Aristotle and education

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Aristotle and education. We only have scraps of his work, but his influence on educational thinking has been of fundamental importance.

Aristotle (384 – 322 BC). Aristotle's work was wide-ranging – yet our knowledge of him is necessarily fragmented. Only around 20 per cent of his written work has survived – and much of that is in the form of lecture and other notes. However, there can be no doubting his significance. He was:

> *A tireless scholar, whose scientific explorations were as wide-ranging as his philosophical speculations were profound; a teacher who inspired – and who continues to inspire – generations of pupils; a controversial public figure who lived a turbulent life in a turbulent world. He bestrode antiquity like an intellectual colossus. No man before him had contributed so much to learning. No man after could hope to rival his achievement*

> *Jonathan Barnes (1982) Aristotle, Oxford: OUP.*

There are only scraps of his work *On Education*, however we can get a picture of his ideas from surviving works. Aristotle believed that education was central – the fulfilled person was an educated person. Here I want to focus on those elements of his thought that continue to play a key part in theorizing informal education.

First, his work is a testament to the belief that our thinking and practice as educators must be infused with a clear philosophy of life. There has to be a deep concern for the ethical and political. We have continually to ask what makes for human flourishing? From this we should act to work for that which is good or 'right', rather than that which is merely 'correct'.

Second, along with many others in his time, he placed a strong emphasis on all round and 'balanced' development. Play, physical training, music, debate, and the study of science and philosophy were to all have their place in the forming of body, mind and soul. Like Plato before him, he saw such learning happening through life – although with different emphases at different ages.

Third, he looked to both education through reason and education through habit. By the latter he meant learning by doing – 'Anything that we have to learn to do we learn by the actual doing of it… We become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate ones, brave by doing brave ones.' (Aristotle *Niconachean Ethics*, Book II, p.91). Such learning is complemented by reason – and this involves teaching 'the causes of things'. We can see here a connection with more recent theorists that have emphasized experience, reflection and connecting to theories.

Fourth, and linked to the above, Aristotle bequeathed to us the long-standing categorizing of disciplines into the theoretical, practical and technical. We have suffered at different points from a continuing emphasis in education, after Aristotle, on contemplation as the highest form of human activity. However, many writers have picked up on his concern for the practical – and for practical reasoning. We can this at

work, for example, in the work of Carr and Kemmis (1986), and Grundy (1987) when they argue for a concern with process and praxis in education. It has also been a significant element in the reformulation of informal education by writers such as Jeffs and Smith (1990; 1994, 1996).

Aristotle's bequest is not an unproblematic one. There is much to dislike about some of his ideas and the way in which subordinated groups are excluded from the benefits of education in his thinking. However, the study of his thought remains deeply rewarding for many educators.

Key texts: The two main texts are:

Aristotle *The Nicomachean Ethics*, London: Penguin. (The most recent edition is 1976 – with an introduction by Barnes).

Aristotle *The Politics (A treatise on government)*, London: Penguin.

Biographical material:

Barnes, J. (1982) *Aristotle*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. An lively and concise introduction to Aristotle's work.

Jaeger, W. W. (1948) *Aristotle*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. Pretty much the standard work.

Websites: There are a lot to choose from. You can find full-text versions of Aristotle work, plus numerous potted biographies and term papers. For starters try the **Perseus Project**, or search the **The On-Line Books Page**.

Tagged with → Aristotle • education • flourishing • informal

Aristotle on knowledge

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Aristotle on knowledge. Aristotle's very influential three-fold classification of disciplines as theoretical, productive or practical remains an excellent starting point for exploring different forms of knowledge.

Contents: introduction · the theoretical · the productive · the practical · further reading and references · links · how to cite this piece

Aristotle, along with many other classical Greek thinkers, believed that the appropriateness of any particular form of knowledge depends on the telos, or purpose, it serves. In brief:

> *The purpose of a theoretical discipline is the pursuit of truth through contemplation; its telos is the attainment of knowledge for its own sake. The purpose of the productive sciences is to make something; their telos is the production of some artifact. The practical disciplines are those sciences which deal with ethical and political life; their telos is practical wisdom and knowledge. (Carr & Kemmis 1986: 32)*

This way of separating different areas of knowledge can be seen, for example, in the way that we might view 'pure maths' (theoretical), tool-making (productive), and social work training (practical). Thus, how we see knowledge and the purpose it serves has a profound effect on the way we view education. It leads to differing understandings of curriculum content and method.

The theoretical: pursuing truth for its own sake

The form of thinking appropriate to theoretical activities, according to Aristotle, was contemplative. It involves mulling over facts and ideas that the person already possesses. This is how one writer describes it:

> *The Aristotelian contemplator is a man who has already acquired knowledge; and what he is contemplating is precisely this knowledge already present in his mind… the contemplator is engaged in the orderly inspection of truths which he already possesses; his task consists in bringing forward from the recesses of his mind, and arranging them fittingly in the full light of consciousness. (Barnes 1976: 38)*

This for Aristotle was the highest form of human activity. It was the ultimate intellectual virtue: a life of unbroken contemplation being something divine. This image can bring to mind pictures of holy men and women reflecting on some eternal truth or of people meditating. The whole thing has a slightly unworldly feel. However, this not a particularly accurate reflection of Aristotle's thinking. The life of the contemplator was not to be a life of physical denial. Nor was it a matter of letting the mind roam at random. The good

person, or expert human, in his view was an 'ace rationalist' (Barnes 1976: 37). Actions were to be based on sound reasoning or detailed reflection.

The role of the educators is, presumably, to help people to gain the knowledge on which they are to reflect; to train them in the disciplines of contemplation; and to develop their character so that they became disposed to this form of activity. 'Intellectual virtue owes both its inception and growth chiefly to instruction, and for this reason needs time and experience' (Aristotle 1976: 91). Education involves training people from childhood to 'like and dislike the proper things'. But there is also something more here. Aristotle places this discipline on a pedestal. It is, for him, the highest form of human activity. Educators, if they are to follow this line, must place the gaining of knowledge for its own sake above, for example, the cultivation of affection and sympathy for other people. This is something that many of us would disagree with. As Barnes comments, human excellence runs in a broader and more amiable stream than Aristotle imagined. The fulfilled person will be a lover of others and an admirer of beauty as well as a contemplator of truth: 'a friend and an aesthete as well as a thinker' (Barnes 1976: 42).

The productive: making things

If the form of thinking associated with theoretical activities was contemplative, the kind of knowledge and enquiry involved in productive disciplines was a 'making' action or poietike. Aristotle associated this form of thinking and doing with the work of craftspeople or artisans. Thus, the making action is not simply seen as mechanical, but also as involving some creativity in an artistic sense. (Interestingly the English word 'poetry' is derived from the Greek poietike.) This making action is dependent upon the exercising of skill (what the Greeks called techne) and it always results from the idea, image or pattern of what the artisan wants to make. In other words the worker has a guiding plan or idea. For example, potters will have an idea of the article they want to make. While working, they may make some alterations, develop an idea and so on. But they are restricted in this by their original plan. There is a finite range of options. We can view this process as follows (adapted from Grundy 1987: 24):

exhibit 1: the productive	
People begin with a plan or design; an idea of the object they want to make.	*eidos*
Their frame of mind is that of the artisan or craftsperson as is disposed to use of skills.	*techne*
Together these provide the basis for action – the 'making action'.	*poietike*
The outcome is a thing or object.	*product*

This form of reasoning is very instrumental. It is dominated by the plan or design and actions are thus directed towards the given end. As Grundy comments:

> *The eidos can only come into being through the techne (skill) of the practitioner, but, in turn, it is the eidos which prescribes the nature of the product, not the artisan's skill. The outcome of poietike (making action) is, thus, some product. This does not mean that the product will always replicate the eidos. The artisan's skill may be deficient or chance factors may be at work. The product will be judged, however, according to the extent to which it 'measures up' to the image implicit in the guiding eidos. (Grundy (1987: 24)*

Put in terms of discussions of process and product, this approach can be seen to be focused around the latter.

The practical: making judgments

The third form of enquiry is what might be called the 'practical sciences'. These were originally associated with ethical and political life. Their purpose was the cultivation of wisdom and knowledge. They involve the making of judgments and human interaction. The form of reasoning associated with the practical sciences is praxis or informed and committed action. This is a term that many educators encounter through the work of Paulo Freire and has been given a number of different political meanings, particularly within Marxist traditions of thinking. To understand what we mean by it here it is useful to reflect on what we have already said about the theoretical and the productive, and to think about these in relation to what we mean by 'practice'.

Practice is often portrayed at a very simple level as the act of doing something. It is frequently depicted in contrast to something called theory – abstract ideas about some particular thing or phenomenon. Theory is what you learn in college and then apply to the situations you find in your work. The result is practice. People often talk about professional knowledge as if it were based on theory from which can be derived general principles (or rules). These in turn can be applied to the problems of practice. In this way theory is 'real' knowledge while practice is the application of that knowledge to solve problems (hence the phrase 'applied social science'). This implies that the practitioner is in a sense always a passive implementor, since ends are pre-given and means decided by the theorist. At best practitioners are skilled artisans implementing the 'design' of others. We can see in this what we have already been examining: the elevating of theory, and use of a technical disposition – the productive sciences.

Theory and practice are not opposites or separate entities. 'Practice' cannot be lacking theory. Similarly, it is difficult to conceive of 'theory' that is purely descriptive and devoid of reference to purposeful action. In other words, practice is soaked in theory. It is a constant process of theory making, and theory testing. Thus, it is in this sense that we can begin to talk about practice as praxis – informed action. As Freire put it 'we find two dimensions, reflection and action, in such radical interaction that if one is sacrificed – even in part – the other immediately suffers' (1972: 60).

Perhaps the best way of approaching practical reasoning is to look at the starting point. Where the productive began with a plan or design, the practical cannot have such a concrete starting point. What we begin with is a question or situation. We then start to think about this situation in the light of our understanding of what is good or what makes for human flourishing. Thus, for Aristotle, praxis is guided by a moral disposition to act truly and rightly; a concern to further human well being and the good life. This is what the Greeks called *phronesis* and requires an understanding of other people. We can represent this as follows (adapted from Grundy 1987: 64):

exhibit 2:the practical	
People begin with a situation or question which they consider in relation to what they think makes for human flourishing.	the good
They are guided by a moral disposition to act truly and rightly.	*phronesis*
This enables them to engage with the situation as committed thinkers and actors.	*praxis*
The outcome is a process.	*interaction*

In praxis there can be no prior knowledge of the right means by which we realize the end in a particular situation. For the end itself is only concretely specified in deliberating about the means appropriate to a particular situation (Grundy 1987: 147). These two statements capture something of the fluidity of the process. As we think about what we want to achieve, we alter the way we might achieve that. As we think about the way we might go about something, we change what we might aim at. There is a continual interplay between ends and means. In just the same way there is a continual interplay between thought and action. What this process involves is a round of interpretation, understanding and application. It is something we

engage in as human beings and it is directed at other human beings.

Further reading and references

Carr, W. & Kemmis, S. (1986) *Becoming Critical. Education, knowledge and action research*, Lewes: Falmer Press. Includes a very helpful overview of Aristotle's view of knowledge.

Grundy, S. (1987) *Curriculum: Product or Praxis*, Lewes: Falmer. 209 + ix pages. Good discussion of the nature of curriculum from a critical perspective. Grundy starts from Habermas' theorisation of knowledge and human interest and makes use of Aristotle to develop a models of curriculum around product, process and praxis.

References

Aristotle (1976) *The Nicomachean Ethics* ('Ethics'), Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Barnes, J. (1976) 'Introduction' to Aristotle *The Nicomachean Ethics* ('Ethics'), Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Freire, P. (1972) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Links

Aristole

Curriculum

Dewey

How to cite this piece: Smith, M. K. (1999). 'Aristotle on knowledge', *the encyclopaedia of informal education*. [http://infed.org/mobi/aristotle-on-knowledge/. Retrieved: insert date].

Tagged with → knowledge

Carl Rogers, core conditions and education

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Carl Rogers, core conditions and education. Best known for his contribution to client-centered therapy and his role in the development of counselling, Rogers also had much to say about education and group work.

contents: introduction · core conditions · carl rogers on education · rogers' influence · further reading and references · links · how to cite this article

Carl Ransom Rogers (1902 – 1987) was born in Oak Park, Illinois, and is best known as the founder of 'client-centred' or 'non-directive' therapy. Rogers initially studied theology – and as part of his studies acted as the pastor in a small church in Vermont. However, he turned to clinical and educational psychology, studying at Teachers' College of Columbia University. There he grew into clinical practice drawing on such diverse sources as Otto Rank and John Dewey (the latter through the influence of W. H. Kilpatrick – a former student of Dewey's). This mix of influences – and Carl Rogers' ability to link elements together – helps to put into context his later achievements. The concern with opening up to, and theorizing from experience, the concept of the human organism as a whole and the belief in the possibilities of human action have their parallels in the work of John Dewey. Carl Rogers was able to join these with therapeutic insights and the belief, borne out of his practice experience, that the client usually knows better to how to proceed than the therapist.

Core conditions

Thorne argues that it is not too simplistic to, 'affirm that the whole conceptual framework of Carl Rogers rests on his profound experience that human beings become increasingly trustworthy once they feel at a deep level that their subjective experience is both respected and progressively understood' (1992: 26). We can see this belief at work in his best known contribution – the 'core conditions' for facilitative (counselling and educational) practice – congruence (realness), acceptance and empathy).

Exhibit 1: Carl Rogers on the interpersonal relationship in the facilitation of learning

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What are these qualities, these attitudes, that facilitate learning?

Realness in the facilitator of learning. Perhaps the most basic of these essential attitudes is realness or genuineness. When the facilitator is a real person, being what she is, entering into a relationship with the learner without presenting a front or a façade, she is much more likely to be effective. This means that the feelings that she is experiencing are available to her, available to her awareness, that she is able to live these feelings, be them, and able to communicate if appropriate. It means coming into a direct personal encounter with the learner, meeting her on a person-to-person basis. It means that she is *being* herself, not denying herself.

Prizing, acceptance, trust. There is another attitude that stands out in those who are successful in facilitating learning… I think of it as prizing the learner, prizing her feelings, her opinions, her person. It is a caring for the learner, but a non-possessive caring. It is an acceptance of this other individual as a separate person, having worth in her own right. It is a basic trust – a belief that this other person is somehow fundamentally trustworthy… What we are describing is a prizing of the learner as an imperfect human being with many feelings, many potentialities. The facilitator's prizing or acceptance of the learner is an operational expression of her essential confidence and trust in the capacity of the human organism.

Empathic understanding. A further element that establishes a climate for self-initiated experiential learning is emphatic understanding. When the teacher has the ability to understand the student's reactions from the inside, has a sensitive awareness of the way the process of education and learning seems *to the student*, then again the likelihood of significant learning is increased…. [Students feel deeply appreciative] when they are simply *understood* – not evaluated, not judged, simply understood from their *own* point of view, not the teacher's. (Rogers 1967 304-311)

This orientation has a number of attractions for those seeking to work with the 'whole person' and to promote human flourishing. Notions of wholeness overlap with what Carl Rogers describes as congruence or 'realness'; and the attitude embodied and conveyed by educators may be accepting and valuing of the other (Rogers 1951). However, his third condition 'empathetic understanding' does raise a number of problems. Rogers emphasizes achieving a full an understanding of the other person as is possible. This involves a willingness and ability to enter 'the private perceptual world of the client without fear and to become thoroughly conversant with it' (Thorne 1992: 31). Here we might argue that in conversation, the task is not so much to enter and understand the other person, as to work for understanding and commitment. This is not achieved simply by getting into the shoes of another. Conversation involves working to bring together the insights and questions of the different parties; it entails the fusion of a number of perspectives, not the entering into of one (Gadamer 1979: 271-3). As Freire (1972: 63) put it, at the point of encounter, 'there are neither ignoramuses nor perfect sages; there are only men who are attempting, together to learn more than they now know'. In this respect, we might be arguing for dialogical – rather than person-centred, practice. There are problems when the practitioner , 'concentrates on the other person as such rather than on the subject matter – when he looks at the other person, as it were, rather than with him at what the other attempts to communicate' (Linge 1976: xx).

On education

The strength of Rogers' approach lies in part in his focus on relationship. As he once wrote, 'The facilitation of significant learning rests upon certain attitudinal qualities that exist in the personal *relationship* between facilitator and learner'(1990: 305). *Freedom to Learn* (1969; 1983; 1993) is a classic statement of educational possibility in this respect. However, he had already begun to explore the notion of 'student-centred teaching' in *Client-Centered Therapy* (1951: 384-429). There, as Barrett-Lennard (1998: 184) notes, he offered several hypothesized general principles. These included:

> *We cannot teach another person directly; we can only facilitate his learning.*
>
> *The structure and organization of the self appears to become more rigid under threat; to relax its boundaries when completely free from threat…*
>
> *The educational situation which most effectively promotes significant learning is one in which 1) threat to the self of the learner is reduced a minimum, and 2) differentiated perception of the field of experience is facilitated.*

In this we can see something of Rogers' debt to Dewey – but something else had been added in his particular concern with experience and selfhood. First, there is an interest in looking at the particular issues, questions and problems that participants bring (this is not a strongly curriculum-based orientation

and has some parallels with the subsequent interest in self-direction in learning). Second, he draws in insights from more psychodynamic traditions of thinking (as did educators such as A. S. Neill and Homer Lane).

Freedom to Learn brought together a number of existing papers along with new material – including a fascinating account of 'My way of facilitating a class'. Significantly, this exploration brings out the significant degree of preparation that Rogers involved himself in (including setting out aims, reading, workshop structure etc.) (Barrett-Lennard 1998: 186). Carl Rogers was a gifted teacher. His approach grew from his orientation in one-to-one professional encounters. He saw himself as a facilitator – one who created the environment for engagement. This he might do through making a short (often provocative, input). However, what he was also to emphasize was the attitude of the facilitator. There were 'ways of being' with others that foster exploration and encounter – and these are more significant than the methods employed. His paper 'The interpersonal relationship in the facilitation of learning' is an important statement of this orientation (included in Hirschenbaum and Henderson's [1990] collection and in *Freedom to Learn*). The danger in this is, of course, of underestimating the contribution of 'teaching'. There is a role for information transmission. Here Carl Rogers could be charged with misrepresenting, or overlooking, his own considerable abilities as a teacher. His apparent emphasis on facilitation and non-directiveness has to put alongside the guru-like status that he was accorded in teaching encounters. What appears on the page as a question or an invitation to explore something can be experienced as the giving of insight by participants in his classes.

Roger's influence

These elements do not, on their own, explain the phenomenal growth of the 'person-centred' school of psychotherapy. To explain this we have to look at the man and the moment. Carl Rogers was an accomplished communicator – both in person and through his writings and films. He was also a committed practitioner who looked to his own experiences (and was, thus, difficult to dismiss as 'academic). He was able to demystify therapy; to focus on the person of the counsellor and the client (as against a concentration on technique and method); and crucially to emphasize honesty and the destructiveness of manipulation. In the service of the latter Carl Rogers was extremely wary of attempting to dig into, and make sense of the unconscious (and this could also be seen as a significant weakness in his work in some quarters). In short, he offered a new way, a break with earlier traditions. Crucially these concerns chimed with the interests of significant groups of people. Psychologists wanting to enter the field of psychotherapy; case, pastoral and youth workers wanting to develop their practice; lay people wanting to help or understand those with 'problems' – all could get something from Rogers.

The history and focus of Carl Rogers' work was one of the reasons why he has been so attractive to successive generations of informal educators. This was a language to which they could relate. The themes and concerns he developed seemingly had a direct relevance to their work with troubled individuals. Informal educators also had access to these ideas. Rogers' popularity with those providing counselling training (at various levels) opened up his work to large numbers of workers. Crucially the themes he developed were general enough to be applied to therapeutic work with groups (for example, see his work on *Encounter Groups* (1970, New York: Harper and Row) and in education. Significantly, Carl Rogers took up the challenge to explore what a person-centred form of education might look like.

Carl Rogers has provided educators with some fascinating and important questions with regard to their way of being with participants, and the processes they might employ. The danger in his work for informal educators lays in what has been a point of great attraction – his person-centredness. Informal education is not so much person-centred as dialogical. A focus on the other rather than on what lies between us could lead away from the relational into a rather selfish individualism. Indeed, this criticism could also be made of the general direction of his therapeutic endeavours.

Further reading and references

Key texts

Here I have picked five key texts that both give a flavour of Roger's thinking and practice, and are of direct relevance to the work of educators.

Kirschenbaum, H. and Henderson, V. L. (eds.) (1990) *The Carl Rogers Reader*, London: Constable. An excellent collection of extracts and articles . Includes autobiographical material, discussion of the therapeutic relationship, the person in process, theory and research, education, the helping professions, and the philosophy of persons. Also explores the shape of a 'more human world'. The 33 pieces are a good introduction to his work.

Rogers, C. R. (1961) *On Becoming a Person. A therapist's view of psychotherapy*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin (1967 – London: Constable). His classic work – exploring the process of becoming a person and how personal growth can be facilitated. Also examines the place of research in psychotherapy; a philosophy of persons; and the implications for living.

Rogers, C. (1970) *Encounter Groups*, New York: Harper and Row; London: Penguin. For Rogers (1970) encounter groups held the possibility of our 'opening up' to ourselves and to others. By working for an environment characterized by certain 'core conditions' – genuiness (congruence), acceptance and empathy – group members could 'authentically' encounter each other (and themselves). They could begin to trust in their feelings and accept themselves for what they are.

Rogers, C. R. (1980) *A Way of Being*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin. A collection of articles and pieces said to be a coda to *On Becoming a Person*. The first part examines Rogers' personal experiences; the second his professional thoughts and activities. The third section deals with education (including his paper on learning in large groups). The final piece speculates on the transformations needed in society.

Rogers, C. and Freiberg, H. J. (1993) *Freedom to Learn* (3rd edn.), New York: Merrill. *Freedom to Learn* takes the principles that Carl Rogers developed in relation to counselling and reworks them in the context of education. In other words, it is an exploration of how person-centred learning can be used in schooling and other situations and the nature of facilitation. The third edition is a reworking of the text by Freiberg. I personally prefer the earlier editions (1969; 1983).

Biographical material and commentaries

Rogers included autobiographical material in his writing. Indeed, one of his most important essays, 'This is me' in which he describes his family background and three key experiences with clients first appeared in (1961) *On Becoming a Person*. See also:

Barrett-Lennard, G. T. (1998) *Carl Roger's Helping System. Journey and substance*, London: Sage. 425 + x pages. Very useful discussion of key concepts and key figures plus a discussion of research relating to Roger's approach.

Cohen, D. (1997) *Carl Rogers. A critical biography*, London: Constable. 252 pages. New biography – only in hardback.

Kirschenbaum, H. (1979) *On Becoming Carl Rogers*, New York: Delacorte Press. Biography written while Rogers was still alive – but with some interesting insights into the development of his thought.

Thorne, B. (1992) *Carl Rogers*, London: Sage. Brian Thorne has provided us with a good introduction to Roger's work and life. He also adds a twist of his own – suggesting that Rogers represented, and drew upon, a long-standing spiritual tradition.

References

Freire, P. (1972) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, London: Penguin.

Gadamer, H-G. (1979) *Truth and Method* 2e, London: Sheed and Ward.

Linge, D. E. (1976) 'Editor's intorduction' to H-G. Gadamer *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Rogers, C. R. (1951) *Client-Centered Counselling*, Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.

Links

Websites: Matt Ryan has collected some useful material around client centred therapy – and includes some links to pages concerning Carl Rogers. The focus, though, is on counselling rather than his educational work. Client Centered Therapy. See, also Carl Rogers. There also some links from Rogers – personality and consciousness.

How to cite this article: Smith, M. K. (1997, 2004) 'Carl Rogers and informal education', *the encyclopaedia of informal education*. [www.infed.org/thinkers/et-rogers.htm. Last update: May 29, 2012]

Tagged with → authenticity • core conditions • counselling • empathy • group work • helping • realness • trust

Donald Schon (Schön): learning, reflection and change

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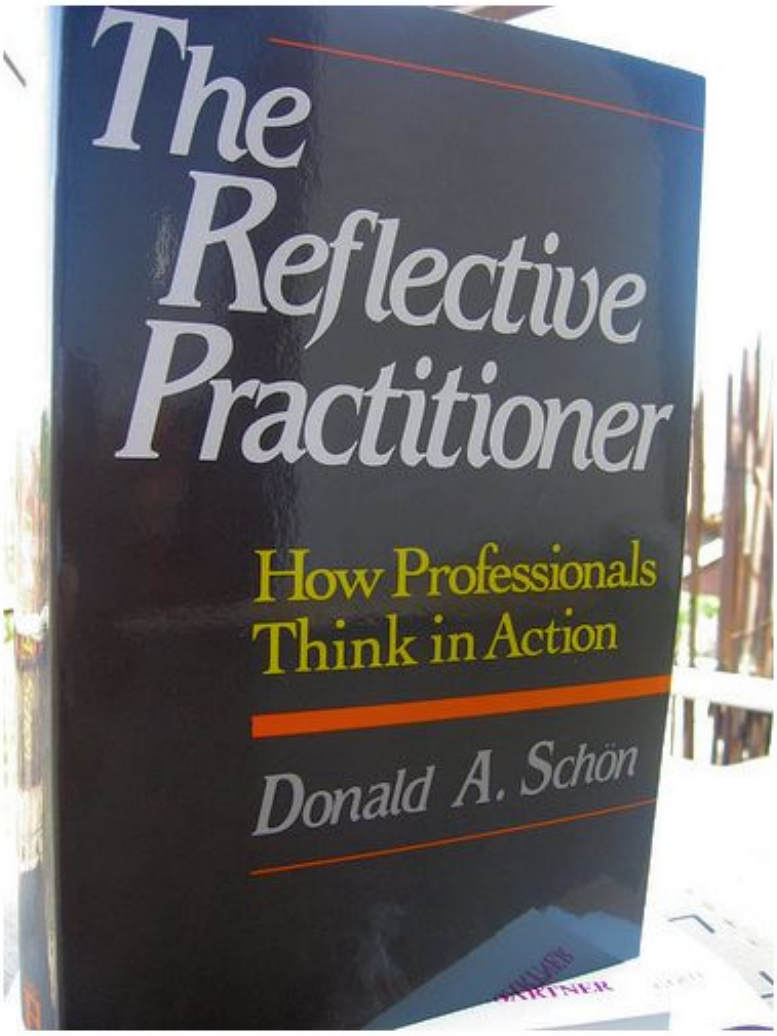

Donald Schon (Schön): learning, reflection and change. Donald Schon made a remarkable contribution to our understanding of the theory and practice of learning. His innovative thinking around notions such as 'the learning society', 'double-loop learning' and 'reflection-in-action' has become part of the language of education. We explore his work and some of the key themes that emerge. What assessment can we make now?

Contents: introduction · donald schon · public and private learning and the learning society · double-loop learning · the reflective practitioner – reflection-in- and –on-action · conclusion · further reading and references · links · how to cite this article

Note: I have used Donald Schon rather than Donald Schön (which is the correct spelling) as English language web search engines (and those using them!) often have difficulties with umlauts).

Donald Alan Schon (1930-1997) trained as a philosopher, but it was his concern with the development of reflective practice and learning systems within organizations and communities for which he is remembered. Significantly, he was also an accomplished pianist and clarinettist – playing in both jazz and chamber groups. This interest in improvisation and structure was mirrored in his academic writing, most notably in his

exploration of professional's ability to 'think on their feet'. On this page we review his achievements and focus on three elements of his thinking: learning systems (and learning societies and institutions); double-loop and organizational learning (arising out of his collaboration with Chris Argyris); and the relationship of reflection-in-action to professional activity.

Donald Schon

Donald Schon was born in Boston in 1930 and raised in Brookline and Worcester. He graduated from Yale in 1951 (Phi Beta Kappa), where he studied philosophy. He was also a student at the Sorbonne, Paris and Conservatoire Nationale de Music, where he studied clarinet and was awarded the Premier Prix. After graduating, he received the Woodrow Wilson Fellowship and continued at Harvard, where he earned master's and doctoral degrees in philosophy. The focus for his doctoral dissertation (1955) was John Dewey's theory of inquiry – and this provided him with the pragmatist framework that runs through his later work. In 1953 he began to teach Philosophy at the University of California, Los Angeles. This was followed by two years of service in the U.S. Army. Concurrently, he lectured at University of Kansas City as an Assistant Professor of Philosophy.

Working from 1957-63 as senior staff member in the industrial research firm Arthur D. Little, Inc., Donald Schon formed the New Product Group in the Research and Development Division. Under the Kennedy administration, he was appointed director of the Institute for Applied Technology in the National Bureau of Standards at the US Department of Commerce (he continued there until 1966). He then co-founded and directed OSTI (Organization for Social and Technological Innovation), a non-profit social research and development firm in the Boston area (he left the directorship in 1973).

His first book, *Displacement of Concepts* (1963) (republished in 1967 as *Invention and the Evolution of Ideas*) dealt with 'the ways in which categories are used to examine "things" but are not themselves examined as ways of thinking' (Parlett 1991, quoted in Pakman 2000). Pakman (2000:3) goes on to comment:

The interest in metaphor expressed in that book, would grow years later toward his elaborations on "generative metaphor," and its role in allowing us to see things anew. Thus, he was already showing some of what would be epistemological enduring interests for his inquiry, namely: learning and its cognitive tools, and the role of reflection (or lack of it) in learning processes in general, and conceptual and perceptual change in particular.

Donald Schon's next book *Technology and Change, The new Heraclitus* (1967) developed out of his experience as an organizational consultant and received considerable critical acclaim. He was invited to give the 1970 Reith Lectures in London. His focus, 'Change and industrial society', became the basis for his path-breaking book: *Beyond the Stable State*. Schon's central argument was that 'change' was a fundamental feature of modern life and that it is necessary to develop social systems that could learn and adapt. Both books show the influence of the work of his great friend and colleague, Raymond Hainer. (Donald Schon had been able to work through his ideas with Hainer, and to draw upon, for example, his exploration of pragmatism, rationalism and existentialism [Hainer 1968]).

Donald Schon became a visiting professor at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) in 1968. In 1972, he was appointed Ford Professor of Urban Studies and Education there. From 1990-92, he served as chair of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning. He later became Ford Professor Emeritus and senior lecturer in the School of Architecture and Planning. The time at MIT was very productive – and he was later to describe the climate of MIT's Division for Study and Research in Education as especially conducive to thinking and research. While he was there he began a very fruitful collaboration with **Chris Argyris**. This collaboration involved teaching, researching and consulting and resulted in three key publications: *Theory in Practice: Increasing Professional Effectiveness* (1974), *Organizational Learning: A Theory of Action Perspective* (1978), and *Organizational Learning II: Theory, Method, and Practice* (1996). Here we can see Donald Schon's

attention moving toward some of the themes that emerged in *The Stable State*.
There is a concern with professional learning, learning processes in organizations, and with developing critical, self-reflecting practice.

It was the last of these areas that then provided the focus for the deeply influential series of books around the processes and development of reflective practitioners (1983; 1987; 1991). He sought to offer an approach to an epistemology of practice based on a close examination of what a (small) number of different practitioners actually do. The heart of this study was, he wrote, 'an analysis of the distinctive structure of reflection-in-action' (1983: ix). He argued that it was 'susceptible to a kind of rigor that is both like and unlike the rigor of scholarly work and controlled experimentation' (*op. cit.*). His work was quickly, and enthusiastically, taken up by a large number of people involved in the professional development of educators, and a number of other professional groupings.

His last major new literary project arose out of a long-term collaboration, dating back to the early 1970s, with Martin Rein (a colleague at MIT). *Frame Reflection* (Schon and Rein 1994) is concerned with the ways in which intractable policy controversies can be reconciled. During his later years Donald Schon also developed an interest in software design and, in particular, the role of computers in designing, and the uses of design games to expand designing capabilities.

Donald Schon died September 13, 1997 at Brigham and Women's Hospital after a seven-month illness.

Public and private learning, and the learning society

While it is Donald Schon's work on organizational learning and reflective practice that tends to receive the most attention in the literature, his exploration of the nature of learning systems and the significance of learning in changing societies has helped to define debates around the so called '**learning society**'. Indeed, Stewart Ranson (1998: 2) describes Donald Schon as 'the great theorist of the learning society'. He was part of the first wave of thinkers around the notion (other key contributors include Robert M. Hutchins 1970; Amitai Etzioni 1968; and Torsten Husen 1974). Hutchins, in a book first published in 1968, had argued that a 'learning society' had become necessary. 'The two essential facts are… the increasing proportion of free time and the rapidity of change. The latter requires continuous education; the former makes it possible (1970: 130). He looked to ancient Athens for a model. There:

> *education was not a segregated activity, conducted for certain hours, in certain places, at a certain time of life. It was the aim of the society. The city educated the man. The Athenian was educated by culture, by paideia. (Hutchins 1970: 133)*

Slavery made this possible – releasing citizens to participate in the life of the city. Hutchins' argument is that 'machines can do for modern man what slavery did for the fortunate few in Athens' (*op. cit.*)

Donald Schon (1973, first published 1971) takes as his starting point the loss of the stable state. Belief in the stable state, he suggests, is belief in 'the unchangeability, the constancy of central aspects of our lives, or belief that we can attain such a constancy' (Schon 1973: 9). Such a belief is strong and deep, and provides a bulwark against uncertainty. Institutions are characterized by 'dynamic conservatism' – 'a tendency to fight to remain the same' (*ibid.*: 30). However, with technical change continuing exponentially its pervasiveness and frequency was 'uniquely threatening to the stable state' (*ibid.*: 26). He then proceeds to build the case for a concern with learning (see inset).

Exhibit 1: Donald Schon on learning and the loss of the stable state

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The loss of the stable state means that our society and all of its institutions are in *continuous* processes of transformation. We cannot expect new stable states that will endure for our own lifetimes.

We must learn to understand, guide, influence and manage these transformations. We must make the capacity for undertaking them integral to ourselves and to our institutions.

We must, in other words, become adept at learning. We must become able not only to transform our institutions, in response to changing situations and requirements; we must invent and develop institutions which are 'learning systems', that is to say, systems capable of bringing about their own continuing transformation.

The task which the loss of the stable state makes imperative, for the person, for our institutions, for our society as a whole, is to learn about learning.

> *What is the nature of the process by which organizations, institutions and societies transform themselves?*
>
> *What are the characteristics of effective learning systems?*
>
> *What are the forms and limits of knowledge that can operate within processes of social learning?*
>
> *What demands are made on a person who engages in this kind of learning? (Schon 1973: 28-9)*

Donald Schon argues that social systems must learn to become capable of transforming themselves without intolerable disruption. In this 'dynamic conservatism' has an important place.

> *A learning system… must be one in which dynamic conservatism operates at such a level and in such a way as to permit change of state without intolerable threat to the essential functions the system fulfils for the self. Our systems need to maintain their identity, and their ability to support the self-identity of those who belong to them, but they must at the same time be capable of transforming themselves. (Schon 1973: 57)*

Schon's great innovation at this point was to explore the extent to which companies, social movements and governments were learning systems – and how those systems could be enhanced. He suggests that the movement toward learning systems is, of necessity, 'a groping and inductive process for which there is no adequate theoretical basis' (*op. cit*). The business firm, Donald Schon argues, is a striking example of a learning system. He charts how firms moved from being organized around products toward integration around 'business systems' (*ibid.*: 64). In an argument that has found many echoes in the literature of the 'learning organization' some twenty years later, Donald Schon makes the case that many companies no longer have a stable base in the technologies of particular products or the systems build around them. A firm is:

> *… an internal learning system in which the system's interactions… must now become a matter of directed transformation of the whole system. These directed transformations are in part the justification for the business systems firm. But they oblige it to internalise processes of information flow and sequential innovation which have traditionally been left to the 'market' and to the chain reactions within and across industry lines – reactions in which each firm had only to worry about its own response as one component. The business firm, representing the whole functional system, must now learn to effect the transformation and diffusion of the system as a whole. (Schon 1973: 75)*

In many respects, we could not ask for a better rationale for Peter Senge's later championship of the *Fifth Discipline* (systemic thinking) in the generation of learning organizations.

Two key themes arise out of Donald Schon's discussion of learning systems: the emergence of functional systems as the units around which institutions define themselves; and the decline of centre-periphery models of institutional activity (*ibid*.: 168). He contrasts classical models of diffusing innovation with a learning system model.

Classical models for the diffusion of innovations	**Learning systems' models around the diffusion of innovation**
The unit of innovation is a product or technique.	The unit of innovation is a functional system.
The pattern of diffusion is centre-periphery.	The pattern of diffusion is systems transformation.
Relatively fixed centre and leadership.	Shifting centre, ad hoc leadership.
Relatively stable message; pattern of replication of a central message.	Evolving message; family resemblance of messages.
Scope limited by resource and energy at the centre and by capacity of 'spokes'.	Scope limited by infrastructure technology.
'Feedback' loop moves from secondary to primary centre and back to all secondary centres.	'Feedback' loops operate local and universally throughout the systems network.

In this we can see the significance of networks, flexibility, feedback and organizational transformation. At the same time we have to recognize that the 'ways of knowing' offered by the dominant rational/experimental model are severely limited in situations of social change. Donald Schon looks to a more 'existentially'-oriented approach. He argues for formulating projective models that can be carried forward into further instances (a key aspect of his later work on reflective practice).

Moreover, learning isn't simply something that is individual. Learning can also be social:

> *A social system learns whenever it acquires new capacity for behaviour, and learning may take the form of undirected interaction between systems… [G]overnment as a learning system carries with it the idea of public learning, a special way of acquiring new capacity for behaviour in which government learns for the society as a whole. In public learning, government undertakes a continuing, directed inquiry into the nature, causes and resolution of our problems.*

The need for public learning carries with it the need for a second kind of learning. If government is to learn to solve new public problems, it must also learn to create the systems for doing so and discard the structure and mechanisms grown up around old problems. (Schon 1973: 109)

The opportunity for learning, Donald Schon suggests, is primarily in discovered systems at the periphery, 'not in the nexus of official policies at the centre' (*ibid*.: 165). He continues, 'the movement of learning is as much from periphery to periphery, or from periphery to centre, as from centre to periphery'. Very much after Carl Rogers, Donald Schon asserts that, 'Central comes to function as facilitator of society's learning, rather than as society's trainer' (*ibid*.: 166).

Taken together, the themes that emerged in *Beyond the Stable State* provided a rich and highly suggestive basis for theorizing about both 'the learning society' and 'the learning organization'. Yet for all his talk of networks and the significance of the 'periphery, Donald Schon's analysis falters when it comes to the wider picture.

While his critical analysis of systems theory substitutes responsive networks for traditional hierarchies, his theory of governance remains locked in top-down paternalism. Only an understanding of the role of democratic politics can provide answers to the purposes and conditions for the learning society he desires. The way societies learn about themselves, and the processes by which they transform themselves, is through politics, and the essence of politics is learning through public deliberation, which is the characteristic of effective learning systems. (Ranson (1998: 9)

Donald Schon's later work with Martin Rein around frame reflection does attend to some matters of public deliberation – but the broad line of argument made by Stuart Ranson here would seem to stand. It was the contribution of two of Schon's contemporaries – Ivan Illich and Paulo Freire – that takes us forward. The formers focus on learning webs, the debilitating impact of professionalization, and the need for an ecological appreciation; and the latter's championship of dialogue and concern to combat oppression allow for a more committed and informed engagement with the 'learning society' and 'learning organization'.

Double-loop learning and theories in use

Donald Schon's work on learning systems fed nicely into a very significant collaboration with Chris Argyris around professional effectiveness and organizational learning. Their (1974) starting point was that people have mental maps with regard to how to act in situations. This involves the way they plan, implement and review their actions. Furthermore, they asserted that it is these maps that guide people's actions rather than the theories they explicitly espouse. One way of making sense of this is to say that there is split between theory and action. Chris Argyris and Donald Schon suggested that two *theories of action* are involved. They are those theories that are implicit in what we do as practitioners and managers, and those on which we call to speak of our actions to others. The former can be described as *theories-in-use*. The words we use to convey what we, do or what we would like others to think we do, can then be called *espoused theory*. This was an important distinction and is very helpful when exploring questions around professional and organizational practice (see **Chris Argyris and theories of action** for a full treatment of this area).

To fully appreciate theory-in-use we require a model of the processes involved. To this end Argyris and Schon (1974) initially looked to three elements:

> ***Governing variables:*** *those dimensions that people are trying to keep within acceptable limits. Any action is likely to impact upon a number of such variables – thus any situation can trigger a trade-off among governing variables.*
>
> ***Action strategies:*** *the moves and plans used by people to keep their governing values within the acceptable range.*
>
> ***Consequences:*** *what happens as a result of an action. These can be both intended – those actor believe will result – and unintended. In addition those consequences can be for the self, and/or for others. (Anderson 1997)*

For Argyris and Schön (1978: 2) learning involves the detection and correction of error. Where something goes wrong, they suggested, a starting point for many people is to look for another strategy that will address and work within the governing variables. In other words, given or chosen goals, values, plans and rules are operationalized rather than questioned. According to Argyris and Schön (1974), this is *single-loop learning*. An alternative response is to question to governing variables themselves, to subject them to critical scrutiny. This they describe as *double-loop learning*. Such learning may then lead to an alteration in the governing variables and, thus, a shift in the way in which strategies and consequences are framed. (See **Chris Argyris and double-loop learning**).

When they came to explore the nature of organizational learning Chris Argyris and Donald Schon (1978: 2-

3) described the process as follows:

> *When the error detected and corrected permits the organization to carry on its present policies or achieve its presents objectives, then that error-and-correction process is single-loop learning. Single-loop learning is like a thermostat that learns when it is too hot of too cold and turns the heat on or off. The thermostat can perform this task because it can receive information (the temperature of the room) and take corrective action. Double-loop learning occurs when error is detected and corrected in ways that involve the modification of an organization's underlying norms, policies and objectives.*

Single-loop learning seems to be present when goals, values, frameworks and, to a significant extent, strategies are taken for granted. The emphasis is on 'techniques and making techniques more efficient' (Usher and Bryant: 1989: 87) Any reflection is directed toward making the strategy more effective. Double-loop learning, in contrast, 'involves questioning the role of the framing and learning systems which underlie actual goals and strategies' (*op. cit.)*.

Finger and Asún (2000) argue that this constitutes a two-fold contribution to pragmatic learning theory. First, their introduction of the notion of 'theory in action' gives greater coherence and structure to the function of 'abstract conceptualization' in Kolb's very influential presentation of experiential learning. 'Abstract conceptualisation now becomes something one can analyse and work from' (Finger and Asún 2000: 45). Second, they give a new twist to pragmatic learning theory:

> *Unlike Dewey's, Lewin's or Kolb's learning cycle, where one had, so to speak, to make a mistake and reflect upon it… it is now possible… to learn by simply reflecting critically upon the theory-in-action. In other words, it is not longer necessary to go through the entire learning circle in order to develop the theory further. It is sufficient to readjust the theory through double-loop learning (ibid.: 45-6)*

To be fair to John Dewey, he did not believe it was necessary to go through a series of set stages in order to learn (although he is often represented as doing so). However, Finger and Asún's main point stands. The notion of double-loop learning adds considerably to our appreciation of experiential learning.

The reflective practitioner – reflection-in- and –on-action

Donald Schon's third great contribution was to bring 'reflection' into the centre of an understanding of what professionals do. The opening salvo of *The Reflective Practitioner* (1983) is directed against 'technical-rationality' as the grounding of professional knowledge. Usher *et. al.* (1997: 143) sum up well the crisis he identifies. Technical-rationality is a positivist epistemology of practice. It is 'the dominant paradigm which has failed to resolve the dilemma of rigour versus relevance confronting professionals'. Donald Schon, they claim, looks to an alternative epistemology of practice 'in which the knowledge inherent in practice is be understood as artful doing' (*op. cit.*). Here we can make a direct link between Donald Schon and Elliot Eisner's (1985; 1998) interest in practitioners as connoisseurs and critics (see Eisner on evaluation).

The notions of reflection-in-action, and reflection-on-action were central to Donald Schon's efforts in this area. The former is sometimes described as 'thinking on our feet'. It involves looking to our experiences, connecting with our feelings, and attending to our theories in use. It entails building new understandings to inform our actions in the situation that is unfolding.

> *The practitioner allows himself to experience surprise, puzzlement, or confusion in a situation which he finds uncertain or unique. He reflects on the phenomenon before him, and on the prior*

> *understandings which have been implicit in his behaviour. He carries out an experiment which serves to generate both a new understanding of the phenomenon and a change in the situation. (Schön 1983: 68)*

We test out our 'theories' or, as John Dewey might have put it, 'leading ideas' and this allows to develop further responses and moves. Significantly, to do this we do not closely follow established ideas and techniques – textbook schemes. We have to think things through, for every case is unique. However, we can draw on what has gone before. In many respects, Donald Schon is using a distinction here that would have been familiar to Aristotle – between the technical (productive) and the practical.

We can link this process of thinking on our feet with reflection-on-action. This is done later – after the encounter. Workers may write up recordings, talk things through with a supervisor and so on. The act of reflecting-on-action enables us to spend time exploring why we acted as we did, what was happening in a group and so on. In so doing we develop sets of questions and ideas about our activities and practice.

The notion of repertoire is a key aspect of this approach. Practitioners build up a collection of images, ideas, examples and actions that they can draw upon. Donald Schon, like John Dewey (1933: 123), saw this as central to reflective thought.

> *When a practitioner makes sense of a situation he perceives to be unique, he sees it as something already present in his repertoire. To see this site as that one is not to subsume the first under a familiar category or rule. It is, rather, to see the unfamiliar, unique situation as both similar to and different from the familiar one, without at first being able to say similar or different with respect to what. The familiar situation functions as a precedent, or a metaphor, or… an exemplar for the unfamiliar one. (Schön 1983: 138)*

In this way we engage with a situation. We do not have a full understanding of things before we act, but, hopefully, we can avoid major problems while 'testing the water'. When looking at a situation we are influenced by, and use, what has gone before, what might come, our repertoire, and our frame of reference. We are able to draw upon certain routines. As we work we can bring fragments of memories into play and begin to build theories and responses that fit the new situation.

There have been three important areas of criticism with regard to this model (beyond those wanting to hang onto 'technical rationality'). First, the distinction between reflection in and on action has been the subject of some debate (see Eraut 1994 and Usher et al 1997). Indeed Donald Schon may well have failed to clarify what is involved in the reflective process – and there is a problem, according to Eraut, around time – 'when time is extremely short, decisions have to be rapid and the scope for reflection is extremely limited' (1994: 145). There have also been no psychological elaborations of the psychological realities of reflection in action (Russell and Munby 1989). However, when we take reflection in and on action together it does appear that Schon has hit upon something significant. Practitioners are able to describe how they 'think on their feet', and how they make use of a repertoire of images, metaphors and theories. However, such processes cannot be repeated in full for everything we do. There is a clear relationship between reflection in and on action. People draw upon the processes, experiences and understandings generated through reflection on action. In turn, things can be left and returned to.

> *We have to take certain things as read. We have to fall back on routines in which previous thought and sentiment has been sedimented. It is here that the full importance of reflection-on-action becomes revealed. As we think and act, questions arise that cannot be answered in the present. The space afforded by recording, supervision and conversation with our peers allows us to approach these. Reflection requires space in the present and the promise of space in the future. (Smith 1994: 150)*

Second, there is some question as to the extent to which his conceptualisation of reflective practice entails praxis. While there is a clear emphasis on action being informed, there is less focus on the commitments entailed. Donald Schon creates, arguably, 'a descriptive concept, quite empty of content' (Richardson 1990: 14). While he does look at values and interpretative systems, it is the idea of repertoire that comes to the fore. In other words what he tends to look at is the process of framing and the impact of frame-making on situations:

> *As [inquirers] frame the problem of the situation, they determine the features to which they will attend, the order they will attempt to impose on the situation, the directions in which they will try to change it. In this process, they identify both the ends to be sought and the means to be employed. (Schön 1983: 165)*

The ability to draw upon a repertoire of metaphors and images that allow for different ways of framing a situation is clearly important to creative practice and is a crucial insight. We can easily respond in inappropriate ways in situations through the use of an ill-suited frame. However, what we also must hold in view is some sense of what might make for the good (see Smith 1994: 142-145).

Third, it could be argued that while Donald Schon is engaged here in the generation of formal theory – 'what we do not find in Schon is a reflection by him on his own textual practice in giving some kind of account of that he does of reflection-in-action and the reflective practicum… He does not interrogate his own method'. (Usher *et. Al* 1997: 149). A more sustained exploration of his methodology may well have revealed some significant questions, for example, the extent to which he 'neglects the situatedness of practitioner experience' (*ibid.*: 168). This is a dimension that we have become rather more aware of following Lave and Wenger's (1991) exploration of situated learning. It may well be that this failure to attend to method and to problematize the production of his models and ideas has also meant that his contribution in this area has been often used in a rather unreflective way by trainers.

Conclusion

The impact of Donald Schon's work on reflective practice has been significant – with many training and education programmes for teachers and informal educators adopting his core notions both in organizing experiences and in the teaching content. Indeed, there is a very real sense in which his work on reflective practice has become 'canonical' – frequently appealed to by trainers in a variety of professional fields (Usher *et . al.* 1997: 143). As such they have suffered from being approached in ways that would have troubled Donald Schon. Rather too often, practitioners are exhorted to 'apply' his theories and exemplars to their own situations and experiences. For him reflective practice was to be enacted. It may be that his theory of reflective practice is far less 'critical' than it appears to be, 'since it is not directed to its own situated practice of doing theory' (Usher *et. al*. 19977: 147). However, it remains very suggestive – and for has some very real echoes in people's accounts of their processes as 'professionals'.

In a similar fashion, his work with Chris Argyris still features very strongly in debates around organizational learning and the possibilities, or otherwise, of learning organizations. And while there is good deal of rhetoric around the notion of the learning society, as Stuart Ranson has convincingly argued, it is Donald Schon's work on learning systems that still provides the most thorough theoretical treatment.

Taken together with his work on design and upon the 'resolution of intractable policy controversies' via 'frame reflection' this is a remarkable catalogue of achievements. Interestingly, though, it is difficult to find a sustained exploration of his contribution as a whole. While there are discussions of different aspects of his thinking (e.g. Newman 1999 analysis of Schon's 'epistemology of reflective practice'), as far as I know, his work has not been approached in its totality. This is a great pity. Going back to books like *Beyond the Stable State* pays great dividends.

Further reading and references

Argyris, M. and Schön, D. (1974) *Theory in Practice. Increasing professional effectiveness*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Landmark statement of 'double-loop' learning' and distinction between espoused theory and theory-in-action.

Schön, D. A. (1973) *Beyond the Stable State. Public and private learning in a changing society*, Harmondsworth: Penguin. 236 pages. A very influential book (following Schön's 1970 *Reith Lectures*) arguing that 'change' is a fundamental feature of modern life and that it is necessary to develop social systems that can learn and adapt. Schön develops many of the themes that were to be such a significant part of his collaboration with Chris Argyris and his exploration of reflective practice.

Schön, D. (1983) *The Reflective Practitioner. How professionals think in action*, London: Temple Smith. 374 + x. Influential book that examines professional knowledge, professional contexts and reflection-in-action. Examines the move from technical rationality to reflection-in-action and examines the process involved in various instances of professional judgement.

Schön, D. (1987) *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. 355 + xvii pages. Development of the thinking in the 1983 book with sections on understanding the need for artistry in professional education; the architectural studio as educational model for reflection-in-action; how the reflective practicum works; and implications for improving professional education.

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How to cite this piece: Smith, M. K. (2001, 2011). 'Donald Schön: learning, reflection and change', *the encyclopedia of informal education.* [www.infed.org/thinkers/et-schon.htm. Retrieved: insert date].

Tagged with → double-loop learning • learning • learning society • reflection • reflection in action • social change

Friedrich Froebel (Fröbel)

infed.org

Friedrich Froebel (Fröbel). Best known for his work on kindergardens and play, Froebel has a lot to say for informal educators.

Friedrich Wilhelm August Froebel (Fröbel) (1782 – 1852). Friedrich Froebel, the German educationalist, is best known as the originator of the 'kindergarten system'. By all accounts he had a difficult childhood. His mother died when he was a baby, and his father, a pastor, left him to his own devices. He grew up, it is said, with a love for nature and with a strong Christian faith and this was central to his thinking as an educationalist. He saw, and sought to encourage, unity in all things.

The purpose of education is to encourage and guide man as a conscious, thinking and perceiving being in such a way that he becomes a pure and perfect representation of that divine inner law through his own personal choice; education must show him the ways and meanings of attaining that goal. (Friedrich Froebel 1826 Die Nenschenerziehung, pp. 2). He came into teaching via a school run along Pestalozzian lines (and spent time at Yverdon). Friedrich Froebel's enduring significance was through his formulation of the 'kindergarten system' with its emphasis on play and its use of 'gifts' (play materials) and 'occupations (activities).

Friedrich Froebel believed that humans are essentially productive and creative – and fulfilment comes through developing these in harmony with God and the world. As a result, Froebel sought to encourage the creation of educational environments that involved practical work and the direct use of materials. Through engaging with the world, understanding unfolds. Hence the significance of play – it is both a creative activity and through it children become aware of

their place in the world. He went on to develop special materials (such as shaped wooden bricks and balls – gifts), a series of recommended activities (occupations) and movement activities, and an linking set of theories. His original concern was the teaching of young children through educational games in the family. In the later years of his life this became linked with a demand for the provision of special centres for the care and development of children outside the home.

Froebel's abiding influence has come in part from the efforts of followers such as Bertha von Marenholtz-Bülow and the thinkers such as Diesterweg. We have seen the development of kindergartens, and the emergence of a Froebel movement. For informal educators, Friedrich Froebel's continuing relevance has lain in his concern for learning through activity, his interest in social learning and his emphasis on the 'unification 'of life.

Key texts:

Fröbel, F. (1826) On the Education of Man (Die Menschenerziehung), Keilhau/Leipzig: Wienbrach.

Lilley, I. (ed.) (1967) Friedrich Froebel: A selection from his writings, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
A recent book that draws together some useful material from the archives of the National Froebel Foundation is:
Bruce, T., Findlay, A., Read, J. and Scarborough, M. (eds.) (1995) Recurring Themes in Education, London: Paul Chapman Publishing.
Biographies: There have been various 'lives' and educational assessments. The standard German treatment is:

Kuntze, M. A. (1952) Friedrich Fröbel: Sein weg und sein Werk 2e, Heidelberg: Quelle und Meyer.

See also:

Heiland, H. (1989) Die Pädogogik Friedrich Fröbels, Hildesheim: Olms.

The English language treatments that I know are:

Kilpatrick, W. H. (1916) Froebel's Kindergarden Principles Critically Examined, New York : Macmillan.

Lawrence, E. (ed.) (1952)Friedrich Froebel and English Education, London: University of London Press.
Series of essays on key elements of Fröbel's thought and practice.

Websites: Visit the very useful (and growing) site maintained by Bruce M. Watson – Froebel Page.

Acknowledgements: Picture: Friedrich Fröbel- Construction kit- 1782-1852- SINA Facsimile. Systems design- The Ulm school. Exhibit at Disseny Hub Barcelona- DHUB. Retrieved from Wikimedia Commons. Kippelboy - licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license.

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Howard Gardner, multiple intelligences and education

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Howard Gardner, multiple intelligences and education. Howard Gardner's work around multiple intelligences has had a profound impact on thinking and practice in education – especially in the United States. Here we explore the theory of multiple intelligences; why it has found a ready audience amongst educationalists; and some of the issues around its conceptualization and realization.

Contents: introduction · howard gardner – a life · howard gardner on multiple intelligences · the appeal of multiple intelligences · are there additional intelligences? · howard gardner's multiple intelligences – some issues and problems · conclusion · further reading and references · how to cite this article

I want my children to understand the world, but not just because the world is fascinating and the human mind is curious. I want them to understand it so that they will be positioned to make it a better place. Knowledge is not the same as morality, but we need to understand if we are to avoid past mistakes and move in productive directions. An important part of that understanding is knowing who we are and what we can do… Ultimately, we must synthesize our understandings for ourselves. The performance of understanding that try matters are the ones we carry out as human beings in an imperfect world which we can affect for good or for ill. (Howard Gardner 1999: 180-181)

Howard Earl Gardner's (1943-) work has been marked by a desire not to just describe the world but to help to create the conditions to change it. The scale of Howard Gardner's contribution can be gauged from following comments in his introduction to the tenth anniversary edition of his classic work *Frames of Mind. The theory of multiple intelligences*:

> *In the heyday of the psychometric and behaviorist eras, it was generally believed that intelligence was a single entity that was inherited; and that human beings – initially a blank slate – could be trained to learn anything, provided that it was presented in an appropriate way. Nowadays an increasing number of researchers believe precisely the opposite; that there exists a multitude of intelligences, quite independent of each other; that each intelligence has its own strengths and constraints; that the mind is far from unencumbered at birth; and that it is unexpectedly difficult to teach things that go against early 'naive' theories of that challenge the natural lines of force within an intelligence and its matching domains. (Gardner 1993: xxiii)*

One of the main impetuses for this movement has been Howard Gardner's work. He has been, in Smith and Smith's (1994) terms, a paradigm shifter. Howard Gardner has questioned the idea that intelligence is a single entity, that it results from a single factor, and that it can be measured simply via IQ tests. He has also challenged the cognitive development work of Piaget. Bringing forward evidence to show that at any one time a child may be at very different stages for example, in number development and spatial/visual maturation, Howard Gardner has successfully undermined the idea that knowledge at any one particular developmental stage hangs together in a structured whole.

In this article we explore Howard Gardner's contribution and the use to which it has been put by educators.

Howard Gardner – a life

Howard Gardner was born in Scranton, Pennsylvania in 1943. His parents had fled from Nürnberg in Germany in 1938 with their three-year old son, Eric. Just prior to Howard Gardner's birth Eric was killed in a sleighing accident. These two events were not discussed during Gardner's childhood, but were to have a very significant impact upon his thinking and development (Gardner 1989: 22). The opportunities for risky physical activity were limited, and creative and intellectual pursuits encouraged. As Howard began to discover the family's 'secret history' (and Jewish identity) he started to recognize that he was different both from his parents and from his peers.

His parents wanted to send Howard to Phillips Academy in Andover Massachusetts – but he refused. Instead he went to a nearby preparatory school in Kingston, Pennsylvania (Wyoming Seminary). Howard Gardner appears to have embraced the opportunities there – and to have elicited the support and interest of some very able teachers. From there he went to Harvard University to study history in readiness for a career in the law. However, he was lucky enough to have Eric Erikson as a tutor. In Howard Gardner's words Erikson probably 'sealed' his ambition to be a scholar (1989: 23). But there were others:

> *My mind was really opened when I went to Harvard College and had the opportunity to study under individuals—such as psychoanalyst Erik Erikson, sociologist David Riesman, and cognitive psychologist Jerome Bruner—who were creating knowledge about human beings. That helped set me on the course of investigating human nature, particularly how human beings think. (Howard Gardner quoted by Marge Sherer 1999)*

Howard Gardner's interest in psychology and the social sciences grew (his senior thesis was on a new California retirement community) and he graduated *summa cum laude* in 1965.

Howard Gardner then went to work for a brief period with Jerome Bruner on the famous MACOS Project ('Man: A course of study'). Bruner's work, especially in *The Process of Education* (1960) was to make a profound impact, and the questions that the programme asked were to find an echo in Gardner's subsequent interests. During this time he began to read the work of Claude Levi-Strauss and Jean Piaget in more detail. He entered Harvard's doctoral programme in 1966, and in the following year became part of the Project Zero research team on arts education (with which he has remained involved to the present). Howard Gardner completed his PhD in 1971 (his dissertation was on style sensitivity in children). He remained at

Harvard. Alongside his work with Project Zero (he now co-directs it with David Perkins) he was a lecturer (1971-1986) and then professor in education (1986-). His first major book, *The Shattered Mind* appeared in 1975 and some fifteen have followed. Howard Gardner is currently Hobbs Professor of Cognition and Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and adjunct professor of neurology at the Boston University School of Medicine.

Project Zero provided an environment in which Howard Gardner could begin to explore his interest in human cognition. He proceeded in a very different direction to the dominant discourses associated with Piaget and with psychometric testing. Project Zero developed as a major research centre for education – and provided an intellectual home for a significant grouping of researchers. A key moment came with the establishment of the Project on Human Potential in the late 1970s (funded by Bernard van Leer Foundation) to 'assess the state of scientific knowledge concerning human potential and its realization'. The result was *Frames of Mind* (1983) Howard Gardner's first full-length statement of his theory of multiple intelligences.

Howard Gardner on multiple intelligences – the initial listing

Howard Gardner viewed intelligence as 'the capacity to solve problems or to fashion products that are valued in one or more cultural setting' (Gardner & Hatch, 1989). He reviewed the literature using eight criteria or 'signs' of an intelligence:

> *Potential isolation by brain damage.The existence of idiots savants, prodigies and other exceptional individuals.*
>
> *An identifiable core operation or set of operations.*
>
> *A distinctive development history, along with a definable set of 'end-state' performances.*
>
> *An evolutionary history and evolutionary plausibility.*
>
> *Support from experimental psychological tasks.*
>
> *Support from psychometric findings.*
>
> *Susceptibility to encoding in a symbol system. (Howard Gardner 1983: 62-69)*

Candidates for the title 'an intelligence' had to satisfy a range of these criteria and must include, as a prerequisite, the ability to resolve 'genuine problems or difficulties' (*ibid*.: 60) within certain cultural settings. Making judgements about this was, however, 'reminiscent more of an artistic judgement than of a scientific assessment' (*ibid*.: 62).

Howard Gardner initially formulated a list of seven intelligences. His listing was provisional. The first two have been typically valued in schools; the next three are usually associated with the arts; and the final two are what Howard Gardner called 'personal intelligences' (Gardner 1999: 41-43).

Linguistic intelligence involves sensitivity to spoken and written language, the ability to learn languages, and the capacity to use language to accomplish certain goals. This intelligence includes the ability to effectively use language to express oneself rhetorically or poetically; and language as a means to remember information. Writers, poets, lawyers and speakers are among those that Howard Gardner sees as having high linguistic intelligence.

Logical-mathematical intelligence consists of the capacity to analyze problems logically, carry out mathematical operations, and investigate issues scientifically. In Howard Gardner's words, it entails the ability to detect patterns, reason deductively and think logically. This intelligence is most often associated with scientific and mathematical thinking.

Musical intelligence involves skill in the performance, composition, and appreciation of musical patterns. It encompasses the capacity to recognize and compose musical pitches, tones, and rhythms. According to Howard Gardner musical intelligence runs in an almost structural parallel to linguistic intelligence.

Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence entails the potential of using one's whole body or parts of the body to solve problems. It is the ability to use mental abilities to coordinate bodily movements. Howard Gardner sees mental and physical activity as related.

Spatial intelligence involves the potential to recognize and use the patterns of wide space and more confined areas.

Interpersonal intelligence is concerned with the capacity to understand the intentions, motivations and desires of other people. It allows people to work effectively with others. Educators, salespeople, religious and political leaders and counsellors all need a well-developed interpersonal intelligence.

Intrapersonal intelligence entails the capacity to understand oneself, to appreciate one's feelings, fears and motivations. In Howard Gardner's view it involves having an effective working model of ourselves, and to be able to use such information to regulate our lives.

In *Frames of Mind* Howard Gardner treated the personal intelligences 'as a piece'. Because of their close association in most cultures, they are often linked together. However, he still argues that it makes sense to think of two forms of personal intelligence. Gardner claimed that the seven intelligences rarely operate independently. They are used at the same time and tend to complement each other as people develop skills or solve problems.

In essence Howard Gardner argued that he was making two essential claims about multiple intelligences. That:

> *The theory is an account of human cognition in its fullness. The intelligences provided 'a new definition of human nature, cognitively speaking' (Gardner 1999: 44). Human beings are organisms who possess a basic set of intelligences.*
>
> *People have a unique blend of intelligences. Howard Gardner argues that the big challenge facing the deployment of human resources 'is how to best take advantage of the uniqueness conferred on us as a species exhibiting several intelligences' (ibid.: 45).*

These intelligences, according to Howard Gardner, are amoral – they can be put to constructive or destructive use.

The appeal of multiple intelligences to educators

Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences has not been readily accepted within academic psychology. However, it has met with a strongly positive response from many educators. It has been embraced by a range of educational theorists and, significantly, applied by teachers and policymakers to the problems of schooling. A number of schools in North America have looked to structure curricula according to the intelligences, and to design classrooms and even whole schools to reflect the understandings that Howard Gardner develops. The theory can also be found in use within pre-school, higher, vocational and adult education initiatives.

This appeal was not, at first, obvious.

> *At first blush, this diagnosis would appear to sound a death knell for formal education. It is hard*

> *to teach one intelligence; what if there are seven? It is hard to enough to teach even when anything can be taught; what to do if there are distinct limits and strong constraints on human cognition and learning? (Howard Gardner 1993: xxiii)*

Howard Gardner responds to his questions by first making the point that psychology does not directly dictate education, 'it merely helps one to understand the conditions within which education takes place'. What is more:

> *Seven kinds of intelligence would allow seven ways to teach, rather than one. And powerful constraints that exist in the mind can be mobilized to introduce a particular concept (or whole system of thinking) in a way that children are most likely to learn it and least likely to distort it. Paradoxically, constraints can be suggestive and ultimately freeing. (op. cit.)*

Mindy L. Kornhaber (2001: 276), a researcher involved with Project Zero, has identified a number of reasons why teachers and policymakers in North America have responded positively to Howard Gardner's presentation of multiple intelligences. Among these are that:

> *… the theory validates educators' everyday experience: students think and learn in many different ways. It also provides educators with a conceptual framework for organizing and reflecting on curriculum assessment and pedagogical practices. In turn, this reflection has led many educators to develop new approaches that might better meet the needs of the range of learners in their classrooms.*

The response to Howard Gardner is paralleled by the adoption of Kolb's model of experiential learning by adult and informal educators. While significant criticism can be made of the formulation (see below) it does provide a useful set of questions and 'rules of thumb' to help educators to think about their practice. The way in which Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences has been translated into policy and practice has been very varied. Howard Gardner did not, initially, spell out the implications of his theory for educators in any detail. Subsequently, he has looked more closely at what the theory might mean for schooling practice (e.g. in *The Unschooled Mind*, *Intelligence Reframed*, and *The Disciplined Mind*). From this work three particular aspects of Gardner's thinking need noting here as they allow for hope, and an alternative way of thinking, for those educators who feel out of step with the current, dominant product orientation to curriculum and educational policy. The approach entails:

A broad vision of education. All seven intelligences are needed to live life well. Teachers, therefore, need to attend to all intelligences, not just the first two that have been their tradition concern. As Kornhaber (2001: 276) has noted it involves educators opting 'for depth over breadth'. Understanding entails taking knowledge gained in one setting and using it in another. 'Students must have extended opportunities to work on a topic' (*op. cit.*).

Developing local and flexible programmes. Howard Gardner's interest in 'deep understanding', performance, exploration and creativity are not easily accommodated within an orientation to the 'delivery' of a detailed curriculum planned outside of the immediate educational context. 'An "MI setting" can be undone if the curriculum is too rigid or if there is but a single form of assessment' (Gardner 1999: 147). In this respect the educational implications of Howard Gardner's work stands in a direct line from the work of John Dewey.

Looking to morality. 'We must figure out how intelligence and morality can work together', Howard Gardner argues, 'to create a world in which a great variety of people will want to live' (Gardner 1999: 4). While there are considerable benefits to developing understanding in relation to the disciplines, something

more is needed.

Are there additional intelligences?

Since Howard Gardner's original listing of the intelligences in *Frames of Mind* (1983) there has been a great deal of discussion as to other possible candidates for inclusion (or candidates for exclusion). Subsequent research and reflection by Howard Gardner and his colleagues has looked to three particular possibilities: a naturalist intelligence, a spiritual intelligence and an existential intelligence. He has concluded that the first of these 'merits addition to the list of the original seven intelligences' (Gardner 1999: 52).

> ***Naturalist intelligence*** *enables human beings to recognize, categorize and draw upon certain features of the environment. It 'combines a description of the core ability with a characterization of the role that many cultures value' (ibid.: 48).*

The case for inclusion of naturalist intelligence appears pretty straightforward, the position with regard to **spiritual intelligence** is far more complex. According to Howard Gardner (1999: 59) there are problems, for example, around the 'content' of spiritual intelligence, its privileged but unsubstantiated claims with regard to truth value, 'and the need for it to be partially identified through its effect on other people'. As a result:

> *It seems more responsible to carve out that area of spirituality closest 'in spirit' to the other intelligences and then, in the sympathetic manner applied to naturalist intelligence, ascertain how this candidate intelligence fares. In doing so, I think it best to put aside the term spiritual, with its manifest and problematic connotations, and to speak instead of an intelligence that explores the nature of existence in its multifarious guises. Thus, an explicit concern with spiritual or religious matters would be one variety – often the most important variety – of an existential intelligence.*

Existential intelligence, a concern with 'ultimate issues', is, thus, the next possibility that Howard Gardner considers – and he argues that it 'scores reasonably well on the criteria' (*ibid.*: 64). However, empirical evidence is sparse – and although a ninth intelligence might be attractive, Howard Gardner is not disposed to add it to the list. 'I find the phenomenon perplexing enough and the distance from the other intelligences vast enough to dictate prudence – at least for now' (*ibid.*: 66).

The final, and obvious, candidate for inclusion in Howard Gardner's list is **moral intelligence**. In his exploration, he begins by asking whether it is possible to delineate the 'moral domain'. He suggests that it is difficult to come to any consensual definition, but argues that it is possible to come to an understanding that takes exploration forward. Central to a moral domain, Howard Gardner suggests, 'is a concern with those rules, behaviours and attitudes that govern the sanctity of life – in particular, the sanctity of human life and, in many cases, the sanctity of any other living creatures and the world they inhabit' (*ibid.*: 70). If we accept the existence of a moral realm is it then possible to speak of moral intelligence? If it 'connotes the adoption of any specific moral code' then Howard Gardner does not find the term moral intelligence acceptable (*ibid.*: 75). Furthermore, he argues, researchers and writers have not as yet 'captured the essence of the moral domain as an instance of human intelligence' (*ibid.*: 76).

> *As I construe it, the central component in the moral realm or domain is a sense of personal agency and personal stake, a realization that one has an irreducible role with respect to other people and that one's behaviour towards others must reflect the results of contextualized analysis and the exercise of one's will…. The fulfilment of key roles certainly requires a range of*

> *human intelligences – including personal, linguistic, logical and perhaps existential – but it is fundamentally a statement about the kind of person that has developed to be. It is not, in itself, an intelligence. 'Morality' is then properly a statement about personality, individuality, will, character – and, in the happiest cases, about the highest realization of human nature. (ibid.: 77)*

So it is, that Howard Gardner has added an eighth intelligence – naturalist intelligence – to his list. He has also opened the door to another possibility – especially that of existential intelligence – but the court is out on that one.

Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences – some issues and problems

There are various criticisms of, and problems around, Howard Gardner's conceptualization of multiple intelligences. Indeed, Gardner himself has listed some of the main issues and his responses (1993: xxiii-xxvii; 1999: 79-114). Here, I want to focus on three key questions that have been raised in debates. (There are plenty of other questions around – but these would seem to be the most persistent):

Are the criteria Howard Gardner employs adequate? John White (1997) has argued that there are significant issues around the criteria that Howard Gardner employs. There are questions around the individual criteria, for example, do all intelligences involve symbol systems; how the criteria to be applied; and why these particular criteria are relevant. In respect of the last, and fundamental question, White states that he has not been able to find any answer in Gardner's writings (*ibid*.: 19). Indeed, Howard Gardner himself has admitted that there is an element of subjective judgement involved.

Does Howard Gardner's conceptualization of intelligence hold together? For those researchers and scholars who have traditionally viewed intelligence as, effectively, what is measured by intelligence tests – Howard Gardner's work will always be problematic. They can still point to a substantial tradition of research that demonstrates correlation between different abilities and argue for the existence of a general intelligence factor. Howard Gardner (1993: xxiv) disputes much of the evidence and argues that it is not possible, as yet, to know how far intelligences actually correlate. More recent developments in thinking around intelligence such as Robert Sternberg's (1985, 1996) advancement of a 'triarchic model' have shared Gardner's dislike of such standard intelligence theory. However, in contrast to Howard Gardner, Robert Sternberg does not look strongly at the particular material that the person is processing. Instead he looks to what he calls the componential, experiential and contextual facets of intelligence. A further set of criticisms centre around the specific intelligences that Howard Gardner identified. For example, it can be argued that musical intelligence and bodily-kinesthetic intelligence are better approached as talents (they do not normally need to adapt to life demands).

Is there sufficient empirical evidence to support Howard Gardner's conceptualization? A common criticism made of Howard Gardner's work is that his theories derive rather more strongly from his own intuitions and reasoning than from a comprehensive and full grounding in empirical research. For the moment there is not a properly worked-through set of tests to identify and measure the different intelligences.

> *I once thought it possible to create a set of tests of each intelligence – an intelligence-fair version to be sure – and then simply to determine the correlation between the scores on the several tests. I now believe that this can only be accomplished if someone developed several measures for each intelligence and then made sure that people were comfortable in dealing with the materials and methods used to measure each intelligence. (Gardner 1999: 98)*

Howard Gardner himself has not pursued this approach because of a more general worry with such testing – that it leads to labelling and stigmatization. It can be argued that research around the functioning of the brain generally continues to support the notion of multiple intelligence (although not necessarily the

specifics of Howard Gardner's theory).

There are further questions around the notion of selfhood that Howard Gardner employs – something that he himself has come to recognize. In the early 1990s he began to look to the notion of distributed cognition as providing a better way of approaching the area than focusing on what goes on in the mind of a single individual (Hatch and Gardner 1993) (see the discussion of social/situational orientations to learning).

Conclusion

While there may be some significant questions and issues around Howard Gardner's notion of multiple intelligences, it still has had utility in education. It has helped a significant number of educators to question their work and to encourage them to look beyond the narrow confines of the dominant discourses of skilling, curriculum, and testing. For example, Mindy Kornhaber and her colleagues at the Project SUMIT (Schools Using Multiple Intelligences Theory) have examined the performance of a number of schools and concluded that there have been significant gains in respect of SATs scores, parental participation, and discipline (with the schools themselves attributing this to MI theory). To the extent that Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences theory has helped educators to reflect on their practice, and given them a basis to broaden their focus and to attend to what might assist people to live their lives well, then it has to be judged a useful addition.

Project SUMIT (2000) uses the metaphor of *Compass Points* -'routes that educators using the theory have taken and which appear to benefit students'. They have identified the following markers that characterize schools with some success in implementing practices that attend to multiple intelligences theory.

> ***Culture: support for diverse learners and hard work.*** *Acting on a value system which maintains that diverse students can learn and succeed, that learning is exciting, and that hard work by teachers is necessary.*
>
> ***Readiness: awareness-building for implementing MI.*** *Building staff awareness of MI and of the different ways that students learn.*
>
> ***Tool****: MI is a means to foster high quality work. Using MI as a tool to promote high quality student work rather than using the theory as an end in and of itself.*
>
> ***Collaboration****: informal and formal exchanges. Sharing ideas and constructive suggestions by the staff in formal and informal exchanges.*
>
> ***Choice****: meaningful curriculum and assessment options. Embedding curriculum and assessment in activities that are valued both by students and the wider culture.*
>
> ***Arts****. Employing the arts to develop children's skills and understanding within and across disciplines.*

Informal educators can usefully look at this listing in respect of their projects and agencies. The multiple intelligences themselves also provide a good focus for reflection. Arguably, informal educators have traditionally been concerned with the domains of the interpersonal and the intrapersonal, with a sprinkling of the intelligences that Howard Gardner identifies with the arts. Looking to naturalist linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences could help enhance their practice.

Further reading and references

The main Howard Gardner writings on multiple intelligences are as follows:

Gardner, Howard (1983; 1993) *Frames of Mind: The theory of multiple intelligences,* New York: Basic Books. The second edition was published in Britain by Fontana Press. 466 + xxix pages. (All references in this article refer to this second, 10th Anniversary, edition). A major addition to the literature of cognitive psychology being the first full length explication of multiple intelligences.

Gardner, Howard (1989) *To Open Minds: Chinese clues to the dilemma of contemporary education*, New York: Basic Books. This book includes a significant amount of material on Gardner's early life.

Gardner, H. (1991) *The Unschooled Mind: How children think and how schools should teach*, New York: Basic Books.

Gardner, Howard (1999) *Intelligence Reframed. Multiple intelligences for the 21st century*, New York: Basic Books. 292 + x pages. Useful review of Gardner's theory and discussion of issues and additions.

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To cite this article: Smith, Mark K. (2002, 2008) 'Howard Gardner and multiple intelligences', *the encyclopedia of informal education*, http://www.infed.org/mobi/howard-gardner-multiple-intelligences-and-education.

Tagged with → education • Howard Gardner • learning • multiple intellegences

Ivan Illich: deschooling, conviviality and lifelong learning

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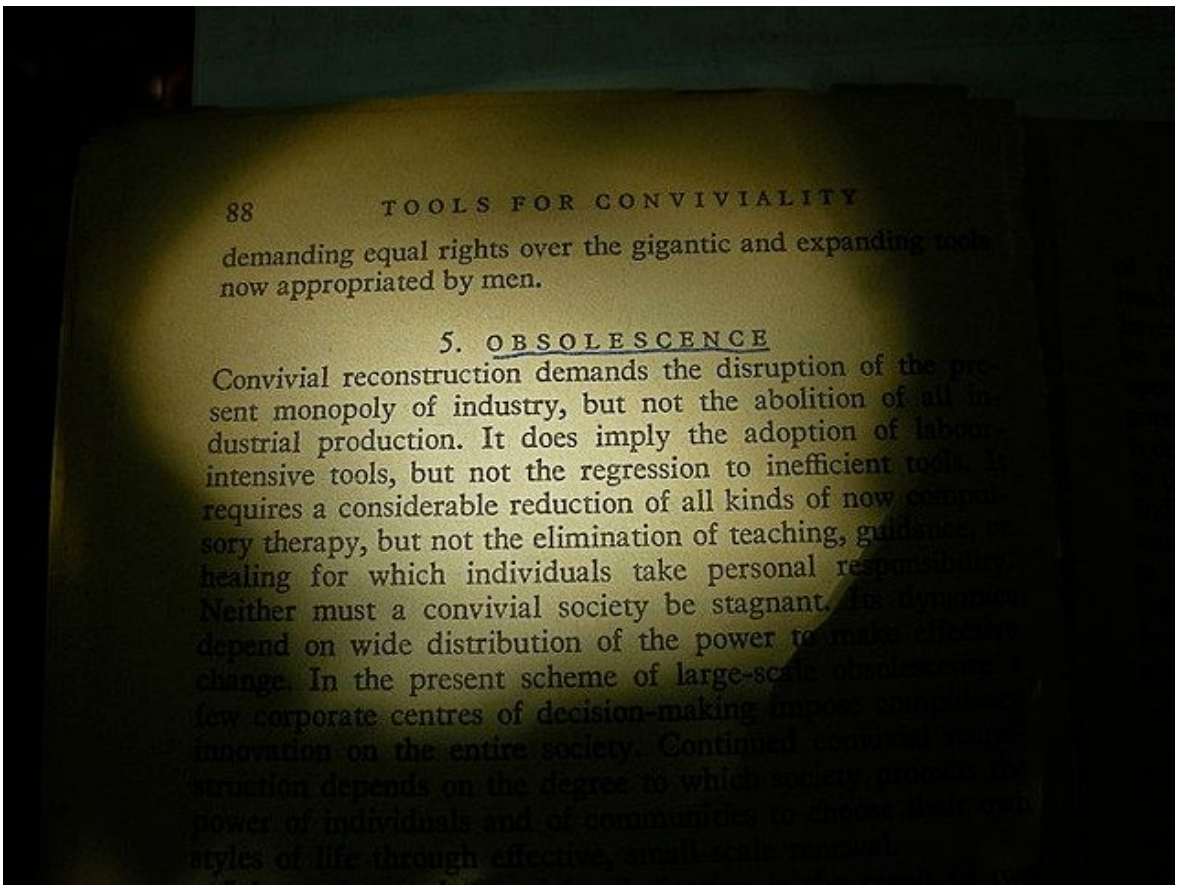
88 TOOLS FOR CONVIVIALITY

demanding equal rights over the gigantic and expanding tools now appropriated by men.

5. OBSOLESCENCE

Convivial reconstruction demands the disruption of the present monopoly of industry, but not the abolition of all industrial production. It does imply the adoption of labor-intensive tools, but not the regression to inefficient tools. It requires a considerable reduction of all kinds of now compulsory therapy, but not the elimination of teaching, guidance, or healing for which individuals take personal responsibility. Neither must a convivial society be stagnant. Its dynamics depend on wide distribution of the power to make effective change. In the present scheme of large-scale obsolescence, few corporate centres of decision-making impose innovation on the entire society. Continued convivial reconstruction depends on the degree to which society protects the power of individuals and of communities to choose their own styles of life through effective, small-scale tools.

Ivan Illich: deschooling, conviviality and lifelong learning. Known for his critique of modernization and the corrupting impact of institutions, Ivan Illich's concern with deschooling, learning webs and the disabling effect of professions has struck a chord among many informal educators. We explore key aspects of his theory and his continuing relevance for informal education and lifelong learning.

contents: introduction · early life · ivan illich and cidoc · later work and life · ivan illich on institutionalization and commodification · illich's convivial alternative · conclusion · further reading and references · links

Many students, especially those who are poor, intuitively know what the schools do for them. They school them to confuse process and substance. Once these become blurred, a new logic is assumed: the more treatment there is, the better are the results; or, escalation leads to success. The pupil is thereby "schooled" to confuse teaching with learning, grade advancement with education, a diploma with competence, and fluency with the ability to say something new. His imagination is "schooled" to accept service in place of value. Medical treatment is mistaken for health care, social work for the improvement of community life, police protection for safety, military poise for national security, the rat race for productive work. Health, learning, dignity, independence, and creative endeavour are defined as little more than the performance of the institutions which claim to serve these ends, and their improvement is made to depend on allocating more resources to the management of hospitals, schools, and other agencies in question. Ivan Illich *Deschooling Society* (1973: 9)

Ivan Illich (1926 – 2002) rose to fame in the 1970s with a series of brilliant, short, polemical, books on major institutions of the industrialized world. They explored the functioning and impact of 'education'

systems (*Deschooling Society*), technological development (*Tools for Conviviality*), energy, transport and economic development(*Energy and Equity*), medicine (*Medical Nemesis*), and work (*The Right to Useful Unemployment and its Professional Enemies*; and *Shadow Work*). Ivan Illich's lasting contribution was a dissection of these institutions and a demonstration of their corruption. Institutions like schooling and medicine had a tendency to end up working in ways that reversed their original purpose. Illich was later to explore gender, literacy and pain. However, his work was the subject of attack from both the left and right. In the case of the former, for example, his critique of the disabling effect of many of the institutions of welfare state was deeply problematic. From the 1980s on he became something of a forgotten figure, although there were always a number of writers and practitioners in the fields he wrote about who found significant possibility in his analysis. Andrew Todd and Franco La Cecla (2002) have commented that his great contribution was as an archaeologist of ideas, 'someone who helped us to see the present in a truer and richer perspective'. In this piece we examine his legacy.

Early life

Ivan Illich was born in Vienna. His father, Ivan Peter, was a civil engineer. This meant that Ivan Illich, along with his younger, twin brothers were able to live comfortably, attend good schools and travel extensively in Europe (Smith and Smith 1994: 434). Illich was a student at the Piaristengymnasium in Vienna from 1936 to1941, but was expelled by the occupying Nazis in 1941 because his mother had Jewish ancestry (his father was a Roman Catholic). From this point on Ivan Illich became something of a wandered – travelling the world and having the minimum of material possessions. He completed his pre-university studies in Florence, and then went on to study histology and crystallography at the University of Florence. At this point Ivan Illich decided to enter and prepare for the priesthood. Her went to study theology and philosophy at the Gregorian University in Rome (1943-6). In 1951 he completed his PhD at the University of Salzburg (an exploration of the nature of historical knowledge). One of the intellectual legacies of this period was a developing understanding of the institutionalization of the church in the 13th century – and this helped to form and inform his later critique.

On completing his PhD Ivan Illich began work as a priest in Washington Heights, New York. He was there until 1956. His congregation was largely Irish and Puerto Rican. In Washington Heights, Ivan Illich was soon speaking out for Puerto Rican culture, 'and against "cultural ignorance" on the part of the dominant culture' (Smith and Smith 1994: 434, see, also, Illich's reflections in *Celebration of Awareness,* pp. 29 – 38). He had become fluent in Spanish and several other languages (during his life he was to work in 10 different languages).

Ivan Illich and the Centre for Intercultural Documentation (CIDOC)

Ivan Illich then went onto to be vice rector of the Catholic University of Ponce in Puerto Rico. However, he spent only four years there, being forced out of the university in 1960 because of his opposition to the then Bishop of Ponce's forbidding of Catholics to vote for Governor Luis Munoz Marin (because of his advocacy of state-sponsored birth control). Illich founded the Centre for Intercultural Formation (initially at Fordham University) to train American missionaries for work in Latin America. While still committed to the Church, Ivan Illich was deeply opposed to Pope John XXIII's 1960 call for north American missionaries to 'modernize' the Latin American Church. He wanted missionaries to question their activities, learn Spanish, to recognize and appreciate the limitations of their own (cultural) experiences, and 'develop assumptions that would allow them to assume their duties as self-proclaimed adult educators with humility and respect' (Smith and Smith 1994: 435).

From the start he wanted the institution to be based in Latin America – and after walking and hitchhiking several thousand miles he decided on Cuernavaca, Mexico. With the help of Feodora Stancioff and Brother Gerry Morris he set up shop. The Centre was renamed Centre for Intercultural Documentation (CIDOC) and provided an opportunity for several hundred missionaries each year to join, in Ivan Illich's words, 'a free club for the search of surprise, a place where people go who want to have help in redefining their questions rather than completing the answers they have gotten' (quoted in Smith and Smith 1994: 435). The critical and questioning stance of the Centre, and its freewheeling ways of work in began to cause some concern amongst key elements of the Catholic hierarchy. Illich was not one to mince his words:

> *Upon the opening of our centre I stated two of the purposes of our undertaking. The first was to help diminish the damage threatened by the papal order. Through our educational programme for missionaries we intended to challenge them to face reality and themselves, and either refuse their assignments or – if they accepted – to be a little bit less unprepared. Secondly, we wanted to gather sufficient influence among the decision-making bodies of mission sponsoring agencies to dissuade them from implementing [Pope John XIII's] plan. (Illich 1973b: 47-8)*

Ivan Illich was ordered by the Vatican to leave CIDOC, but he managed to hold out – eventually resigning all offices and church salaries, and then leaving the priesthood in 1969. The Centre had broadened its appeal considerably – and became known for explorations of the many the themes that have become identified with Illich.

Illich's concerns around the negative impact of schooling hit a chord – and he was much in demand as a speaker. His books, *The Celebration of Awareness* and *Deschooling Society* brought his thinking to a much wider audience – as did the work of CIDOC colleagues such as Everett Reimer (1971). His chronicling of the negative effects of schools and his development of a critique of the 'radical monopoly' of the dominant technologies of education in *Deschooling Society* (1973) echoed concerns held well beyond libertarian and anarchist circles. He went on to apply his critique to energy consumption (*Energy and Equity* – 1974), and memorably to medical treatment (in *Medical Nemesis* – 1976). In *Tools for Conviviality* (1975), Illich provided a more general exploration of his concerns and critique and offered some possible standards by which to judge 'development' (with an emphasis on mutuality, human-scale technology etc.). Throughout he infused his work with an ecological understanding.

Later work and life

Interest in his ideas within education began to wane. Invitations to speak and to write slackened, and as the numbers of missionaries headed for Latin America fell away, CIDOC began to fade. Illich's thinking did not resonate with dominant mood in the discourses of northern education systems. At a time when there was increasing centralized control, an emphasis on nationalized curricula, and a concern to increase the spread of the bureaucratic accreditation of learning, his advocacy of deinstitutionalization (deschooling) and more convivial forms of education was hardly likely to make much ground.

Ivan Illich's later work ranged across a number of areas – but have generally carried forward the central themes of his earlier work. The pieces in *Toward a History of Needs* (1978) and *Shadow Work* (1981) largely look to the economics of scarcity, (i.e. that the predominant dynamic in both 'developed' and 'under-developed' economies lies in the desire to profit through the provision of goods and services in sectors where there is a 'scarcity, rather than the wish to share subsistence). *Gender* (1982) looks to the social experiences of female/male complementarity. In the mid- to late 1980s Ivan Illich turned to and exploration of literacy practices in *ABC: The Alphabetization of the Popular Mind* (1988) and in *In the Vineyard of the Text* (1993).

Ivan Illich had set himself against building up a school of followers (Finger and Asún 2001: 7). However, as Carl Mitcham has argued, his thought and life have had an influence on a small, but close circle of friends (see Ivan Illich Studies below). Representative of what might be called the Illich community of reflection are,

for example, Barbara Duden's *The Woman Beneath the Skin: A Doctor's Patients in Eighteenth-Century Germany*, Wolfgang Sachs' *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power,* Lee Hoinacki's *El Camino: Walking to Santiago de Compostela* and David Schwartz's *Who Cares? Rediscovering Community.*

After the 1980s Ivan Illich divided his time between Mexico, the United States, and Germany. Currently he was a Visiting Professor of Philosophy and of Science, Technology, and Society at Penn State – and also taught at the University of Bremen. He continued to live frugally and 'opened his doors to collaborators and drop-ins with great generosity, running a practically non-stop educational process which was always celebratory, open-ended and egalitarian' (Todd and La Cecla 2002). He engaged in a 'heroic level of activity' – in the early 1990s he was diagnosed as having cancer. True to his thinking (as expressed, for example, in *Medical Nemesis*) he insisted on administering his own medication. This was against the advice of his doctors, 'who proposed a largely sedative treatment which would have rendered his work impossible' (Todd and La Cecla 2002). He was able to finish a history of pain (which will be published in French in 2003).

Ivan Illich died on December 2, 2002.

Institutionalization, expert power, commodification and counterproductivity

As Ian Lister commented in his introduction to *After Deschooling, What?* (Illich 1976: 6), the central, coherent feature of Ivan Illich's work on deschooling is a critique of institutions and professionals – and the way in which they contribute to dehumanization. '[I]nstitutions create the needs and control their satisfaction, and, by so doing, turn the human being and her or his creativity into objects' (Finger and Asún 2001: 10). Ivan Illich's anti-institutional argument can be said to have four aspects (*op. cit.*):

***A critique of the process of institutionalization*.** Modern societies appear to create more and more institutions – and great swathes of the way we live our lives become institutionalized. 'This process undermines people – it diminishes their confidence in themselves, and in their capacity to solve problems… It kills convivial relationships. Finally it colonizes life like a parasite or a cancer that kills creativity' (Finger and Asún 2001: 10).

A critique of experts and expertise. Ivan Illich's critique of experts and professionalization was set out in *Disabling Professions* (1977a) and in his exploration of the expropriation of health in *Medical Nemesis* (1975b). The latter book famously began, 'The medical establishment has become a major threat to health' (*ibid.*: 11). The case against expert systems like modern health care is that they can produce damage which outweigh potential benefits; they obscure the political conditions that render society unhealthy ; and they tend top expropriate the power of individuals to heal themselves and to shape their environment (*op. cit.*). Finger and Asún (2001: 10) set out some of the elements:

> *Experts and an expert culture always call for more experts. Experts also have a tendency to cartelize themselves by creating 'institutional barricades' – for example proclaiming themselves gatekeepers, as well as self-selecting themselves. Finally, experts control knowledge production, as they decide what valid and legitimate knowledge is, and how its acquisition is sanctioned.*

***A critique of commodification*.** Professionals and the institutions in which they work tend to define an activity, in this case learning, as a commodity (education), 'whose production they monopolize, whose distribution they restrict, and whose price they raise beyond the purse of ordinary people and nowadays, all governments' (Lister in Illich 1976: 8). Ivan Illich put it this way:

> *Schooling – the production of knowledge, the marketing of knowledge, which is what the school amounts to, draws society into the trap of thinking that knowledge is hygienic, pure, respectable, deodorized, produced by human heads and amassed in stock….. [B]y making school*

> *compulsory, [people] are schooled to believe that the self-taught individual is to be discriminated against; that learning and the growth of cognitive capacity, require a process of consumption of services presented in an industrial, a planned, a professional form;… that learning is a thing rather than an activity. A thing that can be amassed and measured, the possession of which is a measure of the productivity of the individual within the society. That is, of his social value. (quoted by Gajardo 1994: 715)*

Learning becomes a commodity, 'and like any commodity that is marketed, it becomes scarce' (Illich 1975: 73). Furthermore, and echoing Marx, Ivan Illich notes the way in which such scarcity is obscured by the different forms that education takes. This is a similar critique to that mounted by Fromm (1979) of the tendency in modern industrial societies to orient toward a 'having mode' – where people focus upon, and organize around the possession of material objects. They, thus, approach learning as a form of acquisition. Knowledge become a possession to be exploited rather than an aspect of being in the world.

The principle of counterproductivity. Finger and Asún (2001: 11) describe this as 'probably Illich's most original contribution'. Counterproductivity is the means by which a fundamentally beneficial process or arrangement is turned into a negative one. 'Once it reaches a certain threshold, the process of institutionalization becomes counterproductive' (*op. cit.*). It is an idea that Ivan Illich applies to different contexts. For example, with respect to travel he argues that beyond a critical speed, 'no one can save time without forcing another to lose it…[and] motorized vehicles create the remoteness which they alone can shrink' (1974: 42).

The lines of this critique and argument with respect to schooling when set out like this are reasonably clear. But Ivan Illich in his earlier writings tended to 'obscure the essential elements' (Lister 1976: 5). He is 'an intellectual maverick who deals in metaphors and allegories' and those who did not read the related works 'were often confused as to what deschooling was all about' (*ibid.*: 5-6). A further problem was that, according to Gajardo (1994: 719), Ivan Illich's writings 'were founded essentially on intuition, without any appreciable reference to the results of socio-educational or learning research. His criticism evolves in a theoretical vacuum'. Gajardo goes on to suggest that this may explain the limited acceptance of his educational theories and proposals. However, perhaps the most significant problem with the analysis is the extent to which Illich's critique 'overrated the possibilities of schools, particularly compared with the influence of families, television and advertising, and job and housing structures' (Lister 1976: 10-11). This was something that Ivan Illich recognized himself when he was later to write of schools as being 'too easy targets' (1976: 42). It may well be that the way in which he presented his critique was taken as condemning the school out of hand (Gajardo 1994: 719). However, as Finger and Asún 2001: 11) have commented,

> *Illich is not against schools or hospitals as such, but once a certain threshold of institutionalization is reached, schools make people more stupid, while hospitals make them sick. And more generally, beyond a certain threshold of institutionalized expertise, more experts are counterproductive – they produce the counter effect of what they set out to achieve.*

It can be persuasively argued that Ivan Illich 'transgressed a cardinal rule' about what discourses are acceptable within education (Gabbard 1993). He questioned the 'messianic principle' that schools as institutions can educate.

Ivan Illich's critique remains deeply suggestive. While not rigorously linked to data, nor fully located in its theoretical traditions, it does nevertheless draw some important lines for exploration and interrogation; and provides us with some means by which to make judgments about the impact of institutions and experts. The dominance of the school and institutionalized education in our thinking about learning has tended to obscure and undermine other everyday or 'vernacular' forms. We have moved into a period when knowledge has become more commodified (see, for example, Leadbeater's 2000 discussion of the knowledge economy).

Convivial alternatives

> *I believe that a desirable future depends on our deliberately choosing a life of action over a life of consumption, on our engendering a lifestyle which will enable us to be spontaneous, independent, yet related to each other, rather than maintaining a lifestyle which only allows to make and unmake, produce and consume – a style of life which is merely a way station on the road to the depletion and pollution of the environment. The future depends more upon our choice of institutions which support a life of action than on our developing new ideologies and technologies. (Illich 1973a: 57)*

The word 'convivial' has an immediate appeal for many educators and animateurs in that in everyday usage it looks to liveliness and being social (enjoying people's company). However, while bring concerned with individual interaction, Ivan Illich was also interested in institutions and 'tools' – physical devices, mental constructs and social forms. He argued for the creation of convivial, rather than manipulative institutions and saw conviviality as designating the opposite of industrial productivity.

Conviviality, Ivan Illich argued, involves 'autonomous and creative intercourse among persons, and the intercourse of persons with their environment' (*ibid.*: 24). He sees this as being in 'contrast with the conditioned response of persons to the demands made upon them by others, and by a man-made environment'. He continues:

> *I consider conviviality to be individual freedom realized in personal interdependence and, as such, an intrinsic ethical value. I believe that, in any society, as conviviality is reduced below a certain level, no amount of industrial productivity can effectively satisfy the needs it creates among society's members. (op. cit.)*

In convivial institutions (and the societies they make up) modern technologies serve 'politically interrelated individuals rather than managers'. (Illich 1975: 12). Such institutions are characterized by 'their vocation of service to society, by spontaneous use of and voluntary participation in them by all members of society (Gajardo 1994: 716). Ivan Illich (1975a) uses "convivial" as 'a technical term to designate a modern society of responsibly limited tools'. He applied the term "convivial" to tools rather than to people, he said, in the hope of forestalling confusion.

In many respects, Ivan Illich is echoing here the arguments of earlier writers like Basil Yeaxlee who recognized the power of association and the importance of local groups and networks in opening up and sustaining learning. However, he takes this a stage further by explicitly advocating new forms of formal educational institutions. He also recognizes that the character of other institutions and arrangements need to be changed if the 'radical monopoly' of schooling is to be overturned.

Learning webs – new formal educational institutions. In *Deschooling Society* Ivan Illich argued that a good education system should have three purposes: to provide all that want to learn with access to resources at any time in their lives; make it possible for all who want to share knowledge etc. to find those who want to learn it from them; and to create opportunities for those who want to present an issue to the public to make their arguments known (1973a: 78). He suggests that four (possibly even three, he says) distinct channels or learning exchanges could facilitate this. These he calls educational or learning webs.

Exhibit 1: Ivan Illich on learning webs

Educational resources are usually labelled according to educators curricular goals. I propose to do the contrary, to label four different approaches which enable the student to gain access to any educational

resource which may help him to define and achieve his own goals:

1. **Reference services to educational objects** – which facilitate access to things or processes used for formal learning. Some of these things can be reserved for this purpose, stored in libraries, rental agencies, laboratories and showrooms like museums and theatres; others can be in daily use in factories, airports or on farms, but made available to students as apprentices or on off-hours.

2. **Skill exchanges** – which permit persons to list their skills, the conditions under which they are willing to serve as models for others who want to learn these skills, and the addresses at which they can be reached.

3. **Peer-matching** - a communications network which permits persons to describe the learning activity in which they wish to engage, in the hope of finding a partner for the inquiry.

4. **Reference services to educators-at-large** – who can be listed in a directory giving the addresses and self-descriptions of professionals, paraprofessionals and freelances, along with conditions of access to their services. Such educators… could be chosen by polling or consulting their former clients. (Illich 1973a: 81)

Such an approach to educational provision found some enthusiastic proponents within non-formal education (see, for example, the work of Paul Fordham *et. al.*1979). More recently, such themes have appeared in a somewhat sanitized form in some policy pronouncements around lifelong learning and the so-called learning society. Writers like Leadbeater (2000: 112) rediscovered Ivan Illich and argued for a partially deschooled society: 'More learning should be done at home, in offices and kitchens, in the contexts where knowledge is deployed to solve problems and to add value to people's lives'. However, there can be a cost in this. The reference to 'adding value' hints at this. As Ivan Illich himself argued, 'educators freed from the restraint of schools could be much more effective and deadly conditioners' (Illich 1975: 74). Without a full realization of the political and ethical dimensions of conviviality, what can happen is not so much de-schooling but re-schooling. The activities of daily life become more deeply penetrated by commodification and the economic and social arrangements it entails. Learning becomes branded (Klein 2001: 87-105) and our social and political processes dominated by the requirements of corporations (Monboit 2001).

Informal education – changing the character of other institutions and formations. Ivan Illich argues for changes to all institutions so that they may be more convivial for learning.

> *A radical alternative to a schooled society requires not only new formal mechanisms for the formal acquisition of skills and their educational use. A deschooled society implies a new approach to incidental or informal education…. [W]e must find more ways to learn and teach: the educational qualities of all institutions must increase again. (Illich 1973a: 29-30)*

Unfortunately, Ivan Illich does not explore this in any depth – and it has been up to those seeking to encourage more dialogical forms of everyday living to develop an appreciation of what this might mean in practice for educators and policymakers. Ivan Illich's critique of development and his 'call for the creation of a radically new relationship between human beings and their environment' has not played a significant part in the mainstream of policy and practice (Finger and Asún 2001: 14). In recent years one of the strongest arguments for the need to examine the learning potential of institutions has come from those like Peter Senge who have sought to alter the character of business organizations (creating so-called 'learning organizations'). While some of these writers have had a concern with dialogue and organizational forms that are more just, many have not had the sorts of interests and commitments that Ivan Illich described as 'convivial'. In some respects the current interest in social capital (most significantly expressed in the work of Robert Putnam 2000) is more hopeful. The importance of convivial institutions is recognized in the sustaining of community – but social capital, because it is also linked to economic advancement, can be easily co-opted in the service of non-convivial activities (as the involvement of the World Bank in promoting the notion may suggest).

Conclusion

Ivan Illich's concern for conviviality – on the ordering of education, work, and society as a whole in line with human needs, and his call for the 'deprofessionalization' of social relations has provided an important set of ideas upon which educators concerned with mutuality and sociality can draw. His critique of the school and call for the deschooling of society hit a chord with many workers and alternative educators. Further, Ivan Illich's argument for the development of educational webs or networks connected with an interest in 'non-formal' approaches and with experiments in 'free' schooling. Last, his interest in professionalization and the extent to which medical interventions, for example, actually create illness has added to the critique of professions and a concern to interrogate practice by informal educators – especially those in more 'community-oriented' work. As Gajardo (1994: 717) has commented, 'if… we separate Illich's thought from its emotional context, it is interesting to realize how thought-provoking some of his suggestions and proposals are'.

Erich Fromm, in his introduction to *Celebration of Awareness* (Illich 1973: 11) describes Ivan Illich as follows:

> *The author is a man of rare courage, great aliveness, extraordinary erudition and brilliance, and fertile imaginativeness, whose whole thinking is based on his concern for man's unfolding – physically, spiritually and intellectually. The importance of his thoughts… lies in the fact that they have a liberating effect on the mind by showing new possibilities; they make the reader more alive because they open the door that leads out of the prison of routinized, sterile, preconceived notions.*

Ivan Illich's critique of the process of institutionalization in education and his setting of this in the context of the desirability of more convivial relationships retains considerable power. As Finger and Asún (2001: 14-15) have argued, the 'forgotten Illich' offers considerable potential for those wanting to build educational forms that are more fully human, and communities that allow people to flourish. For Illich, and for Finger and Asún (2001: 177), 'De-institutionalization constitutes *the* challenge for learning our way out' of the current malaise.

Further reading and references

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Links

Ivan Illich: Very useful page with links into key obituaries and to his writings. Includes e-texts of *Deschooling Society* and *Tools for Conviviality.*

Thinking after Illich*:* some essays of Ivan Illich and those of some of his friends and collaborators.

Ivan Illich: writings on the web: Useful listing of links from PreserveNet.

Scary School Nightmare – great short video exploring Illich's ideas around schooling from pinkyshow.org.

[Our thanks to readers for their link suggestions]

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Tagged with → association • conviviality • Illich • informal education • Ivan • learning • professional relationship • schooling

Jean-Jacques Rousseau on nature, wholeness and education

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Jean-Jacques Rousseau on nature, wholeness and education. His novel Émile was the most significant book on education after Plato's Republic, and his other work had a profound impact on political theory and practice, romanticism and the development of the novel. We explore Jean-Jacques Rousseau's life and contribution.

contents: introduction · life · nature, wholeness and romanticism · social contract and the general will · on education · on the development of the person · conclusion · further reading and references · links · how to cite this article

Why should those concerned with education study Rousseau? He had an unusual childhood with no formal education. He was a poor teacher. Apparently unable to bring up his own children, he committed them to orphanages soon after birth. At times he found living among people difficult, preferring the solitary life. What can such a man offer educators? The answer is that his work offers great insight. Drawing from a broad spectrum of traditions including botany, music and philosophy, his thinking has influenced subsequent generations of educational thinkers – and permeates the practice of informal educators. His book *Émile* was the most significant book on education after Plato's *Republic*, and his other work had a profound impact on political theory and practice, romanticism and the development of the novel (Wokler 1995: 1).

Life

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778) was born in Geneva (June 28) but became famous as a 'French' political philosopher and educationalist. Rousseau was brought up first by his father (Issac) and an aunt (his mother died a few days after his birth), and later and by an uncle. He had happy memories of his childhood – although it had some odd features such as not being allowed to play with children his own age. His father taught him to read and helped him to appreciate the countryside. He increasingly turned to the latter for solace.

At the age of 13 he was apprenticed to an engraver. However, at 16 (in 1728) he left this trade to travel, but quickly become secretary and companion to Madame Louise de Warens. This relationship was unusual. Twelve years his senior she was in turns a mother figure, a friend and a lover. Under her patronage he developed a taste for music. He set himself up as a music teacher in Chambéry (1732) and began a period of intense self education. In 1740 he worked as a tutor to the two sons of M. de Mably in Lyon. It was not a very successful experience (nor were his other episodes of tutoring). In 1742 he moved to Paris. There he became a close friend of David Diderot, who was to commission him to write articles on music for the French Encyclopédie. Through the sponsorship of a number of society women he became the personal secretary to the French ambassador to Venice – a position from which he was quickly fired for not having the ability to put up with a boss whom he viewed as stupid and arrogant.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau returned to Paris in 1745 and earned a living as a music teacher and copyist. In the hotel where he was living (near the Sorbonne) he met Thérèse Lavasseur who worked as a seamstress. She was also, by a number of accounts, an odd figure. She was made fun of by many of those around

here, and it was Rousseau's defence of her that led to friendship. He believed she had a 'pure and innocent heart'. They were soon living together (and they were to stay together, never officially married, until he died). She couldn't read well, nor write, or add up – and Rousseau tried unsuccessfully over the years to teach her. According to his *Confessions*, Thérèse bore five children – all of whom were given to foundling homes (the first in 1746) (1996: 333). Voltaire later scurrilously claimed that Rousseau had dumped them on the doorstep of the orphanage. In fact the picture was rather more complex. Rousseau had argued the children would get a better upbringing in such an institution than he could offer. They would not have to put up with the deviousness of 'high society'. Furthermore, he claimed he lacked the money to bring them up properly. There was also the question of his and Thérèse's capacity to cope with child-rearing. Last, there is also some question as to whether all or any of the children were his (for example, Thérèse had an affair with James Boswell whilst he stayed with Rousseau). What we do know is that in later life Rousseau sought to justify his actions concerning the children (see, for example 1996: 345-346); declaring his sorrow about the way he had acted.

Diderot encouraged Rousseau to write and in 1750 he won first prize in an essay competition organized by the Académie de Dijon – *Discours sur les sciences et les arts*. 'Why should we build our own happiness on the opinions of others, when we can find it in our own hearts?' (1750: 29). In this essay we see a familiar theme: that humans are by nature good – and it is society's institutions that corrupt them (Smith and Smith 1994: 184). The essay earned him considerable fame and he reacted against it. He seems to have fallen out with a number of his friends and the (high-society) people with whom he was expected to mix. This was a period of reappraisal. On a visit to Geneva Jean-Jacques Rousseau reconverted to Calvinism (and gained Genevan citizenship). There was also a fairly public infatuation with Mme d'Houderot that with his other erratic behaviour, led some of his friends to consider him insane.

Rousseau's mental health was a matter of some concern for the rest of his life. There were significant periods when he found it difficult to be in the company of others, when he believed himself to be the focus of hostility and duplicity (a feeling probably compounded by the fact that there was some truth in this). He frequently acted 'oddly' with sudden changes of mood. These 'oscillations' led to situations where he falsely accused others and behaved with scant respect for their humanity. There was something about what, and the way, he wrote and how he acted with others that contributed to his being on the receiving end of strong, and sometimes malicious, attacks by people like Voltaire. The 'oscillations' could also open up 'another universe' in which he could see the world in a different, and illuminating, way (see Grimsley 1969).

At around the time of the publication of his famous very influential discourses on inequality and political economy in *Encyclopedie* (1755), Rousseau also began to fall out with Diderot and the Encyclopedists. The Duke and Duchess of Luxembourg offered him (and Thérèse) a house on their estate at Montmorency (to the north of Paris).

During the next four years in the relative seclusion of Montmorency, Rousseau produced three major works: *The New Heloise* (1761), probably the most widely read novel of his day); *The Social Contract* (April 1762), one of the most influential books on political theory; and *Émile* (May 1762), a classic statement of education. The 'heretical' discussion of religion in *Émile* caused Rousseau problems with the Church in France. The book was burned in a number of places. Within a month Rousseau had to leave France for Switzerland – but was unable to go to Geneva after his citizenship was revoked as a result of the furore over the book. He ended up in Berne. In 1766 Jean-Jacques Rousseau went to England (first to Chiswick then Wootton Hall near Ashbourne in Derbyshire, and later to Hume's house in Buckingham Street, London) at the invitation of David Hume. True to form he fell out with Hume, accusing him of disloyalty (not fairly!) and displaying all the symptoms of paranoia. In 1767 he returned to France under a false name (Renou), although he had to wait until to 1770 to return officially. A condition of his return was his agreement not to publish his work. He continued writing, completing his *Confessions* and beginning private readings of it in 1770. Jean-Jacques Rousseau was banned from doing this by the police in 1771 following complaints by former friends such as Diderot and Madame d'Epinay – who featured in the work. The book was eventually published after his death in 1782.

Rousseau returned to copying music to make a living, working in the morning and walking and 'botanizing' in

the afternoon. He continued to have mental health problems. His next major work was *Rousseau juge de Jean-Jacques, Dialogues*, completed in 1776. In the next two years, before his death in 1778, Rousseau wrote the ten, classic, meditations of *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*. The book opens: 'So now I am alone in the world, with no brother, neighbour or friend, nor any company left me but my own. The most sociable and loving of men has with unanimous accord been cast out by all the rest' (1979: 27). He appears to have come upon a period of some calm and serenity (France 1979: 9). At this time 'he found respite only in solitude, the study of botany, and a romantically lyrical communion with nature' (Wokler 1995: 15).

In 1778 he was in Ermenonville, just north of Paris, staying with the Marquis de Giradin. On July 2, following his usual early morning walk Jean-Jacques Rousseau died of apoplexy (a haemorrhage – some of his former friends claimed he committed suicide). He was buried on the estate (on a small picturesque island – *Ile des Peupliers*). Later, in 1794, his remains were moved to the Panthéon in Paris (formerly the Church of Sainte Geneviève. The Pantheon was used to house the bodies of key figures of the French Revolution.) His remains were placed close by those of Voltaire, who had died in the same year as him.

Nature, wholeness and romanticism

Rousseau argued that we are inherently good, but we become corrupted by the evils of society. We are born good – and that is our natural state. In later life he wished to live a simple life, to be close to nature and to enjoy what it gives us – a concern said to have been fostered by his father. Through attending to nature we are more likely to live a life of virtue. Jean-Jacques Rousseau was interested in people **being** natural.

> *We are born capable of sensation and from birth are affected in diverse ways by the objects around us. As soon as we become conscious of our sensations we are inclined to seek or to avoid the objects which produce them: at first, because they are agreeable or disagreeable to us, later because we discover that they suit or do not suit us, and ultimately because of the judgements we pass on them by reference to the idea of happiness of perfection we get from reason. These inclinations extend and strengthen with the growth of sensibility and intelligence, but under the pressure of habit they are changed to some extent with our opinions. The inclinations before this change are what I call our nature. In my view everything ought to be in conformity with these original inclinations. (Émile, Book 1 – translation by Boyd 1956: 13; see also, 1911 edition p. 7).*

As Ronald Grimsley has written, 'From the outset Rousseau had drawn inspiration from his own heart and found philosophical truth in the depth of his own being' (1973: 135). His later writings, especially *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, show both his isolation and alienation, and some paths into happiness. 'Everything is in constant flux on this earth, he writes (1979: 88):

> *But if there is a state where the soul can find a resting-place secure enough to establish itself and concentrate its entire being there, with no need to remember the past or reach into the future, where time is nothing to it, where the present runs on indefinitely but this duration goes unnoticed, with no sign of the passing of time, and no other feeling of deprivation or enjoyment, pleasure or pain, desire or fear than the simple feeling of existence, a feeling that fills our soul entirely, as long as this state lasts, we can call ourselves happy, not with a poor, incomplete and relative happiness such as we find in the pleasures of life, but with a sufficient, complete and perfect happiness which leaves no emptiness to be filled in the soul. Such is the state which I often experienced on the Island Of Saint-Pierre in my solitary reveries, whether I lay in a boat and drifted where the water carried me, or sat by the shores of the stormy lake, or elsewhere, on the banks of a lovely river or a stream murmuring over the stones. (Rousseau 1979: 88 – 89)*

Rousseau's is sometimes described as a romantic vision. 'Romanticism' is not an easy term to define – it is best approached as an overlapping set of ideas and values.

> *The 'Romantic' is said to favour the concrete over the abstract, variety over uniformity, the infinite over the finite,; nature over culture, convention and artifice; the organic over the mechanical; freedom over constraint, rules and limitations. In human terms it prefers the unique individual to the average person, the free creative genius to the prudent person of good sense, the particular community or nation to humanity at large. Mentally, the Romantics prefer feeling to thought, more specifically emotion to calculation; imagination to literal common sense, intuition to intellect. (Quinton 1996: 778)*

In many respects Rousseau's vision could be labelled as 'green'. But with this comes a classic tension between the individual and society, solitude and association – and this is central to his work.

Social contract and the general will

Chapter 1 of his classic work on political theory *The Social Contract* (published in 1762) begins famously, 'Man was born free, and he is everywhere in chains'. It is an expression of his belief that we corrupted by society. The social contract he explores in the book involves people recognizing a collective 'general will'. This general will is supposed to represent the common good or public interest – and it is something that each individual has a hand in making. All citizens should participate – and should be committed to the general good – even if it means acting against their private or personal interests. For example, we might support a political party that proposes to tax us heavily (as we have a large income) because we can see the benefit that this taxation can bring to all. To this extend, Rousseau believed that the good individual, or citizen, should not put their private ambitions first.

This way of living, he argued, can promote liberty and equality – and it arises out of, and fosters, a spirit of fraternity. The cry of 'liberty, equality and fraternity' is familiar to us today through the French Revolution (1789 – 1799) – and the impact of the thinking and experiences of that time have had on political movements in many different parts of the world since. Just how the 'general will' comes about is unclear – and this has profound implications. If we are to put the general will over the individual or 'particular' will then there needs to be safeguards against the exploitation of individuals and minorities. Rousseau's belief in liberty, equality and fraternity, and his emphasis on education (see below) may go some way in counteracting the dangers of the general will, but others have hijacked the notion so that the majority rules the minority – or indeed a minority a majority – it just depends who has the power to define or interpret the general will.

On education

The focus of *Émile* is upon the individual tuition of a boy/young man in line with the principles of 'natural education'. This focus tends to be what is taken up by later commentators, yet Rousseau's concern with the individual is balanced in some of his other writing with the need for public or national education. In *A Discourse on Political Economy* and *Considerations for the Government of Poland* we get a picture of public education undertaken in the interests of the community as a whole.

> *From the first moment of life, men ought to begin learning to deserve to live; and, as at the instant of birth we partake of the rights of citizenship, that instant ought to be the beginning of the exercise of our duty. If there are laws for the age of maturity, there ought to be laws for infancy, teaching obedience to others: and as the reason of each man is not left to be the sole arbiter of his duties, government ought the less indiscriminately to abandon to the intelligence*

> *and prejudices of fathers the education of their children, as that education is of still greater importance to the State than to the fathers: for, according to the course of nature, the death of the father often deprives him of the final fruits of education; but his country sooner or later perceives its effects. Families dissolve but the State remains. (Rousseau 1755: 148-9)*

'Make the citizen good by training', Jean-Jacques Rousseau writes, 'and everything else will follow'.

In *Émile* Rousseau drew on thinkers that had preceded him – for example, John Locke on teaching – but he was able to pull together strands into a coherent and comprehensive system – and by using the medium of the novel he was able to dramatize his ideas and reach a very wide audience. He made, it can be argued, the first comprehensive attempt to describe a system of education according to what he saw as 'nature' (Stewart and McCann 1967:28). It certainly stresses wholeness and harmony, and a concern for the person of the learner. Central to this was the idea that it was possible to preserve the 'original perfect nature' of the child, 'by means of the careful control of his education and environment, based on an analysis of the different physical and psychological stages through which he passed from birth to maturity' (ibid.). This was a fundamental point. Rousseau argued that the momentum for learning was provided by the growth of the person (nature) – and that what the educator needed to do was to facilitate opportunities for learning.

Exhibit 1: Jean-Jacques Rousseau on education

Now each of these factors in education is wholly beyond our control, things are only partly in our power; the education of men is the only one controlled by us; and even here our power is largely illusory, for who can hope to direct every word and deed of all with whom the child has to do.

Viewed as an art, the success of education is almost impossible since the essential conditions of success are beyond our control. Our efforts may bring us within sight of the goal, but fortune must favour us if we are to reach it.

What is this goal? As we have just shown, it is the goal of nature. Since all three modes of education must work together, the two that we can control must follow the lead of that which is beyond our control.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1762) *Émile* (1911 edn.), London: Dent, pp.6.

The focus on the environment, on the need to develop opportunities for new experiences and reflection, and on the dynamic provided by each person's development remain very powerful ideas.

We'll quickly list some of the key elements that we still see in his writing:

- a view of children as very different to adults – as innocent, vulnerable, slow to mature – and entitled to freedom and happiness (Darling 1994: 6). In other words, children are naturally good.
- the idea that people develop through various stages – and that different forms of education may be appropriate to each.
- a guiding principle that what is to be learned should be determined by an understanding of the person's nature at each stage of their development.
- an appreciation that individuals vary within stages – and that education must as a result be individualized. 'Every mind has its own form'
- each and every child has some fundamental impulse to activity. Restlessness in time being replaced by curiosity; mental activity being a direct development of bodily activity.
- the power of the environment in determining the success of educational encounters. It was crucial – as Dewey also recognized – that educators attend to the environment. The more they were able to control it – the more effective would be the education.
- the controlling function of the educator – The child, Rousseau argues, should remain in complete ignorance of those ideas which are beyond his/her grasp. (This he sees as a fundamental principle).

- the importance of developing ideas for ourselves, to make sense of the world in our own way. People must be encouraged to reason their way through to their own conclusions – they should not rely on the authority of the teacher. Thus, instead of being taught other people's ideas, Émile is encouraged to draw his own conclusions from his own experience. What we know today as 'discovery learning' One example, Rousseau gives is of Émile breaking a window – only to find he gets cold because it is left unrepaired.
- a concern for both public and individual education.

We could go on – all we want to do is to establish what a far reaching gift Rousseau gave. We may well disagree with various aspects of his scheme – but there can be no denying his impact then – and now. It may well be, as Darling (1994: 17) has argued, that the history of child-centred educational theory is a series of footnotes to Rousseau.

On the development of the person

Rousseau believed it was possible to preserve the original nature of the child by careful control of his education and environment based on an analysis of the different physical and psychological stages through which he passed from birth to maturity (Stewart and McCann 1967). As we have seen he thought that momentum for learning was provided by growth of the person (nature).

In Émile, Rousseau divides development into five stages (a book is devoted to each). Education in the first two stages seeks to the senses: only when Émile is about 12 does the tutor begin to work to develop his mind. Later, in Book 5, Rousseau examines the education of Sophie (whom Émile is to marry). Here he sets out what he sees as the essential differences that flow from sex. 'The man should be strong and active; the woman should be weak and passive' (Everyman edn: 322). From this difference comes a contrasting education. They are not to be brought up in ignorance and kept to housework: Nature means them to think, to will, to love to cultivate their minds as well as their persons; she puts these weapons in their hands to make up for their lack of strength and to enable them to direct the strength of men. They should learn many things, but only such things as suitable' (Everyman edn.: 327). The stages below are those associated with males.

Stage 1: Infancy (birth to two years). The first stage is infancy, from birth to about two years. (Book I). Infancy finishes with the weaning of the child. He sets a number of maxims, the spirit of which is to give children 'more real liberty and less power, to let them do more for themselves and demand less of others; so that by teaching them from the first to confine their wishes within the limits of their powers they will scarcely feel the want of whatever is not in their power' (Everyman edn: 35).

> *The only habit the child should be allowed to acquire is to contract none… Prepare in good time form the reign of freedom and the exercise of his powers, by allowing his body its natural habits and accustoming him always to be his own master and follow the dictates of his will as soon as he has a will of his own. (Émile, Book 1 – translation by Boyd 1956: 23; Everyman edn: 30)*

Stage 2: 'The age of Nature' (two to 12). The second stage, from two to ten or twelve, is 'the age of Nature'. During this time, the child receives only a 'negative education': no moral instruction, no verbal learning. He sets out the most important rule of education: 'Do not save time, but lose it… The mind should be left undisturbed till its faculties have developed' (Everyman edn.: 57; Boyd: 41). The purpose of education at this stage is to develop physical qualities and particularly senses, but not minds. In the latter part of Book II, Rousseau describes the cultivation of each of Émile's five senses in turn.

Stage 3: Pre-adolescence (12-15). Émile in Stage 3 is like the 'noble savage' Rousseau describes in The Social Contract. 'About twelve or thirteen the child's strength increases far more rapidly than his needs' (Everyman edn.: 128). The urge for activity now takes a mental form; there is greater capacity for sustained

attention (Boyd 1956: 69). The educator has to respond accordingly.

> *Our real teachers are experience and emotion, and man will never learn what befits a man except under its own conditions. A child knows he must become a man; all the ideas he may have as to man's estate are so many opportunities for his instruction, but he should remain in complete ignorance of those ideas which are beyond his grasp. My whole book is one continued argument in support of this fundamental principle of education. (Everyman edn: 141; Boyd: 81)*

The only book Émile is allowed is Robinson Crusoe – an expression of the solitary, self-sufficient man that Rousseau seeks to form (Boyd 1956: 69).

Stage 4: Puberty (15-20). Rousseau believes that by the time Émile is fifteen, his reason will be well developed, and he will then be able to deal with he sees as the dangerous emotions of adolescence, and with moral issues and religion. The second paragraph of the book contains the famous lines: 'We are born, so to speak, twice over; born into existence, and born into life; born a human being, and born a man' (Everyman edn: 172). As before, he is still wanting to hold back societal pressures and influences so that the 'natural inclinations' of the person may emerge without undue corruption. There is to be a gradual entry into community life (Boyd 1956: 95). Most of Book IV deals with Émile's moral development. (It also contains the the statement of Rousseau's' his own religious principles, written as 'The creed of a Savoyard priest', which caused him so much trouble with the religious authorities of the day).

Stage 5: Adulthood (20-25). In Book V, the adult Émile is introduced to his ideal partner, Sophie. He learns about love, and is ready to return to society, proof, Rousseau hopes, after such a lengthy preparation, against its corrupting influences. The final task of the tutor is to 'instruct the the young couple in their marital rights and duties' (Boyd 1956: 130).

Sophie. This last book includes a substantial section concerning the education of woman. Rousseau subscribes to a view that sex differences go deep (and are complementary) – and that education must take account of this. 'The man should be strong and active; the woman should be weak and passive; he one must have both the power and the will; it is enough that the other should offer little resistance' (Everyman edn: 322). Sophie's training for womanhood upto the age of ten involves physical training for grace; the dressing of dolls leading to drawing, writing, counting and reading; and the prevention of idleness and indocility. After the age of ten there is a concern with adornment and the arts of pleasing; religion; and the training of reason. 'She has been trained careful rather than strictly, and her taste has been followed rather than thwarted' (Everyman edn: 356). Rousseau then goes on to sum her qualities as a result of this schooling (356-362).

Conclusion

Rousseau's gift to later generations is extraordinarily rich – and problematic. Émile was the most influential work on education after Plato's Republic, *The Confessions* were the most important work of autobiography since that of St Augustine (Wokler 1995: 1); *The Reveries* played a significant role in the development of romantic naturalism; and *The Social Contract* has provided radicals and revolutionaries with key themes since it was published. Yet Rousseau can be presented at the same time as deeply individualist, and as controlling and pandering to popularist totalitarianism. In psychology he looked to stage theory and essentialist notions concerning the sexes (both of which continue to plague us) yet did bring out the significance of difference and of the impact of the environment. In life he was difficult he was difficult to be around, and had problems relating to others, yet he gave glimpses of a rare connectedness.

Further reading and references

Books by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Here we have listed the main texts:

Rousseau, J-J. (1750) *A Discourse: Has the restoration of the arts and sciences had a purifying effect upon morals?* Available in a single volume with *The Social Contract*, London: Dent Everyman. The essay that first established Rousseau.

Rousseau, J-J (1755) *A Discourse on Inequality*. Translated with an introduction by M. Cranston (1984 edn.), London: Penguin. Also available as an Everyman Book in a single volume with *The Social Contract*. Said to be one of the most revolutionary documents to have come out of eighteenth-century Europe. Seeks to show how the growth of civilization corrupts man's natural happiness and freedom by creating artificial inequalities of wealth, power and social privilege. Rousseau contends that primitive man is equal to his fellows because he can be independent of them, but as societies become more sophisticated, the strongest and most intelligent members of the community gain an unnatural advantage over their weaker brethren, and the constitutions set up to rectify these imbalances through peace and justice in fact do nothing but perpetuate them.

Rousseau, J-J (1755) *A Discourse on Political Economy*. Available as part of *The Social Contract and Discourses*, London: Everyman/Dent.

Rousseau, J-J. (1761) *La Nouvelle Heloise (The New Heloise: Julie, or the New Eloise : Letters of Two Lovers, Inhabitants of a Small Town at the Foot of the Alps)*, Pennsylvania University Press. Story based on the relationship between Abelard and Heloise.

Rousseau, J-J. (1762) *Émile*, London: Dent (1911 edn.) Also available in edition translated and annotated by Allan Bloom (1991 edn.), London: Penguin. Rousseau's exploration of education took the form of a novel concerning the tutoring of a young boy.

Rousseau, J-J (1762) *The Social Contract*, London: Penguin. (1953 edn.) Translated and introduced by Maurice Cranston. Also first published in 1762. (also published by Dent Everyman along with the Discourses).

Rousseau, J-J. (1782) *Rousseau juge de Jean-Jacques, Dialogues* (Rousseau, judge of Jean-Jacques, dialogues / edited by Roger D. Masters and Christopher Kelly ; tran slated by Judith R. Bush, Christopher Kelly, and Roger D. Masters) (1990 edn), Hanover : Published for Dartmouth College by University Press of New England. Conversation between a seeker of truth about Jean-Jacques (Rousseau) and the 'Frenchman' – someone who had been a victim of the various 'slanders' made about J-J.

Rousseau, J-J (1782) *The Confessions of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (1953 edn.), London: Penguin. Extraordinary reading. 'By writing his *Confessions* Rousseau not only wanted to know himself and alleviate his guilt, he sought also to recapture the happiness of the past, to saviour again those brief but precious occasions when he felt that he had been truly himself and had lived as nature had wanted' (Grimsley 1973: 137)

Rousseau, J-J (1782) *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*. Translated with an introduction by P. France, London: Penguin. Unfinished series of reflections combining argument with anecdote and description. 'As he wanders around Paris, gazing at plants and day-dreaming, Rousseau looks back over his life in order to justify his actions and to elaborate on his view of a well-structured society fit for the noble and solitary natural man' This edition includes an introduction, notes and a brief chronology.

Many of these are available as e-texts (see below).

Books on Jean-Jacques Rousseau. There is a large number of books to choose from (especially you are fluent in French!) Listed here you will find those books we have found most useful in putting together this page:

Boyd, W. (1956) *Émile for Today. The Émile of Jean Jaques Rousseau selected, translated and interpreted by William Boyd*, London: Heinemann. Boyd does a good job in cutting down the book to its central elements for educators – and provides a very helpful epilogue on natural education and national education.

Cranston, M. (1983) *Jean-Jacques*, (1991) *The Noble Savage*, (1997) *The Solitary Self. Jean-Jacques Rousseau in exile and adversity,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press (also Allan Lane). The standard English language treatment of Rousseau in three volumes. Wonderful stuff.

Grimsley, R. (1969) *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: A study in self-awareness*, 2e, Cardiff: University of Wales Press. Provides some good insights into Rousseau's character and psychology.

Grimsley, R. (1973) *The Philosophy of Rousseau*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. Useful summary and overview of Rousseau's thinking. Chapters on society; nature; the psychological and moral development of the individual; religion; political theory; aesthetic ideas; and the problem of personal existence.

Mason, J. H. (1979) *The Indispensable Rousseau*, London: .Good overview of Rousseau plus a good selection of extracts from his work.

Masters, R. D. (1968) *The Political Philosophy of Rousseau*, Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press. Detailed study of Rousseau's political and educational thinking as they form a systematic doctrine.

Wokler, R. (1996) *Rousseau,* Oxford: Oxford University Press. Published in the 'Past Masters' series, this book provides an good overview of Rousseau's work and contribution.

See, also, P. D. Jimack's helpful introduction to *The Social Contract and Discourses*, London: Everyman.

For a brief introduction to his life see:

Smith, L. . and Smith, J. K. (1994) *Lives in Education. A narrative of people and ideas* 2e, New York: St Martins Press.

See also:

Hampson, N. (1990) *The Enlightenment*, London: Penguin. Good overview of key themes and contexts – and how these informed romanticism and later revolutionary crises.

Other references

Barry, B. (1967) "The Public Interest", in Quinton, A. (ed.) *Political Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

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Darling, J. (1994) *Child-Centred Education and its Critics*, London: Paul Chapman.

Dent, N.J.H. (1988) *Rousseau: An Introduction to his Psychological, Social and Political Theory*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell

Melzer, A.M. (1990) *The Natural Goodness of Man: On the Sytem of Rousseau's Thought*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Miller, J. (1984) *Rousseau: Dreamer of Democracy*, London: Yale University Press

Quinton, A. (1996) 'Philosophical romanticism' in T. Honderich (ed.) *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Soëtard, , M. (1995) 'Jean-Jacques Rousseau' in Z. Morsy (ed.) *Thinkers on Education Volume 4*, Paris: UNESCO.

Stewart, W. A. C. and McCann, W. P. (1967) *The Educational Innovators. Volume 1 1750–1880*, London: Macmillan.

Links

Why not visit:

Rousseau Association – has useful articles plus a range of links. Includes page devote to Rousseau and education.

The Jean-Jacques Rousseau Museum

Project Gutenberg – download Jean-Jacques Rouseau's *Confessions..* and *Emile*

EpistemeLinks – full listing of full electronic texts

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How to cite this article: Michele Erina Doyle and Mark K. Smith (2007) 'Jean-Jacques Rousseau on education', the encyclopaedia of informal education, http://www.infed.org/thinkers/et-rous.htm. Last update: January 07, 2013

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Jerome Bruner and the process of education

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Jerome Bruner and the process of education. Jerome Bruner has made a profound contribution to our appreciation of the process of education and to the development of curriculum theory. We explore his work and draw out some important lessons for informal educators and those concerned with the practice of lifelong learning.

contents: introduction · jerome s. bruner – his life · the process of education · the culture of education · conclusion · further reading and references · links

> *It is surely the case that schooling is only one small part of how a culture inducts the young into its canonical ways. Indeed, schooling may even be at odds with a culture's other ways of inducting the young into the requirements of communal living…. What has become increasingly clear… is that education is not just about conventional school matters like curriculum or standards or testing. What we resolve to do in school only makes sense when considered in the broader context of what the society intends to accomplish through its educational investment in the young. How one conceives of education, we have finally come to recognize, is a function of how one conceives of culture and its aims, professed and otherwise.(Jerome S. Bruner 1996: ix-x)*

Jerome S. Bruner (1915-) is one of the best known and influential psychologists of the twentieth century. He was one of the key figures in the so called 'cognitive revolution' – but it is the field of education that his influence has been especially felt. His books *The Process of Education* and *Towards a Theory of Instruction* have been widely read and become recognized as classics, and his work on the social studies programme – Man: A Course of Study (MACOS) – in the mid-1960s is a landmark in curriculum development. More recently Bruner has come to be critical of the 'cognitive revolution' and has looked to the building of a cultural psychology that takes proper account of the historical and social context of participants. In his 1996 book *The Culture of Education* these arguments were developed with respect to schooling (and education more generally). 'How one conceives of education', he wrote, 'we have finally come to recognize, is a function of how one conceives of the culture and its aims, professed and otherwise' (Bruner 1996: ix-x).

Jerome S. Bruner – life

Bruner was born in New York City and later educated at Duke University and Harvard (from which he was awarded a PhD in 1947). During World War II, Bruner worked as a social psychologist exploring propaganda public opinion and social attitudes for U.S. Army intelligence. After obtaining his PhD he became a member of faculty, serving as professor of psychology, as well as cofounder and director of the Center for Cognitive Studies.

Beginning in the 1940s, Jerome Bruner, along with Leo Postman, worked on the ways in which needs, motivations, and expectations (or 'mental sets') influence perception. Sometimes dubbed as the 'New Look', they explored perception from a functional orientation (as against a process to separate from the world around it). In addition to this work, Bruner began to look at the role of strategies in the process of human categorization, and more generally, the development of human cognition. This concern with cognitive psychology led to a particular interest in the cognitive development of children (and their modes of representation) and just what the appropriate forms of education might be.

From the late 1950s on Jerome Bruner became interested in schooling in the USA – and was invited to chair an influential ten day meeting of scholars and educators at Woods Hole on Cape Cod in 1959 (under the auspices of the National Academy of Sciences and the National Science Foundation). One result was Bruner's landmark book *The Process of Education* (1960). It developed some of the key themes of that meeting and was an crucial factor in the generation of a range of educational programmes and experiments in the 1960s. Jerome Bruner subsequently joined a number of key panels and committees (including the President's Advisory Panel of Education). In 1963, he received the Distinguished Scientific Award from the American Psychological Association, and in 1965 he served as its president.

Jerome S. Bruner also became involved in the design and implementation of the influential MACOS project (which sought to produce a comprehensive curriculum drawing upon the behavioural sciences). The curriculum famously aimed to address three questions:

> *What is uniquely human about human beings?*
>
> *How did they get that way?*
>
> *How could they be made more so? (Bruner 1976: 74)*

The project involved a number of young researchers, including Howard Gardner, who subsequently have made an impact on educational thinking and practice. MACOS was attacked by conservatives (especially the cross-cultural nature of the materials). It was also difficult to implement – requiring a degree of sophistication and learning on the part of teachers, and ability and motivation on the part of students. The educational tide had begun to move away from more liberal and progressive thinkers like Jerome Bruner.

In the 1960s Jerome Bruner developed a theory of cognitive growth. His approach (in contrast to Piaget) looked to environmental and experiential factors. Bruner suggested that intellectual ability developed in stages through step-by-step changes in how the mind is used. Bruner's thinking became increasingly influenced by writers like Lev Vygotsky and he began to be critical of the intrapersonal focus he had taken, and the lack of attention paid to social and political context. In the early 1970s Bruner left Harvard to teach for several years at the university of Oxford. There he continued his research into questions of agency in infants and began a series of explorations of children's language. He returned to Harvard as a visiting professor in 1979 and then, two years later, joined the faculty of the new School for Social Research in New York City. He became critical of the 'cognitive revolution' and began to argue for the building of a cultural psychology. This 'cultural turn' was then reflected in his work on education – most especially in his 1996 book: *The Culture of Education*.

The process of education

The Process of Education (1960) was a landmark text. It had a direct impact on policy formation in the United States and influenced the thinking and orientation of a wide group of teachers and scholars, Its view of children as active problem-solvers who are ready to explore 'difficult' subjects while being out of step with the dominant view in education at that time, struck a chord with many. 'It was a surprise', Jerome Bruner was later to write (in the preface to the 1977 edition), that a book expressing so structuralist a view of knowledge and so intuitionist an approach to the process of knowing should attract so much attention in America, where empiricism had long been the dominant voice and 'learning theory' its amplifier' (*ibid.*: vii).

Four key themes emerge out of the work around *The Process of Education* (1960: 11-16):

The role of structure in learning and how it may be made central in teaching. The approach taken should be a practical one. 'The teaching and learning of structure, rather than simply the mastery of facts and techniques, is at the center of the classic problem of transfer… If earlier learning is to render later

learning easier, it must do so by providing a general picture in terms of which the relations between things encountered earlier and later are made as clear as possible' (*ibid*.: 12).

Readiness for learning. Here the argument is that schools have wasted a great deal of people's time by postponing the teaching of important areas because they are deemed 'too difficult'.

> *We begin with the hypothesis that any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development. (ibid.: 33)*

This notion underpins the idea of the **spiral curriculum** – 'A curriculum as it develops should revisit this basic ideas repeatedly, building upon them until the student has grasped the full formal apparatus that goes with them' (*ibid.*: 13).

Intuitive and analytical thinking. Intuition ('the intellectual technique of arriving and plausible but tentative formulations without going through the analytical steps by which such formulations would be found to be valid or invalid conclusions' *ibid.*: 13) is a much neglected but essential feature of productive thinking. Here Bruner notes how experts in different fields appear 'to leap intuitively into a decision or to a solution to a problem' (*ibid.*: 62) – a phenomenon that Donald Schön was to explore some years later – and looked to how teachers and schools might create the conditions for intuition to flourish.

Motives for learning. 'Ideally', Jerome Bruner writes, interest in the material to be learned is the best stimulus to learning, rather than such external goals as grades or later competitive advantage' (*ibid.*: 14). In an age of increasing spectatorship, 'motives for learning must be kept from going passive… they must be based as much as possible upon the arousal of interest in what there is be learned, and they must be kept broad and diverse in expression' (*ibid.*: 80).

Bruner was to write two 'postscripts' to *The Process of Education*: *Towards a theory of instruction* (1966) and *The Relevance of Education* (1971). In these books Bruner 'put forth his evolving ideas about the ways in which instruction actually affects the mental models of the world that students construct, elaborate on and transform' (Gardner 2001: 93). In the first book the various essays deal with matters such as patterns of growth, the will to learn, and on making and judging (including some helpful material around evaluation). Two essays are of particular interest – his reflections on MACOS (see above), and his 'notes on a theory of instruction'. The latter essay makes the case for taking into account questions of predisposition, structure, sequence, and reinforcement in preparing curricula and programmes. He makes the case for education as a knowledge-getting process:

> *To instruct someone… is not a matter of getting him to commit results to mind. Rather, it is to teach him to participate in the process that makes possible the establishment of knowledge. We teach a subject not to produce little living libraries on that subject, but rather to get a student to think mathematically for himself, to consider matters as an historian does, to take part in the process of knowledge-getting. Knowing is a process not a product. (1966: 72)*

The essays in *The Relevance of Education* (1971) apply his theories to infant development.

The culture of education

Jerome Bruner's reflections on education in *The Culture of Education* (1996) show the impact of the changes in his thinking since the 1960s. He now placed his work within a thorough appreciation of culture: 'culture shapes the mind… it provides us with the toolkit by which we construct not only our worlds but our very conception of our selves and our powers' (*ibid.*: x). This orientation 'presupposes that human mental activity is neither solo nor conducted unassisted, even when it goes on "inside the head" (*ibid.*: xi). It also

takes Bruner well beyond the confines of schooling.

Conclusion

Jerome S. Bruner has had a profound effect on education – and upon those researchers and students he has worked with. Howard Gardner has commented:

> *Jerome Bruner is not merely one of the foremost educational thinkers of the era; he is also an inspired learner and teacher. His infectious curiosity inspires all who are not completely jaded. Individuals of every age and background are invited to join in. Logical analyses, technical dissertations, rich and wide knowledge of diverse subject matters, asides to an ever wider orbit of information, intuitive leaps, pregnant enigmas pour forth from his indefatigable mouth and pen. In his words, 'Intellectual activity is anywhere and everywhere, whether at the frontier of knowledge or in a third-grade classroom'. To those who know him, Bruner remains the Compleat Educator in the flesh… (Gardner 2001: 94)*

To be completed

Further reading and references

Bruner, J (1960) *The Process of Education*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. 97 + xxvi pages. Rightly recognized as a twentieth century educational 'classic', this book argues that schooling and curricula should be constructed to foster intuitive 'graspings'. Bruner makes the case for a 'spiral curriculum'. The second edition, 1977, has a a new preface that reassesses the book.

Bruner, J. S. (1966) *Toward a Theory of Instruction*, Cambridge, Mass.: Belkapp Press. 176 + x pages.

Bruner, J. S. (1971) *The Relevance of Education*, New York: Norton. In this book Bruner applied his theories to infant development.

Bruner, J. (1996) *The Culture of Education*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. 224 + xvi pages.

References

Bruner, J. (1973) *Going Beyond the Information Given*, New York: Norton.

Bruner, J. (1983) *Child's Talk: Learning to Use Language,* New York: Norton.

Bruner, J. (1986) *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. (1990) *Acts of Meaning* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J., Goodnow, J., & Austin, A. (1956) *A Study of Thinking,* New York: Wiley.

Gardner, H. (2001) 'Jerome S. Bruner' in J. A. Palmer (ed.) *Fifty Modern Thinkers on Education. From Piaget to the present*, London: Routledge.

Links

To cite this article: Smith, M.K. (2002) 'Jerome S. Bruner and the process of education', *the encyclopedia of informal education*. [http://infed.org/mobi/jerome-bruner-and-the-process-of-education/ Retrieved: enter date]

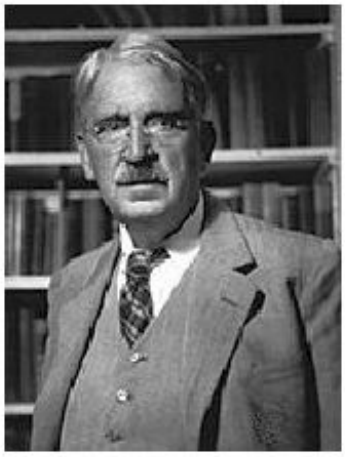
Tagged with → curriculum • curriculum theory • education • pedagogy • process • schooling • teaching

John Dewey on education, experience and community

infed.org

John Dewey on education, experience and community. Arguably the most influential thinker on education in the twentieth century, Dewey's contribution lies along several fronts. His attention to experience and reflection, democracy and community, and to environments for learning have been seminal.

(This 'John Dewey' page is due to be extended).



John Dewey (1859 – 1952) has made, arguably, the most significant contribution to the development of educational thinking in the twentieth century. Dewey's philosophical pragmatism, concern with interaction, reflection and experience, and interest in community and democracy, were brought together to form a highly suggestive educative form. John Dewey is often misrepresented – and wrongly associated with child-centred education. In many respects his work cannot be easily slotted into any one of the curriculum traditions that have dominated north American and UK schooling traditions over the last century. However, John Dewey's influence can be seen in many of the writers that have influenced the development of informal education over the same period. For example, Coyle, Kolb, Lindeman and Rogers drew extensively on his work.

John Dewey's significance for informal educators lies in a number of areas. First, his belief that education must engage with and enlarge experience has continued to be a significant strand in informal education practice. Second, and linked to this, Dewey's exploration of thinking and reflection – and the associated role of educators – has continued to be an inspiration. We can see it at work, for example, in the models developed by writers such as David Boud and Donald Schön. Third, his concern with interaction and environments for learning provide a continuing framework for practice. Last, his passion for democracy, for educating so that all may share in a common life, provides a strong rationale for practice in the associational settings in which informal educators work.

Key texts: There is rather a lot of material to choose from here. Three key 'educational' texts that seem to appeal most strongly to informal educators are:

Dewey, J. (1916) *Democracy and Education. An introduction to the philosophy of education* (1966 edn.), New York: Free Press. Classic discussion of education for democracy ('sharing in a common life') that includes an important reconceptualization of vocational learning. It remains (for me at least) an infuriating book to read. At times ideas are not expressed with the clarity they deserve; there is repetition; and not enough signposting for readers. But… there is gold in these hills.

Dewey, J. (1933) *How We Think. A restatement of the relation of reflective thinking to the educative process* (Revised edn.), Boston: D. C. Heath. Brilliant, accessible exploration of thinking and its relationship to learning. Dewey's concern with experience, interaction and reflection – and his worries about linear models of thinking still make for a rewarding read. The book's influence lives on in the recent concern with experience and reflection in writers like Boud, Kolb and Schön.

Dewey, J. (1938) *Experience and Education*,New York: Collier Books. (Collier edition first published 1963). In this book Dewey seeks seeks to move beyond dualities such as progressive / traditional – and to outline a philosophy of experience and its relation to education.

To approach Dewey's concern with experience and knowledge in more detail:

Dewey, J. (1929) *Experience and Nature*, New York: Dover. (Dover edition first published in 1958). Explores the relationship of the external world, the mind and knowledge.

Biographies: There have been a couple of excellent and fairly recent intellectual biographies:

Campbell, J. (1995) *Understanding John Dewey. Nature and co-operative intelligence*, Chicago: Open Court. Good, new, general introduction to Dewey's work. Campbell, as his subtitle suggests, focuses on the evaluative power of intelligence not as an individual possession but as a possession of the group.

Ryan, A. (1995) *John Dewey and the High Tide of American Liberalism*, New York: W. W. Norton. Clear and fair-minded evaluation of Deweyian liberalism.

Websites: Visit the Center for Dewey Studies, Carbondale. It gives details of his collected works; and access to the John Dewey Internet discussion group. You can also hear Dewey talk. **Center for Dewey Studies**. There is also a useful short guide to his publications and access to other sites on a Colorado site. You can get the full text of *Democracy and Education.* **John Dewey Links**.

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First published May 8, 1997.

Tagged with → community • democracy • education • experience • John Dewey • learning • publiv life • schooling

John Holt, learning and (un)schooling

infed.org

John Holt. John Holt's explorations of the failures of formal teaching and schooling influenced a generation of educators. By looking to the experiences and interests of children, and the sense they made of learning and education, we can find great possibility.

John Caldwell Holt (1923-1985)

forthcoming

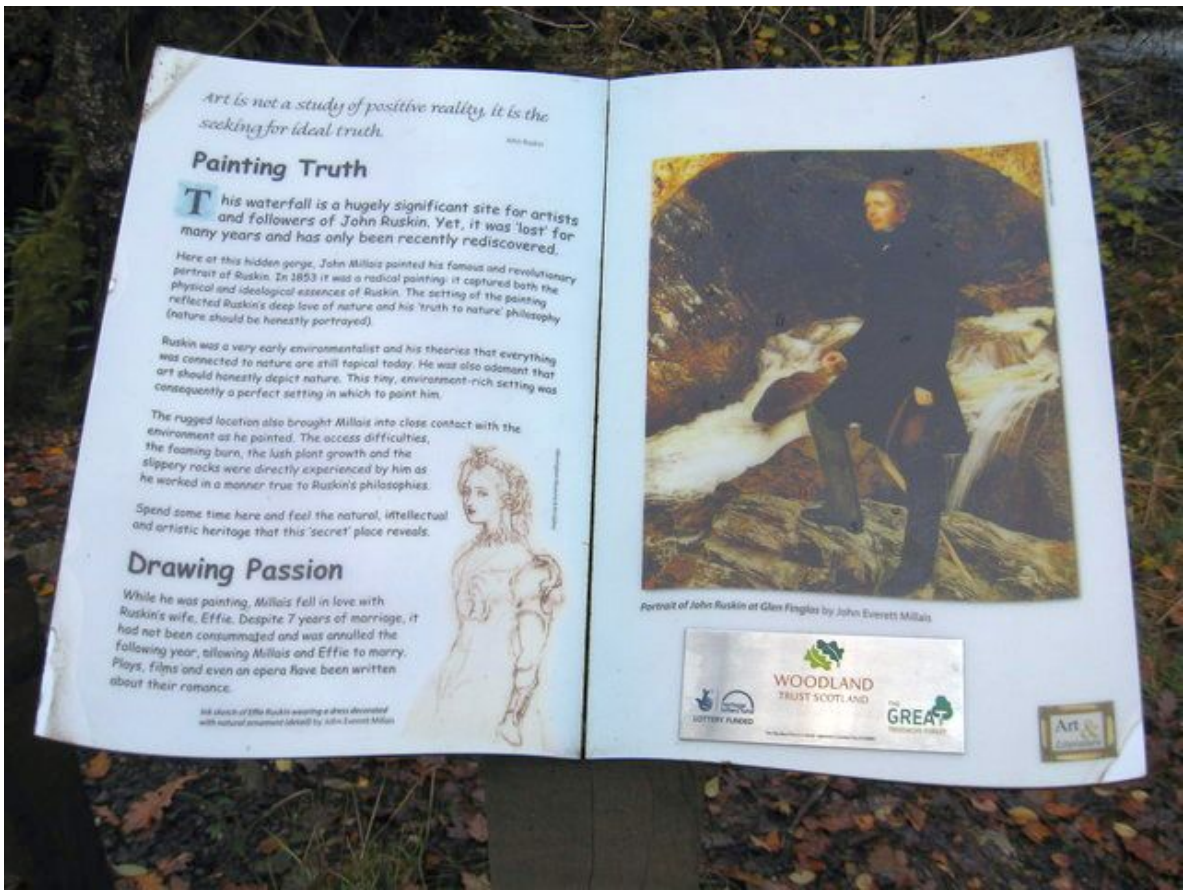
Websites

The best starting point is holtgws.com. It has details of his life, work and thinking – plus lots of photographs and resources.

Tagged with → children • deschooling • learning • schooling • unschooling

John Ruskin on education

infed.org



John Ruskin on education. John Ruskin altered the way we look at art and architecture, and was an influential social critic and advocate of economic change and reform. His desire to advance reform and to deepen people's appreciation of art inevitably brought him to teaching and to education. His work was to have lasting significance. But what did Ruskin advocate? What was special about his approach? Sara E. Atwood explores his contribution.

contents: introduction · john ruskin as educator: active learning, dynamic teaching · a moral philosophy of art · natural inequality; aptitude and circumstance · insufficiency of the "three R's"; purposeful education · dissatisfaction with contemporary education: ruskinian alternatives · unity of knowledge; involution of studies · fors clavigera: theory in practice · john ruskin's ideal schools · ideal curriculum · influences and legacy · references · about the writer · how to cite this piece

John Ruskin (1819-1900) was the most prominent and influential art critic of the nineteenth century as well as one of the period's most articulate social critics. A true polymath, Ruskin was by turns a gifted artist, amateur geologist, botanist, etymologist, mythologist, and early environmentalist. He established himself as a powerful new voice in the art world with *Modern Painters* (1843), intended as a defense of J.M.W. Turner. Over the course of five volumes published from 1843-1860 *Modern Painters* evolved into a moral philosophy of art. John Ruskin continued to demonstrate his technical knowledge and ability while further developing his moral aesthetic in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849) and *The Stones of Venice* (1851; 1853), drawing parallels between national art and national virtue. For Ruskin, art is inherently moral, and his art instruction is concerned not only with mechanical technique, but with teaching men how to achieve "the

right moral state" (20:73) necessary for the production of noble art. His social teaching, likewise, seeks always to reform men's hearts and to revive what is noble in human nature. Edward Alexander, among others, has written of John Ruskin's "removal from art to society" (154) in the latter half of his career. In fact, there is no such marked separation. Ruskin's work as art critic, instructor, and social reformer are dependent one upon the other.

During the 1850s John Ruskin began to focus more intently upon social reform. In 1857 he delivered two lectures, published as *The Political Economy of Art*; these were followed in 1860 by a series of essays on political economy which appeared (until an overwhelmingly negative reader response forced their cancellation) in the *Cornhill Magazine* and were later published under the title *Unto This Last*. Ruskin wrote more "Essays on Political Economy" for *Fraser's Magazine* (published as *Munera Pulveris,* 1872) and in 1865 published one of his best-known books, *Sesame and Lilies*. Ostensibly a consideration of the value of books and reading, the essays included in this book, like so much of John Ruskin's writing, address much deeper issues, including the role of education for women. The 1860s also saw the publication of *The Ethics of the Dust*, *Time and Tide*, and *The Queen of the Air*. These books, about geology, labor and politics, and mythology reflect the increasingly allusive nature of Ruskin's writing, which characterizes so much of his later work, including *Fors Clavigera* , *The Bible of Amiens,* and even his autobiography, *Praeterita.*

Fors Clavigera, the series of letters begun in 1871 and addressed "to the workmen and labourers of Great Britain," was also the vehicle for the foundation of John Ruskin's ideal community, The Guild of Saint George. The Guild was intended as an active manifestation of Ruskin's philosophy of social reform: its members would live cooperatively, producing their own food and goods and living "contented lives, in pure air, out of the way of unsightly objects, and emancipated from unnecessary mechanical occupation" (27:159). The Guild would try, he wrote, "to take [sic] some small piece of English ground beautiful, peaceful, and fruitful" (27:96). Their children would be educated according to Ruskinian educational precepts in the Schools of St. George, for which Ruskin had planned a library of great books, the *Bibliotheca Pastorum*. Although the Guild did not ultimately succeed in all its aims it was nonetheless one of the most important embodiments of John Ruskin's educational philosophy. Although he is perhaps best known today as an art critic and reformer, John Ruskin considered himself primarily a teacher. He may well have been describing himself when he wrote in 1865:

> *The moment we can use our possessions to any good purpose ourselves, the instinct of communicating that use to others rises side by side with our power. If you can read a book rightly, you will want others to hear it; if you can enjoy a picture rightly, you will want others to see it: learn how to manage a horse, a plough, or a ship, and you will desire to make your subordinates good horsemen, ploughmen, or sailors: you will never be able to see the fine instruments you are master of, abused (18:218).*

Ruskin repeatedly disowned any pretensions to genius and held that his particular talent lay in identifying and revealing the greatness of others. This same talent, combined with a formidable intellect and an unflagging curiosity, made him particularly effective as an educator. As Slade Professor of Art at Oxford, he taught the rising generation of privileged English gentlemen. But while he recognized and valued the importance of his Oxford professorship, his teaching was by no means limited to the University. In the course of his long life John Ruskin's teaching crossed both social and economic divides. He gave art instruction to laborers at the Working Men's College in Red Lion Square; taught drawing by correspondence to numerous private pupils; instructed the girls of Winnington Hall both in lectures and in frequent letters; supported and encouraged numerous artists; devised plans for his own schools under the aegis of The Guild of St. George; and taught, and continues to teach, through his books. The devotion of so many of his

students and disciples testifies to the deep impression left upon them by a teacher who scorned unsound and unproven theories in favour of "facts which you will find to be irrefragably true" (29:198), and who sought to enrich not only the mind, but the soul, the "motive power" (17:29) of men. Could it be possible, he challenged contemporary political economists in *Unto This Last*, that "among national manufactures, that of Souls of a good quality may not at last turn out a quite leadingly lucrative one?" (17:56). Ruskin's aims as an educator were a part of his program of social reform; thus, Ruskin's educational philosophy and vision are born of the same moral aesthetic that governs all his work.

John Ruskin as educator: active learning, dynamic teaching

John Ruskin believed in active learning and his approach to teaching was dynamic. His main concern, in correspondence and books as well as in lectures, was to make his readers (or listeners) *see* clearly, to provide visual, tangible examples of the principles or subjects he taught. Charlotte Bronte, in a letter to W. S. Williams following the publication of *Modern Painters I,* offered a powerful testament to Ruskin's abilities: "Hitherto I have had only instinct to guide me in judging of art; I feel now as if I had been walking blindfold—this book seems to give me eyes" (qtd. in *Early Years* 73). Throughout his teaching, Ruskin sought to give sight to all his students. "[T]he greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world," he wrote in the third volume of *Modern Painters* "is to *see* something and tell what it *saw* plainly. Hundreds of people can talk for one who can think, but thousands can think for one who can see. To see clearly is poetry, prophecy, and religion,—all in one" (5:333).

The desire to learn through doing was the motive force behind much of John Ruskin's work. His researches for books such as *The Stones of Venice* and others are one instance: he filled numerous portfolios with detailed sketches, made plaster casts of various architectural details for further study, and climbed scaffolding in order to better view the details of ceilings, arches and capitals. His lectures, too, almost always involved visual aids intended to further illuminate his subject, and the pages of his letters are frequently decorated with illustrative sketches and diagrams. In his Inaugural Lecture at the Cambridge School of Art in 1858, Ruskin held that valuable drawings were those "in which the pupil [had] learned much in doing" as these would produce "the most precious results for his understanding and his heart, not for his hand" (16:181-2). Drawing, Ruskin claimed in a lecture at the Saint Martin's School of Art in 1857 "enabled [students] to say and to see what they could not otherwise say or see, and it also enabled them to learn certain lessons which they could not otherwise learn" (16:439). By drawing, "they obtained a power of the eye and a power of the mind wholly different from that known to any other discipline" (16:440). Ray Haslam points out that "the education of sight was for Ruskin a far more complex thing than simply the training of sense perception—'intellectual lens and moral retina.' This therefore became the central teaching objective through the dual process of looking and drawing. For John Ruskin, the process of drawing hardly existed as an activity in its own right. Within an educational context it could become a powerful tool for learning in general" ("According" 153). Thus *The Elements of Drawing* (1857), an instruction manual aimed at students and amateurs, is as much about the education of sight and taste as it is about the technical aspects of drawing and is at the same time part of Ruskin's program of moral education. Between the diagrams, sketches, and experiments, Ruskin's analogies serve to "connect artistic with moral laws, and to suggest an underlying harmony in the universe" (CW 15:xviii).

A moral philosophy of art

Although John Ruskin's aim is always pedagogical, some of his books address educational issues more directly than others, particularly *Sesame and Lilies*, *The Ethics of the Dust*, *Time and Tide*, *The Eagle's Nest*, *The Bible of Amiens*, and the most systematic expression of his educational philosophy, *Fors Clavigera*. As his editors Cook and Wedderburn point out, Ruskin did not write as a specialist; just as his educational writings often anticipate or echo the work of men like Pestalozzi, Froebel, and Thring, whose work he had never read, they also sometimes "forestall or unwittingly repeat the Reports of Matthew Arnold" (CW27:lx), or the sentiments of Cardinal Newman. Like these contemporaries, Ruskin drew upon the "ancient wisdom" (CW27:lx) of Plato, Xenophon and others. What sets John Ruskin's approach to education apart is its

combination of ancient wisdom with Ruskin's personal vision and mythology, and with the moral aesthetic that governs all his work, from art criticism to social reform. Thus, Ruskin connects the act of seeing clearly to education and to morality: "Well, my friends, the final result of the education I want you to give your children, will be, in a few words, this. They will know what it is to see the sky. They will know what it is to breathe it. And they will know, best of all, what it is to behave under it, as in the presence of a Father who is in heaven" (27:164).

Natural inequality; aptitude and circumstance

In "Modern Education" (1853), an appendix to *The Stones of Venice*, John Ruskin defines one of his foremost educational principles: education according to aptitude and circumstance. "The great leading error of modern times," he writes, "is the mistaking erudition for education" (11:261). True education, as he sees it, is concerned not with how much men know, but with "what will fit them to do their work and be happy in it" (11:262). Ruskin repudiated the modern system of competitive examination and of prizes and honors, which, he asserts, ought to be the "rewards of a man's consistent and kindly life, not of a youth's temporary and selfish exertions" (29:498). Some children, Ruskin holds, will naturally desire education and profit by it, while others will dislike it and be disgraced by it, regardless of prizes or punishments. Thus the native intellectual inequality of men guarantees a natural balance in society, "each in his place and work" (29:498). As no two men are exactly alike, they should not be educated in exactly the same way:

> *Among all men, whether of the upper or lower orders, the differences are eternal and irreconcilable, between one individual and another, born under absolutely the same circumstances. One man is made of agate, another of oak; one of slate, another of clay. The education of the first is polishing; of the second, seasoning; of the third, rending; of the fourth, moulding. It is of no use to season the agate; it is vain to try to polish the slate; but both are fitted, by the qualities they possess, for services in which they may be honoured (11:262).*

Though such ideas claimed a place in the work of many European educationalists they had yet to make an impact upon English mass schooling, characterised as it was by the accumulation of mechanical facts, competitive examination, and the dreary code of "payment by results."<href="#1″>(note 1)

While John Ruskin declares that "*every man in a Christian kingdom ought to be equally well educated*" (11:263, Ruskin's emphasis), he did not believe in the equality of all men. Rather, he cites the "impossibility of equality among men [and] the good which arises from their inequality" (11:260). As he saw it, men would do better in endeavoring to fill their appointed positions in society worthily, than in scrambling to get out of them. In a society governed by the laws of Human Economy that Ruskin envisioned, a Law of Help would prevail, each individual contributing to the successful operation of the whole society, resulting in a balance dependent on helpful fellowship rather than on equality. Education, then, should enable a man to understand "the significance of almost every act of [his] daily life, in its ultimate operation upon himself and others" (11:260). Thus for John Ruskin education encompasses more than the "three R's"; it is instead, as Collingwood recognized, "closely bound up in a grand scheme of life and politics,—Platonic in its breadth of view" (C2:323).

Insufficiency of the "three R's"; purposeful education

John Ruskin held that the "three R's" should not constitute the sum of a child's education—a position that critics were quick to deride. In *Fors Clavigera*, he announces his intention not "to teach (as usually understood) the three R's" (29:479). Reading and arithmetic, he explains, often hinder a child's acquisition and memory of ideas; Ruskin would have his students "read less, and remember more" (29:489). Yet Ruskin does not dismiss reading altogether, only aimless and careless reading, which inevitably results in "knowledge without discretion—the knowledge which a fool receives only to puff up his stomach, and sparkle in his cockscomb" (29:498). For John Ruskin, reading is useless without the moral grounding

necessary for accurate, thoughtful understanding. As he states in *Fors*, Letter 67, "Intellectual before,—(much more without)—moral education is, in completeness, impossible; and in incompleteness, a calamity" (28:655). Ruskin declares of arithmetic that "the importance at present attached to it is a mere filthy folly, coming of the notion that every boy is to become first a banker's clerk and then a banker,—and that every woman's principal business is in checking the cook's accounts" (29:503). Instead, John Ruskin proposes a more pragmatic approach, in line with his commitment to active learning: children should be given small incomes in reward for due labor, by which means they will more readily learn the value of money, orderly habits, and the practical as opposed to merely mechanical application of sums (see Hannah More for an earlier variant of this orientation in the context of Sunday schooling). Ruskin proposed to use such an approach in his Schools of St. George as well, in which the study of geometry, for instance "shall be very early learned, on a square and diagonal of actual road . . . . And similarly every bit of science the children learn shall be directly applied by them, and the use of it felt, which involves the truth of it being known in the best possible way, and without any debating thereof. And that they cannot apply they shall not be troubled to know" (28:49). This idea of purposeful education is central to Ruskin's philosophy. He proposes that children should learn, through active effort, that which will best fit them for their position in life, as well as that which will make them knowledgeable of the world around them. His Schools of St. George were to be provided with gardens, playgrounds, cultivable land, laboratories, and workshops to facilitate active learning.

Dissatisfaction with contemporary education; Ruskinian alternatives

In *Fors* Letter 50 John Ruskin takes direct aim at contemporary secular and religious education. Echoing the Wordsworthian sentiment that governed his educational ideals, Ruskin maintains that all children should be taught "what to admire, what to hope for, and what to love" (28:255), an aim he declares inconsistent with modern notions of education and modern values:

> *What to admire, or wonder at! Do you expect a child to wonder at—being taught that two and two make four—(though if only its masters had the sense to teach that, honestly, it would be something)—or at the number of copies of nasty novels and false news a steam-engine can print for its reading? What to hope? Yes, my secular friends—What? That it shall be the richest shopman in the street; and be buried with black feathers enough over its coffin? What to love—Yes, my ecclesiastical friends, and who is its neighbour, think you? Will you meet these three demands of mine with your three R's or your catechism?*

> *And how would I meet them myself? Simply by never, so far as I could help it, letting a child read what is not worth reading, or see what is not worth seeing; and by making it live a life which, whether it will or no, shall enforce honourable hope of continuing long in the land—whether of men or God (28:255).*

John Ruskin believed that modern education offered only a hotchpotch of knowledge. In *Fors*, Letter 30 he prints as "sufficiently characteristic" (27:558) four questions from an examination given to the children of St. Matthew's National School. The questions, consisting of various complex mathematical equations and seemingly arbitrary word games ("How many different permutations can be made of the letters in the word *Chillianwallah*? How many if arranged in a circle, instead of in a straight line?") are mind-numbing and, Ruskin argues, largely meaningless:

> *I am bound to state that I could not answer any one of these interrogations myself, and that my readers must therefore allow for the bias of envy in the expression of my belief that to have been able to answer the sort of questions which the First of May once used to propose to English children,—whether they knew a cowslip from an oxlip, and a blackthorn from a white,—*

> *would have been incomparably more to the purpose, both of getting their living, and liking it (27:559).*

Unity of knowledge; involution of studies

John Ruskin countered the modern approach by urging the importance of the unity of knowledge, one of his central educational principles. In a letter to the Reverend Frederick Temple (later Archbishop of Canterbury) dated September 5, 1857, Ruskin had outlined what he considered the ideal method, as he saw it, of integrating art education into general education. The main value of his scheme, he explained to Temple, would "be brought out by judicious involution of its studies" (16:453), and by emphasizing the relations between facts. For example, Ruskin writes, an ideal examination paper in Botany would require a student to possess not only botanical knowledge, but a sound knowledge of other studies as well, such as geography, drawing, mathematics, chemistry, political economy, and literature. Questions regarding, among other things, the mythological symbolism of a particular plant, its influence on civilization, and its commercial value in London would demand an awareness of the ways in which the various branches of knowledge work together. This holistic approach to education was one of John Ruskin's first principles, arising from his insistence on the necessity of seeing "clearly," understanding all things in relation to each other. "The system of the world is entirely one" he wrote in *Modern Painters V*, "small things and great are alike part of one mighty whole" (7:452). Ruskin urged the correlation of studies in such works as "Modern Education," *Unto This Last*, *Munera Pulveris,* and *Time and Tide.* In *The Ethics of the Dust*, he demonstrated that the study of crystallography might teach social reform, political economy, and virtue as well as science. Ruskin's letters to the students at Winnington Hall, with their emphasis on discovering connections and analyzing relations, their alternately playful and serious tone, their use of dialectic, range of allusion, and challenging Biblical analysis, can also be seen as a rehearsal for *Fors*, the work that best exemplifies this principle of the judicious involution of studies.

Fors Clavigera: theory in practice

John Ruskin's method of doing so is to weave together various threads of information intended to teach the very values he preached. To this end, he combines assorted readings in literature, including Marmontel, Gotthelf, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Dante, Plato, and others; readings in English history (Froissart), Greek history and mythology, and heraldry; studies in art, including Carpaccio, Botticelli, Giotto, and Holbein; studies in natural history; sketches of the lives of great men; commentary on current events often accompanied by excerpts from contemporary newspapers or books; and criticism of nineteenth century social and political economy. What at first appear the oddest of images and allusions—a recipe for Yorkshire goose pie, potted crocodile, Theseus' vegetable soup, serpents, and dragons—are charged with a symbolism that grows with each layer of meaning. *Fors* is also suffused with nostalgia, reflecting Ruskin's tendency to locate his social ideal in the past, especially in the Middle Ages. The letters are marked by a persistent comparison of past to present, the past unfailingly signifying ideals either decaying or abandoned in the present. Such comparisons simultaneously convict and inspire, strengthening John Ruskin's critiques of English society—his condemnation of modern political economy, social injustice, religion, education, etc.—while exemplifying the values and behaviors that he hoped to revive through his teaching. Excerpts of biography, myth, fiction, and history, representative of the virtues of bygone ages, are juxtaposed with contemporary newspaper extracts, letters, and anecdotes illustrating the vulgarity, cruelty, and faithlessness of the nineteenth century. Far from being random digressions or puzzling fragments, the historical narratives are instead an integral part of Ruskin's analysis of modern society, and of his educational strategy, each extract becoming a teaching tool, a lesson in how to reform the individual and society "[W]hat a stiff business we have in hand," Ruskin exclaims, with a touch of his characteristic humor, in Letter 43, "—rent, capital, and interest all to be attacked at once! And a method of education shown to be possible in virtue, as cheaply as in vice!" (28:110).

Indeed, the gravity of Ruskin's concerns are frequently leavened by a light touch of quick, dry wit such as

this last. John Ruskin often relieved the sternness of his teaching with humor, frequent digression, and self deprecation, creating a feeling of intimacy with his audience or readers, and the bitterness and vituperation that alienated many critics of *Fors* is balanced by an appealing humor and playfulness. The editors of the Library Edition advise that "a certain quality of humour, and tact for discrimination, are necessary for the right reading of *Fors*" (27:xxviii), and Collingwood notes that "a great part of 'Fors' . . . is a coruscating play of wit, dazzling with side-glances of allusion which indeed require sharp watching to catch" (C2:403). For example, in Letter 11, "The Abbot's Chapel," October 15, 1871, Ruskin has a bit of fun at his own expense while simultaneously mocking the smugness of well-bred ladies and gentlemen. Contrasting his sightseeing party to Furness Abbey with a group of rough laborers encountered on the train, Ruskin admits that "we were all in a very virtuous and charitable temper: we had had an excellent dinner at the new inn, and had earned that portion of our daily bread by admiring the Abbey all the morning. So we pitied the poor workmen doubly—first, for being so wicked as to get drunk at four in the afternoon; and, secondly, for being employed in work so disgraceful as throwing up clods of earth onto an embankment, instead of spending the day, like us, in admiring the Abbey" (27:183). "Aesthetical persons" (27:184) like himself, Ruskin notes wryly, "like to have done our eight hours work of admiring abbeys before we dine" (27:184). In Letter 27, Ruskin remarks impishly that "as my friends are unanimous at present in begging me never to write to newspapers, I am somewhat under the impression that I ought to resign my Oxford professorship, and try to get a sub-editorship of the Telegraph" (27:499). Discussing bees in Letter 51, Ruskin declares that he does not want a book to tell him "whether [a bee] has its brains in the small of its back, or nowhere in particular, like a modern political economist" (28:277). As Birch notes, Ruskin's humor in *Fors* is often mingled with "the spirit of mockery" (180). While Ruskin alternately provokes, stimulates, puzzles, and even berates his readers, he often teases them as well, laughing with and at them.

This lightening of John Ruskin's often stern pronouncements of principle was a feature of all his teaching, both written and in his lectures. The dialogue between the Old Lecturer and the girls in *The Ethics of the Dust* is characterized by affection and humor, recalling the often bantering tone of Ruskin's Sunday letters to the students at Winnington Hall. And Collingwood remembers the change in Ruskin's tone, when lecturing, from "artificially cadenced" (C2:383) to vivacious as he left off reading his prepared passages and began to extemporize, excitedly describing his specimens and working out his subject with dramatic gestures and lively pantomime, so that he "became whatever he talked about" (2:382-3).Cook recalls the amusement of Ruskin's audience during one lecture when "a hidden treasure was disclosed in the shape of a sketch from Tintoret's 'Paradise,' which the Professor—by chance or design—held out wrong side up. 'Ah, well,' he said, joining in the general laughter, 'what does it matter? For in Tintoret's 'Paradise' you have heaven all round you'" (*Studies in Ruskin* 59).

John Ruskin's ideal schools

The very structure of *Fors*, with its emphasis on active, associative learning, dialectic, connection and comparison, reflects and exemplifies John Ruskin's educational philosophy, drawing together various strands of thought expressed throughout his books. Yet Ruskin also offers in *Fors* a blueprint for an ideal educational program, intended for use in the projected schools of Saint George. For Ruskin, education is above all a moral and ethical process, not an accumulation of facts or achievements, and moral education, as he expresses it in Letter 67 "consists in making the creature we have to educate, clean, and obedient [and] practically serviceable to other creatures" (28:655). While he requires his students to know names, certain dates, and to have a solid understanding of basic facts, Francis O'Gorman observes that his primary concern is "the assimilation of knowledge with values" (46). Education, then, bears the duty "of transmitting the kinds of knowledge, values, and beliefs John Ruskin wished to impart to the children of the present and thus to the adults of the new century" (O'Gorman 46).

In Letter 8, August 1871, in which Ruskin formally begins the St. George's Fund, he offers a brief outline of education under St. George that calls to mind passages of "Modern Education," *Unto This Last*, and *Time and Tide*. The children of the Guild,

> *shall be educated compulsorily in agricultural schools inland, and naval schools by the sea, the indispensable first condition of such education being that the boys learn either to ride or to sail; the girls to spin, weave, and sew, and at a proper age to cook all ordinary food exquisitely; the youth of both sexes to be disciplined daily in the strictest practice of vocal music; and for morality, to be taught gentleness to all brute creatures,—finished courtesy to each other,—to speak truth with rigid care, and to obey orders with the precision of slaves. Then, as they get older, they are to learn the natural history of the place they live in,—to know Latin boys and girls both,—and the history of five cities: Athens, Rome, Venice, Florence, and London (27:143).*

Many of John Ruskin's first principles of education are expressed in this short passage: the cultivation of the land; bodily exercise, music, and dance; the practical arts, such as spinning, weaving, and sewing; self-sufficiency; natural history and local knowledge; obedience and accuracy; gentleness (compassion, mercy) to all creatures; the example of figures and events from past history.

Ruskin's ideal curriculum

In Letter 94, John Ruskin describes the curriculum of his ideal school: "For the school itself, the things taught will be music, geometry, astronomy, botany, zoology, to all; drawing, and history, to children who have a gift for either. And finally, to all children of whatever gift, grade, or age, the laws of Honour, the habit of Truth, the Virtue of Humility, and the Happiness of Love . . . . including all the habits of Obedience and instincts of Reverence which are dwelt on throughout 'Fors,' and all my other books" (29:484). Ruskin urges the importance of obedience throughout *Fors,* noting in Letter 37 that despite "our present state of utter moral disintegration" (28:20), both obedience and honor are instinctive in man, requiring only to be drawn out and revived by the right sort of instruction. Thus, "the first essential point in the education given to the children will be the habit of instant, finely accurate, and totally unreasoning, obedience to their fathers, mothers, and tutors . . . . The second essential will be the understanding of the nature of honor, making the obedience solemn and constant" (28:20).

The scheme of education that John Ruskin describes in *Fors* is thus intended to teach the virtue and honor that "our present forms of education refuse to teach" (29:499). In his penultimate letter Ruskin, uncertain "whether it has more distressed, or encouraged me, to find out how much is wanting, and how much to be corrected, in the hitherto accepted mode of school education for our youngest children" (29:493), is concerned once again with offering alternative methods of instruction. One such alternative, derived from Plato, centers on a belief in the wholesome and moral effect of music. Music had long been an integral part of John Ruskin's moral aesthetic; as early as 1838, he had written an essay entitled "On the Relative Dignity of the Studies of Painting and Music and the Advantages to be Derived from Their Pursuit," first published in its entirety in the Library Edition by Cook and Wedderburn.As Delia da Sousa Correa notes "in addition to writing repeatedly about music education [during the 1870s], Ruskin invested considerable time in his own musical training" (112), and by 1880 was "composing song-settings himself" (129). In Letter 95, he notes that he has been attempting (unsuccessfully) to construct a sort of lyre "by which very young children could be securely taught the relations of sound in the octave" (29:500). In Letter 82 John Ruskin espouses "Plato's distinct assertion that, as gymnastic exercise is necessary to keep the body healthy, musical exercise is necessary to keep the soul healthy; and that the proper nourishment of the intellect and passions can no more take place without music, than the proper functions of the stomach and the blood without exercise" (29:239). Thus each school, Ruskin proposes in Letter 95, ought ideally to have "a grammar of simple and pure music" (29:500) designed to teach sincerity and purity; in effect, to help instil morality.

Again following Plato, Ruskin next insists on the importance of the "moral faculty" (29:501) of elocution in its bearing on accuracy and memory. Accordingly, students should spend part of each day listening to their master read some bit of poetry or prose—Chaucer, Spenser, Scott—always excluding "merely didactic or descriptive books" (29:502) such as the penny Children's Prizes that Ruskin considered so ineffective and demoralizing. Children should also study the Bible closely, memorizing important passages of verse—as

John Ruskin had done as a child under his mother's tutelage—as well as memorizing lines of "such poetry as would always be helpful and strengthening to them" (29:503), with the exception of Shakespeare, which should never be used as a school book, but should rather be "known by thinking, not by mouthing" (29:502). As an exercise in narration, children "ought to be frequently required to give account of themselves" (29:503) and their daily experiences.

Believing geography to be among the most important subjects of study, John Ruskin decries what he considers the inaccuracy and inadequacy of modern maps. Proper physical and historical maps should, he urges, take the place of modern "cheap barbarisms" (29:506), forming part of a standard school geography of the British Empire. The hand-coloring of these maps would then form part of the drawing curriculum, reinforcing the involution of studies. Astronomy would also intersect both drawing exercises and geometry, students being required to draw weekly "the arc described by the sun, with its following and preceding stars, from point to point of the horizon" (29:507), the primary goal of such lessons being to teach the child the "places and names of the stars when it can see them" (29:507). Thus all three subjects would teach the child how to see and understand the world clearly. Similarly, instruction in writing should be carried out in connection with study in drawing and geometry, and should be aided by the finest examples of illuminated writing intended to guide and stimulate clever children to imitation.

Zoology and botany, John Ruskin holds, should be taught with the aid of quality illustrations by respected naturalists and botanists, which he proposed to obtain using funds from the Guild of Saint George. His own textbooks of birds and botany, *Love's Meinie* and *Proserpina*, would also be used in his ideal schools.

Lastly, needlework and dressmaking, which symbolized for Ruskin the social responsibilities of women, as demonstrated in *The Ethics of the Dust* should also form a part of the curriculum for girls.

In this brief outline of John Ruskin's ideal curriculum, which echoes the substance of previous letters, we recognize the moral imperative that drives Ruskin's "educational legislation" (28:440) in the prominence given to those subjects that will teach not only practical skills but personal discipline and right conduct. We recognize too Ruskin's characteristic emphasis, displayed throughout his books as well as in his private and public teaching, on association, the unity of all subjects of study, and the importance of active, visual learning.

Ruskin: influences and legacy

John Ruskin's educational philosophy influenced the work and ideas of such educationalists as Sir John Lubbock (1834-1913), onetime President of the Ruskin Society of Birmingham, and Warden of the Guild of Undergraduates at Birmingham University, who urged a science characterized by a Ruskinian love of nature and respect for life and marked by reverence and admiration; Physicist Oliver Lodge (1851-1940), who in 1900 became the first Principal of Birmingham University, published articles about Ruskin's science teaching in the journal *Saint George*, which was initially published by the Birmingham Ruskin Society,while attempting to implement a broader curriculum at his university; Patrick Geddes, Professor of Botany at University College, Dundee from 1889-1914, and director of the Edinburgh Summer Schools of Art and Science, published *John Ruskin, Economist* in 1884. At the Edinburgh Summer Schools, he encouraged the involution of studies recommended by Ruskin, believing that schools "should aim to offer the kind of completeness in liberal education that, he thought, Ruskin had described in *Fors Clavigera*" (O'Gorman 45). Several educators addressed Ruskin's principles in lectures or articles, including the Reverend J.P Faunthorpe (note 2), Sir Michael Sadler and Prof. Churton Collins. These men were among a group of individuals, including such figures as J. Marshall Mather, Henry Rose, Julia Firth, and William Jolly, who according to O'Gorman "were or came to be in positions of considerable responsibility and influence with regard to education" (49) and through whom Ruskin's educational ideals "in various reconfigurations, attained, however indirectly, a distinct degree of purchase" (O'Gorman 49).

One of the names most memorably associated with John Ruskin's is that of John Howard Whitehouse, founder in 1919 of Bembridge School on the Isle of Wight, companion of the Guild of Saint George, founding member of the Ruskin Birmingham Society, editor of the journal *Saint George*, Liberal MP for Mid-

Lanark from 1910-1918, and future owner of Ruskin's Lake District home, Brantwood. After Ruskin's death, Whitehouse amassed an extensive collection of Ruskin's books, manuscripts, drawings, letters, and other items, making his major purchases at the 'Dispersal Sales' held at Brantwood in 1930 and 1931, and storing his collection at Bembridge. Whitehouse played a pivotal role in keeping Ruskin's ideas alive and in forwarding his work. He implemented many of John Ruskin's educational principles at Bembridge, and was the editor, in 1919, of a collection of lectures occasioned by the centenary of Ruskin's birth, written by Ruskinians such as John Masefield, Laurence Binyon, and Dean Inge. In his introduction to the volume, Whitehouse emphasizes the enduring influence of Ruskin's work in social reform, identifying him as the "definite pioneer" (11) of "policies relating to land and reform, the methods of dealing with slums, modern methods of taxation, the scientific treatment of such problems as unemployment, sweating, the care of the aged poor, the hours and conditions of labour, the reform of our educational system, the planning of cities, and many others . . . . which have since been carried out in the letter and the spirit, affecting almost every aspect of the social change and reconstruction which we have witnessed during the past four or five decades" (11).

Several schools honored John Ruskin by adopting his name, thus linking "the Master of the St. George's Guild with various schemes for the better education of the people" (CW30:xli). The London School Board named the John Ruskin School in Beresford Street, Walworth, in honor of Ruskin's influence as an educationalist and teacher and a Ruskin Hall was established at Birkenhead. In Norfolk, the Ruskin School Home, founded in 1900, intended to "'take for our basis John Ruskin's educational idea'" (qtd. in Dearden 56). Ruskin College, Oxford, which boasted trade union associations and links to the University, was founded in 1899 by two American admirers and is still in operation today, offering educational opportunities to adult students of limited qualifications and means, and welcoming students who, according to its webpage "want to put something back into society." Dearden writes that "Trenton, Missouri, had its Ruskin College (1900) with courses to study industrial economy, a social-science-oriented liberal arts course, and a business course" (55). Schools continue to honor Ruskin today. In September, 2005, Anglia Polytechnic University received Privy Council approval to change its name to Anglia Ruskin University (Wildman, 47). The University incorporates the Cambridge School of Art, which Ruskin opened with his Inaugural Address in 1858. According to former University Vice-Chancellor Professor David Tidmarsh, the new name honors Ruskin as "'a mould-breaking educator, deeply committed to making higher education accessible to all and passionate about teaching and work-related skills'" (qtd. in Wildman, 48). The University has also refurbished the Ruskin Gallery at the Cambridge School of Art.

The work of these educationalists and institutions, inspired by John Ruskin's passionate conviction, recall his directive in *The Crown of Wild Olive*, repeated emphatically in Letter 94 of *Fors*:

> *Educate, or govern, they are one and the same word. Education does not mean teaching people to know what they do not know. It means teaching them to behave as they do not behave . . . . It is not teaching the youth of England the shapes of letters and the tricks of numbers; and then leaving them to turn their arithmetic to roguery, and their literature to lust. It is, on the contrary, training them into the perfect exercise and kingly continence of their bodies and souls. It is painful, continual, and difficult work; to be done by kindness and by watching, by warning, by precept, and by praise,—but above all—by example (18:502; 29:485).*

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See also

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Acknowledgements: Picture: John Ruskin in Glen Finglas was sourced from the Geograph website and is reproduced here under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 2.0 Generic (CC BY-SA 2.0) licence. Photograph by Carol Walker.

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How to cite this article: (2008) Atwood, S. E. 'John Ruskin on education', *the encyclopaedia of informal education*. [http://infed.org/mobi/john-ruskin-on-education. Retrieved: insert date].

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1 Robert Lowe's Revised Code of 1862 made school funding and teachers' salaries dependent upon students' success in standard government examinations.

2 Ruskin's relationship with Faunthorpe, and with Whitelands College, constitutes another fascinating and instructive chapter in the development of his educational philosophy. For more on this subject, see Sara Atwood, *A Cowslip From an Oxlip and a Blackthorn From a White: Fors Clavigera and Ruskin's Educational Philosophy,* Ch. 3

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Karl Marx and education

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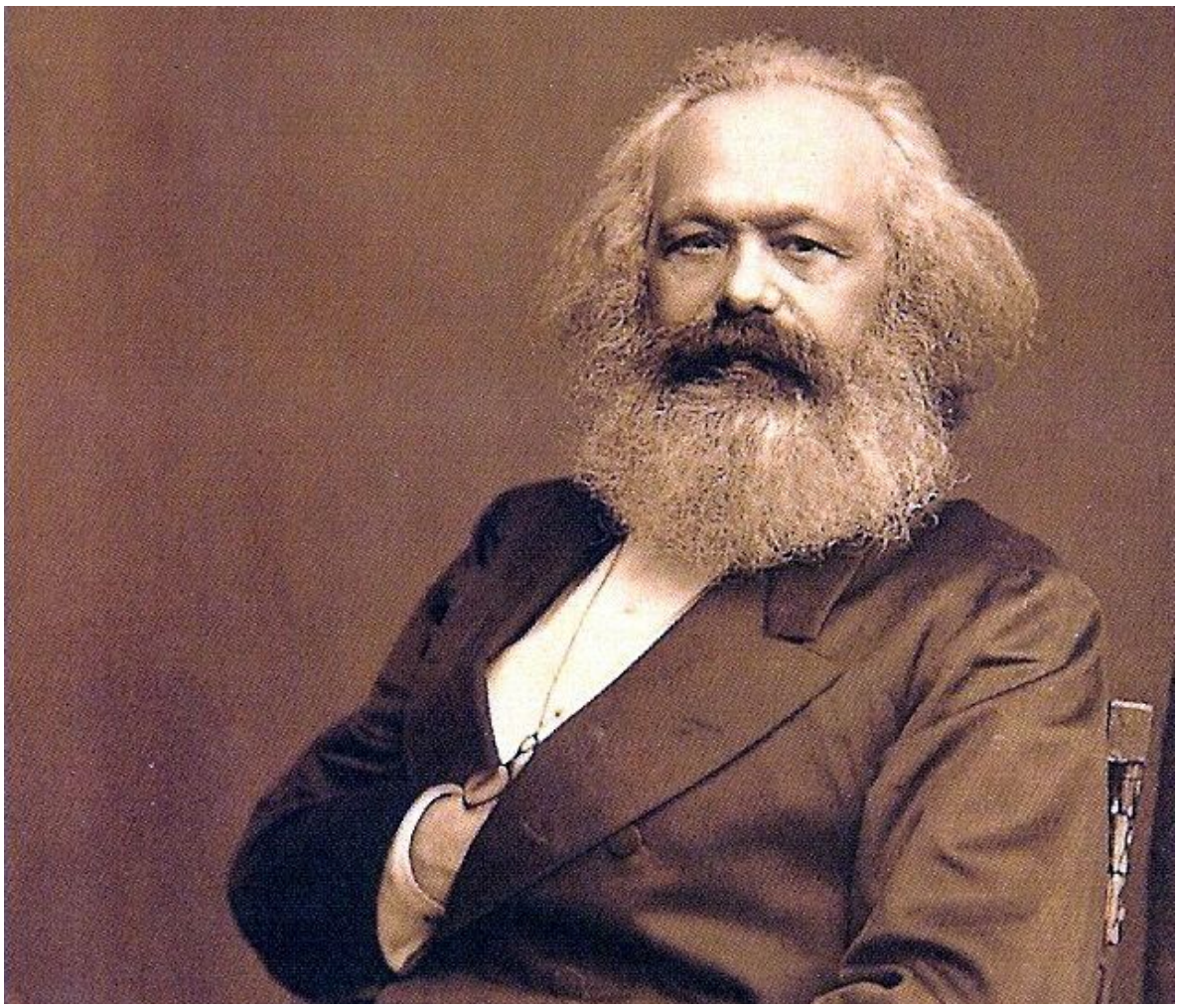

Karl Marx and education. What significance does Marx have for educators and animateurs today? An introduction and assessment by Barry Burke.

contents: introduction · life · Karl Marx as a thinker · Karl Marx and the class struggle · the communist manifesto · Karl Marx's relevance to knowledge and education · further reading · links · how to cite this article

Karl Marx never wrote anything directly on education – yet his influence on writers, academics, intellectuals and educators who came after him has been profound. The power of his ideas has changed the way we look at the world. Whether you accept his analysis of society or whether you oppose it, he cannot be ignored. As Karl Popper, a fierce opponent of Marxism, has claimed 'all modern writers are indebted to Marx, even if they do not know it'.

Life

Karl Marx was born in Trier on May 5, 1818. He studied at the universities of Bonn, Berlin, and Jena. His early writings for, and editorship of, the Cologne newspaper *Rheinische Zeitung* brought him quickly into conflict with the government. He was critical of social conditions and existing political arrangements. In 1843 after only a year in post, Marx was compelled to resign as editor. Soon afterwards the paper was also forced to stop publication. Marx then went to Paris (where he first met Engels). His radicalism had come to

be recognizably 'communistic'. His revolutionary analysis and activity led to him being ordered to leave Paris in 1845. Karl Marx went onto settle in Brussels and began to organize Communist Correspondence Committees in a number of European cities. This led to the organizing of the Communist League (and the writing of the *Communist Manifesto* with Engels) (see below). With the unrest and revolutionary activity of 1848, Marx was again forced to leave a country. He returned to Paris and then to the Rhineland. In Cologne he set up and edited the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung,* and continued organizing. In 1849 Marx was arrested and tried on a charge of incitement to armed insurrection. He got off, but was expelled from Germany.

Karl Marx spent the remainer of his life in England, arriving in London in 1849 (see Karl Marx in Soho). His most productive years were spent in the Reading Room of the British Museum where much of his research and writing took place. He wrote a great deal although hardly any of it was published in English until after his death in 1883.

Karl Marx as a thinker

Marx's intellectual output is difficult to categorize for whilst his major work, Das Kapital, translated into English as *Capital,* is a work of economics, he is more popularly recognised as a social scientist and a political philosopher. As C.Wright Mills has explained: "as with most complicated thinkers, there is no *one* Marx. The various presentations of his work which we can construct from his books, pamphlets, articles, letters written at different times in his own development, depend upon our point of interest …; every student must earn his own Marx." So today, we have Marxist anthropology, Marxist literary criticism, Marxist aesthetics, Marxist pedagogy, Marxist cultural studies, Marxist sociology etc. His intellectual output lasted from the early 1840s to the early l880s and over that long period of 40 years produced a number of works that have enriched the thinking of those who came after him.

There are many who see different stages in the thinking of Karl Marx. His earlier works are sometimes referred to as showing a humanistic Marx, a philosophical Marx who was concerned with the role of the individual, with what human beings are actually like, with the relationship between consciousness and existence. The later Marx, we are told, wrote as a social scientist, a political economist who was more concerned with social structure than with individuals. It *is* possible to read this into the work of Karl Marx but it is also possible to see a basic thread going right through all his work. One of the reasons for this is that one of his major works, the *Grundrisse* or *Outlines,* described by David McLellan, Marx's biographer as "the most fundamental of all Marx's writings" was not published in English until the 1970s. It is quite easy, therefore, to see why there are different perspectives on Karl Marx, why my Marx can be different from your Marx.

Karl Marx on the class struggle

So what was it that made Karl Marx so important? At the cornerstone of his thinking is the concept of the class struggle. He was not unique in discovering the existence of classes. Others had done this before him. What Marx did that was new was to recognize that the existence of classes was bound up with particular modes of production or economic structure and that the proletariat, the new working class that Capitalism had created, had a historical potential leading to the abolition of all classes and to the creation of a classless society. He maintained that "the history of all existing society is a history of class struggle". Each society, whether it was tribal, feudal or capitalist was characterized by the way its individuals produced their means of subsistence, their material means of life, how they went about producing the goods and services they needed to live. Each society created a ruling class and a subordinate class as a result of their mode of production or economy. By their very nature the relationship between these two was antagonistic. Marx referred to this as the relations of production. Their interests were not the same. The feudal economy was characterized by the existence of a small group of lords and barons that later developed into a landed aristocracy and a large group of landless peasants. The capitalist economy that superseded it was characterized by a small group of property owners who owned the means of production i.e. the factories, the mines and the mills and all the machinery within them. This group was also referred to as the

bourgeoisie or capitalist class. Alongside them was a large and growing working class. He saw the emergence of this new propertyless working class as the agent of its own self emancipation. It was precisely the working class, created and organized into industrial armies, that would destroy its creator and usher in a new society free from exploitation and oppression. “What the bourgeoisie, therefore, produces, above all, is its own grave-diggers”.

The Communist Manifesto

These ideas first saw the light of day as an integrated whole in the *Communist Manifesto* which Marx wrote with his compatriot Frederick Engels in 1847/8. The Manifesto begins with a glowing tribute to the historical and revolutionary role of the bourgeoisie. It points out how the bourgeoisie had totally altered the face of the earth as it revolutionized the means of production, constantly expanded the market for its products, created towns and cities, moved vast populations from rural occupations into factories and centralized political administration. Karl Marx sums up the massive achievements of the bourgeoisie by declaring that “during its rule of scarce one hundred years (it) has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of Nature’s forces to Man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam-navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalization of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground – what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labour?”. However, the creation of these productive forces had the effect, not of improving the lot of society, but of periodically creating a situation of crisis. Commercial crises as a result of over-production occurred more and more frequently as the productive forces were held back by the bourgeois organization of production and exchange.

But along with the development of the bourgeoisie who own the means of production we find the development of the proletariat – the propertyless working class. With the evolution of modern industry, Marx pointed out that workmen became factory fodder, appendages to machines. Men were crowded into factories with army-like discipline, constantly watched by overseers and at the whim of individual manufacturers. Increasing competition and commercial crises led to fluctuating wages whilst technological improvement led to a livelihood that was increasingly precarious. The result was a growth in the number of battles between individual workmen and individual employers whilst collisions took on more and more “the character of collisions between two classes”. Marx and Engels characterize the growth of the working class as a “more or less veiled civil war raging within existing society” but unlike previous historical movements which were minority movements, the working class movement is “the self-conscious independent movement of the immense majority, in the interests of the immense majority”. The conclusion they drew from this was that the overthrow of bourgeois supremacy and a victory for the working class would not, therefore, produce another minority ruling class but “in place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition of the free development of all”.

The *Communist Manifesto* contains within it, the basic political theory of Marxism – a theory that Marx was to unfold, reshape and develop for the rest of his life. Without doubt, the Manifesto is sketchy and over-simplistic but its general principles were never repudiated by Marx although those parts that had become antiquated he was only too ready to reject or modify.

For instance, the two-class model which has always been associated with Marx was never an accurate picture of his theory. Marx later made it quite clear that within the bourgeoisie, there were a whole number of factions existing based on different types of property such as finance, industry, land and commerce. He was aware of the growth of the middle classes, situated midway between the workers on the one side and the capitalists and landowners on the other. He regarded them as resting with all their weight upon the working class and at the same time increasing the security and power of the upper class. At the other end of the spectrum, he explains the existence of different strata of the working class such as the nomad population moving around the country, the paupers, the unemployed or industrial reserve army and what has become known as the aristocracy of labour, the skilled artisans. All of these strata made up a working

class created by capitalist accumulation.

However, why is it that Marx felt that the existence of classes meant that the relationship between them was one of exploitation? In feudal societies, exploitation often took the form of the direct transfer of produce from the peasantry to the aristocracy. Serfs were compelled to give a certain proportion of their production to their aristocratic masters, or had to work for a number of days each month in the lord's fields to produce crops consumed by the lord and his retinue. In capitalist societies, the source of exploitation is less obvious, and Marx devoted much attention to trying to clarify its nature. In the course of the working day, Marx reasoned, workers produce more than is actually needed by employers to repay the cost of hiring them. This surplus value, as he called it, is the source of profit, which capitalists were able to put to their own use. For instance, a group of workers in a widget factory might produce a hundred widgets a day. Selling half of them provides enough income for the manufacturer to pay the workers' wages. income from the sale of the other half is then taken for profit. Marx was struck by the enormous inequalities this system of production created. With the development of modern industry, wealth was created on a scale never before imagined but the workers who produced that wealth had little access to it. They remained relatively poor while the wealth accumulated by the propertied class grew out of all proportion. In addition, the nature of the work became increasingly dull, monotonous and physically wearing to the workforce who became increasingly alienated from both the products they were creating, from their own individuality and from each other as human beings.

Karl Marx's relevance to knowledge and education

Karl Marx made it clear that "life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life" and what he meant by life was actual living everyday material activity. Human thought or consciousness was rooted in human activity not the other way round as a number of philosophers felt at the time. What this meant was the way we went about our business, the way we were organized in our daily life was reflected in the way we thought about things and the sort of world we created. The institutions we built, the philosophies we adhered to, the prevailing ideas of the time, the culture of society, were all determined to some extent or another by the economic structure of society. This did not mean that they were *totally* determined but were quite clearly a spin-off from the economic base of society. The political system, the legal system, the family, the press, the education system were all rooted, *in the final analysis,* to the class nature of society, which in turn was a reflection of the economic base. Marx maintained that the economic base or infrastructure generated or had built upon it a superstructure that kept it functioning. The education system, as part of the superstructure, therefore, was a reflection of the economic base and served to reproduce it. This did not mean that education and teaching was a sinister plot by the ruling class to ensure that it kept its privileges and its domination over the rest of the population. There were no conspirators hatching devious schemes. It simply meant that the institutions of society, like education, were reflections of the world created by human activity and that ideas arose from and reflected the material conditions and circumstances in which they were generated.

This relationship between base and superstructure has been the subject of fierce debate between Marxists for many years. To what extent is the superstructure determined by the economic base? How much of a reflection is it? Do the institutions that make up the superstructure have any autonomy at all? If they are not autonomous, can we talk about relative autonomy when we speak about the institutions of society? There have been furious debates on the subject and whole forests have been decimated as a result of the need to publish contributions to the debate.

I now want to turn to Marx's contribution to the theory of knowledge and to the problem of ideology. In his book, *The German Ideology,* Marx maintained that "the class which is the dominant *material* force in society is at the same time its dominant *intellectual* force". What he meant by that is that the individuals who make up the ruling class of any age determine the agenda. They rule as thinkers, as producers of ideas that get noticed. They control what goes by the name "common sense". Ideas that are taken as natural, as part of human nature, as universal concepts are given a veneer of neutrality when, in fact, they are part of the superstructure of a class-ridden society. Marx explained that "each new class which puts itself in the place

of the one ruling before it, is compelled, simply in order to achieve its aims, to represent its interest as the common interest of all members of society i.e. ..to give its ideas the form of universality and to represent them as the only rational and universally valid ones". Ideas become presented as if they are universal, neutral, common sense. However, more subtly, we find concepts such as freedom, democracy, liberty or phrases such as "a fair days work for a fair days pay" being banded around by opinion makers as if they were not contentious. They are, in Marxist terms, ideological constructs, in so far as they are ideas serving as weapons for social interests. They are put forward for people to accept in order to prop up the system.

What Marx and Marxists would say is that ideas are not neutral. They are determined by the existing relations of production, by the economic structure of society. Ideas change according to the interests of the dominant class in society. Antonio Gramsci coined the phrase "ideological hegemony" to describe the influence the ruling class has over what counts as knowledge. For Marxists, this hegemony is exercised through institutions such as education, or the media, which the Marxist philosopher and sociologist, Louis Althusser referred to as being part of what he called the Ideological State Apparatus. The important thing to note about this is that it is not to be regarded as part of a conspiracy by the ruling class. It is a natural effect of the way in which what we count as knowledge is socially constructed. The ideology of democracy and liberty, beliefs about freedom of the individual and competition are generated historically by the mode of production through the agency of the dominant class. They are not neutral ideas serving the common good but ruling class ideas accepted by everyone *as if they were for the common good.*

This brings us back to the notion of education as part of the super-structural support for the economic status quo. If this is the case, there are a number of questions that need to be asked. The first is can society be changed by education? If not, why not? Secondly, can education be changed and if so, how?

Further reading

Biographies:

The following biographies are good starting points:

McLelland, D. (1995 *Karl Marx: A biography* 3e, London: Macmillan. 464 pages. Something of a standard work and includes a postscript, 'Marx today'.

Wheen, F. (1999) *Karl Marx*, London: Fouth Estate. pages. Highly readable new biography that picks up on recent scholarship.

Marx – key texts

Go the Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels Internet Archive for online versions of Marx's key works.

Websites

Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels Internet Archive – Excellent collection of primary and secondary works. Includes pieces on various colleagues and family.

In Defence of Marxism Argues for Marxist analysis it's relevance to current social and political questions.

Marxism Page – links and resources.

Marx and Engel's Writings – collection of Marx and Engels' writings in history, sociology, and political theory.

Acknowledgements: Picture: Karl Marx, sourced from Wikemedia Commons from International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam, Netherlands. Listed as being in the public domain.

How to cite this article: Burke, Barry (2000) 'Karl Marx and informal education', *the encyclopaedia of*

informal education, www.infed.org/thinkers/et-marx.htm. Last update: January 03, 2013

Tagged with → class • education • hegenomy • Karl Marx

Mahatma Gandhi on education

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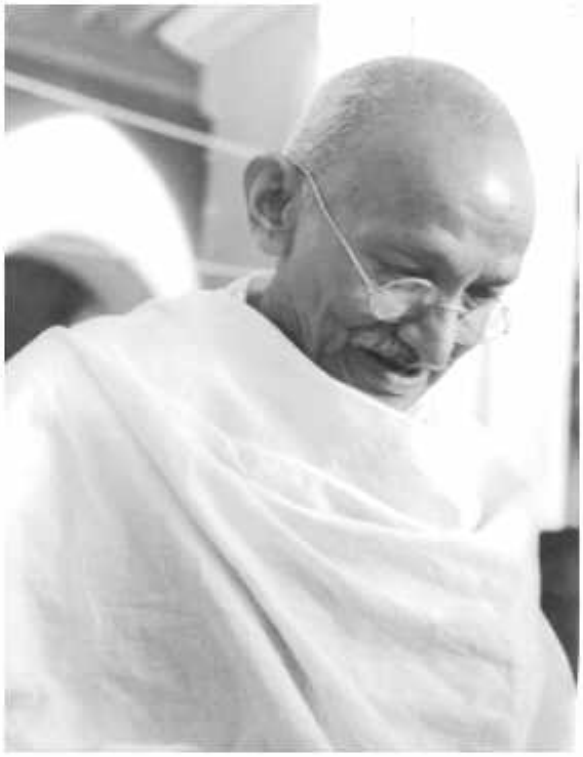
Mahatma Gandhi on education. His critique of western, particularly English, education was part of his critique of Western 'civilization' as a whole. Barry Burke explores his vision.



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The real difficulty is that people have no idea of what education truly is. We assess the value of education in the same manner as we assess the value of land or of shares in the stock-exchange market. We want to provide only such education as would enable the student to earn more. We hardly give any thought to the improvement of the character of the educated. The girls, we say, do not have to earn; so why should they be educated? As long as such ideas persist there is no hope of our ever knowing the true value of education. (M. K. Gandhi *True Education* on the NCTE site)

In a piece published some years ago, Krishna Kumar, Professor of Education at Delhi University, wrote that 'no one rejected colonial education as sharply and as completely as Gandhi did, nor did anyone else put forward an alternative as radical as the one he proposed'. Gandhi's critique of Western, particularly English, education was part of his critique of Western civilization as a whole. There is a story that, on arriving in Britain after he had become famous, someone asked him the question: 'Mr Gandhi, what do you think of civilization in England?' to which he replied 'I think that it would be something worth trying!'

Early life

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born in 1869 in Porbander on the West coast of India. He had a reasonably conventional middle class Indian upbringing. His father (Karamchand) was the senior official (*dewan* or prime minister*)* of a small Indian state (Porbandar) before moving on to be the chief *karbhari* (adviser) in the principality of Rajkot. He looked to his son to follow in his footsteps. Gandhi went to school, did not particularly excel at anything but learned the things that were expected of him. He married in 1882, aged 13. His wife, Kasturbai Makanji who was also 13, was the daughter of a local merchant and was chosen for him. (Gandhi was later to speak strongly of the 'cruel custom of child marriage'). At the end of his formal schooling he decided that he wanted to be a lawyer. To do this he had to come to England to enroll at the Inner Temple. He was called to the Bar in the summer of 1891. On his return to India, he found that he could not make a successful career as a lawyer so he moved to South Africa in 1893.

His experiences in South Africa changed his life. While he was there, he came face to face with blatant racism and discrimination of a kind that he had never witnessed in India. The humiliation he felt at the hands of officials turned him from a meek and unassertive individual into a determined political activist. He had originally gone to South Africa on a one year contract to work for an Indian law firm in Natal Province. There he took up various grievances on behalf of the Indian community and gradually found himself first as their

advocate on civil rights issues and finally as their leader in a political movement against racial discrimination and for South African Indian rights. His methods were unusual. He launched a struggle against the authorities which in keeping with his strict Hindu beliefs was based on a strict adherence to non-violence. This meant that it consisted of passive resistance – the peaceful violation of certain laws, the courting of collective arrests (he urged his followers to fill the jails), non-cooperation with the authorities, boycotts and spectacular marches. These methods were later to be perfected back in India in the fight for independence from the British Empire.

Gandhi's ideas were gradually perfected as a result of his South African experiences. Throughout his life, the ideas he formed in these first few years in South Africa were to be developed to fit various changed circumstances in the fight for Indian independence. They were, however, set within a global context of a total rejection of modern civilization. His rejection of 'modern' or Western civilization was all encompassing. He described it as the 'Kingdom of Satan' polluting everyone it touched. Modernization in the form of industrialization, machinery, parliamentary government, the growth of the British Empire and all the things that most people regarded as progress, Gandhi rejected. In opposition to modern civilization he counter posed ancient Indian civilization with its perceived emphasis on village communities that were self-sufficient and self-governing. He was concerned with the stranglehold that Western civilization had over India. The materialistic values that the British Raj imposed on India had to be countered by the spirituality of Ancient India. Time and time again throughout his life he would return to this theme of the need to revert to what he called their 'own glorious civilization' which was far superior to anything modern society could offer.

Swaraj and Swadeshi

What Gandhi was looking for was what he called *swaraj* and *swadeshi*. These two terms taken together represent the type of society that Gandhi was looking for. *Swaraj*, very badly translates as independence/autonomy/home rule/self rule. *Swadeshi* can be translated as self-sufficiency or self-reliance.

Swaraj for Gandhi was not simply a question of ousting the British from India and declaring independence. What it implied was a wholly different type of society. He did not want the British to be replaced by Indians doing exactly the same. If that was all they achieved, they would not have achieved true freedom but merely the same type of government run by a different set of men. He wanted the value system and life style of the British Raj to be done away with and totally replaced by a simpler, more spiritual, communal life. This new type of society, reflecting the old values of pre-colonial days, was to be based on the village. He stated that:

> *[I]ndependence must begin at the bottom. Thus every village will be a republic … having full powers. It follows, therefore, that every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs. Thus, ultimately, it is the individual who is the unit. This does not exclude dependence on and willing help from neighbours or from the world… In this structure composed of innumerable villages, there will be ever-widening, never-ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom.*

Gandhi's vision for a new India entailed that 'every religion has its full and equal place'. (He was totally opposed to the partition of India). Equally, 'there would be no room for machines that would displace human labour and that would concentrate power in a few hands'.

In his Collected Works there is a passage, written in 1942, that amplifies his ideas on the role of the village. He states that 'my idea of village *swaraj* is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its own vital wants, and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity'. He continues:

> *Thus every villages first concern will be to grow its own food crops and cotton for its cloth. It should have a reserve for its cattle, recreation and playground for adults and children. Then, if there is more land available, it will grow useful money crops, thus excluding ganja, tobacco, opium and the like. The village will maintain a village theatre, school and public hail. It will have its own waterworks, ensuring clean water supply. This can be done through controlled wells or tanks. Education will be compulsory up to the final basic course. As far as possible every activity will be conducted on the co-operative basis. There will be no castes such as we have today with their graded untouchability. Non-violence with its technique of… non-cooperation will be the sanction of the village community. There will be a compulsory service of village guards who will be selected by rotation from the register maintained by the village. The government of the village will be conducted by a [council] of five persons annually elected by the adult villagers, male and female, possessing minimum prescribed qualifications. These will have all the authority and jurisdiction required. Since there will be no system of punishments in the accepted sense, this [council] will be the legislature, judiciary and executive combined to operate for its year of office.*

Gandhi was quite certain that any village could become such a republic straight away without much interference even from the colonial government because he beleived that their sole effective connection with the villages was the collection of village taxes. All that was needed was the will to do it. He referred to his ideal state as one of 'enlightened anarchy in which each person will become his own ruler'. It is interesting to see that throughout his writings on the autonomous self-sufficient village communities we see echoes of the anarchist lifestyles proposed by such writers as Tolstoy or Thoreau in the nineteenth century.

On education

Given Gandhi's values and his vision of what constituted a truly civilized and free India, it was not surprising that he developed firm views on education. Education not only moulds the new generation, but reflects a society's fundamental assumptions about itself and the individuals which compose it. His experience in South Africa not only changed his outlook on politics but also helped him to see the role education played in that struggle. He was aware that he had been a beneficiary of Western education and for a number of years while he was in South Africa he still tried to persuade Indians to take advantage of it. However, it was not until the early years of this century, when he was in his middle thirties, that he became so opposed to English education that he could write about 'the rottenness of this education' and that 'to give millions a knowledge of English is to enslave them … that, by receiving English education, we have enslaved the nation'. He was enraged that he had to speak of Home Rule or Independence in what was clearly a foreign tongue, that he could not practice in court in his mother tongue, that all official documents were in English as were all the best newspapers and that education was carried out in English for the chosen few. He did not blame the colonial powers for this. He saw that it was quite logical that they would want an elite of native Indians to become like their rulers in both manners and values. In this way, the Empire could be consolidated. Gandhi blamed his fellow Indians for accepting the situation. Later in his life he was to declare that 'real freedom will come only when we free ourselves of the domination of Western education, Western culture and Western way of living which have been ingrained in us .. . Emancipation from this culture would mean real freedom for us'.

As we have seen, Gandhi had not only rejected colonial education but also put forward a radical alternative. So what was this alternative? What was so radical about it?

First of all, I need to say a word about Gandhi's attitude to industrialization. He was, in fact, absolutely opposed to modern machinery. In his collected works, he refers to machinery as having impoverished India, that it was difficult to measure the harm that Manchester had done to them by producing machine-made cloth which, in turn, ruined the internal market for locally produced handwoven goods. Typically of Gandhi, however, he does not blame Manchester or the mill owners. 'How can Manchester be blamed?' he writes.

‘We wore Manchester cloth and this is why Manchester wove it’. However, he notes that where cloth mills were not introduced in India, in places such as Bengal, the original hand-weaving occupation was thriving. Where they did have mills e.g. in Bombay, he felt that the workers there had become slaves. He was shocked by the conditions of the women working in the mills of Bombay and made the point that before they were introduced these women were not starving. He maintained that ‘if the machinery craze grows in our country, it will become an unhappy land’. What he wanted was for Indians to boycott *all* machine-made goods not just cloth. He was quite clear when he asked the question ‘What did India do before these articles were introduced?’ and then answered his own question by stating ‘Precisely the same should be done today. As long as we cannot make pins without machinery, so long will we do without them. The tinsel splendour of glassware we will have nothing to do with, and we will make wicks, as of old, with home-grown cotton and use handmade earthen saucers or lamps. So doing, we shall save our eyes and money and support *swadeshi* and so shall we attain Home Rule’.

Within this context of the need for a machine-less society, Gandhi developed his ideas on education. The core of his proposal was the introduction of productive handicrafts in the school curriculum. The idea was not simply to introduce handicrafts as a compulsory school subject, but to make the learning of a craft the centrepiece of the entire teaching programme. It implied a radical restructuring of the sociology of school knowledge in India, where productive handicrafts had been associated with the lowest groups in the hierarchy of the caste system. Knowledge of the production processes involved in crafts, such as spinning, weaving, leather-work, pottery, metal-work, basket-making and bookbinding, had been the monopoly of specific caste groups in the lowest stratum of the traditional social hierarchy. Many of them belonged to the category of ‘untouchables’. India’s own tradition of education as well as the colonial education system had emphasized skills such as literacy and acquisition of knowledge of which the upper castes had a monopoly.

Gandhi’s proposal intended to stand the education system on its head. The social philosophy and the curriculum of what he called ‘basic education’ thus favoured the child belonging to the lowest stratum of society. in such a way it implied a programme of social transformation. It sought to alter the symbolic meaning of ‘education’ and to change the established structure of opportunities for education.

Why Gandhi proposed the introduction of productive handicrafts into the school system was not really as outrageous as may appear. What he really wanted was for the schools to be self-supporting, as far as possible. There were two reasons for this. Firstly, a poor society such as India simply could not afford to provide education for all children unless the schools could generate resources from within. Secondly, the more financially independent the schools were, the more politically independent they could be. What Gandhi wanted to avoid was dependence on the state which he felt would mean interference from the centre. Above all else, Gandhi valued self-sufficiency and autonomy. These were vital for his vision of an independent India made up of autonomous village communities to survive. It was the combination of *swaraj* and *swadeshi* related to the education system. A state system of education within an independent India would have been a complete contradiction as far as Gandhi was concerned.

He was also of the opinion that manual work should not be seen as something inferior to mental work. He felt that the work of the craftsman or labourer should be the ideal model for the ‘good life’. Schools which were based around productive work where that work was for the benefit of all were, therefore, carrying out education of the whole person – mind, body and spirit.

The right to autonomy that Gandhi’s educational plan assigns to the teacher in the context of the school’s daily curriculum is consistent with the libertarian principles that he shared with Tolstoy. Gandhi wanted to free the Indian teacher from interference from outside, particularly government or state bureaucracy. Under colonial rule, the teacher had a prescribed job to do that was based on what the authorities wanted the children to learn. Textbooks were mandatory so that Gandhi found that ‘the living word of the teacher has very little value. A teacher who teaches from textbooks does not impart originality to his pupils’. Gandhi’s plan, on the other hand, implied the end of the teacher’s subservience to the prescribed textbook and the curriculum. It presented a concept of learning that simply could not be fully implemented with the help of textbooks. Of equal, if not more importance, was the freedom it gave the teacher in matters of curriculum. It

denied the state the power to decide what teachers taught and what they did in the classroom. It gave autonomy to the teacher but it was, above all, a libertarian approach to schooling that transferred power from the state to the village.

Gandhi's basic education was, therefore, an embodiment of his perception of an ideal society consisting of small, self-reliant communities with his ideal citizen being an industrious, self-respecting and generous individual living in a small cooperative community.

For informal educators, we can draw out a number of useful pointers. First, Gandhi's insistence on autonomy and self-regulation is reflected in the ethos of informal education. Gandhi's conception of basic education was concerned with learning that was generated within everyday life which is the basis on which informal educators work. It was also an education focused on the individual but reliant on co-operation between individuals. There is also a familar picture of the relationships between educators and students/learners:

> *A teacher who establishes rapport with the taught, becomes one with them, learns more from them than he teaches them. He who learns nothing from his disciples is, in my opinion, worthless. Whenever I talk with someone I learn from him. I take from him more than I give him. In this way, a true teacher regards himself as a student of his students. If you will teach your pupils with this attitude, you will benefit much from them. (Talk to Khadi Vidyalaya Students, Sevagram, Sevak, 15 February 1942 CW 75, p. 269)*

Lastly, it was an education that aimed at educating the whole person, rather than concentrating on one aspect. It was a highly moral activity.

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Kumar, K. (1994) 'Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi' in Z. Morsy (ed.) *Thinkers on Education Volume 2*, Paris: UNESCO.

Links

Gandhi On Education: excellent collection of quotes from the National Council for Teacher Education

Mahatma Gandhi: The Complete Information – provides information on his philosophies, struggles, biography etc. Also has the beginnings of an net edition of his collected works.

How to reference this piece: Burke, B. (2000). 'Mahatma Gandhi on education', *the encyclopaedia of informal education.* [http://infed.org/mobi/mahatma-gandhi-on-education/. Retrieved: enter date].

Tagged with → Mahatma Gandhi. education • swadeshi • swaraj

Maria Montessori and education

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Maria Montessori and education. First the education of the senses, then the education of the intellect – Montessori's vision and 'method' are still popular.

Maria Montessori (1870 – 1952). Maria Montessori was the first woman in Italy to qualify as a physician. She developed an interest in the diseases of children and in the needs of those said to be 'ineducable' In the case of the latter she argued for the development of training for teachers along Froebelian lines (she also drew on Rousseau and Pestalozzi) and developed the principle that was also to inform her general educational programme: *first the education of the senses, then the education of the intellect*. Maria Montessori developed a teaching programme that enabled 'defective' children to read and write. She sought to teach skills not by having children repeatedly try it, but by developing exercises that prepare them. These exercises would then be repeated: *Looking becomes reading; touching becomes writing*. (See *The Montessoria Method*).

The success of her method then caused her to ask questions of 'normal' education and the ways in which failed children. Maria Montessori had the chance to test her programme and ideas with the establishment of the first *Casa dei Bambini* (Children's house or household) in Rome in 1907. (This house had been built as part of a slum redevelopment). This house and those that followed were designed to provide a good environment for children to live and learn. An emphasis was placed on self-determination and self-realization. This entailed developing a concern for others and discipline and to do this children engaged in *exercices de la vie pratique* (exercise in daily living). These and other exercises were to function like a ladder – allowing the child to pick up the challenge and to judge their progress. 'The essential thing is for the task to arouse such an interest that it engages the child's whole personality' (Maria Montessori – *The Absorbent Mind*: 206).

This connected with a further element in the Montessori programme – decentring the teacher. The teacher was the 'keeper' of the environment. While children got on with their activities the task was to observe and to intervene from the periphery. (Here there are a number of parallels with Dewey).

The focus on self-realization through independent activity, the concern with attitude, and the focus on the educator as the keeper of the environment (and making use of their scientific powers of observation and reflection) – all have some echo in the work of informal educators. However, it is Maria Montessori's notion of the Children's House as a stimulating environment in which participants can learn to take responsibility that has a particular resonance.

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Acknowledgement: The picture of Maria Montessori is as it appeared on the front cover of her book *The Montessori Method*, published in 1916, in Dutch, in Amsterdam. It is believed to be in the public domain because copyright has expired. See Wikipedia Commons

Tagged with → education • helping • intellect • learning • schooling • senses

Oscar Romero of El Salvador: informal adult education in a context of violence

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Oscar Romero of El Salvador: informal adult education in a context of violence. John Dickson explores Oscar Romero's place and impact as a socially involved educator. He examines key aspects of the social and historical background; the means and extent of Oscar Romero's teaching ministry; and Romero's confrontation with the dilemma facing all authentically revolutionary adult educators: violence.

contents: introduction · el salvador · oscar romero · cebs – base communities · oscar romero – educator and mobiliser · death squads · oscar romero challenges the us president and the salvadoran military · conclusion · further reading and bibliography · links · how to cite this article

"Cese la represion!" Oscar Romero March 24th 1980

Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador (1917-1980) provided moral direction to a grassroots movement for social change, over which he had no or only limited control. With all the tools at his disposal Archbishop Romero sought to pierce the silence of repression and inform the population at large of 'the facts'. Oscar Romero's stance ultimately cost him his life.

Why should educators be interested in a relatively obscure Catholic Archbishop who was shot to death in a tiny Central American republic over 25 years ago? Perhaps the words of a rather more famous Latin American may serve to elaborate the significance: Chilean Dictator General Augusto Pinochet famously uttered words to the effect that "We have nothing against ideas. We're against people spreading them."

Oscar Arnulfo Romero, or Archbishop Romero of El Salvador as he is better known, was both a man of ideas and a man intent on spreading them. Given the social context of El Salvador in 1980 his ideas were seen as revolutionary – a threat to the status quo. It is unclear to what extent the works of fellow Latin American Paulo Freire were known to Oscar Romero. However by his actions he demonstrated an increasing alignment with Freire's assertion (1976) that, "whereas the task of the educational system in the old society was to maintain the *status quo*, it must now become an essential element in the process of liberation…the basic problems in education are not strictly pedagogical, but political and ideological."

So, what were the dangerous ideas Archbishop Oscar Romero espoused? Concern for civil and human rights, and the advocacy of justice for the poor and truth in the public domain were bound to bring him into conflict with powerful interests. Romero could variously be described as a 'prophet of the people', a mobilizer and a voice speaking against and into a violent void.

El Salvador

During the mid to late 20th century the destruction of the El Salvadoran peasant economy, and the creation of a "proletariat… wholly or partially dependent on wage labour for survival" (Pearce 1986: 11) altered the mediaeval nature of the social milieu in important ways. However, in contrast with more 'modern' societies,

religious belief remained, and still remains a "[central] part of the world view" of most Salvadorans (Martín-Bar? 1990: 96). In this context the voice of an Archbishop with credibility amongst the populace has a resonance and authority extending into all spheres of life.

Historically, some sectors of the Christian church have been active in solidarity for action towards a more just society. As Diamond (1989: 262) asserts, religious experience is not necessarily reflected as "a passive acceptance of oppression" (Martín-Bar? 1990: 97), other pertinent factors need to be considered:

> *… any experience designed to intensely change one's self-concept and beliefs about one's relationship to others has an intensely political utility. The direction a spiritual movement takes depends entirely on the political persuasion of its participants, especially its leaders (Diamond 1989: 262)*

Liberation theologian Gustavao Gutiérrez utilises Gramsci's analysis in describing the radical theologian as: the "organic intellectual" who exercises the prophetic function of denouncing social injustice (1973: 174). By word and action Oscar Romero exercised his function as teacher, pastor and informal mobiliser to unmask and denounce the 'culture of silence' imposed upon the oppressed majority by an oligarchic minority-unaccustomed to opposition from such quarters. In doing so he was forced to confront a genocidal military-armed, trained and financed to a great extent by the United States of America [1]. El Salvador's close proximity to Nicaragua was of course the central factor in that equation.

El Salvador is the smallest and most densely populated of the five Central American republics, with its 5.5 million inhabitants unequally sharing a land area of 21,400 sq km. About 60% of the population lived in rural areas. In 1978 the International Commission of Jurists estimated that 60% of the land was owned by a 2% oligarchy (all figures cited in Arnson 1982: 5). Reflecting these disparities, El Salvador in 1979 had the lowest per capita income of any nation in the western hemisphere bar Haiti. According to International Labour Organization (ILO) research conducted in 1984, El Salvador, "had one of the highest rates of labour under-utilisation (open unemployment as well as under-employment) in the Americas" (cited in Pearce 1986: 30). The authors of the ILO report, drew attention to the political implications of their analysis:

> *Far from the East-West conflict it is sometimes represented to be, the present [civil] war seems more accurately portrayed as the open explosion of the class antagonism between agricultural workers and the landowners… (ibid.: 43)*

Given that the US Assistant Secretary of State in the Reagan administration told the *Washington Post* in January 1982 that the decisive battle for Central America is under way in El Salvador" (cited in Arnson 1982: 83). The ILO's assessment seems patently naive. Without doubt American interests, reflected in their training and arming of military and paramilitary forces loyal to the landed oligarchy, were inextricably linked to the Salvadoran conflict.[2] Nevertheless, this so called "class antagonism" led directly to 30,000 politically motivated killings between October 15th 1979 and December 1981 (Amnesty International; March 1982).

It was into this context of state-led terror that Oscar Arnulfo Romero was installed as Archbishop of the archdiocese of San Salvador, on February 22, 1977. Centred upon the national capital of San Salvador, Oscar Romero's diocese was the most populous and important, particularly in terms of access to the power brokers of the political and military leadership. The majority of the owners of the large land holdings also lived in the capital, many of these regularly attending the city's cathedral.

Oscar Romero

Oscar Romero was born on August 15, 1917 in a small town in the mountains of eastern El Salvador. He apparently entered the seminary for training as a priest at age thirteen. Considered quiet, bookish and non-controversial, Romero's elevation to Archbishop was welcomed by those business, government and military figures consulted by the apostolic nuncio (Vatican Ambassador) in the lead up to his selection. As Brockman recounts: based upon his earlier theological stance [3] Oscar Romero 'was supposed to be the firm conservative who would rein in the priests of the archdiocese whom, in the eyes of the government and the upper classes [the previous archbishop] had not been able to control' (Brockman 1989: 8). With access to educational provision severely limited in El Salvador, and the ruling class holding ownership of the major newspapers, most radio stations and all television services, the economic and cultural domination of the landed elite had been assured. In this form of social structure the perceived options for change could be easily be regulated to serve the interests of capital. As Jackson and Ashcroft argue:

> *In addition to control over the means of production and its accompanying coercive apparatus, the dominant class exercises crucial control over the apparatus of cultural dissemination (institutions of learning, the arts, the mass media) in short over all those means through which social consciousness could be effectively created. Without resorting to the contentious notion of false consciousness, ruling class cultural hegemony can be seen as giving the working class no effective choice between alternatives. (in Thompson 1980: 101)*

Increasingly – and particularly since Oscar Romero's term as Archbishop – the El Salvadoran Catholic Church assumed an important counter-hegemonic role to the controlling tendencies of the dominant class. It had become a key source for the dissemination of information – particularly amongst the poorer classes. Although historically associated with the maintenance of the oppressive oligarchic social arrangement, the development of a more critical indigenous theology (viz. liberation theology), along with participatory pastoral / educational models, led to direct conflict between progressives within the church and the reactionary forces of the state. (cf Martín-Bar? 1990; Pearce 1986; Montgomery 1987; Beirne 1985).

CEBs – Base Communities

Following the reforms of Vatican II and the declaration of the Council of Latin American Bishops at the Medellín conference of 1968 (both of which emphasised a more socially involved church with a less hierarchical structure) the church in El Salvador initiated the formation of numerous *communidades de base* (CEBs). These grassroots Christian communities were seen as the principal means of implementing the reforms by involving the lay people in planning and implementing church programs and ensuring outreach amongst the pastorally neglected rural populace.

The educational focus within the CEBs included the training of leaders (some 15,000 between 1970 & 1976) in basic theology, "agriculture, co-operativism, leadership and health" and community organisation (Pearce 1986: 113). Given the propensity for many of the socially involved religious [4] to apply liberation theology, with its emphasis upon social analysis – particularly Marxist social analysis – the CEBs emerged as a focal point for political action. This account of a peasant unionist from the impoverished northern region of Chalatenango reveals something of the methodology and expression of liberation theology within the CEBs:

> *What made me realise the path of our farm worker's union was when I compared the conditions we were living in with those that I saw in the scriptures; the situation of the Israelites for example… when Moses had to struggle to take them out of Egypt to the Promised Land… then I compared it to the situation of slavery in which we were living. For example, when we asked for changes in the work rates on the plantations, instead of reducing them for us, the following day they increased them, just like the Pharaoh did with the Hebrew people making bricks, right? Our struggle is the same; Moses and his people had to cross the desert, as we are crossing one*

> *now; and for me I find that we are crossing a desert full of a thousand hardships, of hunger, misery and exploitation. (Pearce 1986: 118)*

As Pearce relates in her first hand study of the Chalatenango peasant movement, rebellion against the repressive social order did not occur as a spontaneous collective expression of outrage, but rather with a slow process of *conscientizaão* (consciousness raising) and mobilization. A process occurring primarily within the CEBs.

Brookfield (1987: 63) somewhat blithely notes that "in [some] societies… [educational activities] drawing people's attention to visible inequalities, and making them critically aware of their oppressed condition, may produce violent results. Certainly, this was the experience in El Salvador. On the 24th of February 1977, shortly after Oscar Romero's investiture, troops fired on a large crowd (some estimated a figure of 60,000) of civilians protesting the recent fraudulent election result – killing 23 persons. Greatly encouraging progressive elements within the Church, Oscar Romero's first significant act as Archbishop – after consulting widely with his clergy – was to suspend all diocesan masses for the following Sunday. He alone would celebrate mass, in the Cathedral adjoining the Plaza Libertad – the site of the recent massacre. Rejecting the appeals from conservatives such as the papal nuncio, Romero went ahead with the protest:

> *A hundred thousand strong, it was the largest demonstration of Salvadoran church unity within memory… for many it marked a return to the church after a long estrangement. (Brockman 1989: 17)*

The machine-gun killing of Father Rutilio Grande, a Jesuit priest active in the CEBs of Chalatenango, on March 12th 1977 marked the beginning of a vicious campaign against the clergy. A concerted media campaign was launched against the "third world priests" as they were derisively called and their preaching of "hatred, subversion and class struggle" (a local media release cited in Brockman 1989: 3). Later in the year the now infamous flyers, bearing the legend "Be a Patriot! Kill a Priest!" were circulated (Arnon 1982: 36).

The murder of Grande, carried out by a paramilitary "Death Squad", proved a most significant factor in Romero's political and theological reorientation. Grande's death and 'similar instances of persecution of the church had a remarkable effect on Archbishop Romero. Within a relatively short time, he changed from an ally of the oligarchy into an eloquent spokesman for the poor' (Beirne 1985: 16). In a bulletin published on March 14th, Oscar Romero praised Grande's "efforts to raise the consciousness of the people throughout his parish" (cited in Leiken and Rubin 1987: 353). In protest at the Government's lack of action in apprehending Grande's murderers, Romero boycotted the President's inauguration on July 1st 1977. This act had enormous significance: for the first time a Salvadoran Head of State was denied the official sanction and blessing of the Catholic Church. In effect Oscar Romero was publicly declaring the election result invalid.

The activities of the progressive religious amongst the CEBs became the crux of the conflict between the church and the elite, and also within the church itself. The work of *conscientização*undertaken by clergy such as Rutilio Grande had paved the way for a national linkage of peasant's organizations (Berryman 1987: 130f). According to Salvadoran law, peasant's unions independent of governmental control have no legal status. Furthermore, the Salvadoran constitution proscribed a severely limited role for the church in political life:

> *Clerics and laity shall be forbidden to engage in political advertising in any form by invoking religious motives or making use of the people's religious beliefs. In the churches, on the occasion of acts of worship or religious instruction, criticism shall not be made of the laws of the state, of its government, or of individual public officials. (Article 157, cited in Brockman 1989: 3)*

Oscar Romero – educator and mobilizer

Despite these constraints, during Oscar Romero's three years and three months as Archbishop the political role of the church extended with each compounding crisis. Romero utilised two key vehicles for his program of pastoral teaching: first, his monthly pastoral letter which was circulated throughout the country and was read aloud at mass in the parishes. Second, the archdiocese radio station – YSAX, over which Romero's weekly Sunday sermon, before the well attended San Salvador cathedral, was broadcast. The Archbishop also read an information bulletin outlining the weeks previous events and detailing instances of political violence (Montgomery 1982: 35Off; Brockman 1989: 28).

As an educator the Archbishop has a central role in the Salvadoran Catholic church. Not only does he have an important teaching ministry within the Cathedral context, he is also called upon to relate the theological directives from the Vatican and the Episcopal Council of Latin American Bishops to the local context. In addition, he has direct oversight for the pastoral workers across the entire country: given the impoverished state of local congregations the centralised disbursement of church finances is a mechanism for directing the pattern of ministry nationwide. In a nation where at least 70% of the population have some allegiance to the Catholic Church (Martin-Bar? 1990: 96) it is doubtful that there is a more authoritative and influential figure than that of the Archbishop. Nevertheless, that influence is limited by the entrenched class interests; any impetus for social change requires the sanction of those few wielding ultimate economic and military power. When the interests of the major regional power, in this case the United States of America, invariably concur with those of the local elite the space for social change is limited and potential revolutionary movements are met by the full force of the state. As Oscar Romero and fellow Bishop Arturo Rivera Damas wrote in 1978:

> *Alongside institutionalised violence [5] there frequently arises repressive violence, that is to say the use of violence by the state's security forces to the extent that the state tries to contain the aspirations of the majority, violently crushing any signs of protest against the injustices… mentioned. (cited in Pottenger 1991: 151)*

Death Squads

In August 1978, four Salvadoran bishops issued a statement condemning the peasant's popular organizations as "Marxist". Any individual publicly accused in such a way was likely to become the target of the "Death Squads". Oscar Romero immediately wrote in defense of the peasants – and the religious working amongst them:

> *In a pastoral letter [entitled] "The Church and the Popular Organisations"… he defended the peasant's right to organise and [referring to Vatican II] pointed out how that right was violated in El Salvador… implicitly recognising that these organisations were as legitimate as traditional political parties. (Berryman 1987: 130)*

By affirming a justifiable role for the peasant organizations, and inferring that the religious need not disavow these organizations when they become involved in struggle, Oscar Romero was signalling that the church was advocating the popular organizations land reform agenda; the consequences of this position he well understood. Romero was in essence publicly siding with the popular organizations, and – more dangerously – becoming perhaps the most high profile mobiliser to their cause.

As mentioned above the archdiocese radio station YSAX was a key vehicle for Oscar Romero's instruction. Via the air waves Romero's messages, in particular his lengthy Sunday sermon (generally no less than one and a half hours), found a huge and receptive audience across the nation – as well as in Guatemala,

Honduras and Nicaragua. According to confirmed figures for radio audiences in El Salvador – gathered in research conducted for commercial advertising agencies – Archbishop Oscar Romero's Sunday audience was found to be reaching "73% of the [population in the] countryside and 47% [in] the urban areas" (cited in Pearce 1986: 170). Romero's homilies invariably related scriptural readings to the wider realities of El Salvadoran life.

Aware of the implications of restricted press ownership, Archbishop Oscar Romero also utilized the broadcast as an oral newspaper: every documented case of killing, assault, disappearance, or torture – whether by the left or the right was broadcast. Additionally, the archdiocese office became the publishing house for information bulletins documenting human rights violations, and a source of information counter to the propaganda of the regular media. Romero advised his listeners: 'Don't keep isolated from this communication of the word. For while the forces that persecute and defame the church have all the newspapers, all the radio stations, all the television on their side, the struggle is unequal' (cited in Brockman 1989: 28).

Such was the power of the YSAX broadcasts that its transmitter or antenna was bombed ten times between 1977 and 1980. The nations foremost business organization, the ANEP, publicly accused the church of provoking unrest and ran a media campaign against the station. Even the Minister of the Interior threatened the directors of the station over its criticisms of the government (Montgomery 1982: 350f; Brockman 1989: 6-28).

As the spiral of violence intensified, culminating in the October 15th 1979 military coup, the death threats against Archbishop Oscar Romero came daily (Kraus 1991: 74). Despite this his denunciations of the "idolatry (of money, of military and political power), of US imperialism [and] of corruption and falsehood" (Berryman 197: 52) continued. He also remained a firm and vocal supporter of the peasant's organizations.

Archbishop Oscar Romero challenges the US President and the Salvadoran military

At about this time Oscar Romero wrote directly to US President Jimmy Carter arguing that given the level of human rights abuse by the military, aid to the junta should be suspended. Carter's "evasive response" (Dunkerley 1988: 395) left Romero little alternative than to issue a final ultimatum aimed directly at those serving in the armed forces. In a sermon on March 24 1980 he outlined what was in effect a moral justification for mutiny. After providing a theological framework for the statements that were to follow, Oscar Romero related some of the hundreds of cases of genocidal military action occurring during the previous week, citing an Amnesty International press release to confirm his accounts. Finally he addressed the military directly:

> *I would like to make a special appeal to the men of the army, and specifically to the ranks of the National Guard, the police and the military. Brothers, you come from our own people. You are killing your own brother peasants when any human order to kill must be subordinate to the law of God which says, "Thou shalt not kill". No soldier is obliged to obey an order contrary to the law of God. No one has to obey an immoral law. It is high time you recovered you consciences and obeyed your consciences rather than a sinful order… In the name of God, in the name of this suffering people whose cries rise to heaven more loudly each day, I implore you, I beg you, I order you – in the name of God: stop the repression. (Cited in Leiken & Rubin 1987: 377-380)*

Later that evening whilst saying mass at a church run cancer hospital a lone gunman shot Romero dead [6]. In Washington the following day the Carter administration authorized $55 million in economic aid to El Salvador, which was followed a few weeks later by $5.7 million in further "military assistance" (Dunkerley 1988:396).

Conclusion

Oscar Romero, perhaps understandably, has become a somewhat mythical figure in the Catholic Church, particularly but not exclusively in Latin America. Aside from the 'martyrs death' aspect, his memory has become the focal point in the struggle to make liberation theology more palatable to conservative elements within the church. Latin American liberation theologians have in more recent times rejected as naive given the military resources of US backed local regimes – the notion of armed struggle as a realisable course towards social justice in Latin America. Although by no means a pacifist, Romero did perceive violent struggle as a problematic, last possible alternative. Speaking in an interview with *Presna Latina* on March 7th – shortly before his assassination he outlined his position:

> *Profound religion leads to political commitment and in a country such as ours where injustice reigns, conflict is inevitable… Christians have no fear of combat; they know how to fight but they prefer to speak the language of peace. Nevertheless, when a dictatorship violates human rights and attacks the common good of the nation, when it becomes unbearable and closes all channels of dialogue, of understanding, of rationality, when this happens the Church speaks of the legitimate right of insurrectional violence. (cited in Pearce 1986:184)*

Perhaps there was a certain naïveté in his belief that an appeal to conscience could halt the violence. On the other hand, perhaps he was following the development of his own thinking to its logical conclusion, deciding that an ultimatum – quite probably followed by his own death – would shock all players into a cessation of violence or provoke a split within the military. At the very least a reduction in US military support for the junta was a possible outcome.

As an educator Oscar Romero undoubtedly perceived his role as providing moral direction to a movement for change, over which he had no or only limited control. This he provided not only by words but also by example. Brookfield writes of the "ethical duty" (1987: 63f) borne by adult educators seeking to encourage critical thinking, to point out to those involved the potentiality for violence resulting from their political actions. Romero went further than merely pointing out the dangers. With all the tools at his disposal Archbishop Oscar Romero sought to pierce the silence of repression and inform the population at large of the facts. The peasant movement whose activities he so encouraged faced death daily: with great integrity, he too was prepared to face that same fate in the course of the struggle for social justice in El Salvador.

Notes

[1] U S economic & military aid to El Salvador in 1980 exceeded $78m. (Dept of State; cited Arnson p.106) By 1988 this figure had reportedly risen to $547m. (Santiago p.41).

[2] In [early] 1982 the Reagan administration began training 1,600 Salvardoran soliders on U S soil, and provided another $55 million in emergency military aid – including … counter insurgency jets and forward air control planes…" (Arnson 1982: 83) According to *Time* magazine, Nov 22 1993, recently released intelligence reports reveal "that Reagan and Bush administration officials had… detailed knowledge… about the role of civilian and military leaders in death squad killings in El Salvador". In September 1996 *The Washington Post* reported that Defense department manuals were used to train Latin American military in torture techniques. This included Salvadoran officers.

[3] As editor of the conservative Catholic weekly newspaper *Orienta'cion* during the 1970's, Romero had railed "against schools that taught demogoguery and Marxism… [the Jesuit teachers] should not even call themselves Christian" (cited in Beirne 1985:10). His reactionary views, at that time, were legend.

[4] Here meaning ordained clergy.

[5] This reference to "institutionalised violence" derives from the Medellin Declaration (p4, above) which described the structural and economic constraints placed upon Latin America by the West and its agents

)the I.M.F etc) as a form of institutionalised violence against the poor.

[6] A 1992 United Nations commission into political killings in El Salvador found that Roberto d'Aubuisson, later a leading figure in the ruling ARENA party, arranged Oscar Romero's murder. (The Economist May 29th 1993)

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Links

Salt of the Earth's remembrance of Oscar Romero.

Resources for Catholic Educators: Oscar Romero – Listing of on-line resources

The author acknowledges helpful feedback from Michael Newman and Grif Foley of the University of Technology Sydney on this article.

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How to cite this article: Dickson, J. (2005) 'Oscar Romero of El Salvador: informal adult education in a context of violence', *the encyclopedia of informal education.* [http://infed.org/mobi/oscar-romero-of-el-salvador-informal-adult-education-in-a-context-of-violence/. Retrieved: insert date].

Tagged with → adult education • Catholicism • democracy • lifelong learning • revolution. social action

Paulo Freire: dialogue, praxis and education

infed.org

Paulo Freire, dialogue, praxis and education. Perhaps the most influential thinker about education in the late twentieth century, Paulo Freire has been particularly popular with informal educators with his emphasis on dialogue and his concern for the oppressed.

contents: introduction · contribution · critique · further reading and references · links

Paulo Freire (1921 – 1997), the Brazilian educationalist, has left a significant mark on thinking about progressive practice. His *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is currently one of the most quoted educational texts (especially in Latin America, Africa and Asia). Freire was able to draw upon, and weave together, a number of strands of thinking about educational practice and liberation. Sometimes some rather excessive claims are made for his work e.g. 'the most significant educational thinker of the twentieth century'. He wasn't – John Dewey would probably take that honour – but Freire certainly made a number of important theoretical innovations that have had a considerable impact on the development of educational practice – and on informal education and popular education in particular. In this piece we assess these – and briefly examine some of the critiques that can be made of his work.

Contribution

Five aspects of Paulo Freire's work have a particular significance for our purposes here. First, his emphasis on dialogue has struck a very strong chord with those concerned with popular and informal education. Given that informal education is a dialogical (or conversational) rather than a curricula form this is hardly surprising. However, Paulo Freire was able to take the discussion on several steps with his insistence that dialogue involves respect. It should not involve one person acting **on** another, but rather people working **with** each other. Too much education, Paulo Freire argues, involves 'banking' – the educator making 'deposits' in the educatee.

Second, Paulo Freire was concerned with praxis – action that is informed (and linked to certain values). Dialogue wasn't just about deepening understanding – but was part of making a difference in the world. Dialogue in itself is a co-operative activity involving respect. The process is important and can be seen as enhancing community and building social capital and to leading us to act in ways that make for justice and human flourishing. Informal and popular educators have had a long-standing orientation to action – so the emphasis on change in the world was welcome. But there was a sting in the tail. Paulo Freire argued for informed action and as such provided a useful counter-balance to those who want to diminish theory.

Third, Freire's attention to naming the world has been of great significance to those educators who have traditionally worked with those who do not have a voice, and who are oppressed. The idea of building a 'pedagogy of the oppressed' or a 'pedagogy of hope' and how this may be carried forward has formed a significant impetus to work. An important element of this was his concern with conscientization – developing consciousness, but consciousness that is understood to have the power to transform reality' (Taylor 1993: 52).

Fourth, Paulo Freire's insistence on situating educational activity in the lived experience of participants has opened up a series of possibilities for the way informal educators can approach practice. His concern to look for words that have the possibility of generating new ways of naming and acting in the world when working with people around literacies is a good example of this.

Fifth, a number of informal educators have connected with Paulo Freire's use of metaphors drawn from Christian sources. An example of this is the way in which the divide between teachers and learners can be transcended. In part this is to occur as learners develop their consciousness, but mainly it comes through the 'class suicide' or 'Easter experience' of the teacher.

> *The educator for liberation has to die as the unilateral educator of the educatees, in order to be born again as the educator-educatee of the educatees-educators. An educator is a person who has to live in the deep significance of Easter. Quoted by Paul Taylor (1993: 53)*

Critique

Inevitably, there are various points of criticism. First, many are put off by Paulo Freire's language and his appeal to mystical concerns. The former was a concern of Freire himself in later life – and his work after *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* was usually written within a more conversational or accessible framework.

Second, Paulo Freire tends to argue in an either/or way. We are either with the oppressed or against them. This may be an interesting starting point for teaching, but taken too literally it can make for rather simplistic (political) analysis.

Third, there is an tendency in Freire to overturn everyday situations so that they become pedagogical. Paulo Freire's approach was largely constructed around structured educational situations. While his initial point of reference might be non-formal, the educational encounters he explores remain formal (Torres 1993: 127) In other words, his approach is still curriculum-based and entail transforming settings into a particular type of pedagogical space. This can rather work against the notion of dialogue (in that curriculum

implies a predefined set of concerns and activities). Educators need to look for 'teachable moments' – but when we concentrate on this we can easily overlook simple power of being in conversation with others.

Fourth, what is claimed as liberatory practice may, on close inspection, be rather closer to banking than we would wish. In other words, the practice of Freirian education can involve smuggling in all sorts of ideas and values under the guise of problem-posing. Taylor's analysis of Freire's literacy programme shows that:

> *.. the rhetoric which announced the importance of dialogue, engagement, and equality, and denounced silence, massification and oppression, did not match in practice the subliminal messages and modes of a Banking System of education. Albeit benign, Freire's approach differs only in degree, but not in kind, from the system which he so eloquently criticizes. (Taylor 1993: 148)*

Educators have to teach. They have to transform transfers of information into a 'real act of knowing' (op cit: 43).

Fifth, there are problems regarding Freire's model of literacy. While it may be taken as a challenge to the political projects of northern states, his analysis remains rooted in assumptions about cognitive development and the relation of literacy to rationality that are suspect (Street 1983: 14). His work has not 'entirely shrugged off the assumptions of the "autonomous model"' (ibid.: 14).

Last, there are questions concerning the originality of Freire's contribution. As Taylor has put it – to say that as many commentators do that Freire's thinking is 'eclectic', is 'to underestimate the degree to which he borrowed directly from other sources' (Taylor 1993: 34). Taylor (1993: 34-51) brings out a number of these influences and 'absorbtions' – perhaps most interestingly the extent to which the structure of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* parallels Kosik's *Dialectic of the Concrete* (published in Spanish in the mid 1960s). Here we would simply invite you to compare Freire's interests with those of Martin Buber. His concern with conversation, encounter, being and ethical education have strong echoes in Freirian thought.

Further reading and references

Key texts: Paulo Freire's central work remains:

Freire, P. (1972) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Harmondsworth: Penguin. Important exploration of dialogue and the possibilities for liberatory practice. Freire provides a rationale for a pedagogy of the oppressed; introduces the highly influential notion of banking education; highlights the contrasts between education forms that treat people as objects rather than subjects; and explores education as cultural action. See, also:

Freire, P. (1995) *Pedagogy of Hope. Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New York: Continuum. This book began as a new preface to his classic work, but grew into a book. It's importance lies in Freire's reflection on the text and how it was received, and on the development of policy and practice subsequently. Written in a direct and engaging way.

Biographical material: There are two useful English language starting points:

Freire, P. (1996) *Letters to Cristina. Reflections on my life and work*, London: Routledge. Retrospective on Freire's work and life. in the form of letters to his niece. He looks back at his childhood experiences, to his youth, and his life as an educator and policymaker.

Gadotti, M. (1994) *Reading Paulo Freire. His life and* work, New York: SUNY Press. Clear presentation of Freire's thinking set in historical context written by a close collaborator.

For my money the best critical exploration of his work is:

Taylor, P. (1993) *The Texts of Paulo Freire*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Other references

Kosik, K. (1988) *La dialectique du concret*, Paris: Plon.

Street, B. V. (1984) *Literacy in Theory and Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Torres, C. A. (1993) 'From the "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" to "A Luta Continua": the political pedagogy of Paulo Freire' in P. McLaren and P. Leonard (eds.) *Freire: A critical encounter*, London: Routledge.

Links

Lesley Bentley – Paulo Freire. Brief biography plus lots of useful links.

Catedra Paulo Freire (Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Sao Paulo) – click for English version.

Blanca Facundo's critique of Freire's ideas, and reactions to Facundo's critique – interesting collection of pieces.

Paulo Freire Institute – a wide range of material available about current work in the Freirian tradition. Click for the English version.

Daniel Schugurensky on Freire – consists of a collection of reviews of his books and links to other pages.

Q&A: The Freirian Approach to Adult Literacy Education, David Spener's review for ERIC.

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[http://www.flickr.com/photos/chhhh/2973802038/]

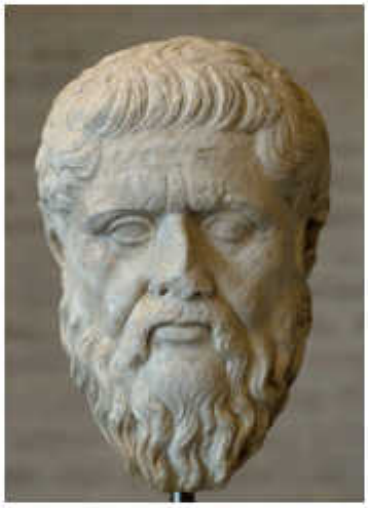
How to cite this article: Smith, M. K. (1997, 2002) 'Paulo Freire and informal education', *the encyclopaedia of informal education*. [http://infed.org/mobi/paulo-freire-dialogue-praxis-and-education/. Retrieved: insert date]

Tagged with → concientization • dialogue • education • Paulo Freire • pedagogy • praxis • social action

Plato on education

infed.org

Plato on education. In his *Republic* we find just about the most influential early account of education. His interest in soul, dialogue and in continuing education continue to provide informal educators with rich insights.



Plato (428 – 348 BC) Greek philosopher who was the pupil of Socrates and the teacher of Aristotle – and one of the most influential figures in 'western' thought. He founded what is said to be the first university – his Academy (near Athens) in around 385 BC. Plato's early works (dialogues) provide much of what we know of Socrates (470 – 399BC). In these early dialogues we see the use of the so called Socratic method. This is a question and answer form of arguing with an 'expert' on one side and a 'searcher' on the other. In the dialogues, the questioning of the expert by the 'searcher' often exposes gaps in the reasoning. Part of this can be put down to Plato's dislike of the Sophists (particularly as teachers of rhetoric) and his concern that teachers should know their subject.

The 'middle period' of Plato's work is also characterised by the use of dialogues in which Socrates is the main speaker – but by this point it is generally accepted that it is Plato's words that are being spoken. We see the flowering of his thought around knowledge and the Forms, the Soul (*psyche* and hence psychology), and political theory (see, especially, *The Republic*).

The 'late period' dialogues are largely concerned with revisiting the metaphysical and logical assumptions of his 'middle period'.

One of the significant features of the dialogical (dialectic) method is that it emphasizes collective, as against solitary, activity. It is through the to and fro of argument amongst friends (or adversaries) that understanding grows (or is revealed). Such philosophical pursuit alongside and within a full education allows humans to transcend their desires and sense in order to attain true knowledge and then to gaze upon the Final Good (*Agathon*).

Perhaps the best known aspect of Plato's educational thought is his portrayal of the ideal society in *The Republic*. He set out in some detail , the shape and curriculum of an education system (with plans for its organization in *The Laws*). In the ideal state, matters are overseen by the guardian class – change is to be avoided (perfection having already been obtained), and slaves, and craftsmen and merchants are to know their place. It is the guardian class who are educated, merchants and craftsmen serve apprenticeships and slaves…

Plato's relevance to modern day educators can be seen at a number of levels. First, he believed, and demonstrated, that educators must have a deep care for the well-being and future of those they work with. Educating is a moral enterprise and it is the duty of educators to search for truth and virtue, and in so doing guide those they have a responsibility to teach. As Charles Hummel puts it in his excellent introductory essay (see below), the educator, 'must never be a mere peddler of materials for study and of recipes for winning disputes, nor yet for promoting a career.

Second, there is the 'Socratic teaching method'. The teacher must know his or her subject, but as a true philosopher he or she also knows that the limits of their knowledge. It is here that we see the power of

dialogue – the joint exploration of a subject – 'knowledge will not come from teaching but from questioning'.

Third, there is his conceptualization of the differing educational requirements associated with various life stages. We see in his work the classical Greek concern for body and mind. We see the importance of exercise and discipline, of story telling and games. Children enter school at six where they first learn the three Rs (reading, writing and counting) and then engage with music and sports. Plato's philosopher guardians then follow an educational path until they are 50. At eighteen they are to undergo military and physical training; at 21 they enter higher studies; at 30 they begin to study philosophy and serve the *polis* in the army or civil service. At 50 they are ready to rule. This is a model for what we now describe as lifelong education (indeed, some nineteenth century German writers described Plato's scheme as 'andragogy'). It is also a model of the 'learning society' – the *polis* is serviced by educators. It can only exist as a rational form if its members are trained – and continue to grow.

Key texts:

Plato (1955) *The Republic*, London: Penguin ((translated by H. P. D. Lee).

Biographical material:

Hare, R. M. (1989) *Plato*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. Succinct introduction that covers a good deal of ground.

Websites: There are thousands of sites that have some reference to Plato. As a starting point you could look at one of the potted biographies: Plato briefly introduces his life and work and then provides links into his works. Try The Republic.

 First published May 8, 1997

Tagged with → education • pedagogy • Plato • Socratic • virtue

Rabindranath Tagore on education

infed.org

Rabindranath Tagore on education. As one of the earliest educators to think in terms of the global village, Rabindranath Tagore's educational model has a unique sensitivity and aptness for education within multi-racial, multi-lingual and multi-cultural situations, amidst conditions of acknowledged economic discrepancy and political imbalance. Kathleen M. O'Connell explores Rabindranath Tagore's contribution.

contents: background · key ideas · conclusion · bibliography · links · how to cite this article

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), Asia's first Nobel Laureate, was born into a prominent Calcutta family known for its socio-religious and cultural innovations during the 19th Bengal Renaissance. The profound social and cultural involvement of his family would later play a strong role in the formulation of Rabindranath's educational priorities. His grandfather Dwarkanath was involved in supporting medical facilities, educational institutions and the arts, and he fought for religious and social reform and the establishment of a free press. His father was also a leader in social and religious reform, who encouraged a multi-cultural exchange in the family mansion Jorasanko. Within the joint family, Rabindranath's thirteen brothers and sisters were mathematicians, journalists, novelists, musicians, artists. His cousins, who shared the family mansion, were leaders in theatre, science and a new art movement.

The tremendous excitement and cultural richness of his extended family permitted young Rabindranath to absorb and learn subconsciously at his own pace, giving him a dynamic open model of education, which he later tried to recreate in his school at Santiniketan. Not surprisingly, he found his outside formal schooling to be inferior and boring and, after a brief exposure to several schools, he refused to attend school. The only degrees he ever received were honorary ones bestowed late in life.

His experiences at Jorasanko provided him with a lifelong conviction concerning the importance of freedom in education. He also realized in a profound manner the importance of the arts for developing empathy and sensitivity, and the necessity for an intimate relationship with one's cultural and natural environment. In participating in the cosmopolitan activities of the family, he came to reject narrowness in general, and in particular, any form of narrowness that separated human being from human being. He saw education as a vehicle for appreciating the richest aspects of other cultures, while maintaining one's own cultural specificity. As he wrote:

> *I was brought up in an atmosphere of aspiration, aspiration for the expansion of the human spirit. We in our home sought freedom of power in our language, freedom of imagination in our literature, freedom of soul in our religious creeds and that of mind in our social environment. Such an opportunity has given me confidence in the power of education which is one with life and only which can give us real freedom, the highest that is claimed for man, his freedom of moral communion in the human world…. I try to assert in my words and works that education has its only meaning and object in freedom–freedom from ignorance about the laws of the*

> *universe, and freedom from passion and prejudice in our communication with the human world. In my institution I have attempted to create an atmosphere of naturalness in our relationship with strangers, and the spirit of hospitality which is the first virtue in men that made civilization possible.*
>
> *I invited thinkers and scholars from foreign lands to let our boys know how easy it is to realise our common fellowship, when we deal with those who are great, and that it is the puny who with their petty vanities set up barriers between man and man. (Rabindranath Tagore 1929: 73-74)*

As well as growing up in a household that was the meeting place for leading artists and intellectuals from India and the West, Rabindranath had a further experience which was unusual for someone of his upbringing. In the 1890s, he was put in charge of the family's rural properties in East Bengal. His first experiments in adult education were carried out there as he gradually became aware of the acute material and cultural poverty that permeated the villages, as well as the great divide between the uneducated rural areas and the city elites. His experiences made him determined to do something about rural uplift, and later at Santiniketan, students and teachers were involved with literacy training and social work and the promotion of cooperative schemes. As an alternative to the existing forms of education, he started a small school at Santiniketan in 1901 that developed into a university and rural reconstruction centre, where he tried to develop an alternative model of education that stemmed from his own learning experiences.

Rabindranath composed his first poem at age eight, and by the end of his life, had written over twenty-five volumes of poetry, fifteen plays, ninety short stories, eleven novels, thirteen volumes of essays, initiated and edited various journals, prepared Bengali textbooks, kept up a correspondence involving thousands of letters, composed over two thousand songs; and – after the age of seventy – created more than two thousand pictures and sketches. He dedicated forty years of his life to his educational institution at Santiniketan, West Bengal. Rabindranath's school contained a children's school as well as a university known as Visva-Bharati and a rural education Centre known as Sriniketan.

Key ideas

Rabindranath did not write a central educational treatise, and his ideas must be gleaned through his various writings and educational experiments at Santiniketan In general, he envisioned an education that was deeply rooted in one's immediate surroundings but connected to the cultures of the wider world, predicated upon pleasurable learning and individualized to the personality of the child. He felt that a curriculum should revolve organically around nature with classes held in the open air under the trees to provide for a spontaneous appreciation of the fluidity of the plant and animal kingdoms, and seasonal changes. Children sat on hand-woven mats beneath the trees, which they were allowed to climb and run beneath between classes. Nature walks and excursions were a part of the curriculum and students were encouraged to follow the life cycles of insects, birds and plants. Class schedules were made flexible to allow for shifts in the weather or special attention to natural phenomena, and seasonal festivals were created for the children by Tagore. In an essay entitled "A Poet's School," he emphasizes the importance of an empathetic sense of interconnectedness with the surrounding world:

> *We have come to this world to accept it, not merely to know it. We may become powerful by knowledge, but we attain fullness by sympathy. The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence. But we find that this education of sympathy is not only systematically ignored in schools, but it is severely repressed. From our very childhood habits are formed and knowledge is imparted in such a manner that our life is weaned away from nature and our mind and the world are set in opposition from the beginning of our days. Thus the greatest of educations for which we came prepared is neglected, and we are made to lose our world to find a bagful of information instead. We rob the child of his earth to teach him geography, of language to teach him grammar. His hunger is for*

> *the Epic, but he is supplied with chronicles of facts and dates…Child-nature protests against such calamity with all its power of suffering, subdued at last into silence by punishment. (Rabindranath Tagore, Personality,1917: 116-17)*

In Tagore's philosophy of education, the aesthetic development of the senses was as important as the intellectual–if not more so–and music, literature, art, dance and drama were given great prominence in the daily life of the school. This was particularly so after the first decade of the school. Drawing on his home life at Jorasanko, Rabindranath tried to create an atmosphere in which the arts would become instinctive. One of the first areas to be emphasized was music. Rabindranath writes that in his adolescence, a 'cascade of musical emotion' gushed forth day after day at Jorasanko. 'We felt we would try to test everything,' he writes, 'and no achievement seemed impossible…We wrote, we sang, we acted, we poured ourselves out on every side.' (Rabindranath Tagore, *My Reminiscences* 1917: 141)

In keeping with his theory of subconscious learning, Rabindranath never talked or wrote down to the students, but rather involved them with whatever he was writing or composing. The students were allowed access to the room where he read his new writings to teachers and critics, and they were encouraged to read out their own writings in special literary evenings. In teaching also he believed in presenting difficult levels of literature, which the students might not fully grasp, but which would stimulate them. The writing and publishing of periodicals had always been an important aspect of Jorasanko life, and students at Santiniketan were encouraged to create their own publications and put out several illustrated magazines. The children were encouraged to follow their ideas in painting and drawing and to draw inspiration from the many visiting artists and writers.

Most of Rabindranath's dramas were written at Santiniketan and the students took part in both the performing and production sides. He writes how well the students were able to enter into the spirit of the dramas and perform their roles, which required subtle understanding and sympathy without special training.

As Rabindranath began conceiving of Visva-Bharati as a national centre for the arts, he encouraged artists such as Nandalal Bose to take up residence at Santiniketan and to devote themselves full-time to promoting a national form of art. Without music and the fine arts, he wrote, a nation lacks its highest means of national self-expression and the people remain inarticulate. Tagore was one of the first to support and bring together different forms of Indian dance. He helped revive folk dances and introduced dance forms from other parts of India, such as Manipuri, Kathak and Kathakali. He also supported modern dance and was one of the first to recognize the talents of Uday Sankar, who was invited to perform at Santiniketan.

The meeting-ground of cultures, as Rabindranath envisioned it at Visva-Bharati, should be a learning centre where conflicting interests are minimized , where individuals work together in a common pursuit of truth and realise 'that artists in all parts of the world have created forms of beauty, scientists discovered secrets of the universe, philosophers solved the problems of existence, saints made the truth of the spiritual world organic in their own lives, not merely for some particular race to which they belonged, but for all mankind.' (Tagore 1922:171-2)

To encourage mutuality, Rabindranath invited artists and scholars from other parts of India and the world to live together at Santiniketan on a daily basis to share their cultures with Visva-Bharati. The Constitution designated Visva-Bharati as an Indian, Eastern and Global cultural centre whose goals were:

1. To study the mind of Man in its realisation of different aspects of truth from diverse points of view.
2. To bring into more intimate relation with one another through patient study and research, the different cultures of the East on the basis of their underlying unity.
3. To approach the West from the standpoint of such a unity of the life and thought of Asia.
4. To seek to realise in a common fellowship of study the meeting of East and West and thus ultimately to strengthen the fundamental conditions of world peace through the free communication of ideas

between the two hemispheres.

5. And with such Ideals in view to provide at Santiniketan a centre of culture where research into the study of the religion, literature, history, science and art of Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Zoroastrian, Islamic, Sikh, Christian and other civilizations may be pursued along with the culture of the West, with that simplicity of externals which is necessary for true spiritual realisation, in amity, good-fellowship and co-operation between the thinkers and scholars of both Eastern and Western countries, free from all antagonisms of race, nationality, creed or caste and in the name of the One Supreme Being who is Shantam, Shivam, Advaitam.

In terms of curriculum, he advocated a different emphasis in teaching. Rather than studying national cultures for the wars won and cultural dominance imposed, he advocated a teaching system that analysed history and culture for the progress that had been made in breaking down social and religious barriers. Such an approach emphasized the innovations that had been made in integrating individuals of diverse backgrounds into a larger framework, and in devising the economic policies which emphasized social justice and narrowed the gap between rich and poor. Art would be studied for its role in furthering the aesthetic imagination and expressing universal themes.

It should be noted that Rabindranath in his own person was a living icon of the type of mutuality and creative exchange that he advocated. His vision of culture was not a static one, but one that advocated new cultural fusions, and he fought for a world where multiple voices were encouraged to interact with one another and to reconcile differences within an overriding commitment to peace and mutual interconnectedness. His generous personality and his striving to break down barriers of all sorts gives us a model for the way multiculturalism can exist within a single human personality, and the type of individual which the educational process should be aspiring towards.

Tagore's educational efforts were ground-breaking in many areas. He was one of the first in India to argue for a humane educational system that was in touch with the environment and aimed at overall development of the personality. Santiniketan became a model for vernacular instruction and the development of Bengali textbooks; as well, it offered one of the earliest coeducational programs in South Asia. The establishment of Visva-Bharati and Sriniketan led to pioneering efforts in many directions, including models for distinctively Indian higher education and mass education, as well as pan-Asian and global cultural exchange.

One characteristic that sets Rabindranath's educational theory apart is his approach to education as a poet. At Santiniketan, he stated, his goal was to create a poem 'in a medium other than words.' It was this poetic vision that enabled him to fashion a scheme of education which was all inclusive, and to devise a unique program for education in nature and creative self-expression in a learning climate congenial to global cultural exchange.

Conclusion

Rabindranath Tagore, by his efforts and achievements, is part of a global network of pioneering educators, such as Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Montessori and Dewey–and in the contemporary context, Malcolm Knowles–who have striven to create non-authoritarian learning systems appropriate to their respective surroundings. In a poem that expresses Tagore's goals for international education, he writes:

> *Where the mind is without fear*
> *and the head is held high,*
> *Where knowledge is free;*
> *Where the world has not been broken*
> *up into fragments by narrow domestic*
> *walls;*
> *Where words come out from the*
> *depth of truth;*

> *Where tireless striving*
> *stretches its arms towards*
> *perfection;*
> *Where the clear stream of reason*
> *has not lost its way into the*
> *dreary desert sand of dead habit;*
> *Where the mind is led forward*
> *by thee into ever-widening*
> *thought and action–*
> *into that heaven of freedom,*
> *my Father,*
> *Let my country awake.*

Further reading and references

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Links

To learn more about Tagore's educational institutions:

http://www.globalsolidarity.org/articles/nonformal.html

http://www.itihaas.com/modern/tagore-profile.html

http://www.visva.bharati.com

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(Wikipedia Commons).

How to cite this article: O'Connell, K. M. (2003). 'Rabindranath Tagore on education', *the encyclopaedia of informal education.* [http://infed.org/mobi/rabindranath-tagore-on-education/. Retrieved: insert date].

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Tagged with → aesthetic development • arts • cultural studies • education • India • organic

Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947) - The Nature of Education, Educational Development and the Rhythm of Growth, Universities and Professional Training

university philosophy precision process

One of the twentieth century's most original metaphysicians and a major figure in mathematical logic, Alfred North Whitehead was also an important social and educational philosopher. Born in England, he was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he also taught mathematics from 1884 until 1910. He then moved to London, where he was professor of applied mathematics at the University of London until 1924. Receiving an invitation to join the philosophy department at Harvard University, Whitehead came to the United States and taught at Harvard until 1937. He remained in Cambridge, Massachusetts, for the rest of his life.

While Whitehead's metaphysical and logical writings merit his inclusion in any pantheon of twentieth-century philosophers, his work in social and educational philosophy is marked by singular qualities of imagination, profound analysis, and personal commitment. His thought resembles much in the philosophy of John Dewey (1859–1952). In the philosophy of higher education, where Dewey wrote very little, Whitehead is probably the most important figure since John Henry Cardinal Newman (1801–1890).

The Nature of Education

"Education is the acquisition of the art of the utilisation of knowledge." This simple sentence from Whitehead's introductory essay in his *Aims of Education* (1929, p. 4), epitomizes one of his central themes: Education cannot be dissected from practice. Whitehead's synthesis of knowledge and application contrasts sharply with educational theories that recommend mental training exclusively. His general philosophical position, which he called "the philosophy of organism," insists upon the ultimate reality of things in relation, changing in time, and arranged in terms of systems of varying complexity, especially living things, including living minds. Whitehead rejected the theory of mind that maintains it is a kind of tool, or dead instrument, needing honing and sharpening. Nor is it a kind of repository for "inert" ideas, stored up in neatly categorized bundles. It is an organic element of an indissoluble mind/body unit, in continuous relationship with the living environment, both social and natural. White-head's philosophy of organism, sometimes called "process philosophy," stands in continuity with his educational thought, both as a general theoretical backdrop for this educational position and as the primary application of his fundamental educational themes.

Educational Development and the Rhythm of Growth

Whitehead's general concept of the nature and aims of education has as its psychological corollary a conception of the rhythm of education that connects him with developmental educators such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778). For Whitehead, education is a temporal, growth-oriented process, in which both student and subject matter move progressively. The concept of rhythm suggests an aesthetic dimension to the process, one analogous to music. Growth then is a part of physical and mental development, with a strong element of style understood as a central driving motif. There are three fundamental stages in this process, which Whitehead called the stage of romance, the stage of precision, and the stage of generalization.

Romance is the first moment in the educational experience. All rich educational experiences begin with an immediate emotional involvement on the part of the learner. The primary acquisition of knowledge involves freshness, enthusiasm, and enjoyment of learning. The natural ferment of the living mind leads it to fix on those objects that strike it pre-reflectively as important for the fulfilling of some felt need on the part of the learner. All early learning experiences are of this kind and a curriculum ought to include appeals to the spirit of inquiry with which all children are natively endowed. The stage of precision concerns "exactness of formulation" (Whitehead 1929, p. 18), rather than the immediacy and breadth of relations involved in the romantic phase. Precision is discipline in the various languages and grammars of discrete subject matters, particularly science and technical subjects, including logic and spoken languages. It is the scholastic phase with which most students and teachers are familiar in organized schools and curricula. In isolation from the romantic impetus of education, precision can be barren, cold, and unfulfilling, and useless in the personal development of children. An educational system excessively dominated by the ideal of precision reverses the myth of Genesis: "In the Garden of Eden Adam saw the animals before he named them: in the traditional system, children named the animals before they saw them" (Whitehead 1925, p.

285). But precision is nevertheless a necessary element in a rich learning experience, and can neither substitute for romance, nor yield its place to romance. Generalization, the last rhythmic element of the learning process, is the incorporation of romance and precision into some general context of serviceable ideas and classifications. It is the moment of educational completeness and fruition, in which general ideas or, one may say, a philosophical outlook, both integrate the feelings and thoughts of the earlier moments of growth, and prepare the way for fresh experiences of excitement and romance, signaling a new beginning to the educational process.

It is important to realize that these three rhythmic moments of the educational process characterize all stages of development, although each is typically associated with one period of growth. So, romance, precision, and generalization characterize the rich educational experience of a young child, the adolescent, and the adult, although the romantic period is more closely associated with infancy and young childhood, the stage of precision with adolescence, and generalization with young and mature adulthood. Education is not uniquely oriented to some future moment, but holds the present in an attitude of almost religious awe. It is "holy ground" (Whitehead 1929, p. 3), and each moment in a person's education ought to include all three rhythmical elements. Similarly, the subjects contained in a comprehensive curriculum need to comprise all three stages, at whatever point they are introduced to the student. Thus the young child can be introduced to language acquisition by a deft combination of appeal to the child's emotional involvement, its need for exactitude in detail, and the philosophical consideration of broad generalizations.

Universities and Professional Training

The pragmatic and progressive aims of education, accompanied by Whitehead's rhythmic developmentalism, have ramifying effects throughout the lifelong educational process, but nowhere more tellingly than in their application to university teaching and research. Whitehead was a university professor throughout his life, and for a time, dean of the Faculty of Science at the University of London. Personal experience makes his analysis of higher studies pointed and relevant. Strikingly, Whitehead chose the modern business school as representative of modern directions in university theory and practice. As a Harvard philosopher, he was in an excellent position to comment on this particular innovation in higher education, since Harvard University was the first school in the United States to have a graduate program in business administration. The novelty of the business school should not be overestimated, since the wedding of theory and practice has been an unspoken motif of higher education since the foundation of the university in the Middle Ages. What has happened is that business has joined the ranks of the learned professions, no longer exclusively comprising theology, law, and medicine. The business school shows that universities are not merely devoted to postsecondary instruction, nor are they merely research institutions. They are both, and the active presence of young learners and mature scholars is necessary to their organic health. "The justification for a university is that it preserves the connection between knowledge and the zest of life, by uniting the young and the old in the imaginative consideration of learning" (Whitehead 1929, p. 93). This community of young and old is a further extension of the organic nature of learning. It makes the university analogous to other living associations, such as the family. The place of imagination in university life illustrates Whitehead's insistence on the aesthetic element in education. Universities are not merely institutions of analytic and intellectual skills, but of their imaginative integration into life. There is a creative element to all university activity (and not merely to the fine arts), a creativity necessary to the survival of life in a world of adventurous change. "Knowledge does not keep any better than fish" (Whitehead 1929, p. 98) and, while universities have a calling to preserve the great cultural achievements of the past, this conservatism must not be allowed to degenerate into a passive and unreflective commitment to inert ideas. "The task of a University is the creation of the future" (Whitehead 1938, p. 233). Ironically perhaps, the modern university, even one containing a business school, should not be managed like a business organization. The necessary freedom and risk, so important to the inventive scholar, requires a polity "beyond all regulation" (Whitehead 1929, p. 99).

Civilization, as Whitehead expresses it in his 1933 book, *Adventures of Ideas* (pp. 309–381), is constituted by five fundamental ideals, namely, beauty, truth, art, adventure, and peace. These five capture the aims, the rhythm, and the living, zestful and ordered progress of education and its institutional forms. They constitute a rich meaning of the term *creativity,* the ultimate driving source and goal of Whitehead's educational theory and program.

See also: PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION.

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Aristotle B.C.) (384–322) - Education for a Common End

subject conduct doing politics

Aristotle, the Greek philosopher and scientist, was born in Stagira, a town in Chalcidice. At the age of seventeen he became a member of the Greek philosopher Plato's school, where he stayed for twenty years. After Plato's death in 348 **B.C.E.** Aristotle taught philosophy, first at Atarneus in Asia Minor, then in Mytilene on the island of Lesbos. Then he became tutor of Alexander the Great at the court of Macedonia. In 335 or 334 **B.C.E.** he returned to Athens and founded a school called the Lyceum.

Aristotle's first writings were dialogues modeled on Plato's examples; a few have survived in fragmentary form. The main body of writings that have come down to us consists of treatises on a wide range of subjects; these were probably presented as lectures, and some may be notes on lectures taken by students. These treatises lay unused in Western Europe after the collapse of the Roman Empire in the sixth century **C.E.**, until they were recovered in the Middle Ages and studied by Muslim, Jewish, and Christian thinkers. The large scope of the treatises, together with the extraordinary intellect of their author, gained for Aristotle the title, "the master of those who know."

The treatises are investigative reports, describing a method of inquiry and the results reached. Each treatise includes: (1) a statement of the aim of the subject matter; (2) a consideration of other thinkers' ideas; (3) an examination of proposed principles with the aim of determining the one that has the best prospect of explaining the subject matter; (4) a search for the facts that illustrate the proposed principle; and (5) an explanation of the subject matter by showing how the proposed principle explains the observed facts. The treatises were essential to the work of the Lyceum, which was a school, a research institution, a library, and a museum. Aristotle and his students compiled a *List of Pythian Winners*; researched the records of dramatic performances at Athens; collected 158 constitutions, of which only *The Constitution of Athens* has survived; prepared a literary and philological study called *Homeric Problems;* and put together a collection of maps and a museum of objects to serve as illustrations for lectures.

Aristotle's writings on logic worked out an art of discourse, a tool for finding out the structure of the world. The other subject matters of Aristotle's treatises are of three kinds: (1) the theoretical sciences–metaphysics, mathematics, and physics–aim to know for the sake of knowing; (2) the productive sciences–such as poetics and rhetoric–aim to know for the sake of making useful or beautiful things; and (3) the practical sciences–ethics and politics–aim to know for the sake of doing, or for conduct. Aristotle said that the theoretical sciences are capable of being understood by principles which are certain and cannot be other than they are; as objects of study their subject matters are necessary and eternal. The productive sciences and the practical sciences are capable of being understood by principles that are less than certain; as objects of study their subject matters are contingent.

Thus Aristotle's idea was that distinct sciences exist, the nature of each to be determined by principles found in the midst of the subject matter that is peculiarly its own. A plurality of subject matters exists, and there is a corresponding plurality of principles explaining sets of facts belonging to each subject matter. What is learned in any subject matter may be useful in studying others; yet there is no hierarchy of subject matters in which the principles of the highest in the order of Being explain the principles of all the others.

Education for a Common End

Unlike Plato's *Republic* and *Laws,* Aristotle's treatises do not contain lengthy discussions of education. His most explicit discussion of education, in Books 7 and 8 of the *Politics,* ends without being completed. Yet, like Plato, Aristotle's educational thinking was inseparable from his account of pursuing the highest good for human beings in the life of a community. The science of politics takes into account the conduct of the individual as inseparable from the conduct of the community. Thus Aristotle holds that ethics is a part of politics; and equally, politics is a part of ethics. This leads him to argue that the end of individuals and states is the same. Inasmuch as human beings cannot realize their potentiality apart from the social life that is necessary for shaping their mind and character, an investigation into the nature of society is a necessary companion to an investigation into the nature of ethics. The good life is inescapably a social life–a life of conduct in a community. For Aristotle, "the Good of man must be the end of the science of Politics" (1975,1.2.1094b 7–8). In community life, the activity of doing

cannot bring into existence something apart from doing; it can only "end" in further doing. And education, as one of the activities of doing, does not "produce" anything apart from education, but must be a continuing process that has no end except further education.

In Aristotle's explicit remarks about the aims of education, it is clear that, like all activities in pursuit of the good life, education is "practical" in that it is a way of conduct, of taking action. At the same time, in pursuing the good life, the aim is to know the nature of the best state and the highest virtues of which human beings are capable. Such knowledge enables us to have a sense of what is possible in education. Educational activity is also a "craft" in the sense that determining the means appropriate for pursuing that which we think is possible is a kind of making as well as a kind of doing. It is commonplace to say that, in doing, we try to "make things happen." Education is an attempt to find the kind of unity of doing and making that enables individuals to grow, ethically and socially.

The *Politics* ends by citing three aims of education: the possible, the appropriate, and the "happy mean." The idea of a happy mean is developed in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. There human conduct is held to consist of two kinds of virtues, moral and intellectual; moral virtues are learned by habit, while intellectual virtues are learned through teaching. As examples, while humans are not temperate or courageous by nature, they have the potentiality to become temperate and courageous. By taking on appropriate habits, their potentialities can be actualized; by conducting themselves appropriately they can learn to actualize their moral virtues. Thus children learn the moral virtues before they know what they are doing or why they are doing it. Just because young children cannot control their conduct by intellectual principles, Aristotle emphasizes habit in training them. First, children must learn the moral virtues; later, when their intellectual powers have matured, they may learn to conduct themselves according to reason by exercising the intellectual virtues.

Arguing that the state is a plurality that should be made into a community by education, Aristotle insisted that states should be responsible for educating their citizens. In the *Politics,* Book 8, he makes four arguments for public education: (1) from constitutional requirements; (2) from the origins of virtue; (3) from a common end to be sought by all citizens; and (4) from the inseparability of the individual and the community. In most states in the Greek world before Aristotle's time, private education had prevailed.

Finally, Aristotle's enduring legacy in education may be characterized as threefold. First is his conception of distinct subject matters, the particular nature and conclusions reached in each to be determined as the facts of its subject matter take their places in the thinking and conduct of the investigator. Second is his insistence on the conjoint activities of ethics and politics, aiming to gain the practical wisdom that can be realized only insofar as citizens strive for the highest good in the context of a community of shared ends. This means that the end of ethics and politics is an educational end. And, third, the education that states need is public education.

Although thinkers may know in a preliminary way what the highest good is–that which is required by reason–they will not actually find out what it is until they learn to live in cooperation with the highest principles of reason. The highest good is never completely known because the pursuit of it leads to further action, which has no end but more and more action. The contingent nature of social existence makes it necessary to find out what is good for us in what we do; we cannot truly learn what it is apart from conduct. While reason is a part of conduct, alone it is not sufficient for realizing the highest good. Only by our conduct can we find out what our possibilities are; and only by further conduct can we strive to make those possibilities actual.

See also: **PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION.**

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Boyd H. Bode (1873–1953)

education philosophy educational dewey

A leading spokesperson of Progressive education and a founder of American pragmatism, Boyd H. Bode was born Boyo Hendrik Bode in Ridott, Illinois. Bode was the eldest son in a family of eight children of Dutch parents, Hendrik and Gertrude Weinenga Bode. His father, both a farmer and minister in the Christian Reformed Church, fully expected Bode to follow him into the ministry. To this end, Boyd was allowed to pursue an education. He received an bachelor's degree in 1896 from William Penn College (affiliated with the Quakers) and from the University of Michigan in 1897. He completed his Ph.D. in philosophy at Cornell University in 1900. While away at school Bode decided not to enter the ministry, and wrote to his father: "Your letter gave me the impression that you still have the fear that I–after all–will still lapse into unbelief. Let me again put your mind at ease that here is little danger for that .... It appears to me that morals without religion does not mean much."

During the 1890s American higher education developed in directions that made a career in academics, separate from the ministry, possible. Upon graduating from Cornell, Bode assumed a position at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, as an instructor and later assistant professor of philosophy and psychology. In 1909 he took a position at the University of Illinois, where he served as professor of philosophy until 1921. Although he left Wisconsin a firm idealist, among his supporters in Madison were the pragmatists John Dewey and William James, whose positions Bode had challenged in publication. At the time Bode found the pragmatist position inadequate to account for the nature of the mind or of knowing, and a weak foundation for morality.

Despite his professional success at the University of Illinois, Bode became increasingly dissatisfied with the role of idealism in solving pressing human problems. By 1909 he wrote of his work in philosophy to friend and fellow philosopher Max Otto: "A good deal of the work is mere drill and I don't find that I am getting anything out of it any more." Gradually he began to reevaluate idealism; and his views about both Dewey and James' positions changed. The pragmatist challenge to idealism demanded attention, and as Bode struggled to respond he gradually thought himself out of idealism and into pragmatism. He sought a philosophy that made a difference, as he put it, a philosophy "brought to earth." He concluded that Dewey was correct: Human experience was sufficient to explain questions of truth and morality.

At Illinois, partly because of the influence of his Cornell classmate William Chandler Bagley, Bode became increasingly interested in educational issues. In particular, he recognized the profound educational differences that follow differing conceptions of mind, a concern fully explored a few years later in his classic *Conflicting Psychologies of Learning* (1929). In 1917 he joined Dewey and other pragmatists in coauthoring *Creative Intelligence,* in which Bode developed a pragmatic conception of consciousness as action. At Illinois he began to teach a graduate seminar on educational theory, and soon he was teaching regularly in the department of education. In 1916 Dewey published *Democracy and Education,* which offered a definition for philosophy that was consistent with Bode's developing thinking. Bode began to publish on educational issues, including entering the debate over the question of transfer of training. In 1921 *Fundamentals of Education* was published, and he assumed the position as head of the department of principles and practice of education at The Ohio State University. His departure from the University of Illinois caused quite a stir. Bagley asserted that he was "a remarkable teacher–by far the most effective, I am sure, at the University of Illinois." Students protested that he was being pushed out from the university because he was seen as "Socrates [who] corrupted the young men of Athens" and held a "too liberal attitude in intellectual matters" for the time.

At Ohio State Bode came to be perhaps the most articulate spokesmen for pragmatism in education. Acknowledging his influence, *Time* magazine declared Bode to be "Progressive education's No. 1 present-day philosopher." Bode was at the center of what came to be known as the "Ohio School of Democracy" in education. In numerous publications he sought to clarify the educational meaning of democracy as a way of life. In articulating his position, which centered on the ideals of faith in the common person's ability to make wise decisions and in the "method of intelligence" as a means of establishing truth (with a small "t"), he took issue with those, including John L. Childs and George Counts, who would impose a social vision on the public schools. His hope was grounded in a profound faith in the process of democratic decision making, the "free play of intelligence" in pursuit of social goods, and in the goodness of people, the "common man," rather than in the foresight of a

few to anticipate the future. In *Democracy as a Way of Life* (1937) he presented his social and educational vision. On another front he challenged the extreme wings of educational progressivism, pointing out that it is not possible to build a school program on needs and interests without a clear social philosophy. He chastised progressive educators who ignored the importance of social philosophy in *Progressive Education at the Crossroads* (1938). He asserted that needs and interests are assigned, they do not inhere in individuals. Moreover, he forcefully argued that the disciplines of knowledge have a central role in education, and that to ignore their power and place in human progress as some progressives did was to invite educational disaster. Thus, he stood in a middle position between child-centered progressives on one side and those who were committed to reconstructing the society through a predetermined social program on the other. Both sides took issue with him.

In addition, Bode wrote about the dangers inherent in what he called the "cleavage" in American culture, that fundamental tension between the demands of democracy and the tendency to look outside of experience for ideals. America could not have it both ways: Democracy was an evolving experiment that drew its aims and means from human experience–the struggle to learn how to live together in order to maximize human development in its various forms. This issue increasingly demanded his attention in his later years particularly in response to the growing attack on progressivism and public education from the right.

Bode argued his position from the pulpit and through publication. As a speaker he was forceful and funny. One attendee at his session during the 1937 Progressive Education Association conference wrote that "To have heard Dr. Boyd Bode of Ohio poke linguistic rapiers, sheathed in salving humor, into every sacred tradition of society, democracy, and theology, was to have experienced an awakening. Shocking it was at times–challenging every minute–and disturbingly logical."

Bode is not well remembered. When recalled, usually he is dismissed as a disciple of his colleague and friend John Dewey. But Bode was not a disciple. He differed with Dewey on a number of fronts, not the least being his dissatisfaction with Dewey's concept of "growth" as an educational ideal. More properly, he ought to be considered one of the founders of educational American pragmatism. Even today the clarity of his prose and quality of his thinking distinguish him from other philosophers of education; his works remain one of the surest and most pleasant roads to understanding of pragmatism and education.

See also: DEWEY, JOHN; PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION; PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION.

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George S. Counts (1889–1974) - Sociology and Education, Social Reform, Political Activism, Contribution

Progressive educator, sociologist, and political activist, George S. Counts challenged teachers and teacher educators to use school as a means for critiquing and transforming the social order. Perhaps best known for his controversial pamphlet *Dare the School Build a New Social Order?* (1932), Counts authored scores of scholarly works that advanced the social study of education and emphasized teaching as a moral and political enterprise. His work on schooling and society continue to have relevance to contemporary dilemmas in education.

Counts was born and raised in Baldwin, Kansas. His family was Methodist and, by his own account, imparted strong ideals of fairness and brotherhood. Counts earned his B.A. from Baker University, the local Methodist school, in 1911 with a degree in classical studies. After graduating, he was employed as a high school math and science teacher, an athletic coach, and principal before beginning postgraduate studies in education at the University of Chicago in 1913, at the age of twenty-four. After receiving a Ph.D. degree with honors, Counts taught at Delaware College, now the University of Delaware (1916–1917) as head of the department of education. He taught educational sociology at Harris Teachers College in St. Louis, Missouri (1918–1919), secondary education at the University of Washington (1919–1920), and education at Yale University (1920–1926) and at the University of Chicago (1926–1927). For nearly thirty years, Counts taught at Teachers College, Columbia University in New York (1927–1956). After being required to retire at the age of 65 from Teachers College, Counts taught at the University of Pittsburgh (1959), Michigan State University (1960), and Southern Illinois University (1962–1971).

Sociology and Education

Much of Counts's scholarship derives from his pioneering work in the sociology of education. His adviser as a doctoral student at the University of Chicago was the chairman of the department of education, psychologist Charles H. Judd. Significantly, Counts insisted on fashioning for himself a minor in sociology and social science at a time when professors of education wholly embraced psychology as the mediating discipline through which to study educational practice and problems. Although his contemporaries were fascinated with the "science of education" and its psychological underpinnings, Counts was interested in the study of social conditions and problems and their relationship to education. Heavily influenced by Albion Small and other Chicago sociologists, Counts saw in sociology the opportunity to examine and reshape schools by considering the impact of social forces and varied political and social interests on educational practice. For example, in the *Selective Character of American Secondary Education* (1922), Counts demonstrated a close relationship between students' perseverance in school and their parents' occupations. In the *Social Composition of Boards of Education: A Study in the Social Control of Public Education* (1927) and *School and Society in Chicago* (1928), he asserted that dominant social classes control American boards of education and school practices respectively. Because schools were run by the capitalist class who wielded social and economic power, Counts argued, school practices tended towards the status quo, including the preservation of an unjust distribution of wealth and power.

Counts's educational philosophy was also an outgrowth of John Dewey's philosophy. Both men believed in the enormous potential of education to improve society and that schools should reflect life rather than be isolated from it. But unlike Dewey's *Public and Its Problems,* much of Counts's writing suggests a plan of action in the use of schools to fashion a new social order.

Social Reform

From 1927 to the early 1930s Counts became fascinated with the Soviet Union precisely for its willingness to employ schools in the inculcation of a new social order. Although he later became disillusioned with mounting evidence of Soviet totalitarianism and an outspoken critic of the Communist Party (he was elected as president of the American Federation of Teachers in 1939 having run as the anti-Communist candidate), Counts–like twenty-first century criticalists–believed that schools always indoctrinated students. What interested Counts was the schools' orientation: what kind of society did the schools favor and to what degree. As he put it, the word *indoctrination* "does not frighten me" (1978, p. 263). This position, in particular, later brought Counts fierce critics like Franklin Bobbit, a leader of the social efficiency movement, who countered that the schools were not to be used as agents of social reform.

Counts was accordingly critical of the child-centered Progressives for their failure to articulate any conception of a good society. He chided their preoccupation with individual growth at the expense of democratic solidarity and social justice. In his speech to the Progressive Education Association (PEA), "Dare Progressive Education be Progressive?" which later became the pamphlet *Dare the School Build a New Social Order?,* he argued that Progressive education had "elaborated no theory of social welfare" (1978, p. 258), and that it must "emancipate itself from the influence of class" (p. 259).

Political Activism

Counts was also a political activist. He was chairman of the American Labor Party (1942–1944), a founder of the Liberal Party, and a candidate for New York's city council, lieutenant governor, and the U.S. Senate. He was president of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and a member of the Commission on the Social Studies of the American Historical Association. He was the first editor of the Progressive journal *Social Frontier* which, at its peak, boasted a circulation of 6,000, and advocated enlisting teachers in the reconstruction of society.

Contribution

Counts's importance to and impact on American education remain a matter of debate. His contributions to the evolving discourse on democracy and education are evident in a great deal of his writing, specifically in his conviction that schools could be the lever of radical social change. Highly critical of economic and social norms of selfishness, individualism, and inattention to human suffering, Counts wanted educators to "engage in the positive task of creating a new tradition in American life" (1978, p.262). He wanted teachers to go beyond abstract, philosophical conceptions of democracy and teach explicitly about power and injustice. He wanted teachers and students to count among their primary goals the building of a better social order.

See also: PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION; PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION.

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Johann Comenius (1592–1670) - Contributions, Works

A prolific scholar on pedagogical, spiritual, and social reform, Johann Amos Comenius was born in the village of Nivnice in southeast Moravia (now part of the Czech Republic), and became a minister in the Unity of Brethren church, a Protestant sect. Political and religious persecution during the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) drove Comenius from his homeland in 1628, and despite his earnest hopes for repatriation, Comenius never returned. He found refuge in Poland, England, Prussia, Hungary, and the Netherlands as a scholar and bishop of his church until his death in Amsterdam. Pained by the political and religious strife that plagued seventeenth-century Europe, Comenius authored more than 200 works as he searched for a method to alleviate human suffering while uniting all people and religions through a common appreciation of God.

Contributions

Comenius is best known for his innovations in pedagogy, but one cannot gain an adequate appreciation of his educational ideas without recognizing his religious and metaphysical convictions. Despite the prevalent human suffering of his day, Comenius remained optimistic about the future of mankind, as he believed in the immanence of God and the imminence of God's kingdom on Earth. As God's creations, humans were necessarily good, not corrupt. Comenius also felt that Christ's Second Coming would end human strife but that people themselves could act in ushering the new millennium by engaging in *pansophy,* or the lifelong study of an encyclopedic system of human knowledge. By seeing the harmony among everything in the universe, all human beings would come to acknowledge God's glory and presence in themselves and in nature.

Specifically, Comenius characterized human life–from the mother's womb to grave–as a series of educational stages in which objects from nature would serve as the basis of learning. In this, he was influenced by the writings of the English statesman Sir Francis Bacon, an early advocate of the inductive method of scientific inquiry. Comenius believed that true knowledge could be found in things as they existed in reality and when one came to understand how they came about. As a result, Comenius urged all people to recognize the interconnections and harmony among philosophical, theological, scientific, social, and political facts and ideas. That way, one could reconcile three seemingly distinct worlds: the natural, the human, and the divine. Comenius felt that disagreements among religious, scientific, and philosophic enterprises arose because each held only a partial understanding of universal truth–but that all could exist harmoniously through pansophic awareness. Viewing the human mind as infinite in its capacity (as the benevolent gift of God), Comenius advocated universal education so that the souls of all people would be enlightened in this fashion. Through universal education and pedagogy, pansophy would eliminate human prejudice and lead to human perfection–a state of being that God had intended for man.

Comenius found fault with many of the educational practices of his day. In particular, he disapproved of the scholastic tradition of studying grammar and memorizing texts. He lamented the haphazard and severe teaching methods in european schools, which tended to diminish student interest in learning. Finally, comenius felt that all children–whether male or female, rich or poor, gifted or mentally challenged–were entitled to a full education, and he regretted that only a privileged few received formal schooling. For comenius, all of these educational shortcomings were especially urgent, as they hindered mankind's progress to the new millennium. As a result, he attempted to remedy these problems by authoring a number of textbooks and educational treatises.

Works

Perhaps Comenius's most familiar work is the *Great Didactic,* which he originally wrote in 1632. As Comenius held the conviction that pansophy was necessary for the spiritual salvation of humankind, he reasoned that a good man (a rational being who understood God through nature), and ultimately a good society, could only be created if all people acquired encyclopedic knowledge. In order to guarantee that this would occur, Comenius delineated a universal teaching method or standard set of pedagogical postulates that would facilitate an effective communication of knowledge between the teacher and student. Delineating four levels of schools lasting six years each, Comenius was one of the first educators to recommend a coherent and standard system of instruction. Indeed, Comenius suggested that the universality of nature dictated that all people shared common stages of intellectual development. As a result, he reasoned, teachers needed to identify their students' stages of development and match the level of instruction accordingly. Lessons should proceed from easy to complex at a slow

and deliberate pace. Furthermore, Comenius argued that the acquisition of new material began through the senses–an idea that reflected the rise of empiricism in the seventeenth century.

Ultimately, Comenius believed that the purpose of learning was eminently practical: not for ostentatious displays of rhetorical acumen, but for preparing for the Second Coming of Christ. Comenius derided the educational legacy of the Renaissance with its focus on classical grammar and even the Reformation with its mechanical teaching of the catechism. By employing the methods presented in the *Great Didactic,* however, Comenius argued that teachers could ensure that they produced knowledgeable and virtuous students who would continue to learn throughout their lives. In this way, he viewed teaching as a technical skill; if performed correctly, one could guarantee the results.

In 1631, Comenius published *The Gate of Languages Unlocked,* a Latin textbook. In it, he recommended that teachers employ the students' native language as a necessary frame of reference for unfamiliar words to become meaningful. Comenius also advocated that teachers begin with simple lessons for students to master before proceeding to more complex exercises. It became the standard Latin textbook in Europe and America throughout the seventeenth and much of the eighteenth centuries. One contemporary scholar has suggested that the incremental organization and explicit goals of the text anticipated the principles of mastery learning.

In 1658, Comenius wrote another Latin textbook, *The World in Pictures,* one of the first reading books to incorporate illustrations. Enormously popular in Europe and America, it was printed in the United States until 1887. Again, reflecting Comenius's belief that all learning began with the senses, *The World* in Pictures included numbered parts of illustrations, each of which corresponded to a word. It also presented a simplified vocabulary and specific examples to help students understand the relevant concept or rule. And like the *Gate of Languages Unlocked,* Comenius attempted to present lessons in a way that reflected the order of nature, although some scholars have noted that Comenius manipulated perspectives and exaggerated proportions to facilitate the lesson at hand. Some educators consider the *World in Pictures* a pivotal text in pedagogical innovation that opened the way for modern-day teaching instruments such as audiovisual aids and electronic media.

Frustrated by the fragmentation of European institutions of higher education, along with their tendency to impose knowledge authoritatively and discourage critical thinking, Comenius advocated the creation of a universal college. In *Way of Light,* which he wrote while visiting England in 1641 and 1642, Comenius outlined his vision for establishing universal textbooks and schools, a common language, and a pansophic college. Comenius believed that a pansophic college would contribute to the establishment of an intellectual and spiritual consensus in the world by propelling, steering, and coordinating the research of all scholars. This "college of light" would be located in a prominent and accessible locale and utilize a common language in order to facilitate the inclusion of all European scholars of prominence. It would also govern an ideal world and disseminate knowledge so that an understanding of God's creations and glory would not become the exclusive possession of the privileged. Such an institution would therefore unite all human beings in the world both culturally and religiously. Although the pansophic college never came about, Comenius's treatise inspired the establishment of the Royal Society in England (founded in 1662) and the Berlin Royal Academy of Sciences (founded in 1700).

Comenius's belief that knowledge and wisdom could be merged into a single pan-science drew the criticism of the French philosopher René Descartes, who sought to free science from theology in a quest to gain knowledge objectively. Indeed, Comenius's pansophic ideas fell out of favor by the late seventeenth century, as they became incongruous with the prevailing epistemological sensibilities of the Enlightenment.

In the past century, however, a number of educators revived the pedagogical elements of Comenius's legacy. They cited his emphasis on early childhood education and his aversion to corporal punishment as precursors to the German educator Friedrich Froebel's kindergarten idea. They lauded Comenius's call for universal education and a carefully graded system of schools. They noted his innovative use of learning aids such as the illustrations in the *World in Pictures* and his preference for focusing on actual things rather than rhetoric in education. Finally, they praised Comenius's desire to make learning enjoyable and more meaningful through the use of dramatic productions and other innovative methods.

Still, one must remember that these pedagogical innovations derived from Comenius's urgent desire for the alleviation of human suffering, the mending of political, epistemological, and spiritual divisions, and ultimately, man's gradual comprehension of God's will and glory.

See also: PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION.

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i find very interesting and helpful for me as an educator in preeschool to know about Amos Comenius,and know that i'm in a head direction in the way i transmit the knowlegde the those so sensitive childen throught picture first and play after that reading then wrinting. but, nowadays parents in algeria and all around the world they want their children have an early litracy even at age of 3 years but what about play instruction ?

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Johann Herbart (1776–1841) - Career, Contribution

education university ideas herbartianism

German philosopher Johann Friedrich Herbart is the founder of the pedagogical theory that bears his name, which eventually laid the groundwork for teacher education as a university enterprise in the United States and elsewhere. Herbart was born in Oldenburg, Germany, the only child of a gifted and strong-willed mother and a father whose attention was devoted to his legal practice. Herbart was tutored at home until he entered the gymnasium at the age of twelve, from which he went on as valedictorian to the University of Jena at a time when such stellar German intellectuals as Johann Gottfried Herder, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and Friedrich von Schiller were associated with that institution. It was apparently Schiller's *Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen* (Letters concerning the aesthetic education of man), then in progress in 1795, that influenced Herbart to devote himself to philosophy and education.

Career

In 1797 and almost against his will Herbart was persuaded by his mother to accept a position as tutor to the sons of the regional governor of Interlaken in Switzerland. During his three years of work with these three very different boys, aged fourteen, ten, and eight when their relationship began, Herbart confronted in earnest the problems of teaching children, reporting monthly to their father on his methods and the results achieved. During his Swiss sojourn, he was also influenced by the thinking of Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, whose school at Burgdorf he visited and whose ideas he systematized in 1802 in his *Pestalozzis Idee eines ABC der Anschauung untersucht und wissenschaftlich ausgeführt* (Pestalozzi's idea of an ABC of sense impression investigated and laid out scientifically).

Returning to Germany in 1800, Herbart completed his remaining doctoral work at the University of Göttingen, receiving his degree in 1802. He remained there as a lecturer in both philosophy and pedagogy until he received an appointment as professor of philosophy in 1805. Chief works related to education from his Göttingen period are *Über die ästhetische Darstellung der Welt als das Hauptgeschäft der Erziehung* (On the aesthetic representation of the world as the main concern of education), published in 1804, and *Allgemeine Pädagogik aus dem Zweck der Erziehung abgeleitet* (General pedagogy deduced from the aim of education), published in 1806. He also published on metaphysics and psychology.

In 1809 Herbart accepted the chair of pedagogy and philosophy at the University of Königsberg, formerly occupied by Immanuel Kant, and began a period of great productivity, ranging across the full spectrum of philosophical investigations. In the midst of work in metaphysics and psychology he also organized a pedagogical seminar for advanced students, attached to a demonstration school in which he and his students attempted to implement his pedagogical ideas, which were then critiqued and revised through the seminar discussions. This seminar, widely imitated by his later disciplines in Germany and elsewhere, was a first step toward trying to approach educational work scientifically.

Herbart left Königsberg in 1833, apparently because of disagreements with the Prussian government over his educational views in relation to state and church power. He returned to the University of Göttingen, where he remained for the last eight years of his life, producing his *Umriss von pädagogischen Vorlesungen* (Outlines of pedagogical lectures) in 1835, in which he attempted to connect more directly his early pedagogical theory and his later psychological work. He gave his last lecture two days before he died of a stroke on August 14, 1841.

Contribution

The legacy of Herbart to education was mediated through two major German disciples, Karl Volkmar Stoy and Tuiskon Ziller, who sought to implement his theories with varying degrees of alteration. Stoy was inspired by Herbart's early lectures in philosophy and pedagogy at the University of Göttingen and, upon qualifying as a lecturer at the University of Jena in 1842, took charge of a local private school that soon attracted students from all over Europe. In 1845 he was appointed professor at the university, then he moved in 1865 to the University of Heidelberg, establishing at nearby Bielitz a normal school based upon Herbartian principles. He returned to Jena in 1874 and established there the pedagogical seminar that would be taken over upon his death in 1885 by Wilhelm Rein, and brought to international renown by the end of the nineteenth century both for its practices and for its incorporation of teacher education into the university. It was there that the majority of Herbartians from other countries, including the United States, developed their ideas.

Rein had studied with the second major disciple of Herbart, Ziller, who had pursued a career in law, being appointed a lecturer at the University of Leipzig in 1853. Like Herbart, a period of teaching during his doctoral work led Ziller to investigate educational questions, and his first works, published in 1856 and 1857, were direct extensions and applications of Herbart's ideas. He established at the University of Leipzig a pedagogical seminar and practice school modeled after that of Herbart at Königsberg. Ziller was instrumental in founding the *Verein für wissenschaftliche Pädagogik* (Society for Scientific Pedagogy) in 1868, which published a quarterly that disseminated Herbartian ideas, and spread all over Germany as local clubs for the study of Herbartian approaches to educational problems. Ziller wrote *Grundlegung zur Lehre vom erziehenden Unterricht* (Basis of the doctrine of instruction as a moral force), published in 1865, and his *Vorlesungen über allgemeine Pädagogik* (Lectures on general pedagogy), published in 1876, five years before his death. These works provided the Herbartian legacy that Wilhelm Rein as a student of Ziller at Leipzig brought to his work when Rein resuscitated the pedagogical seminar at the University of Jena in 1886, a year after Stoy's death.

The German tradition of Herbartianism distinguishes between the Stoy and Ziller schools, the former being considered truer to Herbart's own ideas and the latter an extension of them more or less justified. Scholarship on both schools continues, centered at the University of Jena since its international conference, *Der Herbartianismus: die vergessene Wissenschaftsgeschichte* (Herbartianism: the forgotten history of a science), in 1997. The investigation of, or even attention to, the fine points of Herbartian theory, was notably lacking in American Herbartianism, although the central ideas remained intact. First and foremost was the development of moral character as the central aim of education. Second was the adoption of Herbart's notion of apperception as the dynamic of learning: the ideas already configured in the mind are stimulated into activity by new information and either integrate that new information through meaningful connections or let it pass if such connections are not made. The essential unity of the ideas present in the mind is reflected in the theory of concentration as a principle for organizing the curriculum, which in relating several subjects to one another in the course of instruction also nurtures the many-faceted interest that is essential to full intellectual and thus spiritual development. Ziller added to these basic ideas the notion of the cultural-historical epochs as a curriculum principle that responds to the recapitulation in the individual of the psychic and cultural development of his group.

Rein and others developed a full eight-year course of study built upon this principle, which was translated and adapted to American use by Charles A. McMurry, one of the major disseminators of Herbartianism in the United States and a student with Rein. Charles De Garmo, on the other hand, brought back to the United States the more conservative Herbartianism of Stoy, whose ideas were mirrored in the secondary schools of the *Franckische Stiftungen* in Halle established for orphans by August Hermann Francke in 1695 and under the directorship of Otto Frick during De Garmo's doctoral study at the University of Halle. De Garmo also provided for American readers the most thorough survey of the German Herbartians and Herbartian concepts in his *Herbart and the Herbartians,* published in 1895. It joined a substantial number of translations of work by Herbart and various German Herbartians made available in the 1890s.

American Herbartianism enjoyed a brief burst of national attention in the 1890s because of attempts by U.S. Commissioner of Education William Torrey Harris to stop its spread and the formation of the National Herbart Society in 1895 in response to those efforts. Within seven years the National Herbart Society had become the National Society for the Study of Education and its yearbooks had lost any obvious association with Herbartianism. Within that period at least eight universities were offering heavily Herbartian programs, and the demand for American Herbartian texts, particularly those of Charles McMurry, lasted until nearly 1930. Integrated curriculum, elementary school history teaching, and constructivist learning theory are part of the contemporary legacy of Herbartianism.

See also: EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY; INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN; MCMURRY, CHARLES.

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I wish to get copy of Herbartian Philosophy. His contribution in education will be a good reference material for resarch work.

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thanks bfor the clear information it help me a lot for my research. thanks once again.

Johann Pestalozzi (1746–1827) - Career and Development of Educational Theory, Diffusion of Educational Ideas

school children method learning

In the history of education, the significant contributions of Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi are (1) his educational philosophy and instructional method that encouraged harmonious intellectual, moral, and physical development; (2) his methodology of empirical sensory learning, especially through object lessons; and (3) his use of activities, excursions, and nature studies that anticipated Progressive education.

Career and Development of Educational Theory

The development of Pestalozzi's educational theory is closely tied to his career as an educator. Born in Zurich, Switzerland, Pestalozzi was the son of Johann Baptiste Pestalozzi, a middle-class Protestant physician, and Susanna Hotz Pestalozzi. Pestalozzi's grandfather, Andreas Pestalozzi, a minister in the rural village of Hongg, inspired his evolving philanthropic mission to uplift the disadvantaged Swiss peasantry.

Pestalozzi, who had an overly protected and isolated childhood, considered himself to be socially inept and physically uncoordinated as an adult. His formal education was in institutions in Zurich. He first attended a local primary school and then took the preparatory course in Latin and Greek at the Schola Abbatissana and the Schola Carolina. His higher education was at the Collegium Humanitatis and the Collegium Carolinum, where he specialized in languages and philosophy.

With other university students, Pestalozzi was influenced by Jean Jacques Bodmer, an historian and literary critic, whose reformist ideology urged regenerating Swiss life by renewing the rustic values of the Swiss mountaineers. Pestalozzi joined the Helvetic Society, an association committed to Bodmer's ideals, and wrote for *The Monitor,* a journal critical of Zurich's officials. Pestalozzi was jailed briefly for his activities, which the authorities deemed subversive.

In 1767 Pestalozzi studied scientific agriculture with Johann Rudolf Tschiffeli, a physiocrat and experimental farmer near Kirchberg. Pestalozzi married Anna Schulthess, daughter of an upper-middle-class Zurich family in 1769. His only child, named Jean Jacques after Rousseau, was born in 1770. After using Rousseau's work *Émile* as a guide to educating his son, Pestalozzi revised Rousseau's method in *How Father Pestalozzi Instructed His Three and a Half Year Old Son* (1774). Though still committed to Rousseauean natural education, Pestalozzi began to base instruction on a more empirically based psychology.

In 1774 Pestalozzi established his first institute, a self-supporting agricultural and handicraft school at Neuhof. At its height, the school enrolled fifty pupils, many of whom were indigent or orphaned. Here, Pestalozzi devised *simultaneous instruction,* a group method to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic. However, financial indebtedness forced the school's closing in 1779.

Pestalozzi published *Leonard and Gertrude,* a popular didactic novel in 1781, which was followed by a less successful sequel, *Christopher and Elizabeth* in 1782. Between 1782 and 1784 he wrote educational essays for *Ein Schweizer Blatt,* the Swiss newspaper. His *On Legislation and Infanticide,* (1783), condemned killing or abandoning unwanted children. He wrote two children's books: *Illustrations for My ABC Book* (1787) and *Fables for My ABC Book* (1795). Pestalozzi's *Researches into the Course of Nature in the Development of the Human Race* (1797) was a pioneering work in educational sociology.

Pestalozzi re-entered active educational service in 1799 when the Napoleonic-backed Helvetian Republic appointed him director of the orphanage at Stans. Here, he developed his concept of a residential school in which children were educated within an emotionally secure setting. Operating for less than a year, the orphanage closed when French and Austrian armies battled in its vicinity.

Pestalozzi then conducted a residential and teacher training school at Burgdorf from 1800 to 1804. He trained such educators as Joseph Neef, who would introduce Pestalozzianism to the United States, and Friedrich Froebel, the kindergarten's founder.

Pestalozzi's most systematic work, *How Gertrude Teaches Her Children* (1801) was a critique of conventional schooling and a prescription for educational reform. Rejecting corporal punishment, rote memorization, and bookishness, Pestalozzi

envisioned schools that were homelike institutions where teachers actively engaged students in learning by sensory experiences. Such schools were to educate individuals who were well rounded intellectually, morally, and physically. Through engagement in activities, students were to learn useful vocations that complemented their other studies.

Pestalozzi's method rested on two major premises: (1) children need an emotionally secure environment as the setting for successful learning; and (2) instruction should follow the generalized process of human conceptualization that begins with sensation. Emphasizing sensory learning, the special method used the *Anschauung* principle, a process that involved forming clear concepts from sense impressions. Pestalozzi designed object lessons in which children, guided by teachers, examined the form (shape), number (quantity and weight) of objects, and named them after direct experience with them. Object teaching was the most popular and widely adopted element of Pestalozzianism.

Pestalozzi developed two related phases of instruction: the general and special methods. The general method in which teachers were to create an emotionally secure school environment was a necessary condition for implementing the special method. Emphasizing sensory learning, the special method, using the *Anschauung* principle, involved forming clear concepts from sense impressions. Pestalozzi designed an elaborate series of graded object lessons, by which children examined minerals, plants, and animals and human-made artifacts found in their environment. Following a sequence, instruction moved from the simple to the complex, the easy to the difficult, and the concrete to the abstract.

Pestalozzi's object lessons and emphasis on sense experience encouraged the entry of natural science and geography, two hitherto neglected areas, into the elementary school curriculum. On guided field trips, children explored the surrounding countryside, observing the local natural environment, topography, and economy. A further consequence of Pestalozzi's work was the movement to redirect instruction from the traditional recitation in which each child recited a previously assigned lesson to simultaneous group-centered instruction.

In 1804 Pestalozzi relocated his institute to Yverdon, where he worked until 1825. He died on February 17, 1827 and was buried at Neuhof, site of his first school.

Diffusion of Educational Ideas

Pestalozzianism was carried throughout Europe and America by individuals he had trained as teachers and by visitors who were impressed with his method. After Gottlieb Fichte promoted Pestalozzianism in his *Addresses to the German Nation* in 1808, Prussia incorporated selected elements of Pestalozzi's method in its educational reform of 1809 and dispatched teachers to study with him. In the United Kingdom, the Home and Colonial School Society in 1836 established a Pestalozzian teacher training school.

William Maclure, a philanthropist and natural scientist, began Pestalozzianism's introduction to the United States in 1806, when he subsidized Neef's school near Philadelphia. Neef's *A Sketch of a Plan and Method of Education* (1808) and *The Method of Instructing Children Rationally in the Arts of Writing and Reading* (1813) promoted Pestalozzian education in the United States. Under Maclure's auspices, Neef, Marie Duclos Fretageot, and William D'Arusmont conducted Pestalozzian schools at Robert Owen's communitarian experiment at New Harmony, Indiana, from 1824 to 1828.

Other American proponents of Pestalozzianism were Henry Barnard and Edward A. Sheldon. Barnard (1811–1900), a common school leader and U.S. Commissioner of Education, endorsed Pestalozzian education in *Pestalozzi and Pestalozzianism* (1859). Sheldon (1823–1897) incorporated the Pestalozzian object lesson in the teacher education program at the Oswego normal school in New York. In 1865 a report of the National Teachers' Association endorsed object teaching.

Certain Pestalozzian elements could be found among American progressive educators of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who, like Pestalozzi, opposed traditional schools' formalism and verbalism and emphasized children's interests and needs. Such educational emphases as the *child-centered school, child permissiveness,* and *hands-on process learning* had their origins with Pestalozzi.

Pestalozzi's paramount contribution to education was his general philosophy of *natural education* that stressed the dignity of children and the importance of actively engaging children in using their senses to explore the environment.

Specifically, his legacy to later educators was his emphasis on children's holistic physical, mental and psychological development; his emphasis on empirical learning; his reforms of elementary and teacher education; and his anticipation of child-centered progressivism.

See also: INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES; PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION; SHELDON, EDWARD.

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GERALD L. GUTEK

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baju bayi murah toko online murah — 6 months ago

Very nice post. I just stumbled upon your weblog and wished to say that I have truly enjoyed surfing around your blog posts.

baju bayi murah toko online murah — 6 months ago

so many entertaining stuff in your blog Thank you so much for letting us know about this! I must say that you are a very dedicated person to have written a wonderful post like this!

jamesetta — 4 months ago

I love what you did and this is an amazing story

John Dewey (1859–1952) - Experience and Reflective Thinking, Learning, School and Life, Democracy and Education

experiences philosophy society educational

Throughout the United States and the world at large, the name of John Dewey has become synonymous with the Progressive education movement. Dewey has been generally recognized as the most renowned and influential American philosopher of education.

He was born in 1859 in Burlington, Vermont, and he died in New York City in 1952. During his lifetime the United States developed from a simple frontier-agricultural society to a complex urban-industrial nation, and Dewey developed his educational ideas largely in response to this rapid and wrenching period of cultural change. His father, whose ancestors came to America in 1630, was the proprietor of Burlington's general store, and his mother was the daughter of a local judge. John, the third of their four sons, was a shy boy and an average student. He delivered newspapers, did his chores, and enjoyed exploring the woodlands and waterways around Burlington. His father hoped that John might become a mechanic, and it is quite possible that John might not have gone to college if the University of Vermont had not been located just down the street. There, after two years of average work, he graduated first in a class of 18 in 1879.

There were few jobs for college graduates in Burlington, and Dewey spent three anxious months searching for work. Finally, a cousin who was the principal of a high school in South Oil City, Pennsylvania, offered him a teaching position which paid $40 a month. After two years of teaching high school Latin, algebra, and science, Dewey returned to Burlington to teach in a rural school closer to home.

With the encouragement of H. A. P. Torrey, his former philosophy professor at the University of Vermont, Dewey wrote three philosophical essays (1882a; 1882b; 1883) which were accepted for publication in the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy,* whose editor, William Torrey Harris, hailed them as the products of a first-rate philosophical mind. With this taste of success and a $500 loan from his aunt, Dewey left teaching to do graduate work at Johns Hopkins University. There he studied philosophy–which at that time and place primarily meant Hegelian philosophy and German idealism–and wrote his dissertation on the psychology of Kant.

After he received the doctorate in 1884, Dewey was offered a $900-a-year instructorship in philosophy and psychology at the University of Michigan. In his first year at Michigan, Dewey not only taught but also produced his first major book, *Psychology* (1887). In addition, he met, wooed, and married Alice Chipman, a student at Michigan who was herself a former schoolteacher. Fatherhood and ten years' teaching experience helped his interest in psychology and philosophy to merge with his growing interest in education.

In 1894 the University of Chicago offered Dewey the chairmanship of the department of philosophy, psychology, and pedagogy. At Chicago he established the now-famous laboratory school (commonly known as the Dewey School), where he scientifically tested, modified, and developed his psychological and educational ideas.

An early statement of his philosophical position in education, *My Pedagogic Creed* (1897), appeared three years after his arrival at Chicago. Four other major educational writings came out of Dewey's Chicago experience. The first two, *The School and Society* (1956), which was first published in 1899, and *The Child and the Curriculum* (1902), were lectures which he delivered to raise money and gain support for the laboratory school. Although the books were brief, they were clear and direct statements of the basic elements of Dewey's educational philosophy and his psychology of learning. Both works stressed the functional relationship between classroom learning activities and real life experiences and analyzed the social and psychological nature of the learning process. Two later volumes, *How We Think* (1910) and *Democracy and Education* (1916), elaborated these themes in greater and more systematic detail.

Dewey's work at Chicago was cut short when, without consulting Dewey, Chicago's president, William Rainey Harper, arranged to merge the laboratory school with the university training school for teachers. The merger not only took control of the school from Dewey's hands but changed it from an experimental laboratory to an institution for teacher-training. Dewey felt that he had no recourse but to resign and wrote to William James at Harvard and to James M. Cattell at Columbia

University, informing them of his decision. Dewey's reputation in philosophy had grown considerably by this time, and Cattell had little difficulty in persuading the department of philosophy and psychology at Columbia to offer him a position. Because the salary offer was quite low for a man with six children (three more had been born during his ten years at Chicago), arrangements were made for Dewey to teach an additional two hours a week at Columbia Teachers College for extra compensation. For the next twenty-six years at Columbia, Dewey continued his illustrious career as a philosopher and witnessed the dispersion of his educational ideas throughout the world by many of his disciples at Teachers College, not the least of whom was William Heard Kilpatrick.

Dewey retired in 1930 but was immediately appointed professor emeritus of philosophy in residence at Columbia and held that post until his eightieth birthday in 1939. The previous year he had published his last major educational work, *Experience and Education* (1938). In this series of lectures he clearly restated his basic philosophy of education and recognized and rebuked the many excesses he thought the Progressive education movement had committed. He chastised the Progressives for casting out traditional educational practices and content without offering something positive and worthwhile to take their place. He offered a reformulation of his views on the intimate connection between learning and experience and challenged those who would call themselves Progressives to work toward the realization of the educational program he had carefully outlined a generation before.

At the age of ninety he published his last large-scale original philosophical work, *Knowing andthe Known* (1949), in collaboration with Arthur F. Bentley.

Experience and Reflective Thinking

The starting place in Dewey's philosophy and educational theory is the world of everyday life. Unlike many philosophers, Dewey did not search beyond the realm of ordinary experience to find some more fundamental and enduring reality. For Dewey, the everyday world of common experience was all the reality that man had access to or needed. Dewey was greatly impressed with the success of the physical sciences in solving practical problems and in explaining, predicting, and controlling man's environment. He considered the scientific mode of inquiry and the scientific systematization of human experience the highest attainment in the evolution of the mind of man, and this way of thinking and approaching the world became a major feature of his philosophy. In fact, he defined the educational process as a "continual reorganization, reconstruction and transformation of experience" (1916, p. 50), for he believed that it is only through experience that man learns about the world and only by the use of his experience that man can maintain and better himself in the world.

Dewey was careful in his writings to make clear what kinds of experiences were most valuable and useful. Some experiences are merely passive affairs, pleasant or painful but not educative. An educative experience, according to Dewey, is an experience in which we make a connection between what we do to things and what happens to them or us in consequence; the value of an experience lies in the perception of relationships or continuities among events. Thus, if a child reaches for a candle flame and burns his hand, he experiences pain, but this is not an educative experience unless he realizes that touching the flame resulted in a burn and, moreover, formulates the general expectation that flames will produce burns if touched. In just this way, before we are formally instructed, we learn much about the world, ourselves, and others. It is this natural form of learning from experience, by doing and then reflecting on what happened, which Dewey made central in his approach to schooling.

Reflective thinking and the perception of relationships arise only in problematical situations. As long as our interaction with our environment is a fairly smooth affair we may think of nothing or merely daydream, but when this untroubled state of affairs is disrupted we have a problem which must be solved before the untroubled state can be restored. For example, a man walking in a forest is suddenly stopped short by a stream which blocks his path, and his desire to continue walking in the same direction is thwarted. He considers possible solutions to his problem–finding or producing a set of stepping-stones, finding and jumping across a narrow part, using something to bridge the stream, and so forth–and looks for materials or conditions to fit one of the proposed solutions. He finds an abundance of stones in the area and decides that the first suggestion is most worth testing. Then he places the stones in the water, steps across to the other side, and is off again on his hike. Such an example illustrates all the elements of Dewey's theoretical description of reflective thinking: A real problem arises out of present experiences, suggestions for a solution come to mind, relevant data are observed, and a hypothesis is formed, acted upon, and finally tested.

Learning

For Dewey, learning was primarily an activity which arises from the personal experience of grappling with a problem. This concept of learning implied a theory of education far different from the dominant school practice of his day, when students passively received information that had been packaged and predigested by teachers and textbooks. Thus, Dewey argued, the schools did not provide genuine learning experiences but only an endless amassing of facts, which were fed to the students, who gave them back and soon forgot them.

Dewey distinguished between the psychological and the logical organization of subject matter by comparing the learner to an explorer who maps an unknown territory. The explorer, like the learner, does not know what terrain and adventures his journey holds in store for him. He has yet to discover mountains, deserts, and water holes and to suffer fever, starvation, and other hardships. Finally, when the explorer returns from his journey, he will have a hard-won knowledge of the country he has traversed. Then, and only then, can he produce a map of the region. The map, like a textbook, is an abstraction which omits his thirst, his courage, his despairs and triumphs–the experiences which made his journey personally meaningful. The map records only the relationships between landmarks and terrain, the logic of the features without the psychological revelations of the journey itself.

To give the map to others (as a teacher might) is to give the results of an experience, not the experience by which the map was produced and became personally meaningful to the producer. Although the logical organization of subject matter is the proper goal of learning, the logic of the subject cannot be truly meaningful to the learner without his psychological and personal involvement in exploration. Only by wrestling with the conditions of the problem at hand, "seeking and finding his own way out, does he think .... If he cannot devise his own solution (not, of course, in isolation but in correspondence with the teacher and other pupils) and find his own way out he will not learn, not even if he can recite some correct answer with one hundred percent accuracy" (Dewey 1916, p. 160).

Although learning experiences may be described in isolation, education for Dewey consisted in the cumulative and unending acquisition, combination, and reordering of such experiences. Just as a tree does not grow by having new branches and leaves wired to it each spring, so educational growth does not consist in mechanically adding information, skills, or even educative experiences to students in grade after grade. Rather, educational growth consists in combining past experiences with present experiences in order to receive and understand future experiences. To grow, the individual must continually reorganize and reformulate past experiences in the light of new experiences in a cohesive fashion.

School and Life

Ideas and experiences which are not woven into the fabric of growing experience and knowledge but remain isolated seemed to Dewey a waste of precious natural resources. The dichotomy of in-school and out-of-school experiences he considered especially wasteful, as he indicated as early as 1899 in *The School and Society:*

> From the standpoint of the child, the great waste in the school comes from his inability to utilize the experiences he gets outside the school in any complete and free way within the school itself; while on the other hand, he is unable to apply in daily life what he is learning in school. That is the isolation of the school–its isolation from life. When the child gets into the schoolroom he has to put out of his mind a large part of the ideas, interests and activities that predominate in his home and neighborhood. So the school being unable to utilize this everyday experience, sets painfully to work on another tack and by a variety of [artificial] means, to arouse in the child an interest in school studies .... [Thus there remains a] gapexisting between the everyday experiences of the child and the isolated material supplied in such large measure in the school. (1956, pp. 75–76)

To bridge this chasm between school and life, Dewey advocated a method of teaching which began with the everyday experience of the child. Dewey maintained that unless the initial connection was made between school activities and the life experiences of the child, genuine learning and growth would be impossible. Nevertheless, he was careful to point out that while the experiential familiar was the natural and meaningful place to begin learning, it was more importantly the "intellectual starting point for moving out into the unknown and not an end in itself" (1916, p. 212).

To further reduce the distance between school and life, Dewey urged that the school be made into an embryonic social community which simplified but resembled the social life of the community at large. A society, he reasoned, "is a number of people held together because they are working along common lines, in a common spirit, and with reference to common aims.

The common needs and aims demand a growing interchange of thought and growing unity of sympathetic feeling." The tragic weakness of the schools of his time was that they were endeavoring "to prepare future members of the social order in a medium in which the conditions of the social spirit [were] eminently wanting" (1956, pp. 14–15).

Thus Dewey affirmed his fundamental belief in the two-sidedness of the educational process. Neither the psychological nor the sociological purpose of education could be neglected if evil results were not to follow. To isolate the school from life was to cut students off from the psychological ties which make learning meaningful; not to provide a school environment which prepared students for life in society was to waste the resources of the school as a socializing institution.

Democracy and Education

Dewey recognized that the major instrument of human learning is language, which is itself a social product and is learned through social experiences. He saw that in providing a pool of common meanings for communication, the language of each society becomes the repository of the society's ideals, values, beliefs, and accumulated knowledge. To transmit the contents of the language to the young and to initiate the young in the ways of civilized life was for Dewey the primary function of the school as an institution of society. But, he argued, a way of life cannot be transmitted by words alone. Essential to acquiring the spirit of a way of life is immersion in ways of living.

More specifically, Dewey thought that in a democratic society the school should provide students with the opportunity to experience democracy in action. For Dewey, democracy was more than a form of government; it was a way of living which went beyond politics, votes, and laws to pervade all aspects of society. Dewey recognized that every social group, even a band of thieves, is held together by certain common interests, goals, values, and meanings, and he knew that every such group also comes into contact with other groups. He believed, however, that the extent to which democracy has been attained in any society can be measured by the extent to which differing groups share similar values, goals, and interests and interact freely and fruitfully with each other.

A democratic society, therefore, is one in which barriers of any kind–class, race, religion, color, politics, or nationality–among groups are minimized, and numerous meanings, values, interests, and goals are held in common. In a democracy, according to Dewey, the schools must act to ensure that each individual gets an opportunity to escape from the limitations of the social group in which he was born, to come into contact with a broader environment, and to be freed from the effects of economic inequalities. The schools must also provide an environment in which individuals may share in determining and achieving their common purposes in learning so that in contact with each other the students may recognize their common humanity: "The emphasis must be put upon whatever binds people together in cooperative human pursuits ... and the fuller, freer, intercourse of all human beings with one another .... [This] ideal may seem remote of execution, but the democratic ideal of education is a farcical yet tragic delusion except as the ideal more and more dominates our public system of education" (Dewey, 1916, p. 98).

Dewey's belief in democracy and in the schools' ability to provide a staging platform for social progress pervades all his work but is perhaps most clearly stated in his early *Pedagogic Creed:*

> I believe that education is the fundamental method of social progress and reform. All reforms which rest simply upon the enactment of law, or the threatening of certain penalties, or upon changes in mechanical or outward arrangements, are transitory and futile .... By law and punishment, by social agitation and discussion, society can regulateand form itself in a more or less haphazard and chance way. But through education society can formulate its own purposes, can organize its own means and resources, and thus shape itself with definiteness and economy in the direction in which it wishes to move .... Educationthus conceived marks the most perfect and intimate union of science and art conceivable in human experience. (1964, pp. 437–438)

Perhaps it was with these ideas in mind that Dewey was prompted to equate education with philosophy, for he felt that a deep knowledge of man and nature was not only the proper goal of education but the eternal quest of the philosopher: "If we are willing to conceive of education as the process of forming fundamental dispositions, intellectual and emotional, toward nature and fellow men, philosophy may even be defined as the general theory of education" (1916, p. 328).

See also: PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION.

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JONAS F. SOLTIS

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<a href="http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/1914/Dewey-John-1859-1952.html">John Dewey (1859-1952) -
 Experience and Reflective Thinking, Learning, School and Life, Democracy and Education</a>
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User Comments

Jill Kline over 2 years ago

I appreciate all of the detailed information on your site - thank you! I am doing a research paper with some of John Dewey's work in it and I would like to reference your website. Could you please verify that the author of this piece is Jonas Soltis? What would be the date of publication? THANKS!!!

Zailin Cargamento over 2 years ago

I find the article very informative and teches me a great deal about my own career as an educator. God bless.

rizwan almost 3 years ago

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Emma 4 months ago

Hi, I found the information on your website very helpful - thank you! I am finalising an assignment using some of Dewey's work and I would like to reference your website. Could you please verify that the author of this piece is Jonas Soltis? What would be the date of publication?
Many thanks
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i see you got really very useful topics I am satisfied to discover this publish very useful for me

desiree e. mesias 11 months ago

i am so grateful that i happened to browse this site. i am exactly looking for related documents for my final paper for my graduate studies. after reading this, it made me more determined to finish my paper and somehow, my thoughts were affirmed by the principles and teaching of John Dewey.

s.javed almost 3 years ago

female

John L. Childs (1889–1985)

education dewey social york

Professor of education at Teachers College, Columbia University, John Lawrence Childs was a leading member of the New York Progressives from the 1930s to 1960. Childs was born in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, where he learned the value of hard work, which was for him both a moral and social obligation. Raised as a Methodist, he spent four years at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, graduating in 1911 with a degree in journalism. While at Madison he began working for the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). For three years he headed its Midwest chapter in Kankakee, Illinois, where he met and married his wife, Grace Mary Fowler, in 1915. The following year he sailed for China as a YMCA missionary working for most of the time in Peking (Beijing). During John Dewey's visit to China (1919–1920), he stayed for a short while with the Childses, and John Childs was impressed. Early in 1922 Childs returned to the United States, and in February 1923 began graduate work at Union Theological Seminary, which included two courses at Teachers College given by W. H. Kilpatrick. Childs returned to China eighteen months later. On his visit to China in 1927 Kilpatrick persuaded Childs to obtain his doctorate, and Childs moved back to New York.

Childs joined the faculty of Teachers College following the publication of his dissertation, "Education and the Philosophy of Experimentalism," in July 1931. In correspondence to Robert Miller, Kilpatrick described the book as "one of the very best pieces of thinking yet done in the field of the exploitation and criticism of Professor Dewey's ideas." Thus began Childs's close identification with the work of Dewey.

Almost immediately, Childs and Dewey coauthored two chapters in *The Educational Frontier,* edited by Kilpatrick. Several scholars noted that Dewey seemed to have flirted with social reconstructionism in these chapters. In a telling memorandum to Dewey, Childs wrote, "educational reconstruction and social reconstruction are correlatives, and, therefore, the two must develop together. Any attempt to work through the school problem–to say nothing of the educational problem as a whole –inevitably leads into a consideration of the prevailing economic and social situation." Dewey stepped back somewhat from this position; Childs was committed to social reconstruction, and in 1937 joined the board of directors of the *Social Frontier,* having been a regular contributor to the journal almost at its inception in 1934.

Dean William Russell was not altogether pleased with Childs's radical position, but promoted him to associate professor in 1935 and to professor in 1938. In 1935 Childs joined the American Federation of Teachers, in which he became an important player. Russell put him in charge of a select committee looking into the demands of striking cafeteria workers at Teachers College. The report exonerated the strikers, and it received some publicity in both the New York and the national press. Childs resigned from the union in 1937 on account of its takeover by communist sympathizers. He later rejoined and took a leadership role in its postwar activities. He achieved greater prominence when he was elected state chair of the Liberal party, a position he held from 1944 until early 1947. Childs's political activities were an extension of his philosophical ideals; they were moral necessities. This missionary had in effect changed his allegiance from the work of the gospel, albeit a social gospel, to the work of educational and social reconstruction. In his writings he made apparent his commitment to a morality based not in the supernatural or transcendent, but one embedded in human experience.

In 1950 Childs published his most significant work, *Education and Morals*. Perhaps the major point of the book is that morality always exists in the making of choices in genuine life alternatives. If there is no choice there is no morality involved. (He never engaged in discussion of the existential notion of choice.) Thus the educational enterprise is at root a moral enterprise because it is involves constant choices on behalf of students. For Childs, moral goods existed in the context of democratic values and aims. In this view he was at odds with Boyd Bode, with whom at this time he began an extended correspondence. Bode felt that the pragmatic educational agenda related to method and the reliance on intelligence; Childs believed that it also required a democratic outcome. He did not, as did George S. Counts, call for indoctrination, but he felt as strongly. Bode only went as far as to say that the schools should promote the processes of democracy but not expressly its aims.

In his last major book, *American Pragmatism and Education,* Childs devoted a chapter to Bode. The book is a delineation of the principles of pragmatism, and in the opening of the book he outlines its major tenets.

> Thought is intrinsically connected with action; theories and doctrines are working hypotheses potheses and are to be tested by the consequences they produce in actual life-situations; moral ideas are empty and sterile apart from attention to the means that are required to achieve them; reality is not a static, completed system, but a process of unending change and transformation; man is not a mere puppet of external forces, but through the use of intelligence can reshape the conditions that mold his own experience. (pp. 3–4)

If this statement sounds somewhat academic and remote from contemporary education, it is nonetheless an accurate and perceptive summary of pragmatic theory, and quite in line with Dewey's own views.

Childs's career was very much based on his interpretation and commentary of Dewey's work, and he was highly praised for both. He was a major speaker at Dewey's eightieth and ninetieth birthday festivities, and as well as the centenary celebrations; he wrote a chapter on education in Paul A. Schilpp's volume on *Dewey in the Library of Living Philosophers* ; he was the recipient of the John Dewey Society medal in 1965, as well as many other awards. Childs retired from Teachers College in 1955 and spent much of the next decade as a visiting professor at several universities. Upon his final retirement he moved to Rockford, Illinois, where he died in 1985.

See also: CURRICULUM, SCHOOL; PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION; PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION.

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User Comments

Maria Montessori (1870–1952) - Biography, Work with Disabled Children, Links to Itard and Séguin, The Orthophrenic School

schools education approach

Physician Maria Montessori is recognized as one of the pioneers in the development of early childhood education. She is also credited with promoting a substantial number of important educational reforms that have worked their way over the course of the twentieth century into the mainstream of education. These include the recognition of multiple pathways to learning, the importance of concrete or hands-on learning, the stages of cognitive development in children, and the link between children's emotional development and their ability to learn at an optimal rate. Her ideas about the importance of the first six years of life and the boundless potential of children–regardless of race, gender, or social class–made a significant contribution to human rights as societies around the world began to rede-fine the rights and roles of women and children.

Biography

Montessori was born in 1870 to an educated middle-class family in Ancona, Italy. Growing up in a country that was, at the time, very conservative in its attitude toward and treatment of women, Montessori pursued a medical and scientific education. In 1896, despite many years of opposition from her father, teachers, and male fellow students, she graduated with highest honors from the Medical School of the University of Rome, becoming the first woman physician in Italy.

Work with Disabled Children

As a physician, Montessori specialized in pediatrics and the newly evolving field of psychiatry. Her approach was that of a well-trained scientist, rather than the familiar philosophical exploration and intuitive approach followed by many of the educational innovators who came before and after. Montessori found it ironic that she became best known for her contributions in education, a field that she had been unwilling to enter as it was one of the three traditional roles open to women at the time: working with children, homemaking, or the convent.

Montessori taught at the medical school of the University of Rome, and through its free clinics she came into frequent contact with the children of the working class and poor. Her experience with the children of poverty convinced Montessori that intelligence is not rare, although it seemed to present itself in many forms other than those recognized by traditional schools.

In 1900 Montessori was appointed director of the new Orthophrenic School attached to the University of Rome, formerly a municipal asylum for the "deficient and insane" children of the city, most of whom would be diagnosed in the twenty-first century as autistic or mentally disabled. She and her colleagues initiated a wave of reform in an institution that formerly had merely confined these mentally challenged youngsters in barren settings. Recognizing her young patients' need for stimulation, purposeful activity, and self-esteem, Montessori dismissed the caretakers who treated the inmates with contempt. Facing a desperate lack of staff to care for so many children in a residential setting, she set out to teach as many as possible of the less-disturbed children to care for themselves and their fellow inmates.

Links to Itard and Séguin

From 1900 to 1901, Montessori combed the medical libraries of western Europe seeking successful work previously done with the education of children with disabilities. Her studies led Montessori to the work of two almost forgotten French physicians of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: Jean-Marc-Gaspard Itard and Édouard Séguin. Itard is well known in the twenty-first century for his work with the "Wild Boy of Aveyron," a youth who had been found wandering naked in the forest, presumably abandoned as a very young child and thus spending many years living alone. The boy could not speak and lacked almost all of the skills of everyday life. Here apparently was a "natural" man, a human being who had grown up outside of human society without the influence of interaction with his own kind. Itard hoped from this study to shed some light on the age-old debate about what proportion of human intelligence and personality is hereditary and what proportion stems from learned behavior.

This experiment was a limited success, although it captured the attention and imagination of many of his contemporaries. Itard found his wild boy uncooperative and unwilling or unable to learn most things. This led him to postulate the existence of developmental periods in normal human growth. He formed the hypothesis that, during these "sensitive periods," a child

must experience stimulation to develop normally, or grow up, forever lacking the skills and intellectual concepts not developed at the stage when nature expects them to be readily absorbed.

Although Itard's efforts to teach the wild boy were barely successful, he followed a methodical approach in designing the process, arguing that all education would benefit from the use of careful observation and experimentation. This idea had tremendous appeal to the scientifically trained Montessori, and later became the cornerstone of her method.

From the work of Édouard Séguin, a French psychologist who studied with Itard and carried on his research, Montessori drew further confirmation of Itard's ideas, along with a far more specific and organized system for applying it to the everyday education of children with disabilities. Working primarily with the blind, Séguin developed a methodical approach to breaking skills down into small steps, and was highly successful with a carefully developed collection of hands-on educational materials. In the early twenty-first century, Séguin is recognized as the founder of the modern approach to special education.

The Orthophrenic School

From these two predecessors, Montessori took the idea of a scientific approach to education, based on observation and experimentation. She belongs to the child study school of thought and pursued her work with the careful training and objectivity of the biolo-gist studying the natural behavior of an animal in the forest. Montessori studied her mentally disabled patients, listening and carefully noting their response to her attempts to implement Séguin's educational methods, as well as their progress in becoming increasingly independent and verbal.

Slowly the children learned to perform most of the everyday tasks involved in preparing the meals and maintaining the environment of the residential school. Her success with these mentally disabled children received international attention when, after two years, many of Montessori's such adolescents were able to pass the standard exams given by the Italian public schools.

Acclaimed for this miracle, Montessori responded by suggesting that newborn human beings normally enter the world with an intellectual potential that was barely being developed by schools in the early years of the twentieth century. She challenged that if she could attain such results with children who were disabled, schools should be able to get dramatically better results with normal children.

Montessori's work reinforced her humanistic ideals, and she actively supported various social re-form movements. She was a highly regarded guest speaker throughout Europe on behalf of children's rights, the women's movement, peace education, and the importance of a league of nations. Montessori become well known and highly regarded throughout Europe, which contributed to the publicity that surrounded her schools.

The Children's House

Unfortunately, the Italian Ministry of Education did not welcome Montessori's ideas, and she was denied access to school-aged children. Frustrated in her efforts to conduct the experiment with public school students, in 1907 she welcomed the opportunity to serve as the medical director for a day-care center that was being organized for working-class children who were too young to attend public school.

This first Casa dei Bambini (Children's House) was located in the worst slum district of Rome, and the conditions Montessori faced were appalling. Her first class consisted of fifty children, from two through five years of age, taught by one untrained caregiver. The children remained at the center from dawn to dusk while their parents worked, and had to be fed two meals per day, bathed regularly, and given a program of medical care. The children themselves were typical of extreme inner-city poverty conditions. They entered the Children's House on the first day crying and pushing, exhibiting generally aggressive and impatient behavior. Montessori, not knowing whether her experiment would work under such conditions, began by teaching the older children how to help out with the everyday tasks that needed to be done. She also introduced the manipulative perceptual discrimination and puzzles and eye-hand manipulative exercises that she had used with mentally disabled children.

The results surprised her, for unlike her mentally disabled children who had to be prodded to use her apparatus, these very small children were drawn to the work she introduced. Children who had wandered aimlessly the week before began to settle down to long periods of constructive activity. They were fascinated with the puzzles and perceptual training devices.

To Montessori's amazement, children three and four years old took the greatest delight in learning practical everyday living skills that reinforced their independence and self-respect. Each day they begged her to show them more, even applauding with delight when Montessori taught them the correct use of a handkerchief to blow one's own nose. Soon the older children were taking care of the school, assisting their teacher with the preparation and serving of meals and the maintenance of a spotless environment. Their behavior as a group changed dramatically from that of street urchins running wild to models of grace and courtesy. It was little wonder that the press found such a human-interest story appealing and promptly broadcast it to the world.

Montessori education is sometimes criticized for being too structured and academically demanding of young children. Montessori would have laughed at this suggestion. She often said, "I followed these children, studying them, studied them closely, and they taught me how to teach them."

Montessori made a practice of paying close attention to the children's spontaneous behavior, arguing that only in this way could a teacher know how to teach. Traditionally schools at this time paid little attention to children as individuals, other than to demand that they adapt to external standards. Montessori argued that the educator's job is to serve the child, determining what each student needs to make the greatest progress. To her, a child who fails in school should not be blamed, any more than a doctor should blame a patient who does not get well fast enough. Just as it is the job of the physician to help people find the way to cure themselves, it is the educator's job to facilitate the natural process of learning.

Montessori's children exploded into academics. Too young to go to public school, they begged to be taught how to read and write. They learned to do so quickly and enthusiastically, using special manipulative materials that Montessori designed for maximum appeal and effectiveness. The children were fascinated by numbers. To respond to their interest, the mathematically inclined doctor developed a series of concrete math learning materials that still fascinates many mathematicians and educators to this day. Soon her four- and five-year-olds were adding and subtracting four-digit numbers, soon progressing on to multiplication, division, skip counting, and increasingly advanced and abstract concepts.

Their interests blossomed in other areas as well, compelling the overworked physician to spend night after night designing new materials to keep pace with the children in geometry, geography, history, and natural science. Further proof of the children's academic interests came shortly after her first school opened, when a group of well-intentioned women gave the children a collection of lovely and expensive toys. The new gifts held the children's attention for a few days, but they soon returned to the more interesting learning materials. To Montessori's surprise, she found that children who had experienced both generally preferred work over play, at least during the school day. Of the early twenty-first century classroom, Montessori would probably add: "Children read and do advanced mathematics in Montessori schools not because we push them, but because this is what they do when given the correct setting and opportunity. To deny them the right to learn because we, as adults, think that they should not is illogical and typical of the way schools have been run before."

Montessori evolved her method through trial and error, making educated guesses about the underlying meaning of the children's actions. She was quick to pick up on their cues, and constantly experimented with the class. For example, Montessori tells of the morning when the teacher arrived late, only to find that the children had crawled through a window and gone right to work. At the beginning, the learning materials, having cost so much to make, were locked away in a tall cabinet. Only the teacher had a key and would open it and hand the materials to the children upon request. In this instance the teacher had neglected to lock the cabinet the night before. Finding it open, the children had selected one material apiece and were working quietly. As Montessori arrived the teacher was scolding the children for taking them out without permission. She recognized that the children's behavior showed that they were capable of selecting their own work, and removed the cabinet and replaced it with low open shelves on which the activities were always available to the children. This may sound like a minor change, but it contradicted all educational practice and theory of that period.

The Discovery of the Child

One discovery followed another, giving Montessori an increasingly clear view of the inner mind of the child. She found that little children were capable of long periods of quiet concentration, even though they rarely show signs of it in everyday settings. Although they are often careless and sloppy, they respond positively to an atmosphere of calm and order.

Montessori noticed that the logical extension of the young child's love for a consistent and often repeated routine is an environment in which everything has a place. Her children took tremendous delight in carefully carrying their work to and

from the shelves, taking great pains not to bump into anything or spill the smallest piece. They walked carefully through the rooms, instead of running wildly as they did on the streets.

Montessori discovered that the environment itself was all-important in obtaining the results that she had observed. Not wanting to use heavy school desks, she had carpenters build child-sized tables and chairs. She was the first to do so, recognizing the frustration that a little child experiences in an adult-sized world. Eventually she learned to design entire schools around the size of the children. She had miniature pitchers and bowls prepared and found knives that fit a child's tiny hand. The tables were lightweight, allowing two children to move them alone. The children learned to control their movements, disliking the way the calm atmosphere was disturbed when they knocked into the furniture. Montessori studied the traffic pattern of the rooms, arranging the furnishings and the activity area to minimize congestion and tripping. The children loved to sit on the floor, so she bought little rugs to define their work areas and the children quickly learned to walk around work that other children had laid out on their rugs.

Montessori carried this environmental engineering throughout the entire school building and outside environment, designing child-sized toilets and low sinks, windows low to the ground, low shelves, and miniature hand and garden tools of all sorts. Many of these ideas were eventually adapted by the larger educational community, particularly at the nursery and kindergarten levels. Many of the puzzles and educational devices in use at the pre-school and elementary levels in the early twenty-first century are direct copies of Montessori's original ideas. However, there is far more of her work that never entered the mainstream, and twenty-first-century educators who are searching for new, more effective answers are finding the accumulated experience of the Montessori community to be of great interest.

Worldwide Response

Maria Montessori's first Children's House received overnight attention, and thousands of visitors came away amazed and enthusiastic. Worldwide interest surged as she duplicated her first school in other settings with the same results. Montessori captured the interest and imagination of leaders and scientists around the world. In America, leading figures such as Woodrow Wilson, Alexander Graham Bell, Thomas Edison, and Henry Ford enthusiastically supported her. Through books and countless articles written about and by Montessori, she also became a well-known authority to parents and teachers.

As an internationally respected scientist, Montessori had a rare credibility in a field where many others had promoted opinions, philosophies, and models that have not been readily duplicated. The Montessori method offers a systematic approach that translates very well to new settings. In the first thirty years of the twentieth century, the Montessori method seemed to offer something for everyone. Conservatives appreciated the calm, responsible behavior of the little children, along with their love for work. Liberals applauded the freedom and spontaneity. Many political leaders saw it as a practical way to reform the outmoded school systems of Europe, North America, and Asia, as well as an approach that they hoped would lead to a more productive and law-abiding populace. Scientists of all disciplines heralded its empirical foundation, along with the accelerated achievement of the little children. Montessori rode a wave of enthusiastic support that many felt should have changed the face of education far more dramatically than it did.

The Decline and Resurgence of Interest in Montessori Education in America

By 1925 there were more than 1,000 Montessori schools in the United States and many tens of thousands more around the world. But by 1940 the movement had virtually disappeared from the American scene. Only a handful of schools remained that openly advertised that they followed the Montessori approach, although many continued to operate without using the name. Education textbooks failed to mention her at all except as an obscure footnote, and her work was virtually forgotten until it was "rediscovered" and brought back to North America in the 1960s by Dr. Nancy McCormick Rambush and the newly formed and rapidly expanding American Montessori Society. During this period, Montessori schools continued to expand in most of the rest of the world.

The question is often asked about what led to the decline of Montessori education in the United States. Several reasons can be reasonably postulated, including the disruption in trans-Atlantic travel during and after World War I and World War II. Many would agree that a highly influential book published in 1922 by Professor William Kilpatrick of Columbia University, *Montessori Reexamined,* may have led many American educators to dismiss Montessori unfairly as being an intellectual holdover from the outdated and no longer accepted theories of faculty psychology. Kilpatrick pronounced that Montessori was rigid, outdated, and mistaken in her attempt to educate the senses, suggesting that she was under the misapprehension that

the brain and senses could be strengthened, like a muscle, by exercises in sensory training and memorization. Unfortunately, this and many other criticisms were unfounded, primarily based on a lack of accurate information and under-standing, along with perhaps some bias against Montessori's popularity as she was a doctor and not a trained educator. Others have suggested that her being a highly articulate and outspoken woman who was openly critical of the schools of her day may have also played a substantial role.

In the early twenty-first century there are almost six thousand Montessori schools in the United States, and their number continues to expand in virtually every country around the world. In America, most Montessori schools are nonpublic and primarily serve early childhood students between the age of two and six. However, the number of public school districts implementing the Montessori approach has grown substantially since the 1980s, with more than 300 districts running more than 500 magnet Montessori schools. As charter schools have developed, Montessori schools are among the most popular and successful models.

Also since the 1980s, Montessori schools have tended to expand in both enrollment and the age levels served, with the majority of schools offering elementary programs as well as early childhood. Secondary Montessori programs are less common, but are beginning to appear in substantial numbers, initially as middle school programs and gradually as high school programs as well.

The largest professional society in the United States is the American Montessori Society in New York City. It accredits Montessori schools and more than fifty university-sponsored and independent Montessori teacher education centers around the United States. Several dozen smaller professional Montessori associations can also be found in the United States. They include the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI), the society founded by Montessori herself in 1929, which has its headquarters in the Netherlands and a national office in Rochester, New York; and the more recently founded umbrella organization for Montessori schools, the International Montessori Council (IMC), which has its American offices in Rockville, Maryland, and Sarasota, Florida. The Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE) also accredits Montessori teacher education programs and is recognized ognized by the United States Department of Education.

Montessori's prime productive period lasted from the opening of the first Children's House in 1907 until the 1930s. During this time, she continued her study of children, and developed a vastly expanded curriculum and methodology for the elementary level as well. Montessori schools were set up throughout Europe and North America, and Montessori gave up her medical practice to devote all of her energies to advocating the rights and intellectual potential of all children.

During her lifetime, Montessori was acknowledged as one of the world's leading educators. As with all innovators, the educational community moved on beyond Montessori, adapting many elements of her work that fit into existing theories and methods. It can be fairly suggested that every classroom in America reflects Montessori's ideas to a fairly substantial degree. Certainly the contemporary attitudes about multiple intelligences, the importance of mental health and emotional literacy, the attractiveness of the modern classroom, the use of manipulative materials in instruction, cooperative learning, authentic assessment, and multiage classrooms as a desirable model for classroom groupings are just a few examples of ideas generally attributed to Maria Montessori.

Ironically, schools are beginning to recognize that the Montessori approach has much more to offer, primarily because to obtain the results that Montessori made world famous, schools must implement her model as a complete restructuring of the school and the teacher's role, rather than as a series of piecemeal reforms.

As understanding of child development has grown, many contemporary American educators and those who would reform education have rediscovered how clear and sensible her insight was. In the early twenty-first century, there is a growing consensus among many psychologists and develop-mental educators that her ideas and educational model were decades ahead of their time. As the movement gains support and continues to spread into the American public school sector, one can readily say that Montessori, begun at the dawn of the twentieth century, is a remarkably modern approach.

See also: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION; INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES.

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TIMOTHY DAVID SELDIN

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<a href="http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/2244/Montessori-Maria-1870-1952.html">Maria Montessori
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TITLE OF THE PROJECT

Multi Skills Development of the Special Needs Persons
Vocational Training Institute

IMPLEMENTING AGENCY

Silver Ray Foundation
No.17, Seenigoda, Wathugedara,
Ambalangoda, Sri lanka

Tele - +94-912255010/ +94-718179867/ +94-778643968
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Web - www.silverayfoundation.org

CONTACT PERSONS IN THE ORGANIZATION

M. Windyanie Gayathrie - President – SRF
M. Wimalasiri - Director Executive – SRF

GEOGRAPHICAL AREA OF THE PROJECT

Galle District in Sri Lanka.

Proposal of the Project
Multi Skills Development of the Physically Handicapped Youth through
Electricity & Information Technology @ Vocationally

Silver Ray Foundation is a community based organization funded in 2010 committed to the Humanitarian

Social Welfare Services.SRF is registered under Registrar General of Companies in Sri Lanka, Act No 7 of 2007 and Registration No GA 2527. The Silver ray Foundation is a people's consortium, with a community participatory development approach to fulfill the basics needs of the community. It envisages a community participatory group concept, to move beyond the development limits, at grass root level. SRF is dedicated to resuscitate the social morals, values and habits, rapidly disappearing from Sri Lanka.

The SRF operates Silver Ray Home 01 Vocational Training Institute for Special Needs Persons at No.53/16, Robert De Zoysa Mawatha, Walagedara, and Balapitiya, Sri Lanka (near to courts Balapitiya). We started to give Electricity & IT training course for the disable youth @ Silver Ray Home 01.

Our goals are Multi Skills development of the disable children across Electricity & IT fulfill the global village concept through Vocational Training and enhance employment opportunities & contribute to revenue development.

We are providing two years period Multi Skills Training Course for the handicapped youth. The course consist of House Wiring, Motor Winding, House Hold Appliance Repairing & at the same time we hope to start programming Computer Hardware & Computer Software course also. At present about 10 handicapped youth maintaining our foundation & we hope to increase up to 25 children at the same center as soon as possible. Our students need lot of tools & equipments to proceed this course. We have lot of defects for do that. When we are operating that project we are not getting any kind of help from International Fundraising Organization or the Sri Lankan government. At the moment we are facing lot of financial problems.

We request from your organization to take a suitable action and help our children & our foundation to proceed this project continually as well as possible considering as a corporate service responsibility.

Thank you,

Regards,

Windyanie Gayathrie(President-SRF)

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It`s a really interesnting and documented article, which show the historical link between Itard, Séguin and Montessori. More attention should be paid nowadays to thos group of brilliant physicians who did so much for education.

Paulo Freire (1921–1997) - Conceptual Tools, Philosophy of Education, Criticism

Paulo Reglus Neves Freire was a Brazilian educator whose revolutionary pedagogical theory influenced educational and social movements throughout the world and whose philosophical writings influenced academic disciplines that include theology, sociology, anthropology, applied linguistics, pedagogy, and cultural studies. He was born to a middle-class family in Recife, in the state of Pernambuco in the northeast of Brazil. His early work in adult literacy–the most famous being his literacy experiments in the town of Angicos in Rio Grande do Norte–was terminated after the military coup in 1964. That year he went into exile, during which time he lived in Bolivia; then Chile where he worked for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Chilean Institute for Agrarian Reform, and where he wrote his most important work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970); Mexico; the United States where he held a brief appointment at Harvard University's Center for Studies in Development and Social Change; and Switzerland where he worked for the World Council of Churches as the director of their education program. He also served as an adviser for various governments, most notably the government of Guinea-Bissau. In 1980 he returned to Brazil to teach and later to serve as secretary of education for São Paulo. He worked as a consultant for revolutionary governments such as the New Jewel Movement in Grenada, the Sandinista government in Nicaragua, and the government of Julius K. Nyerere in Tanzania. From 1985 until his death in 1997, Freire served as the honorary president of the International Council for Adult Education. Freire's conception of education as a deeply political project oriented toward the transformation of society has been crucial to the education of revolutionary societies and societies undergoing civil war, as well as established Western democracies. Freire's work has exercised considerable influence among progressive educators in the West, especially in the context of emerging traditions of critical pedagogy, bilingual education, and multicultural education.

Freire's revolutionary pedagogy starts from a deep love for, and humility before, poor and oppressed people and a respect for their "common sense," which constitutes a knowledge no less important than the scientific knowledge of the professional. This humility makes possible a condition of reciprocal trust and communication between the educator, who also learns, and the student, who also teaches. Thus, education becomes a "communion" between participants in a dialogue characterized by a reflexive, reciprocal, and socially relevant exchange, rather than the unilateral action of one individual agent for the benefit of the other. Nevertheless, this does not amount to a celebration of the untrammeled core of consciousness of the oppressed, in which the educator recedes into the background as a mere facilitator. Freire conceived of authentic teaching as enacting a clear authority, rather than being authoritarian. The teacher, in his conception, is not neutral, but intervenes in the educational situation in order to help the student to overcome those aspects of his or her social constructs that are paralyzing, and to learn to think critically. In a similar fashion, Freire validated and affirmed the experiences of the oppressed without automatically legitimizing or validating their content. All experiences–including those of the teacher–had to be interrogated in order to lay bare their ideological assumptions and presuppositions. The benchmark that Freire used for evaluating experiences grew out of a Christianized Marxist humanism. From this position, Freire urged both students and teachers to unlearn their race, class, and gender privileges and to engage in a dialogue with those whose experiences are very different from their own. Thus, he did not uncritically affirm student or teacher experiences but provided the conceptual tools with which to critically interrogate them so as to minimize their politically domesticating influences.

Conceptual Tools

Banking education. Freire criticized prevailing forms of education as reducing students to the status of passive objects to be acted upon by the teacher. In this traditional form of education it is the job of the teacher to deposit in the minds of the students, considered to be empty in an absolute ignorance, the bits of information that constitute knowledge. Freire called this *banking education*. The goal of banking education is to immobilize the people within existing frameworks of power by conditioning them to accept that meaning and historical agency are the sole property of the oppressor. Educators within the dominant culture and class fractions often characterize the oppressed as marginal, pathological, and helpless. In the banking model, knowledge is taken to be a gift that is bestowed upon the student by the teacher. Freire viewed this false generosity on the part of the oppressor–which ostensibly aims to incorporate and improve the oppressed–as a crucial means of domination by the capitalist class. The indispensable soil of good teaching consists of creating the pedagogical conditions for genuine

dialogue, which maintains that teachers should not impose their views on students, but neither should they camouflage them nor drain them of political and ethical import.

Problem-posing method. Against the banking model, Freire proposed a dialogical *problem-posing method* of education. In this model, the teacher and student become co-investigators of knowledge and of the world. Instead of suggesting to students that their situation in society has been transcendentally fixed by nature or reason, as the banking model does, Freire's problem-posing education invites the oppressed to explore their reality as a "problem" to be transformed. The content of this education cannot be determined necessarily in advance, through the expertise of the educator, but must instead arise from the lived experiences or reality of the students. It is not the task of the educator to provide the answer to the problems that these situations present, but to help students to achieve a form of critical thinking (or *conscientization*) that will make possible an awareness of society as mutable and potentially open to transformation. Once they are able to see the world as a transformable situation, rather than an unthinkable and inescapable stasis, it becomes possible for students to imagine a new and different reality.

In order, however, to undertake this process, the oppressed must challenge their own internalization of the oppressor. The oppressed are accustomed to thinking of themselves as "less than." They have been conditioned to view as complete and human only the dominating practices of the oppressor, so that to fully become human means to simulate these practices. Against a "fear of freedom" that protects them from a cataclysmic reorganization of their being, the oppressed in dialogue engage in an existential process of dis-identifying with "the oppressor housed within." This dis-identification allows them to begin the process of imagining a new being and a new life as subjects of their own history.

Culture circle. The concrete basis for Freire's dialogical system of education is the *culture circle,* in which students and coordinator together discuss generative themes that have significance within the context of students' lives. These themes, which are related to nature, culture, work, and relationships, are discovered through the cooperative research of educators and students. They express, in an open rather than propagandistic fashion, the principle contradictions that confront the students in their world. These themes are then represented in the form of codifications (usually visual representations) that are taken as the basis for dialogue within the circle. As students decode these representations, they recognize them as situations in which they themselves are involved as subjects. The process of critical consciousness formation is initiated when students learn to read the codifications in their situationality, rather than simply experiencing them, and this makes possible the intervention by students in society. As the culture circle comes to recognize the need for print literacy, the visual codifications are accompanied by words to which they correspond. Students learn to read these words in the process of reading the aspects of the world with which they are linked.

Although this system of codifications has been very successful in promoting print literacy among adult students, Freire always emphasized that it should not be approached mechanically, but rather as a process of creation and awakening of consciousness. For Freire, it is a mistake to speak of reading as solely the decoding of text. Rather, reading is a process of apprehending power and causality in society and one's location in it. Awareness of the historicity of social life makes it possible for students to imagine its re-creation. Literacy is thus a "self-transformation producing a stance of intervention" (Freire 1988, p. 404). Literacy programs that appropriate parts of Freire's method while ignoring the essential politicization of the process of reading the world as a limit situation to be overcome distort and subvert the process of literacy education. For Freire, authentic education is always a "practice of freedom" rather than an alienating inculcation of skills.

Philosophy of Education

Freire's philosophy of education is not a simple method but rather an organic political consciousness. The domination of some by others must be overcome, in his view, so that the humanization of all can take place. Authoritarian forms of education, in serving to reinforce the oppressors' view of the world, and their material privilege in it, constitute an obstacle to the liberation of human beings. The means of this liberation is a *praxis,* or process of action and reflection, which simultaneously names reality and acts to change it. Freire criticized views that emphasized either the objective or subjective aspect of social transformation, and insisted that revolutionary change takes place precisely through the consistency of a critical commitment in both word and deed. This dialectical unity is expressed in his formulation, "To speak a true word is to transform the world" (Freire 1996, p. 68).

Freire's educational project was conceived in solidarity with anticapitalist and anti-imperialist movements throughout the world. It calls upon the more privileged educational and revolutionary leaders to commit "class suicide" and to struggle in

partnership with the oppressed. Though this appeal is firmly grounded in a Marxist political analysis, which calls for the reconfiguring of systems of production and distribution, Freire rejected elitist and sectarian versions of socialism in favor of a vision of revolution from "below" based on the work of autonomous popular organizations. Not only does Freire's project involve a material reorganization of society, but a cultural reorganization as well. Given the history of European imperialism, an emancipatory education of the oppressed involves a dismantling of colonial structures and ideologies. The literacy projects he undertook in former Portuguese colonies in Africa included an emphasis on the reaffirmation of the people's indigenous cultures against their negation by the legacy of the metropolitan invaders.

Freire's work constitutes a rejection of voluntarism and idealism as well as determinism and objectivism. The originality of Freire's thought consists in his synthesis of a number of philosophical and political traditions and his application of them to the pedagogical encounter. Thus, the Hegelian dialectic of master and slave informs his vision of liberation from authoritarian forms of education; the existentialism of Jean Paul Sartre and Martin Buber makes possible his description of the self-transformation of the oppressed into a space of radical intersubjectivity; the historical materialism of Karl Marx influences his conception of the historicity of social relations; his emphasis on love as a necessary precondition of authentic education has an affinity with radical Christian liberation theology; and the anti-imperialist revolutionism of Ernesto Che Guevara and Frantz Fanon undergird his notion of the "oppressor housed within" as well as his commitment to a praxis of militant anticolonialism.

Freire's pedagogy implies an important emphasis on the imagination, though this is not an aspect that has been emphasized enough in writings about him. The transformation of social conditions involves a rethinking of the world as a particular world, capable of being changed. But the reframing proposed here depends upon the power of the imagination to see outside, beyond, and against what is. More than a cognitive or emotional potential, the human imagination, in Freire's view, is capable of a radical and productive envisioning that exceeds the limits of the given. It is in this capacity that everyone's humanity consists, and for this reason it can never be the gift of the teacher to the student. Rather, educator-student and student-educator work together to mobilize the imagination in the service of creating a vision of a new society. It is here that Freire's notion of education as an ontological vocation for bringing about social justice becomes most clear. For Freire, this vocation is an endless struggle because critical awareness itself can only be a necessary precondition for it. Because liberation as a goal is always underburdened of a necessary assurance that critical awareness will propel the subject into the world of concrete praxis, the critical education must constantly be engaged in attempts to undress social structures and formations of oppression within the social universe of capital without a guarantee that such a struggle will bring about the desired results.

Criticism

Since its first enunciation, Freire's educational theory has been criticized from various quarters. Naturally, conservatives who are opposed to the political horizon of what is essentially a revolutionary project of emancipation have been quick to condemn him as demagogic and utopian. Freire has faced criticism from the left as well. Some Marxists have been suspicious of the Christian influences in his work and have accused him of idealism in his view of popular consciousness. Freire has also been criticized by feminists and others for failing to take into account the radical differences between forms of oppression, as well as their complex and contradictory instantiation in subjects. It has been pointed out that Freire's writing suffers from sexism in its language and from a patriarchal notion of revolution and subjecthood, as well as a lack of emphasis on domination based on race and ethnicity. Postmodernists have pointed to the contradiction between Freire's sense of the historicity and contingency of social formations versus his vision of liberation as a universal human vocation.

Freire was always responsive to critics, and in his later work undertook a process of self-criticism in regard to his own sexism. He also sought to develop a more nuanced view of oppression and subjectivity as relational and discursively as well as materially embedded. However, Freire was suspicious of postmodernists who felt that the Marxist legacy of class struggle was obsolete and whose antiracist and antisexist efforts at educational reform did little to alleviate–and often worked to exacerbate–existing divisions of labor based on social relations of capitalist exploitation. Freire's insights continue to be of crucial importance. In the very gesture of his turning from the vaults of official knowledge to the open space of humanity, history, and poetry–the potential space of dialogical problem-posing education–Freire points the way for teachers and others who would refuse their determination by the increasingly enveloping inhuman social order. To believe in that space when it is persistently obscured, erased, or repudiated remains the duty of truly progressive educators. Freire's work continues to be indispensable for liberatory education, and his insights remain of value to all who are committed to the struggle against oppression.

See also: EDUCATION REFORM.

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<a href="http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/1998/Freire-Paulo-1921-1997.html">Paulo Freire (1921-1997) - Conceptual Tools, Philosophy of Education, Criticism</a>
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User Comments

ea — about 2 years ago

But is not the “crucial importance” to those “truly progressive educators” only, in this philosophy of education, whose ‘all’ are “all who are committed to the struggle against opression" “in revolutionary societies and societies undergoing civil war,” in view of, and Westen democracies (with only an exception or two) comprising generally of, the cticisers in the penultimate paragraph, as 'the world gets smaller' the need felt for some globalisation of educational philosophies being to the rest about received wisdom related global biases giving rise to undesirable behaviour coupled with innocence based on assumtions in matters of societal values and common concern and the validity of differing views on them (relatedly ‘thinking man’ aspirations with) in the formulating and implementation of educational philosophy -as, e.g., in: http://www.geocities.ws/educationalphilosophyari/

aaaa — about 1 year ago

hahahaha i know more

malaya Kumar nandy — about 1 month ago

I would like to read more books of Paulo Freire.

Plato –B.C.) (427?) (347) - The Ideal State, The Dialectical Method, Educational Programs, The Cultivation of Morals

knowledge soul possessed philosopher

Plato (427?–347 B.C.E.) was a prominent Athenian philosopher who posed fundamental questions about education, human nature, and justice.

A student of the famous philosopher Socrates, Plato left Athens upon his mentor's death in 399 B.C.E. After traveling to other parts of Greece, Italy, and Sicily, Plato returned to Athens in 387 B.C.E. and founded a school of mathematics and philosophy called the Academy, which became the most prominent intellectual institution in all of ancient Greece. Plato authored a number of dialogues that often depicted Socrates engaging in the educational mode of dialectic. Like his mentor, Plato suspected that most people did not know what they claimed to know, and hence wondered why rigorous qualifications for rulers did not exist. Challenging the Sophists' claims that knowledge and truth were relative to the perspective of each individual, Plato developed an epistemology and metaphysics that suggested an absolute truth that could only be gleaned through rigorous self-examination and the development of reason–skills crucial for enlightened political leaders.

The Ideal State

Plato's educational ideas derived in part from his conception of justice, both for individuals and for the ideal state. He viewed individuals as mutually dependent for their survival and well-being, and he proposed that justice in the ideal state was congruent with justice in the individual's soul.

Plato's ideal state was a republic with three categories of citizens: artisans, auxiliaries, and philosopher-kings, each of whom possessed distinct natures and capacities. Those proclivities, moreover, reflected a particular combination of elements within one's tripartite soul, composed of appetite, spirit, and reason. Artisans, for example, were dominated by their appetites or desires, and therefore destined to produce material goods. Auxiliaries, a class of guardians, were ruled by spirit in their souls and possessed the courage necessary to protect the state from invasion. Philosopher-kings, the leaders of the ideal state, had souls in which reason reigned over spirit and appetite, and as a result possessed the foresight and knowledge to rule wisely. In Plato's view, these rulers were not merely elite intellectuals, but moral leaders. In the just state, each class of citizen had a distinct duty to remain faithful to its determined nature and engage solely in its destined occupation. The proper management of one's soul would yield immediate happiness and well-being, and specific educational methods would cultivate this brand of spiritual and civic harmony.

The Dialectical Method

Plato's educational priorities also reflected his distinct pedagogy. Challenging the Sophists–who prized rhetoric, believed in ethical and epistemological relativism, and claimed to teach "excellence"–Plato argued that training in "excellence" was meaningless without content and that knowledge was absolute, certain, and good. As a result, teachers assumed a high moral responsibility. Plato doubted whether a standard method of teaching existed for all subjects, and he argued that morally neutral education would corrupt most citizens. He preferred the dialectical method over the Sophists' rhetorical pedagogy. For Plato, the role of the teacher was not to fill an empty reservoir with specific skills, but to encourage the student to redirect his or her soul and to rearrange the priorities within it to allow reason to rule over the irrational elements of spirit and appetite.

In the *Meno,* Plato examined a paradox that challenged the dialectical method of education: if one knows nothing, then how will one come to recognize knowledge when he encounters it? In response, Plato's Socrates proposed a different idea. Through a geometry lesson with a slave boy, he attempted to demonstrate that all possessed some minimal knowledge that served as a window into one's eternal and omniscient soul. Through dialectic, the teacher could refute the student's false opinions until the student pursued a true opinion that survived the rigors of critical examination. Unacquainted with the storehouse of knowledge in one's soul, a person needed to learn how to access or "recollect" it. Plato distanced himself further from the Sophists by distinguishing knowledge (eternal and certain) from opinion (unreliable and ephemeral).

Plato developed this idea more fully in the *Republic,* declaring knowledge superior to opinion in both an epistemological and ontological sense. Opinion reflected a misapprehension of reality, while knowledge belonged to an essential or "intelligible" realm. In particular, Plato proposed a linear hierarchy of knowledge starting with the "visible" realms of imagination and then belief, and moving to the "intelligible" realms of reason, and ultimately, knowledge. In his celebrated cave metaphor, Plato's Socrates depicted chained prisoners, who presumed shadows of representations cast by artificial light to be real. The first step of education, then, was to turn one's soul away from this artificial world of shadows and toward the representations of objects and ideas themselves–leading one to the realm of belief. The objects of belief, however, were still empirical, and thus, ephemeral, relative, and unreliable. Beyond the cave lay the intelligible realm of reason and knowledge. Plato asserted that ideas did not possess any physical qualities, and to ascend beyond the world of tangible objects and ideas, one needed to develop the power of abstract thinking through the use of postulates to draw conclusions about the universal essence or "form" of an object or idea. Mathematics constituted a particularly useful tool for the development of reason, as it relied heavily on logic and abstract thought. The ultimate stage of awareness for Plato was knowledge of the "form of the good"–a transcendence of all postulates and assumptions through abstract reasoning that yielded a certain and comprehensive understanding of all things.

Educational Programs

Plato also made clear that not all citizens of the ideal state possessed the same capacity to realize the "form of the good." As a result, he proposed distinct educational programs for future artisans, auxiliaries, and philosopher-kings. Plato favored mathematics as a precise and abstract model for the development of thought in the future rulers of the just state. Knowledge, however, could only be attained through the use of dialectic to shed all assumptions and to glean the first principle of all, the "form of the good." After many years of mathematical and dialectical study, followed by fifteen years of public service, the best of this group would have come to understand the "form of the good" and have become philosopher-kings. Cognizant of the interrelationship of all things and confident of the reasons behind them, the intellectually and morally elite would be equipped to rule the just state in an enlightened manner.

The Cultivation of Morals

In addition, Plato advocated the removal of all infants from their natural families to receive a proper aesthetic education –literary, musical, and physical–for the development of character in the soul and the cultivation of morals necessary for sustaining the just state. Suspecting that most writers and musicians did not know the subjects they depicted–that they cast mere shadows of representations of real objects, ideas, and people–Plato feared that artistic works could endanger the health of the just state. Consequently, he wanted to hold artists and potential leaders accountable for the consequences of their creations and policies. This is why Plato advocated the censorship of all forms of art that did not accurately depict the good in behavior. Art, as a powerful medium that threatened the harmony of the soul, was best suited for philosophers who had developed the capacity to know and could resist its dangerous and irrational allures. Exposure to the right kinds of stories and music, although not sufficient to make a citizen beautiful and good, would contribute to the proper development of the elements within one's soul. For Plato, aesthetics and morality were inextricable; the value of a work of art hinged on its propensity to lead to moral development and behavior.

A Less-Ideal State

In the *Laws,* Plato considered the possibility that not only the majority, but all citizens could be incapable of reaching the "form of the good." He thus envisioned a second-best state with rulers ignorant of the "form of the good" but capable of thought. Such a society had absolute and unyielding rulers who eradicated any idea or thing that questioned their authority. Acting as if they possessed wisdom, such leaders established laws that reflected their opinions and their imperfect conception of the good.

Modern Scholarship

Contemporary advocates of popular democracy have criticized Plato's republican scheme as elitist and tyrannical in prizing order over individual liberty. Indeed, Plato believed that individuals could not stand alone, and as most would never reach internal harmony or virtue, the majority needed to be told how to conduct its life by those who possessed that knowledge. Incapable of understanding the reasons behind the laws, most citizens needed merely to obey them.

Some scholars have also questioned Plato's treatment of women in his just state. For instance, Jane Roland Martin has argued that although he did not differentiate education or societal roles on the basis of sex, Plato was not committed to gender

equality. Despite his abolition of the family, gender distinctions would have likely persisted, as Plato did not seek to ensure the equal portrayal of men and women in literature. According to this view, Plato's female guardians-in-training warranted a distinct education from men to help mitigate the cultural, symbolic, and epistemological assumptions of female subordination. Identical education, then, did not necessarily constitute equal education, a point that holds significant implications for contemporary assumptions about the effects of coeducation.

These criticisms illustrate the longevity of Plato's educational, metaphysical, and ethical ideas. In addition, other scholars have eschewed the tendency to evaluate the modern implications of Plato's specific educational doctrines, and instead have highlighted his assumption that education could address fundamental social problems. They view Plato's method of inquiry –critical self-examination through the dialectical interplay of teacher and student–as his primary contribution to educational thought. Indeed, perhaps education itself embodied the highest virtue of Plato's just state.

See also: PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION.

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SEVAN G. TERZIAN

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roger almost 3 years ago

give me the negatives and positives of plato education

bob 9 months ago

hi

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so many entertaining stuff in your blog You have done your best by making us know about this. It was a brief and wide presentation which can easily be understood by anyone.

Theodore Brameld (1904–1987)

education philosophy social university

A philosopher and visionary educator who developed the reconstructionist philosophy of education, Theodore Brameld spent a lifetime working for personal and cultural transformation through education. Influenced by John Dewey's educational philosophy, Brameld urged that schools become a powerful force for social and political change. He welcomed reasoned argument and debate both inside and outside the classroom. After completing a doctorate in philosophy at the University of Chicago in 1931, Brameld taught at Long Island University and spent much of his career at New York University and Boston University.

In the 1930s Brameld was drawn to a social activist group of scholars at Teachers College, Columbia University, including George Counts, Harold Rugg, Merle Curti, and William Heard Kilpatrick. Counts especially influenced him profoundly. Writing in *The Social Frontier,* a journal of educational and political critique, Brameld argued for a radical philosophy that focused analysis on weaknesses in the social, economic, and political structure. From this analysis came constructive blueprints for a new social order that challenged social inequities like prejudice, discrimination, and economic exploitation. These issues were addressed in *Minority Problems in Public Schools,* published in 1945.

Placing abundant faith in the common person, Brameld considered democracy the core of his educational philosophy. In 1950 he asserted in *Ends and Means in Education: A Midcentury Appraisal* that education needed a reconstructed perspective and suggested reconstructionism as an appropriate label to distinguish this philosophy. Many of Brameld's ideas grew out of his experience in applying his philosophical beliefs to a school setting in Floodwood, Minnesota. There he worked with students and teachers to develop democratic objectives. Insisting that controversial issues and problems ought to play a central role in education, he considered no issue out of bounds for discussion and critical analysis.

Brameld never wavered in his conviction that philosophy must be related to real-life issues. Philosophers as well as educators must act decisively on their values, he affirmed. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s he remained defiant and courageous in the face of intimidation and harassment by the forces of McCarthyism that tried to muffle his resolute voice.

Starting in 1950 with the publication of *Patterns of Educational Philosophy: A Democratic Interpretation,* Brameld developed his cultural interpretation of four philosophies of education: essentialism, perennialism, progressivism, and reconstructionism. He viewed essentialism as an educational philosophy concerned mainly with the conservation of culture; perennialism as centering on the classical thought of ancient Greece and medieval Europe; progressivism as the philosophy of liberal, experimental education; and reconstructionism as a radical philosophy of education responding to the contemporary crisis. In his writings throughout the 1950s, Brameld maintained that reconstructionists–like progressivists–opposed any theory that viewed values as absolute or unchanging. Values must be tested by evidence and grounded in social consensus.

Brameld continued to refine his philosophy in his many publications. In 1965 a small but influential book, *Education as Power,* appeared in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Japanese, and Korean editions (and was reissued in 2000). *Education as Power* clearly and concisely outlines many of the major tenets of reconstructionism.

Education has two major roles: to transmit culture and to modify culture. When American culture is in a state of crisis, the second of these roles–that of modifying and innovating–becomes more important. Reconstructionism, Brameld affirmed, is a crisis philosophy; the reconstructionist is "very clear as to which road mankind should take, but he [or she] is not at all clear as to which road it will take" (2000, p. 75).

Above all, reconstructionism is a philosophy of values, ends, and purposes, with a democratically empowered world civilization as the central goal of education. Social self-realization, "the realization of the capacity of the self to measure up to its fullest, most satisfying powers in cooperative relationship with other selves" (2000, p. 93), is the capstone of reconstructionist theory and practice, but Brameld also pays attention to politics, human relations, religion, and the arts in his philosophy. A commitment to existential humanism remains constant. Defensible partiality, a central concept in reconstructionism, suggests a search for answers to human problems by exploring alternative approaches and then defending the partialities that emerge from a dialectic of opposition.

Brameld's abiding interest in the concept of culture led him to write a scholarly volume, *Cultural Foundations of Education: An Interdisciplinary Exploration* (1957), that demonstrated his debt to influential anthropologists. Following this came application of his theoretical framework to Puerto Rican culture and education in *The Remaking of a Culture* (1959), and application to a study of a Japanese fishing village and a segregated community in *Japan: Culture, Education, and Change in Two Communities* (1968).

One of Brameld's last books, *The Teacher As World Citizen: A Scenario of the 21st Century* (1976), provides a visionary outline and culmination of many of his lifelong hopes and beliefs. Written as if looking back from the eve of the year 2001, the teacher-narrator recalls global transformations of the preceding quarter century. Radical changes have occurred, especially establishment of a World Community of Nations based on a global Declaration of Interdependence.

Brameld's conception of the utopian spirit as a realizable vision of what could and should be achieved was influenced greatly by scholars like Lewis Mumford whose comprehensive organic, ecological, and humanistic philosophy had a profound influence on Brameld's reconstructionism. Some critics found Brameld's educational philosophy too goal-centered and utopian while others were disturbed by his advocacy of teachers as social change activists. Still others criticized his early interest in Marx, as well as his ongoing critique of the capitalist value system. Brameld's unpopular commitment in intercultural education and education for a world community in the 1950s was more widely embraced as multicultural and global education a half century later.

After becoming professor emeritus at Boston University in 1969, Brameld taught at Springfield College in Massachusetts and at the University of Hawaii where he continued to write, conduct research, and become involved in community change initiatives. As he did throughout his professional life, Brameld wrote letters to the editors of newspapers and worked on articles for scholarly journals. Brameld participated in demonstrations against nuclear power and enjoyed spending time at his home in Lyme Center, New Hampshire and traveling around the world as an instructor with World Campus Afloat (a study-abroad program now known as the Semester at Sea).

Theodore Brameld died in October 1987 in Durham, North Carolina, at the age of eighty-three. The Society for Educational Reconstruction (SER), founded in the late 1960s by Brameld's former doctoral students and others inspired by his ideas, continues to sponsor conferences and symposia focusing on various dimensions of the reconstructionist philosophy of education.

See also: PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION; PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION.

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DAVID R. CONRAD

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<a href="http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/1800/Brameld-Theodore-1904-1987.html">Theodore Brameld (1904–1987)</a>
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William C. Bagley (1874–1946) - Early Career, Teachers College

education school educational university

Professor of education at Teachers College, Columbia University (1917–1940), William C. Bagley is commonly referred to as the founder of essentialist educational theory. Bagley was born in Detroit, Michigan, and after his family relocated to the east coast, he attended elementary school in Weymouth, Massachusetts. When his family moved back to Detroit in 1887, Bagley attended high school there and graduated from Detroit's Capitol High School in 1891 at the age of seventeen. Bagley entered Michigan Agricultural College (now Michigan State University), with the intention of preparing himself to become a farmer. Upon graduation in the spring of 1895, Bagley had no land and no money to begin farming. After a fruitless search for employment, he soon decided to teach, a decision that influenced the rest of his life. He accepted a teaching position in a rural one-room schoolhouse near Garth and Rapid River, Michigan.

Early Career

Bagley taught in Michigan for two years, during which time he dedicated his professional life to the improvement of teaching. He attended the University of Chicago in the summer of 1896, and then transferred to the University of Wisconsin in Madison. Working under Joseph Jastrow, he earned his master's degree in psychology, in the spring of 1898. Upon completion of this degree, he accepted a Sage Fellowship at Cornell University to study with well-known psychologist Edward Bradford Titchener. For four years, Bagley worked under Titchener and learned the structuralist psychology of his mentor. Bagley completed his Ph.D. in 1900 and spent the following academic year as an assistant in Titchener's laboratory. Still committed to the improvement of good teaching, Bagley accepted a position, beginning in the fall of 1901, as principal of Meramec Elementary School in St. Louis, Missouri. He worked in St. Louis for only one year, after which he accepted his first professorship as director of the Teacher Practice School and professor of psychology and pedagogy at the Montana State Normal School in Dillon, Montana. While in Montana, Bagley became active throughout the state by speaking at teachers institutes, by delivering commencement speeches, and by creating the first journal in the *Rocky Mountain region dedicated specifically to education, The Intermountain Educator.*

While working in Montana Bagley wrote his first major book, the *Educative Process* (1905). As a comprehensive portrayal of an early "science of education," the work became a popular textbook throughout the United States for courses on the introduction to educational psychology. The *Educative Process* was well received by professors as well as by the general public. With this book, Bagley's name received national, and even international, prominence.

Bagley received an offer to return to New York State to work at Oswego State Normal School in Oswego, New York. In the fall of 1906 he began his appointment there as superintendent of the Teacher Training Department. He also served as principal of the practice school and taught courses on educational methods. After only two short years he left Oswego to accept his first position at a state university, the University of Illinois.

At Illinois, Bagley helped to develop the Department of Education to the point that it became one of the most well known in the nation. In the nine years he was on the Illinois faculty, Bagley attracted to Illinois such prominent educational scholars as Guy M. Whipple, Lewis Flint Anderson, Lotus D. Coffman, and Charles H. Johnston. He also worked with several of his colleagues in 1910 to create the *Journal of Educational Psychology,* a scholarly publication that has remained significant for almost 100 years. Moreover, during this time, he helped to found Kappa Delta Pi, an honor society in education that has since opened chapters internationally.

As a professor at the University of Illinois, Bagley worked diligently to create a School of Education that was to differ remarkably from the Department of Education that he inherited. This transition ultimately required three main ingredients: an additional number of education faculty members, the construction of a building to house the school, and the creation of a program that permitted the School of Education to enroll its own students. Bagley had to prevail against the view, held by many professors of liberal arts, that future teachers needed no special preparation beyond a sound liberal arts education. Bagley certainly agreed that a sound liberal arts education was essential for future teachers. He also, however, believed that for people who planned to be teachers, a liberal arts curriculum should be accompanied by an equally sound sequence of

professional education courses. Bagley eventually founded the University of Illinois' School of Education, although the construction of the building was not completed until 1918, one year after he left Illinois.

Teachers College

In the fall of 1917 Bagley began his final academic appointment at Teachers College, Columbia University, where he joined a stellar education faculty that included such prominent scholars as John Dewey, Edward L. Thorndike, William Heard Kilpatrick, and George D. Strayer. Bagley's official position was professor of normal school administration. This role allowed him to use his many years as a normal school professor, to work toward the improvement of normal school education across the nation–in effect becoming for more than twenty years the nation's dean of normal schools, or dean of teacher education.

While at Teachers College, Bagley entered into some of the most heated educational discussions of his career. Sometimes with, and often against, his colleague Kilpatrick, Bagley engaged in debates about the relative weight that should be given in educational theory to academic subject matter, on the one hand, and to the interests and needs of students on the other. Bagley never denied the importance of designing a curriculum that met the interests and needs of students. He often argued, however, that the emphasis that theorists such as Kilpatrick placed on the individual needs of students often eclipsed the necessity for academic subject matter in the curriculum. Importantly, Bagley sought a reasonable view of professional education that balanced the needs of students with a rigorous academic curriculum.

While at Teachers College in the 1920s, Bagley also entered into educational discussions about the role of intelligence testing in the schools. In *Determinism in Education: A Series of Papers on the Relative Influence of Inherited and Acquired Traits,* Bagley argued against the determinist viewpoint, held by people such as Thorndike, that education played little or no role in the improvement of a person's intelligence. Instead, Bagley asserted that the recently created intelligence tests actually measured the educational opportunity experienced by students rather than their innate ability.

In 1934 Bagley published what he believed to be his most significant contribution to educational theory. In *Education and Emergent Man: A Theory of Education With Particular Application to Public Education in the United States,* Bagley applied Gestalt psychology to teaching, arguing against what he called mechanistic psychology, represented most prominently by Thorndike and what might be termed *extreme pragmatism,* advocated by Kilpatrick. This final book of Bagley's, however, received little attention from his colleagues. This lack of recognition likely played into the final major event of Bagley's career, the founding of essentialism in 1938.

In that year, Bagley joined with some of his colleagues to create an organization that would counteract some of the extreme tendencies of Progressive education. In the *Essentialist's Platform,* which Bagley published in April 1938, the essentialists offered several basic educational principles. First, they recognized the right of an immature student to the guidance of a well-educated, caring, and cultured teacher. Second, they proposed that an effective democracy demanded a democratic culture in which teachers impart the ideals of community to each succeeding generation of children. Third, they called for a specific program of studies that required thoroughness, accuracy, persistence, and good workmanship on the part of pupils. Bagley's basic point with his role in the founding of essentialism was that the currently dominant theories of education were feeble and insufficient. He wanted these dominant theories complemented, and perhaps replaced, with a philosophy that was strong, virile, and positive. He did not, however, want to destroy completely the dominant theories that he was critiquing. Throughout his life, he supported both the academic disciplines and certain basic tenets of Progressive education.

Soon after the founding of essentialism, Bagley retired from Teachers College. During retirement and until his death on July 1, 1946, in New York City, he served as editor of *School and Society.* He died while completing editorial work for this journal. Bagley can be remembered as an untiring fighter for professional education, a supporter of the academic disciplines, and both a critic and a supporter of different aspects of the complex movement known as Progressive education.

See also: CURRICULUM, SCHOOL; KILPATRICK, WILLIAM H.; PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION.

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<a href="http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/1780/Bagley-William-C-1874-1946.html">William C. Bagley
(1874-1946) - Early Career, Teachers College</a>
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User Comments

William H. Kilpatrick (1871–1965)

york education john dewey

Progressive educational philosopher and interpreter of John Dewey's work, William Heard Kilpatrick was born in White Plains, Georgia, the son of a Baptist minister. Educated in village schools, he graduated from Mercer University in Macon, Georgia, moving on to do graduate work in mathematics at Johns Hopkins University. Kilpatrick served as a public school principal in Georgia before returning to his alma mater to teach and briefly serve as Mercer's acting president. In 1906 he became embroiled in a series of controversies with the institution's president that resulted in the board of trustees holding a "heresy" trial, after which Kilpatrick resigned. In 1908 he moved to New York City to begin his doctoral studies at Teachers College, Columbia University, where John Dewey, one of his major professors, called him the best student he ever had. His dissertation, which he defended in 1911, was a history of colonial Dutch schools in New York. Beginning his work at Teachers College as a part-time administrator in the Appointment Office and a history of education instructor, Kilpatrick eventually attained a full-time teaching appointment in the philosophy of education, which he held from 1912 to 1937.

Kilpatrick's meteoric rise in educational circles began with the publication in 1918 of his article "The Project Method" in the Teachers College *Record*. In that article Kilpatrick provided a practical approach to implementing John Dewey's educational philosophy. Drawing on Dewey's earlier work, *Interest and Effort,* he attempted to demonstrate how students could engage in purposeful activity at the intellectual, physical, and affective levels. The inclusion of projects matched the child-centered approach advocated by Progressive educators at this time. The emphases that projects placed on individual learning, on reflective activity, and on the development of the whole child struck a resonant chord with teachers of the period. "The Project Method" was an immediate bestseller among educators and launched Kilpatrick's national public career.

Other reasons for Kilpatrick's rising influence in American education were his effective teaching and charismatic public-speaking ability. Often teaching classes in excess of 600 students, he was able to use group work, discussion, and summary lectures to enrich the educational experience for his students. Kilpatrick was known for his cultured Georgian accent, his thick mane of white hair, and his perceptive blue eyes, all contained within a small, energetic frame. His popularity was such that the New York City press gave him the moniker "Columbia's Million Dollar Professor." Although his salary never approached that figure, the tuition his classes generated for the coffers of Columbia University did exceed that amount during his quarter century of service to Teachers College.

Kilpatrick's career at Teachers College came to a close amid controversy. Dean William Russell decided to enforce the institution's mandatory retirement age, and his action set off a national firestorm among educators when Kilpatrick was the ruling's first casualty. It became a cause célèbre at several national conferences during 1936, with John Dewey wading into the controversy to support Kilpatrick's continued appointment. Kilpatrick's final class in 1937 consisted of 622 students, bringing to 35,000 the number of students he had taught at Teachers College. Living almost another three decades, Kilpatrick was active in his retirement, leading the New York Urban League, the Progressive Education Association, and the John Dewey Society as its first president. He continued writing and speaking in addition to teaching summer school classes at such universities as Stanford, Northwestern, and Minnesota. His involvement in organizations often brought him into conflict with the major conservatives of the day, including Robert Hutchins, Father Charles Coughlin, and William Randolph Hearst. Kilpatrick's activities also placed him within the ranks of influential liberals in post—World War II America, including Eleanor Roosevelt, Ralph Bunche, and Bayard Rustin.

Kilpatrick's consistent Progressive message was that schools needed to be more child-centered, democratic, and socially oriented. After World War II, critics attacked many of the ideas and practices of Progressive education. They saw a curriculum that lacked rigor and students who were academically unprepared to compete with in a global economy. Specific criticism aimed at Kilpatrick emerged in the school reform literature of the 1980s and 1990s. Supporters of a traditional curriculum, such as E.D. Hirsch and Diane Ravitch, viewed the Progressive philosophy that Kilpatrick had espoused as the principal cause for what, in their opinion, was a decline in the academic standards of American schools. Over the same period, though, numerous Progressive-oriented pedagogies were implemented in the nation's classrooms. These innovations included cooperative learning, team teaching, individualization of instruction, and the experiential elements of the middle school movement. These student-centered practices, along with Kilpatrick's unswerving commitment to democratic principals in the

schools, form the bedrock of his legacy. In one of his final statements, John Dewey said that Kilpatrick's works "form a notable and virtually unique contribution to the development of a school society that is an organic component of a living, growing democracy" (Tenenbaum, p. x).

See also: CURRICULUM, SCHOOL; DEWEY, JOHN; INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES; PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION; PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION.

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JOHN BEINEKE

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User Comments

William James (1842–1910)

mind education psychology child

William James was the American philosopher whose work in psychology established that science as an important element in the revision of social and philosophical doctrines at the turn of the nineteenth century. Thereafter it was no longer possible to erect systems in purely deductive fashion. All thought must take account of the deliverances of current natural science, and particularly the branch relating to man's mind. This respect for the organized experience of the laboratory inevitably influenced educational theory and practice, then still known by their proper name of *pedagogy*.

But James was not merely a scientist in psychology and a proponent of scientific rigor in moral philosophy, including education. He was a philosophical genius–the greatest that America has produced–who touched upon every department of life and culture and who ranks as a chief architect of the reconstruction in Western thought that took place in the 1890s. In the company of Nietzsche, Dilthey, Renouvier, Bergson, Mach, Vaihinger, and Samuel Butler, he led the revolt against orthodox scientism, Spencerism, and materialism and contributed to that enlargement of outlook that affected the whole range of feeling and opinion and has since earned the name of Neo-Romanticism. Every academic discipline and every art was involved in the change; and, in each, thinkers of uncommon scope laid the foundation for the new systems of ideas on which the twentieth century still lives.

William James was in a favored position for adding something unique to the movement: He possessed the American experience as his birth-right and was early acclimated to European ways, British and Continental. He studied in Germany and was fluent in both German and French, and his family circumstances were propitious. He was the eldest son of Henry James Sr., son of the original William James who had emigrated from Ireland to this country and made a fortune. Henry Sr. could devote himself to study and did so. His original ideas on religion and society won no acceptance in his day, but they have been found important by modern scholars, and they certainly influenced the two geniuses who were his sons, William the philosopher and Henry the novelist.

William James's own intellectual career is marked by his father's easy unconventionality, which as will be seen permitted long exploration before "settling down." Every shift in his own development is caught up in, and contributory to, his mature work. James wanted at first to become a painter, but he had the critical sense to see that his talent was insufficient. Next he took up chemistry at Harvard, went on to study physiology in response to his interest in living things, and wound up preparing for a medical degree. He interrupted his course to spend a highly formative year as one of Louis Agassiz's assistants in the Thayer expedition to Brazil. He then went abroad, where he read literature, attended university lectures, and became acquainted with the new psychology, which the Germans had made experimental and exact. He returned to take his Harvard M.D. in 1869 and after further study abroad began to teach anatomy and physiology.

It was not long before his inquiring spirit led him to offer courses in the relations of psychology to physiology, for which he soon established the first psychology laboratory in America. After the publication of his great book, *The Principles of Psychology,* in 1890, James's work exhibited the flowering of an intellect that had from the beginning been haunted by the enigmas of life and mind: He gave himself exclusively to metaphysics, morals, and religion.

By an oddity of academic arrangements, James was a professor of philosophy four years before he was made a professor of psychology, but nomenclature is irrelevant: His beginnings in the psychology laboratory were very soon followed by his offering of a course in philosophy. In other words, the subjects for him commingled and he was always a philosophical writer and teacher. Those were the great days of the Harvard department of philosophy, and during his thirty-five years of teaching James's direct influence spread over a wide range of students, as disparate as George Santayana and Gertrude Stein.

To the end of the century James, despite his new goals, continued to write and lecture on the subject that had first brought him fame. He pursued his research on the newest topics of abnormal psychology, he read Freud and helped bring him over for a lectureship at Clark University. And what is more to the point of the present entry, between 1892 and 1899, James delivered at a number of places the *Talks to Teachers,* which were an offshoot of the *Psychology* and which constitute his important contribution to educational theory.

In any such theory, the assumptions made about the human mind are fundamental and decisive. If "the mind"–which for this most practical of purposes is the pupil's mind–is imagined as a sensitive plate merely, then teaching can take the simple form of making desired impressions on the plate by attending chiefly to the choice and form of those impressions. The rest is done by setting the child to take these in by rote, by repeating rules, by watching and remembering contrived experiments. In other words, the teacher points the camera and pushes the button for a snapshot or time exposure.

No pedagogy has ever been quite so simple, of course, for the least gifted or attentive teacher is aware that the child must exert *some* effort, be in some way active and not photographically passive, before he can learn the set verses or the multiplication table. So, to start the machinery, a system of rewards and punishments is established, which will by mechanical association strengthen the useful acts of mind or hand and discourage the useless or harmful. In this primitive pedagogy, the pupil's acquirements are deemed a resultant of essentially mechanical forces, and the teacher serves as the manipulator of a wholly environmentalist scheme.

It is unlikely that any good teacher has ever adhered strictly to that role or thought of himself or herself as operating that sort of invisible keyboard. If it were so, no child would ever have learned much of value from any schooling whatever. But it is also true that educational practice always tends toward the crude mechanics just described. And the reasons are obvious: sheer incompetence in many teachers and weariness in the rest. For the two great limitations on classroom performance under any theory are (1) the scarcity of born teachers; and (2) the strenuousness of able and active teaching (which means that even the best teachers can sustain the effort for only a given number of hours at a time).

The state of affairs which James and other school reformers of the 1890s found and sought to remedy was a result of these several deficiencies. The movement of Western nations toward providing free, public, and compulsory education was, it must be remembered, an innovation of the nineteenth century. The inherent difficulties of this new social and cultural goal were great. It made unprecedented demands–on children, parents, administrative systems, and (most important) on the national resources of teaching talent, which are not expandable at will. Theory, too, was wanting for the supervision and teaching of teachers themselves. The confusion that ensued was therefore to be expected. Only a few points were clear: the older pedagogies were too mechanical in their view of the mind; the number of inadequate teachers was excessive; and the exploitive use of the good ones was a danger to the trying-out of mass education.

It was high time, therefore, that psychology put in its word on the subject it supposedly knew all about–the mind. Unfortunately, the mechanical view of the mind existed in two forms–one, as the view natural to ignorant or indifferent persons and, two, as the view that the prevailing scientific metaphor of the time seemed to justify. The universe, according to the Darwin-Spencer philosophy, was a vast machine, and its elements, living or dead, were also moved by the great push-pull of matter like the parts of a machine. The prophets of science–T. H. Huxley, John Tyndall, John Fiske–held audiences spellbound with illustrations of this principle, which everyone was sure could be demonstrated in the laboratory. The newest science, German born and bred, was psychophysics, a name which alone was enough to show that the operations of the mind bore the universal character of mechanism. Man was no exception to the law exemplified by the collision of billiard balls or (in more refined form) by the effect of light on a photographic plate.

To be sure, these scientific interpreters of nature would not have subscribed to a simplistic pedagogy if they had ever turned the full force of their minds on the problem of teaching. One of them, Herbert Spencer, did write a fairly sensible tract on education. And the psychophysicists did not entirely blot out the influence of earlier and richer pedagogies, notably that of the German psychologist Johann Herbart, who died in 1841. But on the whole the situation of the schools in the decades of the nineteenth century was critical, and the strictures and exhortations of the reformers tell us very precisely in what ways.

James, with his encyclopedic knowledge of psychology, theoretical and experimental, his mastery of the art of teaching, and his genius for diagnosis in the study of human feeling, was in an ideal position for showing up the false principles, old and new, and propounding the true ones. The root of the matter was to consider the pupil as an active being–not merely a mind to be filled, but complex and growing organism, of which the mind was but one feature. That feature, in turn, was not a receptacle, but an agent with interests, drives, powers, resistances, and peculiarities which together defined a unique person. Nothing can be imagined farther removed from this than a machine built to a pattern and responding passively to external prods and prizes.

Rather, as one marks the difference, the familiar outline appears of the child who presides over the child-centered school of the Progressives–the men and women who came to dominate theory and practice thirty years after James. But it is only the outline of that child, for James was much too wise a philosopher to suppose that doing the opposite of whatever is done will correct present abuses. His *Talks to Teachers* (1899) fill but a small volume, yet they contain an extremely subtle and complex set of precepts–precepts, not commandments. To follow the precepts one must–alas–use intelligence and judgment, not because James is not clear and definite, but because the teaching situation is infinitely variable–like its object, the child.

To begin with, James does not reject the associationist principle that was the mainstay of the earlier pedagogy. It is a sound principle, but it is not simple or automatic as was once thought. Associations impress the mind not in a one-to-one arrangement, but in groups or constellations, some members of which fight or inhibit each other. Moreover, the structure of the particular mind favors or excludes certain kinds and ranges of associations. It follows that to reach–and teach–any mind, the teacher must multiply the number of cues that will bring to full consciousness in the pupil the points he should retain or remember. The reason for this method, which is in fact less a method than a call to exert the imagination, is that the same reality can be cognized by any number of psychic states. It is accordingly a *field theory of thought* that James substitutes for the linear-mechanical and would have the teacher act upon.

Throughout his chapters, James moves back and forth from the schoolroom to the world, where the habits and powers of great minds and dull ones can be observed and turned into examples. The point of the shuttling is that there is or should be no difference in kind between what the child is asked to imagine, perform, remember, or reason out and what the grown man does or fails to do. This soon becomes an important criterion. Meanwhile the difference is in degree, which means that the teacher must be aware of differences in development–crudely measured by the age of the child, more closely measured by his rate of maturing, most delicately marked by what is called native ability.

Any teacher starts with the pupil as a lively bouncing creature in which the body and its needs predominate. The curiosity of the child is indeed a sign that mind is present also, but James knows that the "native interests of children lie altogether in the sphere of sensation" (1899, p. 92). Hence James recommends that until artificial interests develop, children be taught through objects, things that move, events of dramatic quality, anecdotes in place of propositions. Stressing also the link between instinct (which rules these early interests) and action, James strongly favors letting the child handle the means of instruction, build, take apart, try out, *do*.

In this commonsense view that instruction should begin by exploiting native interests (which turn out to be physical and active), James is a fore-runner of the Chicago School, of which John Dewey was the instigator and later the idol. But neither James nor Dewey was an innovator in the desert. The European kindergarten movement, the early, scattered elements of the Montessori method, and numerous other reforms of school and preschool instruction were in full swing even before James. Indeed, Rabelais and Rousseau had long since made the identical point about the value for education of having the naturally restless child learn by playing, both because playing is congenial and because it is the fundamental form of learning: trial and error.

That point evidently has to be made over and over again in history. But each time history gives it a special coloring. It was natural that in the period immediately after Darwin, which saw the popular triumph of science, the reminder about the child's activism should be seen as the root of the scientific march of mind; for if play is the germ of trial and error, trial and error is the germ of experimentation. It is this plausible linkage that set Dewey and the Progressives to pursue the scientific analogy to an extreme. For them–at least as educators–the mind is forever facing problems and seeking solutions. Teaching school therefore becomes the art of devising situations that will challenge the problem-solving mind and build up in its child-owner a stronger and stronger capacity to size up, ascertain, verify, and solve.

William James never had to confront this hypothesis head on, but it is clear what form his refutation would have taken. In the first place, not every adult is a scientist, and though it is true that adults who are not scientists encounter problems and resolve them, that activity is but one of many forms that cerebration takes. The poet, the painter, the mystic, the housewife, the salesman, the rabble-rouser, each performs his task differently, even if at times they all resort to "situation analysis" and "problem-solving." We must remember James's assertion that the mind is continuous: it stretches from the kindergarten, where it learns, to the laboratory, where James studies it, just as it stretches from Plato's garden to the London Stock Exchange; which is to say that within the unity of the human mind reigns a great diversity, not reducible to the very special, historically late, and purposely artificial form of scientific reasoning.

According to James, good teaching, therefore, cannot follow a set form; it is not the curing of a weakness, such as the replacement of unreason by reason and superstition by science. Rather, it is the interaction of a practiced or well-filled mind with one on its way to the same state. The contents of any mind at any moment–that which James first called "the stream of consciousness"–is an ever-flowing rush of objects, feelings, and impulsive tendencies. The art of teaching consists in helping to develop in the child the power to control this stream, to sort out its objects, classify their kinds, observe their relationships, and then multiply their significant associations.

In the abstract, this work may be called *attending;* the power generated is *Attention*. James is particularly valuable on this faculty. He points out that if passive attention is sustained by making subject matter continuously interesting, active attention will not develop. He knows that a good part of any subject for any learner of whatever age is bound to be dull; mastering it is drudgery. Therefore, while he encourages the teacher to arouse the pupil's interest in the dull parts of the work by associating them closely with the more interesting through showing unsuspected facets, by challenging pugnacity to overcome difficulty, by dwelling on the concrete effects of the abstract, and by any other means that ingenuity can supply, he does not lose sight of the goal. All this effort at building up enticing associations is to "lend to the subject...an interest sufficient *tolet loose the effort"* of deliberate attention (1899, p.110).

Not the precept alone but its pattern has significance. Throughout his educational doctrine, James is at pains to counteract what he calls the "softer pedagogy" by qualifying its blind zeal. The softer pedagogy is that which, having seized on a good teaching principle, such as "make the work interesting," forgets that it is only a device and reduces the end of education to its means: What we can't make interesting we won't teach–or at least not require; there is a good reason for the pupil's not learning it: it's not interesting. On the contrary, says James, education that works for voluntary attention is "the education par excellence" (1890, p. 424).

The Jamesian correctives spring from a sense of the original *complexity* of the human mind. It is not a machine that mysteriously gets more *complicated*. Thus, when James recommends the use of objects, the indulgence of childish touching, building, and trying out, it is not in order to ingrain a habit of fiddling, but in order to develop mental powers that *transcend* the tangible and even the visual. Again, he refuses to give objects primacy over words or to deride the utility of abstraction: "... words...are the handiest mental elements we have. Not only are they very *rapidly* revivable, but they are revivable as actual sensations more easily than any other items of our experience" (1890, p. 266). And he goes on to remark that the older men are and the more effective as thinkers, the less they depend on visualization. The implications for educational method, when we consider its evolution since 1890 and are aware that the abandonment of teaching to read has lately been urged on the strength of the visual substitutes at our disposal, deserve our closest attention.

The retreat from the word was already beginning in James's time and he warned against its dangers. He bore incessant witness to the important connection between words and memory and its role in making knowledge secure. "I should say therefore, that constant exercise in verbal memorizing must still be an indispensable feature in all sound education. Nothing is more deplorable than that inarticulate and helpless sort of mind that is reminded by everything of some quotation, case, or anecdote, which it cannot now exactly recollect" (1899, pp. 131–132). The description seems to fit the student mind that does best at "objective" examinations, where the case or quotation is helpfully supplied. To summon it up unaided requires a more athletic type of mind, developed by training in verbal memory.

It is clear that James's standard of performance, for both teacher and pupil, was quite simply *the bestmind.* He was in that sense a thorough educational democrat, unwilling to classify and mark down intelligences ahead of time, on the basis of their background or their probable future. Everybody had a chance to rival the greatest; education was the means of finding out who could succeed, while helping all equally in the effort. This assumption and the attitude it dictates is the opposite of competing with oneself alone, setting one's own standards, and pursuing only one's own "needs"–which boil down to one's own momentary wants.

All these limiting, hierarchical ideas were in the air when James wrote and lectured, and he put his finger on their unfortunate cause: "Our modern reformers...write too exclusively of the earliest years of the pupil. These lend themselves better to explicit treatment;...Yet away back in childhood we find the beginnings of purely intellectual curiosity, and the intelligence of abstract terms" (1899, p.151). The implication here–and experience justifies it–is that the pupils are often brighter than their teachers: "Too many school children 'see'...'through' the namby-pamby attempts of the softer pedagogy to lubricate things for them." The absurdity of believing that geography begins and ends with "the school-yard and neighboring hill" is a case in point. The

child soon comes to think of all schooling as contemptible make-believe–and James with prophetic vision denounces the Dick-and-Jane reading books as yet unheard of: "School children can enjoy abstractions, provided they be of the proper order; and it is a poor compliment to their rational appetite to think that anecdotes about little Tommies and little Jennies are the only kind of things their minds can digest" (1899, pp. 151–152).

A principal cause of James's impatience with spoon-feeding methods, with educational research and statistics ("those unreal experimental tests, those pedantic elementary measurements"), with theoretical advice, including his own ("a perceptive teacher...will be of much more value"), is his awareness of the deadly grip of habit (1899, p. 136). "Could the young but realize how soon they will become mere walking bundles of habits, they would give more heed to their conduct while in the plastic state" (1899, p. 77).

If this is true, how much more to blame are the teachers whose "method" in instruction becomes the mold of a habit imposed on the young mind. For James, a right education is precisely the power to sidestep ruts, to link ideas freely over a wide range, to exert voluntary attention, to be rich in suggestion and invention, and to be prompt in receptivity. He repeatedly contrasts the dry, prosaic mind with the witty and imaginative. And since knowledge and experience alike tell him that this balance of freedom and control which he disiderates depends on a well-furnished and strenuously trained mind, he wants teachers capable of arousing passion in their charges–the "whole mind working together." Native deficiencies in this or that faculty can be over-come or ignored: "In almost any subject your passion for the subject will save you." And at the same time he shows a warm understanding of the non-academic type. The student who cuts a poor figure in examinations may in the end do better than "the glib and ready reproducer," just because of deeper passions and of "combining power less commonplace" (1899, pp. 137, 143).

It comes as no surprise, then, that James ends by defining education not in intellectual terms–though his whole impetus is toward intellect–but in terms that unite emotion and action: education is "the organization of acquired habits of conduct and tendencies to behavior.... To think is the moral act:" it "is the secret of will,...it is the secret of memory.... Thus are your pupils to besaved: first, by the stock of ideas with which you furnish them; second, by the amount of voluntary attention that they can exert in holding to the right ones.... ; and, third, by the several habits of acting definitely on these latter to which they have been successfully trained" (1899, pp. 29, 186–188).

The "saving" is of course from the blind compulsion of determinism reinforced by bad habit. James's pronouncements about education rest upon a mass of physiological and psychological facts and are abundantly illustrated by reference to them. The reflex arc is as much a condition of learning as the stream of thought; the individual type of memory (visual, auditory, muscular) as determinative as the hereditary constitution of the neural synapses. But James is not a materialist, for he can find no evidence that these factors which limit or condition thought also produce it. And at the same time he finds in man's power of fixing the mind upon an idea–the power of thinking–a range of freedom to be exploited.

These considerations and conclusions bring us back to the starting point. If the nascent mind to be taught in the schoolroom is not a machine, if it is continuous and unified in kind, but diversified in quality and degree, if its operations are not exclusively analytic and directed at problem-solving, what sort of mind is it, in a single word? And what sort of educational theory will suit its needs? To answer the second question first, psychology can and ought to give the teacher help, but it is a great mistake to think that "the science of the mind's laws" can serve to define "programmes and schemes and methods of instruction for immediate schoolroom use. Psychology is a science, and teaching is an art; and sciences never generate arts directly out of themselves. An intermediary inventive mind must make the application, by using its originality" (1899, pp. 7–8).

In short, no matter which way we turn, we cannot in education get away from the work of the mind or substitute for it an ingenious abstraction. How then does the mind work? The scientific way, we saw, was but a special form of its activity; what is the inclusive mode, or as we just asked, what sort of mind? It is, so to put it, an artistic mind: it is by a kind of artistry that we perceive reality, which is the mind's most inclusive task. True, sensations hold a controlling position commanding our belief in what is real, but not all sensations are "deemed equally real. The more practically important ones, the more permanent ones, and the more aesthetically apprehensible ones are selected from the mass, to be believed in most of all; the others are degraded to the position of mere signs and suggestions of these" (1890, p. 305). This description of the mind's seizing upon reality fairly parallels the operations of the artist upon his materials for the creation of another kind of reality: it is the pragmatic method, which only means human impulse seeking convenience and delight, seeking the permanent and the

recognizable, the orderly and the satisfying. All education therefore aims at preparing the mind to fulfill its native tendencies and thereby to grasp and enjoy an enlarged order of multifarious reality.

See also: EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY; PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION.

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Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) - Social Inequalities, Émile, Gender Considerations

A political and moral philosopher during the Enlightenment, Jean-Jacques Rousseau developed provocative ideas about human nature, education, and the desired relationship between individuals and the ideal society.

Born in the city of Geneva, Switzerland, Jean-Jacques Rousseau lost his mother hours after his birth and was abandoned by his father at the age of seven. After many years of failed apprenticeships and employments, Rousseau rose to intellectual prominence in 1750 upon winning first prize in an essay contest in France. This marked the beginning of a long period of scholarly production in which he authored a number of philosophical treatises that addressed the problem of individual and collective freedom–and how education might help to resolve the dilemma by producing enlightened citizens who would uphold an ideal state. Forced to flee France and Switzerland as a result of the social criticisms inherent in his work, Rousseau found temporary refuge in England and then surreptitiously returned to France where he remained until his death.

Social Inequalities

Rousseau's discontent with contemporary society became evident in his *Discourse on the Arts and Sciences* (1750). Addressing the question of whether progress in the arts and sciences had abetted or detracted from morals, Rousseau portrayed civilization as evil, and he chastised scholars for pursuing knowledge for fame instead of social progress. Similarly, in his *Discourse on Inequality* and his article on political economy written for Denis Diderot's *Encyclopédie* (both published in 1755), Rousseau lamented man's departure from the state of nature and his consequent preoccupation with artificial social customs and institutions–all derived from vain and illusory desires to dominate others. Although he accepted individual or innate differences among human beings, Rousseau attacked the existence of social and civil inequalities in which people crushed the spirits of others in attempting to control them.

In the wake of these social criticisms, Rousseau sketched his vision for an ideal society. Particularly in *The Social Contract* and *Émile,* both published in 1762, Rousseau delineated a society without artificial social constraints or civil inequality. Ruled by a "general will" that encapsulated the essential commonality of all men, citizens would utilize reason to reconcile their individual interests with the laws of the state. Educated to be self-interested and self-reliant, a citizen would not measure himself against other people nor seek to control them. He would eschew selfish inclinations in favor of social equality. How, then, could such an ideal state emerge? For Rousseau, it required the complete education of a child.

Émile

Echoing his disdain for contemporary culture and politics in *The Social Contract,* Rousseau begins *Émile* by declaring: "God makes all things good; man meddles with them and they become evil." Society held man hostage in artificial institutions and traditions, thereby corrupting the natural goodness of human nature. This proclamation contradicted the notion of original sin, widely accepted in eighteenth-century Europe. It implied that a complete social revolution–not mere pedagogical reform –was necessary to replace the artificial social mores of the bourgeoisie with a new class of natural, self-reliant citizens. In accordance with John Locke's empirical epistemology, moreover, Rousseau believed that children were born ignorant, dependent, impressionable, without rational thought, and gained all knowledge through direct contact with the physical world.

As a result, Rousseau removed his fictional pupil, Émile, from his family and placed him in rural isolation. The first three stages of a child's development (infancy, boyhood, and pre-adolescence) required a kind of "negative" education. Protected from the artificial and pernicious influences of contemporary society, Émile would not develop unrealistic ambitions and feelings of jealousy or superiority with regard to other men (*amour propre*). In such a way, the tutor would encourage the child's physical development, shield him from social and religious institutions, prevent the formation of bad habits and prejudices, and preserve his natural inclination of self-interest (*amour de soi*).

Educated free from the manipulations and desires of others up to this point, Rousseau wanted Émile to remain ignorant of social duty and only to understand what was possible or impossible in the physical world. In such a way, his student would

learn to obey the immutable laws of nature. For instance, if Émile were to break the window to his room, he would face the consequences of sleeping with a cold draft. If Émile were to ignore his astronomy lesson, he would endure the panic of losing his way in the woods at night. Through this kind of trial and error, the child would gradually develop reason, adapt to different situations, and become an autonomous man.

The only appropriate book for Rousseau's future citizen was *Robinson Crusoe,* as it depicted the independent activities of a man isolated in a natural setting. And to abet Émile's self-reliance, Rousseau exposed his student to a variety of artisan trades. Thus, the child would not crave things he could not get, nor would he engage in a vain desire to control other people. An independent and rational young man, Émile learned to accept what was available to him. It is important to note, however, that although the tutor was always behind the scenes, he constantly manipulated conditions to give Émile the illusion of freedom.

Having developed the power to reason by the age of fifteen, the child then needed to develop his morality by understanding society and God. Through the safe and detached medium of historical study, Rousseau wanted his pupil to construct his understanding of human character. Detailed historical accounts of men's spoken words and actions would allow Émile to recognize the universality of natural human passion. As a self-confident and rational adolescent, he would neither envy nor disdain those in the past, but would feel compassion towards them.

This was also the time to cultivate Émile's religious faith. Rousseau did not want his pupil to become an anthropomorphic atheist. Nor did he want his pupil to fall under the authority of a specific religious denomination, with its formal rituals and doctrines. Such trappings smacked of the very artificial social institutions from which Émile was to be freed. Instead, Émile was to recognize the limitations of his senses and to have faith that God–the supreme intelligent will that created the universe and put it into motion–must in fact exist. In this respect, Rousseau deviated from the Enlightenment faith in man's reason as the sole vehicle for understanding God. Rousseau also alienated himself from formal religious institutions in demeaning their authority and asserting the original goodness of human nature. The corrupt codes and institutions of society had tarnished the purity of human nature, fueled a quest to rule over others, and made man a tyrant over nature and himself. The only salvation, however, rested not with God but society itself. A better society, with civil equality and social harmony, would restore human nature to its original and natural state and thereby serve the intent of God. In this way, Rousseau's brand of religious education attempted to teach the child that social reform was both necessary and consistent with God's will.

In Rousseau's final stage of education, his pupil needed to travel throughout the capitals of Europe to learn directly how different societies functioned. Émile also needed to find an appropriate mate, Sophie, who would support him emotionally and raise his children. Assuming that women possessed affectionate natures and inferior intellectual capacities, Rousseau relegated Sophie to the role of wife and mother. In direct contrast to Émile's isolated upbringing for developing his reason and preparing him as a citizen, Sophie's education immersed her in social and religious circles from the outset, thereby ensuring that she would not become a citizen. Despite this inequality, Rousseau believed that Émile and Sophie would comprise a harmonious and moral unit in the ideal state and produce future generations who would uphold it.

Gender Considerations

Some scholars have explored the implications of Rousseau's gender-distinct education and have suggested that Émile's societal isolation rendered him inadequate as a husband and citizen. Raised in social isolation and without family, Émile developed the capacity to think rationally, but at the expense of affectionate and empathetic feelings necessary to sustain a relationship with his future wife or with the ideal state. As delineated in *The Social Contract,* Rousseau's ideal state required not merely rational thinkers, but citizens who empathized with one another and the state. Thus, according to this view, Rousseau's gender-distinct assumptions produced an inadequate education for Sophie (whose reason had not developed) and Émile (emotionally cold and prey to his wife's manipulations). The family, fragmented and incomplete, could not sustain the ideal state.

A number of scholars have doubted whether Émile's isolation in the countryside could necessarily be free of social forces and whether the tutor could exemplify abstract principles without alluding to examples from conventional society. On the other hand, generations since Rousseau have altered their child-rearing practices and adopted his developmental view of childhood as a period of innocence. Some have accused Rousseau, in his manipulation of Émile and stress on the general will, of advocating a proto-totalitarian state. On the other hand, many scholars have identified Rousseau's faith in the agency of individuals to make rational and enlightened decisions both for themselves and their society as a precursor to democracy.

Indeed, this lack of consensus about Rousseau's legacy speaks less to his inadequacies than to his profound contributions to the fundamental, enduring, and controversial questions about human nature, self, society, and education.

See also: PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION.

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