), Philanthropic Giving, Oxford, 1989, pp.292-314.
7. R. Jeffry Lustig, Corporate Liberalism. The Origins of Modern American Political Theory 1890-1920., (Berkeley, 1982), pp.195- 226.
8. Ibid.
9. John H. Stanfield II, "Private Foundations And Black Education And Intellectual Talent Development." , in Magat, pp.334-349.

10. Ibid, especially 337-38.
11. Richard Glotzer, "The Career of Mabel Carney: The Study of Race and Rural Development in the United States and South Africa.", (forthcoming Vol. 29) International Journal of African Historical Studies.
12. Lustig, pp.204-205.
13. Wm Roger Louis, "The United States And The African Peace Settlement of 1919: The Pilgrimage of George Louis Beer", Journal of African History, 4(1963), 413-433.
14. L.D. Pearce, The Turning Point in Africa. British Colonial Policy 1938-48, (London, 1982) pp.1-16.
15. See Kenneth J. King, "Africa and the Southern States of the U.S.A.: Notes on J.H. Oldham and American Negro Education for Africans.", Journal of African History, Vol.X., No.4., 1969, pp.657-77.
16. John Kendle, The Round Table Movement and Imperial Union, (Toronto, 1975), pp.1-22.
17. Clive Whitehead, "The Medium of instruction in British Colonial education: a case of cultural imperialism or enlightened paternalism?", History of Education, 1995, Vol.24, No.1., 1-15. For a detailed discussion of Anglo-Saxon expansion see Paul Rich, Race and Empire in British Politics, (Cambridge, 1986), pp 13-26.
18. Clive Whitehead, "Educational Policy in British tropical Africa: the 1925 White Paper in Retrospect", History of Education, Vol.10., No.3., 1981. pp.195-203.
19. Thomas Jesse Jones (Ed.), Education West in Africa, (New York, 1922), and Thomas Jesse Jones (Ed.), Education in East Africa, (New York, 1925).
20. The South Africa Program cost far less than the \$4,000,000 Carnegie funneled into Canadian Higher Education. See Archibald MacMechan, "Canada as a Vassal State", Canadian Historical Review, Vol.1, No.2., 1920, pp.347-353., and S. Sommerville, "Is Canada Becoming Americanized?", The Empire Review, June, 1926, 537-540.
21. Personal Communication, Alan Pifer to the author. July 1992. Pifer is a former President of Carnegie Corporation.
22. For an extensive treatment of this subject see Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, The Politics of Knowledge, Chicago, 1989, pp.132-146.
23. Phyllis Lewsen, "Liberals in Politics and Administration, 1936-1948", in Jeffrey Butler, Richard Elphick and David Welsh, Democratic Liberalism in South Africa (Cape Town, 1987) pp.112-113.
24. Shepardson to Van Eck, February 8, 1949. KCM 56986(475)(2),

- E.G.Malherbe Papers, Killie Campbell Africana Library, University of Natal, Durban, South Africa. (Hereafter E.G. M. Papers)
25. Between 1939-1945 Britain accumulated 2,879 million in external. In the same period Britain sold off 1,118 million in overseas assets, particularly in the United States. Whitehall was now becoming dependent on American aid in peace time. Cf. Wm William Roger Louis, British Strategy in the Far East 1919-1939, (Oxford, 1971), pp.17-108. Pearce, The Turning Point in Africa, pp.90.
 26. A first conference was held at the Greenbrier Hotel, White Sulfur Springs, West Virginia in 1958. At British insistence, no Africans were included. A second "whites only" conference was held at Cumberland Lodge, England, in 1959. Participants selected from foundations, government agencies and universities, attended in private capacities. "Conference on Assistance to Tropical African Countries", Grant Series Two, Box 5 - 1958, CC.
 27. E. Jefferson Murphy, Creative Philanthropy. Carnegie Corporation in Africa 1953-1973, (New York, 1976), pp.57-81.
 28. Ibid.
 29. 67. Annual Report, Carnegie Corporation, 1976 and 1982.
 30. 68. As Carnegie's President, Alan Pifer, wrote to one of the Corporation's South African associates after a 1980 trip to South America; "Perhaps what emerges in time will not be unlike Brazil where there is no legal segregation but where the whites tend to occupy a substantial proportion of the better jobs". Pifer to Malherbe, November 10, 1980. KCM 56987(88) E.G.M. Papers.

TEACHING TOLERANCE AMIDST DISAGREEMENT

P. Lance Ternasky

Whenever we get a group of parents, teachers, and administrators together, we are apt to hear concerns about how students treat each other and their teachers and about the type of treatment they receive in turn. The popular press and presidential candidates lament the apparent loss of common values and the heightened sense of dissension. Although we are quick to express our fears, we are often reluctant or unable to articulate a reasonable response to the resultant moral anxiety.

It is hard to know where to begin. Concerned educators and other citizens regularly find themselves asking how we can educate children to be knowledgeable, productive, and the kind of people with whom others would want to live. Teachers struggle with how to balance competing claims for their time and resources, and they wrestle with how to respond to the seemingly inevitable disagreement that accompanies those claims. What do we do with the disagreement? What should we teach our students about disagreement when many find it increasingly difficult to even discuss (let alone resolve) conflict?

It strikes me that part of our uncertainty lies in confusion about what it means to be tolerant. This is a critical issue for at least two reasons. First, tolerance plays a pivotal role in many of the contentious debates currently facing education (e.g., the nature and role of multiculturalism). And secondly, tolerance is a key component of any viable ethical theory. Without a defensible understanding of tolerance, an ethical theory cannot withstand philosophical scrutiny. Given these criteria, let me sketch one view of tolerance and its relationship with disagreement. In the process, I will suggest what this might mean for schools and those persons in them.

On Difference and Tolerance

I view education as a vehicle for ensuring equality and eradicating discrimination on the basis of non-relevant criteria. Like many others, I regard education as social transformation, and I envision a time when certain debates that currently rack the body politic will be viewed solely from a historical perspective. Now I am aware of my optimism here; consequently, when I ponder the relationship between disagreement and tolerance I am compelled to consider the state of things now and not as I hope they might be. The driving question then is what tolerance must resemble today—just which interpretation of it works best—so that a more salutary future is possible. Consider the following characteristics of tolerance.

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. 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. If tolerance requires that the things about which we argue are important, then it cannot imply disinterest.

As importantly, it also cannot mean the desire to nonchalantly adopt another's ideas or practices. It is meaningless to say we tolerate something we might readily accept. Since tolerance contains an implicit presumption of error, I tolerate your beliefs or behaviors because I cannot now convince you of your error.

Now there is a tension here. Tolerance presumes error, but all ideas held strongly enough to warrant tolerance by another also contain the implicit desire to proselytize.¹ (Any ideal that I claim demands protection from your biases is one I would desire you also to

hold.) I desire this result because ideals are objects of rational assessment (even if the reasons are ultimately shown to be invalid). It is the aberrant person who replies, "Just because!" when asked why she favors reproductive choice or why he rejects affirmative action. Adults in possession of their faculties are more likely to give reasons for their respective positions, for by concurring with me you validate my position and extend my ideological community.

In this context, nonholders adopt a position because they become convinced of the apparent truth of another's ideas. This adoption transpires because the speaker has offered sound reasons why the nonholder should accede, and, though the reasons vary greatly, no serious holders willingly argue that their ideals are merely arbitrary or erratic constructions. Moreover, if the reasons offered were petty or capricious, then not only would they not warrant tolerance (since tolerance connotes things that matter), but a decision to adopt would be equally vacuous.

Although the possibility of adoption exists, the more likely response (at least initially) between disagreeing parties is one of reservation. Although both parties would like to believe that they could draw the other into line, each may have to be satisfied that his/her antagonist listen. If in this setting adoption is unlikely even though the freedom to argue one's position is explicit, then the most the speaker can hope for is that the other will come to see that portions of my argument are reasonable. While I might accept your mere acquiescence on this point, true vindication comes when you grant that something of what I say makes sense or warrants serious consideration. Tolerance operates when you take me seriously, and it can only happen if you are sincere in your attempt to understand what I am saying. The essence of tolerance, then, is not freedom but understanding.

If tolerance is simply conceived of as the right to think whatever one chooses, then it is insipid. I am not asserting that what one can and does believe is unimportant, or that one's thinking does not

color one's perception of the world. However, the protection of thought alone is inadequate, for as William James noted, belief is measured by action.² This action may be in the form of speech—but only speech of a certain type. The speech must be intelligible to listeners and must make certain claims on them. It must motivate to action or provoke a response from both the speaker and the listener. If it fails to do so, it lacks both the nonholder's implicit critique and the believer's impetus to proselytize; it is, therefore, ineligible for tolerance. Thought and speech incapable of evoking a reaction cannot be our focus.

It is unarguably true that tolerance should protect one from coercion and violence based solely on one's convictions, but there are certain things this proposition cannot mean. Few would even attempt to argue that tolerance connotes the abuse of liberty, and even the most permissive societies have not conflated tolerance with license. Although tolerance dictates a certain freedom of action, we know that every society constrains speech and deed—even those forms not deemed licentious or treasonous. Our courts have regularly ruled that certain statutory prerogatives supersede the rights of believers (religious and otherwise). One could safely argue that actions born of conscience must first meet the condition of no decisive harm to the state before they will receive lasting judicial or legislative assurances of tolerance. Tolerance is too circumscribed if restricted to the freedom to act.

So when we approach the issue of tolerance pragmatically and historically, it cannot mean the freedom to think, the freedom to speak, or the freedom to act. Although each of these liberties represents a fundamental societal good, once we acknowledge the marked limitations on their practice we see that they cannot denote tolerance's scope. To permit tolerance to be so narrowly defined would ultimately relegate it to protecting only irrelevant or nonthreatening differences. If tolerance is to hold our ethical and political attention, it must risk more.

A relevant tolerance that admits notable limitations on personal freedom is best confined to the dialogue of disagreement. Persons must be taken seriously and must view others in like fashion for such a conversation to proceed. They must speak of differing ideas in an environment colored by the presumption of error and the drive to proselytize. Their topics must be substantive and their ideas must make claims on the other, and always resident in this exchange is the possibility of adoption. However, these conditions—and hence tolerance—are not possible without a structural commitment to understanding.³

This commitment requires that we eschew practices that restrict understanding. This condition means that we must reject attempts to silence or isolate. The silence comes from avoiding (or confining) the discordant voices out of fear that their error may cause conflict, or (as threatening) that they may push us to reevaluate our own belief system. Isolation emerges from a social acquiescence that permits the proliferation of debatably distinct groups, each with vocal demands for recognition. Here, one may be told, “Since you are not one of us, we simply can’t understand each other.” From the standpoint of understanding, neither approach is viable.

Now what does all this mean when we think about students, educators, and the social climate in which they interact? If persons take the meaning of tolerance seriously, their behavior should differ from that expected by popular culture. Popular culture tells us that conflict is to be avoided at all costs. Tolerance tells us that some things are worth arguing about.⁴ Popular culture tells us that we behave admirably when we simply do not care about difference. Tolerance says that although indifference about many things is desirable, true tolerance is concerned with matters that persons find vitally important. Popular culture asserts that tolerance is the equivalent of endorsement. Tolerance correctly notes that its intent is critique and understanding. Popular culture suggests that if we should disagree we must either remain silent or associate only with like-minded persons. Tolerance counters that the need for conversation is

greatest with those with whom we disagree. Tolerance ultimately tells us that our goal is not to escape confrontation but to engage the other.

Contending with Disagreement

Although the notion of tolerance as understanding may seem quite plausible, the thought that disagreement is an integral part of that tolerance may strike many as peculiar. Most of us find disagreement stressful, and schools devote considerable energy to holding this form of conflict in check. What, then, could possibly be gained from promoting it?

What is needed at this point is an example of tolerance at work along with parameters of its use. It is fitting that I select the hard case of the hypothetical dogmatist for exploring tolerance as understanding and for considering the obligations ideological rivals owe each other if tolerance really matters.⁵

The critic may ask why anyone should feel compelled to understand or respond to the dogmatist. From personal experience, many of us sense that serious undesirable consequences may accompany a substantive challenge of such a person's beliefs. The critic may even assert that in a society that extols freedom of conscience, we should, at most, note the dogmatist's position but refrain from any response that may be construed as a threat—a position that could be defended with certain popular conceptions of tolerance. I have argued that tolerance however, entails critique, judgment, and dialogue. How do we accomplish them without denigrating the dogmatist or succumbing to some form of violence? Why must we respond, and if we are to respond, what might we say?⁶

One justification for engaging the dogmatist comes from the activity of education itself. Although education is concerned with information transmission and with preserving society by replicating a certain sort of citizen, it obviously is not limited to these goals. A more adequate description of education would include its role of teach-

ing students to discriminate between the reasons for choosing one idea over another. Moreover, we realistically expect that the nature and complexity of these reasons and the instances of such reasoning will become more sophisticated as students progress through the educational process.

The ability to identify “good reasons” represents a cornerstone of our conception of education, but as a justification it still lacks an explanation for why we should voice our good reasons. Some may assert that it is enough that we have such reasons—reasons that ultimately permit us to choose our own conceptions of a good life. Why should anyone be required to expose her reasons to scrutiny in the classroom or in a civic forum?

One reasonable reply is suggested by the work of Hannah Arendt. According to Arendt, although freedom in a democracy condemns coercion of belief, it also demands that one provide within the public sphere (e.g., the classroom, the school board, or the city council meeting) defensible reasons for actions. Further, the freedom implicit in democracy necessitates a public space within which these reasons can be articulated. For Arendt, however, the ensuing exchange is not limited to mere discussion where the respective points of view are simply displayed and then returned to a mental cupboard for safe-keeping. Rather, it entails a conversation whereby every participant’s thought could conceivably be altered by the argument of another.⁷

For one’s thinking to actually be altered by a conversation presumes certain things about the exchange. The requisite truth-telling cannot be limited to merely stating what one believes, for to do only this much is to settle for egocentrism. Participation in the public sphere requires that truth-telling extend beyond “what I believe” or “what the preeminent literature suggests” to include “why I think position X mistaken.” Unless this implicit challenge is raised, each party is permitted an unjustified confidence that she is in possession of the truth. In taking this additional step, the participant risks offending the holders of X and subjects herself to possible ridicule and

rejection. However, refusal to take this step precludes legitimate involvement in democracy and permanently relegates the speaker to the status of safe but noncontributing observer.

If Arendt is correct, as I believe she is, then a democracy requires that the hard issues be discussed and that every participant's views be held to review. This proviso means that even those in positions of power who sense that they must remain neutral to display their tolerance are compelled to address the controversial and seemingly irresolvable issues and to risk confrontation. Following an Arendtian logic, cowardice rather than a commitment to tolerance may explain one's choice of reflective silence over the prospect of conflict.

Just as important, it also means that instead of being exempt from discourse, the dogmatist is obliged to confront those with differing views. As with every person who holds that her ideals warrant tolerance, she enters this exchange intending to persuade, but the very nature of the public sphere dictates that she realize her position may be changed or clarified by such an encounter. It is only by entering the debate that she can obtain what she desires: tolerance for her potentially contrary views and an audience from which converts might arise. Further, it is only in forming arguments capable of withstanding the barbs of those with whom we disagree that our own ideas become clear and begin to take a shape that permits others to "try them on." Prior to this, they remain securely one's own, but they contribute little to social evolution or moral progress.

So what does this suggest for the classroom? It means that disturbing debates will occur more frequently and at all grade levels. It may mean that students will engage the issues of race, gender, and class: an engagement laden with emotion and personal history. They may need to openly struggle with the appropriate role of religion in their school and with the appropriate role of the school in their personal lives. However, it also means that rather than attempting to placate students embroiled in a pithy dispute, the teacher will use

student indignation and frustration and fear to construct a crucible from which understanding might emerge.

Although this approach may represent a lofty goal, we correctly view it as potentially dangerous. Each of us has been “wounded” by a student or colleague during some heated exchange, and we are understandably reluctant to endorse a model in which such maltreatment could become commonplace. Fortunately, the social context of disagreement need not be virulent, and there are several things we can do to keep this environment from becoming malicious.

We can begin by reminding our students (and perhaps our colleagues) that the exploration of ethics is and should be troublesome. Moral considerations weave their way throughout our relations with the world, and the seriousness with which persons engage the moral debate speaks to the crucial role of ethics in human experience. Beyond establishing that the task is often not easy, certain qualifiers for ethical discussion must be placed—restraints that apply to all participants. Three are essential.

The first is that the conversation must be undominated and free of coercion. This observation requires that all be permitted access to the debate as equals. It does not mean, however, that all moral stances are comparable or that any are immune from criticism. Within the public sphere, the equals may argue and may eventually conclude that a particular position is simply wrong.⁸

This orientation will also mean that we must be open to nondominant sources of moral data. The notion that students’ moral growth is enhanced by dialogue may prompt educators to pursue greater familiarity with the foremost voices of their students’ moral traditions or those of now-extinct traditions. This attitude will require study of frequently ignored sources, such as, original ideas embedded in, say, religious thought, foreign and multicultural history, the writings of iconoclasts, or the literature on ethnic and gender bias.

The second qualifier is that participants need to rethink the re-

lationship between information and debate. Most typically assume that the former precedes the latter: one must “know” before entering a conversation. Although it is trivially true that a blank slate cannot enter into discourse and that conclusions should be drawn from evidence rather than from baseless opinion, we shortchange ourselves and our counterparts if we remain silent until we have “the answer” and only then are willing to enter the discussion. What often occurs is that the perceived need for sufficient data translates into the conviction that one never has enough information to make an informed decision, to resolve a moral dispute, or to undertake moral action.

Students and their teachers must often engage in discourse before they have what they consider to be sufficient information, for what counts as sound reasoning often emerges from the conversation between persons immersed in a single, difficult question. In a circuitous manner, much of the necessary data comes from the debate itself. The history of great ideas confirms that works of consummate importance are seldom the product of single thinkers working in seclusion. More frequently, they result from ongoing dialogues between persons operating with less than the critical mass of factual material. Debate contributes much of the information required for debate, while it simultaneously inhibits the potential for dominated discourse.

This orientation may appear to denigrate factual knowledge, but such an impression is misguided. Its purpose is to assuage lay fears about “experts.” It is understandable that persons would experience a certain anxiety if they thought they could not participate in the public sphere unless they possessed the training and idiom of the authority. These concerns are allayed, however, when we remind all parties that equals debate and that the most complex ideas in any field can be communicated in ordinary language. No one need ask permission to speak.

As an extension of this point, the final qualifier is that language may not be used to preclude participation in debate. No participant

can make a case by relying upon arcane knowledge or a private language. Just as we would find it unacceptable if in the typical American classroom ethical discourse were undertaken only in Tagalog, so it is when use of a private language (an unfamiliar religious or political position or technical jargon) excludes equals from the conversation. If anyone dismisses a challenge by claiming that the critic lacks the insight or the information to which only the speaker is privy, then the speaker fails to make the case, and any argument won by sleight of hand (e.g., fallacious reasoning) or by mere acquiescence (“I’ll agree just so I don’t have to listen to you any longer.”) reflects coercion rather than persuasion.

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.

Moral beliefs are objects of rational assessment, and persons generally insist that good reasons exist for them. If born of good reasons, these beliefs are subject to examination, and the holders are responsible for explicating to those with differing viewpoints why particular ideals are worth holding. This holding may require a certain “bilingualism” on the part of the speaker. If he is, say, a religious fundamentalist, he will need to “translate” his private reasons into a language that nonfundamentalists can understand. This move does not require him to disparage his religious language nor to disavow its content. It does, however, require that if he wants his moral reflections considered within the public sphere, he must make his reasons accessible.

Participation in a democracy requires finding a language whereby diverse parties can reach understanding. The nature of this language is not fixed and is, therefore, subject to evolution. This

public language could take the form of a shared moral pidgin (i.e., a narrow and rather superficial set of rules to guide public discussion). However, the results of social and linguistic intercourse over time and critical conversations among those who disagree may permit new levels of agreement, and this outcome reduces the need for the protection of purported diversity while it endorses a more complex set of common reasons.

Tolerance as understanding means that educators must welcome disagreement rather than search for ways to make contentious issues innocuous. Tolerance as understanding also means that we risk having our ideas altered by the thinking and experiences of others, and this qualification initially requires that all parties hold adamant views in suspense. Suspense does not require that we induce moral amnesia, however, for each agent's moral beliefs are subject to review. Given sufficient time and evidence, we likely will discover that some ideas are simply better than others.

Conclusion

The discussion above is characterized by a certain confidence in human beings. I can imagine many readers responding that this account of tolerance "sounds good" but questioning its relevance for the schools. Others may note that certain questions remain unanswered: "How do we teach tolerance or the value of legitimate dialogue? "I see lots of talking; why do I see so little change?" "How do we ensure that the demand for honest disagreement isn't used to oppress minorities—"We the majority don't understand what you minorities are talking about, and until we do you'd best keep quiet!"

These are genuine concerns, and ones I have addressed in other contexts; however, they were not my focus here. Rather, my goals were to make the strong connection between disagreement and tolerance and to sever the popular association between avoidance of conflict and tolerance. To do so it was necessary to distinguish between mere talking and dialogue. Many mistakenly assume that the terms

are synonymous. When we make this mistake, we confuse talking at or talking past someone with actual dialogue, and consequently, we are continually disappointed when these forms of non-dialogue fail to make a difference. Finally, it is necessary to challenge the common belief that serious disagreement is permanent. Too many students and educators have resigned themselves to moral inaction because they have concluded that most problems are perennial and that no form of conversation can improve them. They argue that people today are just too different, and that their respective views of the moral world are simply incommensurable. From this position, a moral stance is either idiosyncratic or the product of one inconsequential community among many.

Now I am not so naive as to maintain that a properly conceived tolerance stands as a panacea for all the ills that society faces. However, by the same token, we must break free of the notion that Americans are special people dealing with altogether exceptional problems. Now although it is likely the case that particular peoples in particular eras have displayed distinctiveness, it is pathologically myopic to presume that we (in this time and place) are ethically and socially unique beings.

A history of the species quickly reveals countless similarities across cultures and time. Although this history is punctuated by often unimaginable ruthlessness, it also tells the story of innumerable, nonviolent contacts between fundamentally diverse peoples—contacts that altered all parties. The histories of ideas, of languages, of religions disclose the truth that humanity has been “fed by many streams.” With great regularity human beings have incorporated new ideas and practices while discarding others that their predecessors considered sacrosanct. In fact, the only way to guarantee that a culture or a tradition within it will remain fixed and permanent is to fully isolate it from all outside influences—a highly unlikely possibility in the world in which we live.

Despite the difficulty of the task and the many instances of hu-

man cruelty, students need to be reminded that it is not wishful thinking to believe that true dialogue and the resolution of significant problems remain real possibilities. Although it is true that the attribution of error may be related to intolerance, I have argued that there is no inevitable correlation between the two. Severe disagreement need not prompt violence or coercion. Tolerance with both an embedded critique of the other and the desire to proselytize can promote a non-violent conflict where "the arbitration of mind" is substituted for escapism or brutality.⁹ Tolerance as understanding is not a second-best strategy for problem-solving, but perhaps the most fitting way of securing a dynamic balance between zeal and civility.

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ENDNOTES

1. Proselytism is a strong term, but it is appropriate here. Where tolerance is operating we are not dealing with mere sentiments, we are typically contending with deeply held convictions born of our multiple connections and commitments to family, religious systems, and the community at large.
2. See William James, *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979.) My argument is not intended to disparage the importance of freedom of belief. I willingly grant that attempts to constrain belief likely constitute acts of coercion and violence. James goes further and convincingly argues that constraining belief may be more than unethical. If you force me to deny the existence of X when X actually exists, you force me to be irrational.
3. Although it is true that certain ideologues would welcome the arrangement whereby we were required to understand them without reciprocity, liberal theorists are correct that free parties would never willingly enter into such an agreement. Tolerance requires a show of good faith. In the vernacular this is the oft-cited demand that one be "heard."
4. Note that I am not espousing an argumentative attitude for its own sake. There are many situations (weddings and funerals, for example) in which respect for persons dictates a particular civility. I am concerned here, however, not with decorum but with ethical/political dis-

course.

5. I have used the term “dogmatism” to connote an extreme ethical stance. It is necessary to distinguish this term from “absolutism.” As with skepticism and relativism, the distinction between absolutism and dogmatism is often lost, and the two are mistakenly seen as synonymous. We must expect, however, great diversity among absolutists, and their ranks may well include conservative religious groups, objectivist philosophers, certain Marxists, and curiously even some relativists who view their precepts as indisputable principles. Although the absolutist is often perceived as arrogant, intolerant, and uninterested in the evidence, it is worth noting that belief in objective, universal moral principles does not require that one embody these characteristics. The absolutist may be quite tolerant, and given the difficulty of securing an objective moral point of view, it is possible the absolutist will display conspicuous humility in light of potential fallibility.
6. I use the terms “we” and “they” solely for the purpose of explication. These (and related) terms have no inherent meaning. The meaning attributed to them is always contextual. Consequently, such meaning is never fixed. A member of one group (e.g., ethnic minority) may discover that he or she has become one of “them” (e.g., diverse citizens concerned about the portrayal of women in music videos) when conditions or interests shift.
7. See Hannah Arendt, Between Past and Future (New York: Viking, 1961) and On Revolution (New York: Viking, 1965).
8. Let’s say, for instance, that one were to assert that children simply could not mature into moral and contributing members of society unless they received corporal punishment. We would have an obligation to discover the reasons for this view and the evidence used to support it. But when a review of the evidence revealed that physical punishment clearly was not necessary for such development, we could justifiably conclude that the initial claim was inaccurate. Now the speaker could continue to espouse the same mistaken opinion, but the listeners’ obligation to understand would already have been met. The more likely outcome (unless the speaker suffers from certain pathologies) is that the speaker will adjust his or her views in light of the new evidence or perhaps abandon them.
9. John Dewey, Human Nature and Conduct (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1922), 300-301.