HOLISTIC EDUCATION REVIEW

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Holistic Education Review aims to stimulate discussion and application of all person-centered educational ideas and methods. Articles explore how education can encourage the fullest possible development of human potentials and planetary consciousness. We believe that human fulfillment, global cooperation and ecological responsibility should be the primary goals of education, and we will inquire into the historical, social, and philosophical issues that have prevented them from so becoming.

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Co-editors: Mary E. Sweeney, Ph.D., and Ron Miller
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Cover photos: The Free School, Albany, NY (Courtesy of Mary Leue) and BONGO program students doing a tableau of the painting "Death of Socrates" (photo by Terry Born).

Looking at Alternative Education

This issue includes a special feature on alternative education. Alternative education is distinguished by key ingredients including choice and variety, change, community contact, innovative evaluation systems, diffused roles for staff, small school size, and warm school climate. True alternative schools clearly state that their mission is the full development of each student. Their goals provide for the emotional, intellectual, physical, aesthetic and spiritual development of all students in their programs.

In an Audit Report about Jefferson County's alternative programs (located in the Denver, Colorado metropolitan area) Mary Anne Raywid has advocated the unique characteristics of alternative schools and recommends that such programs be expanded. Yet Mary Anne warns against the *superiority* attitude that some alternative school educators may emulate. Mary Anne concludes that no one form of education is the answer for all youth.

It is becoming clear that conventional education programs are failing marginal or at-risk youth. And even many average high school students are disengaging from academic rigor and are just stepping through the educational process. The popular press has been filled with reform strategies for conventional schools to reconnect disengaging youth. Recent reports proposing remedies to conventional school practices promote smaller school size, house units with 150 students and a core group of teachers, interdisciplinary learning, and individualized education programs. *Many of these practices and more have been in place in alternative and holistic programs for some time.* Conventional schools do not need to reinvent the wheel but should call upon the tried and true practices of alternative schools. A *superiority* attitude on the part of either party will not stand to serve youngsters well.

MARY E. SWEENEY

Holistic Education and the Politics of Empowerment

This is, of course, an election year. But what do politics have to do with holistic education?

Plenty, actually. Holistic education, as we described it in our first issue this past Spring, is a deeper appreciation for the process of human development and a critical look at how cultural patterns can both nurture and undermine that development. Thus, it is much more than just a new method or a packet of curriculum materials; it is a deeply moral and yes, a *political* position. To hold reverence for the unfolding life of the individual person is a statement of value and hence of priorities: it is saying that the intellectual, physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the growing child deserve a greater share of adult attention and social resources than they are currently being given.

For what are our highest values, our highest priorities as a society? We are obsessed with material success and high professional or celebrity status, and thus we tolerate a ruthlessly competitive social order, so clearly manifested in our educational system with its endless testing and grading. In true social-Darwinian fashion, we think it is *natural* for some few to succeed and prosper while many others falter and fail and spend their lives in meaningless jobs or on the streets. On top of that, we are preoccupied with "national security" and pour billions of dollars and much of our society's intellectual and moral energy into preparations for war. The needs of the child—the needs of healthy human development—clearly have less priority than material success, high status, and so-called national security.

The Child Welfare League of America is making a major effort—the Children's Presidential Campaign—to call attention to this bizarre sense of priorities. They are asking citizens to contact this year's presidential candidates and other elected officials, to insist that children's welfare and children's rights be recognized and given more attention and resources. They have identified these ten specific areas where government—especially in the past eight years—has reduced support for, or utterly failed to recognize, human needs: income security (one in five American children are raised in poverty), housing, adequate nutrition, day care, physical and mental health care, abused and neglected children, adopted children and their families, foster care services, the needs of adolescents, and physically and mentally challenged children.

We applaud the Child Welfare League for raising these important issues. We encourage our readers to contact the League (440 First St. NW Suite 310, Washington, DC 20001-2085; ph. (202) 638-2952) for more information—and then to take action by getting in touch with elected officials and candidates. Holistic education must be a political and not merely a pedagogical position, because it is almost useless for us to create nurturing educational environments for children if they daily go home to poverty, sickness, abuse, or neglect.

Still, in many ways the goals of this campaign barely scratch the surface of what young people need for their fullest

Politics of empowerment (cont.)

and healthiest development. Yes, we need quality child care—but no amount of legislation can provide the *bonding* and emotional security that only a healthy family life can provide. Yes, we need health care, but we must be wary of the catch-all phrase "mental health"; our goal must not merely be a lower suicide rate or less depression, but the nurturing of the highest and best human qualities inherent in young people—their unmeasured creative, intuitive, imaginative and spiritual capacities. Yes, we need to pay more attention to adolescents, but what kind of attention?—youth shelters and drop-out programs are mere band aids. What about deeply moving *rites of passage* which our culture absolutely lacks? (We will address this need in the Fall issue of the *Review*.) There are important things missing from the campaign's list. What about the child's dignity as a free and autonomous person in the educational process? What about the spiritual development of the growing person? What about all the subtle but marvelous intelligences that *all* people possess, but which are not valued in the grim, materialistic corporate world?

The issues raised by the Children's Presidential Campaign are but a dawning recognition that our culture systematically ignores deep human needs and higher possibilities. Taken by themselves, these legislative and administrative proposals could easily be dismissed by the public as the idle dream of "bleeding heart liberals." Ultimately it is not the politicians we must address but the world view—the fundamental values—of our society. Holistic education is political, yes, but it is a new kind of politics—one which seeks the direct empowerment of people rather than ready-made solutions delivered by experts and authorities. By political, we must not mean the superficial process of choosing our leaders from among a group of media celebrities. As Maria Montessori once exclaimed, "What irony! To choose one's rulers! But those who rule cannot free anybody from the chains which bind all . . ."[1]

The chain which binds us all is an inhumanly competitive, blindly materialistic and compulsively defensive value system. We ought to be concerned about the devastating results of such a world view, to be sure—but we must also begin addressing its *causes*. We must raise basic questions about our customary beliefs, goals and lifestyles. Do we really want "better living through chemistry" at the expense of the ecosystem? Do cars and VCRs and television bring more happiness and meaning than human interactions and communal celebrations and rituals? Is a professional career a greater achievement than a sane and happy family life? (It is interesting that the women's movement is beginning to ask this question; they have found that equality defined solely in materialistic terms is spiritually quite sterile.) Most basically, we must ask whether our cultural obsession with "getting ahead"—accelerated learning, being accepted into elite kindergartens, getting A's, going to prestigious colleges and professional schools, and so on—is truly a worthy goal, truly a noble use of our human possibilities.

When we begin to value our children as precious bearers of divine gifts, then we will treat each of them with respect, and honor, and love—and provide for them a culture and a community that nurture the growth of their highest and best potentials. This is the politics of empowerment.

RON MILLER

Notes

1. Maria Montessori, *The Formation of Man* (trans. by A. M. Joosten) (Madras, India: Kalakshetra, 1978), p. 13.

In the past two or three years, the politics of empowerment have been articulated by the Green movement, which is rapidly growing around the world. For an overall introduction to the ecological, democratic, nonviolent, and vitally humane ideas of the Greens, see Fritjof Capra & Charlene Spretnak, *Green Politics, The Global Promise* (Santa Fe, NM: Bear & Co., 1986); and Charlene Spretnak, *The Spiritual Dimension of Green Politics* (Santa Fe, NM: Bear & Co., 1986). We will look more closely at the Green movement, and its implications for education, in a later issue.

Holistic, Integrative Education—

Becoming All That We Can Be

by Linda Campbell

Come to the edge, he said.
They said, We are afraid.
Come to the edge, he said.
They came.
He pushed them
And they flew.
Apollinaire

One of today's foremost advocates of holistic education explores the implications of recent research — and suggests practical applications.

Research in the neurosciences, psychology and education are all pushing us to new edges and new places within ourselves. Each person possesses an amazing array of capabilities yet most of our talents and skills have remained dormant or mediocre at best. How is it possible to awaken inherent abilities? How is it possible to express more of who we are? What does the research say about improving our learning and teaching? Can we free ourselves to soar with skill and talent and inspiration?

New images of what it means to be human and new understandings of how we learn are emerging from many directions. Recent research from diverse fields indicates the necessity to develop the totality of the human being. Educational institutions and methods that nurture only verbal and mathematical talents leave us incomplete and unfulfilled. Fortunately, research now spotlights ways to satisfy our innate desire to grow and learn and become.

The edges of neuroscientific research

In the last several years, much publicity has surrounded the study of right and left hemispheric brain processes. One of the unfortunate results of the popularization of this research was that people began to call themselves right-brained or left-brained, talking themselves into being half-brained while ignoring the fullness of their own being. On the other hand, a highly fortunate result of the split-brain research is the acknowledgement by educators of a VARIETY of mental processes previously ignored in educational settings. The focus on verbal, analytical, symbolic, abstract, temporal, rational and linear skills yielded lopsided and incomplete education. Our right hemisphere's nonverbal, synthetic, concrete, spatial, nontemporal, gestalt, and intuitive skills needed to be engaged in learning as well. Neuroscientific research usurped the autocratic reign of the left hemisphere and supplanted a whole-brained democracy in its stead.

Linda Campbell is an educational consultant with public and private schools across the U.S. She speaks at national and international conferences on the holistic paradigm in education and other leading edge educational topics. She was co-editor, with Dee Dickinson, of the Winter, 1988 issue of **In Context** *magazine, which focused on "Transforming Education." Linda lives in the Seattle area.*

One neuroscientific researcher, Dr. Paul MacClean, has highlighted the importance of emotions and learning. His work has demonstrated that all mental processes are first sifted through the limbic system which is the emotional center of the brain. In reality, purely rational or objective thinking does not exist. Our emotional reaction to incoming information and our feelings about ourselves and others determines whether the information will reach short-term or long-term memory. How we feel determines how and what we will learn.

Dr. Marian Diamond, a neuroanatomist at UC Berkeley, has studied the impact of environment on learning and intelligence with a wide variety of animals. Her research demonstrates that a stimulating environment physiologically increases the size of brain cells, thus signalling enhanced intelligence. The three main attributes of an enriched environment include: living with others of a variety of ages, frequently receiving new toys and thirdly, receiving healthy doses of TLC (being talked to and stroked by the human caregivers). The physiological changes in the brain occur after exposure to a stimulating environment for only SEVEN days. Dr. Diamond's research shows that the brain is flexible and can change at any age if a rich environment is provided, love is received and new challenges are undertaken.

The neuroscientists, then, have made significant contributions to our understanding of ways to tap the potential of the mind. We need to employ the many ways of information processing in both hemispheres of the brain, honor and positively engage our feelings in learning and provide a rich and loving environment. The neuroresearchers have answered some of our "HOW" questions about expressing our range of capabilities. Psychologists and their research are giving us some new images of who we are.

The edges of psychological research

Dr. Howard Gardner, a veteran researcher at Harvard University, has recently written a book entitled, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences.* Dr. Gardner greatly expands our notion of human intelligence. Our society normally teaches to, tests and rewards two kinds of intelligence: verbal-linguistic and logical-mathematical. Gardner has identified at least five other types of human intelligence that are important if we choose to claim more of who we are. The five additional intelligences are: visual-spatial, body-kinesthetic, musical-auditory, interpersonal (the ability to work well with others) and intrapersonal (the ability to know and understand oneself, one's feelings, goals, etc.). Educators who are adapting Gardner's expanded view of intelligence to the classroom envision students well versed in basic skills and talented physically, musically, socially and with inner wisdom as well. Gardner does not want to let us stop there, however. He feels that countless other intelligences are likely waiting to be identified, educated and used.

Two other psychologists, Dr. Reuven Feuerstein of Israel and Dr. Renee Fuller of New York, have done extensive research with mentally retarded individuals. Their work repeatedly demonstrates that IQ is not a static and fixed commodity. Amazing results have been achieved with those whose IQ's range as low as 20 and 30 and up. Using the instructional techniques of Feuerstein and Fuller great leaps occur not only intellectually but socially and emotionally as well. The work of these researchers confirms that ALL of us are capable of learning and growing beyond the expectations of others and our own expectations as well.

Psychologists are erasing our former beliefs about human intelligence while sketching new versions of what intelligence is. They are also teaching us that carefully structured instruction can overcome what was previously perceived as the greatest of mental handicaps. Similarly, researchers in the field of education have also pursued the improvement of teaching and learning so that more students can succeed more of the time.

The edges of educational research

Through recent research in learning styles, it is now understood that people differ in the ways they perceive and process information. Researchers such as Bernice McCarthy, Anthony Gregorc and others recognize individual differences and preferences in learning and teaching. The traditional classroom format of lecturing teachers and listening students is effective for approximately 25% of all students. The remaining 75% need other approaches for a successful learning experience.

New images of what it means to be human and new understandings of how we learn are emerging from many directions.

McCarthy has created a model of instruction enabling teachers to effectively engage all types of learners in the classroom. A simplified version of McCarthy's instructional strategy includes four basic kinds of activities that should be included in the teaching of any kind of subject matter. The four learning activities are:

1. a personal experience or concrete interaction of the student and the topic

2. facts and resource information
3. direct application of the newly acquired information
4. active experimentation or creative play with what was learned

By providing these kinds of learning experiences, the learning styles of all students will be engaged and all will have a greater opportunity for success in the classroom.

The necessary push

Neuroscientific, psychological and educational researchers are discovering ways to waken slumbering human potential. As a result many educators desire to apply the research findings in their instructional programs, but a manageable synthesis is needed to begin.

In addition to focusing on the "basics" in education, we now know it is mandatory to incorporate the body, the feelings, and the social and intuitive dimensions of the human in the educational process.

A recurring theme from research is that to develop human capacities we must USE those capacities. In addition to focusing on the "basics" in education, we now know it is mandatory to incorporate the body, the feelings, and the social and intuitive dimensions of the human in the educational process. To be all that we can be, we must first activate the capacities that we have.

To achieve holistic development of human potential, a new model of instruction has taken form. It is the Integrative Model of Instruction. Put simply, the integrative model has five main characteristics:

1. The body, the mind, the feelings, the social and intuitive aspects of the learner are engaged and valued in the educational process
2. The learner's personal interests are integrated into the study of a topic
3. The learning environment is stimulating and emotionally supportive
4. Subject matter is frequently taught across discipline areas
5. Academics are taught integrating learning styles theory in instruction

How does the Integrative Model work in the classroom? One example follows of an introductory, elementary level unit on world geography. The five criteria mentioned above are noted throughout the lesson plan.

The teacher first asks the students where they have travelled that they have loved. A discussion ensues with the locations noted on a large map. The teacher also asks the students where they would love to travel to. These places are also noted on the map. The instructor then takes the students on an imaginary journey through guided imagery to a wonderful foreign land perhaps to Borneo or Egypt or Madagascar. Here, they encounter the people and the culture of another land. When the guided imagery is completed, the students then reflect on what each encountered.

The above activities demonstrate:
- integration of the learner's interests
- incorporation of learning styles information (a personal and concrete experience) and
- engaging the intuition.

The teacher next explains that the children will have an opportunity to chart their favorite places, perhaps now including the one from their guided imagery, on their own individual globes. Each student will make a globe as a beautiful art and social studies project. Balloons are given to each child, blown up and tied and paper mache globes are begun. A couple of days later when the globes have adequately dried, they are painted a light blue. Students are then provided with maps and they lightly sketch in pencil each of the continents on their globes. When this task is completed, the children then paint the continents on their globes. The continents and oceans are labelled.

This section of the lesson includes:
- integration of learning styles by providing facts and resources and directly applying the information
- incorporating physical activity into learning and
- interdisciplinary learning.

To continue the lesson, the teacher then brings the students together in a large circle to discuss their projects at this point. The students share what they like about their globes and what they don't like. They explain their feelings about the activities they have been participating in. As each child shares his or her reflections, all listen attentively and respectfully. If there is frustration with some element, the student and group may generate suggestions for dealing with the uncomfortable feelings.

These teaching strategies accommodate:
- engaging feelings and
- activating the social nature of the children.

To complete the introductory geography unit, the teacher explains that students will be able to pursue working with geography in a variety of ways. Perhaps they would like to begin charting their favorite places of travel on the globe. Perhaps they want to select a continent and draw in all of its countries and/or cities. Perhaps, they would like to select one place to study in depth. The children might want to work alone or in pairs or groups. They might want to create their own project entirely. Students then generate their projects and pursue them over the next few days when they are shared as the students feel is appropriate. The teacher and/or student may also conclude with some form of learning assessment.

This section of the lesson includes:
- integrating the student's personal interests and
- accommodation of learning styles through the opportunity for active experimentation.

This lesson unfolds as a natural sequence of learning processes. Each learner type has encountered activities in his area of strength so that he could feel and be successful at least some of the time. Each student's body, mind, feelings, social and intuitive capacities have also been engaged in the learning cycle. He has learned and learned thoroughly and at the same time a broader array of human potential was activated than what is normally involved in traditional educational experiences.

To be able to teach incorporating the five major components of holistic, in-

tegrative instruction, it is necessary for educators to rethink and redo their own method of instruction. However, to change methodology, difficult as that is in and of itself, is not enough. As educators, we need to overcome our own sluggishness and PUSH ourselves to develop OUR array of capacities. We need to push ourselves to learn, grow and become in new ways so that similar development may be nurtured in our children. We need to develop our bodies, minds, intuition and emotional and social dimensions so that we are integrous role models for our children. We need to understand and implement learning research so that instruction can be improved and personalized for all students. We need to challenge our current educational practices and begin one step at a time towards claiming and developing the full array of what it means to be human.

Sprouting wings

Fortunately, there are benefits to educators and students alike when integrative instruction is implemented. Not only is academic instruction and learning vastly improved but the educational process is humanized as well. Students find relevancy in what they are learning. There are increased opportunities for success, directly enhancing a student's sense of self-worth and the teacher's feelings of competence as well. There are avenues for students to discover and develop areas of personal interest and talent. Both teachers and students experience holistic development. And education, at last, does more than bestow knowledge. It becomes a process that nurtures the human spirit. It breathes life into the totality of our being so that we may be and give all that we are.

The work of these researchers confirms that ALL of us are capable of learning and growing beyond the expectations of others and our own expectations as well.

We recently received the following brief article, and include it here because it offers another concrete example for applying the research on learning.

Writing for Fun

Anyone In Their Right Mind Can Do It

by Theresa Ann White

For many youngsters, the free-flowing creative act of writing too soon becomes locked inside grammatical chains. What is originally a spontaneous and enjoyable expression changes into a blocked, child-resistant task. But this can be avoided; writing can remain enjoyable. Budding writers can continue to develop.

Theresa Ann White is a free-lance writer currently working on public relations in Jacksonville, Florida. She has been a mental health counselor, journalist, coordinator for a student exchange program, and, for a short while, a milker of sweet Jersey cows.

The discipline of grammar is not the culprit—it is the system of education that prioritizes punctuation, spelling, capitalization and structure over the meaningful ideas wrapped in words. And traditional educational methods merely practice a long-standing given: the only acceptable writing is that which is grammatically pure.

In the last decade, this disciplined approach to learning has been scrutinized by researchers into the hemispheric laterality of the brain. Springer and Deutsch were among the first to popularize the tentative findings of right and left hemispheric functionings in *Left Brain, Right Brain* (1981).[1] A composition teacher named Gabrielle Rico gathered together her own experiences and published *Writing The Natural Way* in 1983.[2]

What Rico and others suggested was that the hemispheres of the brain operate in different styles. In general, the right hemisphere expresses the traits of spontaneity and intuition. Its process is holistic and non-sequential. The left hemisphere was described as a logical and sequential tool, working in a step-by-step manner.

Springer and Deutsch admit that the act of creation calls on non-analytic processes and that these processes are intuitive in nature. But they shy from labelling one or the other as right or left brain traits. True to the code of objectivity, the two disdain simplistic conclusions. What Springer and Deutsch will concur is that "our educational system may miss training or developing half of the brain, but it probably does so by missing out on the talents of both hemispheres."[3]

How all this delicate generalization affects the child in school can be understood in a writing technique I call Freewriting. Based on Rico's text, I changed my approach as a writing coach for a group of mentally ill adults.

Over an eighteen-month period, we experimented with this novel method that uses the "core idea" as a foundation. Improvements in the group were noticeable. Those with a childhood fear of syntax and grammar put their timidity aside. Most significantly, the writer who claimed she had nothing to say produced pages of unique poetry and a short story.

This technique is akin to the natural inclinations of children who have an idea or urge and immediately pen it. Freewriting begins with the core idea. This is the topic for writing, whether it is a color, an expression, a feeling, memory or an abstraction. Write the core idea in the center of a blank paper and without hesitating, write any words that jump from the mind. Use a structure resembling a sun and its rays. The core idea is the sun and radiating from it are spontaneous feelings, definitions, connotations and memories that are sparked by considering it.

Let these images flow without interruption. This is the basis of Freewriting. Do not stop for mistakes; do not worry about whether the radiating ideas are sensible or acceptable. This process takes anywhere from three to five minutes. A natural slowdown will occur, indicating that all spontaneous associations have been exhausted.

Review the sun and its rays. It may look messy; words seem irrelevant. This is expected. This first step in the Freewriting technique is for accumulating, not for refining ideas.

Choose those expressions that strike a chord. With those in mind, begin writing. This time, change the sun into a square. Create a short piece or vignette that expands the chosen ideas. Try to end with a reference to the beginning in a cyclic manner. Again, the conclusion will be felt before it arrives. This vignette will be similar to entries found in the diaries of children. Whole thoughts rush forth, emotions jump out and words run like a turned-on faucet. There is no censorship provoked by an imaginary teacher or an essay grade. The writing is full of feeling and neglectful of the rules.

This is what occurs when the right hemisphere is given priority. What is accomplished is unimpeded freedom of expression. In a gesture lacking inhibition, emotions are transfixed into words. This goes beyond a temporary dismissal of grammar's rules. Associations that can be blocked or forgotten in the midst of a spelling correction can be captured. Mistakes can be corrected afterward but a fleeting image is easily lost.

The final phase calls on the left hemisphere. The edit function can now switch on, tying up loose ends, smoothing syntax, adding and subtracting punctuation marks.

In traditional educational settings, these left hemisphere, edit duties are usually stressed as the means to "teach" writing. But when writing is focused on examining grammar rather than recording a rush of ideas, it is done at the expense of the imagination.

Freewriting is a learned technique that mimics the original spontaneity of youth. By separating during the writing process the ever-present grammatician (left hemisphere) from the fruitful wonderer (right hemisphere), each is given equal time. Neither intrudes upon the other. That exuberant flow of ideas and images, so often shown by children, is not reprimanded and silenced by the stern teacher lurking in the left lane of grey matter.

Notes

1. Sally P. Springer & Georg Deutsch, *Left Brain, Right Brain* (New York: W. H. Freeman, 1981).
2. Gabrielle Rico, *Writing the Natural Way* (Los Angeles: J. P. Tarcher, 1983).
3. Springer and Deutsch, *Left Brain, Right Brain,* p. 192.

Why the Holistic Curriculum?

by Jack Miller

The problems of our age are almost innumerable but it is safe to say that environmental destruction and the threat of nuclear war would be at the top of anyone's list.

Our environmental problems continue to mount. Acid rain, global deforestation, the massive dumping of chemicals into lakes and rivers, the deterioration of the ozone layer are just a few of the problems that continue to plague us.[1] Although sensitivity to environmental issues has increased in the last two decades and some gains have been made, the gains seem minute compared to the environmental problems that still confront us.

The threat of nuclear war continues to hover over our heads. Every two months the U.S. continues to build two hundred nuclear warheads. Two decades ago, Robert McNamara suggested that two hundred nuclear warheads were enough to cripple the Soviet Union. However, the U.S. and Russia continue to be locked in the arms race and today there exist approximately 50,000 nuclear weapons in the world.[2] We continue to speculate about the effects of nuclear war and "nuclear winters," but we really don't grasp the total horror of its prospect. To be sure, civilization and even life as we know it would disappear.

How can we begin to deal with these problems which are so overwhelming? I believe a case can be made that one of the principal causes of our difficulties is the fragmentation of life. In our world we tend to divide things up into little pieces so that we can no longer see relationships; thus, we have our "private" and "public" lives. The industrialist ignores pollution that comes from his plant because he has compartmentalized his business into short-term profits. Ibsen, in his play, *The Doll's House,* describes a businessman who draws strong boundaries between his business and his family life. Ibsen describes how this artificial separation leads to the businessman's downfall.

In academia, Kaplan has referred to the way the analytic philosopher separates his or her trade from more fundamental concerns. Value commitments "belong to the personal life of the philosopher but are not integrated with his professional concerns. What he identifies as philosophy is not something that he lives by, but a purely intellectual pursuit, like the study of mathematics or physics with which it is so intimately

Traditional education, like modern culture, is fragmented and atomistic. A holistic education emphasizes relationships—between thinking and intuition, mind and body, individual and community, personal self and higher Self (the spiritual dimension of experience). Holistic education seeks transformation—that is, the continuing growth of the person and society.

Jack Miller is Professor in Curriculum and Head of the Niagara Centre at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. He has been working in the area of humanistic/holistic education for approximately fifteen years and has written several books including **Humanizing the Classroom** *(Praeger, 1976),* **The Compassionate Teacher** *(Prentice Hall, 1981), and* **The Holistic Curriculum** *(OISE Press, 1988). His other major professional interest is in the area of teacher beliefs and curriculum orientations. Jack is currently working on a manuscript entitled* **New Age Pilgrims** *which includes interviews with men and women engaged in holistic practices in the areas of medicine, education, and meditation.*

This article is drawn from the forthcoming book The Holistic Curriculum, *by John P. Miller, published by and available from OISE Press, the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1V6.*

associated."[3] Just as the industrialist does not see the relationship between his business and the destruction of the environment the analytic philosopher dismisses the connection between his work and his deepest personal values.

One of the most prevalent forms of the fragmentation of life is where we divide people into "us" and "them." At this level we ignore our basic connectedness as human beings. Here we can divide people according to color, people who believe in a particular "ism" and those that don't, and ultimately people who must be bombed in order to preserve our "way of life." It is much easier to build the bomb when you view the enemy as "them." It becomes much more difficult when we see the enemy as "us"—as humans like ourselves.

In general, we have atomized our universe so that we can control it. Yet today, we are reeling under the effects of the atomization.

In general, we have atomized our universe so that we can control it. Yet today, we are reeling under the effects of atomization. At the core of this separation is the division we have made between our inner and outer worlds—or between consciousness and the cosmos. Kant said: "Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the oftener and more steadily we reflect upon them: the starry heavens above and the moral law within me." Kant's connection between our inner being and the universe is precisely the connection that we seem to have lost. Our dualistic emphasis in the west has led to the separation, even alienation, between our psyche and the material world. Griffiths summarizes this split very well:

> It is a disease of the merely rational mind that causes us to see them as separate from one another, to imagine a world extended outside us in space and time, and the mind as something separate from the external world. In reality the world we see is a world which has been penetrated by our consciousness; it is the world as mirrored in the human mind.[4]

The fragmentation of learning

It can be argued that schooling contributes to atomization and alienation. We divide our curriculum into subjects, then the subjects into units which, in many cases, are not related to each other. The most extreme example of this segmentation is competency-based education. Tanner and Tanner comment on the effects of the atomization of the curriculum:

> But perhaps the most damaging result of breaking down the curriculum into minute particles is that it must, of necessity, lead away from an understanding of the unity of all knowledge. Obviously, also, a disintegrated curriculum is not likely to help the student develop an integrated outlook or philosophy or lead to transfer of learning.[5]

Another damaging segmentation in education is the way we separate the head and heart. We stress the basics or thinking skills, but caring and compassion are rarely addressed. Gandhi realized the futility of this split:

> I hold that true education of the intellect can only come through a proper exercise and training of the bodily organs, e.g., hands, feet, eyes, ears, nose, etc. In other words an intelligent use of the bodily organs in a child provides the best and quickest way of developing his intellect. But unless the development of the mind and body goes hand in hand with a corresponding awakening of the soul, the former alone would prove to be a poor lopsided affair. By spiritual training I mean education of the heart. A proper and allround development of the mind, therefore, can take place only when it proceeds *pari passu* with the education of the physical and spiritual faculties of the child. They constitute an indivisible whole. According to this theory, therefore, it would be a gross fallacy to suppose that they can be developed piecemeal or independently of one another.[6]

Another damaging segmentation in education is the way we separate the head and heart. We stress the basics or thinking skills, but caring and compassion are rarely addressed.

We continue to ignore Gandhi's insight. Commissions focus primarily on student achievement, parent groups cry out for the basics, and academics argue for thinking skills. Yet, the teacher must face a whole child who can never be limited by our categories or priorities. Ultimately, we must engage the child in all her richness rather than reduce her to our own preconceptions.

Holistic education

Education, then, has played its role in contributing to the fragmentation of modern life. What is needed is an alternative approach to education. For want of a better word we call this approach holistic. What do I mean by holistic education? Various philosophers and educators have offered definitions which could be interpreted as holistic. For example, Friedrich Froebel, who is known for the development of kindergarten, said:

> By education, then, the divine essence of man should be unfolded, brought out, lifted into consciousness, and man himself raised into free, conscious obedience to the divine principle that lives in him, and to a free representation of this principle in his life. Education, in instruction would lead man to see and know the divine, spiritual, and eternal principle which animates surrounding nature, constitutes the essence of nature, and is permanently manifested in nature.[7]

Krishnamurti, the Indian spiritual teacher who died in 1986, stated:

> The function of your teachers is to educate not only the partial mind but the totality of the mind; to educate you so that you do not get caught in the little whirlpool of existence but live in the whole river of life. This is the whole function of education. The right kind of education cultivates your whole being, the totality of your mind. It gives your mind and heart a depth, an understanding of beauty.[8]

Finally, Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Waldorf education, said:

For it is essential that we should develop an art of education which will lead us out of the social chaos into which we have fallen during the last few years and decades. And the only way out of this social chaos is to bring spirituality into the souls of men through education, so that out of the spirit itself man may find the way to progress and the further evolution of civilization.

We know in our hearts that this is true, for the world is created in spirit and comes forth out of spirit, and so also human creation can only be fruitful if it springs forth from the fountain head of spirit itself. But to achieve such fruitful creation out of spirit, man must be educated and taught in the spirit also.[9]

"The right kind of education cultivates your whole being, the totality of your mind. It gives your mind and heart a depth, an understanding of beauty." Krishnamurti

I offer the following definition:

> The focus of holistic education is on relationships—the relationship between linear thinking and intuition, the relationship between mind and body, the relationships between various domains of knowledge, the relationship between the individual and community, and the relationship between self and Self. In the holistic curriculum the student examines these relationships so that he/she gains both an awareness of them and the skills necessary to transform the relationships where it is appropriate.

This definition centers on connection and this definition can be explored in a number of different contexts. The connections/relationships are briefly outlined below.

Linear thinking and intuition. The holistic curriculum attempts to restore a balance between linear thinking and intuition. Various techniques such as metaphor and visualization can be integrated with more traditional thinking approaches so that a synthesis is achieved between analysis and intuition.

Relationship between mind and body. The holistic curriculum explores the relationship between mind and body so the student senses the connection between the two. The relationship can be explored by movement, dance and yoga.

Relationships among domains of knowledge. There are many different ways we can connect academic disciplines and school subjects. For example, Waldorf education connects subjects through the arts. Holistic approaches to thinking can also link subjects.

Relationship between self and community. The holistic curriculum sees the student in relation to community. Community refers to the school community, the community of one's town and nation and the global community. The student develops interpersonal skills, community service skills and social action skills.

Relationship between self and Self. Ultimately the holistic curriculum lets us realize our true nature. Steiner's concept of development, meditation, and world religions are possible vehicles for this process.

Another way of clarifying what holistic education is, is to compare it to other forms of education.

In several contexts I have described three basic positions that are helpful in analyzing and describing curriculum and instruction.[10] What do I mean by a curriculum position? A curriculum position is rooted in a world view that can be linked to various philosophical, psychological and social contexts. Let me briefly describe the three positions—transmission, transaction, and transformation. The last of these positions, the transformation, is holistic.

The *transmission position* focuses on traditional school subjects taught through traditional teaching methods.

In this position there is primarily a one way movement to inculcate the student with certain values, skills and knowledge. The position is outlined in the diagram below.

TRANSMISSION POSITION

There are two strands within the transmission position. One strand focuses on a traditional academic approach. William T. Harris, the nineteenth century American educator, represented this approach when he argued that the textbook should be at the center of learning because it reflects "what has been tested and found essential to civilization."[11] Today, Neil Postman has picked up this argument when he claims that schools should focus on teaching "systematic content." For Postman the curriculum is "but a design for controlling and shaping the minds of the young."[12]

The other strand within the transmission position focuses on a mechanistic view of learning. The stimulus-response (S-R) model of the behaviorists represents this approach; the student is viewed passively as someone who responds to the initiatives of the teacher, the computer or the programmed text. The American psychologist E. L. Thorndike can be seen as representative of the transmission position when he claimed that "teaching is the arrangement of situations which will lead to desirable bonds."[13]

Underlying both strands, however, is an *atomistic* world view that sees nature as composed of isolated building blocks. This world view not only underlies the transmission curriculum that is segmented into subjects and programmed units but the philosophical, psychological and economic contexts that surround the curriculum. For example, the transmission curriculum (e.g. back to the basics) can often be popular in a conservative (laissez-faire) economic climate. In laissez-faire theory the individual is atomized in the marketplace as he or she competes with other individuals. Psychologically, I have already referred to behavioral psychology that tends to break human behavior into isolated components so that it can be controlled through reinforcement programs. Finally, the transmission position can be linked with logical positivsm which is concerned with breaking down language into logical components that can be analyzed and verified. In the early twentieth century Bertrand Russell was part of a philosophical school called "logical atomism" that is particularly representative of an atomistic approach to philosophy.

In the *transaction position,* the individual is seen as rational and capable of intelligent problem solving. Education is viewed as a dialogue between the student and the curriculum in which the student reconstructs knowledge through the dialogue process. This view is outlined in the diagram below.

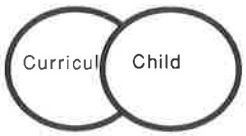
TRANSACTION POSITION

The transaction position focuses on problem solving and instructional strategies that facilitate problem solving. These strategies can sometimes lie within specific academic disciplines, or they can be interdisciplinary, and applicable to social problems that occur within a democratic context.

The world view or paradigm underlying the transaction position is the scientific method. This view is at the heart of John Dewey's pragmatism which focused on the application of the scientific method to a broad range of problems. Dewey argued that the scientific method is "the only authentic means at our command for getting at the significance of our everyday experiences of the world in which we live."[14] In the transmission position science is viewed mechanistically; in the transaction position science and the scientific method are seen as vehicles which can help the individual constructively deal with the world. In psychology, Lawrence Kohlberg has argued that the developmental theories of Piaget and himself represent an attempt to clarify Dewey's work in psychological terms.[15] Piaget's work advances the view that development results from interaction between the student and a stimulating intellectual environment; Kohlberg argues that cognitive developmental theory is an extension of Dewey's conception of growth. The political ideology linked with the transaction position is small-l liberalism, in which there is general belief that rational intelligence can improve the social environment. For example, transaction economists such as John Galbraith believe that the economy can be improved through rational planning and government intervention.

The *transformation position* focuses on personal and social change. In this position there is a holistic emphasis and the student is not just viewed in the cognitive mode, but in terms of his or her aesthetic, moral, physical and spiritual needs. Thus, the curriculum and the child do not just interact at a cognitive level (the transaction position) but interconnect in a holistic manner. This interconnection is diagrammed below.

TRANSFORMATION POSITION



There are two strands within the transformation position. One strand, the humanistic, is rooted in a concern for individual growth; the other strand focuses on social change. In the humanistic strand, educators such as Froebel, Tolstoy, A. S. Neill, and John Holt have viewed the child as essentially good and have argued that the role of the teacher is to let this positive potential unfold. A. S. Neill expressed this belief in his book *Summerhill*:

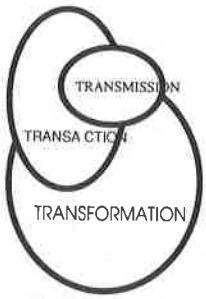
> When my first wife and I began the school, we had one main idea: to make the school fit the child—instead of making the child fit the school . . .
>
> Well, we set out to make a school in which we should allow children freedom to be themselves. In order to do this, we had to renounce all discipline, all direction, all suggestion, all moral training, all religious instruction. We have been called brave, but it did not require courage. All it required was what we had—a complete belief in the child as a good, not an evil, being. For almost forty years, this belief in the goodness of the child has never wavered; it rather has become a final faith.[16]

The social change strand is seen, in part, in the work of such theorists as

Michael Apple and Henry Giroux. These educators argue that schooling reflects social, economic, and political structures so that schools in capitalist societies help reproduce the capitalist system. They advocate political and social change that will transform society into a more egalitarian and cooperative community.

The two strands in the transformation positions have sometimes conflicted with each other. For example, staffs in alternative schools often have battled over whether schools should facilitate individual growth or, instead, be more politically motivated. *The position is most effective when the two strands are integrated.* Florence Tager describes an example of this in the Modern School of New York and Stelton.[17]

What is the relationship between the three positions? One way of viewing them is to see them as competing alternatives and one must choose one position to the exclusion of the others. Another way is to see each one as being more inclusive. From this framework the transaction position includes the transmission position focus on knowledge retention and applies it to problem solving. In turn, the transformation position with its holistic emphasis incorporates the cognitive thrust of the transaction position within a broader, more inclusive context. It is possible then to view the three positions as intersecting circles.



In holistic education, then, we attempt to facilitate a broadening of vision and perspective. We move from the more restrictive scope of an atomistic perspective to a more inclusive view that witnesses the connections between ourselves and the universe.

If we are to confront the fragmentation and the problems associated with fragmentation such as pollution and nuclear war, then the transformation position, or holistic education, demands our attention. Certainly, holistic education will not solve the problems of our age but along with other personal and societal changes we can begin to confront our alienation.

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On the Education of Wonder and Ecstasy

by W. Nikola-Lisa

We are now in the midst of a reawakening, a reshaping of our ways of being in the world. This journal, and a growing number of trade and professional journals like it, is evidence of this conscious resighting of the human experience. One facet of this reawakening is that we are beginning to look at hitherto neglected realms of human experience that have stood outside the common boundary of acceptable societal behavior. Ecstasy is one of these experiences which, though everpresent through time, has stood outside our common cultural consciousness. Historically, ecstasy has had limited appeal to Western psychologists, being dismissed as either a bracketed "religious" experience or an aberrant state of consciousness associated with the hallucinations of the schizophrenic.

It has only been within the last twenty years, with the rise of the human potential movement, that ecstasy has been able to steer a course into more traditional psychological circles. It was psychologist Abraham Maslow who first opened up the field with discussions of the "peak experience," a palatable surrogate term for ecstasy. Although most of the excitement over Maslow's fertile work generated a series of discussions aimed at placing altered or higher states of consciousness within the mainstream of general psychological theory, a number of other voices arose in a variety of related fields calling for a general reestimation of the accepted boundaries of possible human experience.

In education, particularly, excitement over the possibility of including the ecstatic experience in curricula discussions exploded in the field with the arrival of award-winning journalist George Leonard's *Education and Ecstasy.*[1] This polemic against existing practice called for a redefinition of the entire educational enterprise that would effectively put at its heart the transcendent experience of ecstasy.

Although Leonard's voice was loud and articulate, it did not last long. Like many of his humanistic colleagues writing during the late 1960s, Leonard's response to an entrenched educational system was to propose the substitution of a set of "affective" outcomes for an already existing and somewhat suffocating "cognitive" set. Not only have educators since seen the futility in such a neat exchange of educational outcomes, but they have as well become aware of the inherent fallacy which keeps these two domains separate in the first place.

The ecstatic experience, in particular, has forced educational

Traditionally, the experience of ecstasy has been described only in mystical and religious terms. But we can also understand ecstasy as a high level of knowledge achieved by a whole person in relationship to the world. The child's intrinsic sense of wonder is the gateway to such knowledge, and should be nurtured by education.

W. Nikola-Lisa's first two years of teaching were at the World Family School, an alternative pre- and lower-elementary grade school in Bozeman, Montana. As head teacher he drew on Waldorf and British integrated curriculum approaches. After another five years of teaching primary grades in the Bozeman Public Schools, Dr. Nikola-Lisa attended Montana State University where he received his Ed.D. in Elementary School Curriculum and Instruction.

Currently, Dr. Nikola-Lisa teaches in a student-centered graduate field-based M.Ed. program in Curriculum and Instruction at National College of Education in Evanston, Illinois. He teaches courses in group processes, human development and learning theories, developmental play theory, and children's literature.

For the past two years Dr. Nikola-Lisa has worked as a storyteller and writing consultant for the Children's Literacy Project, a collective of artists, wsriters, and educators working with Hispanic school populations on Chicago's southside.

psychologists and learning theorists to look again at the relationship between cognitive and affective states. And, in so doing, it has created a climate within which the "whole person"—or child—movement has come of age. Holistic educators, naturally, seek to define the child within the broad framework of varied states of consciousness. It is an ecological approach sensitive to a multitude of impinging factors, i.e., environmental impact, developmental influences, transcendent states of consciousness, the natural states of play and wonder, etc. Indeed, it is from this more liberal viewpoint that an understanding of the role and importance of ecstatic states is even possible. To understand this, however, it might be helpful to recap briefly some of the explanations given historically to this intensely unique human experience.

Attempt at an explanation

As I have already mentioned, looked at from the perspective of religion, ecstasy is typically defined or explained as a mystical—and as such 'mysterious'—union of the individual self with the Absolute—God. Religious history is replete with allusions to such explanations, explanations which appeal to the supernatural, and thus to the inexplainable. Ecstasy, seen through this lens, is that rare experience which crashes unexpectedly through the devout's intense religious belief structure producing an inexplainably intoxicating—though not necessarily institutionally sanctioned—experience.

Looking from a broader angle, on the other hand, cultural anthropologists and mythologists explain ecstasy quite differently. They see the ecstatic experience from a phenomenological point of view, i.e., a perspective that seeks the more understandable and explainable "good fit" between cultural expectations and individual response patterns. Typically, such explanations deal with cosmogenic phenomena in which an individual or group of individuals strive to return to some ancestral or primitive time in order to relive an important aspect or event in their cultural past.

Psychologists, moreover, can be grouped into two or three different camps depending upon their specific emphasis. Early psychoanalytic assessments, as I have already mentioned, have associated ecstasy with the schizophrenic mind, seeing it as a loss of ego-control. Another related psychodynamic interpetation, similar to the cultural anthropologist, views ecstasy as a type of regression on the part of the individual back to a primitive or undifferentiated state of childhood.

More recent explanations have focused on the psychological mechanisms involved in either producing or sustaining the ecstatic experience. In particular, Arthur Deikman[2] has used the concept of deautomatization to explain the mystical or ecstatic experience. Recognizing that most of our ability to perceive the world is bound up in automatic perceptual responses which limit to a certain extent our ability to "see" the world as it is, Deikman suggests that ecstasy is merely the undoing of those automatic ways of seeing, an undoing which enables us to pay closer attention to certain perceptual phenomena.

A last category of responses to the ecstatic experience, falling still within the parameters of a psychological framework, involves those psychologists who seek to place the ecstatic experience naturally along a broad continuum of humanly possible states of consciousness. Such psychologists are less interested in the actual psychological mechanisms involved in the ecstatic experience (recognizing that it is extremely difficult to actually enumerate them), and more interested in expanding our ways of seeing that elusive concept "human potential." Their treatment of the subject is usually epistemic, i.e., focused on the knowledge-bound context of the experience. Andrew Greeley,[3] though not himself a psychologist, represents this point of view clearly in his discussion of knowledge domains—four in all—that lead ultimately to "ecstasy knowledge."

Ecstasy as knowledge

The first domain of knowledge that Greeley outlines, one that is familiar to us all, is that of rational or discursive knowledge. This type of knowledge provides a foundation for all of Western thought; it is the linear, left-brained sequencing of analytical knowledge. Typically, we associate the roots of this type of knowledge with the ancient

Greeks who first awakened in human consciousness the desire to know the world objectively.

A second domain of knowledge identified by Greeley involves metaphysical knowledge. This type of knowledge is also rational—observing "the conventions of discursive language, the language of prose, the laws of logic, the methods of rational discourse"—but instead of being interested in the proximate, it is more interested in an elaboration of the Ultimate.

The ecstatic experience, in particular, has forced educational psychologists and learning theorists to look again at the relationship between cognitive and affective states.

Of a qualitatively different nature is mythopoetic knowledge. Although also concerned with the Ultimate, mythopoetic knowledge appeals to the whole person, a being of subtly emotional, sensual, and cognitive faculties. Mythopoetic knowledge differs in both style and language in its use of symbols (presentational language), rather than the more rigid expressions of discursive language. And, rather than trying to "explain" particular settings or situations or phenomena, mythopoetic knowledge seeks merely to "illuminate" the ambiguities, to highlight the inconsistencies.

Greeley's fourth level of knowledge involves, of course, mystical or ecstasy knowledge. It, too, involves the whole person—but this time without requiring either the exigencies of logical understanding or the felicitations of symbolic representation. It is better termed an "apprehension" than a firm, clear understanding. And, most importantly, ecstasy knowledge intimates a special relationship between the perceiving individual knower and the object to be known. In this relationship, there is a marked redefinition of the line that separates self from not-self: the process of self-definition begun at infancy is temporarily circumvented allowing the individual to experience a renewed intimacy with the cosmos.

The Child in wonder

If ecstasy knowledge is rooted in the disturbance of the boundary that separates self from not-self, then it seems that there can be no better place to view this realignment than in the young child. In fact, it was that venerable Western philosopher Plato who urged us centuries ago to look for the genesis of knowledge in the child's emerging sense of wonder.

Picking up on this notion, cultural historian Edith Cobb, in her highly visionary book *The Ecology of Imagination in Childhood*,[4] stresses repeatedly that it is through wonder that we come to know the world-at-large at all. For Cobb, however, wonder is not an abstract term, a loftly ideal, but is concretely rooted in the child's developing perceptual capabilities. Each individual—from birth on—possesses an overwhelming desire to organize the environment. Such an organizational drive for order occurs through the interplay of perceptual activity and natural form. Wonder, in particular—as 'true metaphor'—derives:

> from the overlapping of the energies of the perceiving nervous system and energy systems in nature at the level of unity which is the specific interest of ecology, where temporal and spatial relations are of supreme importance in the drive toward organization or form and meaning.[5]

Cobb, in short, advises us that children learn "by becoming," by vibrating sympathetically with the surrounding natural form of the immediate environment. This type of learning is not bound by either discursive or presentational language. And, although rooted in the concrete or proximate, it resounds in the Ultimate. In this way, then, it resembles uncannily Greeley's fourth category of ecstasy knowledge, and perhaps finds its most ecological and poetic statement in the words of that great American poet Walt Whitman.[6]

> There was a child went forth every day,
> And the first object he look'd upon, that object he became,
> And that object became a part of this child,
> And the grass and white and red morning-glories, and white and red clover, and the song of the phoebe-bird,
> And the third-month lambs and the sow's pink-faint litter, and the mare's foal and cow's calf,
> And the noisy brood of the barnyard or by the mire of pond-side,
> And the fish suspending themselves so curiously below there, and the beautiful curious liquid,
> And the water-plants with their graceful flat heads, all became part of him.

If it was not obvious, it should be from the above account—and the basic thread of this entire discussion—that the precursor to mystical or ecstasy knowledge as outlined by Greeley previously is the child's experience of wonder in early childhood. This experience, generated naturally by the plasticity of the developing perceptual system, enables the young child to "know" the universe by direct immediate apprehension. Although this peculiar "knowing by becoming" is mediated by the manipulation of concrete objects, objects in-and-of-themselves serve only as a catalyst inciting the mind to organize novelty of experience into a palpable whole.

The Universe-at-large

This underlying holism of which we are all a part is the natural state of apprehension in the young child. Evidence of this fact emerges early as those peculiarly cosmic questions begin to issue from the astutely perceptive child. Questions about the nature of time, space, dreaming and waking, the mind, etc. all fall within the purview of the young child's native intelligence and curiosity.

Philosopher Garreth Matthews[7] calls this particularly childlike quality "naivete," and reminds us that every society, at one point or another, has needed "a barefoot Socrates to ask childishly simple (and childishly difficult) questions, to force its members to reexamine what they have been thoughtlessly taking for granted." Citing philosopher Robert Spaemann, Matthews encourages us as a society even to cultivate a type of "institutionalized naivete."

In a similar stance—though in much stronger terms—poet, architect,

philosopher, and inventor Buckminister Fuller addresses this same phenomena—those "embarrassingly important cosmological questions" of the young child. In his book-length essay *Intuition*,[8] Fuller reprimands parents and educators alike for their ofttimes shortsighted view of the world of the young child. Playing social critic in that peculiarly Fullerian poetic voice, he admonishes us to concentrate less on the A, B, Cs, and 1, 2, 3s—that is, only the parts—of our child's "Elementary Education," and to stress more the essential beginning of the entire learning process: the underlying holism that holds the universe together. It is a holism, again, that is directly intuited or apprehended by the young child—displayed through a profound and resilient sense of wonder.

In the end, Fuller calls for a reestimation of the effect that industrial "specialization"—seeing only the parts—has had on contemporary society. He emphasizes the need for a holistic point of view—a synergistic point of view—a point of view that is naturally operative in the ecological response system of the young child. Education, in particular, according to Fuller, should play an important role in this reestimation process. In a world of behavioral objectives, anticipatory sets, criterion-referenced outcomes, and microanalysis, the refreshedness of natural wonder and curiosity—forming a chain of embryonic growth toward ecstasy—should not only be acknowledged, but encouraged wholeheartedly.

If wonder and ecstasy do indeed form the basis for learning, for apprehending the "true metaphors" of the universe as mind interacts with nature, then it seems that the charge to us—parents and educators alike—for this new dawning era is to encourage our children to make those connections. We can do this by providing a richly stimulating and natural environment, developing an attitudinal mind set that recognizes the importance of natural forms of play, wonder, and ecstasy, and, finally, by taking the time ourselves to venture out into the universe-at-large to explore, to dream, to ponder, and perhaps even to wonder ourselves into ecstasy.

Notes

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3. Greeley, *Ecstasy*, pp. 56-72.
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8. R. Buckminster Fuller, *Intuition*. (NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1972), p. 46.

We think this article is quite provocative. It is not a scholarly analysis but an honest expression of ideas shared by many parents who teach at home. The ideas are worth considering, and deserve further exploration.

Measuring Learning and Educational Success

by Tom Friedlander

Do traditional school practices encourage growth and learning—or merely passive, "academic" achievement? What is necessary for true learning?

What should be the goal of the educative process? Should it be to encourage growth or to encourage passivity? If the goal is growth, this means that first, the student should develop, at his own timing, knowledge of his (or her) own self: a realistic acceptance of one's own giftings and limitations. Second, the student should be holistically aware of the world around him. Lastly, the student should come into the knowledge of how he fits into the world around him. In every way, the student must discover his own role in the scheme of things.

The emphasis of the lifelong learning experience, especially in the primary and secondary years, should be on the student and not on the teacher, on learning rather than on teaching. The focus of the learning process should be (a) preparation of the child according to the child's own physiological readiness, and (b) the student's curiosity.[1]

One of the best ways to encourage true learning is through the stimulation of inborn curiosity, for finding out on one's own is often the surest way to insure understanding and long term retention. As John Holt writes,

> The child is curious. He wants to make sense out of things, find out how things work, gain competence and control over himself and his environment, and do what he can see other people doing. He is open, receptive and perceptive . . . In [the] struggle to make sense out of life, the things we most need to learn are the things we most want to learn.[2]

To learn successfully, the learner must be sufficiently curious to figure out, discover or ask about the object of his curiosity. The stimulation of curiosity depends on the child, and ideally should be initiated by him, for each child (contrary to what conventional schooling leads us to believe) is a unique creation. Usually learners—especially if they are children—will find a way to learn (and correctly at that) what they want to know, if they want to know it badly enough, particularly if the thing or skill which they are trying to learn is useful to them.[3] Their methods of doing so might not always be conventional or convenient for adults—but they will learn. The stumbling blocks to this learning are almost always created by others, not by learners themselves, especially if the learning is driven by curiosity.

Tom Friedlander is a free-lance writer in Wisconsin. He has written frequently on home schooling.

The very act of learning involves succeeding. For when a child (or adult, for that matter) acquires knowledge or a skill, there comes with it the often almost subconscious sense of personal satisfaction or fulfillment at the discovery that one's horizon is broadened, that one is a bit nearer to a desired goal and a bit further from ignorance.

Schooling hinders learning

Schooling, which is almost by definition the regulation of learning, does so on both an individual and collective level. But regulation is the death knell of curiosity, and in attempting to regulate learning, schooling actually suppresses it. Conventional schooling imposes preset standards upon the student, be they relevant or not, logical or not, understood by the student or not—and then determines whether the student will "make it out there" by examination of the student's responses to those standards. Worse yet, from the primary level on up conventional schooling determines the child's fate in relation to the responses of the child's peers to those standards.[4]

If a child, no matter how young, does not fit into the molding process within certain narrow tolerance limits, he or she is immediately suspected of failure. If change is not almost imminent, the child is doomed to fail (or at least not succeed), for self-fulfilling labels and attitudes towards the child are all too easily communicated by his teachers, his peers, and (all too often) his parents. Thus, the somewhat obscure goals of academia are not only lost to the great majority of students, but learning itself is made to be a feared and resented process.

To illustrate this, consider an analogy drawn by nationally acclaimed author and educational psychologist James Dobson: A glass was put between piranhas and some other fish that were their favorite food. After a few rushes at the fish proved only to hurt the fierce carnivores, they quickly grew oblivious to the presence of their prey, *even when the glass was removed and the fish swam freely around the noses of their natural predators.*[5] Although this analogy was told in the context of parent-child relationships, it could easily be applied to the typical frustration of many children in conventional school situations. Very often the natural desire of children to learn is thwarted by the methods of conventional education. After being refused their "favorite food" (the instinctive process of learning), many children give up trying to learn.

The response of the student to all kinds of negative stimuli may be compared to a long-distance runner being pursued by half-real tormenters. Conventional schooling sets long and short term goals as it will, driving each and every child around the course, finally driving the exhausted student across the finish line. What is being evaluated all the time is not really individual achievement, but merely the capability of the child (again, on arbitrary scales) to keep ahead of the tormenters. The child's reward for compliance? His own existence is secured—until the next race.

Conventional education has little choice but to regulate learning by putting it into the context of a group setting, or schooling. It defines a body of knowledge that must be memorized (but not necessarily *learned*), assigns children of the same age to classes of presumably the same general learning levels, and "teaches" them the knowledge and skills at a pre-set pace. The learner needs support, it is true, and asked-for guidance too, but rarely if ever regulation except for safety's sake. (And sometimes, as in the proverbial case of the hot stove, the teacher needs to let the learner find out for himself.) Regulation may provide security, but does not promote individuality or the spontaneity which is foundational to true learning. The path to *educational* success, unlike the path to *academic* success, cannot be laid out so very precisely for the learner, because individual learning may (and should) take the learner in so many directions.

Measuring true learning

True educational success is a complex process that can never be successfully measured in reference to one's peers. It is a mistake for schools to try to measure what is learned (that is, what is force fed); it is a crime for them to do so in reference to the supposed achievement of others. If educational success can be measured at all, it must be (a) on an individual level, (b) long term, and (c) observational and non-conclusive in its results; that is, used diagnostically. If these conditions are met, measuring academic success (where it must be measured at all) becomes a non-threatening tool for the purpose of self-guidance in the learning experience.

But supposing that learning must be measured for occupational guidance, that measuring is used as an evaluative tool. If self-guided learning is allowed to run its own course, most children will eventually pursue the field in which they are most interested as well as gifted—and in which they are most likely to be successful (providing we

define success to encompass more than materialistic terms). In the course of his learning, before committing himself to a more channelled or advanced course of study, the student may choose to be tested in his or her areas of interest. Such an evaluation would be determinative only to the extent the student made it so.

Ultimately, successful learning cannot be evaluated by examination, but only by observation. What schools attempt to judge is not success in learning, but mere absorption (at best) and compliance (at worst). True success in education has little to do with mastery of the rules of competition or manipulation. True success is neither proficiency in test taking nor finding one's place in the pecking order, but is found in discovering how to learn and how to apply what one has learned. It is an ongoing process of individual curiosity, creativity, experience and evaluation.

The path to* educational *success, unlike the path to* academic *success, cannot be laid out so very precisely for the learner . . .

The parent, as the child's lifelong experienced partner, can help the student, more than any other adult guide, to decide when he or she is ready for evaluation and career selection.[6] Despite the growing tendency of society at large to believe that children are born for schooling, the facts are that children are not born into families of thirty or more. School classes are not normally grouped with fewer than ten students, as are families.

In conclusion, measuring true educational success is different, in methods and results, from measuring academic success. Such measuring must not be used as a manipulative tool, and must be used only when absolutely necessary, when requested by agreement between the child and the parent. In this way educational evaluation will produce not only successful individuals, but individuals for whom learning is a lifelong and enjoyable process.

Notes

1. John Holt, *How Children Learn* (New York: Delta; 1983.
2. Quoted in Allen Graubard, *Free the Children* (New York: Pantheon; 1972), pp. 17-18. Also, Carl R. Rogers, *Freedom to Learn* (Columbus: Charles E. Merrill; 1969), p. 162.
3. A. S. Neill, *Summerhill: A Radical Approach to Child Rearing* (New York: Hart; 1960), p. 4. Also, John Holt: *Freedom and Beyond* (New York: E. P. Dutton; 1972), pp. 77-87; Rogers, p. 153.
4. Paul L. Houts, *The Myth of Measurability* (New York: Hart; 1977), pp. 137-43. Also, Rogers, p. 154.
5. "Focus on the Family" film series, (Arcadia, CA: Focus on the Family ministries).
6. Dr. Raymond and Dorothy Moore, *Home Grown Kids* (Washougal, WA: The Hewitt Research Foundation, 1987), pp. 11-41.

What Makes Alternative Schools Alternative?

Since the 1960's, the concept of "alternative" education has floated around the margins of this nation's educational policies.

There have always been small, privately run schools that are alternatives to conventional forms of education, including almost all truly holistic programs. But in the last twenty years there has emerged a large network of "free schools" and parent cooperatives, as well as a movement called "public schools of choice," which deliberately call themselves "alternative."

Indeed, many of them truly are. But others that have adopted the term are not, in any real sense, alternative to traditional, mainstream educational goals and methods—they are simply devices for making conventional schooling more efficient by siphoning off the most unsuccessful and unhappy students.

In the following articles, holistically-oriented educators attempt to put the "alternative" back into alternative education. We believe that holistic approaches need not be confined to private Montessori, Waldorf, and "free" schools, but can and must be offered through public schools of choice. Truly alternative public schools can be the "research and development" arm of public education, using ideas pioneered by more independent educators, as well as their own, and applying them in schools that are accessible to the entire community.

While most of these authors are involved with high schools, alternative education is appropriate at every level, from grade school through graduate school. The conventional, industrial-age model of schooling, based on competition and rigid bureaucracy and an authoritarian "professionalism," has dampened and diminished learning for students of all ages. It is time to look for alternatives.

Alternative Education and "Alternative" Schools

Why dropout schools aren't alternative

by Mary E. Sweeney

Last summer at the National Alternative School Conference held in Port Townsend, Washington, a heavily attended workshop was one presented by Roy Weaver, Ph.D., professor at Ball State in the School of Education and editor of *Changing Schools* (the primary periodical of the alternative school network), and myself concerning the topic "At-Risk Students: A Place in Alternative Education?" "Alternative" has become a buzz word for the popular culture as well as in the field of education. For example, the outgoing director of a private secondary school for dropouts in Oregon recounted that they dubbed their program as "alternative" because this was an innovative term in education and a word that they could hang their hat on.

There is confusion about true alternative schools, schools of choice and dropout programs. Too many uninformed parents and educators equate alternative education with a "special education" connotation or with "at risk" youth who are in jeopardy of dropping out or leaving high school before their graduation. This paper will present a more precise definition of alternative schools. The historical roots, philosophical premises and organizational characteristics of alternative schools will be discussed. Finally, some of the myths surrounding alternative education will be examined to make sense of the confusion and the term "alternative" in the field of education. First, let us discuss the matter of defining "alternative."

Definitions of alternative

There is little agreement on *definitions* of *alternative* schooling. Some theorists emphasize distinct school features: providing alternative learning experiences from conventional high schools,[1] choice for families in a community at no extra cost,[2] less bureaucratized formal structures,[3] and separateness from traditional school units.[4]

For purposes of this paper, "true alternative" schools will refer to those schools that make different basic assumptions about learners compared with traditional school philosophies. That is, alternative school programs assume in their philosophy that they are dealing with the "whole" of the child; including in their goal setting the *physical, moral, social, emotional, spiritual,* and *aesthetic,* as well as the *intellectual* developmental realms of a student. In true alternative schools, the assumption is made that different learners learn in distinct ways, thus the individual talents and needs of each child are what is valued. In the best interest of the learner, students and parents choose the type of program most tailor made for individual student needs.

In summary, this discussion advocates a definition of "true alternative schooling" (henceforth to be called alternative schools) to be synonymous with the schooling program that deals with the *whole child*– not with programs that, at best, promise the acquisition of basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic. Also, alternative schools are created to offer choice and diversity. True alternative schools differ from "back to the basics" type schools because, while parents and students may choose back-to-basics schools, the needs of individual students are not the guiding philosophy.

Historical roots

A debate exists over the historical origin of the alternative school movement. Just as agreement has not been reached on a universal definition of alternative schooling, consensus has not been reached on the roots of alternative schools. For example, Deal and Nolan claim that alternative school themes are rooted in the Progressive education movement of the 1920's, associated with John Dewey,[5] while other theorists claim that alternative schools were initiated in public school systems in the early 1960's.[6] Two explanations are given for the later evolution of alternative schools: first, that they are a spin-off of the free schools model (Summerhill type)[7]established in the private sector in the early 1960's, and second, that the social themes which characterized 1960's thinking (humanism, egalitarianism, participatory decision making) spawned educational alternatives in the public sector.

Ideologically, the growth of alternative schools has followed two lines of thought. First, they were influenced by anti-establishment and countercultural sentiments with the supposition that they would be exemplary models to *replace* traditional schooling. Raywid has stated: "Most viewed their programs as the kind of reform desperately needed by all education."[8]

In the mid seventies alternative school advocates offered a second line of thought, arguing that they were experimenting with different organizational arrangements in an attempt to offer a variety of ways to educate children. Alternative education was a way of moving away from a monolithic system toward more diverse ways of educating an increasingly pluralistic youth population.[9]

In summary, alternative schools can be traced back to the Progressive movement of the 1920's, with a more recent version being the free schools of the 1960's. Some would argue that alternative schools originated to replace the monolithic "one best system"[10] of conventional schools but now exist to offer choice and diversity to a pluralistic stu-

dent population. How alternative programs rearrange their organizational structures is the topic of discussion for the next section.

Organizational characteristics

True alternative schools have key characteristics that distinguish them from conventional programs and include: comprehensive goal setting, innovative curricula and teaching strategies, broader student choice and innovative school governance practices, close interpersonal relations between students and teachers, diffuse roles for principals and teachers rather than formal ones, and personal advisory systems. These structural characteristics typically result in greater student satisfaction and the virtual elimination of school vandalism and violence.[11]

Among the ingredients or characteristics of a successful alternative school are distinctly stated *goals* and a clear school philosophy.[12] (The demise of numerous alternative programs has been attributed to the lack of well defined goals and philosophy.) One study found that alternative schools' goals differed according to curricular emphasis, site location, size, and academic achievement.[13] An important goal of many alternative schools is stressing *learning how to learn;* according to Raywid, an option school for disruptive youth is much more likely to spend time on basic skill development and behavioral modification techniques to award appropriate behavior, so that students can return to their home schools. But an open alternative school tries to turn students on to the excitement of learning. One way it does this is by involving students themselves in the setting of school goals. Jefferson County Open High School in Evergreen, Colorado (popularly known as Mountain Open High or MOHS) is an exemplary program with comprehensive goals and objectives that are reviewed and renewed annually by all school members.

Then there is the matter of teaching strategies. Numerous reform studies of this decade recommend the use of *multi-teaching technologies* and *methodologies* because of the criticism of the reliance and predominance of the lecture method of teaching in conventional schools.

Alternative schools utilize numerous instructional strategies to affect learning: individualized instruction, discussion, independent study, some lecturing, films, guest speakers, simulation games, frequent field trips, group study, experimental learning, multi-age and multi-grade level learning, peer teaching and tutoring, extended field trips, intervisitations between alternative schools, action learning, heterogeneous grouping, work opportunities, community service experiences, and learning contracts. Innovative instructional methods are a major point of emphasis in alternative programs.[14]

Alternative schools look beyond curricula and instructional methods to encourage learning on the part of individual youth. They make use of: a humane school climate, smaller school size, flexible organizational arrangements and the ability to change program components, unconventional grading systems, career explorations and work opportunities, and extended field or school trips. Some alternative programs are organized around one major theme; for example, Mountain Open High School utilizes the Walkabout Program.[15] Schools-without-walls organize their curriculum around a central theme which is the city as classroom. Some alternative programs offer a variety of interdisciplinary courses encompassing perspectives in sociology, psychology, history, art, and philosophy.

A key ingredient or innovative technology of alternative schools is *choice.* Free choice aids students, parents, and teachers in the process of overcoming feelings of powerlessness and alienation. Free choice allows involved parties to feel empowered. Often "schools of choice" like the back-to-basics type involve choice only when selecting the program. Once immersed in a true alternative school, students are involved throughout their programs making educational plans and decisions.

The *formal structures* of alternative schools are unique. All-school governance systems prevail and they depart from the student council systems of conventional high schools.[16] In part, they follow the model rooted at Summerhill and other free schools in the private sector.[17] Governance systems in many alternative schools are called town meetings, all school meetings, student-staff meetings, and all school governance meetings. Participation in the governance system is an essential ingredient of schools like Mountain Open High[18] Typically, the agenda for governance meetings is decided in advance by staff and students in advisory meetings and a democracy class. At governance meetings, discussion in small groups of twelve or less is employed so that students are directly involved in issues, learn to articulate their opinions, and are exposed to all levels of moral development and reasoning.

Students learn democratic practices by being active participants in the democratic process. Communication and decision making skills are refined. Students become more committed to school and their self-concept is positively enhanced.

Alternative schools offer a clearer choice. They nurture a way of learning that is different from the traditional approach offered in the monolithic system.

Flexible roles

Principals have a diffused and not neatly defined role in alternative schools. One principal recounted that he swept floors at the end of each day. Fantani recommended that alternative school principals be the central planner, bringing together students, parents, teachers, and community people.[19] The traditional role of the administrator is altered, as principals are in closer contact with students, teachers, and the classroom due to smaller school size. In essence, they are closer to the experiences that brought them into education initially.

Teachers are the backbone of alternative schools and central to their programs. Going beyond the role of information disseminator, teachers must be willing to interact with students and

support them. Three of the four most distinct features of alternative schools in the Raywid survey are teacher related, emphasizing the impact of teachers rather than curriculum.[20] The three departures from conventional schools relating to teachers were: teacher roles, teacher-student interaction, and instructional methods.

Similar to alternative school administrators, teachers have a demanding and diffused role. Because of small staffs, teachers share jobs and responsibilities and perform multiple functions. Due to the value that alternative schools place on individual educational plans that are tailor made for individuals, teachers often work extra hours and weekends aiding students. For example, on extended school trips, teachers are responsible for students on a 24-hour basis.

There are "burnout" problems for teachers at alternative schools because of the degree of involvement and other demands. But, teachers seek alternative school experiences as a way to individualize instruction for students and escape the formalities of slowly changing conventional school structures. They report high morale despite the pressing demands on their time.[21] *High morale* is due to teachers experiencing success with students and the programs, feeling *ownership* of alternative programs and having the ability to change program ingredients when necessary. Staff turnover is minimal and the acquisition of available positions is highly competitive and emotional.

The *advisory system* at alternative schools differs from the once-a-year or crisis visit to the counselor, typical of large conventional high schools. In alternative schools like Mountain Open High, weekly advisory meetings of small groups of students and a teacher or staff member exist to establish personal relationships between students and their advisor, to discuss social and academic problems, to initiate issues for governance meetings, to understand the various functions and components of their school, and to report individual student academic and social progress. Variations of advisory systems allow student responsibility and ownership of the school program to be fostered through the weekly check in and update of problems and progress.

Advisory systems are the heart of alternative programs, establishing a dialogue between students and students and their advisor about the importance of the individual's affective and academic needs and aspirations. The satisfaction of one student from Mountain Open High School is indicated in the following quote:

> At my old school, I didn't like it because everybody bothered me. It was a downer to go to school. I'd wake up dreading school. I felt like I had more enemies than friends. It is easier to get along with the teachers at MOHS. I like it that everything revolves around "trust." I do miss some of my old friends but it is less violent at MOHS.[22]

Alternative schools were found to be superior when meeting higher level needs and alternative school students were more satisfied with the climate of their schools.[23]

Structure and responsibility

Many who are uninformed believe that alternative schools are unstructured. On the contrary, such schools are carefully structured, although the structure is arranged differently from conventional high schools.

Conventional school arrangements imply that students are uniform, and that teachers know how and what to teach students; therefore efficiency, mass production, and end products (translated in graduates and number of students going on to college) are the valued good of conventional schools. On the other hand, alternative educators make significantly different assumptions about youth: that students are different from one another, and that school personnel often do not know a great deal about the learning process; therefore schools tailor their programs to individuals, utilizing a variety of teaching strategies.[24]

Photo by Tom Gregory

But individualization of programs does not mean that students in alternative schools "do their own thing" and that basic skills are not taught or learned. In a national study Raywid found that seventy-nine percent of the respondents stated that their schools emphasized basic skills.[25] In part, students at alternative schools *apply* basic skills to higher level in-depth projects (such as the six passages in the Walkabout curricula at Mountain Open High). Learning the importance of *responsibility* or that actions have *consequences* is a goal of alternative schools. Students learn that freedom and choice entail responsibility. Often alternative school students work and interact with their advisor to ensure their individualized progress through a program. Students may be asked to leave, or may choose other programs because of unsatisfactory progress or their apparent unsuitability to the program.

Alternative programs encourage greater responsibility among adults as well; we have seen how teachers and administrators are more involved in the overall operation of the school. Parents and community members are involved as well. Alternative schools initiated

and sustained by concerned members of the public are often more viable than schools operated by independent educators; for instance, the demise of the public alternative program of Adams High School in Portland, Oregon was due, in part, to its creation by seven Harvard graduate students rather than by local community people.

Alternatives serve all

Alternative schools contain heterogeneous student populations. Some students choose alternative schooling because (1) they have been in the alternative system since preschool days, (2) they are gifted and talented students who want a more individualized and challenging approach to learning, and (3) they are disenfranchised youth because of personal and social problems. On the other hand, "At-Risk" programs consist of homogeneous or targeted populations of potential dropouts.

Summary

At-Risk or dropout programs are not true alternative school types because they act as safety valves for comprehensive high schools, in many cases. Alternative schools offer a clearer choice. They nurture a way of learning that is different from the traditional approach offered in the monolithic system. Alternative schools represent innovations in educational reform in the areas of: (1) advancing pluralism, diversity, and equal educational opportunity for *all* students through choice; (2) decentralizing the formal structures of schools; (3) localizing aspects of curricula for individualized needs; (4) involving students, parents, teachers, and community members in planning, operating, and evaluating public schools; (5) and, reducing school violence, vandalism, and disruption. The whole child is central to the organization of innovative alternative schools. The talents and potential of the individual are crucial in the goal setting and philosophical statements of alternative programs.

At-Risk and dropout programs are designed to perpetuate the one best system. These programs act as holding tanks for troubled youth. Youth are repaired and sent back to their home high school, graduate with a GED or the equivalent of a high school diploma, or simply drop out. Some students do find success in "At-Risk" type programs. On the other hand, alternative schools are intentionally planned to offer diversity and choice for learners seeking a way of schooling different from the conventional method.

Alternative schools offer a reform model at a time when few exemplary ideals exist in public education. Such school types hold out hope for the development of individuals with a grasp of the problem solving techniques and higher level interdisciplinary thinking skills necessary to solve the global crises we are destined to face in coming ages.

Mary Ellen Sweeney is co-editor of **Holistic Education Review.** *She has been involved in alternative schooling as a teacher and a learner since 1973. Her doctoral dissertation included a case study of Mountain Open High. She is currently involved in a seven-year follow-up study of alternative school graduates.*

In summary, this discussion advocates a definition of "true alternative schooling" . . . to be synonymous with the schooling program that deals with the* whole child*—not with programs that, at best, promise the acquisition of basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic.

Notes

1. Allan C. Ornstein and Daniel U. Levine, "Strategies for Reforming Metropolitan Schools," *Urban Education*, 16(1), 1981:93-107; Vernon H. Smith, "Alternative Education is Here to Stay," *Phi Delta Kappan*, April, 1981.
2. Robert D. Barr, "Alternatives for the Eighties: A Second Decade of Development." *Phi Delta Kappan*, April, 1981.
3. Terrence E. Deal and Robert R. Nolan, *Alternative Schools: Ideologies Realities Guidelines* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1978).
4. Mary Anne Raywid, *The Current Status of Schools of Choice in Public Secondary Education.* (Hempstead, New York: Hofstra University, 1982).
5. Terrence E. Deal and Robert R. Nolan, "Alternative Schools: A Conceptual Map," *School Review.* November, 1978.
6. Robert Arnove and Toby Strout, "Alternative Schools and Cultural Pluralism: Promise and Reality." *Educational Research Quarterly*, Winter, 1978; George B. Krahl, *Alternative Education: Current State of the Art.* (New York: Institute for Urban and Minority Education, 1977); Mary Anne Raywid, "The First Decade of Public School Alternatives," *Phi Delta Kappan*, April, 1981.
7. A. S. Neill, *Summerhill: A Radical Approach to Child Rearing.* (New York: Hart Publishing, 1960.)
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9. Barr, "Alternatives for the Eighties."
10. David B. Tyack, *The One Best System.* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974).
11. Robert Arnove and Toby Strout, "Alternative Schools for Disruptive Youth," *Educational Forum*, May, 1980, pp. 453-471; Daniel Duke and Irene Muzio, "How Effective Are Alternative Schools?" *Teachers College Record*, February, 1978, pp. 461-483; Mario Fantini, "Alternatives in the Public School," *Today's Education*, September, 1974, pp. 63-6; Raywid, *The Current Status of Schools of Choice;* Mary Ellen Sweeney, "An Exploratory Structural-Functional Analysis of American Urban Traditional and Alternative Secondary Public Schools" (Doctoral dissertation, Portland State University, 1983).
12. Barbara J. Case, "Lasting Alternatives: A Lesson in Survival," *Phi Delta Kappan*, April, 1981.
13. Thomas B. Gregory and Gerald R. Smith, *High Schools as Communities: The Small School Reconsidered* (Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa Fndn., 1987).
14. Raywid, *The Current Status of Schools of Choice.*
15. Bert Horwood, *Experiential Education in High School: Life in the Walkabout Program* (Boulder, CO: Assn. for Experiential Education, 1987).
16. Elas R. Wasserman, "Implementing Kohlberg's Just Community Concept in an Alternative High School." *Social Education*, April, 1976.
17. Barr, "Alternatives for the Eighties."
18. For further discussion see Wasserman, "Implementing Kohlberg's Just Community Concept . . ."
19. Fantini, "Alternatives in the Public School."
20. Raywid, *The Current Status of Schools of Choice.*
21. Raywid, *The Current Status of Schools of Choice.*
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What Makes Alternative Schools Alternative?

by Thomas B. Gregory

Like most alternative schools advocates, I strongly favor choice and variety in public education. Indeed, when it comes to supporting a wide range of philosophically diverse conceptions of schooling, I subscribe to the Patrick Henry approach to public education: While I may disagree with your preferred approach to education, I will defend to the death—well, maybe until it hurts a lot anyway—your right to practice it. The diversity of schools available should reflect the diversity of the society they serve. Jerry Smith and I have discussed the issue elsewhere as a part of a call for the development of small, varied high schools:[1]

> These schools should differ in how they prepare students (instructional approach), in how they organize knowledge (conceptions of curriculum), and in how they approach education (philosophy), not in *who* attends them.
>
> Instructional choices might include programs that are highly individualized, that use a behavior modification format, that emphasize out-of-school, experiential learning, or that emphasize a standard of classroom/textbook approach to name just four markedly different possibilities. Curricular choices might include programs that organize content around a great-books approach, that organize knowledge around a multicultural orientation, or that emphasize bringing all disciplines to bear on one major problem for an extended period of time. Philosophical choices might run the gamut from programs that organize as free schools to those that emphasize traditional values of discipline and conformity (including behavior and dress codes)[1]

Because of this stance, I find the topic on which *HER* has asked several of us to write, problematic. The title we've been given suggests that phrases like "alternative teaching methods" or "an alternative philosophy" have a useful meaning. For me, they don't. They imply a range of possibilities that unduly limit the potential of the concept.

Indeed, school people, ever anxious to look like they're engaged in systemic change when they aren't, have effectively sapped the term "alternative" of most any useful denotation. School districts and, in some cases, whole states have warped the term, alternative, to mean schools for particular, usually difficult clientele. Most often, these "alternatives" have become places to send kids, whose behavior has become a constant, embarrassing reminder that *today's conventional schools, particularly its secondary schools, are fundamentally flawed enterprises.* These new schools are often thinly veiled tracks of their large, unworkable sister schools; they have little autonomy. In some states, it is not very inaccurate to view them as soft jails for court adjudicated kids. Misuse of the concept is so widespread that most educators now inextricably link "alternative" with "dis" kids: those whom society has judged disadvantaged, disruptive, or just plain distasteful.

The latent premise of many such schools is that the problem is with the kids, that they just can't cope with this okay conventional school they have been going to.[2] These small schools function as safety valves that bleed off the most angry critics of an increasingly obsolete social institution, thus allowing it to operate with undeserved impunity. Despite their hobbles, many of these safety valve schools are quite effective, personalized forms of education. Their successes are considerable and, consequently, their numbers continue to grow. These schools hint the power that truly equal schools, similarly conceived but containing heterogeneous populations, would have.

We desperately need public schools that are truly different from one another so that the unrich have meaningful choice in their education. We need to stop protecting weak, sometimes harmful schools, by forcing people to attend them just because of the location of their homes. We need to prohibit schools designed for specific clientele; homogeneity—whether of the poor, the retarded, or the gifted—is a damnable curse, a byproduct of outmoded schools that deal with kids only in large, single-age groups. And we need alternative schools that transcend today's norm, the alternative school that is the underfunded, second class handmaiden of some big, impersonal, unworkable conventional school.[3]

Fortunately, the norm is not the whole picture. Alternative schools, with complete programs serving heterogeneous populations that freely choose to attend them, already exist in the public sector. They represent working models for empowering teachers *and* kids and for personalizing both teaching and learning. They hold the promise of effective reform, if we can learn the lessons they are ready to teach us. What these small schools, in all their wonderful variety do, as everyday practice, is what makes them "alternative" in the sense that *HER*'s editors are using the term. More significantly, it is what makes them the seeds of the survival of public education well into the twenty-first century.

Notes

1. Thomas B. Gregory and Gerald R. Smith *High Schools as Communities: The Small School Reconsidered.* (Bloomington, IN: The Phi Delta Kappa Foundation, 1987), p. 133.

2. I equate the extent to which this presumption—myth may be a better word for it—survives in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, with the degree to which schools still flee the idea of significant change.

3. See pp. 136-7 of *High Schools as Communities* for a discussion of the funding of large and small public schools.

Tom Gregory is currently engaged in a year-long study of an alternative high school program. He has written frequently on alternative education.

Why are Alternatives Successful?

Courtesy of Mary Leue

by Mary Anne Raywid

Wherein lies the alternative in alternatives? That's easy: it resides in the enthusiasm of the people involved—in their investment and engagement in school—and in their commitment to each other.

The *harder* questions involve how we get there. I would name two sets of characteristics. The first identifies an alternative and distinguishes it from something else which just ought to be called by another name. These are defining characteristics and in my judgment there are four. The second set of characteristics identify the requisites of success for an alternative school. There are three characteristics of this sort which seem to prove predictive of which alternatives will succeed and which will not. There are many other traits also to be found in some combination in most alternative schools, but I shall limit this just to defining characteristics and success essentials.

The defining characteristics are as follows:

1. An alternative school is one in which all affiliated, students and staff, are there by choice.
2. An alternative school stands as an alternative to a regular school program. It is not a program one elects as a supplement to a regular program or a regular school day, nor is it a training program one enters in lieu of pursuing an education.
3. An alternative school is one with its own distinctive mission which provides its special identity and sets it off from other schools.
4. An alternative is a separate administrative unit (either a separate school or a separate school-within-a-school or mini-school) with its own students and staff whose primary assignment is to the alternative.

Each of these traits is logically necessary for a school to be an alternative, and each distinguishes an alternative from something quite different. For instance, the choice feature is what distinguishes an alternative school or program from one that is punitive or from one established for special groups presumed deficient or handicapped in some way. Nobody chooses such programs. The 'mission' requirement is necessary if the alternative is going to be anything but just a new school; it must have a distinct vision of something else it wants to be—e.g., a place marked by a special climate or atmosphere, or a special theme, or a particular instructional approach. Without this feature no one has real choice, because there can be no genuine options to choose among. The requirement that the school be a separate administrative unit is what makes the difference between an alternative and a course elective or a set of electives. This is necessary to sustaining a separate mission and a separate point of identification for those involved. It is what enables the alternative to become a community.

The necessary conditions of success of alternative schools are these:

1. They must be small enough to permit personalization of the school experience. This probably means a maximum size of several hundred for an alternative school or school-within-a-school.
2. An alternative must have broad aims making its concern the full development of each youngster—character and intellect, personal and social development, as well as academic achievement. It is concerned with the person, not just with the person's academic accomplishments.
3. An alternative school must provide its teachers with enough freedom from standard rules and procedures to enable them to frame and carry out their own vision of schooling. This means that the school must be freer of external controls than are most, and that this power thus shifted to the school be diffused among teachers rather than concentrated in the principal's office.

The research suggests that if any of these three important features is missing, the alternative school is handicapped and its chances for success are substantially weakened. The reason is that these three conditions are responsible for—give rise to—so many of the other positive features we associate with alternatives. For instance, smallness makes each participant a genuine contributor to the program—it makes each one *count*. Moreover, it makes it possible to avoid an extensive structure of formal rules, and thus smallness permits flexibility and continuing responsiveness.

A concern with the *individual* and not just the *student* or role occupant is what makes young people say alternatives teachers "really care," as opposed to other teachers who they think do not. Such broader educational aims also assign teachers responsibility for the full development of their charges—encouraging the teacher's awareness and response to the full range of what is affecting the youngster. This puts teachers in a much better position not only to make learning humane but also to determine what priorities can best be addressed at a particular moment.

Alternative schools were among the first in the last decade or two to demonstrate the importance of school and teacher autonomy. Now the rest of the world has caught up and this kind of change is being urged for all schools. There is great concern today with boosting teacher efficacy—i.e., with enabling teachers to succeed at their mission. It is now being realized that we have so shackled them that they cannot suc-

ceed. Greater autonomy not only contributes to teacher success; it is also responsible for the heightened morale and sense of professionalism of teachers, and for their unusual commitment and dedication.

I know that there are a number of other features which many find essential to alternative education—e.g., student freedom and decisionmaking, action learning or learning within and directly from the community, or a no failure policy. None of these is incompatible, of course, with the three success essentials I have listed. But I have seen what appear to be successful alternatives that do not pursue these supplementary ideas. On the other hand, I have never seen a successful alternative that is without smallness, broad aims, and substantial autonomy.

The reply to someone who objects that these defining characteristics are not accepted by all, or that they are arbitrary, is that yes, we are surely free to define words as we choose. But if one is interested in alternative education by virtue of its success and accomplishments, these are the sorts of programs to which the success has attached.

Mary Anne Raywid has been a teacher of junior and senior high school students, of adults preparing to be citizens, and of graduate and undergraduate university students. She is especially interested in educational innovation and reform, and she is a scholar/advocate of schools of choice.

Alternatives: A Matter of Distinctiveness

by Roy Weaver

Alternative schools are set apart from conventional schools in at least five distinctive ways: scope of choice or decision-making, infusion of the community into the curriculum, approaches to student evaluation and grading, the school environment, and creative uses of personnel and resources. To begin with an alternative school, as I define it, is one in which students have a choice to attend. They are not forced to be there.

Beyond the element of wanting to be in the school there are other forms of decision-making readily available. For years at Chicago METRO seniors have been able to choose whether or not to have a graduation ceremony. The most noted example is the year that seniors were able to get the late Bill Veeck, then owner of the Chicago White Sox, to open Comiskey Park to the graduating seniors and their guests. Parents and friends sat in the first and third-base box seats and each student took a turn rounding the bases to be met by Nate Blackman, who was at the time principal of the school, at home plate where the student was handed a diploma. At Jefferson County Open School in Jefferson County, Colorado travel is an integral part of the curriculum. Each year students plan a trip to coincide with a unit of study. They select the route to travel, places to stay, and sites to attend. They also choose the readings to be completed along with methods of evaluation. Choice is a critical factor in alternative schools, since it is commonly held that one cannot expect students to become responsible without choice.

Using the community. A fine line exists where the school boundaries begin and end. Communities are widely used as rich sources for learning in alternative schools. At St. Louis METRO students are required to give eighty hours of community service each year. The service cannot be paid. No credit is given. But the service is supervised and evaluated. And METRO students cannot come back to the school the following year if they do not complete the community service requirement. At Spectrum, a junior high school in Toronto, Canada, each Tuesday students are enabled to plan and carry out a community learning experience. Activities range from studying grave markers to get a sense of the city's history to observing court cases. At Chicago METRO the "ancillary" learning program provides students an opportunity to study writing at Playboy magazine, to gain knowledge of reporting at the Chicago Tribune, or to learn about museum work at the Museum of Science and Industry. Clearly the community is a significant part of the alternative school curriculum.

Alternative evaluation. Letter grades are considered inappropriate at Jefferson County Open School and at Graham-Parks in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Instead, narrative accounts of students' strengths and weaknesses are noted. These detailed accounts are used to help students focus on areas of needed improvement. The competition promoted by formal grading procedures is often considered inappropriate in alternative schools.

School environment. The environment in alternative schools is often more relaxed than in conventional schools. Students, teachers, and administrators use their first names. They tend to dress casually. The school is sometimes housed in abandoned facilities, such as hotels (for many years the location of The Brown School in Louisville, Kentucky) or warehouses (for many years the site of a Los Angeles Unified School District alternative school in Venice, California). Even the furniture may be dramatically different. At Spectrum students bring to school the furniture they want to use. Informality is a strong characteristic of many alternative schools.

Creative use of resources. Finally, alternative school teachers and administrators tend to use their resources more creatively. For example, at Jefferson County Open School there is no

"To Know No Boundaries"

by Fred W. Stawitz

"To know no boundaries," a slogan touted in a financial institution advertisement on network television, is a familiar concept to many alternative educators. But, those who have spent years as insiders testing the boundaries of the traditional education system suffer bittersweet frustration.

As a result of their efforts, alternative education programs focused on a national drop-out rate of nearly thirty percent are standard issue in the arsenals of a plethora of school districts concerned about "at risk" students. Unfortunately, this crisis-management approach of districts promoting the so-called "drop-out programs" has had no more effect than placing a Band-Aid on a severed artery.

True alternative education strains the structure of traditional education—an incompatible host—because the boundaries inherently imposed by a top-heavy bureaucracy prevent education from being viewed in a new context. Bureaucrats stridently resist change while, by comparison, alternative educators fluidly adapt to the contemporary intellectual need of a society that exists in the Information Age.

The problem lies as much in the social mind-set of America as in the present education system and is expressed in the wisdom contained in these words—*there exists no greater limit than that which we levy upon ourselves.* Society presently struggles under the self-perpetuating limitations of an education system that has led to a cyclic decline of the social intellect.

Educators seeking solutions will need to look farther than the thumb-in-the-dike measures drop-out programs offer. *The rising tide of dropouts is merely symptomatic of deeply-rooted ills, for all students are becoming "at risk" under the present system.*

Society must adopt a new appreciation for education. This can only happen through the development of schools that circumvent present limitations and align education more closely with the intellectual requirements of society. The traditional system retards this process and adulterates the spirit of alternative educators who subordinate themselves to it.

Roads to a brighter future lie in flexible alternative approaches that adapt education to the needs of the individual. Learning must be the priority. Schools cannot be bound by a structure that encumbers educators in a maze of bureaucracy, alienates students and disenfranchises parents. Students, teachers and parents must form a coalition where each is cooperatively empowered in the process and united towards a successful outcome.

What one financial institution striving to be the best in the world has discovered, all educators will one day learn . . . to know no boundaries.

Fred W. Stawitz is president of the Missouri Valley Alternative Education Council and a contributing consultant for* Holistic Education Review. *He holds bachelor degrees in mathematics and computer science and has taught for the past six years at the Alternative Education Program/Teen Aid in Topeka, Kansas.

He is the originator and project coordinator of "Reach For The Stars" Day—a program highlighting aerospace education on the January 28 anniversary of the loss of the Space Shuttle Challenger.

Photo by Tom Gregory

A Matter of Distinctiveness (cont.)

athletic program. Yet, because the school is part of the county system the school receives an athletic budget. This budget is used largely to lease vans for the trips the students take. Students are viewed as teachers as well as learners. A few years ago at Chicago METRO a National Merit Finalist taught a class on Russian literature, having returned from an extended trip to the Soviet Union and having studied the subject for several years. At St. Louis METRO no substitute teachers are hired. Students are given three choices. They may attend any other class in the school. They may go to the library to study. Or, they may go to an area where volunteers from the community are available for conversation.

While not every alternative school exhibits each of these characteristics, those schools considered "mainstream" in the national alternative education movement typically do. These characteristics make alternative schools truly distinctive from their conventional counterparts.

Roy Weaver is editor of* Changing Schools, *the national publication for alternative programs, and teaches at Ball State University.

Looking Forward to Basics

by Jerry Mintz

For a decade the institutions of the world have been reaching toward the past. People were feeling powerless and confused. In desperation they grasped for old answers, things that used to work. There has been fundamentalism in Christianity and Islam, reactionary politics, and "back to basics" in education. In conjunction with the latter there was the "excellence" movement. This was an attempt to wring a little more out of a system that wasn't working any more. As the article in the *New York Times* of August 9, 1987 indicated, these "reforms" haven't really worked and in fact have left minorities and "at risk" students in the dust, as well as many others.

Where did that system come from? It is a system that grew out of the industrial revolution, based on the factory model. As Jeremy Rifkin has pointed out in his new book, *Time Wars*, punctuality became more important than actually learning. In fact, in the factories it became important that the worker NOT understand the whole, or he might want to change it! "Educators enthusiastically embraced the new concept of scheduling and were quick to transpose the disciplined rhythms of factory work directly into the classroom. The new time rules governing the schooling of children have remained virtually untouched to the modern day."

The concept of grades came from Germany in the mid-1800's. The school subjects that are currently taught across the length and breadth of the land were designed by the "Committee of Ten" in 1894.

For the last twenty years a brave group of educational pioneers has been practicing a quiet revolution. Surprisingly, the alternative school movement never did end in the 1970's. It just got very quiet in order to survive the 1980's. Now there are hundreds and perhaps thousands of independent alternative schools and several thousands of public alternative schools which have been responding quite effectively to this need. In addition there are hundreds of thousands of individual families that have thrown up their hands, checked "none of the above," and decided to teach their children on their own. These have been called "home-schoolers" or "un-schoolers."

Those of us who are in alternative education do not think of what we do as experimental. We think of it as reasonable, obvious, practical and logical. To us it is obvious that people should treat each other with respect, that students should have a say in what they want to learn, that children understand better when they learn by direct experience.

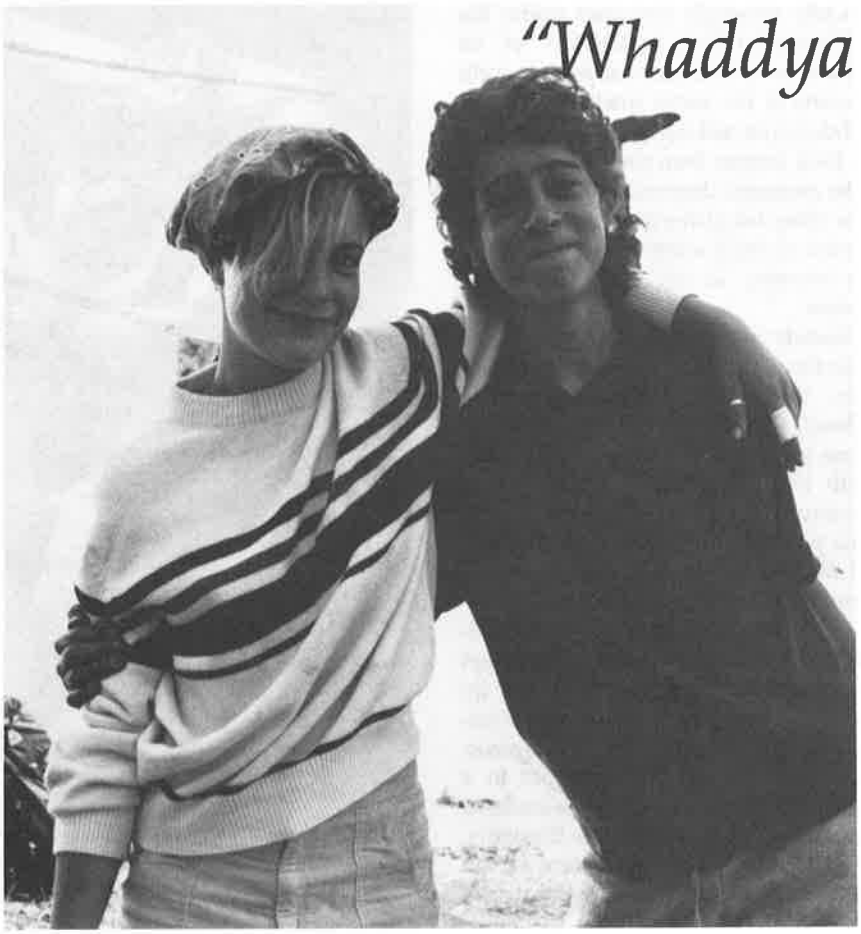

Photo by Tom Gregory

"Whaddya Mean, Free?"

by Mary Leue

It sometimes helps to try to see our country and its institutions in a historical perspective, if we are to understand trends in any degree of depth. This article attempts to bring that perspective into focus as a backdrop for what we in alternative education are about—which actually translates into "This is what *I* believe," since in our neck of the woods, a thousand alternative educators add up to a thousand different beliefs.

Casting my mind back to the late 1960's and early seventies brings up a great wave of nostalgia and sadness. We were so romantic then, so sure we knew what was wrong and how to make it better! Revolution was in the air: the freedom rides in the south, the civil rights marches and the peace marches, the Black Panthers, the "Chicago Eight," the Cambodia crisis, Kent State, the assassinations of so many of the key figures in the dream both wrung our hearts and stirred up our passions for reform.

Some of this "life-long learning" that has been talked about by people such as Ivan Illich and futurist Robert Theobald is making its way to the mainstream. Even in the traditional public school system the word "choice" is becoming more of a reality. The National Governors Association has recommended that school districts everywhere allow parents to choose the schools and the programs that they want their children to attend. This may not seem like much, but this opening up of choice may mean the end of the stagnant monopoly that has typified the public school system for decades.

As Executive Director of the National Coalition of Alternative Community Schools I am fortunate to have been among the first to witness the change that is taking place not only in the United States but around the world. We have helped people start the first alternative schools in Japan. There are alternative school conferences taking place in Germany, France, and Finland. The Chinese have expressed interest in what we are doing. I was called to Washington to tape a segment on alternative education that appeared on the Nipon Network in Japan. And in November the European alternative educators brought me to Paris, France to speak to their conference.

Here in the United States the *New York Times* and *Christian Science Monitor* have been reporting on the new resurgence of alternative education, with the latter doing a special pull-out section. In so doing they made heavy use of the new National Directory of Alternative Schools which the NCACS just produced. In that same Times article of August 10th they said that now "there is wide talk of a 'second wave' of change focusing more directly on how children learn and teachers teach." We think that means that they are beginning to look for us, the alternative educators who have been successfully doing it. Phenomena such as drugs, student suicide and AIDS have made educational empowerment into a life or death issue. Together we can look forward to the true basics: Human respect and communication, learning how to learn, and how to take responsibility for your own life.

In 1968, at the age of twenty-five, Jerry Mintz founded Shaker Mountain School in Burlington, Vt. He started the school with no funds, no building, serving mostly low income and delinquent children at first. He was Headmaster of the school from that time through 1985. For his work he received the Governor's Award for Outstanding Service to Youth.

He was elected to the Board of the National Coalition of Alternative Community Schools in 1982. Two years later he was elected Vice-President, and in 1985 the NCACS named him as their first Executive Director.

Since that time he has traveled to more than 100 alternative schools and increased the membership of the NCACS more than five fold. He recently edited and released a Directory of Alternative Schools, listing nearly 500 schools in 47 states and 16 countries.

Such excitement! We knew who our enemies were and we clung fiercely to our friends. So many wrongs which had been allowed to flourish unchecked in our beloved country were finally going to be set right! Injustices toward the poor in general, blacks in particular, and finally, the plight of the ultimate minority—women and children—were going to be acknowledged and a new system based on justice introduced into the mainstream of American education. "Free the children!" was the cry.

I myself was of an earlier generation, having been born just as the First World War ended, but was experiencing my own youthful freedom for the first time, never having really accepted the version of adult life that had been held out to me during my own young adulthood in the late thirties and early forties. Having personally gone through the relative stultification of enforced conformity, sitting for hours at desks screwed down to the floor in rows, I knew at firsthand how big a price in stifled creativity I had paid for doing well within the system. It was easy for me to extrapolate such a fact to the experience of the bodies, minds and spirits of all tender little children suffering through the daily sterility of somebody else's rules and regulations, while we sang about living in the "land of the free."

"Whaddya mean, free?" was the title we gave to a workshop we put on in 1972 to introduce our brand of education to the public. Another, offered at the university, we entitled "Children of the Broken Dream," meaning the dream of a chicken in every pot, a car in every garage—the dream of universal material prosperity. We wanted to build a new America, nothing less!—an America based on a return to the principles of the founding fathers—on real democracy, individual freedom and justice. We began with the children, since we "knew" that all the trouble started in childhood, and that school was one of the root causes of what was wrong. Little "free schools" sprang up all over the country.

Our "gurus," Jonathan Kozol, John Holt, Paul Goodman, George Dennison, Herb Kohl, et al., gave us all sorts of perspectives on what needed changing, but in the beginning, they (like ourselves) were more focused on what was wrong, on what didn't work—and how much better almost anything else would be—than on what to put in its place. John Holt went in the direction of "unschooling," of "growing without schooling," as the only truly authentic answer to the issue of society versus the individual, of what you might call conformity versus creativity. From this perspective he became the chief source of inspiration and support to a whole crop of young families who had come to the conclusion that they themselves had more to give their children than the institutions run by the society. Ironically, this home schooling group comes mainly from the social element which already have within themselves the resources and options to "make it" in American society—like the hippy group which set up communes and rural free schools, who Jonathan Kozol criticized in his fiery diatribe *Free Schools* as being politically obscene in the face of the universal neglect and mass suffering of our unseen ghetto dwellers within the cities.

Being good Americans, we focused our attention on money, or the lack thereof, as the culprit when and if things went badly in our schools. When we gathered at various regional get-togethers to compare notes on how it was going, we spent a lot of attention on the issue of funding—how to get grants, how to raise money, how to attract parents and teachers if you didn't

have enough money to put into the enterprise. I think it was easier to try to solve this problem (which most of us couldn't or didn't) than to look more searchingly at issues like *what kind of society are we working to create*? How does what we are doing fit into our ultimate aspirations for our children? Is it OK with us if they choose to become members of the lower class when they grow up? Do we want them to end up like us, in the middle class, with middle class aspirations? What kinds of things are they going to choose when they arrive at the age of choice? How does the acquisition of basic skills fit into the picture?

What is education, anyway? Does teaching in an "alternative school" actually boil down to indoctrinating children with the "alternative" virtues of vegetarianism, sexual promiscuity, wearing ragged clothes or none at all, play as opposed to work, "hanging loose and mellow" as opposed to getting frustrated or angry, "doing your own thing" as opposed to learning to take other people into consideration? We were very romantic about the whole thing, it seems, looking back.

But whatever the rights or blind spots of the "movement," somehow the Democratic convention in Chicago of 1968 seems to me to have been a kind of watershed of idealism versus reality. Something of hope died watching our young people being clubbed *en masse* by the Chicago police out in the streets while cynical politicians bartered away the spirit of truth and justice inside the hall. Nothing has felt quite the same since then. I'm not saying that's bad—just different. We are perhaps franker, more honest, about addressing primarily our own personal interests than we were before that climactic event. As the romantic, reforming passion more and more came up against the realities of American life, its momentum gradually turned more and more inward, to apply chiefly to people's own families and the families of like-minded people.

Social and personal realities

I suppose my quarrel with most educational programs, no matter how "holistic" or humanistic they may be—and I include "alternative" education within this category, for the most part—is that they are only as good or as bad, as efficacious or as maladaptive as the society in which they are set. We are all products of that society—including its schools and colleges, its industrial-consumer economy, and the hideously and artificially hyped-up standard of living which we Americans and those other nations which have adopted our way of greed and waste have chosen to believe is perfectly moral and workable, even though its ravages lie about us and the tortured faces of its fallout victims, mostly non-white women and little children, appear nightly on our TV screens. We are all subject to the value judgments of this society from within ourselves, when we set out either to teach or to teach teachers. No matter what level we choose to focus on within the educational field, it all comes back in the end to who we, each one of us, is as a person. In this respect, programs—techniques—perspectives on teaching and learning can become tools or weapons, defensive or offensive, shields or mirrors. In the end, it boils down to "thee and me" set in the framework of whatever the institution is which keeps us alive on the earth.

Alternative schools have their roots in the social movements of the 1960's. But alternative educators need to go beyond both the romantic idealism of those years, and the self-centered withdrawal that followed when that idealism was dashed. We need to work for a society that nurtures personal wholeness and integrity, physical and emotional health, compassion and justice.

Wilhelm Reich, that amazing, multi-faceted pioneer in somato-psycho-analysis and its relationship to life on earth, understood, as no one else involved with learning and development has seemed to me to understand, the direct relationship between teacher and learner as a function of personal wholeness, of biological wellness, as well as social or perceptual understanding. His concept of developmental self-regulation as a rule of thumb still seems to me a primary criterion of educational success. I *don't* mean by "self-regulation" the travesty of ideological, child-centered permissiveness which passes for true self-regulation. Children are very acute, and pick up whatever hidden messages parents are passing on to them, and often exploit adults—or are themselves exploited—by such unacknowledged attitudinal values. What I mean is allowing children the space to explore what they want for themselves, choosing or refusing to choose, learning by choosing. Call it self-regulation or self-governance. To me it is an essential part of any learning situation. It is all too easy for teaching to become something which fits the comfort and convenience of the teacher, without her/his in the least noticing it.

We are, of course, creatures of a long latency learning period, and it is pretty difficult to sort out the base level biological learning from the acculturated overlay. So, in this sense, I am not advocating a return to a romantic ideology of the "noble savage," or some other Rousseauvian model. But leaving out of account the "wisdom of the body," as Walter Cannon (the great pioneering physiologist of the autonomic nervous system) called it, in favor of more operational, rule-centered considerations in defining educational goals and practices seems to me simply putting new wine into old bottles. And that can apply to *any* pre-defined educational system, whether Waldorf, Montessori, progressive, parochial—or even alternative! Children of my generation recognized the iron fist in the velvet glove of Dewey-inspired, "project-centered" progressive programs as easily as they had the old ways of teaching the three R's when they were carried out by teachers whose personal feelings were not in their work. But the old ways had worked with whole-hearted teachers, too!

What I am saying is that knowing what works in education is really important, but failing to carry out an educational program in a wholehearted, authentic manner can kill the best of programs. The question is not always just "What works?" but also "Why does

it work?" John Potter, a leader in the small schools network and director of Somerset School in Washington, D.C., says that almost anything works well that is not too large. Big institutions dwarf individuals. So I am not claiming educational success for "alternative education" via a universal practice of Reichian principles in these schools. At least, not as such. Simply being small and having to struggle together to survive creates an atmosphere in which children thrive! But when one quotes Reich's saying which appears in virtually every one of his books—"Love, work and knowledge are the wellspring of life; they should also govern it"—it is my belief that you go pretty far toward defining a way of being that opens a space for real relationship, out of which learning can grow. And when you take A.S. Neill's self-governance *by* children, not just *for* them, as an implementation of Reichian principles, exciting things happen in schools. I wouldn't want to work in a school that didn't understand this as a first principle.

So, in answer to my own initial question, "Whaddya mean, free?" I guess I would answer, being true to yourself, letting the chips fall where they may, taking your lumps in consequence and learning thereby.

Mary Leue, mother of five and grandmother of ten (almost), has in her sixty-eight years, been a registered nurse, teacher, lay midwife, therapist, community organizer, editor, writer, bookseller and desktop publisher. She currently edits and publishes* SKOLE, *the Journal of the National Coalition of Alternative Community Schools. Beginning this fall, she will lead tours in England and France for a Sufi group which offers pilgrimages to sacred sites in several countries.

Mrs. Leue started The Free School, a small alternative elementary-junior level school in Albany, New York's inner city, in 1969. Over the eighteen years since then, the school has grown into a small community of ten families living in the neighborhood of the school, and now offers members and others pregnancy and birth support, a cooperative savings and loan program, bookstore, natural foods store, press, dairy farm, wooden boatbuilding shop, kiva and other resources.

What Makes Alternative Schools Alternative? — The "Blue Ox" Speaks!

by Dave Lehman

We get asked that question more times than I would like to remember here at the Alternative Community School in Ithaca, New York. (ACS was pronounced "Ox" by our students early in our history, thus our mascot, the blue ox.) It's hard to answer in words, sort of like the Taoist response to the query about the Tao—it's something you really come to know only through experiencing/living it. But that's not satisfactory for most folks and so we go on to try to describe our school and what makes it different.

In some ways ACS is no different from other schools in Ithaca—our kids ride the school bus, we have certified teachers, and we still teach things like English, social studies, and math. Oh yes, we're different in that we are a combined middle school and high school, but such schools exist elsewhere in New York. And yes, we are smaller—only 215 students in grades six through twelve—but there are still plenty of small schools throughout the country (although not enough!—and too many are still being closed and consolidated into huge schools or factories!).

What makes ACS different has more to do with the way we put together our program and how we relate to each other. We have *options* for ways of studying everything. Specifically, we offer five different general ways in which students may freely choose to pursue their secondary school education (and even a sixth for our older students). One option is our **classes** or courses. In some ways these are similar to more conventional schools for they meet regularly for forty-five minute periods—but only four days a week rather than the typical five, and they typically range in size from ten to twenty students. Most importantly, they are generated by the staff and students, not by some central office far removed from the specific persons involved in the teaching and learning. Thus, you will find such titles in our English offerings as "Crunch English," "I in writing," "Kings and Things," "Black Voices," "Women in Literature," "Revolution and Romanticism," "Humorous Presentations," "Star-crossed Lovers," and "Photographic Communication" along with "Shakespeare," "Modern American Literature," and "Creative Writing."

Beyond the classroom

A second option is our **extended projects.** These projects are offered on Tuesday afternoons and Thursday mornings for longer blocks of time, are often interdisciplinary in nature, and often involve doing things out of the school building as well. These have recently included: "Stories for Children," creating original stories with and for the preschoolers also located in our building; "Cross Country Bicycle Touring," physical education with a first aid/CPR component; "Koffee Klatch," creative writing based on the stimuli of trips to different places in Ithaca; "Video Project," meeting after school hours to have the use of a local community-access television studio to produce youth-oriented programs once a month on such topics as "teenage sexuality" and "violence in America"; as well as

other projects. We often utilize other adults from the community, including parents, to come in and offer projects such as "Tie-dying and Batiking," "Tolkien: the Man and the Work," "Watercolor Painting," "Ethnography," and "Fencing." Also, our staff can teach things outside their typical subject areas—e.g. an English teacher who teaches karate (being a third degree blackbelt), a social studies teacher working with a math teacher to run our cottage industry "The Silkscreen Workshop," or a special ed teacher who leads the Spring canoe group.

A third option at ACS is **independent study.** Here students select the topic they want to study and/or the skills they want to learn and contract with a teacher to work on it independently. Even our middle schoolers have demonstrated their capabilities to do this, particularly when it's their own internal motivation that interests them. Here the teacher is a resource, a guide, a consultant, a critic offering support and ideas to the student who is really doing the work.

Our fourth option is **community studies.** Here we actually have three different programs under the coordination of a half-time teacher. There is the familiar "work-study" program for our high school students who have paying jobs out in the community, but can also earn elective credit for this "learning from working." Then there are our "community placements," sort of like mini-apprenticeships where middle school or high school students are involved in "learning by doing" at everything from a local veterinarian or a retail sales store to a genetics research laboratory or the local fire station. Here the intent also is career exploration—students having the opportunity to try on various kinds of occupations to see where their own interests may lie. The third community studies program is CAPS—Community Academic Placements—where students can earn credit in various subject areas through "Learning by doing" at a local business, industry, or social agency. Patterned after New York City's alternative high school program "City as School," our community studies coordinator works with the student, a teacher from the relevant subject area, and someone from the work site in the community to develop a learning plan for that particular location.

There is more of a relaxed, informal, friendly, family atmosphere about the school in which people really come to care about each other, and can even genuinely enjoy teaching and learning together—it is not uncommon at ACS to see a student give a teacher a hug of thanks!

Our fifth curricular option at ACS is learning at **other educational organizations in the community.** This can include taking a German course at our conventional high school, or a calculus course at one of the nearby universities, or a criminology course at our local community college, or music lessons at the Community School of Art and Music, or physical education through a local ballet studio. Any of these can be integrated into a student's weekly schedule and be part of his or her total educational program.

The sixth option at ACS is for high school students only and is **credit by examination.** The student may earn up to six and a half credits by successfully passing a standardized New York State Regents exam in a given subject. This is done in conjunction with a teacher of that subject and includes either an oral exam or a special project as well.

Thus, a significant part of what makes ACS different as an alternative school is the choice of ways of learning things.

A democratic community

Another key aspect of our program which makes us different is our **democratic self-governance.** We believe strongly in students participating fully with the staff in running the school (and parents as well, particularly in major policy decisions including hiring of staff). Here we have several structures, from our overall "Advisory Board" (composed of student, staff, parent, other school district, and community representatives), Parent Steering Committee and "Open Parents Nights" to our student-run (staff facilitated) committees, small Family Groups, and weekly All School Town Meetings.

Yet as important as all the above features of our alternative school are, the underlying thing which makes us different from most schools is the **relationship of students and staff.** Rather than the all-too-common adversarial relationship found in our large conventional secondary schools where teachers are primarily concerned with control and students are primarily concerned with "getting over on the teacher," our students and staff relate to each other on a first name basis out of a mutual respect in which they try to work cooperatively rather than constantly being in conflict. There is more of a relaxed, informal, friendly, family atmosphere about the school in which people really come to care about each other, and can even genuinely enjoy teaching and learning together. It is not uncommon at ACS to see a student give a teacher a hug of thanks!

In this regard education is political, for we are all either revolutionaries, striving for this freedom for all, or we are oppressors, denying this freedom to some (and, therefore, to all).

But lastly, I would hasten to add that *none of these features of our "alternativeness" are things that can only happen here at ACS.* We believe they can happen in any secondary school in the country and we are involved in various state, regional and national educational organizations to help others see such

possibilities within themselves and their schools. We see our work as liberating, helping staff find the freedom to teach, students the freedom to learn, and all of us to find the freedom to be a caring community. In this regard education is political, for we are all either revolutionaries, striving for this freedom for all, or we are oppressors, denying this freedom to some (and, therefore, to all).

So, perhaps in the end, deep down inside there is really nothing different or "alternative" about us at the "blue Ox"; for isn't this what we all want?– the freedom to be fully our own selves in a community in which everyone else can fully be themselves, and in which we can all fully develop our unique potential?

Dave Lehman has been involved with Alternative Community School for a number of years, and has been active in alternative school organizations.

Students in the BONGO program **(See p. 39)**

Photo by Paul Jablon

Jefferson County Open High School – Philosophy and Purpose

by Ruth Steele

Jefferson County Open High School is a public alternative secondary school of choice located in Evergreen, Colorado. The open schools in Jefferson County began with an elementary program, Open Living School, created in 1970 in response to requests from parents. Then in 1975 the high school program, Mountain Open High School, was added. Although the name was changed by the Board of Education to reflect the county-wide constituency, the school is best known as Mountain Open.

The purpose of the Open High School is to provide an environment that will foster the development of the potential in each student through an emphasis on individualization and self-directed learning to prepare students for the transition from childhood to adulthood. A program has been developed to facilitate this transition through a series of passages which demonstrate a student's readiness to be an adult. While built on the mission and goals of the school district, the approach differs significantly from that of the conventional high school.

The Open High School is a small school of choice. Since the school began, its community (staff, students, and parents with the support of the school district) have shared the belief that these two characteristics, smallness and choice, are necessary for a program that emphasizes individualization and self-direction. The Open High School is small for the sake of having a community where everyone is known, where no one is anonymous. The enrollment has been limited to a maximum of 235. Students are at the Open High School by choice, as are staff members. Whether they hear about the school through friends and acquaintances, counselors and teachers in conventional schools, or news coverage, they share a desire to be a part of an alternative learning community.

These two factors alone could be responsible for the positive climate at the school, but structures have been created which facilitate the continuous development of a sense of community where the individual is valued. One of the most important of these structures is the advisory system.

Close personal relationships

There is a belief that each student in the school needs at least one adult who knows them, cares for them, and will listen to them. Within the advisory relationship, a student and his or her advisor will develop an individualized educational program based on that student's unique strengths and needs. Advisor responsibilities include helping students set goals and determining how to reach them; monitoring accomplishments and progress in the personal, social, and intellectual domains; communicating with the home; and helping the student determine when the expectations for graduation have been met. In choosing an advisor, a student chooses an advisory group which meets weekly to discuss mutual concerns and plan activities to build group identity.

The governance of the school is a shared responsibility. Staff and students convene in a weekly all-school meeting to discuss common concerns, organize groups for action, make decisions, solve problems, reach agreements, and share in celebrations of accomplishment. This meeting, called Governance, is democracy in action.

As students move through the transition to adulthood, their rates of progress and development vary greatly. Students are encouraged to challenge themselves and to learn from their mistakes. In the process of learning, a student makes comparisons between how he or she *was* relative to how he or she *is*, or would like *to become*, rather than comparing self with others.

In the process of learning, a student makes comparisons between how he or she was relative to how he or she is, or would like to become, rather than comparing self with others.

Grades do not exist at JCOHS. Students are not separated into sophomores, juniors, and seniors, nor are letters or numbers used as a measure of the quality of a student's performance. There is no credit system. Students are expected to demonstrate competence as they work toward personal goals. The issue of quality of performance is highly personal, so the emphasis is on helping students become capable of realistic self-evaluation.

This self-evaluation is an ongoing process for each student at the school. At the completion of each class or other learning experience, students write evaluations of their own performance and seek responses from their teachers or mentors. These responses validate the students' self-evaluations. Evaluations and responses are shared with advisors who help students become aware of the continuing cycle of experience and reflection which gives personal meaning to those experiences. Evaluation is a part of an ongoing process for the student, rather than an end in itself.

The students are encouraged to consider the world their school, and to become aware of the learning that occurs in all of their experiences. For this reason students are able to evaluate or document how such experiences contribute to their growth and development.

Walkabout

In addition to the advisory system, there are other structures which provide a framework for students so that they can set goals and organize their learning experiences to work toward graduation. There are three phases to this program, known as the Walkabout, a version of the Australian Aborigines' rite of passage, based on the work of Maurice Gibbons.

Phase one is a nine week introduction to the culture of the school with an emphasis on experiential learning in and out of the school. About half of the student's time is structured by required attendance in Governance, a week long backpacking trip, group and individual advising, triads which are small support groups made up of old and new students, and one full day in an interest group of choice. In the fall of 1987, interest groups were Spaces and Places, an introduction to design and construction; Challenge Adventure, including outdoor activities such as rock climbing, kayaking, and cycling; Production, organizing and producing for the theater; and Service and the City, emphasizing using the city as a resource and providing service. In the interest groups students share experiences, learn to set individual and group goals, and reflect on learning through discussions and written evaluations. During this phase, the student, working with the advisor, begins an extensive self-assessment in the personal, social, and intellectual domains. The other half of a student's time is spent in classes, activities, and learning experiences agreed upon with the advisor. All of these experiences, both required and selected, provide an introduction to self-directed learning, an orientation, or disorientation as it is sometimes called, which has proven to be an essential step in moving a student into the school so that he or she can experience success, providing a necessary base for the next two phases.

Phase two is the stage for building a foundation of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors necessary to take on an adult role in society. The IEP (Individualized Educational Program) provides a focus for this phase. Each student develops, with his or her advisor, an IEP based on the self-assessment begun in Phase 1. The IEP is the basis for the selection of learning experiences for the MAP (Mutually Agreeable Program), a schedule negotiated by the advisor and advisee. There are countless possibilities for learning; some are listed below.

- Classes at JCOHS, other high schools, community college, or adult education.
- Warren Occupational-Technical Center
- School trips
- Participation in running the school—Munchie, Leadership, Hiring, Features, office help, Preschool.
- Community learning—mentorships
- Community Service
- Athletics at other schools or recreation centers
- Music at other schools
- Theater and dance—Denver Center, Arvada Center, and community groups
- Skills lab
- Independent study
- Teaching or assisting with a class at JCOHS or other schools

- Computer software for self-help
- Job
- Passages

Students are encouraged, in fact they are expected to be creative in the discovery of learning opportunities wherever they are, in or out of the school. It is by monitoring the MAP that the advisor keeps track of the attendance of each student, for attendance is based on meeting commitments to the MAP rather than physical presence in front of a teacher.

In phase three, students develop and pursue personally challenging projects that demonstrate their ability to use, in real-life situations, the skills and abilities they have developed. There are six areas, known as Passages, that must be addressed through these projects. The Passage areas are Adventure, Career Exploration, Creativity, Global Awareness and Volunteer Service, Logical Inquiry, and Practical Skills. Each passage must be student-initiated, experiential, pre-planned, intense, and in many cases outside the school. These Passages are the actual Walkabout, the transition to adulthood.

There is some overlap of phase two and phase three, and the use of the IEP continues until a student is ready to graduate. The length of time to complete those phases varies with each individual, but generally students take from two to four years to complete the Walkabout process. They begin with a highly structured phase with a great deal of teacher attention, move to a less structured phase in which they work closely with advisors to set up individual programs that includes classes and a variety of other learning options, then complete their work in a largely independent manner. They are expected to take increasing responsibility for their own education and, therefore, for their own lives.

Educational philosophy

There are many philosophical assumptions implied by the very existence of JCOHS. Some of them are listed below. These shared beliefs, held in common by the staff, and eventually embraced by the students, are the basis for a vision of an ideal school or learning environment. This vision provides a focus of understanding that allows for autonomy and creativity as the staff, students, and parents are active participants in the evolution of that ideal school.

- All students already have within them all that they need to become self-actualized adults. To educate them means to help draw out these inner resources so that they may recognize their own gifts, in order to develop, use and cherish them. The task of the staff is to help students discover their unique talents and then to help them build the skills and confidence to develop these gifts to their fullest.

Photo by Tom Gregory

- Individual rates and levels of development are recognized and respected and students are allowed and guided to make appropriate choices of learning experiences.
- Different learning styles are acknowledged and students are encouraged to work from their strengths to develop those areas that are weaker.
- Physical, safety, and security needs must be met before a student can develop a sense of belonging and self-esteem necessary to accept or seek intellectual or academic challenge.
- Experience can be the best teacher if one reflects on the experience and learns from it. A function of the school is to help students be aware of what they are learning, how they learn, and to discover the personal meanings in what they learn.
- Learning can take place in any environment and continues throughout life. One of the most important tasks of the school is to help students learn how to be self-directed learners.
- Learning is a personal responsibility, but one that can be shared. Students become partners with both staff and other students in the process of learning. Competition is minimized and cooperation emphasized.
- Skill without motivation is empty. Motivation without skill is frustrating. JCOHS is not just for the self-motivated few, but should be an environment that stimulates both self-motivation and skill development. One way this is done is to remove as many extrinsic sources of motivation as possible. Thus students are forced to confront themselves, and with help from supportive staff, students, and parents, to create, for themselves, purpose and meaning in their lives.
- Extended trips, from one to three weeks in length, provide unique and valuable opportunities for individual growth and group development. Learning goes on twenty-four hours a day and becomes relevant as students become involved in the real world beyond the confines of the school building. Personal, social, and intellectual development are obvious to students and staff alike as the result of the intensity of trip experiences. A few of the places students and teachers have trav-

eled to recently include Mazatlan to live with Mexican families and learn Spanish; Yellowstone to study history and ecology; the Navajo Reservation in Arizona to plant fruit trees; Tallahassee, Florida, to work on a red wolf habitat for the Junior Museum; Cortez, Colorado to reconstruct an Anasazi kiva; the Bahamas to learn about sailing and oceanography; and the mountains of Colorado to develop skills in winter survival.

- Freedom can be painful. It involves learning from one's mistakes, asking for help, and understanding interdependence. To become an effective citizen in a democracy, one must have the chance to make choices, try out various options and possibilities, to fail, and to be given another chance.
- To develop morally, students need real situations that allow them to understand the consequences of their behavior and they need a variety of role models, both peer and adult.
- Curriculum is the process whereby the school helps each student integrate his or her experiences, both in and out of school, planned and unplanned, into a coherent framework that has personal meaning for that student.
- Personal and institutional growth and change are to be encouraged.

All students already have within them all that they need to become self-actualized adults. To educate them means to help draw out these inner resources so that they may recognize their own gifts, in order to develop, use and cherish them.

The creation of the ideal school is an individual and group responsibility and is an ongoing process.

These assumptions have come from many sources, personal belief systems of the school community concerning human nature and the process of learning, trial and error, readings from a variety of authors—past and present assessment and evaluation of the program as an ongoing process, and perhaps most significantly, the expertise, commitment, knowledge, experience, and intuition of a highly qualified dedicated staff.

The Open High School has grown and developed during its thirteen year history from a shared vision based on commonly held beliefs about the importance of providing a climate that allows and encourages the actualization of individual potential within a community of learners. The process will go on as the members of that community—staff, students, and parents—continue to be creative participants in the process of the evolution of an ideal school based on that vision.

Ruth Steele is principal of Jefferson County Open High and has served on its faculty since 1977. She has led numerous student trips to Mexico and various parts of the U.S., and has been a Fulbright exchange teacher in London. She has worked in Jefferson County Schools for twenty-one years as an art teacher, media specialist, and innovator of alternative programs.

School Flexibility:

All schools need to be alternatives to rigid structures that don't accommodate the present society's children.

by Terry Born and Paul Jablon

When we met eleven years ago we had little in common. But in true zen fashion we created a world where less is more. That germ was built on our view of the child and our love for the sense of wonder she was capable of. We recognized that society had changed but the way we educate human beings in that society had remained static. Children now grow in families that are more often than not headed by single parents. Children are more often than not burdened by the responsibilities of after school jobs and care of the house and younger siblings. Children are less often supported for doing well in school by their peers.

More importantly, media has influenced the way we learn, but has not made any impact on how we teach. Students no longer enter school as linear-learners. Reading is an additional way in which we gather information; most information is received via the multi-sensory spectacle of the television set. This medium provides hundreds of images, fully orchestrated sounds, a multitude of camera angles and optical illusions, all to a totally passive viewer. How can the merely mortal teacher compete? How could we?

We return now to that child of wonder. How do we retrieve and rekindle her natural curiosity? We thought about what made us excited as learners. The best experiences we'd had were things that resulted in an accomplished tangible PROJECT (producing a play, building a greenhouse, cooking for fifty people) and things that we did as a group. We decided that students could get excited about learning if they knew they would have to use the information in order to complete the project. If they were writing a play about perfect societies of the future, then reading More's *Utopia*, Orwell's *1984* and Huxley's *Brave New World* became inherently interesting and provided source material.

By working together interdependently on a play they began to take roles of surrogate supportive families. They encouraged attendance, and completion of assignments because without these, the play wouldn't get done. They discouraged cutting and acting out behavior because with these, the whole group suffered.

We also believed in the idea that learning is an activity that does not begin and end in the classroom. Science and math are not housed in the vestibule of the left brain, nor English and art on the right. The doors and walls that separated them had to be broken down. Education for us needed to occur in a place that was seamless. It was necessary for us to connect the principles in science that were identical to those in a poem we were reading, and that most principles could and had to be related to the students' personal lives. This led us to have teachers in the room at the same time with little or no boundaries between subject areas. We realized that the essential principles were universal and that, in fact, there were probably a very limited number of principles that ultimately guide and maintain the balance of human reality. So here we are, back at the idea that less is more.

The BONGO Program has existed for eleven years. It has incorporated approximately 540 high school students in its magic circle. It is an interdisciplinary team-taught program that uses drama as a vehicle by which to teach at least three academic subjects each term (English, Science, Social Studies, Art, Physical Education, Photography, Psychology). Each term students learn by doing, by writing and producing an original play or video tape, newspaper or book which grows out of their academic studies as related to the humanistic, ethical and dramatic consequences implied by that subject matter. These projects are presented to the public so the students can express their views and become active participants in our society. These plays, videos and publications usually echo the universal themes that we started with. The students still find them relevant. The program succeeds in drastically reducing absence and cutting, while providing a challenging atmosphere where real academics can be taught and applied and critical thinking and writing skill are improved.

There are thousands of other things to say about BONGO, but this piece is meant as a message about alternative education. In the course of our eleven years we have had to change our process often because we were learning how to best reach our audience but the basic ideas of teaching to the whole child, the need to show that child that the world touches her directly and how she can, in turn, touch the world through learning has remained constant.

We are living in a rapidly changing world. Bongo's success is a message to all educators that "all" children are "wonder"full and that if we are truly teachers we must make all education flexible to the needs of our students. Ultimately all good education must be "alternative."

Terry Born and Paul Jablon are founders and co-directors of the BONGO Program, at Middle College High School, a New York City public school housed on the campus of LaGuardia Community College. They presently have a National Endowment of the Arts grant to replicate the BONGO model in other schools and are co-authors of* The Bongo Workbook. *Terry Born, a licensed English teacher, has taught in New York City including ten years in a South Bronx Junior High School. She is a photographer known for her hand-painted photographs which have been shown in galleries in New York and Chicago.

Paul Jablon, a licensed science teacher, has taught in a variety of schools including a street academy in El Barrio, The Haaren Mini-school Complex in Manhattan, and at New York University. He is an author of numerous education articles, and founder of the Science Education journal ADAPTATION. Lest you identify him as a left-brain type, he has worked as a musician and a photographer.

Letters to the Review

Dear editors,

Sarah has just arrived home from school tired and crabby. Lately she frequently complains of headaches. She asks permission to watch television while she eats her snack. Her brother and sister avoid interaction with her. Later, during dinner, Sarah is uncommunicative about her day at school. She answers most inquiries with a shrug or a mumbled, "I don't know." Realizing if I push her she may collapse in tears, I shuffle the children off to bed soon after dinner. I read books as part of our bedtime ritual and Sarah frequently falls asleep before the first story is finished.

This scenario became routine when Sarah, a first grader, was enrolled in the local public school. The scene itself may not be unusual. However, because of my growing sense that there had to be a better way for a young child to learn, we decided to teach Sarah at home. My husband and I are certified teachers and have strong opinions concerning changes that we believe need to be made in this country's educational system. We believe that class size needs to be reduced, that daydreams, play, creativity and imagination need to be encouraged rather than discouraged, that children need to be allowed to develop at their own individual pace, that socialization in public schools is often vicious and mean-spirited, and that critical thinking needs to be developed in children and not just the ability to seek a right answer.

Traditional school classrooms have too many students in a class. An impersonal learning experience results. Meeting individual needs of students becomes synonymous with wishful thinking on the part of the classroom teacher. In contrast, it is inherent in the home schooling experience that many hours of one-on-one learning takes place. A personalized education is the norm. The focus of the home schooling experience often becomes meeting the individualized needs of the student and that goal is realistic and achievable.

Children need time alone. They need to play games, to daydream, to have time that is not structured. Sarah often disappears into her bedroom to lay back and read a book. Kristen has invented a variety of games with her collection of fuzzy, little play mice. Zachary's favorite games revolve around his match box model cars. Together, the children have made up several versions of a grocery store game that includes a garbage bag full of empty food containers, play dollars and real coins. We take walks, cook meals together and read daily. The area libraries are all too familiar with us as we clean the shelves of books on a regular basis.

Children possess wonderful imaginations. I have found that fairy tales and fables are satisfying to that part of the child that delights in fantasy. Our children have developed fine-tuned listening abilities as a result of hours of reading stories out loud. Too often these same eager, creative children become dull and lifeless when placed within the confines of a traditional classroom.

Children need to be allowed to develop at their own pace. Sarah began to read when she was six years old and overnight she was reading whatever she could get her hands on. Kristen, on the other hand, is more of a kinesthetic learner. Kristen has been allowed to develop her reading skills at her own pace without being pushed or forced to learn. Public schools cannot afford the luxury of waiting till a child is ready to master a skill.

Educating through real life

It is a fallacy that public school socialization is a must. Home schooling parents provide their children with a variety of opportunities for socialization: music classes, gymnastics classes, dance classes, church groups and activities at local recreation centers to name a few.

We have blended some unique activities into our home schooling experience. One year I was employed as a lifeguard during lunch time lap swimming. My children came along and swam. They interacted with swimmers ranging from young mothers with babies to senior citizens. Our local roller skating rink offers a weekly special for home schooling families that includes reduced rates. The roller skating provides an especially good opportunity for home schoolers to meet other home schoolers. In addition, our children's grandmother is the director of a day care center. As a result, our children have enjoyed many hours of play with children who attend the day care center.

As is true of real life, our children are interacting with people of all ages with a variety of interests and backgrounds. They are not limited to a classroom full of children their own age.

When Sarah was enrolled in the first grade in the public school, her math teacher gave a math test every Monday. The object of the test was to be timed and the "best" students were those that finished a lot of problems with few mistakes. Although Sarah was one of the best students in her math class, she came to dread Mondays because of the timed test. Eventually she told me that she was no good at math. Mind you, I'm talking about a seven year old child! The math test that was intended to enhance math skills instead created fear and intimidation in many of the young students.

Too often public schools teach children to learn "right" answers. I believe that we need to teach children how to reason and think. The process by which a student arrives at an answer is more important than the answer itself.

Sarah's headaches have become a thing of the past. We have been home schooling our children for nearly three years. Our youngest child, Zachary, may never be enrolled in a traditional public school. The right and opportunity to choose the education we believe is best for our children feels very basic. My vision is to see more educational choices available for our children. Because of our experiences, I will continue to support home schooling as a viable educational option.

Annie Hunt Heiman
Greeley, Colorado

HOLISTIC EDUCATION READING LIST (Additional Listings)

In the Spring issue we offered an introductory list of books on holistic education and related subjects. Each Spring, we will offer an updated, comprehensive reading list. Meanwhile, we will include additions to the lists as they are brought to our attention. Please send us your recommendations. We also welcome book reviews.

Alternative Education (Relevant to our special feature on alternative education beginning on page 21.)

Leo W. Anglin:
"Teacher Roles and Alternative School Organizations." *Educational Forum,* May, 1979: 438-452.

Robert Arnove and Toby Strout:
"Alternative Schools and Cultural Pluralism: Promise and Reality." *Educational Research Quarterly,* Winter, 1978: 74-98.

Mary Frances Crabtree:
"Chicago's Metro High: Freedom, Choice, Responsibility. *Phi Delta Kappan,* May, 1975: 624-628.

Lawrence Cremin:
"The Free School Movement, A Perspective." *Today's Education,* September, 1974: 71-75.

Terrence E. Deal and Lynn D. Celotti:
"How Much Influence Do (and Can) Educational Administrators Have on Classrooms?" *Phi Delta Kappan,* 61, 1980: 471-473.

Terrence E. Deal and Robert R. Nolan:
"Alternative Schools: A Conceptual Map." *School Review,* November, 1978: 29-49.

Terrence E. Deal and Robert R. Nolan:
Alternative Schools: Ideologies, Realities, Guidelines; 1978, Nelson-Hall.

Daniel Linden Duke and Irene Muzio:
"How Effective Are Alternative Schools?" *Teachers College Record,* February, 1978: 461-483.

Mario Fantini:
"Alternatives in the Public School." *Today's Education,* September, 1974: 63-66.

Mario Fantini:
"Education By Choice." *National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin,* 57(374), 1973: 10-19.

Robert L. Fizzell:
"Inside a School of Choice." *Phi Delta Kappan,* June, 1987.

Maurice Gibbons:
"Walkabout: Searching for the Right Passage From Childhood and School." *Phi Delta Kappan,* May, 1974: 596-603.

Martin Gold and David Mann:
Expelled to a Friendlier Place: A Study of Effective Alternative Schools; 1984, Univ. of Michigan.

John I. Goodlad, et. al.:
The Conventional and the Alternative in Education; 1975, McCutchan.

Thomas B. Gregory and Gerald R. Smith:
High Schools as Communities: The Small School Reconsidered; 1987, Phi Delta Kappa Foundation. (Reviewed in this issue on page 42.)

Bert Horwood:
Experiential Education in High School: Life in the Walkabout Program. Association for Experiential Education, 1987.

George B. Krahl:
Alternative Education: Current State of the Art. New York: Institute for Urban and Minority Education, 1977.

Arnie Langberg:
"What's Happening in . . . Jefferson County Open High School?" *Phi Delta Kappan,* June, 1983.

David Thornton Moore:
Alternative Schools: A Review; 1978, Institute for Urban and Minority Education, Urban Diversity Series.

Joe Nathan:
"Results and Future Prospects of State Efforts to Increase Choice Among Schools." *Phi Delta Kappan,* June, 1987.

National School Boards Association:
Alternative Schools. Report Number 1976-3.

Mary Anne Raywid:
"Public Choice, Yes: Vouchers, No!" *Phi Delta Kappan,* June, 1987.

Mary Anne Raywid:
"The Alternative Route to School Renewal." *Compact,* Spring, 1981.

Mary Anne Raywid:
The Current Status of Schools of Choice in Public Secondary Education. 1982, Hofstra Univ.

Stuart Rosenfeld:
"Reflections on the Legacy of the Free Schools Movement." *Phi Delta Kappan,* March, 1978.

Phi Delta Kappan, in the April, 1981 issue, ran a collection of important articles on alternative education.

Also see *Changing Schools,* which has focused on alternative education for over a decade. (See p. 46 in this issue.)

The holistic paradigm in Western culture

Joseph Chilton Pearce:
The Crack in the Cosmic Egg: Challenging Constructs of Mind and Reality; 1971, Julian Press.

Charles M. Johnston:
The Creative Imperative: A Four-Dimensional Theory of Human Growth & Planetary Evolution; 1986, Celestial Arts.

Willis Harman:
Global Mind Change: The Promise of the Last Years of the Twentieth Century; 1987, Knowledge Systems/Institute of Noetic Sciences.

Waldorf education

Bernard Lievegoed:
Phases of Childhood; (1946) 1987, Floris Books/Anthroposophic Press (Reviewed in this issue on page 43.)

Ekkehard Piening and Nick Lyons, ed:
Educating as an Art; 1979, Rudolf Steiner School Press.

Ideas and Methods for Classroom and Home Practice

Teresa Benzwie:
A Moving Experience: Dance for Lovers of Children and the Child Within; 1987, Zephyr.

Naomi Drew:
Learning the Skills of Peacemaking; 1987, Jalmar.

Dorelle M. Heisel:
Biofeedback Strategies for Interpersonal Relationships; 1981, Gordon and Breach.

Maureen Murdock:
Spinning Inward: Using Guided Imagery With Children for Learning, Creativity, and Relaxation; 1987, Shambhala. (Reviewed in this issue on p. 42.)

Book Reviews

High Schools as Communities: The Small School Reconsidered,
by Thomas B. Gregory and Gerald R. Smith.
Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation (P.O. Box 789, Bloomington, IN 47402), 1987. 156 pp.

Reviewed by Mary Anne Raywid

One of the more obvious things that schools must do if they are to be effective is to engage the attention of those within them. Much of the "excellence" literature has seemed oblivious to this challenge. The literature has focused instead on insuring compliance; it has devoted a great deal of attention to what must be demanded and enforced but little to how to bring off these reforms in classrooms.

High Schools as Communities is a departure from this trend. The book contains a proposal for reform explicitly directed at the crucial question: How can we engage teachers and students at sufficient levels of intensity to make the enterprise of education worthwhile? Authors Thomas Gregory and Gerald Smith correctly identify such engagement as central to school improvement. How, they ask, can we reasonably expect teachers and students to improve their school performance unless we make the school itself conducive to such improvement?

Gregory and Smith offer a diagnosis of what went wrong with the U.S. high school and prescribe the changes that must now take place in order to improve that institution substantially. (Along the way, they provide a fresh and provocative analysis of several of the most prominent reports on school reform.) They argue that three factors are largely to blame for the current difficulties of the high school: school size, school structure, and the absence of community within the school.

Gregory and Smith see school size as the root cause of many of the problems, including lack of community, a resultant preoccupation with custodial functions, and the proliferation of specialized nonteaching roles. They recommend that high schools serve no more than 250 students—not only because larger enrollments inevitably result in a counterproductive preoccupation with control and order, but also because "anonymity works against everything for which a school strives."

By *structure,* Gregory and Smith apparently mean not only the way in which a school is governed, but also the ways in which it organizes and allocates such fundamental resources as space, time, and substance. Educators need to rethink practice and re-create the kinds of arrangements most supportive of positive and productive human functioning, they say.

The typical high school today is more an aggregate of individuals going their own ways than a coherent community collaborating to make the enterprise work, according to Gregory and Smith. Unless schools become genuine communities, however, very little bonding is likely to occur between teachers *or* students and the school. And without such bonding, it is difficult for a school to succeed.

Some of the recent reports on school reform have called attention to the problem of size. School structure has also begun to attract some long-delayed attention from would-be reformers. But

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Spinning Inward: Using Guided Imagery with Children for Learning, Creativity, and Relaxation. (Revised and Expanded). by Maureen Murdock.
Shambhala, Boston. 1987. 158 pp.

Reviewed by Thomas Roberts

Five years ago as a teacher and parent, Ms. Murdock compiled the first edition of *Spinning Inward* and sold it from her home. Now, after its fame spread by word of mouth from parent to parent and teacher to teacher, a regular trade edition is out.

The book is a how-to guide for parents, teachers, counselors, or others working with children and adolescents on how to use our powerful imaging abilities. It grows out of the author's experiences in classrooms and leading workshops in imagery and from her studies with idea-leaders such as Jean Houston, Deborah Rozman, and her late partner Beverly-Colleen Galyean.

After an introductory chapter on imagery and new ideas related to it, the author gives general instructions on how to use imagery. Then come nine chapters which illustrate imagery used for relaxation, sensory awareness, nonverbal learning, improving skills, self-expression, self image, inner and outer harmony, entering adolescence and the quest for identity. These topics are briefly discussed at the beginning of each chapter, then three to five exercises provide ways to develop these capacities. After trying out the exercises, most people will be able to create their own.

Chapter notes and references are given for most chapters, and especially useful are bibliographies of books and periodicals and a list of suggested recordings. *Spinning Inward* is an exceedingly useful book for teachers or others who want practical advice on using imagery. It would also be a useful supplemental book for classes on teaching methods. I hope it will encourage others to write and publish books about developing imagistic cognition and on its uses in teaching.

Thomas Roberts is in the Department of Educational Psychology, Counseling, and Special Education, Northern Illinois University.

Gregory and Smith are among the first to focus extensively in the importance of community school success. They explain its importance this way:

> [I]t provides a unifying force; it increases commitment among students and teachers; it lessens alienation and improves motivation; it gives teachers greater autonomy and harnesses the human potential that is in every social situation; and it gives students a greater stake in a school and increases their identification with it. Without community, school is just a place to get through as painlessly as possible; with community, it is *our* school, a place in which to live and find meaning.

Such an emphasis makes *High Schools as Communities* a delightfully novel entry in the continuing parade of literature on school reform. Gregory and Smith expand the discussion of what makes a good school well beyond matters of curriculum and instruction. They make school *culture* a vital concern.

They also see teachers as central—both to the current predicament of the high school and to its ultimate improvement. "High schools have not worked well for students for some time," Gregory and Smith assert. They blame the current sense of crisis on the fact that high schools no longer work for teachers, either. In other words, teachers no longer feel that they can do their jobs adequately. So they, like students, are distancing themselves from the school if not dropping out completely.

Gregory and Smith repeatedly recommend changes that will make schools more autonomous and that will give teachers more control over instructional decisions. At the same time, however, they see teachers as one possible obstacle to school improvement. More specifically, they fear that teacher organizations will oppose the school decentralization pivotal to their other recommendations for improvement. In contrast to so much of the current school reform literature, Gregory and Smith recognize that improvement cannot simply be imposed on schools. Instead, they tackle the problem of how to generate improvement from within the schools. Such an effort is long overdue and well worth the reader's time.

There are aspects of *High Schools as Communities* that I wish had been more fully developed. The authors could have dealt in greater detail with the central concepts of structure and culture, for example. The possible objections to their recommendations (which are treated in the final chapter) also deserve more attention and a more thoughtful response than Gregory and Smith accord them.

Despite these flaws, the book achieves what it set out to do—and it does so in a lively and readable fashion. The authors characterize this book as an argument, and they have aimed that argument at those they most need to convince: the educators who must act on their recommendations for school improvement. The book should help readers see the problems inherent in the accepted notion of what a high school should be.

High Schools as Communities makes a powerful statement, and the book could conceivably contribute to a new model of secondary education. For, as Gregory and Smith correctly conclude, either the high school must change, or it will simply be replaced by institutions in better accord with the needs of teachers, young people, and the society at large.

Mary Anne Raywid has been a teacher of junior and senior high school students, of adults preparing to be citizens, and of graduate and undergraduate university students. She is especially interested in educational innovation and reform, and she is a scholar/advocate of schools of choice.

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Phases of Childhood by Bernard Lievegoed (First published in Dutch, 1946)
Translated from the eighth edition by Tony Langham and Plym Peters.
Published by Floris Books, Edinburgh, and Anthroposophic Press, (Bell's Pond, Star Rte., Hudson, New York 12534), 1987. 206 pp.

Reviewed by Ron Miller

An essential defining characteristic of holistic education is that its first priority is the developing personality of the child rather than the "curriculum" which is determined by social and political ideologies. All holistic educators turn toward the child first; what accounts for the differences between them—between the Montessori method and the Waldorf approach, for example, or between either of these and a "free school"—is how they define human nature and what they consider to be the natural unfolding of personality. (There is, of course, ideology involved in this, but at least a serious attempt is made to understand and follow natural development.)

Dr. Lievegoed is a proponent of Rudolf Steiner's world view, called "anthroposophy." I want to say a few words about this approach before considering *Phases of Childhood*. Anthroposophy is an intricate and fascinating attempt to reclaim the spiritual element in human nature. For Steiner, the human being has a threefold nature: we are comprised of a physical body, a personal self or soul, and transcendent being—spirit. The main thrust of Steiner's hundreds of lectures and books, and the underlying philosophy of the Waldorf schools, is his assertion that "man can fulfill his destiny only by allowing his spirit to direct the course of all his activity" (*Theosophy*, Anthroposophic Press, 1971, p. 88).

As an interested, but nonpartisan, student of Steiner's work, I have mixed feelings about his approach. On the one hand, Steiner's critique of the reductionistic, materialistic world view of modern culture is extremely valuable; simply drawing attention to the spiritual possibilities of human life, and

emphasizing the need for techniques to achieve them (meditation and the creative arts, for example) is a great contribution to our understanding of human development and offers radical new approaches in education. On the other hand, Steiner went on from there to describe, in effusive detail, "higher worlds" that could only be perceived with advanced spiritual insight such as he possessed; the danger in this is that despite his stated desire to found a "spiritual science" which would be open to verification by experience, any world view based on special insight tends to become estranged from developments in other fields of thought. Criticism—and even supporting evidence—from other sources are often not given the attention they may deserve.

Now I can better explain my mixed reaction to *Phases of Childhood*. To begin with, it is a holistic work because it emphasizes the qualities and needs of the unfolding child—the evolving physical, emotional, intellectual, social, and spiritual characteristics that make us human. What I find most important and inspiring in this work is the anthroposophic emphasis on spiritual development.

> A true educationalist is concerned with helping self-realization; for every individual self is a new message from a divine world. The respect for the unfolding human 'I' is the foundation of true educational work, and must be given with love . . . (p. 147)

Dr. Lievegoed criticizes the industrial-age model of education, which, in an effort to turn out trained specialists, has reduced the spiritual possibilities of the individual into a " 'production line' person, who is actually a cog in the complicated economic machinery" (p. 10). "The materialist view of the individual," he says,

> results in the gathering of as much knowledge as possible, because knowledge equals power, not because knowledge can lead to wisdom. . . . The ideal that man should be educated to be a harmonious person, on the one hand developing *practical skills*, on the other hand becoming a bearer of *beauty, wisdom and culture*, does not play any, or only a very small part in this. To effect a change the entire curriculum would have to be based on completely different principles. (pp. 10-11).

Later he continues this critique.

> The modern educational system is certainly geared more towards passing examinations than towards life. The fear that a pupil will not be ready for an exam forces the teacher to make sure that the child is in complete control of all the facts, so that he can regurgitate it all at once at the required time (p. 166).

For Lievegoed, as for Steiner, the true purpose of education is not to promote the memorization of facts but to develop within each student a highly personal, inner-directed, creative engagement with the world. The training of intellect must be balanced by the nurturing of imagination. According to the Waldorf approach, this does not mean that "academic" lessons are interspersed with free time for creativity, but that "every hour in school should be permeated with an artistic spirit" (p. 88). As a practical example, Lievegoed suggests that after hearing a story about history or geography, the students might be tested by asking them to *draw* what they have learned. (This seems to me a simple technique which any teacher, even far removed from a Waldorf school, can use.) This emphasis on creativity is no mere "child-centered" sentimentality; writing in the immediate aftermath of World War Two, Lievegoed says that

> Modern man has become so used to reproduction that as an adult he is often only capable of reproducing the views that are put before him. Is not this one of the causes of the terrible catastrophes taking place all around us? (p. 89)

These few passages, although they contain the essence of the Waldorf philosophy and provide excellent opportunities for dialogue with other social and educational viewpoints, are not further developed in *Phases of Childhood*. Instead, the bulk of this work is a description of the physical and psychological stages of human development from the anthroposophic point of view. To summarize briefly, Lievegoed (after Steiner) divides childhood into three main seven-year phases: from birth to age seven it is primarily physiological development that takes place; from age seven to fourteen it is psychological; and from fourteen to twenty-one it is social development that occupies most of the child's energy. There is a rhythmic regularity to development: the opening of each stage is signalled by a physical event—birth, the changing of teeth around age seven, and the onset of adolescence—and within each stage there is a sequential development of thought, feeling, and will corresponding to physical changes, respectively, in the head (and face), breadth of the trunk, and height (along with length of limbs). According to anthroposophy, this correspondence between physical and psychic development is significant;

> the soul forces of thinking, feeling and the will, are transformed organic forces, which are released as psychological activities when they are no longer needed for the growth and development of the organs (p. 127).

I will not go into the details which Lievegoed provides through two hundred pages. In short, anyone who works (or lives) with children should find this description intriguing and probably rather useful. But I would like to address a deeper issue, which is tied to my concerns about the Steiner movement in general. This description of human development is given in an almost total intellectual vacuum; there is no mention of Piaget, or Merleau-Ponty, or Erikson, or Kohlberg, or Maslow, or Jung. Maria Montessori, who was a brilliant observer of child development and provided insights that in many ways corroborate Steiner's, is casually dismissed because other of her observations differed from his. There is virtually no recognition that cultural factors may contribute, as Philippe Aries has demonstrated, to how we define such basic concepts as childhood and adolescence in the first place. (Just as Freud's theory of human nature reflects his upper middle class, scientific, Victorian milieu, is it not possible that Steiner's "higher worlds" owe something to elements of this world? In our efforts to describe human development, we must be aware of our own implicit ideologies.)

Phases of Childhood is self-contained, and presents its ideas as self-evident and self-sufficient. In fact, in a curious preface, the author admits that the work is forty years old and probably should be rewritten for our later age—but then says he didn't have the time, *and yet the book was reissued anyway*! To me, this sends the message that "these truths are timeless and beyond doubt, and require no scrutiny." While Steiner's insights are indeed often

brilliant and important, I think it is a mistake to ignore the equally brilliant discoveries and ideas of other researchers. To understand human development, we need all the insight we can acquire.

I invite further discussion on this issue. I especially invite students of anthroposophy to respond to my concerns. For there is no question that Steiner's work is extremely valuable for educators (and all of us) today—but it is largely inaccessible to those of us who are uninitiated, which means the vast majority of us. Why not join us in dialogue so that we can join you in replacing the materialist world view with one that is spiritually and humanly satisfying?

Ron Miller is co-editor of **Holistic Education Review.** *He was a Montessori-trained teacher at both the primary and elementary levels, has an M.A. in phenomenological psychology, and a Ph.D. in educational history.*

RESOURCES IN HOLISTIC EDUCATION

(This listing includes resources known to us at this time. We invite readers to send in information about other groups and publications.)

Networks and Organizations

Association for Humanistic Education
P.O. Box 923
Carrollton, GA 30117

Sponsors annual conferences, journal and newsletter. Members include public school educators and others with a broad interest in human relations & human potential issues.

National Coalition of Alternative Community Schools
c/o Jerry Mintz
417 Roslyn Rd.
Roslyn Heights, NY 11577

A network of parent cooperatives, free schools, homeschoolers. Facilitates student exchanges and travel. Sponsors annual and regional conferences, a journal (*Skole*) and newsletter. Has published a directory of member schools with a resource listing.

New Horizons for Learning
4649 Sunnyside North
Seattle, WA 98115

Publishes *On the Beam*, describing the latest research in learning and thinking skills; also a clearinghouse for seminars, workshops and ideas for applying these findings. Sponsors extraordinary conferences.

American Montessori Society
150 Fifth Ave.
New York, NY 10011

Publishes *The Constructive Triangle* magazine about the Montessori movement in the U.S. Also supervises teacher-training programs and accreditation of schools, sponsors workshops and conferences.

Association Montessori Internationale
1095 Market St.
San Francisco, CA 94103

American branch of the teacher-training and accreditation organization originally founded by Maria Montessori in 1929.

International Montessori Society
912 Thayer Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Publishes *The Montessori Observer* and *Montessori News*. Offers teacher training and conferences. A network of independent schools using a broader interpretation of Montessori's ideas.

Association of Waldorf Schools of North America
17 Hemlock Hill
Great Barrington, MA 01230

Directory of Waldorf schools and teacher training.

Publications for educators and parents

Association for Childhood Education International
11141 Georgia Ave., Suite 200
Wheaton, MD 20902

Has just published *Learning Opportunities Beyond the School,* a comprehensive resource guide for parents, teachers, and other child care givers. Contains practical ideas for facilitating learning in multiple settings. ($9 + $1 postage) ACEI also offers other publications on choosing educational materials.

Center for Teaching and Learning
Box 8158
University of North Dakota
Grand Forks, ND 58202

Publishes journals on progressive and open classroom approaches, as well as a series of research papers.

Changing Schools
Teachers College 918
Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306

A newsletter/journal on alternative schools, including public school programs.

Consortium for Whole Brain Learning
3632 13th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55407

A small newsletter, published four times during the school year, with ideas and resources for addressing the various learning styles. $6/yr.

For Parents
3011 Schoolview Rd.
Eden, NY 14057

A newsletter published five times a year "to improve family communication and moral development." Contains practical, down-to-earth advice on adult-child relationships, discipline, and teaching values. Encourages respect for the person and the planet, yet is oriented to the mainstream (it is not affiliated with any particular movement and uses no "new age" language). Also publishes *For Churches* using a similar approach "to assist church leaders' work with families." Sample copy $1.

Green Teacher
c/o Lisa Glick, Lifelab
809 Bay Ave.
Capitola, CA 95010

Published in Britain by the Centre for Alternative Technology. Focuses on environmental education, organic & ecological principles, renewable energy, peace education.

New Families
NextStep Publications
P.O. Box 41108
Fayetteville, NC 28309

Calling itself "a journal of transitions," this quarterly magazine explores family lifestyles in the post-industrial age, with sensitive and comprehensive coverage of the connections between family and work, expanding roles of motherhood and fatherhood, self-sufficiency and home-based work and education, and much more. $15/year.

Publications for children

KidsArt News
P.O. Box 274
Mt. Shasta, CA 96067

A lively newsletter filled with creative activities for elementary-age children, informative features on important artists and art styles, and contributions and responses from kids themselves. Includes folk art from many cultures. Published quarterly, $8.00 year.

Book Publishers (Offering catalogs filled with resources for holistic educators and parents.)

Anthroposophic Press
Bell's Pond, Star Route
Hudson, NY 12534

The most complete selection of books on Rudolf Steiner's philosophy and the Waldorf education approach.

Bergin & Garvey
670 Amherst Rd.
South Hadley, MA 01075

Paulo Freire's works, including *The Politics of Education* and others, also *The Moral & Spiritual Crisis in Education; Education & the American Dream;* and other social-political studies of education, as well as anthropological approaches to childbirth, and other subjects.

Jalmar Press
45 Hitching Post Dr. Bldg. 25
Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274-4297

Resources for teachers, parents and children on nurturing self-esteem, peace, and creative (integrating right and left brain) learning and thinking. Catalog includes important works by Jack Canfield, Barbara Meister Vitale, and Bob Samples.

New Society Publishers
Box H
4527 Springfield Ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19143

Books on peace and nonviolent social change, including serveral titles for educators and young people. (See ad on inside front cover of this issue.)

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
252 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1V6

Titles include *The Holistic Curriculum* by John P. Miller (see p. 9 of this issue); *Sharing the World—A Prospect for Global Learning; Learning and Loving It;* and many works on Canadian education, French (and English) as a second language, and classroom activities. OISE also publishes several educational journals.

Teachers College Press
Teachers College, Columbia University
1234 Amsterdam Ave.
New York, NY 10027

A long list of titles includes books by Douglas Sloan, an important writer in holistic education.

Zephyr Press
430 South Essex Lane, Dept. N7B
Tucson, AZ 85711

Bi-annual newsletter on issues "at the forefront of education and learning." Lists many relevant books and curriculum guides for sale, and includes networking information.

Home schooling

Holt Associates
729 Boylston St.
Boston, MA 02116

National network, resource center. Publishes *Growing Without Schooling* newsletter.

Home Education Magazine
P.O. Box 1083
Tonasket, WA 98855

Extensive and thoughtful coverage of social & philosophical issues, practical ideas.

Peace education/citizen diplomacy

Educators for Social Responsibility
23 Garden St.
Cambridge, MA 02138

Curriculum materials on nuclear issues, conflict resolution, and coming this summer—"Thinking About the Soviet Union." Other new ESR publications include: "Mom, Dad . . . What is Nuclear War?"; "The War Play Dilemma: Balancing Needs and Values in the Early Childhood Classroom"; "Differences: USA/USSR"; and "Bibliography of Nuclear Age Educational Resources."

Summer Institutes are held in cities around the U.S. Contact ESR for more details on 1988 programs: "Teaching for Social Responsibility"; "Teaching About the Soviet Union"; "Conflict Resolution"; "Educating for Living in a Nuclear Age"; "Global Issues from a Third World Perspective"; "Educating for the Twenty-first Century: Teaching Responsible Citizenship."

Parents and Teachers for Social Responsibility
P.O. Box 517
Moretown, VT 05660

Curriculum materials and books on peace, conflict resolution.

Youth Ambassadors of America
P.O. Box 5273
Bellingham, WA 98227

Sponsors exchange of American and Soviet children and educators. (Coming in July—2nd annual educational conference in Moscow.)

Association for Humanistic Psychology
325 Ninth St.
San Francisco, CA 94103

Sponsors exchanges of American and Soviet educators and psychologists. (Coming up—6th AHP delegation to the USSR.)

Environmental education

Institute for Earth Education
Box 288
Warrenville, IL 60555

Curriculum ideas, workshops and conferences. Publishes *Talking Leaves* newsletter, and books such as *The Earth Speaks.*

Vermont Institute of Natural Science
Woodstock, VT 05091

Publishes *Hands-on Nature: Information and Activities for Exploring the Environment with Children.*

Other resources

National Women's History Project
P.O. Box 3716
Santa Rosa, CA 95402

Offers a catalog of resources and materials on women's history, in-service workshops and summer conferences.

The BONGO Program
Middle College High School
31-10 Thomson Ave.
Long Island City, NY 11101

The BONGO Workbook, a 195-page manual for designing an interdisciplinary team-teaching, student-directed, project-oriented high school program that has achieved proven results (see article on p. 39)—$12. The directors of the program are also available to run training and start-up workshops.

HOLISTIC TEACHER EDUCATION

(We would like this to become a comprehensive listing of innovative teacher training programs, and invite you to send information about yours.)

The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

OISE is a graduate school of education and research and field development institute affiliated with the University of Toronto. In addition to an extensive traditional graduate program in education, several interdisciplinary focus areas may be of special interest to holistically oriented educators, including: "Critical Pedagogy and Cultural Studies" and "Education and the Creative Arts Therapies." There is a strong emphasis on multicultural education and moral and religious issues in education. The Institute produces excellent publications (see reference in this issue, p. 47), and appears to us to be an exceptionally stimulating environment.

Contact: Registrar, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5S 1V6.

Programs previously listed:

Antioch/New England Graduate School
Education Department
Roxbury Street
Keene, NH 03431

Northern Illinois University
Dept. of Learning, Development, and Special Education
DeKalb, IL 60115
attn: Dr. Thomas Roberts

Waldorf teacher training

Antioch/New England Graduate School (see above)

Rudolf Steiner College
9200 Fair Oaks Blvd.
Fair Oaks, CA 95628

Waldorf Institute
260 Hungry Hollow Rd.
Spring Valley, NY 10977