THE PHILOSOPHY OF OPEN EDUCATION

Edited and with an introduction by
DAVID NYBERG

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David Nyberg

Contents

General editor's note

There is a growing interest in philosophy of education amongst students of philosophy as well as amongst those who are more specifically and practically concerned with educational problems. Philosophers, of course, from the time of Plato onwards, have taken an interest in education and have dealt with education in the context of wider concerns about knowledge and the good life. But it is only quite recently in this country that philosophy of education has come to be conceived of as a specific branch of philosophy like the philosophy of science or political philosophy.

To call philosophy of education a specific branch of philosophy is not, however, to suggest that it is a distinct branch in the sense that it could exist apart from established branches of philosophy such as epistemology, ethics, and philosophy of mind. It would be more appropriate to conceive of it as drawing on established branches of philosophy and bringing them together in ways which are relevant to educational issues. In this respect the analogy with political philosophy would be a good one. Thus use can often be made of work that already exists in philosophy. In tackling, for instance, issues such as the rights of parents and children, punishment in schools, and the authority of the teacher, it is possible to draw on and develop work already done by philosophers on 'rights', 'punishment', and 'authority'. In other cases, however, no systematic work exists in the relevant branches of philosophy—e.g. on concepts such as 'education', 'teaching', 'learning', 'indoctrination'. So philosophers of education have had to break new ground—in these cases in the philosophy of mind. Work on educational issues can also bring to life and throw new light on long-standing problems in philosophy. Concentration, for instance, on the particular predicament of children can throw new light on problems of punishment and responsibility. G.E.Moore's old worries about what sorts of things are good in themselves can be brought to life by urgent questions about the justification of the curriculum in schools.

There is a danger in philosophy of education, as in any other applied field, of polarization to one of two extremes. The work could be practically relevant but philosophically feeble; or it could be philosophically sophisticated but remote from practical problems. The aim of the new International Library of Philosophy of Education is to build up a body of fundamental work in this area which is both practically relevant and philosophically competent. For unless it achieves both types of objective it will fail to satisfy those for whom it is intended and fall short of the conception of philosophy of education which the International Library is meant to embody.

One of the most 'relevant' issues in modern education is that of 'open education'. This is advocated by de-schoolers, free-schoolers, and many other sorts of radicals and reformers. What 'open education' is, however, is seldom clear, and what benefits it might bestow on the individual or on society has not been subjected to careful scrutiny. Its practicability in modern industrial societies has also to be concretely examined.

A group of young philosophers of education in the USA felt strongly that the time had come to devote some systematic thought to the variety of problems to which 'open education' gives rise. A working conference was therefore held at the State University of New York at Buffalo and this collection of papers was the outcome. The papers cover a considerable range of highly controversial topics—subjectivism in knowledge, A.S.Neill's Summerhill, social control in free schools, bureaucracy in public schooling, etc. They should be of great interest to all students of education who wish to think clearly and constructively about these topics as distinct from just taking up an offensive or defensive stance.

R.S.P.

Acknowledgments

Introduction

It is a sweet thing for an editor to have beneath his name the work of such competent and imaginative thinkers as this volume contains. There is reason for optimism over the current state and the future of philosophical studies in education if these original contributions, the readiness and skill with which they were written, count as evidence.

Each of these contributors was asked to prepare an essay for a project originally called 'The Essential Concepts of Open Education: Analyses of Their Plausibility and Appeal.' The rationale for the project was made on a recognition of the problem, common to many educational reform interests, of enthusiasm far outreaching control in the application of ideas, and the development of program policy and justification. The purpose of the project was to provide the field of educational studies with a volume of critical analysis on various concepts in open education, a volume that was past due and in conspicuous demand.

It is without question that there has been a remarkable interest in, and a good deal of writing and speaking about what is considered a new style of educating in Great Britain, the United States, Canada, and Australia, over the last decade. 'Open,' 'informal,' and sometimes 'humanistic' are adjectives used to describe this new style of educating that is presumed distinct from ordinary or traditional educating. (There is some difficulty in establishing precisely what counts as 'traditional' in education, though most assume it to be a common and stable referent.) Too often, however, the rhetoric of the supporters of this view, especially in the United States, is more vituperative, self-righteous, and lyrical than analytical. One is asked, through much of this literature, to be for or against open education on moral grounds or by force of political conviction, rather than being asked to understand the presumed strength and nature of open education on its intellectual or at least pedagogical grounds. One is asked, also, if one is sympathetic to at least some aspects of open education, to be unsympathetic to all other educational views and schemes, such as contingency management theory, behavioural modification techniques, the very idea of prespecification of intructional objectives, or simple drill.

The result is that the educational questions entailed by the essential concepts of open education, and indeed these concepts themselves, are likely to be ignored in favour of the more political and ideological questions that tend to divide the so-called liberals from the so-called conservatives in educational thought. It is not uncommon, though it is unfortunate, that one is called or tempted to accept a whole family of unanalysed concepts, or to reject them all, under the naive assumption that one does not have a more refined or limited choice in the matter. The problem is, then, that the best of open education theory is in danger of being lost in a gross rejection of the whole basket of open education literature, or if not rejected it is likely to be surrounded and sullied by a rash of unsound convictions, assumptions, and declarations held by the loudest and most popular advocates.

The contributors to this volume were asked to share my interest in the clarification of concepts, and to let positions of advocacy or opposition be reflected in the results of

analysis, whatever those results came to be. It will be obvious to the reader that, taken as a whole, this collection will claim allegiance from the chief zealots of neither advocate nor opposition groups, but it will appeal to some in both.

The table of contents reflects the organizing concern of problem examination and concept clarification with which the project was begun. Progress in refining problems is obvious in each essay, whereas solutions appear less frequently. It is anticipated that the reader will find some of these essays more useful or informative than others, depending on the extent of his own thought in each of the problem areas represented. For this reason, the subjects and styles of the essays range from the elementary to the esoteric, while standards of reasoning and coherence are maintained throughout.

Not reflected in the table of contents, but which properly ought to be pointed out, are the general presuppositions of these essays: that the cultural context of open education is one where adequate resources for alternatives are available; the political climate will tolerate the production of liberal or radical ideology and activity; a body of persons whose basic living needs are met; and where a tradition of cultural values is already defined. Of course these presuppositions do not fit all cultures or countries of the world, and in some places the issues of education raised here would be met with surprise if not utter bafflement. We sometimes forget that the conditions of leisure and morality that obtain in countries of considerable industrialization and wealth, leave time and license for interest in aspects of living and educating that simply are not of priority in other places.

This perspective on the questions of open education is meant only to reaffirm the modest intention of this book, it is not meant to detract from the importance of the work and concern it represents. The compassionate and intelligent development of civilizations is always in order, whether the starting point is in the primitive conditions of desert and jungle, or in the primitive conditions of urban ghetto and rural illiterate poverty.

The human race has a long history of concern with the improvement of its institutions of education. In modern times this concern has been in some significant degree a response to the busy nihilism and wistful vagabonderie of those among us whose music has led them to distrust any future, all politics, and language itself. Insofar as open education can be of use in rejoining our songs and our reason, in comingling our blood and judgment, against the confusion and outrage of bellicose ignorance, and against the depression of quiet wickedness in our societies, it deserves our attention. This volume of criticism leaves open education and its possibilities in a clearer position than it was; whether it is a stronger position we will know in time.

Beau Fleuve, N.Y.   D.N.

part I
Problems of definition

1

What's 'open' about open education?

Brian V.Hill

It is less helpful to ask of a slogan 'What does it mean?' than 'Who said it, and what do they hope to gain?' That is, when one is examining a slogan, an enquiry into political motivation is likely to be more productive than an attempt to gain conceptual precision on the basis merely of the face value of the words used. This is the situation in which we are placed by the phrase 'open education' which, anticipating later comments, I will here brand a powerful and non-specific slogan. The situation is complicated by two further factors. The first is that users of this slogan range very widely with respect to their normative commitments. Thus, some who have a high respect for the received cultural heritage see open education as a strategy more conducive to internalization of what are judged to be the best values than other strategies available. Others, speaking from within, say, a counter-cultural perspective, look to open education to subvert the dominant cultural values. The second factor partly accounts for the first: both words in the slogan can be put to a variety of uses which, depending on context, need not have close family resemblances. We must first, therefore, recall some salient features of the behaviour of slogans, before probing the various normative stances which lie hidden behind this particular slogan.

1

As any ad man knows, the best slogans are those which, irrespective of whether they actually denote anything about the product and the uses for which it is designed, do the most effective job of evoking useful mental associations and feelings of approval. Words that can be used in many different ways are more likely to pick up extraneous emotional overtones which will advance their effect as slogans. This has been well described as the 'boo-hurrah' effect that words often have, which more modern idiom, as my children have taught me, might well render 'yuk-yum'.

An excellent candidate for sloganizing is the word 'open'. Immediately one uses it, the options polarize. To be open (depending on context) is to be not closed, restricted, prejudiced or clogged; but free, candid, generous, above board, mentally flexible, future-oriented, etc. The opposite *[sic]* does not bear thinking about, and there can be no third alternative. 'Open' is yum.

The word has done wonders for 'education'. For no sooner had R.S.Peters almost convinced us that the modern usage of the term 'education' necessarily implies that it is yum, than a new wave of educational critics lodged trenchant criticisms of the modern commitment to education, and one writer at least has asked disdainfully: 'Must we educate?'[1]

2

It will be remembered that Peters, responding without rancour to sharp criticisms of his earlier analysis of the concept of education, refined his account to accommodate two concepts, one older and undifferentiated from notions of rearing and training, which I shall refer to as Education I; the other tighter and more recent, implying development of the whole person through increased understanding.[2] I shall refer to this as Education II. The crucial difference between the two was the knowledge condition built into the second. For our present purpose I accept this analysis. Peters has erected on this analytic foundation a normative theory of education which calls for the initiation of the learner into the most valued public modes of knowing.

Peters's normative views have their American counterpart in the writings, generally earlier, of such people as Phenix, Broudy, Burnett and Smith.[3] The assumption they all have in common is that man has the capacity to interact with his environment in a variety of modes which, over centuries, have become highly developed and extended. The new-born human, possessing capacity to enter these new worlds of experience, deserves opportunity; and he is disadvantaged in the business of social living if he fails to enter in. Since he cannot know, before entering, what he is missing, and since he cannot exercise an intelligent option respecting his own future participation in these modes until he has been grounded in them at some depth, a benign compulsion is unavoidable in any society which takes seriously the responsibility of guiding the development of its younger members. From such premises as these flow arguments for a substantial period of universal compulsory education, the professionalization of teaching, and the maintenance of formal educational agencies, to mention but a few.

While institutionalized education has thus been legitimized at a high level by some theorists, it has also been vigorously promoted on grounds that are more utilitarian, which include the conviction that basic literacy and professional-vocational preparation are indispensable to a society's economic productivity. Many of the current attacks on formal schooling focus on the capitulation of the schools, and of the teaching profession as a whole, to the demands and objectives of a consumer society manipulated by big business.[4] To the extent that the experience of schooling has been an indoctrinative gradgrind, oriented to economic values and rewards, they are surely right. But this has been 'education' only in Peters' first, undifferentiated sense, and the educational theorists I have just mentioned are making common cause with recent radical critics of the school in deploring such a capitulation.

But not all radical critics stop there. For some, the grounds of objection extend to the very idea of a common curriculum, even though it may be based on the maximum possible degree of critical cognition and enquiry. Thus Bereiter, recognizing that the refined concept of education implies transforming the cognition of the learner so that his whole development as a person is affected, objects that this is an intrinsically authoritarian aim, which encroaches on the child's entitlement to free choice.[5] Bereiter, that is, regards Education II as yuk, and he is not alone in this.[6]

It is at this point that the concept of education has, in the minds of many, been given new life by the grafting on of the adjective 'open'. By association, this word restores lost yum-power. One can dissociate one's own engagement in teaching from criticisms of education,

both conceptual and substantive, by saying, 'Ah yes, but I'm involved in *open* education.' It is doubtful if many who speak thus have grappled with the prima facie contradiction between 'open', understood as unrestricted option (including the right to opt out) which is one of its senses, and the implication that 'education', even when regarded as something superior to rearing or training, involves leading human learners towards certain goals. But the use of slogans is such as to discourage enquiries of this sort. In any case, our enquiry may be expedited by asking the political question: Who, in instance x, is advocating open education, and what does it appear they hope to gain by doing so? In short, what *in fact* are they advocating?

3

Much of the topical literature on open education, of course, springs from the American discovery, in the late 1960s, of the English primary school in some of its more informal expressions. When one investigates this model, one finds that the referents for 'open' are variously, spatial, temporal and procedural. That is, the classroom may be termed 'open' because children move in, around and out of the classroom at will, or because there is little use of bells to prescribe lesson segments, or because age and sex segregation have been abolished, or because traditional school subjects have given way to integrated learning activities, or any combination of these.

In anticipation of points to be made later, it is important to note some of the respects in which such schools are not obviously 'open'. Thus, attendance is not voluntary, except in a limited, on-the-premises sense. Also the curriculum, though flexible in practice, is ultimately prescribed by the teacher's view of what constitutes cultural consensus. Her view also determines the kinds of suasion she feels at liberty to exercise, and the 'subtle structuring'[7] by which she determines the choice and availability of activities in and beyond the classroom.

In effect, the meanings attached to 'open' in this context do not challenge the concept of Education II to which they are allied. Proponents of more formal procedures of class and/ or subject organization[8] are not *ipso facto* at variance with advocates of this kind of open school regarding general curriculum goals and the desirability of acquainting children with the best their culture has to offer. In the words of one American observer of the English example we are discussing, the teacher in an informal school typically creates 'a rich environment of possible activities…to lead the child into activities that call for the same skills that the formal school seeks'.[9] Silberman, in the book that did much to acquaint a wider American public with these schools, is equally accepting of the need for an agreed vision of 'the educated man'.[10] I shall therefore say that this segment of the literature on open education is only committed to PROCEDURAL OPENNESS.

Proponents of a more radical kind of openness are prone to allege that such a stance ultimately reverts to a force-fed 'transmission of cultural values', despite the fact that the best writing on both sides of the debate on procedural openness emphasizes the enrichment of the student's capacity for autonomous personal choices.[11] I impute just such an unworthy jibe to the authors of *Teaching as a Subversive Activity,*[12] who seem to want to believe that only they have caught the vision of personal autonomy. Oddly enough, though they claim that the open procedure of 'inquiry method' is the primary truth about good teaching, this

seems to be qualified by the responsibility they place on the teacher to develop 'in youth the attitudes and skills of social, political and cultural criticism',[13] and their recognition that 'the inquiry environment…is a series of human encounters, the nature of which is largely determined by the "teacher"'.[14] Viewed in the light of other writing reviewed in this section, their objections to curriculum pre-selection are more apparent than real.

4

A second characteristic emphasis in the literature on open education is what I shall call NORMATIVE OPENNESS. Into this category fall those viewpoints which advocate that the choice of learning tasks and activities shall be entirely the prerogative of the students. Normative openness logically implies procedural openness, whereas the reverse does not necessarily follow.

Hopkins maintains that there is a distinction between 'free schools' and 'open schools', in that the former are 'based on a philosophy of freedom in education, which holds that each individual has the right to determine what he learns and does not learn',[15] whereas the latter only allow freedom at what I have termed in the previous section the procedural level. The distinction is worth making, but it is misleading to claim that the contrasting ways in which the words 'free' and 'open' are actually used establishes it. John Holt, for example, believes that these terms are practically synonymous,[16] Silberman documents a loose interchange of these and other terms,[17] and bibliographies on open education range eclectically across and beyond all the writings referred to in the present essay. To complicate matters further, references are often made to 'openness' in higher education, by which are meant not only freer and more individualized procedures of instruction, but radical freedom for students to choose what they will study and how their learning will be assessed. In short, the words 'open', 'free' and 'informal' are used in ways that frequently overlap, and any one of these words may be pressed into the service of normative, as distinct from merely procedural, openness.

Normative openness challenges the right of the teacher to be anything more than a facilitator, responsive to the expressed desires of the learner. Whether one enriches the environment *in* the school (A.S.Neill) or counsels deschooling the environment (Illich, Reimer), the intention is to leave the individual free to develop in any direction he chooses. This stance assumes that there is no universal nature, or agreed model, of man; and it regards as presumptuous any attempt to prescribe another person's direction of growth. Illich categorizes schools, along with prisons, hospitals and supermarts, as *manipulative* social institutions,[18] and he would totally remove the provision for *compulsory* education.

Conceptually, such views of education tend either to shade over into therapy or to demolish the concept altogether. As to the first possibility Carl Rogers is a case in point. He transposes his theory of client-centred counselling to the sphere of education, and comes eventually to the belief that 'the only learning which significantly influences behaviour is self-discovered, self-appropriated learning', and that what is learnt in this way 'cannot be directly communicated to another'.[19] In consequence, he says, he has 'lost interest in being a teacher'. He desires only to be known as a facilitator. His book on educational theory eschews any discussion of curriculum content, and concentrates for the most part on interpersonal encounters, designed to render persons 'open to [their] own experience'.[20]

Recommended techniques follow the style of what is often called 'sensitivity training',[21] based on philosophical assumptions akin to Rousseau's fundamental natural goodness.

Clearly, such views are not 'open' in the sense (yet another one) of 'value-free'. They stand opposed both to the primary emphasis on cognitive development which R.S.Peters and others propose as the appropriate educational strategy in a pluralistic society, and to the correction of deviant will which religious theorists sometimes propound.[22] In all three cases, the declared objective is to enhance and enrich the scope of personal autonomy. It does little for the cause of clear communication when people are rallied to the banner of open education, understood in the sense just described, by being given assurance that 'open' here means that nothing is prescribed in advance. This is simply not so.

However, the very fact that normative directions are implicit in therapeutic and 'unlimited human development' models of open education rescues them from conceptual contradiction. Preferred procedures and settings leading to 'natural self'-adjustment impart those elements of intention and direction to the process which are required by the concept of education (whether I or II).

The case is less clear when one's 'philosophy of freedom' fails to legitimize even the cautious benevolence of the facilitator. When, speaking in the Sartrean mode on behalf of the 'new-radicals', Barnes nominates as the three 'needs' of the child: 'the right to live the extreme choice, the right to change, and the right to spontaneous self-realization',[23] it is little wonder that she is driven to call the creation of an educational context an 'Original Sin', albeit one from which, she says, we cannot escape.[24] As we have seen, it is Bereiter who follows this kind of logic to its limit and, in effect, deduces that the concept of Education II is dead. Paradoxically, he returns to the older concept of Education I when he claims that 'the only kind of teaching that is truly nonauthoritarian is skill training, for competence in general gives the individual more power and freedom of choice'.[25]

5

There is another emphasis in the literature on open education, which I shall refer to as REVOLUTIONARY OPENNESS. This is a normative posture derived from neo-Marxist presuppositions, which views the availability to oppressed classes of genuine openness in curriculum choices and learning procedures as a means of accelerating cataclysmic social change. The slide from procedural through normative to revolutionary openness is not all that difficult. Kohl and Holt write with anguish about the constraints of institutional schooling, but strive for the most part to reform the institution and make it more interactive with its community;[26] then Goodman and Reimer insist that the school *per se* is miseducative and must be replaced by freer contexts for learning *in situ;*[27] finally Illich and Freire impute to the school the positive and anti-educational function of maintaining the oppressive social stability of a class-structured society, and call for learning strategies that will liberate the oppressed, using their historical situation as starting point.[28]

The slide, I say, is not all that difficult, for the concept of education (I or II) constrains us to come together in a vision of man and society which legitimizes the guidance of learning activities. If this vision is at odds with the socio-political establishment's vision, then we constitute a subgroup with reforming, and perhaps revolutionary, intentions. The interesting thing about neo-Marxist educational proposals is that they too employ a vocabulary of

openness, freedom, autonomy and liberation. Freire describes most feelingly the moments of discovery which come to peasants encouraged to cognize their own cultural situation, with no limitations placed on possible topics of discourse. Fitting these into a dialectical analysis, he asserts that the development of a critical consciousness in the oppressed cannot fail to ready them for revolution; opened minds lead to liberative actions.

Though writing mainly with the Third World in mind, Freire has essayed occasional commentary on the affluent societies. In one place he sees in the world-wide phenomenon of youth rebellion not just the traditional problem of generation gap but a disenchantment with societies of domination.[29] There is support perhaps for his contention in the frequency with which neo-Marxist terms and typologies appear in counter-cultural writings on education. Open schools are hailed as intrinsically subversive, and their effectiveness in leading students to freedom is assumed to be dependent on their willingness to oppose actively the value system of the oppressive society.[30]

But the wheel has now turned full circle. Since ideological assumptions lead one to assume that no good can come out of the value systems of the dominant classes, they are not open to serious inspection. 'Openness' becomes a cloak for indoctrination, and liberation is promised only to those who despise dialogue with non-believers. It is one thing to look to the open school for social renewal through the transformation of individuals; it is quite another to enlist open procedures in the interests of a curriculum deliberately subversive of democratic social and intellectual values.[31]

6

In this brief review of the pathology of a slogan, we have seen that references to 'openness' confuse rather than clarify our views of the educational process. The tendency is to polarize perceived options so that, on the one side, those committed to individual enrichment through more formal procedures of teaching find themselves lumped together with gradgrind indoctrinators, and on the other side, those committed only to procedural openness are lumped together with exponents of normative or revolutionary openness. It is unlikely that an undertaking always to define the way in which one is using the term 'open education' will suffice, for such is the yum-power of the phrase that one's cautious stipulation is likely to be overlooked or quickly forgotten.

In their classic study of 'the logic of slogans', Komisar and McClellan suggested that, so long as the interpretation is supplied, a slogan can be a goad to desirable action and therefore useful.[32] The problem in the present instance, however, is that, as I have shown, at least three broad groups of slogan systems have been generated by the locution: 'open education', and I have suggested that they are neither conceptually nor normatively compatible with each other. They are unlikely to stimulate innovative research (one of the benefits foreseen by Komisar and McClellan) since they invite premature closure of the mind to alternative ways of interpreting the data. While, superficially, they appear to give rise to similar teaching procedures, the fact is that the role of the teacher varies considerably between them, ranging from minimal 'interference' to outright indoctrination. In the circumstances, it is misleading and probably impolitic for the innovative teacher to align himself with 'open education'. Sir Alec Clegg has sagaciously observed that it is wiser to talk about specific goals and procedures than to 'get caught up in the current cliché'.[33]

7

It may not be inappropriate, in conclusion, to compare the present situation with that in the hey-day of another slogan: 'progressive education'. Once again drawing on yum-power, this time that of the word 'progressive', groups were convened to direct reform along paths not always acceptable to the bulk of those who leapt onto this particular bandwagon. Thus, the Progressive Education Association, initially characterized by strong lay initiative, was gradually swung towards the particular normative posture of certain professional educationists whose normative guiding star was the Pragmatism of John Dewey. Henderson points out that[34]

> It is doubtful whether many teachers really understood [the Progressive Education Association's] philosophical foundations. Certainly, few had studied Dewey's philosophy against any background of other philosophies…. To some extent the movement was popular because it constituted a revolt against the boring formalism of the traditional school.

Now we see history repeating itself, as teachers are drawn along the path of normative and revolutionary openness when often their real desire is to obtain the benefits of procedural openness in serving commonly accepted social and intellectual values. When, in the earlier instance, teachers began to discern that they were being tarred with a particular ideological brush, there were several breakaway movements, whose reactions were characterized by the adoption of counter-slogan systems such as Essentialism, Realism and Idealism; and a barren period of slogan slanging ensued.

It is not, one hopes, too late to learn from the past. The present healthy ferment in educational theory can only suffer from attempts to lump diverse trends together under the rubric of 'open education'. Let us press for more specific and descriptive labels to identify the values, objectives or procedures that are being commended to us, so that our discussion may get down to particulars, employing the forms of discourse appropriate to the things being discussed.

Notes

1   Carl Bereiter, *Must We Educate*?, Prentice-Hall, 1973. Bereiter's use of the term 'education' is very capricious and mainly programmatic, in that he usually equates it with the process of compulsory schooling in public agencies, which he is at pains to denigrate. But he does recognize that some uses imply a knowledge condition of the sort insisted on by Peters. It is, however, this very notion, implying as it does the transformation of the whole person (however good the motive of the one guiding the transformation) which Bereiter finds morally objectionable. *Contra* Peters, in short, he prescribes that the refined notion of education should be recognized as yuk.

2   The original analysis, and the criticisms it attracted, are available in *Philosophy and Education: Proceedings of an International Seminar at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, March 1966,* Teachers College Press, 1967, pp. 1–15. The revised analysis is usefully summarized in P.H.Hirst and R.S.Peters, *The Logic of Education,* Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970, pp. 17–24.

3   Typically, in Philip H.Phenix, *Realms of Meaning,* McGraw-Hill, 1964, and Harry S.Broudy, B.Othanel Smith and Joe E.Burnett, *Democracy and Excellence in American Secondary Education,* Rand McNally, 1964.

4   Representative of such criticisms are Paul Goodman's *Compulsory Miseducation,* Penguin Books, 1971, e.g., pp. 22 f., 51 f., etc; and Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society,* Harper & Row, 1970, pp. 34 f.

5   Bereiter, *op. cit.,* esp. pp. 7–13 and chapter 2.

6   As I have said in note 1, however, it is possible to claim that his animus is triggered chiefly by the compulsory aspect of education, though he is not consistent enough in his usage for this explanation to cover all cases.

7   Thus Marilyn Hapgood, 'The Open Classroom: Protect it from its Friends', in *National Elementary Principal,* November 1972, p. 44.

8   Such as Peters and Dearden in R.S.Peters, ed., *Perspectives on Plowden,* Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969.

9   Theodore Manolakes, 'Introduction: The Open Education Movement', *National Elementary Principal,* November 1972, p. 12.

10 Charles E.Silberman, *Crisis in the Classroom: The Remaking of American Education,* Vintage Books, 1971, e.g., pp. 6–7.

11 Thus, for example, Peters and Dearden in *Perspectives on Plowden,* pp. 10–11 and 30–3.

12 N.Postman and C.Weingartner, Penguin Books, 1971, pp. 25, 72.

13 *Ibid.,* p. 16.

14 *Ibid.* p. 46.

15 Richard L.Hopkins, 'Some Pitfalls in the Free School Movement', *Journal of Educational Thought,* December 1973, p. 138.

16 John Holt, *Freedom and Beyond,* Dell-Delta, 1972, pp. 49 f.

17 Silberman, *op. cit.,* p. 208.

18 Illich, *op. cit.,* pp. 53–7.

19 Carl R.Rogers, *Freedom to Learn,* Merrill, 1969, p. 153.

20 *Ibid.,* p. 282.

21 See, e.g., Gail Inlow's review in chapter 12 of *The Emergent in Curriculum,* Wiley, 2nd ed., 1973.

22 E.g., Jacques Maritain, *Education at the Crossroads,* Yale University Press, 1943, p. 11. See also Brian V.Hill, *Education and the Endangered Individual,* Teachers College Press, 1973, pp. 265–70.

23 Hazel Barnes, *An Existentialist Ethics,* Knopf, 1967, p. 296.

24 *Ibid.,* p. 290.

25 Bereiter, *op. cit.,* p. 8.

26 E.g., Herbert R.Kohl, *The Open Classroom,* Vintage Books, 1970, and John Holt, *The Underachieving School,* Pitman Publishing Corporation, 1969.

27 Goodman, *op. cit.,* and Everett Reimer, *School is Dead: An Essay on Alternatives in Education,* Penguin Books, 1971.

28 E.g., Illich, *op. cit.,* and Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* trans. Myra Bergman Ramos, Herder & Herder, 1970, esp. pp. 57–74. The pairings, of course, are too sweeping to have anything more than rhetorical value.

29 Freire, *op. cit.,* p. 152n.

30 'Since the proselytizing of radical values is common in the counterculture, it often finds its way into the free school movement' (Hopkins, *op. cit.,* p. 141).

31 As a lurid example of the disdain which can be shown for fair statement and substantiation of claims, in the interests of an un-free open education, one may cite the widely distributed *Little Red School Book,* by S.Hansen and J.Jensen, 1971.

32 B.Paul Komisar and James E.McClellan, 'The Logic of Slogans' in *Language and Concepts in Education,* ed. B.Othanel Smith and Robert H.Ennis, Rand McNally, 1961, p. 205.

33 T.Darrell Drummond, 'A Conversation with Sir Alec Clegg', *National Elementary Principal,* November 1972, pp. 20–1.

34 Stella van Petten Henderson, *Introduction to the Philosophy of Education,* University of Chicago Press, 1957, p. 250.

2

Open education: an expression in search of a definition[1]

Don Tunnell

A number of people have thought that defining or conceptualizing open education presents a number of problems. Professor Bernard Spodek, for example, writes:[2]

> Too often in hearing a description of what open education is, one is tempted to respond, 'Yes, that's part of it.' Every definition seems to overlap with other definitions, but no one definition presents a full enough characterization. This results from the fact that open education represents an open system of thought, one that is constantly being modified…
>
> Since open education is such an elusive phenomenon, it has often been suggested that the best way to define it is to state what it is not. This eliminates the confusion between open education and other approaches to education without defining out the range of approaches that can legitimately bear that label.

Partial definitions and overlapping definitions are seen here as being problematical; they do not provide 'full enough characterizations.' It is claimed that because of the changing nature of open education, because it is an 'open system of thought' because the phenomenon is 'elusive' a negative definition is to be preferred; such definitions, it is claimed, do not define out 'the range of approaches that can legitimately bear that label.'

Now the fact that there are partial and/or overlapping definitions of 'open education' may indicate that there are problems with the notion or it may not. (The problems may simply be with the definitions.) One has given part of a definition if one has failed to state the necessary conditions, or the important characteristics of the term, and that would constitute a deficient definition. But if one has given a partial definition in the sense that one has not listed (or described) *all* of the characteristics of the phenomenon, that is not necessarily a problem. Whether we give a longer or shorter list of characteristics depends upon our purposes. We may want, for some purposes, a short, fairly broad-gauged definition, or we may want, for other purposes, a full set of characteristics. So if what 'a partial definition' means is that less than a full set of characteristics has been given, that need not, in ordinary contexts, be a problem.

Overlapping definitions, similarly, need not be problematical. If they overlap in the sense that one definition has a longer list of characteristics and the other has a shorter list, and the listed characteristics do not conflict, then there is not necessarily a problem. But if definitions are proposed which are inconsistent with each other because important characteristics are listed for the one and denied for the other, then, of course, there are problems. Just such a problem now exists, for example, due to the conflicting claims over whether

behavioral objectives are consistent with open education, that is, whether the characteristic of having behavioral objectives is consistent with other claimed characteristics of open education.

The explanation that Spodek offers for the overlapping definitions is that open education is an 'open system of thought, one that is constantly being modified.' This is yet another way definitions can overlap: the meaning of words can shift over a period of time. But, of course, the best that anyone can ever do is to define a term accurately at (or for) a given moment, so if one gives a definition, one cannot be faulted if it turns out that the meaning of the word has changed. So, that there are changes in the conception of open education is only one possible explanation for overlapping definitions, and that explanation is logically independent of the problem of partial definitions. For while definitions offered at different times may overlap in meaning, each may fully characterize the phenomenon at the time it is set forth.

Another reason why there might be overlapping definitions is that the concept of open education is quite vague. Different plausible definitions might be proposed, one definition emphasizing this aspect, another that. Vagueness may or may not be a major problem, and whether it is or is not cannot be determined *a priori*. All such concepts are vague and have open texture, but that need not present any major definitional problems. We might still be able to list the major characteristics and to state what the paradigm cases look like.

On the other hand, to say that open education is vague may be to say that it is being used as a slogan, that is, as a concept which is applied to every favored educational notion which makes its appearance. To some, a high school math class in which sensitivity training was practiced would count as an open classroom. To others, a second-grade classroom based on behavioral objectives chosen by the child would be an open classroom.[3] Since the term 'open' has so many favorable connotations in our culture, since the term may be used emotively, it readily lends itself to being used as a slogan.

To say that the term may be used as a slogan is to take note of a *use* to which the term may be put; the term does have other uses such as describing a particular practice. In this paper I intend to define the term in what I take to be its primary sense, namely, in the sense that it applies to elementary school practices that the British refer to as 'informal education.' I do not deny that 'open education' may refer to practices which are not located in elementary schools. We can develop a broader notion of 'open education' simply by stating the principles of the practice in a more abstract form.

One other point needs to be made before attempting to provide a definition of open education. Spodek says that because open education is such an elusive phenomenon, many have thought it best to say what it is *not* rather than to say what it is. This approach, it is claimed, 'eliminates the confusion between open education and other approaches to education without defining out the range of approaches that can legitimately bear that label.' First, *any* definition of 'open education' that 'define[d] out the range of approaches that can legitimately bear that label' would be a defective definition. And a negative definition can do that as well as a positive definition. A negative definition of 'open education' as 'an educational practice which does not allow the students increased freedom of educational choice' would be just as defective as the possible definition of 'open education' as 'an educational practice which requires students to wait for the teachers' instructions before engaging in some line of activity.' What a good definition of open education ought to do is

to define *in* that range of approaches that can legitimately bear that label and to define *out* that range of approaches that *cannot* legitimately bear that label. But a negative definition does not afford any advantage in this respect.

Second, a negative definition need not 'eliminate the confusion between open education and other approaches to education.' Imagine defining 'car' negatively. It is not a bicycle. It is not a fish. It is not a satellite. It is not a quasar. And so on. Similarly, to tell us that 'open education' does not mean open areas or open architecture, that it does not mean team teaching or individual instruction, and so forth, while not totally unhelpful, does not help us to have any clear idea as to what open education *is*. But in fact we can do much better. We can attempt to characterize accurately the phenomenon. The phenomenon is what it is, and to define it is to say what it is.

I propose the following as a definition of 'open education.' 'Open education' is that form of educational practice which is characteristically regulated by the following rules:

(1)   Students are to pursue educational activities of their own choosing;
(2)   Teachers are to create an environment rich in educational possibilities;
(3)   Teachers are to give a student individualized instruction based on what he/she is interested in, but they are also to guide the student along educationally worthwhile lines;
(4)   Teachers are to respect students. The following count as exhibiting respect for the student:
    (a)   the student is granted considerable freedom; he/she is, for the most part, autonomous,
    (b)   the student's interests and ideas are considered to be important and he/she receives individual instruction and guidance based on his/her interests,
    (c)   there is considerable interaction between teacher and student; they are considered to be equal in some sense,
    (d)   students are rarely commanded; uses of authority are minimized,
    (e)   students' feelings are to be taken seriously.

The first rule–we could call it 'the freedom rule'—involves certain assumptions about students in an educational environment. Advocates of such a rule must assume that students can and probably will learn things of educational value under such conditions, otherwise it would not be an appropriate rule for an educational practice.

Note that the first rule does not give students freedom to do anything they want to, but only to pursue any *educational* activity of their choosing. I am not sure that all open educators stress this point, but it is, I think, important to do so. First, it provides a principle of intervention for the teacher: if the teacher does not think that an activity is educational, he/she would not be violating the freedom rule if he/she were to direct the student to engage in an educational activity. Second, if the rule simply allowed students to do what they wanted, then we might wonder why such a rule would be appropriate for an educational institution. It is conceivable that students would not engage in educational activities and if teachers followed the modified rule, viz., 'Students are to pursue activities of their own choosing,' then there would be no reason to say that such was an educational institution or that the 'students' were students or that the 'teachers' were teachers.

The second rule—we could call it 'the environment rule'—requires that the teacher structure the environment in appropriate ways. This, it seems to me, may be the most important rule. Its significance is that the students' activities are now partly structured by the environment, partly by the teacher's directives. Insofar as students' activities are structured by the environment, the teacher may not need to intervene. If the students were doing something that might prove harmful, or if they were doing something that was not educational, the teacher might intervene. Insofar as the students' activities are structured directly by the teacher, the structure of the environment is not so significant. But the teacher can, by structuring the environment, make it possible for students to perform a number of interesting activities within the classroom which are also educational. In a classroom in which desks are screwed to the floor and there is little room other than the desk-space, the possibilities for using classroom space in interesting ways are rather limited. Unscrewing the desks increases the possibilities. Having a wide variety of educational activities increases the possibility that the environment (the educational activities) will structure student behavior. It may be, then, that the teacher need not intervene during that period of time.

The third rule—the 'individual instruction rule'—explicitly states that the teacher is to start with what the student is interested in. Often claims about the interests of a student are stated ambiguously so that it is not clear whether one is talking about what the student is interested in or what is in the interests of the student. The former has to do with the psychological state of a student, while the latter has to do with an (often) complex evaluative judgment of what one thinks is good for a student.[4] The second half of the rule, however, includes the other part of the interests distinction, viz., it says that the teacher is 'to guide the student along educationally worthwhile lines.' That is certainly to do what the teacher judges to be in the interests of the student.

There is one problem in following this rule. It does not suggest what to do when the student is not interested in doing anything or is generally interested in doing something which itself is not educational, and which is not amenable to being guided along educationally worthwhile lines. Open educators do not usually consider such cases. They seem to assume that the student will be interested. Perhaps open educators would say that a teacher is to keep trying to get them interested in some educational activity, or perhaps they would say that if that failed then the teacher must insist.

The fourth rule—the 'respect rule'—is to some degree redundant. It makes explicit, however, an important quality of open education—it spells out what is to count as 'respect.' The first part (a) explicitly grants limited autonomy to students. To do so exhibits trust and respect. (b) is connected with the third rule. What the student is interested in is the starting point for individual instruction. That the student receives individual instruction also exhibits respect in some sense. The student is to be taught on the basis of his own interests and capabilities and is not to be treated as one of a group in which his interests cannot be considered as readily. That students and teachers are considered to be in some sense equal, (c), is an expression of the democratic nature of the open classroom. That students are rarely commanded, (d), also exhibits respect for them; they are considered to be people who are capable of being reasoned with and persuaded. Finally, to take a student's feelings seriously, (e), is also a way of showing respect for him. It is to take the student's point of view with respect to his feelings rather than judging those feelings (or the situation that brought about those feelings) simply from an adult's point of view.

Practices such as open education are best defined in terms of a set of rules. Open education is a rule-governed practice. The rules regulate the activities of the participants. To say what open education is, then, is to say what rules govern the practice. What differentiates open education from other educational practices is the different sets of rules that govern each. In order to define 'open education,' or any other educational practice, we could list the rules or prescriptions that a teacher and students are to follow.

Since the definition of a practice is essentially normative, it has certain implications for attempts to provide behavioral definitions of such practices. H.S.Walberg and S.C.Thomas, in their paper 'Open Education: An Operational Definition and Validation in Great Britain and United States,'[5] have provided an operational definition of open education which consists of an observation rating scale and a teacher questionnaire. One item that was meant to pick out an open classroom was: 'Children move about the room without asking permission.' This could, however, be a true description of a traditional classroom in which the teacher 'doesn't maintain discipline.' The descriptive statement does not discriminate between open and closed classrooms because the norms may be violated. It is only when children are allowed or encouraged to move about that it is an open classroom characteristic and only when moving about is prohibited is it a closed classroom characteristic.

One cannot tell whether one is observing an open or a closed classroom unless one assumes a particular set of norms. But then one cannot tell simply from a set of descriptions that one is observing an open classroom; the descriptions are insufficient; one needs to know that the descriptions are in accord with the norms. But if that is the case, then the list of norms is fundamental in defining a program.

This is not to say that tests such as Walberg and Thomas' are worthless. They make reasonably good checklists in practice for determining the degree of openness in a classroom, but that is because observers, being relatively good judges in such matters, can tell when children are moving about the room and being allowed to do so (that is, the norms permit it), and when they are moving about and are contravening the norms. The observer's judgment in such cases is: they are doing x and they are/are not supposed to be doing x. It is not: they are doing x.

It is also significant that there is a set of defining characteristics of open education which implies that closed education has the contrary characteristics, but that same set of characteristics which distinguishes open education does not imply that traditional education has a contrary set of characteristics. We can form various kinds of contrasts to 'open education': 'closed education,' 'traditional education,' 'non-open education,' etc. 'Non-open education' is a logical contrast to 'open education'; it includes any educational program that is not open education. It and open education are mutually exclusive and exhaustive, that is, all educational programs are either open or non-open. The notion of open education, however, was developed to form a contrast, not with all the logically possible ways of educating youth, but with a certain set of established ways. The established ways could be called, pejoratively, 'closed,' but it would be a mistake to equate 'closed' education with 'non-open' education. 'Closed' education would be one type of 'non-open' education.

Open and closed education refer to *sets* of characteristics. The distinguishing characteristics of open and closed education are mutually exclusive sets, and they are defined in terms of each other, that is, if A, B, and C are distinguishing characteristics of open education, then closed education has contrary characteristics.[6] (The same is not true for

non-open education.) This suggests that we also need to distinguish between closed education and traditional education, because open and traditional education may share the same characteristic—individualized instruction, for example. If individualized instruction is a characteristic of open education, however, it ought not considered to be a characteristic of closed education.

To talk about the *meaning* of 'open education' is to talk about that set of characteristics that define the concept. A particular practice may be graded or ranked with respect to those defining characteristics and, hence, may be more or less of an open program. A particular program might have characteristics that are defining characteristics of both open and closed education; it would be neither fish nor fowl. It would be wrong to insist that such a program, apart from special contexts, be categorized as one or the other; it would be to lose accuracy and to do violence to the intended use of such categories.

The writings on open education that I have seen do not draw any distinction between 'closed' and 'traditional' education, so the terms tend to be taken as equivalents. I am not suggesting that 'open' and 'closed' education are generally taken as being mutually exclusive; I am, for logical reasons, recommending it. The relationship between 'closed' education (or 'open' education, since 'open' and 'closed' education are contraries) and 'traditional' education is less clear. That relationship can only be discovered by an examination of the characteristics of each. One would expect that the distinguishing characteristics of open education would contrast sharply with many of the distinguishing characteristics of traditional education, but how they differ, must be determined by examining the properties of each.

If someone begins to define 'open education' by saying that it has characteristics X, Y, and Z, and then he admits that traditional education, which within the current context provides the contrast to open education, has the same characteristics, one might well become impatient because what one wants to know is what *differentiates* the types of educational practice. One wants to be told that M, N, and R are open education characteristics when M, N, and R are not characteristics of traditional education. So the context makes an important difference when one is engaged in the activity of defining. One expects to be told of differentiating characteristics—not shared characteristics.

To define 'open education' is to define a program for action. That is, open education is a type of educational program which differs from other educational programs due to the different norms, i.e., rules, involved. Now what needs to be made clear is that the most important definitional task is (1) to work out an explicit statement of that set of norms which would define 'open education,' (2) to make sure that the norms are consistent, and (3) to make sure that the norms define an *educational* practice. If we had such a definition, we would know what we mean by 'open education,' but then we might want to know what the justification is for that particular set of norms, that is, what the moral, empirical, and pedagogical reasons are for adopting such a set of norms. Since the reasons are of different sorts, the manner of establishing them will be different: 'Children have the right to make significant decisions concerning their own learning' will need one type of argument, 'Children tend to engage in exploratory behavior'[7] will need another.

The notion of open education is still in the process of being defined. Practitioners and theoreticians are attempting to work out a practice and to provide a justification for it, and in doing so they are working out those distinctive norms which are to guide the practice

that they distinguish from other forms of education. It is, for example, a matter of current debate as to whether behavior modification techniques may be used in open classrooms. The question is whether such techniques are consistent with other characteristics of the program. Such techniques seem, prima facie, to be in conflict with the purported autonomy of the children and the rights of children in an open classroom. How that issue is to be decided, however, is beyond the scope of this paper. What is important here is to see that the conflict is over the norms that are to guide the practice.

In conclusion, I have argued that it is crucial to see that a practice such as open education needs to be defined in terms of a set of rules. I have tried to show how some confusions regarding a definition of open education can be overcome, and I have proposed a definition which, I hope, does justice to the paradigm cases. I have also argued that the relationship between 'open' and 'closed' education and the relationship between 'open' and 'traditional' education needs to be distinguished. If the arguments of this paper are correct, and if they are heeded, then we ought to be clearer about what we are doing when we define a term such as open education.

Notes

1 I would like to thank Professor Robert Ennis for reading and critically commenting on an earlier version of this paper.
2 Bernard Spodek, 'Open Education: Romance or Liberation' in *Studies in Open Education,* ed. B.Spodek and H.J.Walberg, Agathon, forthcoming.
3 See, for example, Ronald Henderson, 'Defining Goals in Open Education' in *Studies in Open Education.*
4 See R.F.Dearden, *The Philosophy of Primary Education,* Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968, pp. 18–19.
5 *American Educational Research Journal,* vol. 9, no. 9 (Spring 1972), pp. 197–207.
6 This point was suggested by looking at the notion of 'open society.' Karl Popper characterizes an 'open society' as one which emphasized freedom, individualism, humanitarianism, and democratic procedures. A 'closed society,' on the other hand, is totalitarian, collectivist, anti-humanitarian, and anti-democratic. See especially *The Open Society and Its Enemies,* Princeton University Press, 5th ed., 1966.
7 See Roland S.Barth, *Open Education and the American School,* Agathon, 1972, pp. 18 ff., 26.

3
Open education: open to what?
Kieran Egan

1

'Open education' suggests, by metaphorical extension, a removal of obstacles so that the benefits of education are available to everyone. We think of open doors; the barrier no longer hinders movement forwards, the things beyond are not hidden, and one may pass through easily and freely. In the case of education, openness is to those things that make the experience of being human as good and as rich as possible, so that all our children might have life and have it more abundantly.

Much of the literature on open education is best understood as a reaction to traditional forms of schooling, which are described as heavily academic, pre-packaged, sterile, the purveyors of a hallowed and ossified body of content being concerned with drip-feeding it to resisting children who see no value in it *per se* and no example of its enriching the lives of those who are purveying it. Open education is concerned to remove the obstacles which this bad kind of schooling has put in the way of children. Much of the literature on open education describes how these obstacles should be removed, and deals with a vast array of issues from loving children to the kinds of classroom furnishings that will best promote 'opening' the world to the child and the child to the world.

A general characterization of open education must include a family of variously related elements: individualization; freedom for children to explore; provision of rich environments for learning; children encouraged to plan their own activities; interdisciplinary inquiry; flexible scheduling; open areas; cooperative work; talking and play; children's interests determining activities; flexible groupings; non-didactic teacher—rather, a facilitator of learning; children encouraged to learn by experience.

Underlying these characteristics there is a pervading sense of optimism. Open education is optimistic, in the traditional sense, in its assessment of human nature, believing that children's curiosity will lead them naturally towards things of educational value, so that if each child's interests are allowed to determine his or her activities in school, they—better than any externally imposed scheme—will lead to the best education for that child. This optimism is also expressed in the belief that the benefits of education are not genetically restricted to an élite. The past restriction of the best educational benefits to an élite is seen as due rather to its social privileges and the allotment of disproportionate resources to its educational advantage.

A further element underlying, and often surfacing in, open education literature is an almost chiliastic vision of change; a sense that the pace of change is so fast, and

accelerating, that traditional knowledge and training provide entirely insufficient tools for children to deal with the world in which they are going to be adults.

These characteristics of open education account for its emphasis on procedural, formal, methodological concerns. Nothing in particular follows from these characteristics about the *content* of an open school curriculum. There is an overriding emphasis on process as against content. If open education is seen as some kind of process, however, it makes sense to ask towards what it is proceeding—open to what? More generally, what are the educational aims of open education?

This is a difficult question to approach, because an important part of the aim is the process itself. That is, the lives of children are not seen as simply instrumental—appropriately to be sacrificed to some final product—but as important in themselves here and now, and one central aim of open education is to make the here and now of children in schools better. One result, then, is the 'humanizing' and civilizing of those schools that are influenced by open education. This represents a movement of considerable social importance, but as an educational movement it is restricted almost exclusively to the *conditions* in which education may take place. Similarly, the heavy emphasis on procedures lacking specification of what body of skills and content should be mastered, means that the results of the expressed ideals of open education are not so much educated people, in the traditional sense, as people in whom the *conditions* for becoming educated are ideal.

Clearly, the assumption in open education is that each child will master a body of skills and content and become, in the traditional sense, educated. But what particular skills and content will be mastered, it is argued, are better determined by the individual child's interests and developing curiosity than by criteria derived from values meaningful to an older generation brought up in a world very different from that which the child will know.

But while the child's developing mind may provide the primary criteria for appropriate activities, it clearly develops through a dialectical interaction with the natural, social, and cultural worlds. Some criteria for educating must, therefore, be derived from a sense of what it is best for children to learn in order to encourage their individual development so that they will properly understand and appreciate those worlds. The following section, then, tries to identify those aims of open education that are concerned not with the process or conditions of educating but with the ideal product of that process.

2

References to the aims of open education in terms of some product tend to be very general. Typically, there are statements about fulfilling the child's potential; producing people with highly developed thinking skills properly prepared for social participation and exploration of reality; harmoniously developing the whole person; self-actualization. If one searches for an explicit and precise description of the ideal product of open education, one will be disappointed. But this is not to say that open education programs lack clarity and precision. How is the content of these programs determined?

The elements identified in the previous section are, of course, important. Optimism that children's interests will determine what is of best educational value leads to creating a classroom environment that will encourage them to choose their activities for themselves. The chiliastic vision of change leads away from specifying content towards teaching *how*

to think flexibly and productively. And perhaps even more influential is the clear image of what open education is reacting against: if there are rigid rows of desks, open up the room; if there is competition, let there be cooperation; if there is excessive emphasis on the cognitive, give attention to the affective.

These elements, however, do not reveal what content open education most values as aids to the developing child's mind. Either they refer to the conditions in which education takes place or they provide only negative principles. What are the positive principles that determine, for example, what particular things are to be made available for children to choose from? What education principles are implied by the range of experiences provided? Or, put more generally, how does open education distinguish an educational from any other kind of experience?

Again, it is difficult to find a clear answer. If anything, the question is rejected as a hangover from traditional, and improper, compartmentalizing of experience, or it is met with the response that *all* experiences are educational—whether walking in the woods, learning Greek, or living in a family. The open school curriculum, then, is open to expansion in all directions, encompassing the whole world and the whole range of human experience.

Such a response is clearly consistent with those elements of open education so far considered, yet it only serves to shift the focus of the same question, which becomes reformulated as: what criteria determine what experiences are educationally more valuable than others? (This is not to ask for a static list of activities, but rather for principles whereby, for example, the facilitative role of the teacher is to operate, or the limits of appropriate classroom activities are determined.)

Again, it is not possible to find such criteria clearly enunciated. Open education does not have any clear means of ranking kinds of experiences on some hierarchy of educational value. It rejects the idea that some kind of yardstick outside the individual child may be applied to assess the educational value of his experiences. The relative value of activities is seen almost entirely in terms of their relevance to the child's needs.

So the focus of the question must be adjusted again: how is the educational relevance of one experience distinguished from that of another? By reference to the needs of the developing child. And how is the relative importance of different needs determined? By reference to the empirical results of, say, Piaget and the sensitivity of the teacher. But Piaget tells us only about the structures of conceptual development, and gives few clues for determining the relative value of educational experiences except in the vaguest and most general sense. Being sensitive to the needs of children provides no principles to guide us in satisfying competing needs. (Also an important part of educating involves what may be called developing needs. That is, no one *needs* to be able to appreciate Beethoven's music, but we would usually consider it desirable that a need for such beauty be developed. Simple sensitivity to needs already present in the child provides no means for deciding which of the infinite variety of potential needs should be encouraged.)

Open education literature, then, avoids questions about criteria that could determine what things in the natural, social, and cultural worlds are more or less important for children to learn, and responsibility for answering such questions is placed on the child. The child's interests and needs are the overriding determiners of the educational value of experiences, activities, and learning.[1]

Given the theory of open education, it would be difficult to answer the question that Boswell asked Dr Johnson when they were talking about education on Tuesday, July 26, 1763, in London. What, he wanted to know, was the best thing to teach children first? He was assuming a curriculum of content, composed of what one thinks it is important that children should learn about the world. A curriculum of content, in this traditional sense, could not be composed from principles derived from open education literature. This is entirely consistent with all the beliefs, assumptions, and arguments of open education. Internal consistency, however, while a necessary condition for a sensible educational theory, is far from a sufficient condition.

We may thus ask, despite its internal consistency, is open education educationally sensible? To answer this question we should consider some of the problems that arise for an educational movement which lacks effective criteria for determining the relative educational value of things in the world apart from the interests of children.[2]

3

Open education lacks or is weak in self-critical referents; it lacks clear means for judging its own success or failure as an educational movement. As the overriding principles are procedural, *whatever* happens when these procedures are operating has to be success. If the schooling process conforms to the ideals of openness, then *whatever* results is unassailable on educational grounds; because the concept of education has been reduced to applying those elements that we have considered above. Proponents of open education have an effective defense against criticism from outside, but must pay a heavy price for such security; they are defenseless against themselves and theoretically helpless when disagreements emerge among them.[3]

They are defenseless against themselves because their facilitating guidance is limited to that range of things that they have themselves found rewarding; they have no grounds on which to appeal beyond these to that wider tradition of what western man has found of persisting value. Ideally individual open school teachers have absorbed a range of these experiences, but they will be more or less limited. Thus, lacking the reasons traditional school teachers have for referring constantly, and often no doubt ineffectually, to a range of experiences beyond their own, open education teachers must close off educational possibilities for children and tend inevitably towards provincialism. Also, of course, no comparisons of educational effectiveness can be made between competing theories, because there are no results by which they can be compared that are more important than the process itself.

A further problem follows from the conclusion that open school programs derive their clarity largely from an image of what they are reacting against. The lack of criteria apart from children's needs and interests for deciding appropriate content means that open education tends both to be unduly influenced by traditional schooling practices and to confuse what it is reacting against with elements only contingently associated.

One of the characteristics of the traditional curriculum has been a body of knowledge that students are to be exposed to, regardless of their interest in it. Let us take, for example, knowledge about the Italian Renaissance. The stereotype of ˙teaching the Renaissance˙ that open school teachers react against involves following a curriculum guide, having the students learn the names and dates of various artists, and showing perhaps some slides or

posters of their work. No access is provided to the languages of Renaissance art and the teacher's passions are clearly unengaged by its products. It is taught because it is in the curriculum guide, and has always been considered 'important.'

Appreciation of the more sophisticated arts has, on the whole, been restricted to an élite few fortunate enough to have a disproportionate amount of time, energy, and talent expended on giving them access to these most refined products of the human mind. But fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Florence, we are told, is irrelevant to the needs of 'ghetto' children.[4] And, given that most open school teachers, like their traditional counterparts, also lack the kind of education that would enable them properly to read the languages of the Renaissance arts, Florence in its glory is irrelevant also to them. No enthusiasm on their part will persuade children that the effort of mastering the difficult access is worthwhile. Thus, the Renaissance will remain 'irrelevant to the needs' of nearly all children. The difference between the traditional school teacher and the open school teacher, in this case, is that the former will go through the largely vacuous motions anyway and the latter will instead do something perceived as more relevant to the children's needs.

The problem for open education, however, lies in the tendency to associate benefits enjoyed by a privileged class with the élitist class-system that provides those benefits. Thus, a movement which, in some of its rhetoric, asserts the aim of opening access to the best benefits of education to all children often, in practice, closes off those benefits because they are associated with a pernicious social system. The extreme of this, evident in a disturbing amount of open education literature, is anti-intellectualism, an acceptance of ignorance of the cultural world as part of an 'educational' program.

Traditional school teachers often face dilemmas due to conflicting criteria—their theory of an ideal product and their desire to engage the child's interests. For example, a teacher may believe, on good grounds, that children in the early years of primary school learn languages more easily than at any later period. The teacher may also believe it is desirable that adults should be able to read and appreciate Aeschylus and Ovid. To do this it is necessary to learn Greek and Latin. Acquiring facility in Greek and Latin is difficult, and certainly does not interest a typical seven-year-old child. Nor do Aeschylus or Ovid interest a seven-year-old child. The traditional school teacher faces a dilemma, generally stated as: certain desirable educational ends cannot be achieved without very difficult work that is largely meaningless at the time and involves much tedium, yet their achievement is well worth the effort. The open school teacher faces no such dilemma. Either her enthusiasm for Aeschylus and Greek is so infectious that the children become interested in learning the language, in which case Greek may be taught, or the children do not become interested in learning Greek, or lose interest in it after a while, in which case Greek and Aeschylus are irrelevant to the child's interests.

It is far from clear that a theoretical justification for avoiding such dilemmas is educationally desirable. The problem arises again from the lack of criteria for establishing the importance or relevance of anything apart from a student's interest in it. Aeschylus may seem a small loss to those who have never read him, but more generally if the interest elicited is the main criterion for the relevance of any activity, experiences will tend to be considered educationally valuable only to the degree that they are engaging. The exhilaration of a mountain sunrise is thus judged for educational value *vis-à-vis* a Greek grammar lesson on the grounds of their engagingness as experiences. In this way, the concept of

education is opened up enormously and loses the relative precision it has had traditionally when it has been attached to a more or less clearly specified body of skills and content and kinds of activities.

Similarly, the concept of learning is expanded and generalized beyond the limits of traditional educational language. From relative restriction, it too has been enlarged to encompass all experience. It has become generalized towards whatever common thing is shared in 'learning' from a mountain sunrise and a Greek grammar lesson. It has expanded almost to mean 'remembering.' The lack of criteria drawn from an ideal product means that there is no defense against measuring education and learning in terms of those experiences that are the most engaging and memorable. As these experiences will have effects that will be evident in behavior, the quality of education now becomes measurable in terms of degrees of behavioral change. Thus an encounter session in which someone's basic values are undermined becomes necessarily a valuable educational experience.

While open education is dominated by well-meaning people, this opening up of educational concepts may seem useful for the expanded activity it permits in educational institutions. But it is well to be aware that it is based on a theory of education that lacks any significant defense against the techniques of religious conversion, the manipulation of immature emotions, ideologizing, and so on. If we open up concepts, it is good to be aware of the full range of what they are opened up to.

Above are just a couple of examples of the dangers that may follow from a theoretical structure in which educational aims are almost exclusively procedural. The philosopher's defense has been to point out that the needs and interests of children can be used as procedural criteria but not as *educational* criteria. Pointing this out, however, seems a trivial semantic shuffle in the face of a mass movement whose theoretical structure has altered the semantic rules and the meaning of the vocabulary elements.

I have considered some of the dangers inherent in a reactionary educational movement that effectively lacks criteria of educational value derived from a sense of what things in the world are more and less important for children to learn, regardless of their immediate interests. I have so far concentrated on ideas that lead to differences from traditional schooling. Finally I want to consider what I think is the most powerful motivator of the open education movement, and these ideas it shares with what it is reacting against.

4

The stereotype of traditional education that open education literature presents, while to some degree a bogeyman created by the myth of oppression, only too truly reflects a substantial proportion of current teaching. According to the stereotype, traditional teachers derive their guiding principles exclusively from their image of an ideal product, which is some centuries out of date, and entirely ignore the present child's interests and natural development. This is almost too kind. There is no such guiding light for these traditional teachers who, at the best, see their ideal product in terms of a profession or job or, amorphously, as a 'useful member of society.' In other words, no image of an ideal *educated* person provides criteria for activities in such traditional classrooms. Such an ideal might once have been implicit in designing the curriculum that is still more or less followed, but it has long since decayed. These conservative teachers are now guided by unquestioned

custom. They perform reflex genuflections before a set of names, dates, and ideas that do not significantly enliven their own lives but which they vaguely believe will enable students to be decent and useful citizens. The stereotypical traditional education, then, quite as much as open education lacks a living vision of an educational product to guide practice.

Given this, I want to argue that the *educational* differences between open education and its conservative counterpart are trivial. Why, then, the virulence of the debate? Because their concerns have moved from educational questions to ideological ones. Sensitivity in the debate is directed increasingly towards ideological nuances and is less and less able to handle educational issues. Some of the major manifestos of open education explicitly state their political purpose to use schools to effect specific social changes. This, of course, is nothing new—what is new is the vacuum of *educational* thought in which the protagonists argue about the function and role of educational institutions and the education of children.

Clearly, we have failed to find the non-procedural educational criteria that determine the content both of open school curricula and that of their conservative counterparts because these criteria are ideological. Neither one has an image of an educated person as a product; both take an ideological position and aim primarily to produce people dedicated to specific social and political ends.

Dr Johnson's response to Boswell on that July morning was:[5]

> there is no matter what you teach them first, any more than what leg you shall put in your breeches first. Sir, you may stand disputing which is best to put in first, but in the meantime your backside is bare. Sir, while you stand considering which of two things you should teach your child first, another boy has learnt 'em both.

It is only too obvious at present that while the ideological dispute about schools and their uses continues, our educational backside is bare indeed. And, as the overriding criteria for both open education and its conservative counterpart are drawn from other than educational aims, it seems appropriate to conclude that neither should properly be considered an educational movement.[6]

While the move towards ideology might account for the virulence of much current 'educational' debate, however, it does not account for the success of open education as a mass movement. The reason for this, I think, is not because it reacts against conservative and ossified schooling but because it goes a crucial step further in the same direction. The move towards ideology is simply the other face of the move away from considering content in education. Open education's present dynamism may derive from its having taken the radical step of providing a rationale, however thin, for not having to take responsibility for curriculum content at all.

This retreat from content has been progressing at an increasing rate through the last half century, particularly, and most rapidly, in North America. It is clearly a response to very general cultural and social developments. It is too simple just to call it a failure of nerve, but that takes us towards it. Involvement in devastating wars and the complexity of social change seem to have stunned that sense of confidence that is the foundation of a civilization, giving strength to its two great enemies, fear and ignorance.

Johnson was unafraid to specify what children should learn and the order in which they should learn things, but people in recent decades have become increasingly afraid. Just as we are what we eat, we are also what we know. The recent failure of nerve consists in not

daring to specify what knowledge is important. The rationale for not daring is the rapid rate of change, but this is a weak excuse except for those who are eager to avoid the hard and persisting questions of education.

Facing these questions constantly—for instance, *what* and *how* should we teach children for the best?—and reassessing our responses in the light of changing circumstances is a necessary part of a theory of education. If open education claims to be a movement of any educational significance it will have to face the question of content in a way that it has so far shirked in favor of easy ideologizing.

Our education system is designed to initiate children into western civilization and its intellectual adventure. Central to this civilization, as the word suggests, is civility, and harmony in the development of mind and body. Teachers who are ignorant of western civilization and the nature of its intellectual adventure are in a weak position for initiating children. They are, among other things, prey to any mindless Utopian fad and accompanying jargon that comes near them. Their ignorance of the western tradition prevents them from understanding why it is of value and so they communicate no sense of its value in their teaching. Students, consequently, suffer from being ideologized, not educated. Much student frustration and alienation seems to stem from ignorance about a world they cannot control or affect because they know next to nothing about how it got this way or what it is all about. Like the 'facilitators' who ideologized them, they know all the answers without having understood the questions.

Notes

1   Each individual teacher does, more or less informally, apply such criteria in distinguishing between experiences and activities. Children's search for subtle cues as to how they should behave means that the facilitative role of the open school teacher provides very clear and compelling guidance. My concern here, however, is with the explicit theory of open education and the guidance it offers for practice.

2   Certain 'relevant' things, like reading, writing, learning about communities, etc., are prescribed presumably because of the unlikelihood of an illiterate child entirely ignorant about the world surviving easily and being happy in society. But my concern is with how 'relevance' is determined for rather less basic content as well.

3   This problem has proved fatal to many 'free schools.' In those cases the overriding value was 'freedom,' and the concept of education tended to become reduced to whatever happened when students were given certain 'freedoms.' Because there were thus no grounds on which to measure success or failure apart from the degree or kinds of freedoms provided, the inescapable failures of some of the 'free schools'—*felt* by everyone connected with them—were not open to discussion or correction on rational grounds. Personal vituperation or escape were the only recourses available to staff and students alike, with the consequent collapse of the institutions.

4   I mention 'ghetto' children, firstly because such a statement seems self-evident to most proponents of open education, and secondly because much of the dynamic of the open education movement has come from the heroic and inspiring work a number of teachers have done in revising curricula to make schooling in some way sensible to some of these children in extremely poor social conditions. The appropriateness of this work for ghetto children has been extended by argument to schools and situations to which it seems not at all appropriate. The sense of relevance has been preserved by abuses of language that assert similarities (for example, 'students are niggers') and the acceptance of an oppressors/oppressed myth that obscures far more than it clarifies,

but does allow many middle-class teachers to adopt the role of the oppressed and thus relinquish responsibility for a range of educational decisions.

5   *Boswell's London Journal 1762–1763,* ed. Fredrick A.Pottle, McGraw-Hill, 1950, p. 323. Interpreting this in the light of Bruner's assertion that one can teach anything to a child at any age in some intellectually honest way, it seems unobjectionable.

6   This is not to say that social or political concerns might not be more important than educational ones. It is to say that we are not in a situation where desirable social ends and education are incompatible, and so educational institutions should operate with educational principles as overriding.

4

Openness: the pedagogic atmosphere

Donald Vandenberg

1 Introduction

When a philosopher of education reads the literature on open education, he might very well be impressed by the emotionality and vagueness of it all, for, search as he will, he is not likely to find concepts of teaching and learning that are—by his standards—clearly articulated. He finds nothing resembling the Herbartian steps of pedagogy or the Deweyan phases of reflective thought. He might easily conclude that its advocates are so clear and comprehensive in their rejections that they have left little for themselves to recommend except openness itself. Indeed, the vagueness of this literature disappears when it is interpreted as precisely wanting openness as such, as if sheer openness were its *summum bonum,* to which everything else should be subordinated. The word 'open' consequently opens a startling new perspective, for now the entire educational process can be seen through the concepts of openness and closedness. These two concepts could form the basis of a theoretical distinction that, sufficiently elaborated, could furnish a complete theory of education.

Any absence of clear and distinct ideas of teaching, learning, and the learned in the literature of open education is thus explained by assuming that this literature embodies a pre-philosophical understanding that openness as such is the primary constitutive element of the atmosphere that is essential to distinctly human learning. The reasonableness of this assumption, which is not stated explicitly in the literature, appears when one recalls that much of it does emphasize two things: (1) the bureaucratic organization of the schools that allegedly stifles teacher and student initiative and creativity through excessive regulation, and (2) the teacher's attitude of kindness and humaneness toward children lest classroom procedures frustrate the kinds of learnings alleged to be most valuable. The centrality of these two concerns and their implicit plea for openness are quite apparent in Silberman's *Crisis in the Classroom.* In his introduction, he said that adults 'fail to appreciate what grim, joyless places most American schools are, how oppressive and petty are the rules by which they are governed, how intellectually sterile and esthetically barren the atmosphere,' and in the recommendations later on he claimed that when the teacher is a 'facilitator of learning' in the informal classroom, 'the consequence is an atmosphere in which everyone is learning together.'[1]

It is unnecessary to agree with the thesis concerning the existence of a crisis in the classroom to observe that the concept of open education has come to the fore because of the belief that there is one. It is merely tautological, however, to claim that this crisis, if there is one, can be resolved only in the classroom by teachers and pupils who are able to make

particular classrooms work. This requires the presence of the pedagogic atmosphere, correctly identified as openness by advocates of open education. This paper, accordingly, will attempt to delineate the outlines of the pedagogic atmosphere, paying particular attention to the aspect of openness. Because this atmosphere is constituted by feelings, the paper will seek to obtain the affective presuppositions of education by employing the methodology previously formulated under the designation of fundamental educational theory.[2] Its aim is to confront the central issue of 'open education' in the most fundamental way.

2 Terminological orientation

The attempts to speak of the teacher as a facilitator of learning have employed the concepts of the learning environment and the learning climate. To maintain the priority of the pupil's learning, one might wish to speak of the educational atmosphere. The danger in these expressions is that of 'throwing out the baby with the bath water.' Without denying that the most important event in the classroom is the pupil's learning, rather than the teacher's teaching, it can be noticed that the use of these expressions can fail to recognize the significance of learning from the teacher when the teacher is consciously trying to teach something. If this last statement seems disturbing, that is precisely its point.

Without underestimating the significance of informal learnings and personal discoveries, without overestimating the importance of the teacher's talking, and certainly without trying to reinstate the 'dirty bath water,' it can be said that some of the most significant learnings of all are those that are intermittently acquired from one's beloved teachers. The point, elaboration and substantiation of which would lead too far astray, is simply that we are what our teachers have enabled us to become. If at least some of the conscious teachings of some of one's teachers are essential components of one's existential project of being, then the appropriate theoretical approach to the alleged crisis in the classroom is through concepts whose structure allows them to deal with the formation of the pedagogic relation.

Advocates of open education occasionally seem to reject all forms of the pedagogic relation, the 'baby,' in their throwing out of its ungenuine forms, the 'bathwater.' They are right, of course, to reject the ostensibly pedagogic relations that are inauthentically pedagogic, that is, not pedagogic at all, if they mean to say that the learnings that occur within them are not likely to have existential significance for the pupil. It is necessary, however, to retain a purified concept of the pedagogic relation in the theoretical investigation of openness. For this reason the concept of the pedagogic atmosphere is preferable to learning climate or learning environment. Its very expression confines the inquiry to the conditions of the pedagogic relation, that is, to the locus of the alleged crisis in the *classroom*. In other words, the term 'pedagogic atmosphere' is coordinated with its ontological basis.

The words 'climate' and 'environment' of learning have meteorological and biological origins, respectively, which make their theoretical properties inappropriately physicalistic and technological. Their very expression misleads one into a technological framework, as if the classroom climate or environment could be engineered or controlled by mechanical actions. The word 'atmosphere' is less reductionistic, for it refers to an intangible, transient flow of experienced quality. The word *'rapport'* is also inadequate, for *rapport* can be established through irrelevant jokes, nasty remarks about a common enemy, bombastic

rhetoric, and the condescension and smug paternalism involved in 'being a real pal.' There can be excellent *rapport* in the classroom without the presence of a trace of the pedagogic relation.

The word 'atmosphere' occurs in ordinary usage outside of the educational context in a way that is illuminating. When deliberating over the choice of a restaurant, one with a 'congenial atmosphere' but plain bill of fare can be chosen in preference to another with a superior menu but with a discordant atmosphere. When one speaks of the 'pleasing atmosphere' of a restaurant, the atmosphere is perceived 'out there.' One does not refer to the objective conditions existing independently of one's experience, but to one's own *attunement* to those conditions as they reflect back upon one's mood and open one's being toward them. The atmosphere thus depends equiprimordially upon the objective conditions and one's own underlying mood, that is, upon one's general state-of-mind. It may occasionally seem to depend upon whom one is with, but in this case it depends upon the state-of-mind that has been created by being with one another.

This usage suggests that the pedagogic atmosphere depends upon the aggregate of underlying moods that the pupils and the teacher bring to the classroom. These moods are constitutive of their attunement toward each other, for they furnish the medium within which their opening toward each other occurs. It also depends upon the general state-of-mind that emerges from this aggregate that is created by their being there together. The pedagogic atmosphere, in fact, is this general state-of-mind when the pupil's and teacher's being there together becomes ontologically founded in a particular mode of genuine being-with (that is, the pedagogic relation). The pedagogic atmosphere is therefore the ontological foundation of the pedagogic relation. The ontological dimension of this problem arises on the theoretical level when it has already become obvious on the practical level that the physical proximity of the bodies will not suffice to create the pedagogic relation.

The literature of open education thus seems to have addressed itself to the right problem. It has inadvertently become part of the problem, however, insofar as it advocates openness without attending explicitly to the particular mode of openness that can restore the pedagogic relation in the historical situation, that is, insofar as it desires openness without a grounded conception of the educational process. The present inquiry into the kind of openness that is constitutive of the pedagogic atmosphere is therefore concerned with deep-seated, underlying moods, or states-of-mind, with what Heidegger called *Befindlichkeiten,*[3] that make the distinctly pedagogic relation possible. These can be called 'deep structures,' with apologies to Chomsky for transposing his term to the 'affective domain,' that is, to affectivity.

The inquiry, furthermore, has to be an engaged, but not committed, inquiry. Briefly, it has to be guided by the goal of understanding the affective conditions that promote cognitive learnings. The regulative goal of promoting the cognitive development of the pupil as a heuristic framework is not an arbitrary preference derived from perconceived values or a hidden *Weltanschauung*. On the one hand, it is not clear that there is sufficient reason for investigating the pedagogic atmosphere other than to promote cognitive development. On the other hand, this kind of engagement can allow stronger claims to be made. Openness will no longer be merely a good thing to have if it happens to suit one's preferences. It will, rather, be articulated as the condition that makes all genuine learning possible independently of the particular cognitive domain in which it occurs. Stating that the regulative goal

of the inquiry is the cognitive development of the pupil means that it is not concerned with 'affective learning' as such but with the affective conditions of any learning.

To obtain the ontological dimension of what appears to be simply the emotional tone of the classroom, the inquiry has to be concerned with 'fundamental attitudes,' with dispositional factors of emotional quality. The ephemeral feelings of a few seconds' duration, the emotions of a few minutes' length, the moods lasting for hours, and the states-of-mind enduring for days at a time are, of course, at play in the affective life of the classroom, but these are often ontic phenomena and are, perhaps, appropriately studied by empirical psychology, social psychology, and sociology. Their investigation would not lead to an ontologically founded conception of the pedagogic atmosphere unless there was a prior fundamental investigation of the underlying moods that are constitutive of the pedagogic relation. These latter, existential 'states-of-being,' can be designated as life-feelings to avoid the use of terms that are already heavily interpreted. The meaning of the term 'life-feelings' can be stipulated as referring to those underlying moodlike structures of human existence of rather stable duration that collectively make up the affective basis of human being at its most fundamental levels. If emotions underlie feelings, and moods underlie emotions, and states-of-mind underlie all three, then the affective 'entities' lying at a deeper and more permanent level that are constitutive of a general orientation toward one's own life (toward one's own futural being and 'how it matters to one) and toward life in general (toward one's being in the world with others) are appropriately designated by the term 'life-feelings.'[4]

The life-feelings make up one's attunement toward the world and others. When human being is transparent to itself, the ontic feelings, emotions, and moods are for the most part harmoniously integrated with and founded upon the life-feelings. When human being lacks self-transparency, the ontic feelings, emotions, and moods are discordant with each other and with the life-feelings from which they draw their sustenance. Lacking self-transparency, the person is unaware of his own moods, states-of-mind, and life-feelings, attributes them to others (in 'projection' and 'displacement'), and suffers from the loss of his ontological freedom through his being dominated by his underlying affective life. A theoretical undertaking that would focus upon the internal integration of human affectivity in order to formulate a theory of education for self-transparency would be an extremely significant contribution to the literature of open education. The present intent is more modestly aimed at elaborating those life-feelings that are essential to the constitution of the pedagogic atmosphere. What life-feelings are constitutive of the pupil's existential readiness for learning? What life-feelings are constitutive of an existential readiness for teaching? In what ways are these life-feelings constitutive of their turning toward each other? How do they coalesce and become the unitary phenomenon of the pedagogic atmosphere?

3 The pupil's side

Although it is a unitary whole, the pedagogic atmosphere can be considered from one side at a time for theoretical purposes. To begin with the pupil's side is to deal with the question concerning the life-feelings that must be present in the pupil's being to enable him to enter into a pedagogic relation with an adult. After this question is explored, the inquiry can turn to the teacher's side and treat it in such a way as to bring the wholeness of the phenomenon into view.

The treatment of the life-feelings requisite for learning will rely upon the work of Otto Bollnow. According to Bollnow, these are cheerfulness, morningness, expectancy, gratitude, obedience, love, and respect.[5] These will be taken up one at a time. By cheerfulness Bollnow meant a basic, buoyant optimism, the subjective correlate of an open, bright, and cheering world. Bollnow himself depended upon Heidegger's view of the strict correlation between one's own mood and the valence of the world that is disclosed to one.[6] All disclosure of the world occurs through one's moods, for Heidegger, because this disclosure is made possible by the projection to the world that casts its horizons upon things. How things offer themselves to one within their own horizons co-determines one's affective states. If the things encountered in the world within one's horizons did not matter to one in some way, there would be no disclosure. Conversely, all affective structures are intentional: a 'feeling *for*' something. Every 'feeling for' is also a way of feeling oneself.[7]

This notion is so crucial to the present inquiry that it is worth indicating that it has been accepted by philosophers who in some respects are very different from Heidegger. Bollnow himself, for example, earlier investigated the intentionality of the affective life in a book whose title should be translated, *New Security: The Overcoming of Existentialism*.[8] William Luijpen has indicated that the primitive fact of existential phenomenology, that human existence is intentionality, means that human existence is an 'openness of the subject to all that is not the subject itself,' that human existence is openness to the world.[9] Luijpen also referred to the choking down of affectivity through being immersed in the technological world.[10] Similarly, Paul Ricoeur claimed that the body is primordially an opening to the world, implicated in the instrumentality of the world, and he held that bodily feelings are so dependent upon intentionality that when they lose their intentionality they fade away: feelings thus manifest one's orientation to the world.[11] In his own analysis of moods, reminiscent of Heidegger but clearly distinguishing ontic feelings from ontological attunements, Ricoeur suggested that the atmospheric feelings of fundamental nature establish the schemata of man's openness to being.[12]

Thus when Bollnow claimed that cheerfulness as the subjective correlative of an open, bright, and cheering world was a life-feeling of the pupil's that was constitutive of the pedagogic relation, he wanted to distinguish cheerfulness as an elevated mood that allows one to expand freely into an expanding world. This contrasts with the gloomy moods in which the person's consciousness is depressed from contact with a constricting world. Thus cheerfulness as a life-feeling is essential to the expansive transcendence to the world that is the basis for all growth. A complete treatment would distinguish between the various forms in which the life-feeling of cheerfulness manifests itself on the ontic level, such as quiet satisfaction, loud merriment, passive and active joys, gaiety, bliss, and laughter in order to distinguish the content and anthropological and educational significance of each.[13]

By the neologism 'morningness' Bollnow wished to refer to the feeling that is most strongly experienced in its isolation on a bright morning when one is filled with the exuberant, almost exaltant, sheer joy of being alive and looks forward to the day eagerly. One approaches the tasks and projects of the day with childlike enthusiasm. Bollnow, however, wanted to refer to something more comprehensive. The very fullness of the life-feeling of morningness is not primarily attached to specific goals because it overflows them with the aspiration for one's highest being. Morningness thus adds the temporal dimension to cheerfulness. Cheerfulness is primarily directed outward in an immediate and horizontal

expansion to a cheerful world, but morningness is the vertical impetus toward the future, toward being an adult. Much as one looks forward to what the day will bring of an invigorating morning, the life-feeling of morningness structures consciousness during the whole of child and youth. Cheerfulness is the anticipatory openness to the world, but morningness is the anticipatory openness for the 'journey' to the 'future,' including the willingness to be educated as part of this 'journey.'[14]

The third life-feeling structuring the child's and youth's existence, that of joyous expectancy, is, according to Bollnow, founded upon cheerfulness and morningness. The cheerful child expects good things to happen almost everywhere and constantly. He is delighted by continuously new discoveries as he experiences the new qualities of things. In conscious expectancy he opens a new book, marvels over the mysterious chapter titles and striking illustrations, and he expects important things to be contained in this new book, to be learned from it. Intermediate and long range expectations develop as he begins to imagine the exciting things he will do in youth; then, in youth, of the important things he will do as an adult.[15]

Cheerfulness, morningness, and expectancy as basic attunements to the world do not develop by themselves, nor can the child or youth arrange conditions necessary for their emergence. Bollnow therefore supported his view with a brief phenomenology of the child's world to explicate their necessary conditions. His basic claim is that the world becomes open and accessible to the child only through the presence of specific, beloved people, primarily the mother. The standard case is where the mother gives the child adequate love and care. In this situation the infant is first of all able to project consciously to her, drawn out by her warm affection. The mother not only seems affectionate, but to the child she appears to be omnipotent. She fixes everything. She also appears as totally good and beneficent, worthy of absolute trust. Most importantly for the present context is the fact that as the child sees the mother use things, these things are brought into the familiar world and humanized. Just as the night space of the child is transformed into a friendly, humanized place through her lullaby, so, too, are all of the things that she handles humanized through her drawing them into her presence, into her *Lebemwelt*. Thus the world opens up across the presence of this definite, trusted person, and, correlatively, the child opens to the world because of her presence in his world.[16] A familiar world becomes established in the forefront of the strange, possibly hostile, world, from which the outside, stranger world is explored, and to which the child and youth must return for its (and his own) security, that is, for the security established by the presence of particular, trusted adults. Even though the familiar world gradually expands far beyond home, neighborhood, and school, particularly through what is learned in school, the necessity for the absolute security of one's home and of one's own room within it remains throughout adulthood.[17] It remains because cheerfulness as a life-feeling depends upon the presence of this region of safety, within which the person can withdraw from the social world in order to expand phenomenologically to this physically small but absolutely trusted world. For the child and youth it is the presence of trusted adults rather than the thickness of the walls or the locks on the door that makes the home a place that is safe enough to be in. The same holds true for schools. The student requires a safe place within the classroom in order to expand freely to the world.

The basic trust in the familiar world that has opened through the presence of trusted, specific people furnished the basis for Bollnow's claim that the life-feelings of gratitude,

obedience, love, and trust are the 'standard case' for the child. Cases in which they are absent can be adequately understood only by comparison with the standard case, and as deficiencies originating primarily from an insufficiency of parental love.[18] Bollnow's statement, furthermore, is very carefully qualified. The obedience that the pre-adolescent child automatically yields to beloved and trusted parents and teachers, for example, changes gradually throughout youth, particularly through intermittent periods of disobedience when the strivings for independence that are also essential to the progress to independent adulthood create periods of disobedience for some youth that can also be considered as the 'standard case' within these parameters. After each of these, however, the life-feeling referred to by the term 'obedience' is restored, Bollnow contends, often with considerable joyousness.[19] By the term 'obedience,' that is to say, he is referring to a fundamental mood, or general attunement toward adults. In his words, 'Obedience as a general emotional state-of-being, as a trustful readiness of the child to meet the demands made of him with glad affirmative response and to identify himself with them, lies behind every single compliance to particular demands.'[20]

This willing compliance, the ordinary situation for the child from a home of adequate safety, depends in turn upon the lifefeeling of gratitude. The child, Bollnow contends, experiences no problems over his dependence upon adults and is grateful for their help, although here, too, Bollnow holds that intermittent periods of ingratitude emerging in youth when dependence is experienced as a burden may be essential to individual development. The child or youth, however, can feel especially grateful toward particular teachers as well as toward his parents, and this grateful disposition becomes generalized when its momentum carries it over into adult life, first as the idea, 'There were these loving people who helped me to become what I am,' then more generally as gratitude for life itself when life becomes experienced as an unmerited gift.[21] This is not unlike obedience as a life-feeling, which, after its particularization in youth when the youth necessarily has to decide for and against obedience in particular instances, again becomes generalized but this time into an implicit affirmation of the social, civic, and moral order.[22] As the adult life-feeling of gratitude is simply being glad to be alive, so, too, is the adult life-feeling of obedience simply being glad to be alive *here*. It is not conformity but a sense of being at home in one's native land.

The life-attunements of gratitude and obedience depend upon the trust developed by growing up in a world of the requisite safety. They depend upon the cheerfulness such security makes possible. The complete naturalness with which a child develops an affectionate devotion to his parents within these life-feelings makes it virtually unnecessary to explicate love as a life-feeling. Its importance toward teachers develops through its gradual transformation to greater objectivity and some loss of warmth as it becomes respect for this or that teacher. Bollnow claimed that the child has an inherent need to respect his teachers, a need to be able to respect the teacher's knowledge, professional ability, and moral character. As the child wants to believe that he has the best parents in the world ('My father is bigger than your father'), so does he want to think that his teachers are superior to others. The child's trust in the value of the knowledge of the teacher, rather than its actual value, sustains the readiness to learn from her. The child or youth wants to be proud of his teacher, according to Bollnow, for this respect elevates and enlarges himself and arouses

forward-impelling powers. It also catalyzes a longing to conform to the ideas and norms represented by the teacher.[23]

By beginning with the pupil's side of the elements constitutive of the pedagogic atmosphere and by utilizing a phenomenological description of the child's consciousness of the world, Bollnow was able to articulate the standard case wherein adequate love and care is received at the pre-school and extra-school levels. Thus the account of cheerfulness, morningness, expectancy, gratitude, obedience, love and respect yields the necessary affective pre-suppositions of the pedagogic relation. It is a normative-descriptive definition of the affective dimension of childlike existence, that is, of childhood. When the child is enabled to live his childhood fully, these life-feelings are present, structuring his being and creating an eagerness to learn from his teachers. They create an openness toward adults, represented by the teacher, and toward this single, definite person, the teacher, and then beyond her they create an openness toward the world that she brings into her presence, making it safe, and then beyond that they create an openness toward the future.

These abbreviated phenomenological descriptions are, since Husserl and Heidegger, the appropriate way to perform a Kantian transcendental critique.[24] A restatement in a form that approximates a transcendental deduction will serve to indicate that the inquiry is indeed seeking the affective *a priori* of education. Unless the pupil is basically cheerful, he will be unable to project openly to the world and let it be what it is. Unless the world appears to him within the openness of a cheerful world, he will be existentially discouraged from learning more about it. Unless the pupil looks forward to the day when he will be an adult, able to do the things that appear to him to be great things, he will not identify with the adults in his world and enter into conversation with those who are accessible to him in the persons of his teachers. Unless the pupil's attitude is basically one of open expectation for the pleasant surprises that might occur in the next five minutes, the next hour, the next year, etc., he has no interest in undertaking the kinds of tasks that provide significant learnings. Unless the pupil is basically grateful for the time and effort devoted to him by the teacher, he will be unaware that what she says, does, and expects of him has value. Unless the pupil complies with the expectations aroused by the very presence of the teacher as a teacher, he will not undertake learning tasks as a matter of course. Unless the pupil basically respects the teacher, he has no desire to enter into a pedagogic relation with her. Thus cheerfulness is a necessary condition for openness to the world, morningness and expectancy are necessary conditions for openness to the future, and gratitude, obedience, and respect as life-feelings are the necessary conditions for openness to the teacher.

These affective, ontological presuppositions of the pedagogic relation can easily be shown to rest upon a more primordial life-attunement. The life-feelings can be discussed separately to the extent that each of them separately emerges into explicit awareness upon occasion to dominate temporarily the pupil's state-of-being, for example, morningness, or gratitude. They are ontologically interrelated, however, in one's general life-attunement. The familiar world that first opens only through the mother's enabling presence gradually attains independence from her presence and becomes an enabling presence itself when the world itself invites expansion of the child's consciousness to it. The gradual weaning process that is the whole of education is the gradual lessening of the importance of adults in their role in creating a safe world through their protective presence. With this develops the gradually increasing importance of the direct address to the world and the concomitant

expansion of the familiar world. The latter gradually becomes the social-historical world to which the young adult stands in direct relation. Thus the enabling presence gradually becomes the social-historical world. This means that the more primordial affective presupposition of the pedagogic relation, the primal attunement that is constitutive of the pedagogic atmosphere on the side of the pupil, is the trust in the familiar world that gradually becomes generalized into a trust of the social-historical world.

If this trust as a life-attunement is ontological, its locus is in the pupil's being. As such, it makes the requisite, more concrete life-feelings possible. As such, it is not constitutive of any particular *Weltanschauung* because it lies at a level underneath all possible genuine *Weltanschauungen*. It necessarily underlies, for example, both authentic conservatism and authentic liberalism. It makes them both possible because unless one's life-attunement is one of basic trust in the social-historical world as it appears within the horizons of one's perspective, he has no impetus either to preserve the best of the existing order or to change the worst of it. It should be noticed explicitly that saying that trust in the social-historical world is a primal affective constituent of the pedagogic atmosphere when considered from the pupil's side makes absolutely no evaluational judgment about any particular society.

If this trust is primal, then one might conjecture that historical evidence could be gathered to confirm/disconfirm the hypothesis that historical epochs pervaded by a lack of trust of the 'society' are accompanied by a pervasive alienation from the pedagogic relation and a pervasive absence of the pedagogic atmosphere, that is, by a 'crisis in the classroom.'

4 The teacher's side

When considering the teacher's side, it is necessary to bear in mind that, because the pedagogical atmosphere is a unitary whole, the teacher's basic moods have to be compatible with and correspondent to the life-feelings of the pupil that are constitutive of educational readiness and willingness to enter into a pedagogic relation with the teacher. Cheerfulness is therefore necessary on the part of the teacher, too, except in an adult form. This would rule out the artificial euphoria that can be found in some particular attempts to institute an educational atmosphere that Kozol, for one, has criticized as being pedagogically deficient.[25] Adult cheerfulness, above all, cannot be naive, for the teacher should know something of the darker aspects of life that the existential philosophers, among others, have brought to attention. Otherwise she will not be able to help particular students when they are undergoing a minor life-crisis. The teacher's cheerfulness is first of all a willingness to abide with sudden fits of loud laughter, boisterous merriment, and other expressions of the pupil's cheerfulness, for these are necessary not only to continued cheerfulness but to their general well-being. These exuberant expressions of the pupil's cheerfulness can easily be interpreted as maliciously motivated by teachers who lack the life-feeling of cheerfulness on their own part.[26] At the adult level, however, cheerfulness, as an attunement to the world in which the emotional tone of a consciousness expanding freely to the world allows the world to disclose itself joyously, appears as serenity. When perceived by cheerful pupils, the serene teacher radiates cheerfulness from her very being because her demeanor allows for the requisite expansion of the pupil's being.[27]

Serenity as a life-feeling is an inward calm related to the courage to be and is thus quite different from a 'forced' cheerfulness. The latter would divert the pupil's cheerfulness

onto another plane. The difference is that whereas the pupil's cheerfulness is structured by morningness, this life-feeling has necessarily subsided except for the very young teacher in the first year or so of teaching. The pupil's cheerfulness is exuberant; the teacher's, sedate. The open readiness for the world that is now quite familiar occurs within a temporal structure that is focused upon the present, befitting the 'noon' of life, in order to do what one can in the present situation.[28] Corresponding to morningness on the teacher's side is a life-feeling that trusts in the possibilities of the present, that hardly looks ahead to the next class or next week, because of a confidence in both oneself and the world, correlatively, that is mostly an awareness that any 'problems' arising can be dealt with as they emerge. This life-feeling might be designated as good-naturedness, or good humor.[29] Good humor lies at the basis of a sense of humor, of course, but the attunement referred to also includes an encompassing trust not just of students but of the possibilities within the social order, particularly as they become perceived by the students. This, too, cannot be naive, for only a very sophisticated trust in the social-historical world can make possible the kinds of encouragement necessary to maintain the pupil's forward impetus, or morningness, as he seeks his place in the world.

Closely related is the life-feeling of patience, which, as an affective relation rather than as a virtue, is the tone of a consciousness that willingly lets perceived things be what they are without hastily imposing one's preconceptions and conceptions upon them. Patience lets the world as it enters into one's horizons make its own appearance in its own time. This can be thought of as a kind of humility in the presence of what is. It is an active passivity of consciousness that lets the world address one, that, as receptivity, openly waits for the opening of the world.[30] The life-feeling of patience allows the teacher to unfold aspects of instructional content in ways that arouse pupils' expectations and also allows waiting for the pupil's development.[31] Patience corresponds, with a slower temporality, to the life-feeling of expectancy on the part of the pupil. Because the teacher expects the pupil to become interested in the content of instruction as she unfolds it, because she expects him to be able to grasp something with greater understanding later on, because she expects him to be able to act differently when he matures a bit more, she can be patient in waiting for the pupil's growth. Patience is the confidence of an expectation that can let things be what they are in their own time.

When these three life-feelings are united in the teacher's very being, then she can serenely, patiently, and good-naturedly turn toward the pupil, able to extend the trust toward the child that corresponds to the child's willing obedience (and to the youth's intermittent obedience). This trust cannot be created artificially, either, for its basis as a life-feeling is the awareness that the pupil's willingness to fulfill perceived expectations is quite ordinary. The latter is not an 'empirical fact' in the sense that it could be confirmed by 'objective observation' that erroneously claimed to be 'affectively neutral,' but which is more of a 'theoretical indifference' that has no place in pedagogy. The child appears willingly obedient within the perspective of a life-feeling of trust in him. Its truth is perceivable only within the parental and pedagogic perspective that is grounded upon parental or pedagogic affection. Thus trust in the pupil as a dispositional factor is itself dependent upon the deeper life-feeling of pedagogical love.[32] Within pedagogic love the willing obedience of the child is experientially validated.

The life-feelings of the teacher—serenity, good humor, patience, trust, and pedagogic love—can also be stated in the form of a transcendental deduction to indicate that they are the affective presuppositions of the pedagogic relation and thus constitutive of the pedagogic atmosphere. Unless the teacher is serene, the pupil will not open spontaneously toward her. Unless the teacher is good-humored, her presence will not catalyze the pupil's movement toward the future. Unless the teacher is patient, the pupil will not feel that she has time for him and his slower processes and he will not perceive her as accessible. Unless the teacher can extend unconditional trust toward the pupil, he will not feel trustworthy and, more significantly, will not be able to trust the teacher. Unless the teacher's orientation to the pupil is enclosed within an encompassing pedagogic affection, the pupil will not be able to expand openly to the world that she brings into her presence and will not be able to trust that world sufficiently to want to explore it and to allow it to open toward him.

These ontological presuppositions on the side of the teacher, too, can be readily shown to rest upon a more primordial life-feeling. The pedagogic love that makes an unconditional trust in the pupil possible would seem, when viewed 'realistically,' to be courting pedagogic disaster. Its statement seems more sentimental than the most romantic of educational theorists. Yet love and trust on the teacher's part are necessary to establish the pupil's affectionate regard for the teacher and the consequent compliance that goes without saying, which, among other things, makes the pedagogic relation cognitively productive. How can the teacher be sure that hers is not an unrequited love?

This, of course, is the wrong question, for it cannot be asked within any form of love as a life-feeling. It is manipulatory in the phrasing and begs for a manipulatory answer, which indicates a misunderstanding. Perhaps schooling is better when it is maintained without a pedagogic atmosphere, but for the latter the presence of the appropriate underlying life-feelings are necessary. What is at issue is the primordial attunement that underlies pedagogic love and makes it possible. Just as the more primordial affective presupposition of the pedagogic relation on the pupil's side is trust in the social-historical world as it appears within his horizons, so, too, is the more primordial condition on the teacher's side a love of the world as it appears in the classroom in the person of her students. The life-feeling in question is more general than this expression of it. It is more general than an attunement of love of the social-historical world, which it also encompasses. It is love of the world.

5 The unitary phenomenon

This inquiry had to begin with the separate life-feelings first on one side and then the other in order to use a linear means to investigate an instantaneous but highly complex phenomenon and to bring the totality of the phenomenon into view. The chronological development of the life-feelings constitutive of the pedagogic atmosphere occurs in the reverse order to this presentation because the separate life-feelings gradually distinguish themselves from the more primordial love of the world. The infant's love of his mother is already based upon an earlier love of the world as it opens vaguely to his presence as she cares for him before he is able to distinguish her as a definite person, and so on.

This means that on both sides of the pedagogic relation the more primal affective presupposition of the pedagogic relation, constitutive of the pedagogic atmosphere, is love of the world. As an attunement, this love is the sedimentation of appreciations of experienced

qualities found within the world. When both pupils and the teacher love the world, they are able to project freely to it, to open themselves toward the world and let it be, that is, to let it open toward them.[33] The teacher lets it be by dis-closing its possibilities, and the pupil, by letting these possibilities become disclosed, or open, to him. The two sides of the pedagogic relation are thus united by being with one another in the mutual presence to the beloved world. This mutual presence as a mutual openness to the world opens itself correlatively from the beloved world and from the particular affective orientation toward the world that is properly called love of the world. Within this life-attunement, knowledge about the world is knowledge of the world. Thus the love of the world as the life-attunement that forms the ontological basis of the pedagogic atmosphere leads directly to cognizing the world, that is to say, to cognitive learnings and cognitive development within the pedagogic relation.

To say that love of the world as a primal life-attunement is necessary on both sides of the pedagogic relation in order to establish the pedagogic atmosphere, however, is insufficient to express the latter's unity. The necessary world-orientation on the pupil's side has been called trust in the world to indicate (1) a reliance upon the world despite gaps in his knowledge of the world, (2) some hesitancy in his explorations of the world when approaching the horizons of the familiar world, and (3) an existential dependence upon beloved adults to establish this reliance and to overcome this hesitancy. Love of the world occurs within the familiar world, and may be more primordial than trust in the world in one sense, but insofar as it belongs to being a child to enlarge constantly his horizons, trust in the world enables his expansion. Considered from the viewpoint of the totality of his existence, trust in the world is more fundamental. The necessary world-orientation of the teacher has been expressed as love of the world to indicate a fundamental relation to the world that endures irrespective of contingent circumstances, partly because of its interpenetration with the life-feeling of gratitude (which belongs on the teacher's side, too). If each of these world-attunements is expressed as love of the world, then the latter expression becomes inadequate to express the teacher s love of the world correspondent to the pupil's trust in the world. The logic involved would equate A and B with B, thereby losing the distinctness of A and B. To encompass the two quite different world-orientations but to allow them to remain distinguishable as trust and love of the world, to grasp the unity of these two attunements in the pedagogic relation, a new descriptive term is necessary. Mere word-mongering will not suffice, however, for what is needed is a grasp of an even deeper attunement. The most primordial presupposition of the pedagogic atmosphere, lying at a level beneath both trust in the world and love of the world, nourishes them both and unites the two sides of the relation. The most fundamental affective condition that makes these both possible is the ultimate ground of the pedagogic atmosphere. What makes it possible for the teacher and pupil to have a common attunement and to dwell together in a sustaining affective medium is simply hope.[34]

The life-feeling of hope, as established in one's being, should not be confused with surface feelings of hope or with ideological optimism. Particular hopes look forward to the possible fulfillment of a definite desire across a span of time and events too large to be leaped by one's feelings of expectation ('I hope I will graduate.'). Concrete hopes, however, support Minkowski's claim that hope is the basis for having futural horizons and is perhaps identical with having them.[35] And whereas ideological optimism explicitly claims

that the universe is friendly or favorable to human aspirations, ideological pessimism necessarily (and ironically) presupposes hope as a world-attunement. Even Sartre, for example, wrote six hundred pages *hoping* that the laborious undertaking would prove the truth of the final sentence, 'Man is a useless passion.'[36] He explicitly 'proved,' furthermore, not the futility but the 'passion,' that is, that man is a perpetual surpassing of the given world, a perpetual futural project to the world.[37] That is, he proved that 'hope springs eternal' in spite of the 'uselessness.' That hope as a life-feeling underlies both optimism and pessimism as ideologies can also be indicated by noting that both Huston Smith and Paulo Freire included hope within their respective attempts to establish the *a priori* schemata of meaningfulness and dialogue.[38] Their efforts support the present contention that hope is necessary for meaningful dialogue within pedagogy, although the intent of the present point is much more fundamental.

Within a mood of cheerfulness, the world appears bright and expansive, but within a cheerless mood it appears gray, dark, oppressive, and gloomy. The one has open, futural horizons wherein transcendence to the world is 'encouraged' by the opening up of the openness of the world. The other has closed horizons wherein transcendence to the world is 'discouraged' by the closing in of the world. The difference is twofold. First, the degree of freedom varies, for the cheerless person has lost the freedom of consciousness to project to the world, but the cheerful person freely opens into the openness of the open.[39] Second, the degree of illumination varies, for the cheerless world is dark, and the other, bright. The 'brightness' of the world considered from the viewpoint of affectivity is precisely the primordial attunement at hand. Hope is the light of the world.[40]

Hope as a world-attunement, in other words, is the subjective correlate of the light of the world. This light is the openness of the world as such.[41] It is the very being of the world as it appears to human consciousness.[42] Correlatively, hope as the primordial attunement is the very being of man as he projects into the openness of the world and lets it be.[43] In hope, the openness appears as the light of the world.

The structure of hope can be made clearer by way of contrast with anxiety as a life-feeling, that is, with ontological anxiety. Heidegger's suggestion here is helpful, for he claimed that just as each fear has its object ('I am afraid *of* X'), the 'object' of anxiety is being in the world as such. The openness to the world as such can arouse an anxiety over one's being. This feeling was also called 'uncanniness,' or *Unheimlichkeit,* by Heidegger, which, as he points out literally means 'not-being-at-home.'[44] Thus hope as the opposite of anxiety is the feeling of at-homeness in the world as such. It is the instantaneous willingness to initiate the projection to the world in hope that the world as the phenomenal correlate will support the projection to it. The light world will support this project. Thus hope is reciprocally based upon love of the world. It is temporally dependent upon the previous appreciation of experienced qualities in the world.[45] Love of the world, however, differs in that it is oriented to the past. It endures through memory. Hope, on the other hand, is futural because it initiates the projection into the openness of the world guided by the light of the world. Hope is therefore the effective aspect of transcendence. Hope is transcendence itself when transcendence is considered from its origin in the transcendental imagination and when the latter is simultaneously regarded from the viewpoint of affectivity.[46] This is why it is the 'ultimate basis' of the pedagogic atmosphere. Transcendence itself makes it

possible for the teacher and pupils to live together in a sustaining affective medium because transcendence is hope.

When the primordial attunement on both sides of the pedagogic relation is one of hope, the atmosphere is suffused with the light of the world. The world is light enough to enter. Its light, expressed dynamically to include the temporal dimension, is its opening as such. In hope, the person opens to the world as the world opens to him. Hope is the very opening of openness.

The earlier statement that hope as a world-attunement is the most primordial affective presupposition of the pedagogic atmosphere, which means that it is its fundamental constitutive element, can now be reformulated. Hope is openness itself when the latter is considered from the viewpoint of affectivity. This means openness is more than the ultimate ground of the pedagogic atmosphere. It means that openness is the pedagogic atmosphere. The affective schemata as outlined in this investigation as the affective *a priori* of the pedagogic relation are constituted by openness itself, by openness as such.

That openness as such is the pedagogic atmosphere becomes manifest when this inquiry is understood as an 'archeology' of affectivity. The attempt to obtain deeper and deeper levels of feeling that are necessary to establish the pedagogic relation discovered that hope as openness was at the foundation of the various modalities of feeling, sustaining them all. The interhuman life-feelings of trust in the pupil/obedience, gratitude, and pedagogic love/ respect depend upon the life-feelings of serenity/cheerfulness, good-naturedness/morningness, and patience/expectation. The latter correspond to the structural elements of human existence of spatiality, temporality, and 'letting be,' respectively. They depend in turn upon the world-attunements of love of the world/trust in the world and thence upon hope for the world. These latter correspond to the more fundamental existential structures of transcendence and openness. The latter make the former ontologically possible. They are essentially constitutive of the total pedagogic atmosphere. They can be depicted graphically as in Figure 4.1.

Openness, felt as hope in the world and appearing as the light of the world, makes transcendence to the world possible. The latter, felt as love/trust of the world, makes the spatializing dynamic of consciousness in its horizontal expansion to the world, making room for itself, possible. The latter, felt as serenity/cheerfulness, makes the temporalizing dynamic of consciousness in its vertical constitution of self and world, making time for itself, possible. The latter, felt as good-naturedness/morningness, enables consciousness to maintain the open receptivity that makes it possible to let the objects encountered be what they are in a dialogic, reciprocal relation. The latter, felt as patience/expectation, makes

The pedagogic relation

feelings
emotions
moods

cognitive
learnings

TRUST   OBEDIENCE

GRATITUDE   awareness   GRATITUDE
             of value

PEDAGOGIC   dialogic   RESPECT
LOVE   relation

Life–
feelings

PATIENCE   letting be   EXPECTATION

GOOD–
NATUREDNESS temporality MORNINGNESS

SERENITY   spatiality   CHEERFULNESS

LOVE OF   transcendence TRUST IN WORLD
WORLD

World–
attune-
ments

HOPE   openness   HOPE

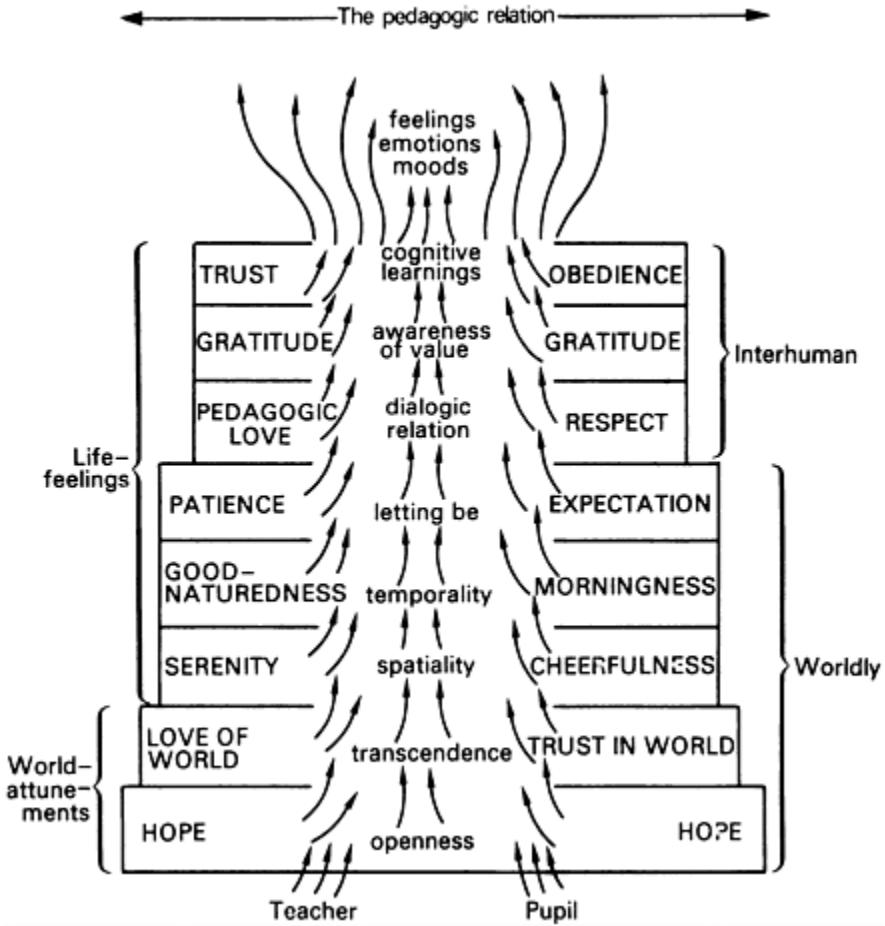Teacher   Pupil

Interhuman

Worldly

Figure   4.1

the pedagogic relation as an open, dialogical relation possible. The latter, felt as pedagogic love for the pupil and respect for the teacher, make an awareness of the worthwhileness of being together in the educating process possible. The latter, felt as gratitude, makes an open willingness to fulfill the obligations to the other that is felt as trust in the pupil/obedience to the teacher possible. The latter makes significant cognitive learnings possible. Thus does openness sustain and suffuse the entire pedagogic atmosphere.

These life-feelings, however, are readily covered over by the superficial, transient feelings, emotions, and moods that the teacher, pupils, and external observer would probably mistakenly identify as the emotional tone of the classroom. The latter are not necessarily grounded deeply in the teacher's and pupils' being. Their educational worth depends upon whether or not they are supported by the general attunements that are constitutive of the pedagogic relation. This inquiry has attempted to ascertain what these latter might be.

Notes

1 Charles E.Silberman, *Crisis in the Classroom,* Random House, 1970, pp. 10, 268.

2 D.Vandenberg, 'Hirst, Hermeneutics, and Fundamental Educational Theory' in *Philosophy of Education 1973, Studies in Philosophy and Education,* 1973; and 'Phenomenology and Educational Research' in *Existentialism and Phenomenology in Education,* ed. D.E.Denton, Teachers College Press, 1974.

   I am indebted to Professors Elmer Eason and Donald Cochrane for suggestions, criticisms, and provocations they made subsequent to the first reading of the first draft of this paper to their group at California State University, Northridge.

3 Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time,* tr. J.Macquarrie and E. Robinson, Harper & Row, 1962, section 29. The translators render this as 'state-of-mind' with misgivings because this omits the reference to the state in which one finds himself. See their note, p. 172.

4 The words 'feeling,' 'emotion,' and 'mood' are taken to mean the affective entities outlined earlier in this paragraph by their duration the purpose of this definition.

5 Otto F.Bollnow, *Die pädagogische Atmosphäre,* 4th ed., Quelle und Meyer, 1970, p. 16.

6 *Ibid.,* p. 27.

7 Heidegger, *op. cit.,* and *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics,* tr. J.S.Churchill, Indiana University Press, 1962, pp. 163–4, 234.

8 O.Bollnow, *Neue Geborgenheit,* Stuttgart, 1960. Partly translated as 'Existentialism's Basic Ethical Position' in *Contemporary European Ethics,* tr. J.J.Kockelmans, Doubleday, 1972, pp. 369–83.

9 W.Luijpen, *Existential Phenomenology,* Duquesne University Press, 1965, pp. 34–9.

10 *Ibid.,* pp. 49–53.

11 P.Ricoeur, *Fallible Man,* tr. C.Kelbey, Henry Regnery, 1965, pp. 30, 62, 127, and 132. See, too, his *History and Truth,* tr. C.Kelbey, Northwestern University Press, 1965, p. 306.

12 Ricoeur, *Fallible Man,* pp. 159–60; *History and Truth,* p. 304.

13 Bollnow, *Die pädagogische Atmosphäre,* pp. 27–9.

14 *Ibid.,* pp. 29–34.

15 *Ibid.,* pp. 35–7.

16 The point is similar to Martin Buber's in 'Education' in *Between Man and Man,* tr. R.G.Smith, Macmillan, 1965, pp. 98–9; and to the genetic phenomenology of Stephan Strasser in *The Idea of a Dialogal Phenomenology,* Duquesne University Press, 1969, pp. 77–99; and to Luijpen's view, *Existential Phenomenology,* p. 230. To call the mother a 'significant other' is to miss the point.

17 Bollnow, *Die pädagogische Atmosphäre,* pp. 18–24. See, too, Bollnow's 'Lived Space' in *Readings in Existential Phenomenology,* ed. N.Lawrence and D.O'Connor, Prentice-Hall, 1967, pp. 178–86.

18 The point, of course, is similar to the psychologist's when he speaks of the rejection as a child to explain some adolescent and adult phenomena within his conceptual structure.

19 Bollnow, *Die pädagogische Atmosphäre,* pp. 38–40.

20 *Ibid.,* p. 39.

21 *Ibid., pp.* 38, 41.

22 It should be explicitly noticed that this affirmation on the level of a life-attunement does not preclude specific dissatisfactions of even a large magnitude.

23 *Ibid.,* pp. 42–3.

24 Cf. Heidegger's interpretation in *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics;* and Edmund Husserl's statements on Kant in *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology,* tr. D.Carr, Northwestern University Press, 1970, part III A.

25 J.Kozol, *Free Schools,* Houghton Mifflin, 1972, p. 72.

26 Bollnow, *Die pädagogische Atmosphäre,* pp. 16, 28.

27 *Ibid.,* p. 29. The explication of the child's life-feelings depends upon Bollnow, but on the teacher's side only the names are drawn from Bollnow. For serenity, see *ibid.,* pp. 63–7.

28 For expressions of serenity and its relation to the spatially-ordered and the courage to be, see Heidegger's 'Remembrance of the Poet' and 'What is Metaphysics?' in *Existence and Being,* Henry Regnery, 1949, pp. 248–54, 343, 355. See, too, *Humanistic Foundations of Education,* ed. C.Weinberg, Prentice-Hall, pp. 146–7.

29 As opposed to being ill-humored.

30 Patience as a life-feeling is similar to Heidegger's concept of *Gelassenheit* when the latter is considered from the viewpoint of affectivity. See his essay by this name translated as 'Conversation on a Country Path about Thinking' in *Discourse on Thinking,* tr. E.H.Freund and J.M.Anderson, Harper & Row, 1966, especially pp. 68–72, where the role of waiting as an aspect of 'releasement' (the rendition of *Gelassenheit* therein) is specified. Kockelmans renders this as 'composure,' *Contemporary European Ethics,* p. 372. In contrast to the dictionary's 'self-possession,' 'calmness,' 'composure,' 'resignation,' 'even temper,' and 'patience,' Heidegger's use emphasizes its root, *lassen,* 'to let.' 'Letting be' seems more fitting than a more literal 'lettingness,' as long as it is not misunderstood as 'letting alone' but includes having something to do with albeit patiently.

31 Bollnow, *Die pädagogische Atmosphäre,* pp. 56–60.

32 *Ibid.,* pp. 44–6, 48–54. See Eduard Spranger, 'The Role of Love in Education' in *Modern Philosophies of Education,* ed. J.P.Strain, Random House, pp. 536–46, for a level-headed explication of pedagogic love.

33 Ludwig Binswanger suggested that love, almost in the sense employed in the text, was a necessary supplement to Heidegger's concept of Care as manifesting Dasein's structural totality. Cf. Strasser, *The Idea of a Dialogal Phenomenology,* p. 116, and Ludwig Binswanger, 'On the Relation Between Husserl's Phenomenology and Psychological Insight,' *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* December 1941, pp. 199–210.

34 Bollnow, *Die pädagogische Atmosphäre,* pp. 60–2.

35 Eugene Minkowski, *Lived Time,* tr. N.Metzel, Northwestern University Press, 1970, pp. 92–5, 100–1.

36 Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* tr. H.E.Barnes, Philosophical Library, 1956, p. 615.

37 Sartre's point was that man is in a perpetual transcendence to the world and future, which seems tantamount to saying that hope springs eternal. It is the necessity for this springing perpetually anew that can be viewed dismally, gladly, or factually. Sartre himself seems to have been entrapped by his dualistic terminology, for after correctly beginning with the concrete, as man in the world, he later seems to find the *term* 'being-for-itself' cannot become the *term* 'being-in-itself.' But the point is that even in this 'pessimism,' hope springs perpetually as the origin of consciousness.

38 Huston Smith, *Condemned to Meaning,* Harper & Row, 1965, p. 48; Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* tr. M.B.Ramos, Herder & Herder, p. 80. Both claim that because human existence is an intentional projection to the world, hope is necessary to make the projection possible.

39 For freedom as the openness to that which is open, see Heidegger's 'On the Essence of Truth' in *Existence and Being,* pp. 303–9; and his *The Essence of Reasons,* tr. T.Malick, Northwestern University Press, 1969, pp. 101–5.

40 For hope as the light of the world making 'free use of some Heideggerian notions,' see J.E.Grady's 'Marcel and Hope,' *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology,* October 1973, pp. 256–64.

41 For light as openness, see Ricoeur, *Fallible Man,* p. 62.

42 Heidegger, *Being and Time,* pp. 401–2.

43 For the being of man as the disclosedness of the world, see *ibid.,* p. 171.

44 *Ibid.,* pp. 232–4.

45 The methodology of the inquiry confined it to the data as given phenomenologically. In 'Desire and Hope,' *Readings in Existential Phenomenology,* pp. 277–85, Gabriel Marcel also confined his reflection to this data when he based hope upon intersubjectivity, not too unlike the text's claim of the genetic interdependence of hope and love of the world. Luijpen, *Existential Phenomenology,* p. 230, based athomeness in the world upon parental and other forms of interhuman love.

46 Stephan Strasser suggested that the difference between existential phenomenology from pure phenomenology is the rejection of the latter's ascription of primacy to knowing in favor of a claim that the *fundamental* intentionality is emotional. 'Phenomenologies and Psychologies' in *Readings in Existential Phenomenology,* p. 349. This would thoroughly justify the present attempt to view the existential structures in affective rather than ontological language. The word 'hope,' for example, may be more adequate ontologically than 'transcendence.' In this regard, compare 'hope' with Jean Nabert's 'primary affirmation,' *Elements for an Ethic,* tr. W.J.Petrek, Northwestern University Press, 1969, p. 47.

part II
Problems of knowledge

5

That's just Einstein's opinion: the autocracy of students' reason in open education

Hugh G.Petrie

Two fundamental principles of open education

Anyone who assays to speak generally about even some limited aspect of open education is surely treading on dangerous ground. For here is a development in education where even the advocates feel universally constrained to comment on the lack of systematic, agreed-upon principles in their domain. Indeed, they make of this lack of coherence the virtue of flexibility. I will leave open what the critics make of it. Nevertheless, in sampling the works of writers on open education and in talking with those who engage in what they call open education, one does get a general picture of the sort of thinking which ties this loosely-knit field together.

In speaking of the kind of reflective abstract characterizations *about* the practices called open education, I am not examining those practices themselves. And it is, of course, quite true that one of the roots of open education is the quintessentially practice-oriented British infant school. It arose with practitioners in a way that few educational reforms have. In this sense, some of the things I will have to say about the *theory* of open education may seem to be distortions to practitioners. *They* don't *do* such things. Yet if what they do is to receive any coherent characterization at all, if it is to be anything more than an existential happening, if it is to be conceived as something others might also wish to do, then it must be susceptible of an abstract general formulation. And it is that formulation, acknowledged or not, which helps in guiding the practice of open educators especially as they are faced with novel situations.

From a different perspective, that of alternative schools, theory is relevant to practice with a vengeance. It would not be too much of a distortion to say that practice in many alternative schools derives almost directly from the desire really to live the abstract principles of autonomy and freedom.

Thus talk *about* the practice of open education *is* relevant, and analysis of the principles and presuppositions revealed in that talk will ultimately be relevant to practice, although it will not, of course, dictate practice. The skeptical practitioners might reflect on the question whether they know what they are about in a very basic sense without considering the sorts of issues I will raise here. Thus what I want to do in this paper is to extract for examination two principles or assumptions which seem to me fairly universally accepted and,

more to the point, fundamentally important for considering the epistemology associated with open education.

The first of these principles has to do with the view that basically knowledge is a personal construct and cannot be 'transmitted' in the usual standard sense. In one recent volume on open education, the writers speak of the attempts to break down standard disciplinary boundaries, the use of disciplines only as needed for a student initiated project, the teacher as facilitator, and so on.[1] Knowledge is truly the student's only when the student makes it her or his own through seeing its importance and relevance. It cannot be handed over by the teacher. The interdisciplinary, problem-oriented mode of discovery learning replaces the disciplinary, subject-centered mode of instruction. I will call this principle and its variants the *personal construct view of knowledge*.

The second principle has to do with the fundamentally important role of the student in open education situations. It seems to be generally held that students can and ought to play a much larger role than they traditionally do in their own education. It is believed that the students can profitably make significant decisions concerning what they will learn, when they will learn, and even how they will learn. The teacher's role never vanishes completely, but neither is it dominant.

Bussis and Chittendon have categorized various educational schemes in a matrix of high to low student participation and high to low teacher participation. Programmed instruction scores low on both. Traditional British classrooms score high on teacher and low on student whereas child-centred classes reverse that. Open classrooms are high for both teacher and student.[2] The students themselves must be actively involved in the learning process. Furthermore, it is important to note that such involvement may, at least for some open educators, go beyond merely encouraging the student to make choices within a teacher-structured context, to participation in the choice of that very context itself. Put another way, it is assumed, at least by some, that children must help in choosing the ultimate ends of their education and not only the means. This distinction, however, concerning the extent of student involvement may well divide open educators. In any event, this principle, in all its variations, I shall call the *principle of respect for student integrity*.

The two principles are, of course, closely connected, but I do not believe they are identical—at least not in all senses. Thus, it seems that one might believe that knowledge is a personal construct and yet maintain that some students are not intellectually capable of learning certain things. Likewise, one might respect the student's integrity and yet believe that knowledge is objectively to be found in the traditional disciplines. One respects the student as a person but locates the authority of knowledge outside the student. On the other hand, there probably are interpretations of the two principles which are logically connected, but more of that later.

Non-epistemological interpretations of the two fundamental principles

In attempting to assess the epistemological significance of these two principles, one needs first to disentangle non-epistemological interpretations of them. That is, principles or assumptions of open education in as vague a form as I have thus far stated them are susceptible of numerous interpretations, and it is not at all clear that arguments for the principles

in one sense carry over to the other senses. Thus, as a preliminary to characterizing the epistemological senses of these principles, I shall first set aside some non-epistemological senses.

Let us look at the personal construct view of knowledge. One might interpret this principle psychologically to mean that when knowledge can be made personally relevant, then it is easier to learn, or the student may be more motivated to learn, or both. Now such a view may very well be correct and I would be the last to object to making education interesting and relevant in this sense. There is no doubt that teachers all too often proclaim the intrinsic interest of their subjects without ever considering whether their students are likewise intrinsically interested in the subject. Thus an emphasis on the desirability of students' being able to appropriate knowledge for their own use can only be salutary. However, this sense of the principle of knowledge as a personal construct is clearly psychological and *not* epistemological. It speaks not of what knowledge is, but of students' motivation to obtain knowledge and various psychological techniques which might facilitate learning. Whether the personal construct view of knowledge is true in this sense is a question for the psychologist to decide, not the philosopher.

The personal construct view of knowledge might also be taken to have an ethical interpretation. In this sense it could be urged that in viewing the whole of what might be known, it is a personal decision for each of us to decide what is most important for us to know in the strictly ethical sense of 'important.' Thus whether someone learns community organizing, empirical sociology, or social philosophy will depend on how valuable each of these might be for the individual involved, and that is clearly a moral choice each must make for himself or herself.

Now there is a problem here of the extent to which young children can be held to be capable of and responsible for ethical decisions. Thus although a choice as a college student of social philosophy over community organizing can easily be seen to be a proper valuational choice for an individual, the choice of chess over multiplication by a third-grader is much less clear. Even the crude instrument of the law does not hold young children responsible for their moral choices. The question of the domain of applicability of the term 'ethically responsible,' however, is a general problem of ethics and not limited to the discussion of open education. It is doubtful that even the most rabid open educators would urge that very young children are capable of much ethical choice. Indeed, this is almost surely why society makes most of the choices of what is valuable to know for youngsters and gradually relaxes its control later on. The extremes at least are clear even though the amount of ethical responsibility which children in the middle ranges may take is still debatable.

In any event, the ethical interpretation of the principle of knowledge as a personal construct, however important, is different from the epistemological interpretation. Although, as we shall see, the problem of assigning ethical responsibility to children has an epistemological analogue in the question of assigning degrees of rationality to children.

Finally, knowledge as a personal construct might also receive an affective interpretation. This would occur if the open educator were taken to claim that the knowledge of oneself, one's body, one's emotions, is all too limited in our society. One might claim that such knowledge is more important (cf. the ethical or social interpretation) than traditional disciplinary knowledge, or at the very least has been radically undervalued. Of course, such a claim again does not say anything about what knowledge is or how it is to be

justified, but rather makes a point that a certain kind of knowledge has not been treated with the respect it deserves. Whatever the truth to this claim, it does not speak to the epistemological question.

Turning now to the principle of respect for student integrity, this too can receive a psychological interpretation. It would mean simply that allowing significant student input into decisions concerning their own educational processes is, in fact, likely to lead to more successful outcomes than the alternatives. Such a practice may well motivate students to perform better and in utilizing their knowledge of themselves could be the most efficient manner of individualizing instruction in whatever way one may wish to individualize it. Again whether this is true or not would be a matter for empirical psychological investigation.

Even more obviously the principle of respect for student integrity could receive an ethical interpretation. Students are persons too, or at least potential persons, and their desires and needs, feelings and emotions must be recognized. Students no more than any other person may be treated as means rather than ends. If a system of schooling is going to interject certain demands into the growth of any child, then this interjection must be ethically justified. Everyone has a prima facie right to do what she or he pleases, and if we are going to require children to attend school and learn certain things, then the burden of proof is clearly on society to justify such constraints. Strike's paper in this volume, 'Autonomy and Control: Toward a Theory of Legitimate Influence,' speaks precisely to this point. In effect, he urges that a proper understanding of the conditions for autonomy, rationality, and mental health, requires certain kinds of outside influence on students. In effect Strike seems to be arguing that sometimes the burden of proof can be successfully carried, as, for example, with requiring literacy in a modern society. At the same time this ethical interpretation of placing the burden of proof on those who would intervene in another's life is no small matter. Indeed, most schools probably operate on precisely the opposite assumption, namely that students must justify their individual behavior whenever it even appears to go against sacrosanct school regulations. Nevertheless, this is still not an epistemological interpretation of the principle.

Finally, one might attempt an affective interpretation of the principle of respect for student integrity. Here one might be urging that students ought to be treated warmly, lovingly, and with affection. Everyone likes to experience friendly human relations. Why should teachers and students be any exception in their relations with each other? Such an affective interpretation might well require an ethical justification, but the point is that one still has not zeroed in on an epistemological interpretation of the principle.

The purpose of the foregoing has been to sharpen the interpretation of the principles of respect for student integrity and knowledge as a personal construct in their epistemological senses by separating off several non-epistemological interpretations. These other senses of the principles seem to me m ore or less plausible things which proponents of open education might be saying, but they do not themselves possess an epistemological import.

Epistemological interpretations of the principles

I turn now to epistemological interpretations of the two principles. Consider first the view of knowledge as a personal construct. Epistemologically this can be taken to be saying that

no matter how true or well justified anything may be, until a given person has made the material his own in appropriate ways, he or she cannot be said to know it. Common sense examples abound. We often say of a student who has rote-memorized a lesson that he or she doesn't really know it, or of someone who can merely use the jargon in a field that knowledge is lacking.

More specifically, assume that some formulation of the justified true belief version of knowledge is appropriate.[3] This means that 'X knows that Y' is to be understood as X's believing Y, Y's truth, and X's being justified in believing Y. Whatever one wants to say about the truth condition, it is clear that for X to know something, he must have a justifiable belief in it. Now as Tom Green has pointed out, there are two senses to the notion of justification here—the subjective and the objective.[4] A proposition is objectively justified in case it finds an appropriate place within the context of the subject matter of which it is a part. It is subjectively justified for a given person if it finds an appropriate place within the context of that person's conceptual scheme. Obviously any given proposition may be justified both objectively and subjectively, justified in neither way, and justified in one but not the other way. Further, even if a proposition is justified in both ways, they may not be identical justifications. That is, a given proposition may be justified by means of its place in a personal idiosyncratic conceptual scheme and also justified in a much different way by its place in the objective context of the subject matter. Green takes this distinction to illustrate in a fundamental way a most important goal of teaching—namely to bring subjective justification in line with objective justification.

But, with this picture we can also see a strong and a weak epistemological interpretation of the view that knowledge is a personal construct. In the weak version the open educator is saying that a person does not possess knowledge *until* the objective justification has been appropriated to the person's subjective justification. The two justifications become the same. Before then the knowledge may be 'there' in some sense, but it is a useless sense as far as the learner is concerned. The strong epistemological version of the thesis on the other hand is that there really is no sense to be given to the notion of objective justification independent of the subjective justifications of certain arbitrarily designated 'experts' in the field. Thus, all justification, and hence all knowledge, is fundamentally a personal construct.

Such a strong thesis receives implicit support from the 'new' philosophy of science of Kuhn, Feyerabend and others.[5] These views stress the theory-ladenness of observation and the revolutionary character of the history of the development of science.[6] Thus, to the extent that established knowledge can be overthrown and replaced by a radically new paradigm which structures experience, in totally new ways, to that extent does objective justification reduce to a series of personal (or at best social) conceptual schemes. Knowledge is radically a personal construct.

The principle of respect for student integrity can also receive a strong and a weak epistemological interpretation. In the weak sense, respect for student integrity can simply be taken to mean respect for persons as a source for potential argument and reasons. Indeed failure to bestow this kind of respect for persons as a potential source of rationality leads to a particular informal fallacy in logic, the *ad hominem*. This is the fallacy of attacking the person rather than the argument, and it is a fallacy just insofar as it fails to realize that any person can be the source of valid arguments and good reasons.

Of course one has the pervasive and earlier noted problem of just how young one can be and still be reckoned a person in the requisite sense. I will not enter into this question of the age of rationality except to note that we are again pretty clear that high school students *do* have the requisite rationality and infants do not. Let me also note that the locus of rationality may not be identical with the locus of ethical responsibility noted earlier. That is, we might decide that rationality comes earlier than ethical responsibility or vice versa, although many will make them coincide.[7] The point to be made here is that as far as the weak version of respect for student integrity is concerned, it is clear that we must gradually increase this respect for students' reasons between the two agreed-upon extremes.

The strong version of the thesis, however, presents a much more serious problem, especially when it is taken in conjunction with the strong version of the personal construct view of knowledge. The weak version of respect for the potential integrity of student reasons leaves open the possibility that although a student's reasons are potentially as valid as anyone else's, in fact we can and do have a standard of evaluation of these reasons. Thus, we can sensibly make comparative judgments as to which of two sets of reasons is better. And in fact, it might be urged that *most* (not all) of the time the reasons contained in the objective context of a subject matter are simply better than the student's reasons.

The strong version of the respect for student integrity would, however, deny that there is such a standard of comparison. That is, student reasons are intrinsically as good as any other reasons. Indeed if one adds the strong view of knowledge as a personal construct, one can see that the student's reasons logically *must* be intrinsically as good as anyone else's because justification, that is, the giving of reasons, is radically idiosyncratic and subjective. What even counts as a reason depends on the subjective conceptual scheme of the individual knower. And conversely, if any coherent set of reasons is as good as any other coherent set of reasons then the justifications for knowledge must be relative to the coherent sets of reasons. Thus in its strong version with the denial of anything other than subjective justification in terms of coherence the principle of knowledge as a personal construct implies the incommensurability of justificatory schemes. Conversely the respect for student reasons in the strong form with its denial of the commensurability of sets of reasons implies individual coherence as the only standard for justification of knowledge.

Before proceeding to evaluate these positions, perhaps an example will help to illustrate the various differences. Consider the proposition that the black-white IQ, score differences do not reflect racial differences in intelligence. Assume the proposition is true. Further assume that the student's personal reason for believing this is his belief in a conspiracy to falsify black scores, and that the 'objective' reasons for believing the proposition involve conceptual confusions concerning the meaning of intelligence. Let's see what happens.

First, under the presupposition that both principles are to receive their weak interpretation, we get the following: We must respect the student's reason. It does, with some historical justification, fit into a coherent scheme. Racism is a deep feeling and it would at least make sense to suppose a conspiracy. All of this can and probably should be granted to the student. On the other hand, we need to recognize that given this conceptual scheme, the student will fail to know, to make his own, the objective reasons for his belief. We need to bring his subjective justification in line with the objective justification. We might do this by challenging him to show us the conspiracy, by pointing out studies where Blacks themselves get the same differential results, and so on. Then, too, we might show him the

importance and subtle influence of differing conceptions of intelligence, how reliance on IQ, score as an operational definition of intelligence guarantees a *status quo* concept of intelligence, how these considerations also explain the results, and so on.

Under the supposition that both principles are taken in their strong sense, however, the scenario would look like this: The two explanations are simply incommensurable. Indeed they structure our experience of the world differently. The so-called objective explanation presupposes that it makes sense to talk about two people holding the same concept; whereas actually every concept is idiosyncratic. Thus, there is no conceivable evidence which would tend to show one position wrong and the other right. To assume that one could give even a socially relative analysis of intelligence is already to be part and parcel of the conspiracy. It is to leave open, at least in principle, the question of the possibility of racial differences in intelligence. If, on the other hand, one really understands racism, one understands that such a question cannot even arise in a truly non-racist society. If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem. In this scenario there could be no rational way of deciding between the allegedly competing explanations because rationality is limited to the prior acceptance of one or the other of the schemes. The pedagogical problem is at most to make the schemes coherent.

Now it might be that a good deal more criticism of reasons solely on coherence grounds may be possible than is usually believed. One can take Gowin to be arguing this very point in his contribution to this volume. It could be urged that although personal conceptual schemes are basically idiosyncratic, nevertheless in fact they can overlap in principle to a considerable degree. Thus Gowin argues that learning is basically idiosyncratic, but teaching can be viewed as the effort to create shared meanings—make explicit the overlap in my terms. Furthermore, the teacher can and must appeal to the standards of evaluation already present in accepted bodies of knowledge in reaching these shared meanings. An awful lot of standard argument, evidence, and appeal to 'objective' standards is clearly involved in this activity. All of this kind of activity seems to me to be involved in what I have referred to as making personal conceptual schemes coherent.

At the same time, however, I find no reason to believe that there will necessarily turn out to be just one coherent scheme once this process has been completed. That is, there remains a real possibility that segments of the student's and teacher's conceptual schemes are coherent and yet completely incommensurable. In such a situation the ultimate epistemological point is that only internal coherence could be used to criticize and adjust reasons. This means that it is *not* possible for the adult teacher to criticize the student's reasons from the adult's perspective, assuming the student's reasons are coherent and the two perspectives really are different. The teacher can only attempt to enter into the student's world on the student's conditions and help make that world more coherent. Furthermore, and this is extremely important, there seems to be no way of rationally choosing between the student's and the teacher's conceptions of the world in terms of which is better. They are simply different.

Assessment of the principles

What then can be said concerning the epistemological foundations of open education? Basically, I suspect the answer is twofold. If the principles of knowledge as a personal

construct and respect for student integrity are taken in their weak senses they do not serve to distinguish open education from almost any other kind of education. On the other hand, if these principles are taken in their strong senses, then they almost surely form a very powerful and distinctive epistemological foundation for open education. Thus it becomes crucial to determine the truth or falsity of the principles in their strong and weak senses.

To begin with the weak version of the respect for student integrity, I have already indicated that this view lies at the basis for the informal logical fallacy of *ad hominem*. That is, to deny that students' arguments and reasons are potentially valid and sound is to commit the fallacy of *ad hominem,* or perhaps *ad studentum*. The philosophical point is that to the extent that it is determined children do possess a form of rationality, then to that extent must they be treated as potential sources of argument. This is, however, a fairly formal 'burden of proof' kind of claim. That is, it might be that one could demonstrate psychologically and anthropologically that actually organizing a classroom to take each student's reasons and arguments completely seriously would lead to severe pedagogical problems of coverage and may serve to instill a sloppy and undisciplined mode of inquiry into the students. As Morgan points out in her paper in this volume, open educators do socialize whether they think they do or not. In this case they tend to socialize for a kind of belief in the ultimate value of mere personal opinion. Thus, practices curtailing the unfettered promulgation of student reasons might be justified even though this might occasionally lead to ignoring a truly sound individual point.[8]

The point is that such practices *must* be justified rather than requiring the students to justify exceptions to the practice. Even this formal shift in burden of proof may have profound differences in the way schools are run, although it is hard to see how open education would be any different in this regard than any other mode of schooling. Even the design of large lecture classes would, in principle, have to take into account the potential validity of student reasons and arguments. Indeed, one could view the whole age-graded, subject-specific nature of today's curriculum as a rough attempt to take into account these kinds of problems by allowing the teacher to deal generally in any course with arguments which are characteristic of the subject matter and the age and even background of the students. Of course, it is also possible that this rough and ready instrument now requires finer gradations.

Turning to the weak version of the personal construct view of knowledge, this too seems to be perfectly correct. No true proposition is knowledge for a student until the student believes it and the student can justify it in terms of his own conceptual scheme. Thus this sense of the personal construct view of knowledge logically follows from a detailed analysis of the justification condition in the classical analysis of knowledge. At the same time, however, it remains open as to whether personal idiosyncratic justification is sufficient for saying that the student really knows the proposition. It may be that his or her subjective justification must be brought into line with the objective justification. This is more likely to be the case with integrated bodies of knowledge called subjects and less likely to be necessary for relatively isolated propositions.

Again, open education would seem to have no particular advantage in this regard except insofar as it might turn out that open education methods such as discovery learning by concentrating on students' personal states of knowledge, in fact, happen to be more successful

than other forms of schooling. But even here, a welldesigned lecture which did start with where the students are might be much more efficient.[9]

But the strong versions of the two principles allow no such accommodation with alternative, more traditional, modes of schooling. If objective justification of knowledge is a myth and if student reasons are intrinsically as good as any other reasons, then any method of schooling which fails to put the student front and center cannot be justified on epistemological grounds. I turn, therefore, to a detailed consideration of the strong versions.

To begin with, the strong versions, implying, as they seem to, a radical subjectivism, must be wrong; and this for a very ancient reason.[10] The principles are in some sense self-defeating. Their truth is inconsistent with seriously asserting them. Consider: If knowledge is really only a personal construct, then knowing that very assertion is possible only for those who, personally, already believe it. Those who personally believe otherwise, cannot, logically cannot, be rationally convinced that knowledge is a personal construct; for the requisite, independent, non-personal evidence or justification is not allowed. Or take the view that any reasons are as good as any other as long as they belong to a coherent scheme of reasons. The reasons which are taken as justification for the personal construct view of knowledge cannot be as good as the reasons against the view, for the former are, I have just shown, incoherent. But even if they were coherent, since reasons are incommensurable, I can have no more reason for believing in the absolute autonomy of student reasons than I can for believing the opposite.

Thus, the extreme views must be given up, but much of the argument for them is persuasive. Can a middle course be found? The detailed answer to this question is far beyond the scope of this paper, but I shall in what remains at least attempt to sketch an answer. In doing so, I shall make use of two points. First, the question of the justification of a proposition (at least an empirical proposition) is *not* identical to the question of its truth.[11] Second, the very fact that observation is theory-laden, not only gives impetus to the extreme interpretations of the two principles, it also provides a way out.

The first point is simple. One can grant a primacy to coherence as the mark of a justifiable scheme or theory without implying that truth must also be understood as coherence. One can even grant that most of what goes by the name of rationality most appropriately fits under schemes of justification rather than theories of truth. Knowledge is justified *true* belief and that seems to allow that we could have justified belief which was, nevertheless, false. And surely this does happen. The Ptolemaic system of astronomy was justified although false. Two different explanations which equally account for the facts do not necessarily render truth relative, although they may render justification relative.

The challenge, however, if one wishes to keep truth and justification separate, is to indicate some mechanism by means of which truth, the way the world is, can influence what we take to be knowledge independently of schemes of justification. I believe this is spelled out in some detail by Campbell in his essay, 'Evolutionary Epistemology.'[12] Briefly the idea is this: Among competing and equally justifiable, that is, coherent, theories, truth, the world, ultimately weeds out those which are unacceptable. We may never know that we have the truth, but at least we know we have discarded gross falsehood.[13] Once we allow something beyond coherence to have a role, however indirect, in determining knowledge, we have the logical requirement for putting some kind of objectivity back into the picture.

I turn now to my second point. One of the considerations which leads to viewing knowledge as a personal construct is the thesis of the theory-laden character of observation.[14] For if observation is itself wholly or even partially determined by theory, then observation cannot be used as an independent device for rational selection among theories. Observation is idiosyncratic. The very way in which the world is experienced can differ from person to person. Quite literally two people can look at the same thing and yet not *see* the same thing.

Yet, I have just urged that in principle it makes sense for different theories, together with their associated perceptual categories, to be compared as to better and worse. Thus the existence of differing perceptual categories provides an extremely good reason for rejecting the view that students' reasons are in principle as good as anyone else's. The argument goes like this: Although we cannot know that our current theories are true, we can know that they are more nearly true than those which have been weeded out by their inadequacies in accounting for the phenomena. Further, current theories and disciplines may have some of their own special perceptual categories associated with them. But these categories are not equivalent to those of untutored common sense, for if they were, we wouldn't have had to develop such abstractly structured bodies of knowledge to understand the world.

If, as seems natural, student reasons are couched utilizing the observational categories of common, or even worse, idiosyncratic, sense, these simply cannot be compared with the reasons to be found in science and the humanities because these bodies of knowledge structure reality differently. And they probably, though not dogmatically, structure it more adequately than does common sense. Thus students cannot in principle even tell whether organized knowledge is ultimately appropriate to their educational needs until they have become familiar with this knowledge. For until they have acquired this knowledge, at least to some extent, they cannot know how such schemes structure experience. As Broudy says, 'Once a subject matter field is organized into a structure with each part depending on others and standing in logical relation to them, it cannot be raided at will.'[15] And the reason it cannot be raided is that one must become familiar with the field before one can perceive the world in the appropriate way. The strong version of the respect for student reasons makes the very basic mistake of assuming either that perception is either unproblematical and roughly the same for all, or else is completely idiosyncratic and therefore incommensurable.[16] Neither position will do, as I have argued.

I do not wish to be misunderstood here, however. There is, of course, a sense in which the organized knowledge *can* be raided for particular problem-solving needs. Two points need to be made. First, organized bodies of knowledge tend to reside in disciplines or guilds which are social institutions with the purpose of safeguarding, extending, and passing on the bodies of knowledge. Second, it is also true that, as the sociology of knowledge points out, certain social features of the disciplinary organization of knowledge are mistaken by guild members for features of the body of knowledge itself. Thus it sometimes happens that certain problem-solutions are reserved for the exercise of expertise where the 'expertise' does not involve the mode of inquiry peculiar to the body of knowledge, but rather the use of a socially approved and certified expert. In such a situation to the extent thatt he cognitive categories of the non-expert overlap with the cognitive categories of the body of knowledge and these are sufficient for solving his problem, of course the discipline can and

should be raided. What I am saying, however, is that there may be an epistemological limit to the amount of raiding which can be done without learning the body of knowledge.

One must not push even this too far, however. It is indeed logically possible that the student's reasons and way of looking at the world are more adequate than the established bodies of knowledge. These ways of understanding the world were not written on a tablet somewhere. The point is that socially we are justified in suppressing an occasionally novel and really interesting suggestion in order to avoid the incredible amount of time it would take to show each student where and how the student's views are not as adequate as may have been thought.[17] Of course, this justification holds only as long as the resulting social system has *some* device for ultimately taking account of alternative views of knowledge. The system must allow radical questioning somewhere, but it need not encourage it everywhere. The evolutionary analogy can help here. Any evolutionary scheme must involve structures for variation, selection, and retention. With finite resources an overemphasis on one of these at the expense of the others would be disastrous. Too much emphasis on idiosyncratic student views, the variation component, could only be at the expense of the selection and retention components. At the same time *some* variation must be allowed for somewhere in the system.

To put the point in another way, Campbell has suggested that someone write an article on Kuhn's views on the philosophy of science entitled, 'Palace Revolutions in Science.' The title tells all. However much the conceptual superstructure may change in scientific revolutions, a great deal of low-level generalization, instrumentation, and methodology remains, although perhaps in a reinterpreted form. It is simply historically highly unlikely that truly revolutionary interpretations of knowledge can be given by students who have not mastered the accumulation of knowledge up till the time of their study. As Waks argues in his contribution to this volume, native student wants, insofar as that notion is understandable at all, may not be automatically satisfied if only the student is left alone. The student may need special environmental conditions, and more importantly from my perspective, may need skills, knowledge, and critical ability in order to be able to do what he or she really wants.

Thus one can see that the strong versions of the principles of knowledge as a personal construct and respect for student integrity must be wrong. But in saying this, I have not been able to indicate any specific way of determining what really is knowledge and what reasons really are adequate. There is and must continue to be a creative tension between the socially and disciplinarily sanctioned views of what is knowledge and the constant possibility that some brash young student can show it's all wrong. Indeed, maintaining this tension may be education's greatest challenge.

Summary

I have identified two fundamental epistemological principles which seem to be involved in open education. These are the principle of knowledge as a personal construct and the principle of respect for the integrity of student reasons. I distinguished a strong and a weak version of each of these theses, and argued that although the weak versions were probably true, they could not serve by themselves to give a distinctive character to open education. I further urged that while the strong versions would give a distinctive character to open

education, these versions must be false. The argument for their falsity, however, did not positively indicate support for any alternative kind of educational practice.

Nevertheless, I believe that a kind of picture has emerged concerning the epistemological implications for open education. Open educators must avoid slipping into the strong interpretations of these two epistemological principles. For if they do, they will fall into a subjectivist incoherence. Of perhaps even more immediate importance would be the effect on how critical inquiry might come to be viewed by their students—namely as simply a matter of opinion. Put another way, it is probably a good psychological move to re-emphasize the integrity of the students as potential sources of sound argument, thus in one sense eliminating a dogmatic source of student failure. At the same time, however, open educators must not also eliminate the chance of challenge and success as the student masters and, for some favored few, changes, the objective body of human knowledge.

The role of the world in affecting our knowledge of it is profoundly indirect, operating only in an evolutionary kind of way. The question of what we, as knowers, can do, thus ultimately falls back into what I have called a criticism of the overall coherence of justificatory schemes, and what Gowin calls creating shared understanding. We must give arguments, weigh evidence, be consistent, consider alternative schemes and ideologies, see what living the alternatives amounts to, and so on. There are no guarantees, to be sure, but neither is such a process merely a matter of opinion.

There is an old-fashioned concept which seems to have fallen out of favor in recent times with the violent swing of educational fashion from dogmatic discipline-oriented excellence to anti-intellectual personal growth. It is the concept of judgment.[18] And it seems to me that the foregoing examination has shown that an emphasis on fostering judgment is the key to the success of open education. For this concept seems precisely to fit both the insights given by the weak versions of the epistemological principles as well as the limitations pointed out in my arguments.

Judgment is linked with wisdom and wisdom with knowing what to do in complex, problematic situations of less than complete specificity. Judgments are personal. They can be mistaken. Different, equally well-qualified persons can reach different judgments on the basis of the same set of facts and can respect each other for their differences. Reasonable men can disagree, especially in complex situations. Yet at the same time judgment is not mere personal opinion. One's judgment must be developed by learning the facts, by knowing the material, by critically analyzing the evidence and arguments. Not just any one is entitled to have his or her judgment respected. The appelation of a person of good judgment must be earned. There are standards involved, not dogmatic adult-centered standards, but standards nevertheless. The potential danger of open education is that it may ignore judgment. Its potential glory is that it may recognize and foster it.

Notes

1   Bernard Spodek and Herbert J.Walberg (ed.), *Studies in Open Education* (Agathon, New York, 1974). See, for example, Susan C. Thomas and Herbert J.Walberg, 'An Analytic Review of Literature'; James B.McDonald, 'Perspectives on Open Education: A Speculative Essay'; and Ronald W.Henderson, 'Defining Goals in Open Education.'

2   Ann Bussis and Edward A.Chittendon, 'An Analysis of One Approach to Open Education' (Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey, 1969).

3   The notion of knowledge as justified true belief goes back as far as Plato's *Theaetetus.* Although under some attack now, it can still be found in A.J.Ayer, *The Problem of Knowledge* (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1956), Roderick Chisholm, *Theory of Knowledge* (Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1966), and Israel Scheffler, *Conditions of Knowledge* (Scott, Foresman, Chicago, 1965).

4   Thomas F.Green, *The Activities of Teaching* (McGraw-Hill, New York, 1971). Note also similar discussions by Israel Scheffler, *Conditions of Knowledge,* W.V.O.Quine, 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism,' *From a Logical Point of View* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1961), W.V.O.Quine and J.S.Ullian, *The Web of Belief* (Random House, New York, 1970), and Hugh G.Petrie, 'Learning with Understanding' in Jane R.Martin (ed.), *Readings in the Philosophy of Education: A Study of Curriculum* (Allyn & Bacon, Boston, 1970).

5   See Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (University of Chicago Press, 1962), Paul Feyerabend, 'Against Method: Outline of an Anarchistic Theory of Knowledge,' M.Radner and S.Winokur (ed.), *Analyses of Theories and Methods of Physics and Psychology,* Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science, vol. iv (University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 1970), and I.Lakatos and A.Musgrave (ed.), *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge* (Cambridge University Press, 1970).

6   I think David Denton's 'Open Education: Search for a New Myth', *Educational Theory,* Fall 1975, provides a more existential interpretation of the problem I am attempting to get at here by means of work in the philosophy of science. The common point seems to be the way in which myths and paradigms pervasively structure the very way in which we experience the world with different myths and paradigms structuring our experience in different ways.

7   For example, I think Strike in his article in this volume ties rationality and ethical responsibility closely together.

8   See Donald T.Campbell, 'Objectivity and the Social Locus of Scientific Knowledge,' Presidential Address to the Division of Social and Personality Psychology, *American Psychological Association,* 1969, for a discussion of occasionally imposing social constraints on individualistic theories in order to assure the advancement of science. The argument is quite similar.

9   Petrie, *op. cit.*

10 Protagoras asserted, 'Man is the measure of all things,' and Plato gave the refutation, Plato, *Theaetetus,* 161. A.S.Neill, at least as interpreted by Waks in his contribution to this volume, seems to be open education's Protagoras. Interestingly, he seems to realize the contradictions in his own work.

11 This is argued in detail in Scheffler, *op, cit.,* chapters 2, 3.

12 Donald Campbell, 'Evolutionary Epistemology' in Paul A.Schilpp (ed.), *The Philosophy of Karl Popper* (Open Court, LaSalle, Ill., 1974).

13 See also Hugh G.Petrie, 'Science and Metaphysics: A Wittgenstein Interpretation' in E.Klemke (ed.), *Essays on Wittgenstein* (University of Illinois, Urbana, 1971), for a more detailed account of how this evolutionary 'justification' of current theories might work.

14 See Kuhn, *op. cit.,* for a standard view of this thesis.

15 Harry S.Broudy, *General Education: The Search for a Rationale,* Phi Delta Kappa Fastback 37 (Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation Bloomington, Indiana, 1974).

16 See Hugh G.Petrie, 'The Believing in Seeing' in Lindley Stiles (ed.), *Theories for Teaching* (Dodd-Mead, New York, 1974) for a detailed account of the necessity for taking into account differing perceptual categories.

17 Campbell, 'Objectivity and the Social Locus of Scientific Knowledge.'

18 Thomas Green, *op. cit.,* has an excellent discussion of judgment in chapter 8. I merely hint at it here.

6
Teaching as making sense of what is known

D.Bob Gowin

How do we make sense of human experience? How do we make meaning out of the muddles of multiple meanings and meaninglessness? How do we get a sense of direction in living, a sense of awareness, a heightened consciousness? In the history of human life, there must be thousands of different answers to these familiar questions. For those social orders and groups which do maintain a continuity in existence, i.e., maintain a commonly shared way of making sense of their continued existence, education, informal or formal, must play a conspicuous role. Education is a process of the renewal of the meanings of human experience, of control of that experience, and sometimes of a growth for both individuals and groups. These remarks are just as apt for open education as for the development of the closed mind. Education is a process by which social groups maintain continuous existence and this fact is true of all sorts of qualitatively different social orders, good and bad, enlightened and dark.

Racism and sexism are names given to social problems in these times. Put very simply, these problems concern oppression. Oppression is the dominance of one group over another. I do not know the word which parallels racism and sexism to apply to oppressive schools and oppressive teachers. Perhaps the word 'schoolism' would do; it is almost as ugly a word as the scene referred to. What makes these phenomena similar? I believe it is the arrogation of illegimate authority to the benefit of the person in the position of power. The reactions of the oppressed, when consciousness has been raised sufficiently, are to take charge, to take back, if they can, their legitimate power. It is to seek freedom from oppression and freedom for responsible choice.

Open education is a response to oppressive schooling. What is oppressive about schooling? I would like to cite one paragraph that was written long before the open education movement became news.[1]

> If one thinks of authority, control, and leadership in political terms, it is clear that the classroom group, at least in its formal aspects, is about as far from democracy as one can get. Not only do the students have no control over the *selection* of their leader, they normally also have no recourse from his leadership, no influence on his *method* of leadership beyond that granted by him, and no power over the *tenure* of his leadership. There are very few working groups in our society in which these essentially despotic conditions are legitimately so much the rule.

Oppressive is as oppressive does. There are those who have power over others who do not understand that they do have oppressive power; even less do they know how to let go of it if they want to. Part of the reason is that the same act of good teaching to one student may be an act of oppression to the student next by. Worse still, the teacher faces a problem, if

not a dilemma, in the act of teaching: how can one act on one's evidentially-held belief and reasoned commitment and at the same time not only not oppress others but in fact set others free to become themselves? To teach intentionally and deliberately is to interfere and to intervene in the lives of other people. How can this teaching be done without being coercive, oppressive, self-defeating? The answer I propose to these old chestnuts is at least new to me. Whether it is a satisfactory or satisfying answer is a problem for each of us.

Advocates of alternative education reaffirm an ancient truth: each person is responsible for his or her own learning. The human condition of being alone, abandoned, anguishing aloud, draws strangers. Maxine Greene entitles her book *Teacher as Stranger*.[2] The significance of being a stranger, to me, is that it points to the problem of meaningful communication between individuals. An awareness of being alone, an experience of encountering strangers, presupposes meaning, because an awareness of individuality is based on an awareness of self, and others as different from self, and this awareness presupposes some meaningful basis for making the distinction. We understand the creation of meaning out of human experience when we understand that one something can come to stand for one something else. The footprint in the sand is taken as a sign that a person probably walked there; the footprint that is present is a sign of the person that is absent. Smoke is a sign of fire; dark clouds are a sign of rain. We say that 'A means B' when we say that 'A stands for B.' Meaning and inference are possible.

Being alienated and being allied derive from the same prior condition of being alive and having a language, a meaning system. Meaning is an achievement of conjoint human activity such that the same sign is taken to stand for the same event. The conditions for perceiving meaninglessness are the same conditions as those for perceiving meaning. The basic question: 'How do we make sense of human experience?' leads us to ask questions about making meaning out of our experience. Meaning is generated out of shared experience and this fact leads us to ask questions about what can be shared between persons. That learning is a responsibility that cannot be shared forces us to re-examine the responsibilities of teachers and the concept of teaching.

A concept of teaching as achievement of shared meaning

Teaching is a triadic episodic flow of meaning of selected materials (XYZ) between teacher (T) and student (S). The teacher acts intentionally to change the meaning of (human) experience of the student by using XYZ materials. The student acts intentionally to understand how the meaning of experience would be changed by the teacher using the materials. The upshot is the achievement of shared meaning. The teacher is responsible for understanding that the meaning of XYZ materials the student takes away (or comes to understand) are the meanings the teacher intended for the student to grasp. The student is responsible for understanding that the meanings accepted by the student are those the teacher intended. When these responsibilities are fulfilled, and shared meaning is achieved, an episode of teaching has happened.

No mention of the notion of learning is found in this concept of teaching. Learning is individual—radically idiosyncratic in all live creatures with a developed language. Learning is not a responsibility that can be shared. Learning is the reorganization or reconstruction of the meanings of experience, and this reconstruction is under the voluntary control of

the person learning. A learning experience is an event of doing (a giving out, a doing to) and undergoing (a taking in, actively absorbing). An adequate yielding of the self in undergoing is possible only through a controlled activity that may well be intense. A learner, in reorganizing or reconstructing, must in some sense create (compose, put together) an experience out of meanings available. The learner will select, simplify, clarify, abridge, condense… the meanings of experience according to the learner's own interests. Active work must be done in consuming and appreciating and understanding the meanings of experience. The most important characteristic of an active learner is what the learner already knows—the freely available concepts, or understandings, or feelings, or whatever. Some organization of meaning must already be present for reorganization to take place.

Teaching is basically an intentional process of trying to get some other person to do something, or to think about something that that person cannot now do. To teach is to change the other by intervention in their lives with certain selected materials, with what is known.

Teaching as making sense of what is known

One thing we can hold teachers responsible for is an adequate understanding of the knowledge claims of their teaching area. Knowing History, or Chemistry, or Art, or Political Science, or Mathematics, is not a simple matter, of course. Knowing an area in a way that is adequate for teaching is even more complicated. Why are we interested in the knowledge claims of different areas ? Because they are ways to make sense of human experience.

All disciplines exhibit structure; in fact, they have multiple structures. Often competing points of view co-exist in a discipline in an uneasy and unsettled way. Different structures of knowledge are expressed in language for msso different that specialists in one area almost literally cannot speak to each other because they do not use the same language. To make sense of these multiple structures presses one farther on to something like their relevant philosophies: philosophy of History, of Science, of Art, of Political Science, of Mathematics. Additionally, an adequate philosophy of education is needed to sort out the different claims of the different areas. The task is enormously difficult, which perhaps is an explanation why it has not been done very well.

In my work I have given a definition of the structure of knowledge. The structure of knowledge in a field of study may be broadly characterized by its telling questions, its key concepts and conceptual systems, its reliable and relevant methods of work, its central and common products, and its internal and external values. We also need to know the Scene; that is, in some fundamentally characteristic sense, the phenomena the field deals with, the occasions which give rise to the quest for knowledge, and the portion of human experience illuminated by the knowledge claims produced by the workers in the field.

In working with teachers I have found it useful to begin small, and to begin piecemeal. I do not expect teachers, college teachers included, to have anything like an adequate philosophical grounding in their own area, much less in philosophy of education. I have found it productive, nevertheless, to ask teachers to select two or five exemplar research papers (or any piece of original work they would take to be a clear case of good work in their field). These materials are the raw materials for their teaching, for what will constitute a curriculum: these knowledge claims next need to be analyzed. The teachers and I work together to

'unpack' the knowledge claims. We do this work by examining the exemplars in the light of the following questions:

(1)   What is the scene? What are the phenomena of interest? What is the widest frame of reference which includes the richest meanings expressed by the field? More colloquially, what is the point of the game? This description should set the context for thought.

(2)   What are good examples of the key *questions* asked in this field? Identify two or three or four.

(3)   From these questions, select the basic *concepts*. Each question probably contains two or more concepts, or generative ideas.

(4)   What would count as an answer to these questions? Specify *how* answers are arrived at. That is, specify methods, techniques, procedures usually used in answering these questions. For example, experimentation, observation, conceptual analysis are methods of work.

(5)   Cite examples of typical *products* in your field. What is produced by the workers in your field? Facts? Theories? Interpretations? Invention? Works of art?

(6)   What are distinctive *values* of your field? What *reasons* are given to justify your field? Why is it important? Important in education?

To do this kind of analysis adequately, and to try out the resulting analysis in a context of teaching, takes from one to three years. The magnitude of the task has been chronically underestimated by almost everyone. Curriculum research will change radically when we begin to understand why it is, and how it is, that knowledge claims and value claims of different areas of human thought make sense of human experience, and that *that* is a primary aim of teaching.

When teachers understand the structure of knowledge of their field they are able to express rather directly the criteria of excellence that are appropriately applied to exemplar works in the field. One of the sets of shared meanings which should be, in my judgment, and objective of teaching is this one: *the criteria of excellence*. That is, students should come to understand, as teachers are able to express an justify, just those human judgments which make sense of experience according to a standard. In knowledge, the standard is truth. In art, the standard is beauty. In politics, the standard is social justice. In mathematics, the standard is proof. Specialists in these fields will debate these standards, but all will affirm the need to have criteria of excellence, however these criteria may be different among different experts.

Becoming educated is one among many ways to make sense of human experience. Schooling at least should not prevent this possibility.

Knowledge intelligently held, choice, and human freedom

Subject matter knowledge, when properly understood, is a means to openness of human experience and is a way to increase the freedom of human choice. Dewey's philosophy of freedom links together freedom as choice, freedom as the power to act, and freedom as effective reason. Dewey's formula is as follows: 'A choice which intelligently manifests

individuality enlarges the range of action, and this enlargement in turn confers upon our desires greater insight and foresight, and makes choice more intelligent.'[3]

Dewey thinks of this formula as an enlarging circle, or a widening spiral. One could easily think of it as an educative event. Roughly, the event would involve a number of different doings. Any preference for a next action, if intelligently constructed, would take account of probable consequences. Probable consequences require some assessment of the reality one is encountering. Even the best anticipations will not foresee all the actual consequences of the action chosen, but insofar as the choice was a freely intelligent one, the doer learns something from his failures. A better choice, next time, would mean that one had reflected upon prior doings; and a better doing, next time, would be one more aptly coordinated with the actual conditions that help or hinder the realization of purposes. As students learn to make sense of their experience by making real choices, acting, failing, reflecting, choosing again more intelligently, they gain a power in freedom that, Dewey claims, 'can be nullified by no amount of external defeats.'[4]

Freedom is something which comes to be; it is something which grows. Freedom is a power for varied and flexible growth when choices are real. When actions are deliberate and face into the realities of immediate experience, there is opened the possibility of change in disposition, in habit, in character, a change toward more intelligent choice, more effectively carried out. These are heady words—freedom, choice, intelligence. They indicate certain qualities in human experience, qualities I believe characterize experience that has been educative. Abstract knowledge and abstract thought which finds no way to enter into the stream of individual experience remains inert. Existential conditions which interact with the preferences of individuals in ways to actualize freedom do so when knowledge and thought are brought to bear upon making actual preferences open, free, and resolute in making sense of what we actually experience.

Responsibilities of teachers

Assuming teachers and students share a common language, and a common place where communication is possible, what responsibilities do teachers have? Teachers have responsibility for:

(1)   Knowing the knowledge and value claims in the area in which they elect to teach, and have been selected by others to teach.

(2)   Knowing how the knowledge and value claims came to be, and came to be put together in the way the teacher understands the claims.

(3)   Knowing that the most important thing about learners is what they already know, what they bring to the teaching situation, because prior learning is the present condition for establishing a meaning framework.

(4)   Knowing how to construct a frame of reference in which meaningful communication may take place.

(5)   Knowing that it is the teacher's responsibility initially for setting the rules of discourse such that agreement upon shared meanings is possible.

(6)   Knowing that meaning multiplies in a social setting.

(7)   Knowing that an episode of teaching has not taken place until teacher and student have achieved a shared meaning.

(8)   Knowing that the student, as learner, has the responsibility for learning and this fact means the teacher should not 'stomp on' or interfere with the style of learning the student has voluntary command over ('Learning: Off Limits to Teachers').

(9)   Knowing that, just because students *are* responsible for learning, that does not mean the teacher is only responsible for putting out the subject matter to be learned. (This conventional wisdom in college teaching: 'I cannot be responsible for their learning' means: 'I have no responsibility for students at all.')

Teaching as task and achievement

In the concept of teaching I am proposing this old problem vanishes. We teach until we reach achievement of shared meanings. Teaching as task, which results in a lack of achievement, is simply teaching which has failed to complete its episode. The point is that which used to be very interesting now seems very easy to dismiss.

In rereading the classic paragraph of Dewey's concerning the relation between teaching and learning as being the same exact equation as that between buying and selling (and I suppose I've read that paragraph dozens of times in one place or another), the two sentences which follow caught my attention for the first time in a different way. The first sentence I believe is false. 'The only way to increase the learning of pupils is to augment the quantity and quality of real teaching.' And I believe it is false because of the import I now see in the sentence which follows it. 'Since learning is something that the pupil has to do himself and for himself, the initiative lies with the learner.' Notice how different this statement is from the statement of the selling-buying analogy. Almost anyone can have someone else purchase an object for them. A stand-in is easy to find if we have the money and the trust. But not so with learning. Learning is a responsibility we can share with no other person. One way we can increase the learning of pupils is to help them realize this fundamental fact—that they are responsible for their own learning.

Several important implications for schooling follow from this recognition of responsibility of learners. First, we cannot morally hold a person responsible if he cannot be responsible. If we hold a person responsible, and he can be responsible, it is important to realize that we can augment or help by adding to his power over the conditions of his own learning. We can supply helps of all sorts, including, of course, 'real teaching.' The more a teacher knows about the interests, desires, hopes and ways that each student uses to make sense of his own experience, the more points of attachment there are, the more ways to make connections and to expand meanings.

Professor Thomas Green proposes the following: 'If teaching and learning, like playing and winning, are to be understood as task and achievement, then they are the task and the achievement of different persons.' He continues, 'Perhaps we would be on better ground if we viewed teaching as the task of which "getting someone to learn" is the corresponding achievement, or learning is the achievement of which studying, investigating, or practicing is the corresponding task.'[5]

The task of teaching as achievement of shared meanings is very different. It extends the significance of what Green mentions, namely 'persons.' One task of teaching is getting learners to realize that learning is their task, their responsibility. If teachers and learners, as persons, are to be brought together (contingently, morally) they will have to be brought

together over, or about, something they can actually share responsibility. Voluntary learners are agents, as persons, who have learned through a process of making meaning out of their experience what the process of making meaning by learning involves.

Green further writes,[6]

> Why is this whole issue important? Ultimately for this reason: In any full philosophy of teaching we shall eventually have to give an account of just what it is that a teacher can be held accountable for. If teaching and learning are causally related or productively related, then the failure to produce learning is the teacher's responsibility; and surely to some extent it is. But if teaching and learning are not causally related or by some kind of productive process, if the student's learning is not the teacher's achievement, then we can no longer blandly assume that the teacher alone can be credited with what is learned or what is not.
>
> We want to understand, within the institutions of education, what the office of the teacher is and to what extent teachers can be held accountable for the results of their efforts.

Professor Thomas Green's topology of the teaching concept is useful. Green describes a continuum across: brute force, conditioning, training, giving instruction, indoctrination, propaganda. The extremes of this continuum are rejected—that is, we can change another's experience by force and conditioning as well as by indoctrination and propaganda, but we usually reject these modes of intervention as candidates for the concept of teaching. The concept I have presented belongs in the very middle—between training and giving instruction.

What do we *give* when we give instruction? Is it like giving away a loaf of bread with love? Notice the *fragility* of giving as compared to forcing. Giving depends on someone else taking, accepting the gift as given. The relation between giving and taking is contingent. The achievement of agreed upon shared meanings is contingent. Unless both parties work on establishing agreement in line with their divergent responsibilities, teaching cannot occur, nor can a student claim to be a student. Becoming a student of a teacher presupposes a voluntary choice, and acceptance of the responsibility of learning for one's self as student.

Oppressiveness in education comes about, in part, when teachers are seen as enforcers—as enforcing learning. The community that makes teachers enforce standards, instead of exhibiting them in their lives, begets young people who evade, avoid, rebel, subvert, etc., the standards even when some of them would help to make sense of their own experience.

Responsibilities can be thrust upon a child. As children grow older they sense this fact. Sometimes they object, and a tension develops between teacher and child or parent and child. The tension dissolves, to some extent, when the child learns that accepting responsibility results in having more choice, more freedom, and more say in what is worth doing. On the adults' side, the gain is found in the recognition that the child, in learning to be responsible, has learned one of the absolutely necessary conditions for the child's future growth and development, namely, that the child is responsible for his learning. The parent, perhaps more so than the teacher, has a responsibility for letting go, for extending the range of actions for which the child can be responsible, and for continually monitoring the existential conditions over which the child really has no power. Under any condition, once the child has mastered a language sufficiently to communicate to self and to others (say around age eight), the parent or the teacher cannot be responsible for the child's learning.

The social significance of this key assertion about learners as responsible is important. It means people need to hold *conscious control* over their own education. Applied to the education of the mass of humanity, it becomes crucial that individuals at all points in their educational context be aware of (1) the means of effecting individual change and (2) the means of controlling change effecting the individual. Perhaps, in a social sense, this is the point of consciousness-raising.

Notes

1   Jacob W.Getzels and Herbert A.Thelen, 'The Classroom Group as a Unique Social System' in *The Dynamics of Instructional Groups,* University of Chicago Press, 1960, p. 56.
2   Maxine Greene, *Teacher as Stranger,* Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1973.
3   Richard Bernstein (ed.), *John Dewey, On Experience, Nature and Freedom,* Liberal Arts Press, 1960, p. 276.
4   *Ibid.,* p. 277.
5   Thomas F.Green, *The Activities of Teaching,* McGraw-Hill, 1972, p. 142.
6   *Ibid.,* pp. 143–4.

part **III**
Problems of socialization

7

Subjectivity and standards in the humanities[1]

R.S.Peters

Introduction

It would be possible and perhaps predictable for a philosopher to deal with this topic in the current analytical manner. A careful analysis could be made, one by one, of the rag-bag of disciplines that are grouped together under the title 'the humanities' in respect of the possibility of shared concepts, of truth-criteria and of agreement in judgments within them. The problems inherent in the suggestion that literary criticism is a form of knowledge (with all that implies, epistemologically speaking) could be explored; question marks could be placed against the status of theology; the claims for rigour and precision in Sherrington's work in physiology could be put alongside what might be claimed for that of Freud, Piaget, or Chomsky in psychology proper. Notorious problems about contemporary biases in interpreting history could be carefully laid out. This is perhaps what would be expected of a philosopher. But to do such a job properly would require a whole volume.

I therefore propose to attempt something more synthetic and hazardous, to revert perhaps to the older style of philosophy in trying to discern some more general attitudes to the human predicament which lie behind our approach to the humanities. I think, myself, that these are profoundly important in education. For I have the simple-minded view that education should, above all things, sensitize us to the predicaments in which we are placed as human beings, to the possibilities which it presents for joy and despair, ennui and excitement. What appals me is the sheer boredom engendered by much of our schooling. On going into classrooms I am so often struck by the looks on the children's faces. What on earth, I reflect, are we doing to these children? They, like us, have an expectation of life of say sixty five years. This is all that they have. Why all this? What a way to spend their time! For what is it preparing them? Perhaps it is merely schooling them for a tolerance of the boredom and frustration that they will have to endure for much of their lives when they leave!

1 The dimensions of human life

I have, therefore, as so often, a strong sympathy with Whitehead, when he says 'The essense of education is that it be religious',[2] but, of course, without any suggestion of compulsory RE or morning assemblies. He goes on to say:

> A religious education is one that indicates duty and reverence. Duty arises from our potential control over the course of events. Where attainable knowledge could have changed the issue,

> ignorance has the guilt of vice. And the foundation of reverence is this perception, that the present holds within itself the complete sum of existence, backwards and forwards, that whole amplitude of time, which is eternity.

Let me attempt to specify these dimensions rather more precisely. I will then pass to the location of the humanities within these dimensions and to the contrast between subjectivity and standards.

Whitehead gives clues to these fundamental dimensions of human life. The first he refers to rather too specifically as that of duty—the responsibility for actions that comes with foreknowledge. I would like to broaden and deepen this dimension. On the one hand there is the jet of human appetite. We are born into the world a bundle of insistent wishes and cravings. But, on the other hand, there is the givenness of the world. One of the most crucial steps in our early education, as Freud discerned so clearly, is our confrontation with this givenness of the world mediated through our perceptual apparatus with all that this implies for the delay of gratification. There is also the givenness of certain human responses to the world. I would rather not use here the terminology of 'facts' because of the clouds of philosophical glory or obtuseness trailed by this term. Often, for instance, people assume some contrast between 'facts' and 'values'. But I am quite happy to talk about moral facts—for instance that avoidable pain or exploitation are evil.

(a) *The givenness of the world and of human responses*

By the 'givenness of the world' I mean such things as the phenomena co-ordinated by the law of gravitation or the indescribable stickiness of putty that has not been mixed to the right consistency, the heat of fire or the expansion of metal when subjected to it. In the face of these palpable features of our life on earth I am constantly amazed at some of the extravagances issuing from modern sorties in the sociology of knowledge. I was once, almost predictably these days, attacked by an indignant young woman in a college of education who was accusing philosophers of conceptual imperialism in imposing categories like that of 'thing-hood' on the world. She ended up by maintaining that the planets, and presumably the earth beneath her feet, were individual or social constructions! I am also appalled by this contemporary arrogance. Bertrand Russell put his finger unerringly on what lies behind this generalized attitude when he accused the pragmatists of cosmic impiety, of thinking that what is true is what serves human purposes, be they individual' or social. He was sensitive to the givenness of the world and to the appropriateness of a degree of humility in the face of it.

The Stoics used to say that a man should strive to alter what is bad and alterable in the human condition and learn to accept and live with what cannot be altered. There are limits to the assertion of will and to the fixing up of things for human benefit; for life presents predicaments as well as problems. The 'duty', to which Whitehead refers, relates to the mixture of morality and manipulation so manifest in Marxism and in the old American way of life. The Stoics had too limited a vision of what is unalterable. Ironically enough one of the first to sense the alterability of human institutions, as distinct from the alterability of nature, so clearly intimated by Francis Bacon, was Machiavelli. Human beings, by ingenuity and foresight, he insisted, could forestall the operations of fate in principalities as well as in irrigation.

The nineteenth century witnessed the zenith of this belief in the capacity of human beings to fix things up. Utilitarianism, Marxism, and the over-arching confidence in progress were symptomatic of it. Pelagianism became a way of life for a few. Human happiness, the class-less society, the superman—all such ideals seemed like attainable aspirations given human effort and ingenuity. Moreover the kingdom of heaven was not just waiting for the elect. All could be transported there along the railroad of history given a bit more steam, solidarity and planning to speed things up.

But in the twentieth century more sombre Augustinian warnings have been sounded. Human nature, perhaps, has deeply ingrained flaws which are not just the product of institutions that crush and splinter it. Men, it is true, are morally much more sensitive then they were. But there was Belsen. And, more importantly, the social sciences have not advanced as much as was hoped. Men are not clever enough—perhaps never will be—to keep pace with their moral indignation. Economic predictions are treated with infinitely more scepticism than forecasts of the weather. And in social reform we tackle one problem, such as health, only to find equally appalling ones on our hands, like over-population and the plight of the aged. Social reform is beginning to look much more like an exercise in raising the misery threshold than a passport to human happiness.

And an even more appalling thought is beginning to seep through in countries where some, at least, have managed to surmount the obvious obstacles to human happiness. What do people do then? Are not the values of consumption really rather tasteless? The human predicament does not, as Marxists have argued, assert itself only when hunger, poverty, war, and disease confront men starkly with it and occasion some comforting story about other worlds. It presents itself as well when the belly is full, the top of the promotion ladder reached, and when the swimming pool has been installed in the garden. People are beginning to talk about the quality of life in prosperous countries like the USA and New Zealand. But what they mean by this is never clear apart from fixing up one or two more things such as new exhausts to get rid of the smog. For the point is that there are certain intractable features of the human condition that defy being fixed up. Aeschylus' sagas about human arrogance were not just directed at generals. What 'quality of life' fits these sombre parameters? If education, especially in the humanities, is not set squarely in these dimensions, it is an evasion. For education is not, as is often said, just for life. It is the search for a quality of living.

This modern Western belief in perfectibility and amelioration has recently been renewed. But it is accompanied nowadays by an emphasis on authenticity, on doing it your own way, on a state of being that lacks the staleness of second-hand role-playing. This search for a better quality of life is couched very often in the language of 'creativity' and doing your own thing. This is splendid as a counterblast both to consumption-geared conformity and to welfare movements that, in seeking to remove injustice, impose on all the mindless conformity of a mass-meeting of shop stewards. But too often this protest borders on being a romantic luxury. It takes too little account of the givenness of social life and the unpalatable truths that have to be faced about it. It is all very well to proclaim that the police are, by definition, fascist pigs and that the police force should be disbanded. For if something is absolutely wrong, that is the end of the matter. To look at consequences would be to be guilty of what Kierkegaard called 'double-mindedness'. But the Mafia will not be

|converted overnight to a belief in the brotherhood of man. And they may be singularly single-minded in pursuing their aims.

This question-mark which I have placed against extreme forms of individualism is not meant in any way to down-grade its fundamental values—the importance of individual responsibility, integrity, liberty, and respect for the individual and his view-point on the world. On the contrary, it is meant to emphasize individual responsibility by drawing attention to the connexion between duty and what Whitehead calls 'attainable knowledge' which 'could have changed the issue'—knowledge of the givenness of the human condition. Individualism, too, gives rise to another conviction of givenness—that of other people. Behind the value of respect for persons lies the conviction that others exist in their own right, that they are not to be moulded into an approved shape or just used by others for their purposes.

There is another type of obliviousness, too, which often accompanies extreme forms of individual assertiveness—an obliviousness of what I have called the givenness of human responses. By this I do not just mean the agreement in judgments about features of the world made possible by our possession of a shared perceptual apparatus. I mean also two other sorts of preconditions of human life. The first is the demands of reason which are at their most palpable in logical principles such as non-contradiction and universalizability to which we must conform if we are to string together any thoughts at all about our condition. The second is the shared response to situations such as those of danger, frustration, and suffering which are features of our form of life as social animals, and which lie behind our acceptance or rejection of less deep-seated conventions demanded of us by society. Again I am often astonished at some modern subjectivist stances in their obliviousness of such features. Do we just make ourselves by our private decisions as some Existentialists would have us believe? Do we not, for better or for worse, possess stomachs, sex organs, and pain-spots? Is the lonely will of the individual all that lonely? Do not consistency and integrity presuppose shared principles constitutive of the operation of reason? The demand for authenticity itself, dates back to Socrates' insistence on the care of the soul. It is connected with the virtue of sincerity and the ancient doctrine of the lie in the soul. And when the young exhibit their authenticity by condemning the war in Vietnam, the pollution of the environment, and the plight of the poor and disadvantaged, do they not do so in the name of shared principles such as those of injustice, and the evil of avoidable suffering? It is often said that individuals have to 'choose' their own principles. Frankly I would feel distinctly uneasy in the presence of people who adopted this hesitant stance to principles such as fairness, avoiding suffering, and telling the truth.

(b) *The dimensions of time*

The other dimension of human life is that of time. There is an important sense in which, as Whitehead insists, the present is all that we have. But the present is but a precipitate left by the past and is big with potentialities for the future. And it is difficult to achieve a proper perspective on time. Human life without a collective memory is a stunted life, the problems of present living are illuminated by their historical perspective. History, of course, can become an absorbing attachment, an endless territory to travel over and explore. But there is a sense in which a people who, like Americans, are as prepared to obliterate their past as

they are to bulldoze their dwelling places, are guilty of a kind of impiety, a lack of reverence for their roots. For, as Burke stressed, we are not just men—we are also Englishmen, Americans, New Zealanders. Our past lives on in us. We take certain things for granted because our forefathers established them—perhaps died for them—when they were not taken for granted, like freedom of speech in England.

> *Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona*
> *Multi, sed omnes illacrimabiles….*

This piety can, of course, take too extreme a form—in ancestor worship, for instance, or in the Garden of Eden view characteristic of traditionalists fixated on the past. But to lack this sense of the continuity of life is but another facet of the tendency of modern man to stride round like Lucifer—or, more probably, to drive around imperiously like Mr Toad.

A proper perspective on time is important, too, in relation to the satisfaction of our wants and choice of activities. There is, on the one hand, the progressive in search of happiness that lies always ahead. Distant goals such as the greatest happiness of the greatest number, or the class-less society are the demythologized relic of the old striving for salvation. And often they involve an equally joyless, dutiful sort of toil. The present is merely the means to the future.

The reaction is the 'ideology of instancy'. In revolt against this dreary view of life the young advance the slogan 'I want it now'. At one time this cult of the present was buttressed by arguments about uncertainty of the future due to the threat of the bomb. But it is doubtful whether it was ever a very menacing cloud over their consciousness. What they have done is to press their parents' presuppositions to their logical conclusion. If consumer gratification is the point of life why delay it? Why not have it now? After all the elder generation, as a result of their anxious toil, seem to end up with ulcers, heart-diseases and an inability to enjoy what they have been working for. So why not have what you can get now—sex, kicks from violence, and trips on drugs and in other people's fast cars?

A more rational attitude to time was enunciated by Henry Sidgwick in his axiom of prudence that 'hereafter as such is to be regarded neither more nor less than now'. Reasons have to be given for doing some things rather than others that include other than temporal considerations—even crude thoughts like 'If you wait you won't be able to have it at all' or 'If you wait there will be more of it'. Spinoza said that it is the hall-mark of reason to see things 'under a certain aspect of eternity'. The important thing for a man is to connect, to grasp the patterns and relationships which structure human life. It is not, therefore, the fact that the pleasure of smoking is to be had now or in five minutes time that matters; it is rather how it is conceived and its relationship to other things in life. Can smoking, like sexual activity, be conceived of not simply as a physical pleasure, but also as an expression of love? Can it be done with skill and grace like dancing? Maybe not. But perhaps it could be thought of as a symbolic gesture of peace. Poems might be written about the smoke ascending lazily upwards and linked with Heraclitus' pre-occupation with fire, smoke, and motion. But the story has not yet been told; for any honest man, who tries to connect, must admit that it dulls the senses and is a danger to health. And, as E.M.Forster remarked: 'Yes, for we fight for more than Love or Pleasure: there is Truth. Truth counts. Truth does count.'

This more rational attitude to time is connected with what John Passmore calls 'care'[3]—attention to the features of what is being done in relation to what has been and what will be. The values, the enjoyment reside neither just in the past, nor in the present, nor in the future. They structure activities that extend over time. There is delight in writing a good sentence, in ploughing a straight furrow, in making a correct diagnosis, or in constructing an ingenious experiment. The delight does not derive just from a generalized love of mastery which can equally well be exhibited in playing with a yo-yo or doing an anagram. The standards that have to be attained are intimately connected with more permanent and all-pervasive concerns in human life—communication, obtaining food from the earth, the relief of suffering, and the pursuit of truth. Thus the reverence, of which Whitehead speaks, is not for the passage of time in itself, but for the dimension which it provides, backwards and forwards from the present, for the concerns which constitute a quality of life. For a quality of life is intimately connected with the standards which are internally connected with these concerns. The humanities and the sciences represent the main locus of these concerns; so the scene is now set to introduce them.

2 Common features of the humanities

The dimensions of the human condition have been plotted in very general terms advisedly; for 'the humanities' include such a variety of different ventures of the human imagination that it would be difficult to describe their subject-matter in any' other way. How else could much be said that is of significance for history as well as for poetry, for philosophy as well as for some of the social sciences?

In a way the term 'subject-matter' misleads from the start; for it conveys the image of some neutral material waiting to be apportioned. But not even nature, let alone man, is like that. For the world which we inherit has the imprint of mind on it from the first moment of discrimination. There is, I have stressed, its givenness. But this feature of it can only be understood against a background of attempts to impose our wills or conceptual schemes upon it. What we call 'the humanities' are the elaborations of our attempts both to understand our human world, to create and re-create it, and to take up various stances towards it. For one of the many distinguishing features of man is that he believes his life in the light of an image of himself that is not constant.

Any account of the human world which ignored some of the natural sciences would, of course, be a frivolity. For the natural world is the main locus of the givenness with which we are confronted in our attempts to construct a view of our condition. The development of the natural sciences, too, has, historically speaking been one of the main determinants of man's changing conception of himself. The heliocentric theory of the heavens induced a degree of humility in those who had previously pictured the earth as the centre of a stage on which the drama of human salvation was being played. Belief in determinism, which accompanied the rise of the physical sciences, cut both ways. In some, like Spinoza, it induced a feeling of acceptance, almost of fatalism, in the face of the world. Others, like Bacon, Hobbes, and Marx, were excited by the possibilities of power and control which were opened up—over nature and over man. It scarcely needs saying, too, that the natural sciences have exerted a profound influence on poetry, on religion, and on philosophy which are 'humanities' in the narrow sense. If we say, therefore, that 'the humanities' are

concerned in various ways with men rather than with nature, we must bear in mind that much of man's behaviour is only intelligible in terms of his thoughts about nature, and that the physical sciences are perhaps the finest product that yet exists of the sustained and controlled imagination of the human race.

It would not be altogether true to say, as some do, that the humanities differ from the physical sciences in their emphasis on the concrete and the particular. Psychology and sociology have, for a long time, tried to establish some generalizations about human behaviour and economics claims to have found some. A preoccupation, too, of moral philosophers has been the attempt to erect general principles of conduct. But there is something sadly lacking in these abstractions if they are regarded as being adequate to explain or justify full-blooded human behaviour. For there is always what Lewin called the individual's 'life-space'. To apply such generalizations to behaviour account must be taken of the individual's beliefs and expectations, his complex purposes and the social rules which he has internalized. Generalizations can be made, for instance, about the surroundings of human learning—about massed or spaced learning, the influence of recency and of rewards, and so on; but as soon as we really get down to any concrete case so much depends on the content of the skills, beliefs or attitudes concerned. And all distinctively human learning involves this complicated sort of content.

Similarly in ethics we can formulate abstract principles like those of justice and the consideration of interests; but the crunch comes when questions are asked about how these principles are to be interpreted and applied. The point is that concepts such as wanting, taking means to ends, deciding, believing, following rules, being affected, in terms of which we have to make sense of human life, are systematically interconnected. Little is ever explained by reference to simplified abstractions as in the physical sciences. Furthermore the content of these formal notions is highly variable from individual to individual, and from society to society. Explanations are usually much more like fitting particulars into a pattern of low-level generalizations than deduction from high level laws.

Historians, who are explicitly concerned, as Aristotle put it, with the particular—with what Alcibiades did and why—are acutely aware of this necessity of attempting to get inside another's 'life-space'. And, in so doing, they use low-level generalizations, rather than trying systematically to establish some, as do psychologists and social scientists. But the difference is one of emphasis.

Poetry, and literature, too, at least according to a view of these highly complex activities that has always made some kind of sense to me, are concerned more constructively with concrete universals in human life. A particular embodiment is created which expresses something of general significance. If the author is successful this reverberates in some way in the experience of the person who appreciates it, like Tolstoy's description of Levin's feelings at seeing his new-born child for the first time—in *Anna Karenina*. This sphere is enormously complicated by the highly contested category of the aesthetic. So I will pass discreetly on to religion—an equally contested sphere, but not one in which I have such a fear of failure to discern what is there through lack of application in accustoming my eyes to the dark.

Most of theology, frankly, I would deal with like F.R.Tennant dealt with the doctrine of the trinity—in a footnote. But religious studies are different—and eminently worth extended exploration. Whether the attempt is made to enter imaginatively into the

experiences which led the Maoris to feel awe in the presence of the forests or the Hebrews to feel it beneath the volcanoes, or whether one struggles, with Kant, to the limits of human reason and feels awe when confronted with the stark contingency of the world, here again one is traversing, with a different type of compass, many tracks from which one can get some kind of common aspect on the human condition.

And then there is finally philosophy. This has had periods when the search has been mainly for the abstract one in the many. But the emphasis now is on trying to discern the subtle accommodations of the one to its context—if there is ever just one to discern. When concepts are being considered the stress is on a rich diet of instances so that both the similarities and the differences can be digested. The notion, too, that there is just one pattern of reasoning—that of mathematics or of physical science—has been more or less abandoned. The form of thought of a lawyer in establishing a case, of a human being in understanding another, of a moral agent in a state of perplexity have all to be scrutinized. Here again, as in the other 'humanities', there is a search for concrete universals—for the forms of meaning and truth that are articulated in the various spheres of human action and belief.

The humanities, then, are a family of languages which men have developed to explain, describe and assess their behaviour, to take up stances towards the world and each other, to express how they feel, and to reflect upon and try to justify what they think and do. They represent various paths that men have taken in their exploration of what it means to be human.

3 The humanities and the dimensions of human life

What, then, is to be said about the relationship of these explorations to the dimensions of human life which I sketched at the start? And what is to be said about the contrast between subjectivity and standards?

The first point to stress, surely, is that in taking any of these paths we are entering a shared inheritance. Robinson Crusoe could not really have asked a scientific question, let alone made a scientific discovery. In the various branches of the humanities the concepts which we use represent centuries of effort by our ancestors. Our view of nature is never a naive opening of the eyes; our emotional responses to it and to other people are seldom like untutored startled reactions. There may be a 'natural' basis to many of them, but they are usually overlaid with the crust of a shared inheritance.

Similarly reasoning in general, and the particular forms of it which we employ in the various 'humanities', does not represent the flowering of an inner potentiality in the individual that is simply encouraged by child-growers. It is basically a public inheritance. As such it should be employed with a certain humility and reverence—with a sense of our shared humanity. It should not be regarded merely as a tool of individual assertion or group domination. It is public not just in the sense that its vehicle is language whose concepts and rules of syntax are a public possession, but in the further sense that, even when it takes place in the individual's head, it is an internalization of public procedures—those of criticism, the production of counter-examples, and the suggestion of different points of view.

Reason, in this developed sense, of course has its origin in the primitive tendency manifest in intelligence to 'accommodate' or to change assumptions because the differences encountered in a novel situation do not permit assimilation, or the fitting of them within

existing assumptions. But in reasoning proper, this caution born of the frequent experience of being in error, because of the differences between situations, becomes the principle enunciated by Francis Bacon that a search must always be made for the negative instance. Conscious, explicit attempts must be made to falsify assumptions, to find exceptions to rules; for only in this way can more reliable assumptions and rules gradually be built up. There must also be some form of public test to decide between competing assumptions. This means agreement not just about how answers are to be sought but also about the types of considerations that are to count as deciding between possible answers. Science is the supreme example of reason in action not just because of the opportunities for criticism which it provides, but also because of the agreement in judgments which it permits by means of its testing procedures. These guarantee objectivity and the escape from arbitrariness.

It is most implausible to suggest that these critical procedures develop naturally in children's minds as they grow up. History and psychology give no support to this flattering belief. In the history of man the overwhelming tendency has been for men to believe what they are told and to do what is expected of them. It is only at rare periods in history that sporadic curiosity and uneasiness about what is generally accepted have become embedded in a critical tradition. Psychologically speaking too, the general proclivity of men is to believe what they want to believe, and to accept the approved view of the group. Francis Bacon was one of the first to note what has since become a psychological platitude, that the determination to look for the negative instance, to subject assumptions to criticism, goes against a deep-seated tendency of the human mind, which William James called 'the primacy of belief'. The determination to find out the truth, to get to the bottom of things, only tends to develop if people are brought up in contact with a critical tradition.

Thus the individual, who is accustomed to reason in this developed sense, is one who has taken a critic into his own consciousness, whose mind is structured by the procedures of a public tradition. A reasonable man is one who is prepared to discuss things, to look at a situation impartially from the point of view of others than himself, to discount his own particular biases and predilections. As G.H.Mead put it, he can adopt the point of view of the 'generalized other'. The disposition to adopt this point of view is a reflection in his consciousness of social situations in which the point of view of others has in fact been represented.

Now the humanities represent various articulations of this general tendency to reason, to criticize, to test things out. They differ from the natural sciences in that the tests are less palpable. Observations are, of course, used in history, psychology, and the social sciences; but they are more overlaid with interpretation and bias than in the natural sciences. In the other humanities, such as morals, literature, and religion the basis is in shared reactions that are less uniform—e.g. sympathy for others in morals, awe in religion. These are much less predictable responses to objects and to situations than taking note of pointer readings on a dial. But they exist; they represent examples of what I previously referred to as the givenness of human responses. In the humanities, as well as in the sciences, they are transformed by reason. Just using the eyes in the satisfying of curiosity becomes in science the insistence on looking carefully at the evidence; sympathy attains a new level in respect for persons in morals, and awe felt for particular natural phenomena becomes elevated to awe felt for the contingency of the whole natural order, in religion.

What we call 'standards' represent the various demands made on us by the use of reason in its different forms, which is articulated in different ways by the concerns which underlie the various humanities. Some can be seen as implementations of the axiom of reason, that to will the end is to will the means. Efficiency of all forms comes under this—whether it be in experimental design, in organizing notes, or in skills such as drawing, spelling, reading, and writing.

Most of the standards in the humanities, however, cannot be conceived of simply under canons of efficiency; for their values are not just to be found in ends, to reach which means are taken. They are constitutive of a manner of travelling as well as of a destination. Indeed it is difficult to say what the destination is unless it is characterized in terms of an enhancement of the standards of travelling. In science, history, psychology and philosophy the 'goal' is truth in some fairly straightforward sense. But this is not to be interpreted either in terms of a culminating Platonic vision or in more mundane terms of amassing an endless store of true propositions. An infinite number of these could be obtained by studying a telephone directory. Rather the aim is to increase sensitivity and understanding; but this is to be interpreted in terms of values such as clarity, coherence, consistency, relevance, non-arbitrariness, humility, accuracy, precision, truthfulness, sincerity, perceptiveness, and so on. These intellectual virtues are definitive of the search for truth and exert a constant pressure on our struggles for understanding and insight. As John Passmore puts it, we take care because we care.

Poetry and literature make additional demands because of their concern with the aesthetic. By that I mean that appraisals such as elegant, neat, witty, graceful, and beautiful are also used. There is also that group of standards connected with what Clive Bell was feeling for when he talked about 'significant form'. But in view of my avowed nervousness with regard to the category of the aesthetic, I can only hint at what these additional demands may be. They concern the relationship between the parts which constitute them, some kind of whole. The parts of a George Eliot novel express insights which ring true in themselves. The form in which they are expressed and the way in which they interlock to form a coherent whole can be *shown*. But it is difficult to pin them down with precise criteria.

The same sort of additional filling out would have to be done in the moral and religious spheres. Standards are generated by impregnation of specific responses with the general demands of reason. Sympathy becomes respect and abstract rationality the principle of justice in morals; awe becomes transformed into the sense of the sacred in religion. In the various disciplines that compose the humanities these over-arching values generate more specific sub-standards, insistence on which is the bread and butter of any valuable work with students who are new to them.

It should not be thought that submission to these standards is necessarily a cheerless grind any more than care in climbing mountains must be viewed as an irksome necessity. There is a delight in achievement, in mastery, in getting things right. If, too, the explorer is really on the inside of the activity concerned, he will also, by definition, be sensitized to its immanent standards. He will have a horror of irrelevance and obscurity, as well as a more positive love of clarity, consistency and precision.

What has this concern for standards to do with the dimensions of human life with which I started? They represent, surely, in detailed form, the pressure of the givenness of the world and of human responses which is mediated through social traditions. They

represent a quality of life which takes account of the conditions under which it has to be lived. We wish for all sorts of things, are curious, and are capable of all kinds of undisciplined, infantile reactions. Reason, both in its striving for order and coherence, and in its mediation of the givenness of the world through its search for the negative instance, attempts to save us from constant frustration, conflict, disillusion and disappointment. It also conveys constantly to us a sense of the conditions which impose restrictions and limitations on wayward wishes and on the arbitrary assertions of will. Reason, too, elevates our sympathy for others into a conviction of their givenness; it intimates the irreverence of using them just for own our ends.

The language in which we talk about human life is shot through with demands of reason and we can make no sense of it without recourse to expressions which signify its demands. Words like 'true' and 'false' are used to appraise thoughts and utterances. We have the term 'belief' for the attitude of mind that is appropriate to what is true. Perceiving and remembering are distinguished by their built-in truth claim from merely imagining. Knowledge is similarly distinguishable from opinion. Our language thus reflects our position as fallible creatures, beset by fears and wishes, in a world whose regularities have laboriously to be discovered.

In action, too, we do not just veer towards goals like moths towards towards a light; we are not just programmed by an instinctive equipment. We conceive of ends, deliberate about them and about the means to them. We follow rules, assess and revise them. Assessment has a toe-hold in every form of our behaviour. Words like 'right', 'good', and 'ought' reflect this constant scrutiny and monitoring of human actions. And in our interpersonal dealings impartiality and respect for persons bear witness to barrier imposed by reason on the restless sorties of the relentless ego.

Man is thus a creature who lives under the demands of reason. He can, of course, be unreasonable or irrational; but these terms are only intelligible as fallings-short in respect of reason. But men acknowledge these demands in ranging degrees. Perhaps, for instance, they rely entirely on authorities or on custom; perhaps they just believe what suits them, act on whim or follow what Lawrence called 'the dark God within'. They act in a way which, in my view, is ultimately inappropriate to the situation in which we are all placed. But those who explore science and the humanities take another course. They acknowledge the demands of reason and embark upon a systematic examination and appraisal of various aspects of life.

In doing this they pay some homage also to the dimension of time. The search for laws in science is a search for assumptions that are true of past, present, and future. Works of art are possessions for ever, attempts, perhaps, to preserve in permanent form some particular insight into or expression of the human condition that is timeless. Religious studies attempt to disclose predicaments of man that are not confined to particular times and places. And in love, one of the supreme religious emotions, another is viewed as existing almost like a work of art in his own right—a whole to which assent is rendered, a sheer particular that embodies general features in a unique way. And, as I stressed before, the historian not only studies the past but should do so with a consciousness of how it both existed in its own right and also lives on in the present. Anyone working in these disciplines should experience, too, a feeling of fraternity for those who worked before him and for those who will carry

on where he leaves off. He should have a sense of the universality of the values that inform their continuous creations. He should not think of himself just as 'doing his own thing'.

4 Subjectivity or creativity?

What account, then, is to be given of subjectivity which, in some quarters, has become almost the cult of 'doing your own thing'? I have never myself been able to discern value in a purely naked ownership. Just because a wish or thought is mine I cannot see that value obviously attaches to it. Indeed, in estimating anything rationally, identity is as irrelevant as time and place. The point of view of any individual must, of course, be respected, his perspective on the world should not be disregarded, he should not be used purely as a means to the satisfaction of another's purposes or to the common interest. But this does not mean that there is any value necessarily in the *content* of his wishes, or point of view. In teaching we often have to combine a conviction that what someone says is irrelevant or false with respect for him as having a point of view and an interest in discovering what could ever have induced him to express or hold such a belief.

What lies behind this emphasis on the individual is surely values expressed by notions such as authenticity, independence of mind and creativity, in addition to sympathy, respect, or love for another individual. And the value of these is to be understood in contrast to the dreariness and cravenness of second-handedness, sentimentality, and conformity. These various forms of 'bad-faith' all involve going through the motions without sensing in any genuine way what the point is of the exercise. Belief, as I said before, is a state of mind appropriate to what is true. But if a person always takes his beliefs from others and never tries to find out anything for himself, he obviously cares little about truth. What he cares about is keeping in line. Similarly if people act in morals basically out of a desire to do the done thing, they must lack concern about considerations which demand that some things rather than others should be done. They are afraid of disapproval rather than sensitive to fairness and to the suffering of others. Imitativeness in art, or the elaboration of a string of clichés in an essay, indicate that the author does not care, in a first-hand way, about the values underlying the activity. Certain standards are conformed to in all such cases but mainly for approval's sake, not because the individual is on the inside of the activity and has a sense of its point.

Individuals who do begin to develop an authentic, first-hand appreciation because of their sensitivity to the values which structure such activities will, of course, be critical at times of what others say and do. But this will not be a mere contra-suggestibility which can become as much of a convention as conformity. It will be much more discriminating because it springs from a genuine sense of what is problematic in the light of underlying assumptions and values. And some will emerge who achieve new insights, who discover not just what is there to see, but what no one else has seen. They may even, like Einstein and Freud, be genuinely 'creative' in that they bring about a fundamental re-creation of the categories defining established conceptions. In poetry and literature this term has more obvious applications because such categories are less well-established and because the givenness of the world is less insistent. The products themselves are more truly 'creations' than is the case in the sciences or in philosophy. The constructiveness of reason and of the imagination is less subject to checks. The standards are more internal to the work itself than

reflections of general principles, which mediate the givenness of the world and of human responses to it.

But originality such as this presupposes training in the discipline concerned, an appreciation of what has been established before, and a genuine concern for the values definitive of it. Discoveries are not made by gazing naively at nature or at other people. How large is the sun? Does not the sun go round the earth? Answers to questions such as these do not spring from naive observation but from a looking that is informed by a mathematical understanding of the heavens. Freud saw the importance of unconscious wishes because he noticed that a case of hysterical paralysis did not follow what he would expect from his knowledge of anatomy, but the lines of his patient's thoughts. It was his training in neuro-physiology that enabled him to see the situation as problematic and his disciplined curiosity that drove him onwards with his brilliant speculations. Individual inventiveness is always to be understood against such a background of a public inheritance.

5 Education and the humanities

Why, then, do we complain so much about the second-handedness of so much work in the humanities? Why do students constantly complain about 'relevance'? Partly, I suspect because of the logic of the situation of learning and partly because of the anti-educational way in which we organize it. These are vast themes, so I can only conclude by hinting briefly at what I have in mind.

Piaget has elaborated important findings about levels of moral development. But I suspect that there are corresponding levels of motivational development as well, which are relevant to the acceptance of standards in the humanities. There is the early egocentric stage when rules are seen merely as things to be done in order to avoid punishment or to obtain rewards; there is then the stage when rules are seen as much more part of the order of the world but are connected with the desire for approval and the fear of disapproval; it is only at the final autonomous stage that rules are seen as alterable and their necessity to depend on reasons for them which are not artificially tacked on like rewards and approval. Discipline gradually becomes accepted because its relevance is seen to felt concerns and interests. It arises from the task, not from the attitudes of others to it.

Now it may well be that children are often initiated into the various disciplines of the humanities at a stage of their development when they cannot yet think of the validity of rules and standards as dependent upon some immanent purpose. They think of them as routines to be mastered because of their connexion with rewards and punishments, approval and disapproval. And by our system of schooling we certainly ensure that they will think of them in this way to a large extent. For merit marks, prizes, punishments, and the examination system, together with the close links between schooling and the occupational structure, provide an easily intelligible motivational pattern. The teacher may be an enthusiast sweating blood to get his students sensitive to the values immanent in what they are studying. But the institution in which he is operating may be speaking a very different and much more powerful message to them. The students may perceive their learning situation in terms of these deadening directives rather than in terms of what the teacher is trying to intimate. Their work thus becomes what Passmore calls 'toil'.

Second, in all branches of the humanities, as well as the sciences, there is an established body of knowledge or some collection of paradigms representing the efforts of previous generations. It is impossible to introduce a new generation to the various modes of experience underlying the humanities without reference to such achievements and artefacts. But they are too often introduced just as information to be digested and models to be copied. And, of course, learning of this sort is much easier to examine than learning which concentrates on mastery of the mode of experience. So products of the tradition may stifle the spirit which once informed its development.

Third, some of the humanities, though connected with shared human responses, do not come up against the givenness of the world to the extent which is characteristic of the natural sciences. As I said before their products are more truly 'creations'. But this leaves the door wider open to a certain kind of Alexandrianism, to pedantry and esoteric enthusiasms of scholars which are remote from the untutored understanding and the concerns of ordinary men. And these traditions of study may be perpetuated in teaching institutions over whose syllabuses the scholars obtain control. Their main ambition may be to turn out people like themselves rather than to open up to students a mode of experience, and to provide them with tools to explore it for themselves.

But I must not expand any more on some of the enormities that are perpetrated in the name of education. I think that I have at least intimated some of the difficulties inherent in the logic of the learning situation as well as those which we create by our institutions. The problem of the educator is rather like that of a religious leader. He may, perhaps unintentionally, be the founder of a small church; yet the logic of institutionalization may stifle and constrain the spirit which the institution tries to perpetuate. But the spirit will not survive without some kind of institutionalization. And if, as I suggested at the beginning, 'the essence of education is that it be religious', it is not surprising that in education, as well as in religion, there are recurring attempts to free the spirit from the forms which are necessary for it to survive and develop. But they, too, whether they be Puritan or progressive movements, are likely to share the same fate of ossification. Protesters are gradually turned into Protestants. But unless they devise institutional forms the light which they shed on the human condition will be merely that of a shooting star across the firmament. This paradox represents the main problem of education. It represents, too, one feature of the givenness of human life to which education itself should make us more sensitive.

Notes

1   This is reprinted, in an adapted form, from W.R.Niblett (ed.), *Science, the Humanities and the Technological Threat,* University of London Press, 1974, with acknowledgment to the editor and publisher.

2   A.N.Whitehead, *The Aims of Education,* Williams & Norgate, 1932, p. 23.

3   See J.Passmore, *The Perfectibility of Man,* Duckworth, 1970, pp. 294–7.

8
Socialization, social models, and the open education movement: some philosophical considerations

Kathryn Morgan

I wish to begin this paper by citing a poem:[1]

> One day young captain Jonathan
> he was eighteen at the time
> Captured a Pelican
> On an island in the Far East.
> In the morning,
> This Pelican
> Of Jonathan's,
> Laid a white egg
> and out of it came
> A Pelican
> Astonishingly like the first.
> And this second Pelican
> laid in its turn
> A white egg,
> From which came inevitably
> Another
> who did the same again.
> This sort of thing can go on
> A very long time,
> if you don't make an omelette.

The point of the poem is this: I interpret the proponents of the open education movement as seeing themselves in the omelette-making process with respect to the issues of socialization and social modelling. Put less metaphorically, the leading exponents and practitioners of open education maintain that they explicitly repudiate any involvement in socialization processes and reject the inhibiting and constraining use of any social models in the educative process. Individualism is to be free-flowering. In this paper, I will try to to show that this perception is an erroneous one, that the claim that open educators are not involved in socializing processes is false, that rather than creating omelettes, a mutated 'Pelican' is being substi-tuted for traditional social models. Moreover, I will try to show that there is

an important theoretical dilemma which must be faced by open educators with respect to the issue of socialization.[2]

The specific focus of my argument will be the issue of the nature and role of the curriculum in open education schools. Curiously, this particular focus renders my investigation more speculative than it might have been had some other focus been selected. This is the case for two reasons. First, there is *no* existing sociology of the curriculum, a vacuum admitted by more than one practicing sociologist.[3] However, it seems clear that we know what such a sociology might look like. At the very least, it would 'attempt to relate the nature of the beliefs and skills which are transmitted to the curriculum…to the authority relationships and organizational structure of the schools.'[4] Without such sociological accounts at hand, the philosopher who deals with issues in the area of the social sciences must extrapolate from general theories of socialization and the role of social models, applying them to the data of the open education movement without the theoretical guidance of the companion sociologist. The second reason is this: at first glance, there seems to be *no* referent for the term 'curriculum of the open education school' insofar as open education practitioners eschew any allegiance to general curricula. The accent seems to be, almost exclusively, on the educative process rather than on any specific educational content. Hence, one would be led to think that there was no curriculum in open schools or that, if such a creature did exist, it would be so radically diverse from school to school as to prevent any sorts of generalizations from being made. Further, this diversity might lead one to infer that any sort of philosophical remarks which might be made would be made on a very weak inferential sort of base and, hence, speculative in a dangerously non-evidential sense.

To counter this sort of criticism, I will try to argue for a distinction between surface curriculum and deep curriculum and for the need for varying levels of description. That is, I will try to show that, at the level of description of the deep curriculum, the *process* of open education educational episodes is what ought to be called the real content of the curriculum, not the various surface interests which occupy different members in the educational setting. In short, I will argue that it is the process of open education, as curriculum-constituting, which is a defining feature of such education. I further argue that if this claim is accepted, then a case can be made for attributing very specific kinds of socializing activities to open education schools.

The paper is divided into four main parts. In part 1, I state the fundamental theoretical assumptions which form the matrix of my discussion of this topic. In part 2, I first examine various proposed definitions of the term 'socialization,' showing how these definitions vary in theoretically significant ways. I then describe briefly the fundamental psychological mechanism involved in socialization: identification. In part 3, I characterize basic differences between the open schools and the public schools, differences detectable at two levels: the level of rhetoric and stereotypes, and the level of fundamental structuring models. In part 4, I argue in a theoretical way for the conclusion that open schools socialize. I then provide illustrative instances of such practices. This part concludes by pointing to what I regard as a fundamental theoretical dilemma facing open educators.

1 Theoretical assumptions

In dealing philosophically with the topic of socialization processes in open education, I am adopting the standpoint of a sociology of knowledge.[5] More specifically, I am making the following theoretical assumptions:

(1) That man's consciousness arises out of his social being and is dialectically related to it;

(2) That education is a social process and, hence, that the dialectical interaction between ideational forms and social structure can be seen operating in any educational setting, and,

(3) That if one shifts the form and content of knowledge in an educational setting, that is, shifts the curriculum, it is reasonable to expect that this shift will have corresponding shifting social-structural correlates.

I will now explain each of these assumptions more fully.

By maintaining the first assumption, I am claiming that what a human being is aware of and what a human being thinks is, to some extent, determined by the social structures in which he is involved. As a dialectic, this works in two ways insofar as it seems clear that the specific kinds of awareness that a human being has may interact with pre-existing social structures, causing new social structures to come into existence. More specifically, the first assumption entails that what and how a human being thinks and what he is going to regard as knowledge is partially determined by those institutions in which he is grounded historically by virtue of his specific identity in social space and social time.

It seems clear that, at least in literate societies, one of the most influential of these social structures is the educational system. That education is a social structure which involves a social process is a claim which goes considerably beyond the somewhat trivial fact that, most often, it involves more than one human being. It is regarded as social in the more technical sense that one of the manifest functions of education, and educational structures, is the management of human knowledge.[6] Hence, to inquire into the social nature of educational processes and structures, one is obliged to ask more fundamental questions such as: what counts as valid knowledge *vis-à-vis* this culture and this educational system? What counts as the valid realization of that knowledge? As Mills has pointed out, if one adopts the point of view that knowledge is socially constructed, one of the implications of the first assumption, then it follows that what we are going to call 'reasoning' or 'being logical' or what we are going to regard as legitimate processes of validation and verification are going to be determined by those models of self-reflective criticism which are adopted by a particular culture.[7] That is, different cultures operate with different standards of rationality and, more specifically, with different standards of what is going to count as 'progress in the growth of knowledge.' That is, various methods of critical assessment which are operative in a particular educational system are related to fundamental beliefs concerning the nature of human knowledge. In short, that is, fundamental social beliefs underlie the organization, the transmission, and the evaluation of knowledge in various educational structures.[8]

This leads to the second assumption, viz. that education involves a social process and insofar as a dialectical relationship holds between ideational forms of both an individual and collective human consciousness and social structure, educational processes will reflect this dialectic.

This second assumption carries with it three important corollaries:

(1) that the very language which is used in social contexts and, more specifically, the types of speech interactions which occur in educational settings, are linked to important social differences and forms of social consciousness.[9]

Speaking a language is an intrinsically social action insofar as one appropriates to himself a particular cultural product, that is, a specific language, and expresses himself in that language. Moreover, it seems clear that to speak a language involves being sensitized to those aspects of the environment which are picked out by various aspects of a specific language and to be less sensitized to those aspects which are not so singled out.[10] Insofar as this is the case, teaching a child or an adult a new mode of speaking and a new language (for example, the special languages of highly sophisticated disciplines such as mathematical physics) alters his consciousness and sensitizes him to new or different aspects of his environment. As I will show below, it is this subconscious (predominantly attitudinal) sensitization which is sought after and often required for processes of socialization to be regarded as successful.

(2)   that curriculum and pedagogy are related in a functional way which carries social implications.

As Esland puts it,[11]

The curriculum is a set of arrangements of knowledge which are assumed to have a purpose: it consists of *intentioned* knowledge. Through their control of the transformations of the child's consciousness, its exponents engineer theoretical world views which are thought to be valid currency in their society. Pedagogy, therefore, can be seen as the rationality of the intention, and evaluation is the verification procedure of the intention.

That is, from the point of view of sociology of knowledge, educational processes and structures are viewed as inducing the younger members of a given culture into the accepted knowledge structures of that culture. Such education is regarded as successful when the child's consciousness is transformed in fairly profound ways to conform to what the culture regards as knowledge. Thus, if one serves a pedagogical role in a culture, for example, as a teacher, one functions as a social agent involved in the process of transforming consciousnesses. In this paper, I will try to argue that to the extent that this assumption is granted, teachers in open schools play an important social role, a role which contains, intrinsically, various socializing functions.

The third corollary of the second assumption is this:

(3)   that insofar as knowledge is a socially constructed reality, it makes sense to regard the elements of the curriculum as socially constructed as well.

That is, curricula of educational systems can be viewed as public displays of what a particular culture regards as knowledge, the specific elements of knowledge which it regards most highly, and those which it sees as most central to the transmission of the culture. Hence, it is reasonable to look for social justifications for organization of knowledge which is thought to lend coherence to the curriculum, for the selection of elements to be included in the curriculum, and for the methods of assessment which are involved in the curriculum.

The third assumption, very simply stated, claims that insofar as a curriculum instantiates the form and content of knowledge which is valued in a particular culture, changes in curriculum will reflect and influence changes of a more structural sort in the culture. That is, it claims that changes in the substances and transmission of what is regarded as legitimate knowledge in a particular culture have social-structural correlates. The way in

which these can be predicted on the basis of noting curriculum shifts, and vice versa, is through reference to the Marxist thesis that the corpus of knowledge, in general, and its specific instantiation in the educational structure, is 'inextricably linked to the interests of those who produce it. Thus, a critique of knowledge is necessarily a critique of producers of knowledge.'[12]

In summarizing the work of Pierre Bourdieu, Young points out that one of the important insights gained from Bourdieu's research into French educational structures is the way that 'particular classes maintain their dominance by being able to confer cultural legitimacy on certain styles of thought and therefore on certain aspects of reality.'[13] If one alters or severely attacks the dominant curriculum, this constitutes, in fact, an attack on both the authority and the power relationships in that culture. For example, if one is operating within a highly stratified society, the curricular correlate to such a society is a highly discipline- or subject-oriented curriculum structure.[14] As Davie, Goody and Watt have pointed out, in highly literate, hierarchically-organized societies, there is a strong emphasis on reading and on writing, both of which are extremely solitary activities and involve a strong empha- sis on individualism with a corresponding de-emphasis on group work and co-operative projects, an individualism which is re-enforced by the methods of evaluation employed, for example, written exams, in the system. In such cultures, high status knowledge is linked with such features as: literacy, individualism, abstractness, and unrelatedness to ordinary life. The curricular correlate to such values is a highly specialized, discipline-oriented cur- riculum with very little interdisciplinary content.[15]

Proponents of the open school movement challenge this value system. In its place, they hope to substitute a commitment to group activity and assessment, a strong emphasis on concreteness and relatedness, and a much stronger reliance on oral presentation. The cur- ricular correlate to this is a curriculum which is far more open insofar as its scope is less restricted and specialized, and the boundary areas within the curriculum are very fluid. The third assumption states that insofar as educational structures are bound up with more gen- eral patterns of power dominance in a given society, changes in one will produce changes in the other as well. If a particular curriculum structure comes under attack—as, indeed, is the case in the open school movement—then such an attack can be legitimately viewed as an attack on the surrounding social structure as well. Similarly, if one argues for a different curriculum base or, more radically, for the absence of curricular structure, then one is, in fact, arguing for more profound social changes as well.

This is not the place to go into an extensive justification of these three theoretical assumptions. Nevertheless, one comment is in order. Insofar as Bernstein and others have been able to determine the empirical relationships which exist between specific curricu- lum patterns and authority patterns, thereby providing empirical support for these three assumptions, they have found that a functional relationship does appear to exist between the specific educational practices in a given culture and the more general social structures which dominate that culture.[16] To challenge one is, in effect, to challenge the other as well. Changing ideational structures of the curriculum—in the case of the open schools, this means moving from closed to open curricula or to no curricula whatever involves changes in the social infrastructure which articulates them, and to wider aspects of social change.[17] More simply stated, the open schools and the curricula of such schools challenge tradi- tional conceptions of social order.

It seems that if one adopts the sort of theoretical perspective sketched above towards educational processes and structures and their interrelationships with surrounding cultures, it is possible to understand why many individuals find the open school movement threatening in a very profound sort of way and why it has given rise to such vehement criticism. Esland describes this response in the following way. He points out that many individuals, including teachers, seem to be largely unaware of the[18]

> fundamental changes occurring in the basic parameters of their pedagogic reference points. The cognitive and existential anxiety which is induced may amount to anomie and a personal struggle to reintegrate their perspectives…. Relativism strikes at the roots of taken for granted reality and is usually resisted, not only because it may lead to an existential vacuum, but because it also relativizes authority and institutionally-convenient divisions of labour.

Thus, I would urge acceptance of these assumptions both on the basis of the available empirical evidence and on the basis of their explanatory power.

To summarize: In this section, I have acknowledged the theoretical matrix within which the remaining discussion is to take place and have tried to elucidate some of the basic assumptions of that matrix. In what follows, I argue that, given these three assumptions, it follows that proponents and practitioners of open education are engaged in the task of substituting one social paradigm for another and that central to that task is the shifting of the content of the socialization process, not the abdication of such a process altogether.

2 The nature of socialization

In this section, I examine the nature of the socialization process more closely, an examination which is necessary if one is to attribute involvement with such a process to the open educators. I carry through this examination in two stages. First, I look at various proposed definitions of 'socialization', noting significant theoretical differences where they occur. Second, I discuss the more specific psychological mechanism involved in socialization: identification.

A. Definitions of 'socialization'

Unfortunately, not all definitions of socialization coincide. Nor do social scientists agree on what is to count as an instance of socialization. This lack of accord complicates the task of examining the issue of socialization in open schools.

Two areas of agreement do exist, however. The first centers around the claim that socialization processes and policies of social control are *intrinsically* linked together. As Clausen puts it,[19]

> Socialization and social control go hand in hand; they are complementary bases for social order and continuity but they are by no means identical…. The effectiveness of social control rests in the last analysis, on the transmission of the moral norms through the socialization process…. As an underlying basis for social control, socialization efforts are designed to lead the new member to adhere to the norms of the larger society or of the particular group into which he is being incorporated and to commit him to its future…. The modes of social control, especially when exercised in reaction to deviance or violation of moral imperatives, help to emphasize the importance of the norms and to strengthen the commitments of individuals to those norms.

As will be seen below, all the definitions stress the development of congruence between an individual's values and the society's values as a mark of successful socialization. As such, socialization can be seen as essentially a conservative process, a means by which societal continuity is insured (although this does not rule out the possibility of developing new norms).

A second area of agreement concerns the extent to which the school and, more generally, the educational structures function as important socialization agents. As one author has pointed out, public education in North America can be seen as a kind of ten to twelve year rehearsal in how a child is expected to behave when he grows up in this society.[20] Even more strongly, social psychologist Elton B.McNeil, states,[21]

> The terms 'education' and 'socialization' should be considered synonymous in our society for education is the primary means of socializing all children after they reach the age of five…. Because the instructor teaches techniques that will ensure adequate social adjustment, education is a mixture of *instruction* and *indoctrination [sic]*.

In short, both social scientists and educational policy makers regard educational structures as performing an important and sustained socialization role in society.

As noted above, a strong content-oriented, conservative dimension emerges in discussions of socialization. I will try to show how this dimension becomes more obvious by considering various definitions of socialization which have been proposed in the literature.

Consider the following definitions:

Definition 1:   'Socialization, a process of interaction whereby a person's behavior is modified to conform to expectations held by members of a group to which he belongs.'[22]

Definition 2:   '…socialization does imply that the individual is induced in some measure to conform willingly to the ways of his society or of the particular groups to which he belongs.'[23]

Definition 3:   'It is simpler, and much more illuminating, to consider the types or styles of learning which contribute to the socialization of the child…. One of these consists in the acquisition of techniques… the other sort of learning is different in purpose; it is the means by which the child develops those emotional reactions of admiration, aversion, guiltiness, and so on which will underlie and motivate his social behaviour…a great deal of attention has been paid to the negative reactions of aversion and guilt which serve to inhibit certain types of anti-social behaviour; this part of the socialization process is often referred to as "anxiety conditioning"…. According to this view, then, social training consists in the conditioning of new emotional reactions in such a way that, on future occasions, they will control or modify the child's behaviour.'[24]

Definition 4:   'Socialization: The processes whereby a person (especially a child) acquires sensitivity to social stimuli (especially the pressures and obligations of group life) and learns to get along with, and to behave like, others in his group or culture; the process of becoming a social being.'[25]

All of these have been proposed as definitions of the complex process of socialization and it is difficult to know which of these to accept. It seems fairly clear, however, that there are important theoretical differences among these definitions.

Definition 1 can be viewed as a kind of minimal definition insofar as conformity of behavior, that is, specific actions of human beings, would be the mark of successful socialization. What the individual's motives are, or the kinds of sensitivities he or she acquires, appear to be largely irrelevant as long as the relevant conformity behavior is forthcoming.

Definition 2 is similar to Definition 1 insofar as the stress is still on conformity behavior. It differs, however, by its inclusion of the deceptively simple word 'willingly.' That is, it adds a motivational component or, at the very least, a dispositional element. Not only is conforming behavior important but it is also important that the socialized individual perform that behavior willingly. Conforming behavior, produced under duress or coercion, would presumably not suffice for successful socialization under Definition 2 although it is admissible under Definition 1.

Definition 3 differs from both the previous definitions in the following ways. First, it clearly acknowledges and appears to place more stress on the second of two major components of the socialization process, the process of social training or social conditioning. It instructs a socializing agent to instill in those to be socialized a set of emotional responses which serve primarily as inhibitors of anti-social actions. If this level of emotional reactions is successfully instilled, then the issue of conforming behavior is no longer a problematic one since an individual who has been successfully socialized with respect to the second type of learning will, in fact, produce the desired conformity behavior because of more fundamental personality structures. Second, such structures are not particularly consciously entertained as reasons for acting but serve, rather', as psychological causes which trigger certain sorts of behaviors and inhibit others. That is, according to Definition 3, socialization processes do not involve individuals justifying their conforming behavior rationally but, rather, as suppressing and inhibiting anti-social behavior at a more subconscious level. In stressing this second learning process, Definition 3 goes considerably beyond both Definitions 1 and 2 insofar as it places primary emphasis on psychological mechanisms rather than on behavior. It differs, importantly, from Definition 2 because it rejects the aspect of voluntariness which seemed to be an important dimension of Definition 2.

Definition 4 is similar to Definition 3 insofar as it cites two components. It differs from 3 insofar as it is clear from the order of elements that 'social sensitivity' is the more important of the two elements and that conforming behavior, both of a cooperative and an imitative sort, is the second major component. Here, again, the non-rational character of social sensitivity is stressed, sensitivity often being a non-discursive psychological sort of awareness. Definition 4 differs from 3, however, to the extent that it stresses conformity of behavior. It clearly states that to *be* a social being and to *become* a social being involve learning to behave *like others* in the relevant group or culture.

The picture of socialization that emerges, conjointly, from these four definitions, is that, in the fullest sense, a successfully socialized individual is one whose behavior conforms to others in his society, one whose commitment to the dominant forms of behavior in the society is a willing sort of commitment, and one whose social sensitivities are such that, at a subconscious level, he is conditioned to experience aversion when contemplating an anti-social act.[26]

When open educators maintain that they are not involved in socializing, that claim must be understood as a rejection of the picture sketched above. First, proponents of open education reject the social and political conservatism inherent in all these definitions, substituting for them either a benign neglect of prevailing norms, claiming that these are not relevant concerning the development of 'open' individuals or, more vigorously, engage in a radical critique of dominant social norms. Second, proponents of open education claim to place a much higher premium on processes of rational decision making and choosing as the basis for social action than do traditional definitions of socialization. Third, by stressing such traits as individual expression and uniqueness, open educators reject conformity. If the behavior and feelings of students in open schools happen to conform, that is to be interpreted as a somewhat random result. It is certainly not entertained as one of the *desiderata* of open education. In short, open educators reject socialization insofar as it involves, as its goal, a conservative, non-rational adherence to the prevailing norms of a given society, an orientation which is manifested by socially conforming behaviors and tendencies to behave. What I will try to argue below is that such educators are mistaken in thinking that they are not involved in socialization processes; that they are, in fact, socializing the young but that the socialization pattern differs from the patterns which are dominant in the surrounding society.[27]

B. The basic psychological mechanism: identification

It will be important for my argument to be clear about the basic psychological mechanisms which are central to the process of socializing. Apart from Definition 1, which is behavioral in nature, the other definitions place relative stress on more 'internal' aspects of successfully socialized individuals. That is, internalization of the relevant norms in question is central to the process. Internalization involves the making one's own—either in the sense of an explicit commitment to or in the sense of feeling that it comes from within and is part of oneself—of relevant attitudes, beliefs and values which constitute the norms of the given socializing community. In the context of socialization, internalization involves a congruence between objective and subjective norms.

The most important psychological process involved in this more general process of internalization is the process of imitation or identification.[28] Although there is terminological disagreement about whether these two terms are equivalent, researchers are at least agreed on the description of the process involved. Stressing that identification involves more than the mere mimicking of the behavior of another, theorists such as Sears, Rau, and Alpert claim that it involves becoming like another person in temperament, mannerisms, meeting standards of conduct, and performing social roles as valued others do.[29] As such, the psychological process of identification involves an alteration of personal identity in a very strong, comprehensive way. Similarly, Bandura and Walters define it as 'the tendency for a person to reproduce the actions, attitudes, or emotional responses exhibited by real-life or symbolized models.'[30]

The process of identification has been found to be *the* central psychological mechanism in successful socialization. This discovery has an important implication for the way in which one structures and detects instances of socialization in various educational settings. Wise, empirically-based, socializing educators have begun to realize that if one wants to

socialize a particular child successfully, then the most effective way to go about it is to set up controlled educational environments in which the mechanism of identification can be optimally employed, environments in which the child becomes like the adult model in the society in question as a result of identifying with him. In such an educational environment, one might very likely find several of the following activities. The relevant social model—which need not be the teacher but might be one of the child's more advanced peers or an older child—would serve as a kind of good example for the others, to be viewed as a person to emulate. Other, similarly didactic, techniques might be the prominent display of maxims and sayings in the educational setting and the use of exemplary folklore as educational materials.

It has become clear from studies concerned with class-related modes of discipline in families, that the kind of verbal commentary by the adult model which accompanies the evaluation of actions serves as an important device in teaching the young how to interpret the nature of the social world.[31] This finding carries over into educational settings as well. Thus, a more indirect, but potentially more powerful technique is the kind of commentary which the teacher gives with respect to various kinds of behaviors in the classroom. Finally, in a more pervasive sense, the teaching style in the educational setting serves as an important inhibitor or catalyst in the development of a feeling of community participation and a sense of social and political competence.[32]

The most important single element found to enhance the process of identification is the degree of social trust which develops between the child to be socialized and the socializing agent. As Inkeles points out,[33]

> models [that is, those individuals with whom identification is being sought] do not have an effect simply by being there. To have an impact on the shaping of the young, the role model must have substantial and intimate contact with the socializee.

Similarly, in discussing the effectiveness of socialization efforts, Clausen says,[34]

> In instances when an adult is trying to teach a child something important to that child's orientation or future functioning, existing research and theory support the generalization that, other things being equal, a positive, warm relationship will be more effective for almost any kind of learning except avoidance responses.

Given that social trust is the most important single factor involved in the degree of successful identification and given the fact that identification is the primary psychological mechanism by means of which socialization takes place, it is reasonable to expect that as the traditional schools are presently structured, socialization efforts are likely to be somewhat less than completely successful. More importantly, given the structure of the educational setting and the basic assumptions about the nature of human interrelationships which govern interaction in open education, it is reasonable to see open educators as potentially far more powerful socializing agents because of the premium placed on social trust. Further, I will argue that it is plausible to view much of what takes place in open education as contributing to successful socialization even though such educators repudiate the elements of social control and conformity associated with traditional patterns of socialization.

3 Open schools versus public schools

It was argued in part I of this paper that one way of understanding the intensity and kind of critical response which the open education movement has generated is by interpreting the movement through the perspective of a sociology of knowledge. Such a perspective commits one to search for levels of description and explanation which relate educational phenomena to more comprehensive social structures in varying functional relationships. The differences between public schools and open schools can be discussed on at least two levels: the level of social perceptions which displays itself through the rhetoric and stereotypes of the movement and, secondly, at the level of primary model incorporation, this second level referring to more general structural features of the two educational systems. I will deal with each of these in turn.

Level of description 1: rhetoric and stereotypes

In dealing with this first level, it is important to recall that I am not concerned with the truth-claims of the contrasting descriptions but, rather, with the description constellations themselves since the constellations are believed to be true and open education theorists operate on this belief. As such, I am involved in the examination of contrasting stereotypes rather than with truth-claims.

In describing public education or, alternatively, mass education, McLuhan and Leonard make use of the machine metaphor.[35] Public education is described as producing human products in a fragmentary, mechanical sort of way, products designed to feed the ever-important needs of the social machine. Conformity, the key to efficient mass-production, is sought after, and human beings are viewed as replaceable, expendable commodities. Concerning school atmosphere, the public schools are seen as operating in a capitalistic climate which is both intensely competitive and highly authoritarian in structure. As McNeil (very tranquilly) points out,[36]

> Our society is highly competitive, and no matter how permissive or understanding an individual teacher may be, the school forcefully communicates the goals of society to its children. The child is no longer simply a child; he is a child asked to produce in a competitive-comparative climate.

Somewhat less calmly, Goodman asserts that 'The public schools which did a good job of socializing immigrants in an open society now regiment individuals and rigidify class stratification….'[37] Goodman further argues that at the advanced level of producing highly specialized professionals, the public schools fail for the following reason: 'Doing others' lessons under compulsion for twenty years does not tend to produce professionals who are autonomous, principled, and ethically responsible to client and community…. Broken by processing, professionals degenerate to mere professional-personnel.'[38] The machine analogy is also carried through by Postman and Weingartner who say,[39]

> If your goals are to make people more alike, to prepare them to be docile functionaries in some bureaucracy, and to prevent them from being vigorous, self-directed learners, then the standards of most schools are neither high nor low. They are simply apt.

Such are the comments of the open education theorists.

Critics of the public schools are not limited to educational theorists. In a report prepared by the Montgomery County Student Alliance, a group of high school students in Maryland

charged the public schools with the following crimes: destroying 'human beings and their curiosity, natural desire to learn, confidence, individuality, creativity, freedom of thought and self-respect.'[40] They further claim that due to the premium put on conforming sorts of behaviors, such crimes lead to the development of alienation towards the educational structure. Continuing the discussion of the destructive effects of public education on personal development, McLuhan and Leonard remark that 'The adult has already learned the lessons that the old schooling teaches so well: inhibition, self-consciousness, categorization, rigidity, and the deep conviction that learning is hard and painful work.'[41] In short, the stereotype of the public schools which emerges from the rhetoric of the open education movement is that of an institution which is conservative, rigid and rule-bound, peopled with educators who are trained to be highly authoritarian in outlook and behavior and with students for whom conformity and passive obedience are esteemed as the highest virtues.

As might be expected, the positive rhetoric of the open education movement indicates a pre-occupation with the opposite of the above-cited characteristics. The personality of the student in the open school is described as 'natural, tolerant, sincere,' as having 'the Summerhill personality' as this is described by Ray Hemmings.[42] Although Graubard expresses a high degree of skepticism about the attainability of the following personality goals, he admits that this is the image which dominates much of the open education literature and thinking: the vision of a personality and system 'in which people will grow organically in a network of wholeness, becoming loving, and sharing, while creating a culture they can believe in…[the goal is someone who is] loving, open, spontaneous, sharing, active, and self-directed.'[43] This personality is thought to flower in an atmosphere which is open and cooperative and by means of a curriculum which is constituted out of the active choosing of individuals who participate in the constructing of a particular curriculum which may, in principle, be individual-specific. By means of structuring the educational experience in this way, open educators reject the institutional, production-model picture of education and substitute for it the picture of a highly individualized setting in which the individual student reigns supreme, where he or she 'is taken seriously as a person.'[44]

Such is the rhetoric. I now move to a more fundamental level of differences between public schools and open schools.

Level of description 2: dominant structuring models

In this section, I distinguish two models, the psychometric model and the epistemological. They are claimed to relate to public schools and to open schools, respectively.[45]

The psychometric model, which is claimed to dominate in the public schools, is composed of the following features:

(1)   The child is regarded as an *object,* more particularly, as a *deficit system* whose passivity is a necessary condition for being initiated into public thought forms;

(2)   The child is regarded as 'having' *intelligence* in the sense of a specific property which can be measured by objective tests;

(3)   The world of knowledge is regarded by those who adopt the psychometric model as composed of pre-existing theoretical forms into which the child must be initiated;

(4)   The pre-existence of such forms and the possession of such by the educator legiti-
      mizes a highly *didactic* form of pedagogy;

(5)   As a possessor of such theoretical forms, the educator assumes the role of societal
      surrogate one of whose main roles is to assess the growing congruence of the
      child's thought forms with the pre-existing standards;

(6)   *Educational development* consists of growing rationality as the child moves away
      from the concreteness of his immediate world towards the increasingly abstract
      theoretical forms;

(7)   *Educational achievement* consists in progressing towards increasingly specialized
      and highly discipline-bound subject-matter and is measured in terms of objective
      evaluative criteria such as behavioral objectives.

One very important outcome of an individual being educated in a system dominated by the
psychometric model is the development of a high degree of privacy. This privacy results
from the fact that progress towards abstraction, the educational goal, entails a greater dis-
continuity between the educational setting and the non-educational environment, in partic-
ular, the home. On a more personal level, the emphasis on increasingly abstract rationality
inculcates the view that one's emotions and feelings are irrelevant in an educational setting
and, hence, such emotions are less likely to be displayed. As argued above, in part II, such
an educational setting does not provide an optimal setting for effective socialization to take
place, and it is reasonable to expect other socialization agents to take over, supplanting the
efforts of such educational systems, agents such as the family and the peer group where
stronger patterns of identification might occur. That is, rather than being the powerful agent
of socialization that the open educators fear, it would seem that the public schools are, at
best, mediocre agents of socialization with respect to any of the definitions, other than
Definition 1.

  The open education movement can be regarded as posing a serious challenge to this
psychometric model insofar as it operates with alternative views concerning human nature
and consciousness, with different social principles and with different conceptions of the
nature of and transmission of human knowledge. As such, it might be regarded as a de-
mythologizing of the psychometric model and the substitution of an alternative model, the
epistemological model. (Whether or not this is, in fact, a substitution of a different mythol-
ogy is not my concern in the present context.)

  Characteristics of the epistemological model include the following:

(1)   The child is regarded primarily as a *subject,* that is, as a being who is actively
      involved in constructing and arranging his knowledge of the world in terms of
      personally-relevant interpretational schemata;

(2)   The main property which the child is thought to possess and which is most rel-
      evant to the educational setting is the non-quantifiable property of *curiosity;*

(3)   Following the leads of Piaget and Bruner, the world of knowledge is regarded as
      composed of thought forms which are in a constant process of construction and
      which are dialectically related to the development of individual subjects interact-
      ing with socially-approved and socially-distributed knowledge;

(4)   Emphasizing the constructive aspect of human knowledge and placing value on intellectual initiative legitimizes a pedagogy which is highly *interaction oriented;*

(5)   As a similarly constructive, growing subject, the educator assumes the role of social model in the process of knowledge construction, one of the main responsibilities of which is the heuristic channeling of the pre-existing curiosity of each individual student;

(6)   *Successful pedagogy* consists not in the measuring of the achievement level of the students but in the ability of the teacher to apprehend and recreate the intentionality and subjective reality of the students so as to provide greater individual stimulation;

(7)   Although *educational achievement* is measured in distance from starting point to present level of development, this is a highly individualized measure. The child is essentially treated as a self-regulative being insofar as he controls the sequence and pace of the experience. In many cases, he controls the content of the experience as well, insofar as his interests and desires are often the crucial curriculum determinants in the setting.

As such, evaluation will be more diffuse, non-quantifiable, highly subjective, and more holistic in tone since all dimensions of the student's subjectivity are regarded as worthy of concern in the educational setting.

As a result of an individual being educated in a structure dominated by the epistemological model, he experiences very little privacy. The epistemological model does not necessitate a move away from concreteness, so no sharp line of discontinuity is drawn between aspects of one's daily life and educational settings. Similarly, strong emphasis is placed on all dimensions of the student's subjectivity and, in fact, the student is encouraged to express his needs, feelings, and choices as the fundamental principle of curriculum construction. Thus, the more affective dimensions are put on public display and the educator has ready access to all dimensions of the student's personality.

Highly correlated with an absence of privacy in these two respects is the tendency for schools dominated by the epistemological model to become, as Charity James puts it, 'porous communities.'[46] That is, open schools, which instantiate and utilize the epistemological model, often have strong community ties and close relations with the neighborhoods in which they take place as well as much closer relations with associated family structures. Again, insofar as this leads to much more fluid boundaries among these areas and to a much higher degree of integration of education with other social processes, a corresponding decrease of individual privacy results. As one enthusiast puts it, 'Someday, all of us will spend our lives in our own school, the world. And education—in the sense of learning to love, to grow, to change—can become…the very essence, the joyful whole of existence itself.'[47] I would argue that given the lack of privacy in open schools and given the great deal of emphasis placed on developing an atmosphere of mutual social trust, the socializing potential of open schools is far greater than that of the public schools.

To summarize this section, I have tried to show how an examination of both the rhetoric and the basic structural features which serve to differentiate the public schools and the open schools should undercut the charge of mindless socialization which the open

education critics launch at the public schools. The public schools, according to the critics' *own* characterization of them, are not the sorts of institutions in which socialization can succeed since the necessary conditions for the flourishing of strong identification patterns are not met. The inference to be drawn from this is twofold: if, in fact, the public schools *are* succeeding at socialization, then there must be some error in the perception of the critics of what actually takes place in such schools. Hence, their descriptions ought to be revised accordingly. Such revisions would very likely be in the direction of convergence thereby weakening the strong polarity of rhetoric which undergirds much of the open education literature. If, on the other hand, the public schools are *not* succeeding at socialization and if the open education critics object to actually occurring patterns of socialization, they ought to direct their criticisms elsewhere, that is, to the proper recipients. If this latter recommendation is followed, then while it might be the case that there are legitimate grounds for rejecting public educational structures, misleading and harmful patterns of socialization would not be such grounds.

The moral to be drawn from this and from the preceding two parts of the paper is that it would perhaps be wise for the proponents of open education to turn a more socially-perceptive eye and imagination to what is actually going on in open educational settings. This is recommended for two reasons: (1) the potential for very powerful forms of socialization to take place is inherent in the defining structure of open education settings and (2) there are empirical indications that such socialization processes are occurring in such settings. I will now try to argue, very directly, for this conclusion basing my argument both on theoretical considerations which have been advanced in this paper and on illustrative instances of what could be viewed as socializing practices in some open schools.

4 Open schools as agents of socialization

Before turning to specific illustrations of what I would regard as socialization practices in open schools, I wish to turn to a body of research which supports the contention that, to some extent, *any* educational structure will be involved in the process of socialization. This argument is drawn from theoretical considerations in sociolinguistics in conjunction with the theoretical assumptions advanced at the beginning of this paper.[48] If the argument is persuasive, then it would make sense to expect socialization to be occurring in open schools as well as any other sort of school. If the argument is valid, it must lead to the relativizing of the autonomy goal as part of the value commitment not only of open schools *per se* but of any educational structure which espouses such a goal.

A. The theoretical argument: all schools socialize

The basic strategy of this argument is the following: I begin from one of the basic assumptions of sociology of knowledge, apply it specifically to educational phenomena and infer that whenever an educator engages in public behaviors of a symbolic sort in an educational setting and whenever these behaviors carry with them an acknowledged normative component, socialization of a very general sort occurs.

The relevant assumption drawn from a general sociology of knowledge is stated, very directly, by Mills. Mills argues that,[49]

> We may locate a thinker among political and social co-ordinates by ascertaining what words his functioning vocabulary contains, and what nuances of meaning and value they embody. In studying vocabularies, we detect implicit evaluations and the collective patterns behind them—'cues' for social behaviour. A thinker's social and political rationale is exhibited in his choice and use of words. Vocabularies socially canalize thought.

Generalizing from these remarks and extending them to cover symbolic gestures of a non-linguistic sort, one is led to the sort of conclusion reached by Clausen one's language is a powerful identifying characteristic and that in certain settings it can be used for important social and political ends. Clausen states,[50]

> An adult who comprehends the nature of cultural diversity may be able to operate comfortably in several assumptive worlds: a child whose ability to symbolize is only rudimentary can hardly be expected to do so. Words themselves have different connotations in different social milieus, whether they be the the more abstract references to thoughts and feelings used in one group or, in another, the simple direct references to action spiced with words forbidden in conventional middle-class speech. One's language, like his body build and facial features, serves to identify and categorize him.

Both Clausen and Mills point to the fact that one's language and, more importantly, one's dominant speech patterns serve as an important inferential cue about more fundamental social and political allegiances as well as serving, at present, as a reliable index to one's social class and background.[51] One inference which can be drawn from such remarks is the degree to which one's symbolizing behavior can serve as an important motivational factor in a situation where one's approval is being sought. These remarks also point to the fallacy of an agent who knowingly functions as a social model in a given social setting assuming responsibility for only those influences which are specifically entertained and intended.

Both Bernstein and Bourdieu have pointed out some of the profound educational consequences which follow from this sociolinguistic perspective.[52] Bourdieu says,[53]

> It could be shown in the same way how *all teaching practices implicitly furnish a model* [my italics] of the 'right' mode of intellectual activity; for example, the very nature of the tests set, the type of rhetorical and linguistic qualities required and the value attached to these qualities, the relative importance given to written papers and oral examinations and the qualities required in both instances, tend to encourage a certain attitude towards the use of language….

Generalizing from this and from other studies, both Bourdieu and Bernstein argue that the three main dimensions of educational structures, the curricular, the pedagogical and the evaluative, form a normative and socially determined code the exercise of which functions to sensitize individuals to certain aspects of encountered reality and to desensitize them to others. For the student, this code is incarnated in the person and behaviors of the educator in conjunction with whatever curricular materials are selected. Hence, the educator functions, invariably and inevitably, as the normative educational surrogate for the relevant community. Moreover, since sensitization is one of the main goals of any process of educating and since the desired form of such sensitization results from social and political decisions of a given culture, *any* educator in such a setting functions as a socializing agent. In other words, I would argue that insofar as an individual is recognized by the other members of a social group as serving an educative purpose and insofar as that individual interacts in that setting in various symbolic ways, barring some sort of deficiency on

the part of those being educated, that individual is serving a socialization function. In short, all educators and all schools socialize.

This conclusion becomes even more explicit when one introduces a transformation element into the discussion. Bernstein argues that in order to provide continuity with the symbolic world inhabited by the pre-school child, the educator needs to be able to understand the consciousness of that child and the social assumptions which underlie and are dialectically related to that consciousness. Nevertheless, Bernstein goes on to argue that in the case of children whose speech codes are non-universalistic in nature and thereby differ from those which dominate in the educational setting, such children should and must be introduced to more universalistic speech codes. As Bernstein states, 'The introduction of the child to the universalistic meanings of public forms of thought is not "compensatory education"; *it is education* [sic].'[54] If this transformation element is introduced into the above stated argument, then explicitly normative conclusions enter in and the dimension of socialization is clearly acknowledged.

I would argue that both these arguments apply to educational behavior in open education contexts. If the open education theorists object to the importation of the second argument, claiming that open education does not try to transform the child but, merely leaves him free to develop his intrinsic potential, to flower forth, then certain additional facts would have to be brought into the argument. The most salient of these is that the available research seems to indicate that the sort of functional autonomy and role-distance that is sought after as part of the autonomy of the open educators appears to be dependent upon one's ability to master more universalistic speech codes.[55] Hence, if a child enters the educational setting and has not mastered a universalistic speech code, it would appear that the open educator is morally obliged to assist in his linguistic transformation as a necessary means to pursuing the ultimate goal of personal autonomy, in short, to socialize.

The theoretical argument can be summarized as follows:

P_1: In the case of human beings, human symbolic activity and, in particular, patterns of speaking are dialectically related to fundamental social and political commitments;

P_2: Applied to educational settings, this means that educators' symbolic behavior is an important indicator of their fundamental social and political orientations, whether or not this is recognized by the educator per *se;*

P_3: Educational settings are, generally, social contexts in which the educator is being regarded as a model by those who are being educated, whether or not this is recognized by the educator *per se;*

P_4: Pedagogical behavior serves a sensitizing function with respect to students who learn to become sensitized to various aspects of presented reality and de-sensitized to others;

P_5: To participate in such a sensitization process, a participation which is an essential part of any educational structure, is to participate in a process of socialization with respect to the fundamental social and political assumptions which serve as the structuring principles for the educational setting;

C_1: Hence: all educators socialize, including open educators.

P_6: The degree to which successful socialization occurs is, to a large extent, directly to the degree of social trust which develops in the socializing setting;

P_7: The development of a high degree of social trust is one of the primary goals of open education;

C$_2$:   Hence: since the environment in which open education takes place is one which optimizes the conditions for successful socialization, it is reasonable to predict that socializing is occurring on a large scale, whether or not the specific educator is aware of it or even disavows that such processes are taking place.

In short, the argument examines the implications of saying that educators function as social agents *vis-à-vis* a certain culture and points out the consequences of this with respect to the specific issue of socialization in open education.

B. Empirical illustrations

In this section, my purpose is to suggest through specific illustrations how processes of socialization might be seen as occurring in the setting of open education. The examples which have been selected are intended to be suggestive, not conclusive. Nor do they exemplify all possible forms of socialization but are restricted to the transmission of four very specific sets of values: the value of human affectivity; non-sexism with respect to role-behavior; preference for horizontal models of authority sharing rather than vertical, autocratic models, and the value of constructive, individualoriented processes of curriculum building as symbolizing the process of mutual accommodation. I would claim that the transmission of such values is implicit in the curriculum of the open education movement and that socialization of the young to these values is sought after by those involved in open education.

As mentioned above, it does not appear, at first glance, as though open schools have any set curricula and, hence, that it will be difficult for me to substantiate my claim by appeals to curriculum. For example, in the *Rasberry Exercises,* a kind of advice manual to those wishing to set up free schools, the authors say that free schools involve 'everyone rejecting the bad things like *knowledge, authority,* and *structure;* and accepting the good things *like freedom, sharing* and *creativity*.'[56] Similarly, in referring to students, Neill advises his teachers, 'You may give them your love but not your thoughts.'[57] When some individuals questioned this apparent lack of predetermined curriculum content, the response that was given by the editor of *The New Schools Exchange Newsletter* was: 'If we consider that absolutely anything that happens, either spontaneously, or pre-planned, in a free school situation is curricular, then worried decision-making is greatly minimized.'[58] That is, if one is troubled by the seeming absence of a curriculum, then one ought to regard everything as part of the curriculum and then the feeling of something's being absent would simply vanish.

I intend to take that editor's advice. Rather than abandoning the concept of curriculum altogether, I wish to distinguish the surface curriculum from what I will refer to as the deep curriculum or the hidden curriculum. It is true that a specific surface curriculum, the sort which is often so carefully described in curriculum guides and course syllabi, is absent in open schools. This absence, however, does not entail the absence of the deep curriculum which refers to 'the way the methods and organization socialize young people by conveying attitudes and values.'[59] In this sense of curriculum, the curriculum of open schools is alive and flourishing and is acknowledged by practitioners in such settings. For example, McLuhan and Leonard claim that 'The importance of even "functional literacy" is much exaggerated; it is the attitude, and not the reading ability, that counts.'[60] Similarly, Graubard

summarizes the elementary school programmes of various open schools by saying, 'For elementary age children, basic skills *and the nurturing of curiosity, self-confidence, and the ability to get along with others are the obvious curriculum.* [my italics]'[61] Although this latter remark introduces the notion of surface curriculum by its inclusion of basic skills, the remainder of the items which are said to form the curriculum are essentially the inculcating of process-oriented personality traits, the teaching of which is compatible with an indefinite variety of surface curricula. I will now turn to an illustration of how four sorts of values can be transmitted through the process-curricula of open schools.

The first value is a strong emphasis on the value of affectivity learning. Insofar as confident self-expression is seen as an important ingredient in personal autonomy, students in open schools participate in expressive sorts of educational activities such as creative subjects, crafts, sensitivity workshops and classes in yoga and meditation. In contexts such as these, what is being emphasized through the structuring of the educational experience is the importance of predominantly affective non-utility oriented modes of individual expression. By expressing enthusiasm for such educational experiences, by helping to structure the educational environment in such a way to facilitate such experiences, and by participating freely in such forms of expression, the open educator sanctions the underlying value commitment which is embodied in such activities.

The second value which is explicitly transmitted by open schools centers around the issue of sexism. In a witty, counter-culture attempt to displace the traditional Mother Goose rhymes and the sexism rampant in them, poet Tamar Hoffs contrasts the following two poems:[62]

Poem 1:   'What are Little Boys made of?'—by Mother Goose

What are little boys made of?
  What are little boys made of?
Snips and snails, and puppy-dogs' tails;
  And that's what little boys are made of.

What are little girls made of?
  What are little girls made of?
Sugar and spice, and all that's nice;
  And that's what little girls are made of.

Poem 2:   'The Truth about Boys and Girls'—by Tamar Hoff
What are little boys made of?
  What are little boys made of?
'Lots of muscles and red corpuscles;
  And that's what little boys are made of.'

What are little girls made of?
  What are little girls made of?
'Lots of muscles and red corpuscles;
  And that's what little girls are made of.'

The inference to be drawn from the second poem would appear to be that little boys and little girls and, as they develop, men and women do not, in fact, differ in *any* significant way. This anti-sexism approach to role-behavior as part of the goals of open schools is acknowledged by Jane Goldman, a teacher in one of the open schools. Goldman states,[63]

> They [that is, the free school people] need to band together not only because of the things they hate, but because they share certain values. *This means knowing what sorts of human beings they want to create* [my italics], It also means giving up the notion that children will just naturally change for the better. Children come to the free school with capitalism's values in their heads, they've learned sexism, racism, extreme competitiveness, obedience to authority, etc. from TV, from their storybooks, from the kids down the street, not to mention from their schools. My school failed because it left its children structureless and unguided, thus ensuring the retention of their old consciousness.

Here the transformation of consciousness, one of the main aspects of socialization, is being cited as a *desideratum* for the open schools and, more explicitly, a commitment to combat sexist attitudes. In addition to explicit verbal commitments to non-sexist policies in open schools, some schools instantiate this commitment in the form of easy access to various courses. For example, at the Santa Barbara Community School, both males and females take courses in auto mechanics. And lest the symbolic message of this practice be lost on the students, it is explicitly stated that the structure of the course, insofar as it is open to women, taken by women, *and* partially taught by women 'is a conscious attempt to break down the traditional role of mechanics as a field appropriate only to men. We feel this is important since women are often pressed into having roles in the society which do not match their real needs and desires'.[64] Here, again, I would argue that open schools which are committed to non-sexist values and which instantiate this commitment by the use of visible role models as well as through more verbal means are engaged in the process of socializing their students although the relevant culture to which they are being socialized is other than the present, sexist-oriented one.[65]

The third area in which open schools appear to socialize is with respect to the strong emphasis placed on games and the importance of participation in games. In describing the program of the Santa Barbara Community School at the elementary level Christopher Boldt says,[66]

> Sports activities go on all day long. There is almost always someone playing soccer, kickball, snake in the grass, whatever. Usually, however, at about 11:00 there is a 'big game' involving children of all ages and several of the teachers or parents who are there…. Sports have been very important in creating a happy, friendly, and cooperative atmosphere in the school…. It is very valuable, I feel, for all the teachers, at one time or another, to be involved in these games as participants rather than supervisors. It is part of the reason for the close relationship that is essential to a school such as ours.

He continues, saying,

> The games are also valuable because they are one of the activities that all ages in the school can do together…. In sports children of all ages and abilities play together and learn to cooperate and coordinate their efforts…. Nor is there any discrimination against girls in our sports activities. Women teachers as well as men teachers play all the games….

I have quoted this passage extensively because I think that it focuses, very explicitly, on the ways in which a seemingly simple activity such as playing a game can be used to symbolize important value commitments and beliefs such as: the importance of friendly cooperation, the basic commonality of all human beings which cuts across ages, sexes, and authority structures; the situation-relativity of authority structures; the value of cooperative

coordination; and the importance of development of closeness between the children and adults who make up the relevant social community. Again, I would argue that insofar as such goals form the rationale for participation in such activities and for including them as an important part of the educational process, important socialization is likely to be taking place.

The fourth, and final, area which I wish to mention is the emphasis placed on curriculum planning by students and, more generally, the emphasis placed on democratic school meetings in open education. Through engaging in the constructive process of curriculum planning, students become familiar with the processes and problems which are implicit in consensual and collaborative efforts of the sort where mutual accommodation and respect assume high importance. More generally, democratic school meetings, which involve teachers, students and parents at the Second Foundation School in Minneapolis, are cited as an important educational experience in and of itself because they are seen to result in *changes of attitudes* on the parts of the participants and in the learning of basically democratic and cooperative modes of interrelating.[67] Here, again, I would argue that it is the *process* of curriculum construction and democratic organizing which is, in fact, part of the deep curriculum of open schools. I would further argue that such processes of decision making are inevitably processes which carry a normative social and political dimension. As such, to sanction such activities is to engage in various processes of socialization insofar as specific norms and decision procedures are being communicated by and approved of by the various model participants.

I would hope that these four illustrations provide ways in which open schools can be seen as serving a socialization function.

C. A serious dilemma for open education

In this last section, I turn to a serious dilemma which I see as resulting from the preceding discussion.

Proponents and practitioners of open education are curiously schizoid about the issue of socialization in open education. On the one hand, they very often advocate and self-consciously acknowledge the fact that they are engaged in the building of a new culture, a culture in which 'alienation will disappear and people will grow organically in a network of wholeness, becoming, loving and sharing.'[68] Somewhat less lyrically, advocates of open education are aware of the fact that a strong de-emphasis is being placed on material rewards, career success, and the attainment of power. For the values of competitiveness and individual achievement, cooperation and uniqueness of personhood are being substituted. For the role of objective evaluator the role of friendly, therapeutically-oriented companion is being substituted. In short, an entirely new culture, complete with its basic metaphysical and axiological assumptions about the nature and worth of human beings, is being proposed. And advocates of open education want students to grow into wholesome members of a social community committed to such values and forms of interaction. Hence, it would seem that since they have ready access to the mechanism of identification due to the high degree of developed social trust, it would be most reasonable for open educators to be engaged in the process of socialization albeit for this new culture which is largely visionary at present.

On the other hand, advocates of open education are repulsed by the conformity dimension which seems to be inherent in all the proposed definitions of socialization. Emphasizing uniqueness and individual expression, open educators are committed to placing primary emphasis on the development of personal autonomy. Such an emphasis would appear to rule out the utilization of psychological mechanisms the outcome of which is an acknowledged subconscious, non-rational shaping of an individual's consciousness, a shaping which is cited as central to socialization by Definitions 3 and 4. Hence, to the extent that socialization entails such an extrinsically-derived consciousness-shaping process, it must, *in principle,* be rejected by advocates of open education. Finally, the evils of socialization are highlighted by pointing to various socializing devices used in the public schools. For example, critics of the public schools have pointed to the content of various readers in the elementary schools, one of the most alarming of which includes the following passage:[69] 'What can I be, Mother?' said Little Lamb.

> 'I want to be something new.'
> 'What can you be?' said her mother.
> 'Someday you will be a sheep.
> A sheep…just like me.
> Little Lamb ran up and down
> in the green meadow. Little
> Lamb was happy.

But now it appears that the proponents of open education are caught in a serious dilemma. If they *do* want children and students to become human beings who are characterized by psychological openness and to become worthy members of the new, open culture, then progress towards membership in such an open community will depend, to some extent, on the development of sensitization to relevant social cues. Since we do not have to worry about the internalization of others' norms, in this case, because the open individual generates his or her own norms and these are assumed to have absolute value *vis-à-vis* the group, the development of such sensitization is precisely what is *meant* by socialization in this context. Thus, I would argue that, in fact, open educators need to socialize, in the sense of employing this complex sensitization process, although the content of the process may differ from that of the public schools.

But this practice would lead to the following dilemma: If the open educators *do* socialize, in this process sense, then the psychological mechanisms which support and facilitate this process undercut the growth of autonomy and, hence, cannot be employed. That is, such socialization is ruled out for theoretical reasons. On the other hand, if such socialization *does not* occur, then the necessary social sensitization will not take place which is required for membership in the open community. Hence, it would not appear to make any sense to strive for such a community if the necessary means for bringing it about cannot be employed. I do not see any clear way to resolve this dilemma.

To summarize this part: I have tried, in section A, to give a general theoretical argument the conclusion of which is that, insofar as open schools are educational structures in a larger social setting and involve individuals who serve as social models, such schools are, inevitably, involved in the process of socialization, this being understood in a very broad but, nevertheless, crucial sense. In section B, I have tried to suggest how such a conclusion might be illustrated by looking at examples of the elements which constitute

the deep or hidden curriculum in specific open schools. Four sorts of areas were singled out as examples involving socializing processes. In section C, I have tried to show how the conclusions drawn from the preceding parts and sections lead to a serious dilemma for proponents of open education.

5 Concluding summary

In this paper, I have tried to show that open educators socialize. In order to show this, I developed and argued for a theoretical matrix of discussion based on principles of sociology of knowledge. This was the task of part 1. In part 2, I sought to clarify the process of socialization by looking at various definitions which have been proposed in the literature. I also gave a brief exposition of the fundamental underlying psychological mechanism of identification. In part 3, I analysed basic differences between public schools and open schools, both at the level of social perceptions and at the level of fundamental structuring models. One outcome of this investigation was the suggestion that open schools provide optimal socializing environments. In part 4, I tried to synthesize the assumptions and findings of the preceding parts, arguing in a very general way for the conclusion that *all* schools socialize and, hence, that open schools socialize. Second, I tried to provide illustrative instances of socializing in open schools.

In part 4, I also tried to argue that if the argument of this paper is sound, it generates an important theoretical and practical dilemma for proponents of open educators: if membership in the envisioned open society is desired, then socializing must take place to produce members of this society. Socialization, however, involves the sensitization of individuals at a subconscious non-rational level and, hence, undercuts one's autonomy. Autonomy is one of the primary goals of open education and its persual therefore rules out socialization practices. In short, in terms of achieving its ultimate goals, open education both prohibits and requires the use of socializing processes. I think that this is an *important* dilemma and I think that this is an important *dilemma*. I would hope that this paper has helped to clarify, for the proponents of open education, some of the fundamental issues involved in generating the dilemma. At present, I see no easy solution.

Notes

1 Robert Desnos, *Chantefleurs, Chantefables,* trans. Elizabeth McGovern, Librairie Gründ, Paris.
2 A point of terminology. In this paper, I am using the terms 'open education,' 'open schools,' 'open educators,' 'public schools,' and related cognates as referring to ideal types of educational structures. In general, the term 'open education' can be regarded as, roughly, extensionally equivalent to schools referred to as 'free schools,' 'alternative schools,' and, to some extent, the British primary schools. The term 'public schools' refers, to some extent, to the public school system in North America. However, it should not be regarded as restricted to such. I am aware that there are important differences among these schools, and that some public schools are regarded as open schools, etc. Therefore, to avoid terminological confusion, I am stipulating that these terms be used in the following way: I identify 'open schools' with *whatever* educational structures adhere to the epistemological model; 'public schools' with whatever educational structures adhere to the psychometric model. The main features of these models are articulated in part III of this paper.
3 Cf. Richard Deer who states, 'There is presently very little scientific understanding of the social dimension of schooling.… We know very little about the ways in which schools themselves affect

conditions in society.' Richard Deer, *A Taxonomy of Social Purposes of Public Schools,* David McKay Co., 1973, p. 29; Michael F.D.Young who says, 'The almost total neglect by sociologists of how knowledge is selected, organized and assessed in educational institutions…hardly needs documenting…. Why no sociology of the curriculum?' Michael F.D.Young, 'An Approach to the Study of Curricula as Socially-Organized Knowledge' in *Knowledge and Control,* ed. Michael F.D.Young, Collier-Macmillan, 1971, pp. 19, 40.

4   Basil Bernstein, 'Some Sociological Comments on Plowden,' *Perspectives on Plowden,* ed. R.S.Peters, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969, pp. 77–8.

5   In adopting this standpoint, I am employing it in the sense first articulated by Hegel in *The Phenomenology of Spirit* and by Marx in the 1844 *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts,* and later modified by Mannheim, Mills, Berger and Luckmann. In particular, see Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia,* Harcourt Brace, 1936; C.Wright Mills, *Power, Politics and People, The Collected Papers of C.Wright Mills,* ed. Horowitz, Oxford University Press, 1969; P.L.Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality,* Penguin Books, 1967.

6   This distinction is stressed by Ioan Davies, 'The Management of Knowledge: A Critique of the Use of Typologies in the Sociology of Education' in *Knowledge and Control,* p. 278.

7   C.Wright Mills, 'Language, Logic and Culture,' *American Sociological Review,* 1939. Reprinted in C.Wright Mills, *Power, Politics and People.*

8   This is one of the fundamental theses advanced by the British sociologist, Basil Bernstein. See Basil Bernstein, 'Education Cannot Compensate for Society' in *School and Society,* ed. B.R.Cosin, I.R.Dale, G.M.Esland, D.F.Swift, MIT Press, 1971, pp. 61–6.

9   This is one of the most significant outcomes of the work of Basil Bernstein and his associates at the University of London. Cf. Basil Bernstein, *Class, Codes and Control,* vol. 1: *Theoretical Studies towards a Sociology of Language,* Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971, for the most complete collection of Bernstein's work. See also the unpublished manuscript entitled 'Class and Pedagogies: Visible and Invisible,' 1973. For the related work of his associates, see the work *Class, Codes and Control,* vol. 2: *Applied Studies towards a Sociology of Language,* ed. Basil Bernstein, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973.

10   In adopting this hypothesis, it should not be thought that I am adopting a strong version of the Whorfian hypothesis, viz. that our language completely determines the way we interpret the world. I regard that thesis as false on empirical grounds. However, I do adopt a more moderate version of the thesis.

11   Geoffrey M.Esland, 'Teaching and Learning as the Organization of Knowledge' in *Knowledge and Control,* p. 84.

12   Alan F.Blum, 'The Corpus of Knowledge as a Normative Order: Intellectual Critique of the Social Order of Knowledge and Commonsense Features of Bodies of Knowledge' in *Knowledge and Control,* p. 12.

13   Michael F.D.Young, 'Introduction' in *Knowledge and Control,* p. 12.

14   Both Durkheim and Bernstein have argued along these lines. See Émile Durkheim, *The Division of Labour in Society,* Collier-Macmillan, 1964; Basil Bernstein, 'Open Schools, Open Society?', *New Society,* September, 1967, pp. 351–3.

15   Cf. G.E.Davie, *The Democratic Intellect,* Edinburgh University Press, 1961; J.Goody and I.Watt, 'The Consequences of Literacy,' *Comparative Studies in History and Society,* v, 1962.

16   In particular, see Basil Bernstein, 'Language and Social Class,' 'Social Class, Linguistic Codes and Grammatical Elements,' 'A Socio-Linguistic Approach to Social Learning,' 'On the Classification and Framing of Educational Knowledge' in *Class, Codes and Control,* vol. 1; 'Open Schools, Open Society?'; 'Class and Pedagogies: Visible and Invisible.'

17   This point is argued by Bernstein in 'Open Schools, Open Society?', and 'On the Classification and Framing of Educational Knowledge,' *Class, Codes and Control,* vol. 1.

18 G.Esland, 'Teaching and Learning…,' *Knowledge and Control,* p. 97.

19 John A.Clausen, 'Introduction' to *Socialization and Society,* ed. John Clausen, Little, Brown & Co., 1968, p. 6.

20 Elton B.McNeil, *Human Socialization,* Wadsworth Publishing Company 1969, p. 16.

21 *Ibid.,* p. 138.

22 Carl W.Backman and Paul F.Secord, *A Social Psychological View of Education,* Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968, p. 4.

23 Clausen, 'Introduction' to *Socialization and Society,* p. 4.

24 Gordon Trasler, 'Socialization' in *The Formative Years: How Children Become Members of their Society,* ed. David Edge, Schocken Books, 1970, pp. 1–3.

25 H.B.English and Ava C.A.English, *A Comprehensive Dictionary of Psychological and Psycho-analytical Terms,* David McKay & Co., 1958.

26 Once this picture is sketched in, the connection between processes of socialization and policies of social control becomes clearer. This connection is most evident in discussions about delinquency. McNeil, for example, says, 'Delinquency—the failure of socialization. The delinquent is a young person whose socialization has failed.' McNeil continues, arguing that delinquency is but one stage, visible in the unsocialized youth, which is part of a continuous process of development which concludes with organized criminal behaviour. Similar remarks concerning delinquency occur in the essay from which Definition 3 was taken. See McNeil, *Human Socialization,* p. 190; G. Trasler, 'Socialization' in *The Formative Years.*

27 For a striking instance of what the 'standard North American pattern' involves, see the statement by the *Educational Policies Commission* concerning the definition of 'the educated citizen' as one who, among other things, 'acts upon an unswerving loyalty to democratic ideals' and is 'economically literate.' Part of this document is reprinted in *Aims of Education,* ed. L.M.Brown, Teachers College Press, 1970, pp. 74–5.

28 Cf. John A.Clausen, 'Introduction' to *Socialization and Society,* p. 8; Brian Foss, 'Other Aspects of Child Psychology' in *Perspectives on Plowden,* pp. 50–1; Eleanor E.Maccoby, 'The Develop-ment of Moral Values and Behavior in Childhood' in *Socialization and Society;* McNeil, *Human Socialization,* p. 25.

29 Work cited by McNeil, *Human Socialization,* p. 25.

30 A.Bandura and R.H.Walters, *Social Learning and Personality,* Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1963, p. 89.

31 See, for example, Basil Bernstein, 'The Role of Language' in *The Formative Years.*

32 Byron Massialas has explored the available research in this area. See Byron Massialas, *Education and the Political System,* Addison-Wesley, 1969.

33 Alex Inkeles, 'Society, Social Structure and Child Socialization' in *Socialization and Society,* p. 121.

34 John A.Clausen, 'Perspectives on Childhood Socialization' in *Socialization and Society,* pp. 150–1.

35 Marshall McLuhan and George Leonard, 'Learning in the Global Village' in *Radical School Reform,* ed. Ronald and Beatrice Gross, Simon & Schuster, 1969, pp. 107–8.

36 McNeil, *Human Socialization,* p. 15.

37 Paul Goodman, 'No Processing Whatever' in *Radical School Reform,* p. 100.

38 *Ibid.,* p. 104.

39 Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner, 'What's Worth Knowing?' in *ibid.,* p. 167.

40 Montgomery County Student Alliance, 'A Student Voice' in *ibid.,* pp. 147ff.

41 McLuhan and Leonard, *Radical School Reform,* p. 110.

42 Ray Hemmings, *Children's Freedom: A.S.Neill and the Evolution of the Summerhill Idea,* Schocken Books, 1973, p. 147.

43 Allen Graubard, *Free the Children: Radical Reform and the Free School Movement,* Vintage Books, 1974, pp. 164–5.

44 Goodman, *Radical School Reform,* p. 103.

45 In this section, I rely heavily on the work of Geoffrey Esland, adopting the basic categories of discussion from him. Although Esland's description purports to be concerned with the topic of dominant psychological models, he recognizes that the pervasiveness of and the general ramifications of these models are so broad that they should be regarded more as opposing ideologies. See G.Esland, 'Teaching and Learning…,' *Knowledge and Control,* pp. 70–116. As mentioned above, in note 2, I regard adherence to these models as defining features of the open schools and the public schools.

46 Charity James, *Young Lives at Stake: The Education of Adolescents,* Schocken Books, 1968, p. 248.

47 McLuhan and Leonard, *Radical School Reform,* p. 115.

48 See Basil Bernstein, *Class, Codes and Control,* vols 1, 2, as well as previously cited references.

49 C.Wright Mills, 'Situated Actions and Vocabularies of Motive,' *American Sociological Review,* v, 1940. Reprinted in *Power, Politics and the People.*

50 John A.Clausen, 'Perspectives on Childhood Socialization' in *Socialization and Society,* p. 136.

51 This is one of the findings of the empirical research carried out by Bernstein and others. See references previously cited.

52 Cf. Bernstein references previously cited and Pierre Bourdieu, 'Intellectual Field and Creative Project,' 'Systems of Education and Systems of Thought' in *Knowledge and Control,* pp. 161–88, 189–207.

53 Pierre Bourdieu, 'Systems of Education and Systems of Thought,' p. 199.

54 Basil Bernstein, 'Education Cannot Compensate for Society,' p. 65.

55 Julienne Ford, Douglas Young and Steven Box, 'Functional Autonomy, Role-Distance, and Social Class,' *School and Society,* pp. 67–73.

56 Robert Greenway and Salli Rasberry, *Rasberry Exercises,* Freestone Publishing Company, 1971, p. 41.

57 This is quoted from Gibran, used by Neill, and cited by Ray Hemmings, *Children's Freedom,* p. 146–a.

58 Harvey Haber, *The New Schools Exchange Newsletter,* cited by Graubard, *Free the Children,* p. 211.

59 *Ibid.,* p. 193.

60 McLuhan and Leonard, *Radical School Reform,* p. 102.

61 Graubard, *Free the Children,* p. 92.

62 Tamar Hoffs, *Ms. Goose: A Lib-retta,* Avondale Press, 1973, pp. 6–7.

63 Jane Goldman, 'Summerhill, Some are Hell…,' from No *More Teachers' Dirty Looks,* vol. 2, no. 1; reprinted in *Socialist Revolution,* no. 8, March-April 1972, p. 115.

64 Ken Cruze, description of Community High School, Santa Barbara, printed in Graubard, *Free the Children,* p. 105.

65 The extent to which verbal behavior may effect sexist attitudes is reflected in this anecdote by a male kindergarten teacher whose consciousness had been recently raised:

> In a kindergarten a boy and girl were busy at the workbench hammering nails. When the teacher came over, he patted the little boy on the head and said, 'That's it, give it another whack.' He was about to say to the little girl, 'Here, let me give you a hand,' but he stopped himself and instead said, 'Good work, keep at it,' and the message he almost automatically gave the girl was 'You need help.' By his fortunate second thought, he was able to give the same message of self-reliance to both children.

Nancy Frazier and Myra Sadker, *Sexism in School and Society,* Harper & Row, 1973, p. 185. This book amply documents the sexist practices in various educational structures.

66 Christopher Boldt, description of the Community School in Santa Barbara, quoted extensively in Graubard, *Free the Children,* pp. 87–8.

67 See Graubard, *Free the Children,* for documentation of these remarks, pp. 114ff.

68 *Ibid.,* pp. 164–5.

69 Taken from Mabel O'Donnell, *Around the Corner,* Harper & Row, 1969, pp. 101–2. This book, along with several others, was adopted in 1969 by the state of California for use in the primary grades. The state of California enrolled 376,500 students, in 1970, in the 1st grade alone.

9

Open education and social criticism

Michael L.Simmons, Jr

In this essay I intend to ask what happens to the meaning of a theory of education[1] that over a long historical period changes its relations to the broader criticism of society of which it was once an essential part and with which it shared its basic concepts. Concepts basic to the theory of open education include freedom, individualism, process, and self-development. These concepts plus the importance given to the empirical basis for knowledge as well as the relation of activity (experimentation) to the development of knowledge were all central to the critique of society which furnished the ideological base for the rise of capitalism and bourgeois or liberal democracy. I am not claiming that every use of these concepts was offered and intended as a critique of feudal social relations and as a support for the growing capitalist order. Luther and Calvin, for example, do not qualify as democrats, but their concepts of inner freedom contributed to the individualistic concept of freedom so necessary to the justification of our present social order.

All contemporary educational theories are faced with a cluster of problems that are political, economic, ideological and philosophical in nature. With respect to the political, economic and social problems it is generally assumed that a solution can be reached within the given social order. But if the major pressing social problems are viewed as contradictions of the system which cannot be resolved short of a basic transformation of the economic, political and power relations of the society, the problems of educational theory become increasingly distressing. For if it is true that in the abstract to will the well being of one child is to will the well being of all children, it is even more true that in the concrete more than good will is necessary.

The theory of open education is made problematic by its relation to its own history and by the contradictions and problems of our democratic capitalist social order. The social order has had two historical problems. First it had to establish itself. Second, it has had to maintain and justify itself. The values which give it ideological validation once functioned to attack feudalism. Now they justify a system that clearly has never made universal and concrete, liberty and justice for all.

The humane concern for the kindly and intelligent treatment of children permeates the history of 'progressive education' of which open education is a current variant. I intend to demonstrate that the expression of the basic problems faced today by open education existed in the writing of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the major thinker in the open education tradition. What existed as contradictory tendencies in Rousseau's thought, but were overcome by him philosophically, now exist as contradictory tendencies in society and are not overcome either in theory or practice by open education. This in essence is the thesis of this

essay. Open education itself will not be treated until the latter half of the essay; some analysis of educational theory, the nature of contemporary society, and the thought of Rousseau shall first be presented.

An educational theory is always a potential, if not explicit, criticism of society. The easiest way to demonstrate this is to go to the historical record. The first comprehensive theory of education in Western civilization is *The Republic*. This work is clearly a critical response to then current social thought and practice of which education is taken to be an important aspect. We could then analyze all other major educational theories and the odds are very high that we would find that all of them speak in a critical fashion about some actual or recommended set of social aims and practices.

However, as important as the genesis of a practice is for determining its meaning we must show that there is something in the very content of education that makes its theory a critic of general social practice. This is easily done when we consider the nature of education itself. Education is a normative set of social practices. The theory of these practices both explains and justifies these practices and also functions as a guide for their continued existence. Justifications and recommendations respecting educational practice (including the practice of theorizing about education) speak to some envisioned good for individual and social well being with respect to the knowledge to be transmitted to the young, the skills which are to be mastered, the attitudes and dispositions which are to be acquired (as well as those to be rejected) by the young.

In order for educational theory *not* to be an actual or potential critic of society there would have to exist a peculiar social order in which (1) there could be no development beyond a given state of belief, knowledge, mode of production and class relations; (2) there could be only one accurate or true description of this social order; (3) there could be only one well articulated set of social norms having only one interpretation which would be recognized as true by all members of society; and (4) there could be no aspect of the educational theory not realized in social practice. Although it might be fun to further this line of thought and develop the notion of some Laplace-like philosopher of education in the sky with total control of all future events, we may do well to stop here on the assumption that it is now understood that the theory of a normative set of social practices is a potential if not explicit critic of society. It is easy to understand in abstract fashion that educational theory is a form of social criticism. What must be discerned is the kind of social criticism contained within any specific educational theory. The particular questions which will concern us when we examine the theory of open education are those which hold for the examination of any theory of education. On what premises and understandings about human nature, the nature and social function of knowledge, is it based? What interpretation is given to the relation of social classes and the meaning of these relations with respect to access to power, goods and values? How does the theory interpret the function of education itself with respect to the reproduction of the major ideology of the social system and the maintenance of the level of technology and production? We must also ask to what degree is the educational theory self-conscious or reflexive? Can it explain itself? Does the theory contain within its own content an analysis of its history, its sources, its support and its function especially with respect to the state of knowledge, ideology, and the relation of classes both at the time of its origin and at any other time in its history? Is there expressed in the theory an awareness that though educational theories express themselves in the language

of universal values a particular expression of these values is always just that, a particular and therefore partial (incomplete and not impartial) expression of human need and interest? And finally, does the theory itself understand that although it may present itself, as some do, as concerned only with questions of means and not the ends or aims of education, it is still a value laden component of the political telos?

In order to understand the meaning of the criticism, implicit or explicit, offered our society by the theory of open education we have to know what kind of society ours is. Our society is still a capitalist society in essence. Barrington Moore, Jr, describes capitalism in its classical sense: 'The proclaimed principle of capitalist society is that the unrestricted use of private property for personal enrichment necessarily produces through the mechanism of the market steadily increasing wealth and welfare for society as a whole.'[2] That the economy is now managed, that the state is involved in the economy in ways never contemplated by early theorists of capitalism, that the proclaimed principle is probably not believed in by great numbers, that the existence of 'welfare' measures demonstrate that the pure capitalism of classical liberal theory does not now exist are, I believe, all true. Nevertheless, the 'unrestricted use of private property for personal enrichment' means in actual practice that the prime motive of the system is to produce goods for profit, not for humane use. The justification of the system is that production for profit is the best guarantee of the realization of humane values and goods. The values freedom, equality, justice, and the free and happy pursuit of property have functioned in the past several centuries to undercut feudalism and to justify and support the establishment of capitalist democracy. Although the access to economic and political power shifted as feudalism was replaced by capitalism, it is clear that equal access to these values was never in the cards for the working class. The exploitation of labor, both domestic and colonial, is a necessary condition of capitalist society. The driving force of the social system has always been to direct production in the interest of increasing the rate of privately realized profit and extend markets and sources of investment. As a social system capitalism has always had the interesting problem of justifying itself as a system that is committed to and productive of the humane values while explaining or explaining away its obvious shortcomings and failures.

The philosophy of capitalism that finally emerged was that of individualist liberalism. The most cynical interpretation of this position is that it leaves all people equally free to sleep under the bridge. The truth of this insight is not to be denied so much as to be recognized as incomplete. The historical necessity of this philosophic position is stated by Harold Laski.[3]

> New class relations, in their turn, require a new philosophy to justify the habits they impose. The movement from feudalism to capitalism is a movement from a world in which individual well-being is regarded as the outcome of action socially controlled to one in which social well-being is regarded as the outcome of action individually controlled…. The whole ethos of capitalism, in a word, is its effort to free the owner of the instruments of production from the need to obey rules which inhibit his full exploitation of them. The rise of liberalism is the rise of a doctrine which seeks to justify the operations of that ethos.

To say that liberalism became the philosophy of the new social order is not to say that it has undergone no changes in content through time, nor is it to claim that it sprang up clearly defined with no inner tensions in its own development. Rousseau, who made great contributions to the development of bourgeois thought, is known by most as an advocate

of education that is carried on by tutor and pupil, the aim being the untarnished and unrestricted development of the child as an individual. But this is only part of the story. As a social philosopher, and one of the great social contract theorists, he sought the theoretical foundations for community based on true values. He is not presented here as a philosopher of established capitalist society, but as a precursor of the French revolution. However, the problems he faced up to intellectually are in many ways similar to those which plague us. The way in which he attempted to resolve them should help us see more clearly the state of educational theory today, and especially the status of open education. The educational insights and pedagogical recommendations he made two centuries ago are still much of the common sense of educational theory today, especially that of the progressive and open variation.

We have said that in the writing of Rousseau can be found a sharp expression of the problems faced by educational theory in democratic bourgeois society. Karl Löwith has made a claim about Rousseau that has even broader scope.[4]

> Rousseau's writings contain the first and clearest statement of the human problem of bourgeois society. It consists in the fact that man, in bourgeois society, is not a unified whole. On the one hand, he is a private individual, and on the other, a citizen of the state, for bourgeois society has a problematic relationship to the state. Ever since Rousseau, the incongruity between them has been a fundamental problem of all modern theories of the state and society.

The problem exists because the human being is now recognized by law to be an individual with guaranteed rights. Were this not the case, were the human being considered only as an exemplification of his place in the social system, inseparable from his role and status as ascribed by the social system (with rights ascribed him via natural law philosophy) the conflict could not occur as described above. Rousseau's formulation of the problem in *Émile* is quite simple.[5]

> Consistency is plainly impossible when we seek to educate a man for others, instead of for himself. If we have to combat either nature or society, we must choose between making a man or making a citizen. We cannot make both. There is an inevitable conflict of aims, from which come two opposing forms of education: the one communal and public, the other individual and domestic.

For Rousseau, then, the educational problem is a broad political problem, as it is for us. The trick for Rousseau is to figure out how to transcend the 'inevitable conflict of aim.' The way in which he does this appears to involve travelling in two different directions. There is in *Émile* the retreat to rustic individualistic education when times are bad. There is also the move to national education for morality and community when times are ideally good, as treated theoretically in his article on 'Political Economy' or when times are seen by him to be possibly good as treated in 'Considerations on the Government of Poland.'[6] What enables Rousseau to transcend theoretically the 'inevitable conflict of aim' is his belief in the innate goodness of man which leads to sympathy for his fellow man and the possibility of creating a just society or community in which the drive for property and esteem do not destroy human decency and goodness. In this community the common good which is good for all individuals can be realized; it is expressed in his concept 'the general will.' Rousseau's psychological and pedagogical insights have formed the common sense of progressive and open education views of childhood, its nature, its rights, its developmental

patterns. His recognition of the impossibility of forming both the man and the citizen, and his attempt to do the impossible, is the key political insight he offers us with respect to the nature of educational theory in our society and the theory of open education in particular.

What is open education? It is an approach to education that defines itself negatively by opposing the rigid, adult dominated, prescribed and enforced overly verbal and abstract lock-step curriculum that is said to characterize public shool education. Positively defined, open education rests upon the belief that the child is a person with rights that are to be respected, the child is a source of imaginative, exploratory activity capable of learning and enjoying his learning about the world and himself. Physical activity is of the essence with respect to the education of young children. Their play is their work and much physical and manipulative activity as well as psychological development with respect to readiness are preconditions of the acquisition of knowledge in its abstract formulations.

The editors of *Open Education: A Sourcebook for Parents and Teachers* describe open education in these terms:[7]

> open education differs conspicuously from methods of teaching and learning that are now widely prevalent. Children in an open education classroom learn and work at their own individual initiative in activity areas for reading, writing, mathematics, science, nature, art, music, dramatics, crafts. They freely talk and move about in their own room, corridors, and other classrooms. Their written, graphed, and painted works adorn the walls in profusion. Their teacher sometimes has them all come together for a story or song, viewing work that they've done, making rules or plans, or setting off on a field trip.

The authors continue by describing the classroom as a place where[8]

> freedom, responsibility, self-discipline, and consideration for others are learned by having to be practiced all the time. This is a classroom that accommodates the full range of individual differences, where individuality can be richly prized and given full expression—to such an extent that children of different ages often work together in it. This is a classroom where all children learn respect and trust by being treated with respect and trust. … Evidence is already in on how children regard an open classroom, once they get used to it. Put simply, they love it.

Open classroom education is frequently described as involving a 'change in atmosphere— toward more humaneness and understanding, toward more encouragement and trust.'[9] This message is not new and none of the knowledgeable advocates of open education claim that it is. The point, however, is not the age of the doctrine or approach, but its meaning.

The cultural and political contradictions expressed in the thought of Rousseau appear today as open education is defined in opposition to 'free school' education.

Roland Barth, a well known student of open education, begins to define open education by describing its methods and practices and by contrasting open education with 'free schools.' Although the methods used in each may at times be the same, the justification for these methods will differ. The methods of open education, Barth states,[10]

> are rooted in public education. They stem from the observation of children in educational settings (i.e., schools). The focus is on the pedagogical domain of thinking and learning. Decisions are made on the basis of insights from developmental and cognitive psychology, with the overriding concern being to help children learn more effectively and to give them easier access to their own abilities.

Contrasted with open education are free schools.[11]

> Free schools have usually been established to provide an alternative to the cultural setting characterizing most public schools. In free schools, diverse styles of life are explored with the purpose of permitting and encouraging alternatives to flourish without restrictions from past, or even present, cultural norms.

Barth's analysis is not political; it is cultural. What emerges is a division between those who are obtaining a more humane type of education within the public school system, within the general culture as accepted, and those children who are being educated outside the generally accepted cultural norms. The distinction being educated within or without the general culture has a theoretical basis which is presented in explicitly political language by Allen Graubard. Here we find the development of free schools closely related to recent political, economic and ideological criticism of society.[12]

> I think that the free school development represents in education the same spirit of radical critique that has appeared in many sectors of American society over the past decade, beginning with the demand for an end to injustice represented by the rise of the civil rights movement. In order to create a truly humane and liberating education, we must be in the process of creating a truly humane and liberating social order.

The 'radical critique' of the past decade has been an exceedingly complex affair. The temptation is to leave communication of its content to intuition rather than description or analysis. However, a brief description can be managed without falsifying the 'critique.' Its expression has had at its foundation at any given time thoughts and attitudes based in some if not all of the following: 'new' and 'old' left critiques of society; anarchistic thought; drug culture approaches to life; rock music; gestalt psychology; psychoanalytic theory; humane disgust with racist practices; hatred and/or fear of the Vietnamese war; disillusionment with the normal political processes. But the overall message was simple to read on the manifest level: society was sick, if not rotten, at the core. There is not a direct line or logical connection from each of the above positions to support of free schools, but the philosophic and political underpinnings of the free school movement find their roots in the general view of life expressed above.

The well known advocate and analyst of British open education practice, Joseph Featherstone, understands well that social and political issues are relevant to open education. Expressing concern with the 'faddishness' of American educational concerns he states,[13]

> The appearance of new issues—such as the movement for open, informal schools—does not cancel out old issues. In fact, 'open education' will be a sham unless those supporting it also address themselves to recurring, fundamental problems, such as the basic inequality and racism of society. A promising atmosphere for children's learning is unlikely to come about in a school systematically starved for funds; or in school systems practicing institutional racism. The most pressing American educational dilemma is not the lack of informality in classroom: it is whether Americans can live together as a more equal, multi-racial society. Issues like school integration and community control have not disappeared, to be replaced by issues like humane education.

Featherstone is, of course, correct. All thoughtful people should address themselves to the 'recurring, fundamental problems' of society. But he does not address the theoretical issue:

how to relate education in theory and practice to these problems. Our particular concern now is to consider the manner in which open education treats these problems.

If we look to the writings of the advocates of open education there is practically no explicit social criticism presented as organically connected to the theory of open education. There is recognition that children will live as adults in a world in which change will be of the essence and therefore they must be prepared to cope with such a world. In part this can be done by education if it insures that the appropriate intellectual and affective characteristics have opportunity to develop during schooling. What has happened, as we have seen, is that the critique of society that was long central to the great sources of open education theory has now become isolated and restricted to the theoretical formulations of those who urge disaffiliation from the public schools.

One exception to the lack of social criticism in open education literature occurs in Charles Silberman's *Crisis in the Classroom,*[14] a popular criticism of American education that gives considerable attention and support to British open education practice and argues that 'it can happen here.' Silberman recognizes the existence of slums and poverty, the banality of the mass media, the failure of legal and health services to reach those who cannot pay for them. Silberman also claims that the educational system that provides the workers for the social services has not given and does not give proper attention to the social morality of the institutions they support. But Silberman is a sleight of hand artist. He criticizes and then when he explains the reasons for our social ills the criticism and the ills somehow disappear. The social ills disappear because they are either permanent aspects of the human condition with no apparent connection to political, economic and ideological realities, and to be lived with as such, or they are ultimately rooted in a state of mind. There is no doubt in Silberman's mind that there is a sense of crisis about the state of the social order. To a large degree this is due to an increase in affluence over the past decades; there is now a 'revolution of rising expectations' that informs our social thought. What once we lived with as necessary social evil we no longer accept. Contemporary technology has made most of us feel that our areas of individual choice are severely limited. The necessity of such social and political rationalization is never discussed, nor considered by Silberman. At the same time our affluent society now presents us with an 'enormous widening of choice' such that a sense of anxiety and a 'pervasive sense of uneasiness' occur. Generational conflict has existed for millennia and student power movements are at least seven centuries old. The social message has two major points. First, things are really getting better, it is only for us to understand this. Second, certain social ills have always been with us, therefore we should think twice about becoming too upset over them. Given the nature of our social problems, what is the source of our educational problems? They exist in the minds, or more accurately, in the mindlessness, of those involved:[15]

> Public schools *can* be organized to facilitate joy in learning and esthetic expression and to develop character—in the rural and urban slums no less than in the prosperous suburbs. This is no utopian hope;… What makes change possible, moreover, is that what is mostly wrong with the public schools is due not to venality or indifference or stupidity, *but to mindlessness*.

The same viewpoint is applied to an analysis of the means of mass communication:[16]

> Why the failure of the mass media? The answer is at once simple and complex. What is mostly wrong with television, newspapers, magazines, and films is what is mostly wrong with the

schools and colleges: mindlessness. At the heart of the problem, that is to say, is the failure to think seriously about purpose or consequence—the failure of people at every level to ask why they are doing what they are doing or to inquire into the consequences.

If mindlessness is the problem then we should expect a consistent man to solve the problem via the mind. Silberman does no, disappoint, he is consistent. 'If mindlessness is the central problemt the solution must lie in infusing the various educating institutions with purpose, more important, with thought about purpose, and about the ways in which techniques, content, and organization fulfill or alter purpose.'[17] Silberman concludes his peroration by saying that everyone must be stimulated 'to think about what they are doing, and why they are doing it.' Everyone refers to school personnel at all levels, to 'radio, television, and film directors and producers; newspaper, magazine, and TV journalists and executives' and 'the general public,' too. The joy of this social criticism and new social program is that there is apparently nothing in society that can make it fail, other than continued mindlessness, I assume. And this holds for improving the schools. In no way is the structure and content of education related to the needs of industry, the country's economic and political structure and need; no mention is made of the ideological dimension of thought found in the concepts of human nature that inform educational thought.[18]

> The 'necessity' that makes schooling so uniform over time and across cultures is simply the 'necessity' that stems from unexamined assumptions and unquestioned behavior. The preoccupation with order and control, the slavish adherence to the timetable and lesson plan, the obsession with routine qua routine,…the joylessness and repression,…the emphasis of the verbal and de-emphasis of the concrete,…none of these are necessary; all can be eliminated.

Questions can now be raised about my lengthy treatment of Charles Silberman as social critic. Within its self-imposed restrictions open education theory is not supposed to include explicit social criticism. Why is the analysis of Silberman necessary? It is because his puerile social analysis is a clear expression of the central problem facing, but not recognized by, open education. Open education views with concern, but in a-critical fashion, the the social totality as given and addresses itself to pedagogy. The final questions which this essay shall address are these: Is the pedagogy of open education weakened or invalidated by its lack of social perspective? Can the concepts and practices of open education not stand alone?

The answer is both yes and no. The concepts can stand alone but with diminished theoretical stature and with their potential for positive practice now heavily indebted to accident, chance and good luck. Open educators, like their predecessors, are dedicated to educating the whole child. This concern implies recognition of the fragmented child. In philosophical and political contexts we speak of alienation. Open education defends against fragmentation through an activity or experience based pedagogy. This is a form of 'negative education.' In *Émile* negative education stands for the protection of the child against pedagogic moves that run counter to his nature as a child. He is not to have imposed upon him knowledge and morality in their adult, abstract formulations prior to the establishment of the physical and experiential preconditions for such learning. At first glance this appears to be only good common sense, now apparently supported by developmental psychology. But in the thought of Rousseau negative education and the protection of the child are not directed against adult culture and pedagogy in the abstract. The pomp and falsity of the high court and upper-class culture is the historical object of Rousseau's criticism. The protection of

the child is the pedagogical method incorporating and expressing the sociopolitical assault. In the thought of John Dewey, too, the protection of the child is to be insured by the child's acquisition of a method of inquiry which is ultimately a mode of social intelligence. Social thought is inseparable from pedagogical method.

Negative education in open education formulations is reduced to psychologically based method. The true educational protection of the child today must include more than psychological security and the protection from instructional trespass against the developmental sequence of learning ability as observed by Piaget and others. Concepts which can unearth and make clear the essence of social reality must inform education. There is a protection to be found in the critical intellect. The problem facing any theory of education today in our society is to face up to the reality of the political and economic power structure and at the same time maintain its commitment to social justice and truth. What is most disturbing about open education's default here is not the lack of intent to make seven and eight year olds radical critics of capitalist democracy. Intellect does not develop without concepts (critical intellect needing critical concepts, obviously) and open education theorists offer no grounds for the development of curriculum that can lead older children to form a socially critical intelligence. A pleasant, decent childhood that makes learning a pleasure and puts a premium on curiosity and individual interest is to be lauded. But this by itself does not speak to the premises and criteria that must be used when later choice is made about the relation of pedagogy, knowledge and social reality. I cannot keep from mind the thought that Piaget's genetic epistemology expresses ideologically the pragmatic middle-class desire for social change. Everything will work out well, and without undue conflict, if the proper order of things is intelligently aided and permitted to emerge without the intrusion of ignorance, accident and undue wilfullness on the part of the dissidents.

A strange paradox is developing in the world of educational theory. Open education with its critical past and its humane content can get very close to aping the function of its 'positivist' and 'behaviorist' competitors. Many approaches to education present themselves today as speaking only to means and methods, but not to the general aims or goals of education. Behavioral objectives, competency based teacher education programs, systems analysis methods, and programmed instruction, for example, all claim the capability of realizing instructional and educational aims in general. These mercenaries claim to be value free instruments. No educator will opt for bad aims, therefore to the degree that the methodological approaches work they can facilitate the achievement of the good. So runs the argument. Clearly at this time these approaches express the economic system's prime concern for 'exchange value,' that is, production for profit, and the ideological impact of the system's essence in other realms of life. What separates these approaches from open education? All recognize the importance of activity as central to learning and other human function. The mercenary theories are rooted in experimental and empirical approaches to knowledge. They are committed to the discovery of knowledge and lawfulness in all areas of existence. These are attitudes that have contributed to the development of our secular and democratic capitalist order.

Two major factors separate the open educators from the mercenaries. The first is the willingness of open educators to use the language of choice and self-control of behavior. The second factor is the history of the open education tradition which gives prime importance to the evaluation and analysis of social goals and aims in educational theory. Stress

on belief in the individual who is essentially free and capable of directing his own life verges on sentimentality in educational theory if the belief is not grounded in a critical and realistic appraisal of social conditions. The appraisal must be critical because the major ideology of our society can not be accepted on its own terms if one is to hold commitment to truth and social justice. The second factor exists today mostly in potential. Open education can re-establish its connection with the best of its past and its truth only if it rethinks its own basic concepts.

The overly rigid educational structures and activities that open education attacks on humane pedagogical grounds are related to the social reification and class based inequities necessary to support the present social order. A humane and critical social theory of education and society can incorporate the best of open education—its commitment to freedom, activity, experimentation, humane authority, the child's right to a sense of worth and fulfillment in the present—in the more relevant, because more penetrating, concepts of praxis, self-objectification, alienation, class conflict, ideology, and demystification and critique.

The theoretical task of educational theory is, of course, impossible. It must think large and attempt to move the world with a small, firm lever. But if it turn its back on its responsibilities and settle, say, for the kindly management of the education of young children in a society which may no longer need oppressive schools to sort out the winners from the losers, then it both discards its fulcrum and plants its feet firmly in the air as it goes about its task.

Notes

1   I use the phrase 'theory of education' the way the phrase 'philosophy of education' is sometimes used. The phrases are interchangeable if it is understood that philosophy is both the search for fundamental understanding and a guide to practice.

2   Barrington Moore, Jr, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy,* Beacon Press, 1967, p. 20.

3   Harold J.Laski, *The Rise of European Liberalism,* Allen & Unwin, 1962, pp. 21–2, 20.

4   Karl Löwith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche,* translated from the German by David E.Green, Anchor Books, 1967, p. 232.

5   Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Émile,* translated and edited by William Boyd, Teachers College Press, 1971, p. 13.

6   Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 'A Discourse on Political Economy' in Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and Discourses,* translated and with an Introduction by G.D.H.Cole, Dutton, 1950, and see also Rousseau's, 'Considerations on the Government of Poland' in *The Minor Educational Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* elected and translated by William Boyd, Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1962.

7   Ewald B.Nyquist and Gene R.Hawes, ed., *Open Education,* Bantam Books, 1972, p. 1.

8   *Ibid.,* p. 2.

9   Charles E.Silberman, 'Introduction' in *The Open Classroom Reader,* ed. Charles E.Silberman, Vintage Books, 1973, p. xvi.

10 Roland S.Barth, *Open Education and the American School,* Agathon, 1972, p. 13.

11 *Ibid.* p. 12.

12 Allen Graubard, *Free the Children,* Vintage Books, 1974, p. xi.

13 Joseph Featherstone 'Relevance to the American Setting' in Nyquist and Hawes, *op. cit.,* p. 101.

14 Charles E.Silberman, *Crisis in the Classroom,* Vintage Books, 1971.
15   *Ibid.* p. 10.
16 *Ibid.,* p. 36.
17 *Ibid.,* p. 11
18 *Ibid.,* pp. 207–8.

10

Open education: an aspirin for the plague

Donald Arnstine

Open education is the latest in a long line of efforts to reform American schools. Its chances of success can be gauged by recalling similar efforts in the recent past. Progressive education was intended to turn schools around by removing the dead weight of tradition and attending to the needs of individual children. Education for life adjustment was intended to make schools useful in the lives of young people who weren't headed for college. The structure of the disciplines was offered as strong medicine for the ills that allegedly resulted from too much progressive education and too much life adjustment.

Despite all this innovation, the schools have remained remarkably untouched by it all. Neither federal research grants nor philanthropic foundations, new theories of instruction nor innovative technologies, have left a lasting impression on schools. The curriculum is not much different from what it was at the turn of the century, and the principal is still captain of the ship. David Hawkins has accurately summarized the character of American schools:[1]

> neither the influence of the kindergarten nor the influence of the colleges of education was enough to make any real dent in the American public school system…it's just very resistant, it has lots of built-in feedback mechanisms for avoiding change. You can get in and you can do something and things will sail along very nicely but two years later you won't find much residue of effect.

If we look to the past for a precedent, there is little reason to hope that open classrooms will make a significant difference in American education. But why is this so? Must we suppose that these various reform movements, past and present, were lacking in sound ideas, lacking in appeal, or lacking in committed support? Probably not. But reform movements do confront school systems the operation of which absorbs innovations and so alters them to fit what exists that only an expert could discover that anything new had ever been introduced.

Schools and school systems are bureaucratically organized. There is a hierarchy of command that extends downward from the school board and its chief executive officer, the superintendent, to his staff and then down again to building principals and teachers. The personnel in this system are highly specialized; they become certified and then appointed on the basis of technical qualifications. Salaries are usually fixed for each type of position in the system, and increments and promotions are regularized and depend heavily on seniority.

Conforming as it does to the classical criteria which are distinctive to bureaucracies,[2] a school system is by its very nature resistant to change. It is designed, like an army or an

automobile plant, for efficient operation, as long as clear-cut orders originating at the apex of the system can filter down to trigger action in the rank and file. However, the only commands that are both intelligible and acceptable at the lower levels of the hierarchy, and that are therefore likely to lead to action, are commands which make no significant change in what is already being done. On the other hand, the design of the system thwarts any effort to originate change at the bottom of the hierarchy, since such efforts—if they are at all significant—are bound to conflict with the standard operating procedures of the system. The bureaucracy swallows up new ideas, changing them so as to conform to the details of its own operation. Thus to imagine that teachers who wanted to run open classrooms could make a difference in schooling is like hoping that we could arrest the course of a plague by administering aspirins to its victims.

This essay will examine the relation between the concept of open education and the fact of bureaucracy in schools. The main question guiding the examination is this: under what conditions could open classrooms be both widely and effectively introduced into American schools? I will first very briefly set forth what appears to be common to most conceptions of open education. On the basis of this conceptualization, we will see why it would be disastrous to try to introduce open classrooms on a school-wide or state-wide basis. This discussion will, in turn, help us to understand more clearly the conditions under which open classrooms could be introduced into schools. These conditions are essentially two: freedom for teachers to make decisions about their work, and education for teachers about the issues on which decisions need to be made. The achievement of both of these conditions depends upon the more effective organization of teachers and teacher educators. This will take time and effort, but without the organization that is required to develop teachers who are both knowledgeable and free, open education will remain little more than a temporary and local relief for a seriously ailing system of schools.

1

It is doubtful that any two descriptions of open education would agree in all respects, but what is probably common to them all is the belief that education must be based upon children's own needs and interests. Support for this commitment is based on both psychological and moral grounds. In the first instance, it is claimed that long-term changes in a pupil's attitudes and behavior cannot be expected unless those who guide his learning enlist his own interests and concerns. In the second instance, it is claimed that the attempt to influence a pupil in spite of his interests and concerns, or contrary to them, violates his integrity as a person. Thus such attempts are said to be not only practically ineffective, but morally wrong as well.

While the merits of these claims will not be argued here, it can readily be seen how they serve as a basis for many of the other distinguishing features of open education. If the needs and concerns of individual pupils are paramount, then it follows that pupils will be encouraged to learn at their own rates, and according to their own particular learning styles. It follows, too, that learning is likely to be a more social and co-operative affair, and a more overtly active one—the more so when learners are younger and less mature. And it follows that the activities in which learning is to take place are likely to be more enjoyed by the learners. When children's own needs and interests become focal, the teacher is no longer

a giver of lessons, an overseer, and a judge, but instead becomes more of a diagnostician, stimulator, and guide.

Perhaps most important for the purposes of the present discussion, open education so conceived is directly opposed to the idea that a curriculum or a set of studies can usefully be imposed upon a learner. However worthy a set of studies might be to those who selected them, they are nonetheless without *intrinsic* value; thus the imposition of studies upon pupils without their participation or consent can result only in passive compliance or outright rejection—both of the content taught and of those who teach it. The external imposition of school activities is anathema to all conceptions of open education.[3]

If it is counterproductive to impose a set of studies upon pupils, it should be equally counterproductive to impose study plans upon teachers. That is, if a teacher is told, without his own participation or consent, to teach this or that content, or to teach in this or that manner, then the teacher can be expected to respond in much the same way as pupils respond to an imposed curriculum. Little can be added to what John Dewey wrote on this issue when he compared teachers to the subjects of an autocratic government:[4]

> Can we expect a different kind of psychology to actuate teachers? Where there is little power, there is correspondingly little sense of positive responsibility. It is enough to do what one is told to do sufficiently well to escape flagrant unfavourable notice. About larger matters, a spirit of passivity is engendered. In some cases, indifference passes into evasion of duties when not directly under the eye of a supervisor; in other cases, a carping, rebellious spirit is engendered.

If the external imposition of a plan of action is as likely to produce results as demoralizing for teachers as it does for students, then it will matter little how benign is the design of that plan. Imposing open classrooms on teachers could not be expected to have much happier educational results than imposing upon children a required curriculum, standardized disciplinary procedures, or armed counselors. Thus it is chilling to imagine a state legislature or a state superintendent of public instruction declaring that all public schools will henceforth operate open classrooms. Under such conditions of widespread imposition, it is doubtful if any of the aims of those currently supporting open education would be realized. For the same reasons, it would be just as fruitless for a school district to impose open classrooms on its schools or even for a single school to impose them upon its teachers.

The existence of an open classroom requires, more than anything else, a teacher who understands it and who is committed to operating it. If such a teacher is successful and is able to publicize the work of the class, and if he or she can engender interest and support from colleagues and from the school administration, then open education may begin to 'infect' a whole school. In succeeding years, several teachers may work together in operating open classrooms.[5] Only in this way—gradually and with the enlightened consent of those who participate—can open education be expected to produce the results sought by its adherents.

But we must still ask, how could a committed teacher find the means and the resources to operate an open classroom? And where would such a teacher come from in the first place? These questions raise two rather ominous matters: school organization and teacher education. As long as the former remains a rigid bureaucracy and the latter continues to follow the apprenticeship model, the possibility of widespread educational change seems remote. We turn, then, to an examination of open education in the light of these two factors.

2

The organization of schools has already been described as bureaucratic. A wealth of literature documenting this fact already exists,[6] so it need only be further observed that a teacher who tried to introduce open education in his classroom would probably run afoul of the bureaucracy. He would be *expected* to use the texts already adopted in the school; to follow an established curriculum guide; and to administer standardized examinations, regardless of what his students had studied. And should the teacher overcome these obstacles, he would still have to satisfy other teachers afraid of the more independent attitudes developing in his students, or fearful that his students would not be prepared adequately for *their* instruction. Beyond the school, there are parents, fearful lest their children be used as guinea pigs, and employers, fearful that students' attitudes will be inappropriate for the jobs that are offered them.[7]

These obstacles to innovation are sometimes rationalized in terms of peoples' 'natural disinclination' to change, but this does not explain the situation so much as explain it away. Here are a few examples of what is meant. There is no lack of funds for reading materials that would stimulate the interest of children, but the public is reluctant to make the money available because of what the bureaucracy has already spent on texts that suit almost no one. A teacher's own colleagues may complain about how unprepared their students are when school begins in September, but the complaints would disappear if the bureaucracy had not established standard age-graded curricular expectations against which all children's performance is to be measured. And parents' apprehensions about their children's chances of entering college might never exist were it not for the breadth of the educational bureaucracy which makes college entrance dependent upon children's performances and decisions as early as age fourteen. Thus nothing inherent in human nature, but rather the bureaucratic organization of schools, is what discourages efforts to innovate. For this reason, the open classroom is unlikely to find any secure place in American schools until the school bureaucracy itself is substantially weakened or dismantled.

Freedom for teachers to make their own decisions about how best to manage the education of children in their charge is a necessary condition for the introduction of open classrooms in schools. But that freedom cannot coexist with a bureaucratic organization of schools. In a bureaucracy, policy is made at the top of the hierarchy; in open classrooms, teachers and students must be responsible for the policies which govern their educational undertakings. To be sure, it is not *just* because open education requires it that teachers should have such freedom; as Dewey observed:[8]

> the democratic principle requires that every teacher should have some regular and organic way in which he can, directly or through representatives democratically chosen, participate in the formation of the controlling aims, methods and materials of the school of which he is a part.

The implementation of open education thus faces a dilemma. It cannot effectively be imposed upon classrooms from the top of the hierarchy, and it cannot be introduced on any significant scale by individual classroom teachers. Like any other educational change, it is dependent upon fundamental change in the organization of schools. This change will

not be initiated by the school administration, which is committed to the maintenance of the system as it is, nor will it be initiated by legislators or school boards, who are wholly dependent for whatever they know about schools upon school administrators. It is likely that only teachers themselves can loosen the grip of school bureaucracies on education—not acting alone, as well-intentioned individuals, but by exercising the power that can be brought to bear when they act together in an organized way.[9]

Once they become able to make decisions about policy, there is no guarantee that teachers will all establish open classrooms. But unless organized teachers become bureaucratized themselves, their acquisition of power will *enable* them to try open education in their classrooms.

3

Even when the educational bureaucracy is weakened and freedom is acquired, there is no reason to suppose that open education will suddenly flourish. The conception of freedom as merely lack of constraint serves us poorly, for those who are unprepared to act can do little with freedom so conceived. Only a few teachers are ready at this time to operate open classrooms, and the removal of bureaucratic constraints would find most teachers still engaged in their customary routines:[10]

> He knows little who supposes that freedom…is ensured by relaxation of conventions, censorships, and intolerant dogmas. The relaxation supplies opportunity. But while it is a necessary it is not a sufficient condition. *Freedom* of thought denotes freedom of *thinking;* specific doubting, inquiring, suspense, creating and cultivating of tentative hypotheses, trials or experimentings that are unguaranteed and that involve risks of waste, loss, and error.

The fact is that at the present time, American teachers are not prepared to work in open classrooms. Besides demanding great sensitivity to different kinds of children, considerable patience, and a sense of humour, teaching in open classrooms calls for a clear idea of educational goals worth striving for, an ability and inclination to work co-operatively with other people, and a willingness to risk trying out—and sometimes abandoning—new ideas. But institutions that prepare teachers seldom offer opportunities to acquire these skills, attitudes, and understandings. Instead, they prepare prospective teachers to take their places obediently in a system that takes its goals for granted, that isolates teachers in self-contained classrooms and children at their own desks, and that imposes heavy penalties for the failures which are the occasional—but inevitable—result of innovation.[11]

In the first place, if a teacher in an open classroom is to take seriously children's interests in the planning of studies, he must have clear criteria of educational value in order to offer justifiable guidance to children. Yet teacher education institutions, emphasizing the transmission of techniques and the emulation of models, offer no more than a single course—and often less—in the study of educational theory. And this study is usually so separated from any experience in working with young people that it is thought by many prospective teachers to be useless.[12]

Secondly, open classrooms create conditions where teachers must work co-operatively—with their students, with colleagues, and often with members of the community. But nearly all institutions that prepare teachers offer work on a wholly individual basis—just as it is offered in elementary and secondary schools. The prospective teacher registers for

courses in teacher education in which he writes his own papers, takes his own exams, does his own student teaching, and gets his own grade for his own work. He is seldom rewarded for working cooperatively with other people, and his preparation gives him neither experience nor assistance in facing the multitude of problems which normally arise when people try to work together.

Finally, a classroom could not be called 'open' unless teachers and students were willing to try out new ideas and willing to risk failure. But the attitudes and dispositions necessary for such experimentation are just opposite to those cultivated in typical programs of teacher preparation. In the latter, student teachers are often required to follow out their previously-made lesson plan, no matter how unsuccessful its translation into classroom activities. Whatever ideas of their own they may have, student teachers are expected to prepare pupils to achieve well in terms of the standard curriculum. And it is usually taken for granted that whatever the student teacher thinks or feels, the beliefs and actions of the 'master teacher' constitute proper pedagogical practice. If the student teacher seriously questions his master teacher's behaviour, he generally keeps his criticism to himself, or complains privately to his own peers. For his first concern is to survive the program and become licensed to teach, and survival does not usually permit criticism of the master teacher.

In short, teacher education—with its de-emphasis of theory, its focus on techniques, and its dependence on student teaching—is largely a matter of apprenticeship. That student teaching is itself a typically ineffective procedure is not a new idea;[13] even more important, the apprenticeship model produces teachers who can at best teach as they were taught. They become craftsmen, perhaps, but not professionals[14]—which is to say, they are not prepared to make the decisions of policy and practice without which an open classroom cannot survive.

4

The discussion in the previous two sections was intended to indicate two conditions which are prerequisite to any widespread introduction of open classrooms in American schools. First, the way in which decisions are made in schools and school systems must be reorganized. The administrative bureaucracy which controls the policies and in the long run the practices of schools must be undermined or disabled. To the extent that this occurs, teachers will be able to make the classroom decisions which lie at the heart of open education. Second, teachers must acquire attitudes and understandings in their own education that will provide the willingness and the confidence to experiment with open education. From a practical point of view, this latter prerequisite for open classrooms involves two phases: one of teacher preparation, and one of inservice education for teachers.

No matter how a person is prepared before he becomes a fulltime teacher, he enters a situation in which he is likely to get only a minimum of support for his innovative ideas. 'Forget what you were taught in college,' he may be advised, 'and follow our example, because this is the real world of schools.'[15] Experienced teachers are not necessarily opposed to open education on pedagogical or ideological grounds, but their survival has often depended on observing the regulations and rituals of the school bureaucracy. They are not likely to encourage new teachers to try ideas that they abandoned themselves many years ago. Thus the new teacher approaches the idea of trying an open classroom with two

strikes against him. His preparation was probably inadequate, and his natural desire to succeed at a new job will discourage him from taking risks. But the attitude he is likely to find among his more experienced colleagues is often the third strike, and the idea of open education is usually retired.

It is necessary, then, for school faculties to be enabled to reconsider their aims and practices as teachers. Only this reconsideration will permit and encourage the serious entertainment of open education as a genuine option, and only this reconsideration will promote in experienced teachers a frame of mind that would support the innovative efforts of their younger colleagues. Experienced teachers sometimes undertake study in education, and sometimes participate in workshops. Unfortunately, these studies nearly always focus on specific instructional problems and techniques: hyperactive children or slow readers, new math games or how to get the most out of the audiovisual equipment. While teachers' expertise is sometimes improved as a result of these experiences, they are seldom encouraged or helped to examine the more fundamental questions, such as what is worth studying, how important is individualized work, or who should be permitted to see another person's evaluation of a pupil. If open education is to get a serious trial, these are the questions that must be asked, answered, and argued. No degree of polish in instructional techniques will transform a teacher from a dispenser of curriculum and a supervisor of routines to the diagnostician, stimulator, and guide demanded by open education.

In short, the in-service education of teachers is just as important to the development of open classrooms as is the education of prospective teachers. Without an appropriate education, there is little reason to expect teachers to experiment with open classrooms no matter how much freedom they wrest from the school bureaucracy. Unprepared, teachers will behave in classrooms just as *their* teachers did, and the teachers of the teachers before them—even if the decisions are their own instead of somebody else's.

The scope of this discussion does not permit a detailed account of the manner in which teacher education and in-service education should proceed.[16] But I will indicate some general features which would distinguish what is needed from what is usually offered as teacher education. Most important, as suggested earlier, is the integration of theory with practice. If educational theory—philosophical, psychological, sociological, and historical—has any value at all, its value will make a difference in how one understands and conducts practice. But insofar as theory is studied apart from the situations in which prospective teachers interact with children and youth, its practical relevance cannot be seen or understood, except by the most imaginative. Graduate study and research may with profit focus exclusively on the development of theory, but prospective teachers should not be asked to study theory independent of practical settings. Conversely, they should not be plunged into practical situations unless they have an opportunity for the guided utilization of theory in the analysis of those situations.

A few other points about the education of teachers are also worth mentioning here. First, those who are going to teach must themselves be enabled to make significant choices about their own learning. It is often claimed that a primary aim of public schools—if not the foremost aim—is to help children learn to make decisions. But teachers can be of no help in furthering this aim unless they themselves have acquired decision-making skills. The only way to acquire them is to practice them, but at many colleges there is little opportunity to do this, for students are overwhelmed with course requirements for majors, for minors,

for breadth, for professional training, and so on. If university officials are unwilling to let young adults make their own decisions—even though they might turn out to be wasteful or unwise—then it is idle to talk of public schools' having any role to play in this crucial area.

Second, prospective teachers must be enabled to work in groups—partly because much of the significant work that is done in the world is an outcome of cooperative efforts, and partly because education cannot be open unless people are encouraged and helped to work cooperatively. Work in groups is not, of course, relevant only to the development of social skills and attitudes. It is important also for the development of scholarly work: four undergraduates working independently will normally produce four similar—and similarly superficial—'research' reports for a class, but the same four people working together *may* produce a single piece of work of far greater intellectual substance. It may be unnecessary to add that it would be contradictory to evaluate people individually for the quality of a piece of work that is produced cooperatively. Hence any serious effort to promote work and study in groups must be accompanied by a re-examination of the current, individually-based system of grading.

Finally, prospective teachers need to have first-hand contacts with children in settings other than academic ones. If it is important for teachers to learn what young people are like, and to learn how to respond to them as people rather than merely as pupils, then the boundaries of teacher education must extend beyond the schools. In school, children's behaviour is a function of their reaction (conformity, indifference, or rejection) to the constraints of school routines and regulations. Acquaintance with children under these conditions can only be partial. Many children are at their best and their most resourceful when they are out of school. A part of the responsibility of teacher education institutions, then, should be to help prospective teachers meet with young people in their neighborhoods, at community centers or other public places, and perhaps even in one another's homes. Open classrooms are expected to take account of children's needs and interests; only by venturing beyond the classroom will people learn what those needs and interests are like.

5

What makes sense in educating prospective teachers will also make sense for teachers already in service. Of course, there are significant differences between the two groups. Experienced teachers know more about how children behave in certain limited (school) contexts; some of them mistakenly believe that that is all they need to know about children. Prospective teachers, still officially students themselves, have more immediate sympathy with the needs and concerns of children; some of them mistakenly believe that nothing more is needed to guide children's learning. Thus while the content of what needs to be learned—attitudes, skills, and understandings—may be similar for both experienced and prospective teachers, the manner in which they learn it will differ.

For these reasons, it may be effective to arrange for prospective and experienced teachers to learn together, so that each might gain from the perspectives and the experience of the other. Ideally, the locus of much of this education would be the public school itself. It is there that ideas can be tried, tested, and observed. And if ideas relevant to teaching and learning are seriously tried out and discussed at the places where teachers work, they will

get more out of it than they presently do in making weekly trips to university campuses for 'in-service education.'

If a continuing dialogue about education is conducted in public schools among teachers and prospective teachers, it would constitute the most effective support conceivable for open classrooms. More important, such a dialogue would probably do far more for the immediate improvement of the quality of education in public schools than all of the specially funded programs, resources, and educational specialists put together. As indicated earlier, open education cannot be imposed successfully on teachers from above, and it is equally fruitless to try to 'sell' open education to teachers through publicity campaigns, incentive systems, and public relations programs. For if anything is 'bought' at all under such conditions, it will not be open education, but only the superficial trappings of it: individual projects, learning stations, and trips to the bathroom without official permission. But not the value commitments and understandings that lie at the heart of open education.

At the present time, two groups appear capable of providing leadership in the initiation of school-based education for teachers and prospective teachers. First, there are the departments of education at colleges and universities. If they curtail some of the wasteful course work that is offered on campus, they can start organizing professional programs around faculty members who can provide guidance in the theoretical analysis of the events that occur daily in schools. Second, there are currently existing teacher organizations: associations and unions. The more effective of these organizations already bring teachers together to discuss conditions of working; it is not much of a further step to plan other meetings in order to analyze classroom situations and examine educational aims and values.

Ideally, teacher organizations and university faculties in education might work together on problems of mutual concern. The university can supply people with expertise in the several areas of educational theory. The teacher organizations can contribute people who have been put in positions of leadership by their peers. Working together, such people could supply leadership and guidance in both of the areas that are critical to the development of open classrooms: the reorganization of schools to widen the areas of decision-making for teachers, and the education—and re-education—of teachers.

While open education may not be the panacea for all the ills of schooling, many of its principles are worth trying. But like progressive education before it, it will not get much of a trial just because its underlying ideas are attractive, or because it enlists the sympathies of people who care about children. One does not fight fire with an eye-dropper, nor stem a plague with aspirins. The way in which schools and school systems are presently organized discourages the introduction of any new ideas or practices. Thus open education, like school reform movements before it, may continue to attract sympathetic writers and yet become, like the celebrated five steps of problem-solving, just another solemn litany in teacher training classes. If this fate is to be avoided, and if anything new is to get a fair test in schools and stand a chance of survival, the school bureaucracy cannot remain the source of decisions about educational policy. Beyond that, those who teach must themselves participate in an education that allows them to consider and try out ideas supportive of open classrooms. For both of these enterprises—the weakening of the school bureaucracy and the education of teachers—strongly organized teachers will be needed. University faculties in education have the knowledge and the experience to make significant contributions to

these efforts. If they should fail to contribute, public school teachers may someday wonder what they need professors for.

Notes

1 David Hawkins, 'How to Plan for Spontaneity' in *The Open Classroom Reader,* ed. C.E.Silberman, Vintage Books, 1973, p. 488.
2 See Max Weber, 'The Essentials of Bureaucratic Organization: An Ideal-Type Construction' in *Reader in Bureaucracy,* ed. R.K.Merton *et al.,* Free Press, 1952, pp. 21–2.
3 While there may not be outright exceptions to this generalization, there are some ambiguous interpretations of it. For example, someone might ask, 'Do you mean that if Johnny isn't interested in learning to read, then you wouldn't teach it to him?' Some supporters of open education might answer, 'No, I wouldn't—at least not until he wants me to.' Others might say, 'No, not now; I would wait till later.' But some might even answer, 'No, first I would get him interested in reading.' It may be suspected that those who interpret open education in this last-mentioned way are using it as a cover for manipulating the pupil—that is, as a disguise or a sugar-coating for an imposed curriculum.
4 John Dewey, 'Democracy in the Schools' in *School and Society,* April 3? 1937; reprinted in *Intelligence in the Modern World: John Dewey's Philosophy,* ed. J.Ratner, Modern Library, 1939, p. 718.
5 For a discussion of how teachers can gain acceptance and support for their open classrooms, see Anne Bremer and John Bremer, *Open Education: A Beginning,* Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1972, pp. 88 ff.
6 See, for example, F*reedom Bureaucracy, and Schooling,* ed. V.Haubrich, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1971; Seymour B.Sarason, *The Culture of the School and the Problem of Change,* Allyn & Bacon, 1971; C.E.Bidwell, 'The School as a Formal Organization' in *Handbook of Organizations,* ed. J.G.March, Rand McNally, 1965; D.Rogers, *no Livingston Street: Politics and Bureaucracy in the New York City School System,* Random House, 1968; Peter Schrag, *Village School Downtown,* Beacon, 1967; and Michael Katz, *Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools,* Prager, 1971.
7 'In fact,' writes Herbert Gintis, 'schooling contributes to the generation of an adequate labor force through *the inculcation of a "bureaucratic mentality" in students*. This enables them to function properly in alienated work-environments….' See Gintis, 'The Dialectics of Consciousness in the Corporate State' in *Harvard Center for Educational Policy Research,* Reprint Series no. 13, n.d., p. 26. Samuel Bowles goes so far as to argue that schools are designed 'to meet the needs of capitalist employers for a disciplined and skilled labor force'; see Bowles, 'Unequal Education and the Reproduction of the Social Division of Labor' in *Schooling in a Corporate Society,* ed. M.Carnoy, David McKay, 1972, pp. 36–64.
8 Dewey, 'Democracy in the Schools' in Ratner, *op. cit.,* p. 717.
9 The need for well-organized teachers, and the reasons why *only* they are likely to exert a counterforce to the power of school bureaucracies, is discussed in Donald Arnstine, 'The Use of Coercion in Changing the Schools,' *Educational Theory,* Fall 1973, pp. 277–88.
10 Dewey, *Experience and Nature,* Dover, 1958, p. 222.
11 See Martin Haberman, 'Educating the Teachers: Changing Problems' in *Freedom, Bureaucracy, and Schooling,* ed. V.Haubrich, pp. 110–26.

12 For a fuller discussion of the truncated role of theory in preparing teachers, see Arnstine, 'The Knowledge Nobody Wants: The Humanistic Foundations in Teacher Education,' *Educational Theory,* Winter 1973, pp. 3–15.

13 See Theodore Kaltsounis and Jack C.Nelson, 'The Mythology of Student Teaching,' *Journal of Teacher Education,* Fall 1968, pp. 277–81.

14 See Harry S.Broudy, 'Teaching—Craft or Profession?' *The Educational Forum,* January 1956, pp. 175–84.

15 See Gerald E.Levy, 'Acute Teachers' in *Ghetto School,* Bobbs-Merrill, 1970; reprinted in *Myth and Reality,* ed. G.Smith and C.R.Kniker, Allyn & Bacon, 1972, pp. 215–25.

16 But for an account of preparing teachers such that theory and practice would be integrated so as to enable experimentation with open education, see Arnstine, *The Humanistic Foundations in Teacher Education,* ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education, 1972, pp. 34–49.

part IV
Problems of freedom

11
Autonomy and control:
toward a theory of legitimate influence

Kenneth Strike

This paper grows out of the conviction that the impetus for the open classroom or the free school is moral as well as pedagogical. By this I mean that educators interested in open education or free schools have been concerned with questions beyond issues of effective ways of teaching. They have been concerned with what I shall call legitimate means of teaching.

To ask questions concerning legitimate means of teaching is to ask in what ways the teacher may permissibly influence the child's attitudes, values, beliefs or behavior and to distinguish such permissible types of influence from objectionable sorts. Such questions concern the ethics of instruction. Here questions of effective teaching are only secondary. To ask such questions is to say in effect, 'To be an effective teacher is all well and good, but before we become too effective, let us pause for a moment and ask whether we are being effective in a morally permissible way, and let us ask what the student's rights in the matter are.' Whenever one human being takes it upon himself to intervene in or influence the life of another, it is worthwhile to ask such questions. When the targets of our intervention or influence are minors who are legally and psychologically less capable than adults of resisting such influence, such questions become more important. Good teaching is not just a matter of whether one succeeds in producing desired outcomes, but of how.

Identifying the problem

Why should such questions emerge on the scene now? I would like to suggest two reasons. The first has been the major origin of concern, while the second seems to me to be the main source of continuing interest.

First, one of the things which characterized the previous decade was a growing self-doubt on the part of Americans concerning the legitimacy of many national goals and policies. We discovered inequality, poverty, and injustice at home and found that America, 'the last best hope of mankind,' often appeared to be exporting exploitation, oppression and death instead of freedom and democracy.

It was only natural that doubt about national values and purposes would result in criticism of those institutions intended to transmit those values and train citizens and manpower to implement those purposes. Thus, the public schools which only a few years before had appeared to many to be the finest triumph of popular democracy[1] suddenly began to seem more as instruments of oppression. Students already somewhat estranged from the adult

world and adult ideals by our age segregated society, began to feel genuinely alienated from schools and began to find words and acts to express their alienation. Educators found themselves involved in a crisis of authority and Federal Courts, reacting to disciplinary practices formerly accepted as necessary for the teaching of respect for authority and for citizenship, now held that schools may not be 'enclaves of totalitarianism' and that 'students may not be regarded as closed-circuit recipients of only that which the state chooses to communicate….'[2] Revisionist historians meanwhile assured us that schools had been oppressive all along.[3]

Under such conditions the school was called upon to account for its uses of authority and for the ways in which it attempted to influence students. Educators found themselves called upon to justify both their goals and their methods on ethical grounds.

This politically motivated concern seems (unhappily, I think) already to have considerably abated. Students at all levels are widely reported to be back docilely 'grubbing for grades' and oriented toward a career, a fact which many educators seem to greet with a sense of relief. There is, however, a newer set of happenings in education which poses the question of legitimate influence in a new form. I shall call this set of happenings (somewhat flippantly) the 'managerial-technological revolution.' It will be familiar to most educators via such manifestations as behavioral objectives, accountability programs and legislation, performance based evaluation, and behavioral modification employed as an instructional method, although I shall want to understand the concept (for reasons which will be obvious soon) broadly enough to encompass the forms of persuasion commonly found in advertising.

The managerial-technological revolution seems to be based on a loose intellectual alliance between a view of management sometimes called systems analysis and quasi-behaviorist psychologies of learning. While educators have felt free to apply these views in an eclectic and *ad hoc* fashion, such opinions, nevertheless provide a substantial part of the intellectual background of the movement.

The basic idea of the managerial-technological revolution is to assume control of an institution or system via an exhaustive analysis of the system's inputs and outputs. The merits of such an analysis are held to be that it enables us to get the outputs desired by manipulating the inputs. A detailed analysis of inputs and outputs enables us to discover what causes what, to get what we want out of the system, and indeed to 'fine-tune' it to specification. An alliance with operant conditioning leads to an interpretation of inputs and outputs such that effective management consists in producing desired behavior via control of rewards and punishments, with management via rewards strongly preferred.

Why consider such a view problematic in regard to problems of legitimate influence? Let me suggest three reasons. First, the managerial-technological revolution is often linked to a philosophy which is explicitly anti-freedom. The movement's leading guru, B.F.Skinner, has been abundantly clear that if the objective of a system is the scientific production of desirable behavior, then freedom is excluded. It is noteworthy that in Skinner's discussion in *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*[4] the issue is not posed in terms of an attempt to distinguish a domain of behavior over which society may legitimately exercise authority from one over which authority ought not be be exercised. (This is the traditional formulation of issues concerning civil liberties.) The question is whether or not to control

behavior. Control wins. Freedom loses. We are, thus, led to a philosophy of what I shall call total management.

Second, managerial-technological programs have been recently involved in some noteworthy disputes which raise issues of legitimate influence. For example, Senator Sam Ervin's Senate Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights has expressed concern about the uses of behavioral modification in prison programs as a result of which some programs have been dropped.[5] In Texas the attempt to impose a performance based evaluation program on the State University system has raised cries of a violation of academic freedom and seems headed toward litigation.[6] In Arizona educators are accused of writing conservative political theory into the behavioral objectives for civics classes.[7]

Third, and possibly most directly related to open education, the managerial-technological orientation toward managing educational programs seems likely to manage the openness out of open education. I suspect that a view which emphasizes antecedently and exhaustively specified outcomes and reinforcement schedules can provide for individualized instruction and open physical spaces, but it cannot permit serious free choice about what is to be studied or the objectives of the educational programs. Views on open education are unlikely to live comfortably in the same cognitive space with a philosophy of total management.

There is also one conceptual problem which makes the relations between the concept of legitimate influence and the managerial-technological revolution both important and philosophically interesting. Put simply it is this: Traditionally the question of legitimate authority was understood against a background assumption that authority was exercised by means of sanctions or by various forms of coercion. Accordingly, the civil libertarian tradition (which has been largely incorporated into American Constitutional Law) tends to understand freedom as either the unrestricted ability to do what one wants or more simply as the absence of coercion. One is free when there are no effective sanctions against one's actions.

This conceptualization of the nature of freedom is, I think, quite adequate to support the civil libertarian's set of doctrines restricting the encroachment on individual liberties when such encroachment is implemented by sanctions against certain acts. It is ill prepared, however, to deal with the problems of legitimate authority or influence when such influence is implemented by a system of rewards or inducements. The reasons are obvious. To the degree that behavior is managed by rewards or inducements, it is not managed by sanctions. Thus, given the above concept of freedom, behavior controlled via inducements is always and necessarily free.[8] Further, there is an obvious sense in which when one is acting to achieve a reward, one is doing what one wants and is unlikely to feel any loss of freedom.[9] Skinner makes much of this, noting that people controlled by positive reinforcement feel free.[10] Of course, given the above concept of freedom not only do such people feel free, they are free. They are doing what they want.

This consequence is counterintuitive. We normally recognize that there are various kinds of control which rob people of freedom without employing sanctions. Terms such as 'indoctrination,' 'manipulation,' or 'deception' name paradigm types of such illegitimate influences. Advertising with its 'hidden persuaders' provides a handy source of examples.

We have now set the stage for a consideration of what I have been calling the question of legitimate influence. I wish to understand the problem as involving two aspects. First, I

shall understand the question to concern exclusively those types of control over attitudes, ideas, or behavior, which do not employ sanctions. The task will be to distinguish a legitimate class of such non-coercive influences from an illegitimate class of such influences. I will assume that the civil libertarian tradition is adequate to deal with the legitimate use of sanctions and will deal with it only as it relates to the primary question.

Second, I shall understand the problem as essentially one concerning how to deal with the types of influence growing out of the managerial-technological revolution. Thus, my 'theory of legitimate influence' will in part attempt to generate some concepts adequate to deal with some of the ethical problems which would be raised by a genuinely successful behavioral technology. Whether or not we actually have such a technology is not here at issue.

Conceiving the problem

If we are to distinguish legitimate from illegitimate influence, we will need a decision criterion, some concept which will sort influences into the requisite sheep and goats. I shall assume initially that an influence is an illegitimate influence because it robs one of freedom. In this respect the problem of legitimate influence parallels the problem of the legitimate use of sanctions. To mark off an area of action over which authority may not be exercised is to mark the domain of liberty and is done for the sake of liberty.

But if these 'illegitimate influences,' whatever they may be, do not involve sanctions how can they rob someone of freedom? And of what kind of freedom is one robbed? Here some examples may help. Consider three possible explanations of the act of buying a car.

(1)   Mr Black works for an automobile dealer. This dealer is known to fire employees who do not buy a new car from them every year. Mr Black buys a new car from them every year.

(2)   Mr Gray has a car adequate to his needs. However, Mr Gray has an unconscious need to think of himself as a swinger. One day he sees a TV advertisement which associates a certain car with a swinger image. As a consequence Mr Gray buys one of these cars. If asked he would be unable to give an accurate account of his motives.

(3)   Mr White needs a new car. He proceeds to check out various consumer reports and to price various cars. As a result he buys a car which meets his needs at a good price.

The third of these cases seems clearly to be a free act. However, the first two provide differing reasons for believing the person involved not to have acted freely. Mr Black's case is one of coercion. He acted in order to avoid the sanction of losing his job. It is Mr Gray's case which is of interest. Here Mr Gray appears to be doing what he wants. He is under no threat of sanctions. Yet his action seems clearly to be less than free. The questions are then, (1) Why would we think Gray's act to be 'unfree', and (2) What sort of freedom is it that Mr Gray lacks?

I suspect we would regard Gray as unfree because, although he acted to realize some desire, this desire (for a new car) has the character of something that was done to him rather than something over which he can exercise control. His wants have been manipulated, and,

thus, even though he is doing what he wants to do, he is not free. Further, the sort of freedom which Gray appears to lack is psychological freedom. He is passive rather than active with respect to the contents of his own mind. He, thus, lacks what I shall call autonomy.

We do not as yet understand autonomy or psychological freedom in any more than an intuitive way, but we do have a potential criterion for legitimate influence. I shall understand a legitimate influence to be the sort of influence which enhances or is compatible with autonomy. I shall understand as an illegitimate influence one which detracts from or is incompatible with autonomy.

The meaning and implication of this intuitive position may be developed by addressing three questions:

(1)   How does this notion of autonomy relate to the possibility of a technology or science of behavior?

(2)   What is autonomy?

(3)   What sort of environment will promote autonomy? (It should be noted that this last question will go a long way toward addressing the basic moral question of the pedagogy of open education.)

Two views of autonomy

Since it is my intent to explicate a theory of legitimate influence in relation to the background of the managerial-technological revolution, it will be useful to begin by inspecting some anti-autonomy arguments deriving from that orientation.

Skinner provides the following characterization of autonomy:[11]

Unable to understand how or why the person we see behaves as he does, we attribute his behavior to a person we cannot see, whose behavior we cannot explain either but about whom we are not inclined to ask questions. We probably adopt this strategy not so much because of any lack of interest or power but because of a longstanding conviction that for much of human behavior there *are* no relevant antecedents. The function of the inner man is to provide an explanation which will not be explained in turn. Explanation stops with him. He is not a mediator between past history and current behavior, he is a *center* from which behavior emanates. He initiates, originates, and creates, and in doing so he remains, as he was for the Greeks, divine. We say that he is autonomous—and, so far as a science of behavior is concerned, that means miraculous.

Note that for Skinner the concept of autonomy seems to involve two claims.

(1)   Autonomous acts are acts of some 'inner force' or inner man. They are acts which stem from the self or the agent and thus originate from within rather than from without the person.

(2)   This inner man acts without being acted upon. Its (his?) behavior is uncaused or spontaneous.

These two aspects of autonomy appear to be different and distinguishable. Moreover they provide two different foci on which debates concerning autonomy can center.

Skinner's rejection of autonomy rests on a rejection of both doctrines. Against the doctrine of the inner man Skinner affirms a thoroughgoing environmentalism. The causes of behavior can always be traced to external sources. Against the spontaneity of the inner man

Skinner affirms an equally thoroughgoing determinism. Everything a person does has a cause.

If Skinner's analysis of what it would mean to be autonomous is accepted, then it would appear that a defense of autonomy and the development of a theory of legitimate influence would depend on some variety of either an anti-deterministic or an anti-environmentalist view or both.

I shall briefly explore both of these options (forgetting the 'or both' for the duration).

Consider, then, what a view of autonomy and legitimate influence based on an anti-determinist theory would look like. Such a view would hold first, that it is necessary (if not sufficient) for an act to be autonomous that it originate with an uncaused event. Add to this the assumption that a cause is any event which has an effect or influence on another event, and it quickly follows that *any* attempt to influence another person is an attempt to rob him of his autonomy. Conversely, if we wish to have autonomous people, we must adopt a policy of trying not to influence or affect their behavior. If autonomous behavior is uncaused behavior, then causing someone to do something, changing his beliefs or behavior, is to cheat him of his autonomy. The only legitimate influence is no influence.

Obviously something has gone wrong somewhere. This view of autonomy makes any attempt to educate another person incompatible with preserving his autonomy. Education *per se* becomes an illegitimate influence just because it aims to change people. I propose to treat this outcome as a *reductio ad absurdum* of the view. The virtue of exhibiting this rather bizarre position at this point is that it seems to me to go far toward explaining why Professor Skinner and his friends have been so hostile to proponents of human freedom. Given the way in which Skinner understands freedom, he is easily led to regard anyone who advocates it as advocating a policy of non-influence. The patent absurdity of such a policy makes it easy for Skinner to write off freedom advocates as victims of a pre-scientific world view. It seems not to have occurred to Skinner to ask whether his understanding of freedom was suspect.

Nor does he seem to notice that some of the people whom he criticizes for their views on freedom, paradigmatically John Stuart Mill, held nothing remotely like what he is opposed to. Mill, for example, was a determinist. Further, Mill's classical arguments for liberty have nothing at all to do with the freedom-determinism dispute, a fact which Mill notes in the first paragraph of 'On Liberty.'[12] Many of Skinner's anti-freedom arguments result from just this confusion of debates about autonomy with debates about liberty.

In any case, let us admit that any view which leads us to reject educational influence *per se* in order to promote autonomy is untenable. We may, then, move on to consider issues relating to environmentalism.

A view of the nature of autonomy which would require or rest on a rejection of an environmentalist position would hold that autonomous acts are those which originate from the self, not in the sense that they are uncaused by any external event, but in the sense that their character stems more from the self and its nature, than from the external event which was the occasion for the act. An autonomous act is like a doorbell ring. It takes an external push to make it happen, but how it sounds depends on the stuff inside.

This view of autonomy can be analyzed into two basic features. The first feature is what I shall call the doctrine of the 'real me.' In order to distinguish acts which stem from the self from acts which are primarily effects of the environment, the position will have to

postulate a self with 'native' wants, values, capacities, and a personality all of which are more than just products of interaction with the environment and which cannot be sufficiently explained by socialization or by histories of reinforcement. These native wants, values, and capacities and the native personality will be used to distinguish real needs from false needs, socially induced values from autonomous wants, or genuineness from phoniness.[13] On this view to trace back a want, value, capacity, or personality trait to an environmental source is to show it to be at heart non-autonomous. As environment increases, the real me decreases and with him goes autonomy.

Second, on this view the environment interacts with the real me in the following ways. First, it can stimulate it. That is, it can provide the pretext for action. Second, it can provide resources for the real me. For example, while the real me may be held to be naturally rational, competent, or good, no one to my knowledge has ascribed to it a natural knowledge of chemistry or physics. It needs a cognitive and an affective diet to grow and expand. So long as the real me is free to choose among such resources in ways compatible with its own inner demands, its autonomy is not violated. Such resources only violate autonomy when someone (like a teacher) insists on them.

Third, and more ominously, the real me may be inhibited by the environment. When the social environment is critical or disapproving, the individual may project a façade to the external world giving it what it wants so as to regain its approval. Given enough time the person will internalize the facade and begin to censor the threatening content of the real self. The individual will develop social self and lose touch with the real self. Autonomy is, thus, sacrificed for approval.

Finally, then, the environment may be therapeutic. It may be sufficiently non-threatening so as to eliminate the need for a social self and to liberate the real me.

If one conceives autonomy as the expression of the real me, one is apt to think of legitimate influence and of proper teaching as a matter of either providing resources or of therapy depending on how autonomous the individuals under consideration are. These two activities together are sometimes called facilitating.

The resource aspects of facilitating are apt to manifest themselves in a 'put the books on the back table' ideology. The teacher's role becomes to mediate between the student and available material, to tell him where he can find what he wants.

The teacher's second role is to create a proper affective or emotional environment so that the real me can escape its inhibitions and learn for itself. Thus, the facilitator will speak a liberation vocabulary. Carl Rogers describes facilitating as *freeing* curiosity, *permitting* individuals to pursue their own interests, and *unleashing* a sense of inquiry.[14] The suggestion is that the teacher does not need to worry about creative curiosity, generating interests, or producing a sense of inquiry. These things do not need to be created because they are already there. But they may need to be set free. Legitimate influence and proper teaching do not try to change the real me but to liberate it and to provide it resources to use in its own way.

This view easily leads its advocates to view standard types of didactic or expository teaching as an infringement of autonomy. There are two likely reasons for this. First, the anti-environmentalist is apt to believe that the real me is inherently competent or inherently good. Thus, the only surprising fact is that students often fail to learn by themselves. And given the assumption of competency any failure is apt to be explained in terms of some

psychological damage which has been done to the student rather than in terms of the need for more effective or organized instruction. The facilitator is apt to feel that people could teach themselves what they needed to know if only they were not messed up.

Second, formal modes of teaching are apt to rest on an assumption that there are objective facts, values, intellectual standards, criteria of judgment, or even needs which are rooted in public standards rather than in the self and that the student needs to know these things regardless of whether or not at a given moment these things provide resources for some autonomous interest. Didactic teaching may express a view of education where, to use R.S.Peters' felicitous phrase, the aim is to 'initiate' students[15] into such public standards and values and where education should not just enable a person to fulfill his wants or actualize his values, but should change his wants and values so as to correspond to such public standards. Any such method of teaching rooted in an assumption that education is a matter of initiating students into public standards and values is likely to be regarded by proponents of the real me as holding that values and standards should come from 'without' rather than from 'within' and thus will be a kind of illegitimate influence.

It is at this point when the doctrine of the real me can become anti-intellectual. A preference for values or standards rooted in the self over public values or standards is easily operationalized in a preference for opinions, values or standards which are 'sincere,' 'genuine,' or expressions of 'how one really feels' over those which are true, reasonable, or otherwise in accord with public criteria. It can generate an 'it does not matter what you believe as long as you are sincere' ethic.

A related difficulty is that proponents of the real me will often conceptualize evaluation of a student's performance according to public criteria as a personal attack rather than as feedback. (This is, of course, not altogether unreasonable since feedback can be used as a means to belittle or attack another person.) The fundamental reasons why feedback will be perceived as objectionable are the same here as above. Feedback on performance is objectionable because it assumes that performance is to be brought into accord with objective and public standards rather than into accord with the private standards of the self.

It is often hard to decide how far advocates of the real me wish to push this line of argument. It is characteristically held concerning matters of taste and matters of morals. Whether anyone has the courage to extend it without modification to math or physics is unclear. One does occasionally get the impression from reading Carl Rogers that it really is objectionable for a teacher to say, 'Johnny, 2+2 is 4, not 5,' and that a proper response to such a transgressing teacher is, 'Who are you to impose your opinion of mathematical truth on a defenseless child.' But the view is most at home in matters of ethics and taste.

Here, I find myself to be a somewhat reluctant critic of the view for I am attracted by the emphasis given to a humane and supportive environment in education, and I find the opinion that the wants, needs, and interests of the student have a *prima facie* right to serious consideration to be a welcome counterweight to the tendency in much of the recent educational writings of managerial-technological types to regard the unwillingness of a student to submit to a preordained batch of behavioral objectives as though such resistance were a kind of defect in the raw material.[16] Nevertheless, I find the way in which the view understands autonomy and the resulting way of distinguishing legitimate and illegitimate influence to be objectionable.

My basic problem is that I find it difficult to believe in the existence of the real me. The view of autonomy under consideration seems to require some rational way to distinguish between needs, wants, and values which are part of a socially induced and, thus, inauthentic self and needs, wants and values which are in some way fundamental to the self. Unfortunately, it would appear to be the case that, other than some very basic drives which are obviously physiologically based, almost all human wants, values and needs are acquired as the result of some sort of socialization process. The anti-environmentalist account of autonomy requires the ability to divide a person's personality into a real self and a social self. Unhappily, the personality turns out to be a bit like an onion. One merely peels off one socially acquired layer after another. What is left is either nothing or something not very interesting. Thus, the viability of the real me analysis of autonomy and legitimate influences depends on the ability to make a non-existent distinction. The preponderance of modern scholarship seems to support an environmentalist position.[17]

Moreover, the doctrine of the real me leads to a problematic view of teaching and of educational influence. First, the tendency to treat the person as naturally competent and to treat learning problems as quasi-therapeutic is apt to lead to indifference to the task of preparing adequate instructional resources. (Note that in denying that people are naturally competent or naturally good, I am not affirming that they are naturally incompetent or naturally evil. I am affirming that they are naturally nothing.) Second, the emphasis on the real me easily leads to the view that to initiate the student into activities governed by public standards is to violate his autonomy and is thus an illegitimate influence. Unfortunately, this classes much of education as illegitimate, for the acquisition of almost everything which makes men human, educated and/or civilized involves the internalization of what must begin as external standards. The decision not to impose understood in this way is again tantamount to a decision not to educate.

A third view of autonomy

It would appear that both an anti-determinist and an anti-environmentalist analysis of autonomy have failed to provide adequate alternatives to Skinner's philosophy of total management. Before we grant reluctant congratulations to Professor Skinner and return home to close our open classrooms and write our behavioral objectives, let us have one more try at it. I shall begin by returning to Mr White and Mr Gray.

What is it about Mr White's act which distinguishes it from Mr Gray's as an autonomous act? I would suggest that it is basically this: Mr White has responded to his world, both his psychological world and his external world, as evidence for his decision. He has taken stock of his various needs and his available options and has made a reasonable choice which matches his needs to a course of action. Mr Gray, however, has responded in a rather mechanical fashion to an unrecognized and uncomprehended psychological need.

This hint may be expanded into a sketch of some of the features of an autonomous person as follows: An autonomous person

(1) tends to base his decisions and actions on available evidence;
(2) tends to alter his behavior when the available evidence on which the behavior was based changes;

(3)   tends to have his needs, especially his psychological needs, function more as evidence for what his decisions ought to be than as 'direct' determinants of his decisions.

(4)   is not easily manipulated or deceived;

(5)   is psychologically capable of accurate perception of external events;

(6)   tends not to distort reality to conform to neurotic needs;

(7)   tends not to be easily led by appeals to an unrecognized self concept;

(8)   tends not to be defensive;

(9)   tends to have an accurate perception of his needs and abilities;

(10) tends to have an accurate self concept.

Traits (1), (2), and (3) form what I believe to be the center of the concept of self direction or autonomy. In essence, an autonomous person is one who tends to respond to the world including his inner psychological world, especially his needs, as evidence for what he should do. His external and internal environment provide reasons which govern his behavior. Thus, while the environment of such a person surely does affect the person's behavior, he does not respond in mechanical fashion to it. The kinds of explanations which connect the environment to the behavior are reason-explanations, not mechanistic explanations.

Traits (4) through (10) suggest some of the kinds of things which tend to indicate that a person is not responding to the environment as evidence or which render him incapable of responding in such a fashion. People who are neurotic or defensive or who have some unrecognized ego ideal tend to be easily manipulated or to distort reality to correspond to their neurotic needs. To the degree that people do such things, they are not responding to their environment as evidence for their decisions or actions.

These traits suggest that an autonomous person is one to whom two" general sorts of properties can be ascribed, one positive kind and one negative kind. On the positive side, a person who is autonomous possesses what I shall call evaluative skills and attitudes. Evaluative skills and attitudes are those which enable a person successfully to base his decisions and behavior on available evidence. They would include whatever intellectual skills which go into a capacity for intelligent or sound judgment as well as supportive affective traits such as self-confidence. On the negative side the autonomous person does not possess what I shall term obstructive traits. Obstructive traits are whatever traits a person may have acquired which result in the inability of the individual to apply whatever evaluative skills and attitudes he may possess in actual choice and action. Paradigmatically obstructive traits are neurotic or psychotic tendencies (or just plain 'hang ups') which induce defensiveness, a tendency to distort or reject painful information, an unrealistic self-concept or a mistaken assessment of one's needs, or which otherwise prevent a person from performing an adequate act of evaluation or from acting on such an evaluation. The lack of such deficiencies is close to what is commonly termed mental health. I shall summarize these observations by indicating that autonomy has a rationality and a mental health component.

How does this view translate into a view of legitimate influence? Put simply, legitimate influences are those which create the capacity or facilitate the process of responding to the world as evidence; illegitimate influences are influences which do the opposite. This means that legitimate influences will be those which develop skills of judgment and men-

tal health. Illegitimate influences will be those which cause judgmental incompetence and neurosis or defensiveness.

 These general criteria suggest that the following features characterize an environment which promotes autonomy.

(1) Such an environment will provide for means whereby an appropriate range of those public standards and criteria which promote sound judgment can be internalized.

(2) Such an environment will provide what I shall call 'choice points.' A choice point is essentially an occasion where the individual is presented with a range of alternatives which are challenging to but manageable by the individual. Choice points may range from small problems for small children to free space for personal exploration and experimentation with different life styles for older adolescents or adults. So far as autonomy is concerned, the point is that the capacity for sound judgment, like any other skill, requires practice.[18]

(3) Such an environment will require maintenance of the 'intellectual liberties' such as free speech or free press whose function is to protect free exchange of ideas and the process of criticism and debate. The open exchange of ideas is an important part of developing a capacity for judgment.

(4) A pedagogy for autonomy will place emphasis on dealing with evidence. Activities such as reason-giving and discovery learning commend themselves.

(5) Such an environment will exhibit a respect for the unconditional worth of each person. This is the sort of environment which creates self-confidence and a sense of self worth, attitudes which are necessary to a rational stance toward the world and to mental health. I use the word 'respect' here because it is devoid of both the excessive sentimentality that the word 'love' has come to have and the clinical overtones of a phrase like positive regard. The phrase 'unconditional worth' is meant to emphasize a basic point of Judeo-Christian ethics which we have largely forgotten which is that men have a value as such which is not related to their behavior or their function. The primary virtue of this distinction is that it permits us to differentiate a judgment about a person's performance from a judgment about a person's basic worth.

The following are features of an environment which retards autonomy:

(1) Such an environment employs means of altering belief or values which are non-evidential. That is, they attempt to produce a change in value or belief without providing evidence which warrants such a change. Such influences become even more objectionable when they induce a generalized susceptibility to the type of influence. This category is of sufficient import that I shall suggest three sub types:

(a) Guilt or defensiveness inducing influences: If a person can be gotten to believe that 'only wicked people believe P' they can be rendered psychologically incapable of giving P serious consideration, for to do so is to engage in an exercise in self-rejection.

(b) Image inducing or associating influences: Advertising often functions by associating an idealized image of a product with an idealized image of

ourselves. In order to succeed such ads must convince us of *both* images. They, thus, deal in two kinds of unreality. I am inclined to find the second sort—the selling of personal images geared to the purpose of promoting consumption—to be most objectionable. Consider for a moment the prospect of a generation whose values are largely internalized from TV commercials. Note also that such appeals can succeed only when they are *not* treated as evidence for a recommended course of action. When the hidden assumptions of advertisements are identified and arranged as premises for a conclusion they become laughable but hardly persuasive.

(c) Reinforcement: On the assumption that notions like believing for reasons or acting on the basis of evidence cannot be plausibly rendered into a conceptual system whose basic explanatory terms are positive and negative reinforcement, positive reinforcement is an illegitimate influence. It changes belief (or behavior) without appeals to evidence.

(2) An environment which promotes anti-intellectual attitudes will retard autonomy.

(3) Over management—the excessive control of another's life such as to eliminate choice points—will retard autonomy.

(4) The violation of intellectual liberty will retard autonomy.

(5) Ego attacks or a lack of respect for the individual's worth will induce defensiveness and restrict autonomy.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that in my judgment the basic theoretical point of this paper is that there is a logical connection between the concepts of autonomy and rationality. The idea of legitimate influence, thus, on analysis turns out to be concerned with developing persons capable and disposed to respond to the world as evidence. The major points at which these ideals tend to conflict with the current managerial emphasis in much of educational thought are:

(1) The current emphasis on teaching measurable behaviors easily induces a drift toward an atomized curriculum of facts and vocational skills as opposed to intellectual skills and a drift toward a pedagogy which emphasizes rewarding rather than reasoning.

(2) The current emphasis on detailed specification of learning outcomes is difficult to reconcile with: the choice points required for the development of autonomy.

If the ideals of open education are to be defined in part against the background of current kinds of 'closedness,' I suspect that open education should come to mean opening some space for reasoning and personal experimentation in a philosophy of total management.[19]

Notes

1 Note, for example, the sense of self-congratulation in a book like L. Cremin, *The Genius of American Education,* Vintage Books, 1965.

2 Tinker *v.* DesMoines Independent School District, 393 U.S. 503 (1969).

3 Michael Katz comments that 'public education originated from impulses that were conservative, racist, and bureaucratic. Those impulses…have driven educational development for over a century.' M.Katz, *School Reform: Past and Present,* Little, Brown, 1971.

4 B.F.Skinner, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity.* Knopf, 1971.

5   L.Pelsner, 'Behavior Control Issue Unsolved,' *New York Times,* February 20 1974, p. 71.

6   W.P.Maxwell, 'PBTE: A Case of the Emperor's New Clothes,' *Phi Delta Kappan,* January 1974, pp. 306–11.

7   M.M.Gubser, 'Accountability as a Smoke Screen for Political Indoctrination in Arizona,' *Phi Delta Kappan,* September 1973, pp. 64, 65.

8   There is the sticky problem of cases where denial of an inducement becomes a sanction. For this essay's purposes I shall ignore the difficulty.

9   This is particularly likely to be the case when the individual has not consciously identified the reinforcers which motivate him. Note the conceptual distinction between an incentive which operates as the aim or goal of an act and thus must be deliberately pursued and a reinforcement which is merely the consequence of an act and need not be consciously identified or pursued.

10 B.F.Skinner, *Walden Two,* Macmillan, 1948, pp. 262, 263.

11 *Beyond Freedom and Dignity,* p. 14.

12 J.S.Mill, 'On Liberty,' Bobbs-Merrill, 1956, p. 3.

13 Carl Rogers, for example, has written an essay suggesting the infant as the paradigm of an autonomous person. The assumption is that since the infant has not had an opportunity to be socialized, his expression of his needs must reflect his *real* needs. Rogers writes, 'Another aspect of the infant's approach to value is that the source or locus of the evaluating process is clearly *within* himself. Unlike many of us he knows what he likes and dislikes, and the origin of these value choices lies strictly *within* himself. He is the *center* of the valuing process….' C.Rogers, *Freedom to Learn,* Merrill, 1969, p. 243 (my italics).

14 *Freedom to Learn,* p. 105.

15 R.S.Peters, *Education as Initiation,* Harrap, 1964.

16 Leon Lessinger, after commending the virtues of a zero defect quality control model to educators, comments: 'the schools are asked to give each student the competence he needs regardless of the difficulties; and that means *regardless of his initial or apparent interest….*' L. Lessinger, *Every Kid a Winner,* Simon & Schuster, 1970, p. 5 (my italics).

17 I am, of course, asserting without argument something which is less than self-evident. I take it that while environmentalism has been the dominant position in Anglo-American scholarship for most of this century and has found support in disciplines as diverse as philosophy and anthropology, nevertheless nativism is making a comeback and is rampant in some areas, particularly linguistics. I doubt, however, that the sorts of innate mental equipment found in the major examples will provide much aid and comfort to advocates of the real me. One fails to see, for example, how the existence of linguistic universals would do much for the case for the real me.

18 Mill in 'On Liberty', pp. 71, 72, makes this point best.

> He who lets the world, or his own portion of it, choose his plan of life for him has no need of any other faculty than the ape-like one of imitation. He who chooses his plan for himself employs all his faculties. He must use observation to see, reasoning and judgment to foresee, activity to gather materials for decision, discrimination to decide, and when he has decided, firmness and self-control to hold to his deliberate decision. And these qualities he requires and exercises exactly in proportion as the part of his conduct which he determines according to his own judgment and feelings is a large one.

19 It needs to be recognized, of course, that what I have called a philosophy of total management and the programs associated with it have at this point been far more influential among academics in education than among teachers. (Indeed, teachers seem to me to be quite adept at resisting such imposed 'innovations' by the expedient of learning to describe what they are already doing in the 'innovations' accepted vocabulary. Since academics in education hit on a new panacea once or twice every decade, this is sometimes a useful skill.) In any case the problem of maintaining freedom in a highly managed educational program is still largely a theoretical one, but has considerable 'reality' potential.

12

Freedom and desire in the Summerhill philosophy of education

Leonard J.Waks

The free school/open education movement is characterized by a familiar core of tenets and attitudes: that fear and force and coercion must be repudiated, that there must be no interference with the spontaneous, self-directed activities of children, that authoritarian methods of teaching must be eliminated.

An important wing of the movement, inspired by the writings of Homer Lane and A.S.Neill,[1] sees these core principles as insufficient for guiding practice, and demands what appears to be a strengthening of these principles. To these radical educators the core, while well and good as far as it goes, does not go 'far enough.' They argue that force and fear and coercion are reprehensible, but they see much the same problem with all uninvited adult guidance and influence, no matter how well-intentioned or well-received. For this reason they demand that children be 'left free' from all adult influence 'to be themselves.' Similarly they agree that it is wrong to interfere in the activities of children, but claim that it is not enough to refrain from barging in and ruining an obviously good thing; the educator must have the patience to refrain from intervention even when children are doing nothing and learning less. Again, they would agree that authoritarian methods of teaching are repugnant, but would add that even those non-authoritarian styles enjoyed by children, those utilizing the 'play way' or the 'discovery method' harm the child no less, and perhaps more. For this reason they reject all teaching not specifically requested by the children themselves, and they feel that when such teaching is requested, pedagogic method is of no great importance.

Let's hear all this from Neill himself.

On non-intervention, he says that in order to 'allow the children freedom to be themselves' he had to 'renounce all discipline, all direction, all suggestion.' Because the child is 'innately wise and realistic,' if he is 'left to himself without adult suggestion of any kind, he will develop as far as he is capable of developing.'[2] 'The function of the child is to live his own life…all interference and guidance on the part of adults only produces…robots.'[3] Neill says that he has 'learned to wait and watch a child make little or no progress,' confident that so long as the child is not 'molested or damaged' he will 'succeed in life.'[4]

On teaching, Neill says that there are no special Summerhill methods, because 'we do not consider that teaching in itself matters very much.' He adds:[5]

whether a school has or has not special methods for teaching long division is of no signifi-
cance, for long division is of no importance except to those who *want* to learn it. And the child
who *wants* to learn it *will* learn it no matter how it is taught.

Neill rejects the utilization of play methods to promote learning, adding 'this notion that
unless a child is learning he is wasting his time is nothing less than a curse.'[6] When told by
a Montessori educator that children will abandon mudpies if 'given something better to do'
he responds that 'there is nothing better to do when one's interest is fixed in mud.'[7]

On the surface, once this Summerhill position is distinguished with clarity from the
core, it appears extreme and implausible. It is difficult to conceive of a school in which this
doctrine is consistently practiced, and Summerhill is certainly *not* such a school, even by
Neill's own account; every page of *Summerhill* makes reference to various ways in which
Neill, his staff, and his policies affect the attitudes and choices of children. If there is no
special method of teaching, there certainly are curricular emphases (for example, dramat-
ics, shop) and instructional policies (for example, the repudiation of examinations).

Neill protects himself against constant exposure to these difficulties by adopting several
dissonance reduction strategies:

(1) He often falls back on the core position, thus making it difficult to disentangle this
more moderate position from his radical doctrine. For example, in one extended discus-
sion he 'emphasize[s] the importance of the absence of fear,'[8] obscuring his roughly equal
condemnation of uninvited interventions which involve no element of fear or coercion, but
only, for example enthusiastic encouragement.

(2) He equivocates between his radical position and the core, sometimes in a systematic
manner built into his terminology. For example, he claims that 'it is the idea of non-inter-
ference in the growth of the child…that has made the school what it is.'[9] 'Non-interference'
appears to echo the core position. But in the context of Neill's theories pertaining to innate
desires and natural development, non-interference in the growth of the child means non-
intervention, even when nothing is going on or getting learned. And consider this from
Homer Lane: helping a child in his simple efforts is interference.[10] Of course this is *not*
invariably the case; to insist that it is, is to fudge important distinctions, though it is admit-
tedly easy to think oneself into an inability to draw these distinctions if one reads Lane and
Neill with sympathy.

(3) Neill explains some of the more glaring problems away as necessary compromises.
Thus, though he rejects teaching which is not specifically requested, he does offer, without
student request but on a non-compulsory basis, the ordinary school curriculum. Certainly
he recognizes that this establishes a fertile field of suggestion, direction, influence. He
pleads that external pressures from parents and school inspectors force this policy upon
him.

(4) Neill attempts to give his radical idea additional appeal by drawing a specious con-
nection with the core principles. He suggests repeatedly that his ideas are stronger ver-
sions, that the core represents a half way house. But this is not so. Suggestion, influence,
and guidance are not relevantly 'like' interference, coercion, bullying; the rejection of the
former cannot be based on any extension of the familiar principles of liberal morality upon
which we base rejection of the latter. Once coercion and intimidation have been thoroughly
repudiated it is not 'going further' in the 'same direction' to reject lending a helping hand
or offering friendly advice; for there simply *is* no further to go in that particular direction. If

friendly advice and helping hands are to be rejected, some additional moral or psychological basis must be found.

I indicate all this to establish how easy it is to score dialectical points against Neill and his system. However, and this is what I want to begin by emphasizing, victories of this sort are rather hollow, even if they may help to alert us to deeper problems in the Summer-hill philosophy. For Neill could swallow his pride, admit to certain inconsistencies between theory and practice, abandon the attempt to bolster his theory with equivocations and specious connections with familiar principles; none the less his ideas would continue to exert a strong influence within the movement for open education. In his autobiography[11] Neill does, indeed, explore the paradoxical nature of his life-long effort to establish and sustain an environment in which children could be free from adult influence of any sort. Neill's ideas continue to be persuasive even in this context, though the familiar rhetorical props and slogans are gone. That being the case, a few dialectical victories against the Summerhill philosophy will hardly justify a retreat to the core principles of open education.

A reconstructed argument for the Summerhill philosophy

This point can be fortified by the construction of a line of reasoning in support of the Summerhill position which is immune from attacks of a trivial or 'verbal' sort. In this section such a line of argument will be presented. Although it is interesting and worthy of consideration on its own merits, this argument is also, I believe, a fair representation or reconstruction of the sort of thinking implicit within the text of *Summerhill*.

For convenience I will divide the argument into three sections, a conceptual sub-argument, a transition, and a psychological-educational sub-argument. The conceptual sub-argument will occupy our attention for most of the remainder of this paper.

The conceptual sub-argument begins by the marking of a distinction between those situations in which children are 'left free to do what they want' and those in which they are subjected to teaching, guidance, direction, suggestion, or influence of any other sort which they have not specifically requested. Remember: to qualify this adult influence does not have to be any form of overt constraint or interference; it does not have to involve force, threats, coercion, or fear. What is necessary is only that there is some engagement between adult and child such that the child does things which he would not have done if 'left free to do what he wants,' or 'given the freedom to be himself,' or 'allowed to live his own life,' etc.

Once this distinction is drawn, the argument proceeds by indicating that left free to do what he wants, the child does what he wants. On its face this seems plausible enough, not much more than a tautology. A moment's reflection, however, raises some doubts, and Neill would hasten to admit that the proposition requires qualification. Some children appear to act aggressively, others appear listless and bored, in some 'do what you want' situations. Neill interprets this phenomenon as 'blockage,' of which he identifies two varieties. In cases of one sort children can't discover their desires, and 'out of touch,' are 'robots,' and hence are at the mercy of adults for meaning and direction in action. This 'downward' blockage results from adult influence of the apparently 'benign,' helpful sort. Children acting to satisfy the expectations of adults dull their perceptions of their own desires. In cases of the other sort children can discover their desires but are unable to express them in

action, even when explicitly permitted to do so. These cases of 'upward' blockage result from a history of adult constraint and prohibition. For Neill, psychotherapy can alleviate much of the damage implicit in either variety of blockage, but a number of years when the child is 'left free to do what he wants' is generally sufficient. Indeed, Neill's mature position is that freedom is preferable to psychotherapy.[12] Children are less blocked and more capable of self-expression after a period of working through their problems in the course of their natural activities within the supportive Summerhill atmosphere. My own experience with schools of this sort tends to confirm Neill's judgment, though for reasons which will emerge I am not satisfied with his interpretation of the matter.

Subject to some such 'blockage' qualification, the premise that left free to do what they want children will do what they want seems plausible enough.

The argument continues by noting that if the child is subject to uninvited adult influence, guidance, or suggestion, he will act in a different manner than he would have if he had been free from that influence. This follows directly from the way in which the distinction between leaving the child free to do what he wants and subjecting him to uninvited influence was constructed.

But if the child does what he wants when left free, and does something else, something other than what he would have done if left free, when he is subjected to uninvited adult influence, it would appear to follow that subjected to uninvited adult influence the child fails to do what he wants to do.

That concludes the conceptual sub-argument. The transition begins by noting that if the child has failed to do what he wanted, he has failed to express his want, or has an unexpressed want. But that is only to say that if the child has failed to do what he wanted, then he has a repressed want or desire, 'repression' being merely a synonym for the 'lack of expression.'

The argument concludes with a psychological-educational sub-argument. It is laid down as a psychological premise that repressed desires are the source of neurosis, hatred, unhappiness. Of course, educators must abandon practices which generate neurosis, hatred, and unhappiness, and that means they must abandon practices which generate repressed wants or desires. But, we conclude from the conceptual sub-argument that uninvited adult influence, suggestion, guidance leads to the child's failing to do what he wants, and hence to repressed wants. Therefore, uninvited adult influence, guidance, suggestion must be rejected. Q.E.D.

Is this argument valid?

At first glance the most promising challenges to this line of reasoning would appear to be those directed against the transition ('Is that what "repression" really means?') and the psychological premise ('Does all repression really cause neurosis, hatred, unhappiness?'). However, the reconstructed argument can be challenged more effectively if the conceptual sub-argument can be blocked, for in that case unfruitful definitional squabbles and indeterminate disputes about rather fuzzy matters of psychological theory and fact can be altogether avoided.

Concentrating, then, on the conceptual sub-argument, the first question to consider is whether it is valid. Does it follow from the premises of that argument that when subjected

to the uninvited influence of adults children fail to do what they want, fail to express their desires?

It ought to be noticed initially that in order to carry the weight imposed by the rest of the reconstructed argument, the conclusion of the sub-argument must be construed in a particularly strong way. The failure to do what one wants, the failure to express one's desires, is the putative cause of aggression, unhappiness, neurosis. In order to make this connection even plausible, the failure to do what one wants, the failure to express one's desire, must be taken as implying that prior to and independent of the act there was something, the want or desire, which did not get expressed in the act and hence which 'remains behind' after the act. If the failure to do what one wants is not taken as implying the existence of such a 'remainder,' a desire still kicking about behind the scenes, so to speak, then no connection can plausibly be drawn between that failure and subsequent neurotic behavior, unhappiness, etc.

Now, in order for the sub-argument to work, in order for it validly to support this conclusion, it must be assumed that these internal states, these wants or desires which exist behind action, are (as I will say) specific to the overt actions which express them; that is, the wants (desires) must stand to the overt actions in the same relationship as, for example, the craving for just this cheese stands to the act of getting and eating this cheese, and not as hunger, or a state of uneasiness, stands to that overt act. Why the validity of the sub-argument requires this relationship between inner desires and overt actions can be indicated with precision. If the wants (desires) were not specific to the overt acts which expressed them, this circumstance could arise: the child could perform one act if left free to do what he wants, he could perform another act if subjected to uninvited adult influence, and yet in both cases, though performing different acts, the child could be expressing one and the same want or desire, thus leaving nothing behind, nothing unexpressed, in either case. The child could, in other words, perform a different act than the one he would have performed if left free to do what he wanted, yet not fail to do what he wanted, not fail to express his desire. And that would show the conceptual sub-argument to be invalid. So the sub-argument requires the assumption that behind overt actions there must exist wants or desires specific to them. The sub-argument, in short, is dependent upon the familiar (indeed, notorious) ghost in the machine, a ghost whose world is filled with all the subtlety and detail of the 'outer' world of overt action.

Neill would hardly reject such a picture. On the contrary, he places just this picture before us on every page of *Summerhill*. The initial sentences of the preface[13] introduce us to the real stars of the Summerhill drama, the 'inner forces,' the 'forces which motivate life.' Neill's psychology is remarkable in its simplicity; these 'inner forces' exist behind every action and either get expressed, which causes pleasure or happiness, or remain repressed, which causes neurosis and unhappiness. These inner forces are, for Neill, altogether specific to the overt acts which express them. Young Beethoven, for example, has Beethovenish forces inside him—he is bursting with the innate desire-to-be-Beethoven and if left alone, free from all influences which he does not specifically seek, he'll develop as far as he is capable of developing, he'll express one Beethovenish desire after another, presumably right on through to the Ninth Symphony.[14]

The validity of the conceptual sub-argument can, then, be challenged by attacking this implicit model of the relationship between wants (desires) and overt actions. That is, if

we were to exorcise the ghost, nullify the model of the act-specific desire, craving, or urge behind the actions of the child, then we could allow that when left free to do what he wants the child indeed does what he wants, and that when subject to adult influence he does something other than what he would have done if left free, yet still not be compelled to accept the crucial conclusion that when subjected to adult influence the child fails to do what he wants, fails to express his desires, in any sense implying that there is something, the desire specifically to do that which he would do if left free, which remains behind unexpressed.

Once the problem is set up in this manner, it can be handled straightforwardly. Counter-examples to the general want-action relationship necessary to sustain the sub-argument can readily be produced. In order to connect the discussion which follows most lucidly with the reconstructed argument for Summerhill, I will work with examples of actions which, as we might naturally say, express wants, yet where, looking behind the scenes, we find no inner forces, no internal wants or desires of the necessary sort.

Consider this familiar airline scenario. The stewardess asks me if I want coffee, tea, or milk. She clearly is not asking me to report on any interior states, any cravings or urges, and it would be peculiar in the extreme if I thought that in order to answer her I had some-how to discover any such thing. How odd if I were to argue with myself in this manner: 'I'd not mind a cup of coffee; in fact, I'd rather enjoy one. But I am asked if I *want* one, and looking into myself I can't say honestly that I can discover any want, desire, craving, or urge specifically for coffee. So in all honesty I must tell her that I don't want coffee.' The stewardess is not interested in any 'inner forces.' She is setting the context for a choice. In that context I may choose coffee by saying 'I want coffee.' (Notice: I could as naturally say 'I'd like coffee' or the more lucidly performative 'I'll have coffee.') I could, of course, have had a conscious craving for coffee when the stewardess arrived. Or such a craving might have developed as soon as I was asked to order. All of this is possible, but nothing of the sort is necessary for me to be acting appropriately in saying 'I want coffee,' and for my having coffee to be quite naturally taken as an expression of my desires.

To bring this example a step closer to the reconstructed argument for the Summerhill philosophy: suppose that I am asked merely if I want something to drink. In this context, if I order coffee it may rather naturally be inferred that I want coffee (subject, of course, to suitable qualifications…. I may be an alcoholic on the wagon, an under-cover coffee tester, etc.: more about these qualifications in the last section). But suppose I am flying some exotic airline. The stewardess makes an uninvited suggestion—she offers me a strange Hawaiian potion—and I, for fancy, go along. Here I do not have what I would have had if I had been left free from all uninvited influence to choose, i.e., coffee. But because in this case we are no longer likely to insist that there was something, the necessary want (desire)-for-coffee lying behind the choice of coffee, we are not likely to think that when moved to accept the strange potion I am failing to express (hence, am repressing) that want-for-coffee.

A reiteration of this argument in an educational context should establish that the conceptual sub-argument is invalid. We find a young man, left free to do what he wants, playing around in the wood shop. We infer that he is doing what he wants to do. We note, however, that to say this does not commit us to the existence of something, an interior desire or inner force to be doing just exactly that. Hence it does not follow that if the child, subjected to

adult influence, did something else, he would necessarily fail to express that desire and hence retain something after the act, a repressed desire.

What makes the argument persuasive?

All of which leads to the natural question why we tend to find the reconstructed argument persuasive. I think that two reasons are worthy of exploration:

(1) Neill draws heavily on a background of English social-political theory, a background providing shared understanding, common assumptions, for most advocates of free schools and open classrooms, regardless of their sympathy for Neill's radical doctrines. Implicit in this theoretical stance is a very strong individual bias. As distinct from the French and German sociological tendencies and American pragmatic theory, the program of English political thought is to build up the common social world out of the perceptions, desires, choices of individuals, and not the other way round. It is second nature for Neill and his readers to look for the explanation of behavior *within* individuals, rather than outside them in the shared world. Hence there would be little natural resistance to the positing of interior forces behind acts, forces capable of accounting for those acts.

Yet in some cases such explanations are inappropriate. After telling us that 'afternoons are completely free for everyone,' Neill adds that 'Tea is served at four.'[15] Do Summerhillians take tea at four because at four they all spontaneously feel something develop inside of them, the desire for tea? Of course not! Tea at tea time is an institution at Summerhill. To reflect back on the previous example: the Englishman takes tea while his American counterpart takes coffee. Is this the expression of an innate natural desire? Of course not! But it would also be short of the mark to insist that even if the institution of tea drinking causes the individual desire for tea, there must be such an interior desire to prompt the choice of tea. Such an inner desire, craving, urge may exist but need not. It is this point which the educationist influenced by the English theoretic background (i.e. most people involved in the free school/open classroom movement) would be likely to miss—that the institution by itself may be sufficient explanation in some cases. The Englishman takes his tea at four not because he's motivated by a craving or urge, but just because it's tea time. There may in all cases be an additional neuro-chemical component to a 'complete' explanation. I am not interested in denying this, only in pointing to its irrelevance to the psychological question under discussion. If one insisted on something more than this neuro-chemical component, if one insisted that the Englishman had to have some inner psychological state to prompt the choice of tea, then one should not insist that this state must be a 'desire.' The state of being-an-Englishman, with all that implies about the outer world, is the 'inner' state which, in general, is sufficient to account for the choice of tea. Yet again: asked at tea time if he wants tea, the Englishman can, without hesitation, say that he does.

(2) If the individualist bias in the social theoretic background of Neill's writing is consonant with the model of the relationship of wants and actions needed to sustain the reconstructed argument, that model is reinforced by Neill's primary substantive interest, the elimination of constraints on masturbation. For masturbation provides Neill with a very compelling paradigm of the desire-action relationship. Here are the crucial elements: (a) there is an internal desire prior to and independent of the act, a craving or urge which is specific to the act which expresses it; (b) there is 'something left behind' when the impulse is blocked by those Victorian masturbation prohibitions, the battle against which (in the name of modern science) constitutes the dramatic plot of *Summerhill;* (c) the familiar 'well-intentioned' but uninvited adult suggestions, designed to channel the impulse along more

'constructive' lines without the use of overt force or coercion, those cold showers and laps around the track, quite clearly also 'leave something behind,' something unexpressed in the original impulse which may with some plausibility be related to aggressiveness, anti-love attitudes, indifference to the feelings of others, compulsive formalism, neurotic anxiety.

It is very tempting to over-generalize from the masturbation paradigm in a specious manner, by analogy to portray all uninvited adult influence, suggestion, advice or guidance as 'like' the lap around the track/cold shower suggestion offered by the superficially well-intentioned but covertly life-hating, frustrated, fascist-leaning boy scout master. Neill does something like that. Building on our sympathy with his stand on masturbation in its primary denotation, Neill extends the argument to sexual fantasy, then to fantasy in general (all fantasy being akin to explicitly sexual fantasy except couched in the symbolic language of the unconscious), and then to play, the acting out of fantasy in this general sense. Neill by now has us 'covered' with this one move; the whole fabric of child life, whether active or passive, is conceived as an extension of masturbation, as sufficiently like masturbation that only a sex-hater (a life hater) would intervene. We should hardly be surprised to find Neill claiming that 'the question of masturbation is supreme in education.'[16]

Or consider this passage:[17]

> There are no set lessons in woodworking. Children make what they want to. And what they want to make is nearly always a toy revolver or gun or boat or kite. They are not much interested in elaborate joints of the dovetail variety; even the older boys do not care for difficult carpentry. Not many of them take an interest in my own hobby—hammered brasswork—because you can't attach much of a fantasy to a brass bowl.

The picture should by now be sufficiently clear. The adult who, confronted with a young man dabbling around in the woodshop, would see an opportunity for teaching carpentry, who would advise, guide, or in some other way attempt to involve the young man in the learning of carpentry skills, would be suffering from a severe mis-appreciation. To step in would be, as it were, to interfere in symbolic masturbation. Such uninvited influence could only be expected to generate repression, with all the mischievous consequences we seek to avoid.

By now, what is fundamentally wrong with this picture should also be clear. The act of dabbling with light carpentry may exhibit none of the elements of the masturbation case at all; there may be *nothing* lurking behind the act, no independent craving or urge or desire, sexual or otherwise. The youth may be fooling around with carpentry because he has nothing better to do, or because that is the sort of thing one does at Summerhill. Certainly he's free to do what he wants—afternoons are completely free for everyone. That means there are no teachers around to be entertained by. Under the circumstances the woodshop may be the best, most interesting or obvious alternative. Here we may say that the youngster is doing what he wants, if we wish. But it would be wrong to insist that there must therefore be something, his want (desire) to be doing just this, an inner something behind the action which either gets expressed or remains repressed. And so it would be wrong to demand on that basis that the youth be left alone, free from suggestion, advice, influence, or teaching.

Being left free and doing what you want

In the last two sections I have been concerned to show that the conceptual sub-argument is invalid and to explain why it is nonetheless persuasive. In this last section I want briefly

to explore the leading premise of that argument, the proposition that left free to do what he wants the child does what he wants.

As already indicated, Neill would qualify that proposition by excepting cases of 'blockage.' This qualification, however, is inadequate. We are now in a good position to understand both why this is so and why none the less we might tend not to perceive this more readily.

Consider a counter-example. A child wants to play golf, but there is no golf course at Summerhill. So left free to do what he wants, he goes to the woodshop or the dramatics class. This is not what he wants to do, but is the best, or the most readily perceived, option available to him under the circumstances. Examples of this sort can be generated *ad nauseam,* given the infinity of possible desires and the limitations of money and space which constrain any educational institution.

An advocate of the Summerhill philosophy might at this point respond by claiming that the desire to play golf is not a 'real,' or a 'natural' desire, but rather must result from prior adult influence. As such playing golf is not what the child 'really' wants to do, so there is no need, psychological or moral, to cater to that desire. The child is already, as it were, off the track and shouldn't be encouraged to deviate further from his 'real' life plan.

The problem with this response is that it salvages the premise of the reconstructed Summerhill argument only by abandoning the conclusion. For: suppose that only desires which could plausibly be taken as 'natural' were admitted as warranting satisfaction; the desire to play games is 'in,' but the desire specifically to play golf is 'out.' The more plausible candidates for the status of 'natural' desires, however, are vague. They can be expressed in many different acts, are not 'specific' to the acts which express them. Hence these desires can be satisfied by many different acts, including those done when the child is 'left free to do what he wants' *and* those done subject to adult influence. Hence the satisfaction of those desires would not in general require that the child be 'left free to do what he wants.'

As a last ditch effort, someone might carry this argument further by claiming to have the ability to sort the 'real' from the 'false,' or the 'natural' from the 'artificially induced' desires at the requisite, fine level of specificity. But this claim would be implausible; it would appear to be little more than a specious justification for the imposition of one's own values on children, and nothing could be more foreign to the philosophy of Lane and Neill. And furthermore Neill respected athletes (Lane did not) and knew that in general children tended to emulate them. And didn't 'Little Arnie Palmer' develop 'as far as he was capable of developing'?

Significantly, Neill does not attempt to protect himself by making any of these specious moves. He says that girls are bored more frequently than boys, and he takes this as evidence that boys are more creative, less blocked, than girls. But he immediately adds, 'Possibly I find the boys more creative than the girls because the school may be better equipped for boys than for girls.'[18]

The problem here is clear enough. Being left free does not guarantee that you can do what you want, for doing what you want is not just a matter of 'being left alone,' or 'being given the freedom to do what you want.' That is, doing what you want is not made possible merely by the absence of external constraints. Suppose that there is something in particular which a child wants to do at a particular time. In order to do it he must be free to do it, must not be prevented from doing it. That may be a necessary condition but it is not sufficient.

At least two other kinds of conditions must, in general, be satisfied: those pertaining to the material-environmental conditions of the action and those pertaining to ability, know-how, skill. One may want, for example, to draw, but lack pencils and paper; one may want to draw a good likeness of a friend but not know how to do so.

Why is this problem, which is rather glaring once it is identified, not more readily perceived? Why is it prima facie so plausible that left free to do what he wants the child does what he wants? At least part of the answer here, surprisingly, can be found in the same two factors, which if the analysis of the previous section is correct, make the conceptual sub-argument, though invalid, appear persuasive.

(1) English social-political theory forms the background of Neill's educational doctrine and governs the 'set' with which we read Neill's work. The central problem within that theoretic tradition is freedom vs. *authority*. The 'individuals' of concern to the writers within that theoretic tradition are mature adults. Their interests, abilities and skills, and the material-environmental contexts within which these are pursued and exercised are not posited as fundamental concerns of the state. The state only enters the arena when these matters have attained a certain degree of complexity. The schoolman, unlike his political analog, is directly responsible for the development of interests and skills and does bear the primary responsibility for the constitution and subsequent maintenance of an appropriate material environment. Seeing the schoolman through political theoretic spectacles, we may tend to be more sensitive to what he allows and permits and requires and forbids than to what he fosters, develops, and equips. That is, seeing the schoolman in terms set by English political theory, we tend not to stretch our vision beyond the realm of norms. The schoolman allows the child the freedom to do what he wants, and the rest is, as it were, up to the child, not really part of the schoolman's affair. This, of course, will never do as a theoretical orientation for education; the blind spots created by its adoption are especially unfortunate in a system of educational ideas which places such immense significance not on the abstract value of freedom from control, but rather on the developmental benefits stemming from the satisfaction of desires.

(2) Masturbation, as an action paradigm, can be exceptionally misleading here. It is almost unique among action types in having neither material, environmental nor skill conditions. In general there are no material or environmental adjuncts necessary for masturbation, though privacy may be necessary in order for masturbation to conform to conventional moral norms. And neither learning nor practice are necessary for masturbation. The only remaining general factor governing masturbation would be the presence or absence of adult constraints and restraining influences, 'freedoms' which are 'given' or 'taken away.' So to the extent that masturbation is taken as a paradigm affecting our conception of human action in general, we will tend to become insensitive to the material and know-how conditions of action.

Conclusions

The conclusions to be drawn from the analysis of this paper are these: the reconstructed argument for the Summerhill philosophy of education is not valid; the premises of this argument do not entail the conclusion. And even if the argument were valid, it would not provide a sound basis for the Summerhill philosophy, for there is an irreparably false

premise in the argument. Hence Neill's distinctive Summerhill philosophy cannot be supported by such an argument.

Does it follow that the core principles identified at the beginning of this paper form an adequate philosophical basis for guiding open educational practices, that Neill's radical philosophy should be rejected? Not at all! What follows is that if Neill's philosophy is justified, it must be on the basis of arguments other than the one under consideration here. And if I am correct in claiming that the reconstructed argument is an accurate representation of Neill's own thinking, then it also follows that the Summerhill philosophy requires a justificatory basis different than that provided by Neill himself.[19]

Notes

1   Homer Lane, *Talks to Parents and Teachers,* Schocken, 1969 (first published 1928); A.S.Neill, *Summerhill,* Hart, 1960.
2   *Summerhill,* p. 4.
3   *Ibid.,* p. 12. See also p. 52, 'The child of spirit can rebel against the hard boss, but the soft boss merely makes the child impotently soft and unsure of his real feelings.'
4   *Ibid.,* p. 29.
5   *Ibid.,* p. 5, Neill's emphasis.
6   *Ibid.,* p. 27.
7   *Ibid.,* p. 174.
8   *Ibid.,* p. 10 and the subsequent discussion, pp. 10–12.
9   *Ibid.,* p. 91.
10 *Talks to Parents and Teachers,* p. 116.
11 A.S.Neill, *Neill Neill Orange Peel,* Hart, 1972.
12 *Summerhill,* pp. 38–40.
13 *Ibid.,* p. xxiii.
14 *Ibid.,* p. 12.
15 *Ibid.,* p. 13.
16 *Ibid.,* p. 224.
17 *Ibid.,* p. 14.
18 *Ibid.,* p. 15.
19 The ideas contained in this paper were originally developed in Edmonton, Alberta, during the academic year 1970–1. I would like to thank Mr Thomas Newman for his advice on the organization of this paper.

Index